

INTO THE MISTS  
SHADESTALKERS - STORY 001

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SHADESTALKERS

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## ***Intrusion***

Blowing wind caused the cart's walls to creak as Mathew pushed himself onto his hands and knees. There was a strange chill in the air, and the gentle howl of the wind outside unsettled the little blue haired being. He was on a table of some sort, which had a few pots and pans along with strange trinkets of some sort. Gentle clucking caught his attention, bringing his gaze up to see a chicken caged in a small birdcage hanging up over an enormous treasure chest of some sort.

He could hear someone moving nearby, though they were nowhere to be seen. Likely on the other side of a cabinet. Taking in a deep breath, the little one began to wander towards

the edge of the table, to see if he could hop down and begin his journey in earnest here.

Tiny footsteps patted across the table as he neared the edge, looking down to see a single boot below. He looked to the left again, now beyond to see a woman laying back in her bed with her feet up. One foot was bare, the other was mechanical – a prosthetic of some sort. It moved as though it were part of her completely, the brass and steel components working together in harmony. He leaned back onto an item behind him – a small key of some sort, just to have something to rest on while he gained the courage to jump down.

*Pshhew!*

A flash of light pushed him forward, and he was in freefall. Before he could do anything, the atmosphere around him shifted to a deep, damp, musky smell that was all-encompassing. He landed on something soft though, or ‘in’ to be more accurate. The mouth of the owner’s sock, which was

crumpled down inside her boot, had been opened. The tiny being tried to shift to get out, but wound up pulling himself deeper inside her sock as he heard the owner moving around. He could barely see outside of his new prison, just enough to take in the sight of the owner's hand swaying by with a faint glow.

"Show yourself," She said calmly, and as she turned, the shine of a blade shifted over the boot's entrance.

A gentle nudge was all it took to bury Mathew entirely, the jostling motion sending him slipping into the depths of her sock's fabric. The walls were stiff with dried, faintly warm sweat as he shifted and squirmed. Then, he heard her return to where she was, mumbling something under her breath. A small glow, the restoration of the spell...

## *The Next Morning*

Mathew had spent the entire time marinating in her sock's fabric. The warmth had left fairly quickly, and with him near the toe section of her sock, he felt as though his body had been crusted into place. The howling winds never faded though, as his world shifted and twisted around. She whipped her sock forward twice after pulling it out, just to mostly free the folds before hastily slipping it onto her foot. Enormous toes wrapped around Mathew's body, pulling him in deep as her foot plunged into the boot. However, it wasn't more than a second before she pulled it free again.

"Hmph," She groaned, about to peel back her sock to retrieve what was inside. However, a slight twitch stopped her



in her tracks. Without saying anything, she paused, not moving at all...

She focused, feeling Mathew's breath on the ball of her foot, his heart fluttering in his chest. Everything seemed off about this object in her shoe. At first, she paused in case it was dangerous – like many things in this particular domain. Her toes squeezed him, pulling him in deep, forcing him to squirm and writhe until she knew exactly what he was...

“Unfortunate,” She said curiously, “You seek my things, and become a prisoner to my boot. It must have been a powerful spell, perhaps even one with permanence attached to it in order to keep you at this size for this long. Or perhaps you are a spirit. Too small to be a Fairy or worse. Can you understand me?”

Without saying a word, Mathew began to lick the skin around his body. Salty sweat mixed with dirt, the feet of a woman who was far more focused on her tasks to seek out a

river and bathe every night. Her foot shifted, and the light that surrounded him faded almost instantly.

“Interesting. No matter, I’ve heard tales of diminutive beings in the shape of humanoids entering in order to steal and plunder. The only way to ensure more do not return, is to not let any escape. Regardless of what you truly are, this is the consequence to your action. I can’t run the risk of an infestation...”

With that, she tied her laces and stood. Almost immediately, a burst of energy rushed through her. The glow from within her boot was unable to be seen by her, though she felt the effects of Mathew’s pleasure. Her own pulse quickened, she felt invigorated and powerful. Her own magics, seemed supercharged by whatever he had just done.

“So this is why tiny beings such as yourself were harvested. Not just to protect ones belongings, I see. I’ll have to



document this, perhaps give your kind a name. If I deem you worthy of study...”

With that, she left her wagon, being sure to arm the countless traps surrounding it as she ventured into the foggy mists of Barovia. Her mind elsewhere, and before long, the novel little being was forgotten.

Flattened so deep into her skin, she no longer felt him...

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Mathew (c) AnirusFere  
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