

# MILKBOY

Evan Parizot

## THE SHEPHERD

A light breeze rolled over endless locks of grass as Rohan Yueh gazed out over the valley that laid below. The wind rippled the lush foliage in an almost hypnotic fashion, as if it intended to put onlookers into a deep trance. Snow capped mountains surrounded Rohan on all sides, towering over the town of Bergstadt that lay at the center of the valley formed by the towering cliffs. The lad couldn't help but marvel at the sight before him, even though it was one he had seen his entire life. Nature had certainly blessed these lands.

Rohan was startled by a firm nudge that came at his back. Turning around, he found the nudge came from a light brown cow. The cow had a fairly shaggy mane that hung off it's stocky frame and covered the creature's eyes just the ever so slightly. Small but pronounced antlers protruded from it's head; not enough to cause significant injury but large enough to defend from potential attackers. Several scores of other cows mingled behind the one that interrupted Rohan's daydreaming. All of them looked expectedly at him.

"Ok, ok Halifax", Rohan said. "I get the message".

Rohan stood up from the little patch of grass he had picked out next to the mountain trail, wiping away drops of water that had accumulated from the mountain air. From the ground he also retrieved his family's heirloom instrument: a well weathered set of bagpipes. Rohan placed the bag of the pipes under his arm and positioned the mouthpiece.

"I guess it's time to go", he thought.

Rohan drew a breath in before playing a few test notes through the instrument. Once warmed up, he looked back again to the herd of cows. All of them continued to look expectantly at him. Rohan wheeled around and began to march down the mountain path. He started in on a tune as he marched, the notes ringing out for the entire mountain valley to hear. As he marched, the herd of cows began to march with him. Rohan didn't need to look back to confirm that they were following; this was something they had done hundreds of times before and knew what was necessary. Rohan was part of a special group that managed the herds, amongst other duties. Members of this group were elite cow handlers, being able to expertly guide the bovine creatures through the harshest of conditions. Rohan Yueh was a Milkboy.

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THE THIEF