



MILKBOY

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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, able to expertly guide the bovine creatures through the harshest of conditions. For Rohan Yueh was a Milkboy.

THE THIEF

It took Rohan another one and a half hours to arrive in Bergstadt, belting out song after song on his bagpipes the entire way there. Once there, Rohan handed off the herd to a set of farmers he worked with on the edge of town. He was only a Milkboy, assisting the dairy farmers to make sure the cows were well fed and stimulated. Rohan did not actually own any of the cows. In fact, Rohan did not own much.

Bergstadt was a moderately large town, with a population of roughly 4,000 people. The town had everything one might expect from a much larger one: markets, bars, theatres, tavern halls, and much more. Bergstadt has its share of the ultra rich, the barons of the cow trade that made the town what it was today, and it had its share of the poor, desperately struggling to make ends meet.

Rohan made his way through the cobblestone streets to small hole in the wall bar. Along the side in an alley was a small door. Rohan glanced around himself before quickly unlocking and opening it, entering, and closing it shut. Directly inside was a small staircase leading to the floor above the bar. Rohan hurriedly ascended the stairs, stashing his belongings in a chest at the top of the stairs.

Rohan glanced outside to see that night had finally fallen and darkness was now the norm. Clouds blotted out the sky, masking the light from the moon and stars alike.

"Perfect conditions", he thought.

From the same chest he had stored items in, he pulled out a pitch black outfit. The outfit was complete with slipper like shoes and a black head covering; the perfect outfit for one who might not want to be seen. Rohan donned the outfit and pulled out another item from the chest: a well worn leather wrap. Inside was a lockpick set that would make any locksmith weep. The picks were also well worn, obviously having had a history with hundreds if not thousands of keyholes.

Rohan tucked the lockpick set inside an opening in his tunic. He glanced around the room once before turning his attention back to the window. Streetlights had now been lit below, casting a dim orange glow every 5 meters or so on the street. Rohan slowly opened the window and peered up and down the street. Seeing no one, he grabbed the edge of the roof in front of him

and pulled himself out of the window. Using the extreme dexterity of a seasoned climber, he flipped his legs out and then over on top the roof.

Rohan rose into a half crouch on the roof, looking again to make sure no one had seen him. Satisfied no eyes were upon him, he took off running across the roof towards the center of town. Not a soul was aware of his presence on the rooftops; Rohan was an expert at moving quickly and silently.

Eventually Rohan slowed to a light jog and then to a walk. He had made it to the center of town where only the most wealthy could afford to live. He started to pay more attention to the numbers on the houses he was carefully moving over.