

Deals & Dangers in Silverymoon

by Henrik Harksen

chapter III: A business meeting in the darkness

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“Okay, let me get this straight, Poonlar – ye cast a spell of illusion, so it *seemed* our spellguard forces arrived? Now, why on all Toril would ye wanna do that?” Breon’s voice in the dark, low-ceiling corridor was utter disbelief.

“Because,” the halfling sounded exasperated, as if this had already been told a million times, “it didn’t feel *right* that those two men should suddenly jump at you. And when the whole tavern suddenly caused the first three layers of the Nine Hells to appear on the street, with you caught in the middle of it, I thought “enough’s enough”! I told you already! What is the big deal, anyway?”

“The big deal –” Breon forced himself to lower his voice, “the big deal, dear ‘friend-whom-I-hardly-know-and-even-so-only-a-little-some-years-ago’, is that no one – I repeat, *no one!* – suddenly does such a risky thing without having some hidden plan in the back of his mind; like demanding some kind of payment from yours truly! And even if you *did* help me in a tight spot up there, I *do not* want to owe you on such a stupid performance. For, believe me, doing a magical imitation of Silverymoon guards – *any* kind of guard – is indeed stupid. No matter what!”

He almost sputtered the last words.

The halfling raised his shoulders in an innocent gesture. “Well, then, I guess I am just stupid, right?”

Even in the darkness, Breon could see the humor playing in Poonlar’s eyes.

That took some of the bluster from the angered dwarf.

“I find that very hard to believe,” he muttered, flexing his shoulders one more time. Passing through magical passways always made his back hurt. Something else he hated.

Sure, he was quite confident that Poonlar Light Star from the Anauroch incident did not really have some hidden, foul master plan. In Anauroch the halfling had proven himself a rather risk-taking and impulsive spellcaster; talented but impulsive, nevertheless. That was probably what had happened here, too. Breon was aware of that. He couldn’t shake off the feeling that something was not right, though. A feeling he did not enjoy.

“Look – it is not that I do not appreciate the help. The Gods know that the situation was getting completely out of hand, that’s for sure. But, really, to create illusions of guards of Silverymoon! That’s asking for more trouble than ye need, I tell ye. That’s just reckless; no, more so – it’s downright stupid.”

He looked at the halfling.

“I don’t buy that ye are stupid. That particular *action* was, though...” He shook his head. “It certainly *is* stupid, Poonlar. Do ye realize that? Do ye have any idea how many able spellweavers will be checking the scene up there in a few moments? *Real* spellcasters, mind ye, wanting to find out what in the Abyss just happened. And it probably won’t take them very long to track us here.”

“That sounds very likely, I admit. And maybe shaping that spell to resemble the spellguards wasn’t one of my brightest ideas, but I improvised, okay?” The smile had gone from the bald mage’s voice. “And since you’re obviously in quite a hurry... why are we standing here, arguing? Do you have that much time? The longer we stand here, the greater the chance of getting caught, right? Sounds to me you do not want that.”

Breon choked down whatever he was about to say in pure frustration. Poonlar was right, of course. He had read Breon absolutely correct. He pointed a finger straight at the halfling.

“Here’s the deal. I go onto whatever business I need to do – it’s none of yer concern, anyway – and ye do *not* follow me.” He raised the hand, stopping Poonlar’s protest. “Believe me, it’s for yer own safety, too, not my wounded ego. Meet me tomorrow evening at the Treant’s Hall, and then we can sit down and talk under better circumstances, and with more time.”

He paused, then added, “Then I can thank ye more properly, too.”

Sighing, the halfling nodded. “Okay. Have it your way, Breon Blackbeard. I’ve learned long ago to listen to grumpy dwarves when their mind’s set.”

Breon smiled. “That’s good. Now, fare you well till tomorrow.”

He turned around and walked down the corridor. He just might make it in time yet...

“Didn’t you notice something strange, with those two guys attacking you?” Poonlar called down the corridor.

Breon turned around. “What’s yer point, mage? I don’t have much time, remember?”

“Didn’t their attack – especially that last one – strike you as odd? As something forced by magic, for instance?”

“Well... I guess it could be. Why?”

Poonlar raised his hands in uncertainty. “I don’t know – I sort of hoped you would know the answer to that one.” He continued, his face even more wrinkled now, deep in thought, “It also strikes me as strange that that first guy said he recognized you. Don’t you think so too?”

“Ah, well, yeah, I suppose it is. I wouldn’t be surprised to find out he just saw *some* dwarf do something to that wheel, though. Through the years I’ve learned that to some humans, dwarves all look alike. I don’t understand why, but that’s how it is. Even more so in the darkness – ye know, with their bad eyesight and so... Could be the case here, too, ye know.”

“Yeah, that’s possible, I guess. Another thing – although it all seemed so random and out of control up there...” He looked straight at Breon, concern in his eyes. “How do you know that fireball wasn’t aimed *at you*?”

This time it was Breon’s time to raise his hands. “I guess I can’t know for sure. Unfortunately I do not have the time right now to find out. It’ll just have to wait till another day. Gotta go, remember? The sooner, the better – especially with a possible arrival of law enforcers any moment now.”

The halfling shrugged and rubbed his bald head. “I only hope you know what you’re getting into, that’s all. Seems to me it may be something ugly.”

Raising an eyebrow, the old merchant tipped his hat Poonlar's way and turned around, continuing down the corridor once more.

"Isn't it always?"

A few moments later, the thoughtful halfling made up his mind about something. With a casual shrug he took off his cloak. As he put it on reversed, he simply disappeared from sight. He was glad the diversion with debating his illusionist performance had succeeded – the usually keen-minded dwarf hadn't had time to wonder how the mage had managed to cast a spell of transportation within the powerful wards of Silverymoon; wards that prevented just that. Otherwise he didn't like the feel of it all.

He'd just have to bide his time, he figured. Then he walked down the corridor, the same direction as the dwarf.

If at that second he had turned around, he would have wondered about the shadowy spot that suddenly moved down the corridor, too. A shadow that had entered just before Breon's exit.

If it had been possible to see any features in this shadow, he would also have noticed and wondered about the slightly intrigued smile it wore.

As it happens, none of this was seen. And so they both moved down the dark without further incident.

Well, 'Demon Dealer', why hasn't he arrived yet?

"I... I don't know for sure. Something happened by a tavern he passed, I've heard." He didn't quite succeed keeping his voice calm. He quickly continued, "But he should be well on his way again. I expect him here any moment, now."

Annoyance. I hope you are not mistaken. It would not please me to know that he has backed out of this 'deal' of yours because you screwed up.

With that, the voice was gone.

Taking a deep breath, he removed the stone to the folds of his cloak again. He certainly wouldn't be pleased to know that, either.

A sharp wind caught his attention. Standing by one of the entrances to the cave, one of his men gestured in quick succession, and with a sigh of relief he nodded. Then he walked briskly over to the desk and sat down.

The dwarf was coming.

Turning down yet another rarely used corridor, Breon knew he was being watched. That was to be expected, of course. He would almost be disappointed if not. Pretending not to notice, he moved on, at a casual pace.

There – there was the human that he was supposed to meet at this place. The merchant saw him before the man exited the dark crack in the wall. They greeted each other in the secret thieves' cant; a fairly complex code of hand movements. (Despite being human, the man obviously had at least an acceptable eye vision in the dark, Breon noted.) Breon ended with gesturing the secret signal they had agreed upon, the man readily following with the agreed upon answer. Satisfied, Breon tipped the hat a little.

“Where is your master – this ‘Demon Dealer’ – Torh?”

The man's features darkened. “Watch your mouth, Blackbeard. He is not my master; as you well know.”

Breon raised an eyebrow in slightly sarcastic surprise. “Oh, well – my apologies, Torh. One never knows, you know.” With an air of innocence, he continued slyly, “I guess the word on the streets is incorrect, then.”

Scowling, the dark clad man pointed his head. “Enough of this banter, dwarf. Do you want to meet the Demon Dealer or not?”

Impressed, Breon wondered what amount of wealth had been promised Torh. Torh was little more than an average burglar – his prime quality being that he always delivered his ‘goods’ on time. If not for his temper he might even have raised within the ranks of the relative few organized thieves operating within the walls of Silvermoon – but his temper had always been the key reason he never climbed above the average rogue. It was widely known that he was too likely to end up in a brawl even in more delicate situations. So no one wanted to have him ‘get’ anything beyond basic goods. Must be some promise, Breon thought, for Torh to check his temper this way.

Bowing in mockery, Breon replied. “Of course I do, Torh. I forget myself. Forgive me. Please lead on.”

As they moved away, he felt more than saw the quiet, athletic figures following them just outside view. About twelve, he estimated.

Entering the high-ceiled room, Breon noted the leather-clad halfling sitting on a wooden chair with an almost arrogantly high, ornamental chairback. He sat behind a large darkwood desk that dominated most of the other end of the room, a cloak casually draping his thin shoulders. On the desk several scrolls were laid out in an orderly fashion, and so were feathered pens and differently colored vials of ink. In front of the desk stood another, comparably simpler wooden chair. Other than the leathers with many pockets and strappings adorned regularly by daggers, the halfling looked like the average halfling on the street; the best of disguises, Breon acknowledged. And fitting the too scant descriptions he had of Luri Demon Dealer. Not much to go by, at this time.

With a casual glance around the room, Breon surveyed what else might be of interest. Standing on each side of the doorway stood two humans, clearly guards and likewise clad all in leathers. Each were armed with a short sword and a minimum of four daggers around their person; placed so he could not miss noticing them. There appeared not to be other entrances – or exits – than the one he just came in through. In the corner to his left stood a tall brazier, from whence a faint light shone, illuminating the room.

Looking back at the halfling, he briefly registered that the wall right behind the large chair looked like it was hidden in the shadows.

Behind him, Torh closed the stone door. If anyone passing outside right now, Breon knew, they wouldn't be able to spot the door. Clever stone doors created by dwarves always worked that way, even to a trained eye.

With a flourish movement he took off his hat, bowing.

"Luri Demon Dealer, I take it?"

"At your service. And you are Breon Blackbeard, I take it?"

Breon seemed to notice something on the feather in his hat, then irritably blew it away. He looked back up at the halfling, apologetically, then straightened up, placing the hat back on his head. Apparently the little show worked, for the halfling didn't seem to realize what had truly transpired. Seemingly an innocent gesture, he had in fact done something very risky; he could now see if there was any magic in the room.

He cleared his throat, as if bothered by the dust.

"Yeah, that's me, all right. Now, forgive me the bluntness of my question, but I like to go straight to the point –"

The halfling bowed his head in brief acknowledgment. (Yep, the cloak was magical, Breon saw now, with clarity.)

"– but how do I know that ye are who ye claim ye are? I do not wanna do any more business with no errand boys..."

The halfling stalled Torh's angry move toward the calm dwarf merchant.

"My time is too precious for that," Breon ended.

The halfling smiled, and stood up from the chair. He waved a fuming Torh back to the closed door.

"That, Breon Blackbeard, is a very legitimate question; and one I do not very often hear when conducting business. A shame, actually. One can't be too careful nowadays.

"Now, I have this distinct feeling that you probably wouldn't believe whatever I proposed on my own initiative. Therefore –" he leaned forward on the table, "what would it take for you to believe me, Blackbeard?" (The dagger he just saw a glimpse of was magical too. Not much, though.)

Breon could not help but admire the halfling for his adept rhetorics; now the halfling – who probably *was* Luri Deamon Dealer, Breon now believed – had played it into Breon's hand to make the first move. After all, 'clearly' the halfling had just agreed to do whatever test was necessary to prove who he was; hence he was honest, right?

The experienced merchant, however, was prepared for that too.

"Not much, halfling. Just show me the palm of yer left hand."

A little surprised, but with only the briefest moment of hesitation, the leather-clad halfling did as requested. With one hand never wavering from his whip – you could never be too careful – Breon took a step forward and, sending a small prayer to the Lady of Luck, looked closer.

Yep, there it was. The dwarf had tried to gather some information on this so-called Demon Dealer. He hadn't found out much, but that was at least better than nothing. Most of it he couldn't be sure was true, he knew that very well; theoretically it *could* be false information planted by the alleged Demon Dealer himself. If he was clever enough, that was actually very likely. Breon had an extensive

web of connections, however, and one of the friends he had made while an active Harper, had told him something that proved invaluable now. Baylee Arnvold had told Breon that he had once met a halfling in the ruins of Dragonspear Castle. The halfling had tried to steal some magical items from those ruins. That halfling had referred to himself as “Luri Demon Dealer.” Baylee had efficiently discouraged him from that particular theft, cutting his palm with one of the very magical items Luri wanted to steal, a magical blade blessed by Loviatar. According to legend, said Baylee, a wound dealt by this blade could never heal properly; at best a red scar would mar the skin. And no magic could hide it. Smiling grimly, Baylee had added, “I bet that scoundrel hadn’t had in mind being at the receiving end of *that*, when he set out to find it.”

And there it was, right before Breon – an angry red scar.

With a nod he stepped back and said, “Baylee gives his regards, Luri Demon Dealer.”

As if suddenly burned, the halfling snapped his hand back, and for a second an ugly scowl dominated his face; then he was calm again. He went back and sat down again, with an air of casualness. Breon could see that it was somewhat forced, though.

“So you’ve met one of my old friends?” the Demon Dealer asked conversationally. He motioned for Breon to sit too.

Breon sat down.

“‘Old friend’ was not the term I heard, but otherwise, yes – yes, I have.”

Luri gave a brief nod. “It’s of course understandable that you have used whatever connections you have at your disposal to learn what you can about me – very shrewd of you to consult him of all people. Besides me he is the only one who know of the origin of... this – “ he wiggled the hand with the scar, “as you might have guessed already. Well, then, I hope you are satisfied now. Now you know I *am* who I claim to be. And as much as I would love to sit here and talk about my old friends and how you come to know them, I have other urgent matters to attend to this day. Like you, I am an honest, hardworking merchant. So let’s go straight to the point, as you yourself said. What do you say – shall we get on with the business at hand?”

I wouldn’t exactly call you ‘an honest merchant,’ Breon thought. Still, he put a professional smile on his face. “Yes, let’s.”

Smiling a wide smile, probably intended to be amiable and trusting but in fact looking very wicked to Breon, Luri placed his hands on the desk. (No rings with magic.)

“Have you agreed to the terms?”

Breon feigned a look of surprise. “‘Terms’? I was under the impression that it was a proposal. One that was negotiable.”

“You did? Well, how unfortunately. How did you come to hold that belief?”

(They now played the game of dealing, they both knew.)

“I don’t know... Your errand boy, there,” he waved in a general direction behind him, clearly indicating Torh, “he wasn’t very good at clarifying many of the questions I had. So I took it for granted – in fact, I was under the *clear impression* – that it was all just a framework from which we could reach something more substantial when we actually met.”

Before the halfling could make a reply, Breon halted the discussion. “I do not see a need to go into such specifics, however, before I have seen – with my *very own eyes!* – what you are trying to sell me. Only an incompetent and inexperienced merchant would do such foolishness.”

He added that for show. It often impressed dealers who didn't know him.

To his silent annoyance it didn't seem to have much of an impact on Luri. He knew then and there that his suspicion that this was going to be one of the harder deals to get through was correct.

"Of course, of course. I almost forget myself. Where are my manners? Please accept my sincerest apologies, Breon Blackbeard. That is only a fair request. So let's get moving, so you can take a look at it."

Pointing a finger he turned the light in the brazier down low.

"And, then, let's talk and see if the deal I am offering is not worth the price I ask."

As the light almost disappeared completely, an eerie feeling slowly spreading along Breon's spine. The dwarf saw that behind the halfling the large shadow at the wall seemed to somehow expand itself, opening up a gaping hole of nothingness. He had seen much in his days, but this was something extraordinary. This was something... *wrong*.

Rationally he concluded that it was a combination of the brazier's disappearing light and the shadow created by the high chairback. But somehow he was not convinced that was it at all. Yet it was not magical, either. His magical eye view didn't reveal anything in the shadow.

The halfling moved halfway into the darkness, beckoning the dwarf to follow.

"It's right this way, Breon Blackbeard."

Breon managed to keep his confident posture. Rumbling in his beard something about "being no stranger to using magical portals" (yet loud enough for Luri to hear, he hoped), he walked toward the now-almost disappeared halfling. His senses even more alert to any possible danger now. To paraphrase what the man had said, you could never be too careful.

It was not that Breon had not expected something like this to happen – after all, the very thing he had been offered couldn't possibly be inside Silverymoon's walls. Not without being noticed a long time ago. Still...

The voice of Luri Demon Dealer spoke. "I will advise you to take my hand anyway, as you may feel a little uncomfortable travelling this way. As you well know, of course."

Did he hear a faint trace of mockery?

His right hand never wavering from his whip, Breon took the hand penetrating from the solid darkness.

"Now, don't let go. And go exactly where I go..."

Stepping inside the darkness almost knocked the stout dwarf out. Not only did his darkvision disappear at first, but all his senses felt like they were weirdly stretched, a most unpleasant feeling. He had to fight to force his stomach to settle down after its initial protest. Soon his vision returned, partially at least. The halfling was a muffled figure stretching unnaturally in a world of layers upon layers of shadows within shadows. He found that knowing distance and time here was as good as impossible. As they travelled through this unnerving nightmare landscape – moving from solid shadow to solid shadow? – Breon focused on walking exactly where the blurry halfling walked, all at a brisk pace. In this totally unknown territory that was not easy for him, but somehow he managed to do it; the grip on the halfling's firm hand sometimes the only reason he didn't stumble or lose himself. It was only at the last moment before they entered the light again that the dwarf thought – imagined? – he

caught a glimpse of another figure in there with him and Luri, shrouded in the darkness. It seemed to gesture something to the halfling, who gave a brief nod...

The world was all light, then. The world took on its normal shape again. The sharp smell of rain in a snowy forest, shadows parting to stand as trees in a forest – and before he could gather his senses any further, Breon's forehead exploded in pain, and he stumbled to his knees in the snow. A curse – the halfling? – hissing “Not on his forehead, you *idiots*. He's a dwarf, by the Gods! – he's thickheaded as a rothé.”

Instinctively trying to roll away, grab his whip and fumbling with a pouch in his cloak – all in one practiced motion – he felt something trickle down his brow. Blood, he grimly surmised; ruining what little of his eye sight was coming back to him after that mysterious travel.

“Stones,” he muttered, gritting his teeth, taking a stab in his side from a sword. Luckily it didn't do much damage, thanks to another of his protections. Judging the whereabouts of the stabber from his hit, Breon jumped into the man with as much force he could muster, still desperately trying to get a bearing on the situation, and have weapons up and ready.

They landed back on the ground, Breon on top of him. He heard the man's grunt as his head cracked violently into a stone. Yet more blood splattered Breon. The man did not move anymore.

The struggling merchant had no time to relish this small victory, for right then the world seemed to attack him from every angle possible. Slashing, stabbing, and cursing. It did not improve matters that he was somehow entangled in the man's ill-smelling cloak, preventing him from getting the whip free.

Finally escaping the clutches of the cloak, Breon desperately rolled to his left, barely avoiding a blow from the hammer that crushed down hard where he'd just been the second before.

Before he managed to snap out the whip or could reach into a pouch, another blow hit him forcefully from behind. The world swayed dangerously and doubled before his eyes. Cursing in helpless frustration, the merchant fell into the darkness falling onto him...

“Hey – *wake up*, I say!”

An excruciating pain his first sign of consciousness, the bleeding dwarf awoke to the world again. It was a pain easily comparable to the hangover of a party of wild drinking of dwarven spirits.

“C'mon now, Breon – don't you want to go after those guys, and see what they're up to, huh? Then *wake up*, by the Gods!” Something wet and sweet was pouring in between his bleeding lips. He already felt more invigorated.

Poonlar? Here? What the...? Opening his eye, he looked up at the halfling mage. A smile lit up Poonlar's face. The look of concern never left him, though. He poured the last contents of the vial down Breon's lips, and said over his shoulder, “He's coming around now. I'm pretty sure he's okay again. Nothing serious.”

Another figure stepped forward, behind Poonlar. A middle-aged grey-bearded bard in practical travelling clothes looked down at the merchant from beneath his hood. Breon recognized

Tonlar of Waterdeep. “Well met again, Breon. I honestly didn’t think we would meet under such distressing circumstances. I do hope you’re feeling better now.”

Nodding in astonishment, Breon sat up, looked around for his hat. Finding it, he donned it – and that’s when he discovered that he wasn’t wearing his boots!

“WHAT?” he roared.

Helping him stand up, the bard and the mage nodded. “We are as bewildered as you are, about that, believe me,” said Tonlar, “When we arrived, mere moments ago, most of them were already disappearing through that portal over there – “ he pointed toward a shimmering light in the clearing, a hovering magical portal that hadn’t been there before, “ – and as we killed the one one standing over you with a hammer,” he gestured to bloody snow, where the scorched and chopped body of a man lay twisted, his war hammer a few feet away, “we heard that halfling say something about “now having what they wanted,” holding your boots up in the air in triumph. As if those boots were some kind of artifact or something... I don’t get it. Who are ‘they’?”

“By all the Gods of ill fortune if I know,” Breon replied. Wearing the hat again, he no longer felt cold. Not even his feet were cold. He was still equipped as before. Apparently all that had been taken was his good ol’ magical dwarven boots. Besides looking somewhat stupid just wearing green socks, here in the snow, he felt okay. Flops would have the laugh of her lifetime, if ever he told her about this. He made a mental note *never* to do that!

He looked at the two others. “How come ye two are here?” He turned to the halfling mage. “Didn’t we agree ye stayed outta this, huh?”

Poonlar merely shrugged. “Well – I figured you could use some more help. Seems I was right, even.”

“Hm... Well, that’s *two* times I owe ye now, I guess. What about ye, old bard? What’s yer excuse, huh?” He flexed his shoulders. Damn his body was hurting. Nothing serious, however. A strange muddy rain was falling around them, giving the forest a weird look. Not under the protection of Silverymoon’s wards, the weather was much harder here in the forest. Somewhere in the Moonwoods, he estimated.

“Breon, old friend – if you want to see where that Demon Dealer and his gang went, I suggest we jump into that portal over there before it evaporates,” the bard said. “That is – if you can do it on bare feet.”

“That’s no problem... And I sure as the Nine Hells ain’t gonna let them beat me that easy. Okay, let’s go, then! But ye give me the abridged version of yer story on the way to that darned portal, understood?”

Walking as fast as Breon’s still sore body could manage, the three moved over to the portal. Poonlar began telling what had transpired.

“I decided to follow you – at a fair distance, so you wouldn’t notice me, of course. I knew that wouldn’t be a good idea.”

“Got that right, all right,” Breon muttered.

“Well – I saw you walk through that door, and all of a sudden it disappeared from sight, seemingly fading away into the stonewall. I did not like that. As if that wasn’t enough – dark clad fighters suddenly appeared seemingly out of nowhere... Blocking the way, if anyone should even consider finding that doorway again, I guess.”

Now almost at the magical passway in the dark forest, the bard hurriedly took over. “In short, Breon, I joined force with your halfling-friend here. You see – *I* was present because Garolen, Queelin and I had a hunch you might need more help than you wanted to ask for. And since it’s been quite a while I was out adventuring for real, I naturally volunteered. It wasn’t easy tracking you, I can tell you that, but by the grace of Tymora I succeeded. And I had just told Poonlar who I were and why I was there, hiding in the shadows just like he was, when this foul-looking man came out of the room – the one who lead you to the room.”

“Torh.”

“Okay, that’s his name? Well, he laughed something about you being ‘sucked into the shadows’ to his fellows, and naturally we had to react immediately. In unison we managed to dispose of most of the men. A few fled, but that’s okay – we managed to force this Torh-guy to tell us where they were taking you. Because, unfortunately, we entered the room a little too late.

“Recognizing his description of the place – in the Moonwoods, as you probably know yourself by now – we then teleported here.”

The halfling took forth a small stone engraved with arcane runes. “You see, Breon – I am in possession of an adrath token.”

The merchant was onto what he implied. “I’ll let the question of how *ye* came in possession of such a token fare for now, halfling-mage. But we are quite sure that the Demon Dealer *does not* have one, right?”

“Yes, we are. And yet he somehow managed to travel by magical means outside of Silverymoon. That should be impossible, no matter how great magic he has at his disposal.”

“So *ye* two also noticed that there’s something strange about that magical portal I came through?”

They nodded gravely. “We only saw a glimpse of it – but it did not look like any spell I’ve ever seen before. It was, somehow, *wrong*,” the mage said.

“My thoughts exactly. This smells, and it smells *bad*, I tell yer.”

They had reached the quickly fading shimmering.

He looked at them, features grim. “Ye know they’re probably waitin’ for us on the other side, right? After all, they saw you.”

They nodded. “Of course.”

A smile growing, he continued, his whip now in hand. “Well, then. Let’s get to it. I don’t like being fooled in business matters – I want to close that darn deal, I want to know what game that darn Demon Dealer is up to – *and I want my boots!*”

With this grim salute, the odd trio jumped into the portal. This time with weapons and spells ready.