



# *The Red Boots*

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Magic

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Once upon a time, in the tiny village of Trembletoe, there lived a young woman. She wore tattered clothes, she barely had enough firewood to protect her from the blustery winter, and she lived in a squat cabin with a leaky roof. Despite all of this, the woman was content with what she had. All throughout Trembletoe, the woman was known for her selfless acts of kindness. She could often be found feeding what little food she had to the homeless or giving away her firewood. Her good deeds weren't an attempt to right a past wrong, nor were they for attention, her behavior was simply because she wanted to make the world a better place.

After saving up copper coins for nearly a year, the young woman finally had enough money to purchase a pair of boots. The boots she already owned were so battered that they were being held together by twine and tar and hardly looked like boots at all. The young woman hardly ever purchased things for herself, but warm boots? Well, those were a necessity. The village was named Trembletoe for a reason. It was covered in ice and snow 10 out of 12 months of the year. If one were to neglect to keep their feet warm, their toes would surely tremble...then fall off.

So, one morning, the young woman made her way into the marketplace to buy a new pair of boots. As soon as she reached the shoe store, she gasped in awe when she saw the pair of red boots in the window. She had never seen such a beautiful pair of boots! The color reminded her of roses and cherries, something she rarely ever saw in Trembletoe. She went into the store and asked how much the red boots cost. When she found out she had enough money, she was filled with joy! She ran her hand down the smooth, suede exterior of the boots and smiled brightly.

Just as the woman was about to pay for the red boots, a man she didn't recognize stepped into the shop. His beard was overgrown, his coat with at least a dozen holes in it, and his frame was lanky and malnourished. He explained that he had journeyed from a faraway city on the other side of the kingdom, and that all he wanted was a warm meal and a place to stay for the night.

The woman glanced at the red boots, then back at the man. She handed the clerk the red boots and said she would return to buy a cheaper pair once she'd helped the stranger. Just like that, the man transformed into a beautiful goddess. "Stories of your kindness have spread all throughout the kingdom." She declared. "I will now reward you for all your good works."

With the snap of her fingers, the goddess transformed the young woman's leaky hut into a mansion. She filled the mansion with eternal warmth and an abundant amount of food. To top it all off, she gave the young woman the pair of red boots she had been ready to sacrifice to help the stranger. The young woman fervently thanked the goddess and immediately began to prepare a feast for the townspeople with her newfound food.

Later that day, the streets of Trembletoe were filled with music and laughter as everyone enjoyed the young woman's feast. When the festivities were nearly over, the young woman joined arms with her fellow townspeople and began to dance. Even in the dark of night, her red boots stood out against the snow. They were an emblem of kindness, and the young woman would cherish the red boots for as long as she lived.

THE END

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