

LO: To read quickly and accurately, developing my comprehension

Text: Dragonskin Slippers

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Dragonskin Slippers

Creel has made a deal with a dragon in a cave. She can choose a pair of shoes from his giant collection. While the dragon's back is turned, she spots an unusual blue pair.

I picked them up and went back to the centre of the room, where I had been gathering another group of shoes to try on. I left the blue slippers for last, but I already knew in my gut that they would be the only pair that fitted.

I was right.

None of the boots or sandals, the brogues or even the crude moccasins I thought came from the southlands fitted my feet. They were too big or too small, the toe pinched or the heel did. They were too stiff, or too floppy, for proper walking.

And then I slipped into the blue pair.

They fitted as though they had been made for my feet. They were so light that I felt as if I were barefoot, yet the soles were thick enough that I could not feel the uneven stone floor beneath them. They were supple as I walked and didn't slide or chafe my feet. I had a sudden urge to cut the skirt of my gown off at the knee so that everyone could admire my beautiful new shoes.

"By the Seven Volcanoes!" The brown dragon had returned, and steam was rising from his nostrils as he surveyed my footwear. "What are you doing?"

I was taken aback by his reaction. "You said I could have any pair of shoes that I wanted," I said stubbornly. I had never owned anything as nice as these shoes, and longing for them made me bold. "And these are the only ones that fit me. I want these."

"Any shoes but those!"

I frowned up at him. "No, it was to be any shoes I liked. You never said that there were some pairs I could not have!"

"What's going on?" The voice of the blue-grey came wafting into the shoe cave. "Which shoes did she pick?"

"She picked the –" Theoradus began, roaring back over his winged shoulder to the cave entrance. "She picked the –" Then he looked at me and snapped his fanged muzzle shut.

"You said any pair of shoes," I reminded him. "Or I will stay here, and let my aunt rouse the entire town to come after you." I folded my arms and put my chin in the air. "You gave your word just as I gave mine."

"You don't know what you're doing," the brown dragon said, its eyes narrowed to slits.