

# Mysdeth



By  
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*Year 9974 of the third age in the land of Isharune:*

Shaldir Ceris hid in the alley next to the inn as the city square erupted in fire. She stood there horrified as dozens of her friends were incinerated before her eyes. A large force of elves was attacking the city of Dunewind after destroying all the outlying villages. They had been fighting them for almost a year.

“Shaldir!” a voice cried out.

Hoto Ceris, Shaldir’s husband, ran into the alley embracing her in a hug. “Thank the gods you are safe.”

“What’s going on Hoto? How did they breach the outer defenses?” Shaldir asked.

“We don’t know, but the Nasir have push into the city at an alarming rate,” Hoto said. “The city defenses are holding the bulk of their forces, but several of the Nasir have made it into the city.”

“What do we do?” Shaldir asked.

“We need to evacuate,” Hoto said. “It isn’t safe here.”

Loud shots echoed through the alley as a group of dwarfs armed with firearms marched past firing at the invading Nasir.

“Khoraldrum?” Shaldir said referring to the dwarves.

“What are they doing in the city?”

“I don’t know, it must be a delegation from Hammerfall,” Hoto said. “But I bet those Nasir will be sorry they are here.”

One hundred seventy-five years ago the city of Dunewind disappeared from the land of Haldur, only to reappear in the land of Isharune. No one in the city knew how it happened, or how to get back to their own world. Since that time, the people of Dunewind have called this new land their home.

The Khoraldrum were what the dwarves of this land were called. They created wondrous technology like the firearms they were wielding, and the airships that flew through the sky. The Khoraldrum were suspicious by nature, not trusting others easily but were intrigued by the human's use of magic. Negotiations were slow and difficult, but the humans were persistent and making progress.

Hoto and Shaldir ran from the alley heading towards the harbor. *If we can get on a ship, we can sail to safety*, Shaldir thought.

The building down the street on the left exploded sending a group of Khoraldrum flying out into the street. An elf with long blond hair and wearing green and gold clothes casually walked out of the burning building towards the only dwarf that was still moving. Hoto drew his sword as he rushed towards the elf, Shaldir ran to the dwarf.

The elf smirked as he watched the human running toward him with a sword. Fire streaked out of the elf's hand towards Hoto, but the warrior activated his magical boots leaping up over the fire landing before the elf. He brought his sword down in a two-handed chop, but the elf twisted counterclockwise spinning like a dancer. He kicked Hoto causing the man to stumble forward. The elf drew a rapier from his belt as he approached the warrior.

Shaldir helped the dwarf stand. A large gash from the left cheek ran up to his forehead just below the hairline, right through his now ruined eye.

"We need to get you to safety," Shaldir said but the dwarf was shaking his head.

“Bah! Ain’t leave’n till dhat pointy ear’d devil ain’t breath’n,” the dwarf said taking aim with his pistol.

The dwarf fired but the shot went over the elf as he ducked down at the last moment. The elf stabbed his rapier straight out forcing Hoto back a step. The elf frowned as he quickened his strikes. High low high he stabbed in quick succession. Hoto continued to parry the elf’s attacks, but barely. The elf thrust his left hand toward the ground, an icy mist jetting out of it covering the ground around Hoto. The warrior slipped on the newly formed ice just as the elf thrust his rapier through the man’s chest.

“Hoto!” Shaldir screamed.

The dwarf growled as he holstered his pistol. He retrieved two more from his fallen comrades, handing them to Shaldir.

“I’m no fighter and I don’t know how to use these,” Shaldir said between her tears.

“Taint tough, ya point and squeeze,” the dwarf said drawing both of his. “We fire together, elf can’t dodge’m all.”

The elf sheathed his rapier, as he bent down picking up Hoto by the collar, swinging the man between him and his two remaining opponents. A wicked smile crossed the elf’s face as he walked toward the pair. The dwarf took aim.

“You can’t! You’ll hit Hoto!” Shaldir pleaded.

“Yer man’s already dead,” the dwarf said calmly.

An eerie glow surrounded Hoto and the elf as they continued their slow march forward. Hoto’s skin began to take an ashen color as he appeared to grow thinner. The elf’s eye flared with an orange light before a beam of energy shot out

striking both Shaldir and the dwarf knocking them back several feet landing hard on the ground. The elf tossed Hoto's body to the side summoning another stream of fire that engulfed the dwarf.

Shaldir pointed both pistols at the elf as she squeezed the triggers. Shots rang out, one grazing the elf's cheek leaving a gash across his face. Shards of ice shot out of the elf's hands piercing Shaldir in several spots, pinning her to the ground. The elf touched his face, pulling back fingers covered in his own blood. Rage crossed the elf's face as he drew his rapier, but he stopped as the sound of a horn echoed throughout the city. The elf looked to the south, a look of concern across his delicate features. He glanced back at Shaldir for a heartbeat before disappearing.

Shaldir was lying in the middle of the street, her breaths were short and raspy. She felt cold, and not from the ice that still pierced her body. She glanced up at the sky watching it turn from a clear blue color to a dark green.

Her skin burned and froze at the same time as a green mist surrounded her. "Help me... please..."

Her vision grew dark as a voice echoed through her mind.

*Stay strong my champion, your fight is not yet over.*

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### *Year 277 of the fourth age:*

Shaldir stood on the street of the ruined city. She glanced around unsure where she was or how long she had been

standing there. *The buildings are but ruins*, she thought. *This city seems to have been destroyed a long time ago*. Movement down the street caught her eye. A skeleton dressed in ragged rusty armor shuffled down the road, its movements slow and jittery.

“Undead?” she said noticing others lumbering around the broken street. “What happened to this place? And where is this?”

*You stand in the ruined city of Dunewind*, a voice said in her head. *Your home, from long ago*.

Shaldir looked around but saw nothing but the lumbering undead. “Show yourself!”

*Come to the square at the center of the city*, the voice said.

Shaldir clenched her fist noticing that she was holding something in each hand. She looked down at her hands, seeing nothing but bones, a pistol in each hand. She dropped the weapons as she screamed.

“My hands!” she screamed noticing the bones beneath her tattered clothing. “What’s happened to me?”

*Come to the square at the center of the city*, the voice said. *Your answers can be found there*.

“Who are you!” she screamed, covering her face with her boney hands. “What have you done to me!”

*Come to the square at the center of the city*, the voice said.

She dropped to her knees sobbing. “Stop saying that!”

She looked at the city around her, a home she didn’t recognize, with undead she didn’t know. “Who am I?” she asked barely above a whisper. “Why... why can’t I remember anything?”

No answer came, just the wind blowing through the street, kicking up a small cloud of ash and dirt.

“Dunewind,” she said looking down the street behind her. “I...Hoto...”

She looked around but saw nothing, only the sound of a shuffling undead drawing closer. From a nearby building an undead shuffled out, ragged clothing fluttering in the breeze. Next to it was a shorter skeleton with a stocky frame and thicker bones. Images flashed before her eyes. The sounds of screaming echoing in her head. She could smell smoke, with the scent of death.

“Hoto...” she said staring at the pair of undead lumbering down the street. “I’m... Shaldir. I am... or was... a serving girl at... ugh I can’t remember!”

*Your memories will return in time, the voice said.*

“Who are you?” Shaldir said standing. “No more games. Show yourself.”

*Come to the square at the center of the city, the voice said.*

She let out a growl as she picked up the two pistols. “You won’t be happy when I get there.”

As she entered the square, she stopped horrified by the sight. Not only were the buildings destroyed here like the rest of the city, the plants and people were also dead. Dozens of undead shuffled through the square, with several trees reaching up to the sky, their black flowers and leaves giving the area a sense of hopelessness. She shook her head watching the undead form of a small child crawling along the ground.

“Show yourself!” she yelled.

*I am here in the well,* the voice said.

“Well?” she said seeing the structure. “There was no well here before.”

*A recent addition,* the voice said.

“Made by who?” she asked stepping up to the stone structure, seeing her reflection in the black liquid within.

*A difficult thing to answer,* the voice said, the liquid rippling as the voice spoke.

“Where are you?” Shaldir asked. “I only see this... black liquid.”

*I am here, within the well,* the voice said. *And I am not.*

“You are this black liquid?” Shaldir asked.

*No,* the voice said. *But I am here, all the same.*

“What happened to Dunewind?” Shaldir asked. “And where are the others?”

*You already know the answer to those questions,* the voice said. *And you know how it happened.*

Shaldir gripped the pistols tighter. “Those elves.”

*The Nasir,* the voice said. *Elves from a land much different than the one you know.*

“They did all of this?” she asked looking around. “They killed all of my friends... and Hoto...”

*Yes,* the voice said.

“Why am I like this?” Shaldir asked. “Why are we all undead, and why am I the only one that can speak?”

*You have been undead for over three hundred years, it was just now that your spirit woke up,* the voice said.

“Then wake the others!” Shaldir said slamming the pistols against the well. “Return Hoto to me!”

*I cannot*, the voice said.

“Can’t or won’t?” she asked.

Silence was her answer.

She fell to her knees as she started sobbing again. “Why... why me?”

*Because you called out to me*, the voice said. *Asked me to help you, and I needed a champion.*

“Then help them!” she said pointing to the other undead.

*I cannot*, the voice said.

Shaldir gripped the pistols tightly as she screamed, her voice echoing in the empty square. She cried for hours, curling up like an infant as she cried out for the others. She wasn’t sure how much time had passed, but felt as if she had no more tears to give.

She stood up, determination filling her. “Show me what happened and who did this.”

Images appeared in the black liquid, filling the gaps in her memory. She saw the Nasir elves march into the city, killing anyone that crossed their paths. They started the buildings of the city on fire. Then the elves vanished as dark clouds filled the sky, lightning of emerald, green lighting up the sky. A column of green light slammed down into the square. Energy burst from the ground as clouds of green mist rose, choking the life from the people that remained. Moments later their bodies rose, as their flesh dissolved from their bodies leaving nothing but the bones.

The liquid went dark. *And now you know.*

"But why attack us?" Shaldir asked.

An image of a handsome elf wearing a jeweled crown of gold appeared. *Because it was the order of King Glinthor Qinsatra of the Nasir.*

"I will kill him," she said gripping the pistols tightly.

*He is not your true enemy,* the voice said.

"He is the only enemy that matters," she said looking down at the pistols in her hand. "But... I... don't know how to fight."

*I can help you,* the voice said. *This well is known as the Darkwell, and the liquid within is called Aion.*

"Aion?" she asked.

*Magic taken physical form,* the voice said. *Magic in this land was... damaged. Like the city and land around it, your body has been infused with magic from the Darkwell.*

"But I'm not a mage," she said. "I don't know how to use it."

*Shaldir, I can teach you magic,* the voice said. *Show you how to use your power. Train you until you are ready to face our true enemy.*

"No," she said watching on of the other undead shuffle through the square. "Shaldir Ceris is dead. She died all those years ago, with... with her husband."

*Then who are you?* The voice asked.

"Mysdeth Eveneye," she said using a name from a novel she loved. "I am the last defender of Dunewind, and avenger of its people. I will learn to use this new power I have and use it to destroy King Glinthor and the Nasir."