

Wisplurkers

Episode 024. Matt's shadow

As Matt slept, Mr Myers ripped away the boy's shadow. He wasn't hungry. Not right now. He would take the shadow and eat it later. He carefully folded it, until it was small enough to fit in his dark, cavernous pocket. Then he slid along the floor, out through the open door onto the landing, and down the stairs. Myers paused for a moment to listen to the sounds coming from the kitchen. His bulging yellow eyes in his black form, glinted in the sunlight that streamed through the glass in the front door. He glanced around the hallway. There were a number of shadowy places he could hide for the time being. Sooner or later, a hoomum would open the front door and he would be able to slip out.

Kylie loved to help her Mum make a cake. She was always allowed to lick any of the mixture left in the bowl, and she liked to make the icing for the topping. On their shopping trip that morning, they'd bought sugar decorations to put on the top of the cake. Kylie carefully arranged them into a pleasing pattern.

"We'll cut it after tea," said Mum. "I'm sure your brother will be feeling well enough to eat a piece of sponge cake."

Someone rang the front door bell. Mrs Jameson wiped her floury, sugary hands on a cloth, before going to see who it might be. It was the next door neighbour.

"Can Calum have his ball back?" Calum was Mrs Wright's three year old. He had a habit of throwing his ball over the fence into the Jameson's back garden.

"Yes, of course. Come through into the kitchen. Would you like a cup of coffee while you're here? I'm just about to put the kettle on." She called back up the stairs. "Matthew. Turn your radio or telly down, love. If you're feeling so much better you can tidy your room".

The sound coming from upstairs was like a dozen voices all talking at once. The voices rose until there was a loud, steady hum. Which of the radio stations was her son tuned to? It sounded strange and very loud. "Matthew. Did you hear me?"

Then, Matt must have heard, the sound fell until it was just distant background mutter.

Denise Jameson opened the door wider to let her neighbour in and. at the same moment, she shivered. A shadow fell across them turning the hallway colder.

"Did you see something, just then?" she asked alarmed.

"No. I don't think so," answered Sandra Wright. "I thought there was a sort of shadowy thingy that came down your stairs and into your hall, but I think it was probably a trick of the light."

"Yes. You're right. It must have been the sunlight coming through that glass panel in the door. What do they call it? Prisms or something like that. Anyway whatever it was, it's gone now." She dismissed it with a shrug of her shoulders.

"Now. How about that coffee and a piece of cake? We've just made it. You can collect Calum's ball later." Their next door neighbour followed her into the kitchen.

Mr Myers slid past the two hoomums in the doorway. Keeping close to the shadows formed by the row of hedges, he made his way into the street. The sun was shining in a cloudless sky, so there was no risk of being caught in the Dull. If the sun went behind a cloud and there were no more shadows, then Myers knew he'd become a Non-being. An unpleasant end, but that was not to be his fate. Not on this bright, light afternoon.

He kept well back under the branches of a tree as a man strolled past. To one side the man's shadow travelled along the ground. As it passed beneath the tree it was suddenly joined by a second shadow. Myers attached himself to the man's right shoe as he walked unknowingly in the very direction needed to take Myers back to the empty house in Wood Street.

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Wisplurkers. By Maggie C.

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