

# The Troll

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## Who Was Afraid of the Dark





Every night-troll knows that if the sun shines upon them, they turn into stone.



That's why troll children play outside after dark—all except one little troll . . .



. . . who didn't dare go outside with the others. He was afraid of the dark.



The little troll, Bo, feared everything his imagination could create . . . ghosts, monsters, and worst of all, little cheerful human children.



His mommy had told him that human children were the naughtiest creatures to be found. They were always laughing and shrieking, which is why little trolls never dared to go anywhere near human habitats.



It's hard for children being scared of the dark, but it's even harder for a little troll. Bo had to watch his friends run joyfully out into the dark—and he did not dare to follow them.



“My little Bo, there is nothing to fear in the darkness,” his mom explained with a comforting voice. “Whether it is a bright day or a dark night, it is the same soft grass under our feet, the same pretty birds in the trees, and the same good-hearted souls wandering around.”



The little troll moved carefully towards the cave entrance and looked out. High up in the sky hung the Man in the Moon. He lit up the dark blue sky with his beautiful light and the stars shone bright.



“What is a troll lad doing inside on such a beautiful night?” asked the Man in the Moon. “Little trolls should be outside playing!”

“I don’t want to go out! It’s much more fun playing inside the cave,” Bo lied.



Every night, Bo went to the cave entrance, but not a single step further.



He sat inside the cave and felt very lonely. He wanted nothing more than to be outside playing with his friends.



When the night was ending, the other little trolls came running back into the cave. They weren't allowed to stay outside when dawn broke, and it was time to have something to eat.

The grown-up trolls had gathered huge piles of mountain grass and other delicacies, which they picked up in the Icelandic highlands.





Bo's friends told him stories of their exciting adventures and the games they had played that night. Glowy and Moss were Bo's best friends, and sometimes the three of them stayed up long into the morning talking about everything under the moon.



It was already early morning, the sun was rising, and the little trolls couldn't help but yawn. Bo laid down. Mommy troll sat next to his rock and told him stories of strange humans who lived near the ocean.

"Do children and humans really exist?" asked Bo curiously.

"In the old days, trolls believed in humans, but I have never seen one with my own eyes," his mom told him. "Maybe it's just a fairytale."



At sunset, the trolls rose again, but poor little Bo sat at home in his cave while his friends ran off into the dark. Glowy waved at him, and Moss had already jumped halfway down the mountain and was throwing rocks in the river. It seemed like yet another uneventful night was in store for Bo. . . .



But on this night, the troll children went further down the mountain than before, and all the way down to the valley. They were not allowed to go there, but the grown-ups were busy preparing dinner and didn't notice. Bo stood at the cave entrance and watched his friends. In the far, far distance, they looked like tiny dots on the ground.



When the night was over and the trolls gathered back home, it became clear that something was wrong. Glowy normally greeted Bo and told him stories from the night, but she was nowhere to be seen. The trolls feared the worst of what might have happened to Glowy, but it was already too bright outside to go look for her. No trolls dared to step outside . . . except Bo. He didn't fear the morning light.



Bo ran as fast as he could down the mountains towards the valley where his friends had been playing. When he got there, he was already feeling very hot and half-blinded by the brightness. The sun was starting to peek from behind the hills and soon he would turn into stone.



Not far away from where his friends had been playing, smoke rose up from the chimney of a small treehouse near the ocean.

*Humans*, Bo thought to himself.

But he still went closer, as he knew Glowy sometimes couldn't control her curiosity. . . .



Next to the house there was a hole in a rock, and there he saw Glowy. She was crying and the tears ran down the rock like a river and fell into the ocean. The troll girl had stepped into a hole, her foot was stuck and she couldn't move.



Bo tried to help his friend. He pulled and pulled with all his strength. But nothing worked. His struggle had caught the attention of the humans who stood nearby, with mouths wide open in disbelief. The human children didn't seem afraid, but rather puzzled by these huge creatures.

"Trolls," they stuttered.

"Is it crying?" asked the little girl with sadness in her voice.



Bo and Glowy would never make it back to the cave in time. The trolls would turn into stone long before they would get there. But, Bo didn't give up. He had forgotten how much he feared those little fluffy human children and tried talking to them:

"Can you bring us some blankets?" he asked as softly as he could.



The children didn't reply. They just ran away.

"Darn!" Bo said, and yet again tried to free Glowy. But her foot was firmly stuck in the hole.

"Go, Bo! Save yourself and take cover. The sun is rising!" Glowy said desperately. She knew it was too late for her to get out.



Just as the sun appeared on the horizon the children came back with big piles of blankets and covers. They tossed them over Bo and Glowy, who lay down on the ground. The children went back for more and more blankets, since the trolls were huge and it was hard to cover them entirely.



At this rock near the ocean, there rose a mountain made out of blankets: colourful, striped and checked, cotton and wool—there were enough to protect Bo and Glowy from the sunshine. Even though Bo tried to stay awake, he and Glowy fell fast asleep, and slept the whole day!

It was already getting dark when they woke up. . . .



The adult humans looked like little pink toothpicks when they stood along with the children who had saved the trolls from the sun. Now everybody helped pull the blankets off the trolls. A tiny man came with a pickaxe and started breaking the stone where Glowy's foot was stuck. Finally, she was able to get out of the hole and stand up.



Even though it was pitch black outside, Bo wasn't scared anymore. There was nothing to be afraid of, just as his mom had told him. He breathed in the peaceful evening air and danced out of joy under the moonlight and the bright stars.

"This is incredibly beautiful!" Bo said, amazed by the night.



Bo watched the tiny, cheerful humans. He realised that all he had feared was his own imagination. The terrible night, chortling children, made up ghosts and monsters: he realized he shouldn't be afraid of any of these things.





“Thank you so much,” Bo said to the humans.

Glowy smiled to the humans, grateful for the rescue. A little girl and boy ran up to the trolls and hugged them, just as if they were big, soft teddy bears. Then the trolls said their goodbyes and headed towards home.



Bo couldn't help thinking about the kind humans while he ran up the mountains. He was very impressed by all that he saw. It was all so much more incredible than he had imagined. The night was beautiful beyond description.



When the wanderers got back to the cave the trolls embraced them and hugged. Their troll children were unharmed! Bo hardly had time to tell anyone about the rescue, he was too eager to get back outside. And that night, and all nights after, Bo ran out to play with the others. He wasn't a bit scared of the dark—he didn't have to be!



Every day when children go out to play, Bo sleeps like a rock (not literally, of course). He enjoys life and has fun, both on sunny days and beautiful nights.



And when the sun comes up and the trolls return to the cave, Bo tells them stories of the humans. . . .