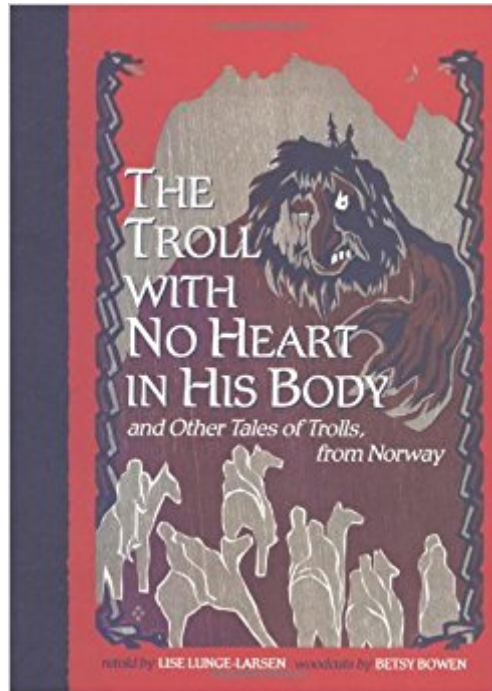




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# The Troll With No Heart In His Body



## Synopsis

As tall as trees and as ancient and rugged as the Norwegian landscape from which they come, trolls are some of lore's most fascinating and varied creatures. Some live under bridges, others deep inside caves. They can carry their heads under their arms or hide their hearts inside wells. They can walk across oceans and fly over mountains. Trees and shrubs may grow from their heads, and their noses can be long enough to stir soup. There are troll hags, troll daughters, and elderly, shrunken trolls. Old or young, they are quarrelsome, ugly, and boastful, and they love to trick princesses and children. To defeat them, children must rely on the strengths of their humanity—persistence, kindness, pluck, and willingness to heed good advice.

## Book Information

Age Range: 6 and up

Paperback: 96 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (August 25, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0618354034

ISBN-13: 978-0618354030

Product Dimensions: 11.1 x 7.7 x 0.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #923,518 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #43 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > European](#) #135 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Norse](#) #867 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Multicultural](#)

## Customer Reviews

Norwegian-born storyteller Lunge-Larsen scoured her homeland's literary landscape for this stellar collection of nine troll tales, many of which will be unfamiliar to American children. Ugly, greedy, fierce and dimwitted, trolls provide admirable subject matter, and Lunge-Larsen spins her stories with enthusiasm. The other characters are memorable, too, from the feckless Butterball, a boy who outwits his captor (a hungry troll hag who carries her head under her arm) to the familiar trio of goats in "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." A Nordic flavor permeates the customary folktale elements present here (such as kidnapped princesses and magical quests) and each tale ends with the Norwegian refrain "Snipp, snapp, snute/ Her er eventyret ute! (Snip, snap, snout/ This tale's told

out!). Short introductions and afterwords for every entry expand on troll lore. Readers learn, for example, that trolls will burst and turn into stone when exposed to sunlight, and that Edvard Grieg's famous "In the Hall of the Mountain King" for Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* refers to the trolls of Norway's Dovre Mountains. Bowen (Antler, Bear, Canoe) fills the slightly narrow pages of this oversize volume with striking woodblock-print compositions and border motifs; according to an illustrator's note, her work draws on ancient carvings as well as early-20th-century art from Norway. Their rough-hewn, almost primitive quality belies the sophisticated use of color and line. A noteworthy addition to the folktale shelf. Ages 5-12. (Sept.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 2-5-Nine Norwegian tales that feature ugly, dim-witted giants who live inside mountains or under bridges, as in "The Three Billy Goats Gruff," the best known of these tales. In fact, the majority of the stories here will be unfamiliar to American audiences. Trolls readily capture children to eat for dinner ("Butterball"), steal princesses and hold them captive to rub their aching heads ("The Boy Who Became a Lion, a Falcon, and an Ant"), and covet human possessions ("The Handshake" and "The Boy and the North Wind"). Lunge-Larsen has fashioned her retellings largely from the folktales collected by Peter Christian Asbjørnsen and Jirgen Moe in the early 1800s. She includes detailed source notes for each selection, a bibliography, and an insightful introduction that discusses her experience with trolls. The retellings retain the power of the originals and don't shy away from the violent nature of several of these stories. Each tale is accompanied by a full-page illustration, several smaller images, and decorative borders that underscore the plot. Bowen's colorful woodcuts-with their folk-art sensibilities-evoke traditional Norwegian decorative art and architecture. The interplay between the art and the text is outstanding. Because of its readability, tellability, and strong visual presentation, this collection should have wide and enduring appeal. Denise Anton Wright, Alliance Library System, Bloomington, IL Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Now that I have kids, I've found my forays back into the world of children's literature disappointing. I can only assume the publishing business has become so efficient at branding and marketing, that it seems like anything that doesn't conform to a carefully categorized set of shiny, cheerful production values is marginalized into oblivion. I keep wondering, where is the mystery that I remember from when I was a kid? Where the sense of possibility? The feeling that there was more to the world than met the eyes? So much of what's available seems so . . . obvious. This book was a wonderful

discovery. It's the product of an inspired collaboration between a wonderful storyteller and an imaginative printmaker. The storyteller remembers first hand those great old tales that I dimly recall from when I was a kid, and manages to keep them true to what made them so fascinating while helping to explain them to a new generation. Great playfully handled stuff about how there are forces out there in the world that defy our sense of order and reason, but that how even something as ur-awful as a troll can easily be managed by the littlest child, if he only stops to use his brains! And stories that have been repeated too often like the Three Billy Goats Gruff come compellingly back to life. The illustrations are at least as strong as the story. They break away from the greeting card/funnypaper/cuteness school of artistic design, in favor of woodcuts that manage to be richly colored and engaging, but also to introduce a degree of subtlety and abstraction that leave room for a sense of mystery and possibility that is so lacking in so many children's books. This book gets my highest recommendation. (Certainly every child of Scandinavian heritage should have a copy in his or her library!) I only wish I could find more books like this . . .

This book is a delight and a must have if you are obsessed with trolls or have a fetish for anything Scandanavian. Very cool, very quirky.

I really enjoyed this book. I bought it to read to my four-year-old and the book well exceeded my expectations. Here you will find classics such as the Three Billy Goats Gruff and tales you may never have heard of. They are all beautifully put together and could be told as a traditional story teller might or read aloud for maximum impact. Great stories well told, and a treasure trove for children and folklorists alike.

I was so happy to find these wonderful troll stories told the way I remember them! My mother (who grew up in northern Minnesota) told us kids these stories when we were very small (that's a long time ago). Lately I thought the tradition was lost because I could only find watered-down versions of the the Three Billy Goats Gruff, not the fascinating and powerful tales I remembered. But all is not lost. Here is a collection of genuine Troll stories, with ugly, scary trolls in all shapes and sizes, and clever boys and girls who persevere through wild and strange adventures and eventually save the day. Great stories, wonderfully told. The illustrations are beautiful. I first borrowed this book from the library, but of course had to then buy a copy of my own. I highly recommend this book.

Just what I needed for my little charges at naptime! Fanciful with easy moral meanings to debate

while the boys fall asleep.

I enjoyed the traditional stories and the kids and I had fun reading them to each other. Snip snap snout! This review's told out.

Lise Lunge-Larsen grew up with troll stories in Norway and has been sharing them with American children since her coming to this country. For a parent to read, or a storyteller to tell, this collection is rich and valuable. Children need stories as vehicles for understanding. They reveal universal truths. They speak to our inner circumstances, they make us human. Some of the basic lessons that are repeated and surface include: -be true to your nature -remember who you are -Life is a journey and only you can take yours -Use your gifts -Don't ever give up -Everything you need can be found inside yourself While learning these stories, children can rest in a world that is full of magic, but mirrors their own. A world that has the possibility of greatness that lies within each human heart. I bought this book to add to my collection of stories to tell again and again to children to remind them of their own capacity to overcome challenging situations in their lives. I could not be more pleased!

Lise Lunge-Larsen is a Norwegian-American storyteller who wants to tell us about a creature rarely reported on in zoological circles, the Norwegian Troll. These nine (really ten, if you keep reading past the bibliography and sources) stories are relatively short, and easy to read. The illustrations are provided by woodcuts created by Betsy Bowen, and they provide just the right atmosphere for these wonderful tales. My children and I all loved these stories, and we recommend them to you.

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