

THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF

INTRODUCTION

By Tracy Hanson

“The Three Billy Goats Gruff is a Norwegian fairy tale collected by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe in their [Norske Folkeeventyr](#) (Norwegian Folktales) collection, first published between 1841 and 1844. Christen Asbjørnsen was a teacher and friends with Jørgen Moe, a minister, for about 15 years. I thought it was interesting to find that their inspiration was the German folktale collectors, the [Brothers Grimm](#).

I introduced two versions of the Three Billy Goats Gruff to our group in June. The *first was a [“vegetarian”](#) version whose ending fell flat. The second is the version you are about to read. But still many of the members were upset with the way it ended. They felt that, like all fairy tales, there should be a happy ending. Maybe [Troll](#) got a [“bum rap”](#). Those Scandinavians with their folktales making everyone think Trolls are mean and ugly. Maybe he was acting that way because that was what people expected. But not who he was or how he felt. And in the end, they had Big Billy Goat invite Troll to come dine with his family on the bluff where the grass was thick, green, and delicious.

If you wanted to give the story a happy ending, how would you write it? Start from this point in the dialog:

Troll: Who's that making such a racket on MY BRIDGE?

BIG BILLY GOAT: It is I, Big Billy Goat Gruff. Who wants to know?

Enjoy the [cartoon](#) of the fairytale.

This is rather a [funny version](#) with a trick ending.

*We had not formalized out scripts when this video was done.

THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF

Paul Galdone

Script by Tracy Hanson

NARRATOR 1	NARRATOR 2	BIG BILLY GOAT
MIDDLE BILLY GOAT	LITTLE BILLY GOAT	TROLL

NARRATOR 1: Once upon a time Three Billy Goats lived in a stony field near a bridge that went across a little river. There was Big Billy Goat, who had long whiskers and big strong horns...then there was Middle-size Billy Goat, who had small curly horns but was not old enough to have whiskers... and then there was Little Billy Goat, who had no horns, and no whiskers, but he was never afraid of anything!!!



NARRATOR 2: Now, across the river was a hillside just covered with delicious, juicy, green grass, but under the bridge lived a mean old troll. He was a scary thing, with eyes as big as tea cups and a long crooked nose. And he thought that the bridge was HIS ... and would not allow anyone to cross it. Well, one day the Billy Goats could not find any more grass on their side of the river, and this is what happened:

BIG BILLY GOAT: Look over there at that beautiful green grass...and then look around us here. We have nothing to eat but stones.

MIDDLE BILLY GOAT: You're right, Brother. It sure does make me feel even hungrier when I see all that good food across the troll's bridge.

Little Billy Goat: Well, I'll tell you one thing, I'm sick and tired of being so hungry. I'm just going to go right across that Troll's bridge right now and eat, and eat, and eat.

BIG BILLY GOAT: Come back here, Little Billy. You don't know what you're saying. That Troll is a mean one. He will be sure to eat you up!

Little Billy G: Don't you worry about one thing, Big Billy. I'm hungry, and besides, I'm not afraid of that old troll.

NARRATOR 1: And Little Billy Goat headed out and started walking across the bridge. The troll, hearing the clip clop, clip clop, clip clop of Little Billy Goat's hooves on the bridge hollered out in a gruff voice:



TROLL: Wait a minute! Who is that walking on MY bridge?

Little Billy G: Hello, Mr. Troll, sir. I'm Little Billy Goat and I...

NARRATOR 2: Being a very rude and not very nice creature, the troll interrupted Little Billy G in mid-sentence and yelled out:

TROLL: Well, what are you doing on my bridge?

Little Billy G: I'm just going over your bridge to eat some nice green grass on the hillside.

TROLL: Oh noooooo you're not! You just get off of my bridge this very minute or I'll come up there and eat you up!

Little Billy G: Oh, please don't do that, Mr. Troll, sir. I wouldn't be very good to eat. I'm little and skinny. But my BIG brother will be along soon. He is bigger and fatter than I am. Why don't you wait for him?

TROLL: Bigger? Fatter? Fatter than you? Very well. Run along then, but be quick about it before I change my mind!

NARRATOR 1: And so fearless Little Billy Goat finished crossing the bridge, ran up the hillside and started eating, as his hungry brothers watched from across the river.



MIDDLE BILLY GOAT: Just look at Little Billy over there eating his head off. The troll didn't bother him a bit. I don't care what happens, I'm going to try to get across the bridge, too!

BIG BILLY GOAT: You'd better not try it. That mean old Troll is hungry, and you know he will stop you and eat you up!

Middle Billy G: I still don't care. I'm hungry. Here I go!

NARRATOR 2: And off went Middle Billy Goat headed off across the Troll's bridge, and hearing the clip clop, clip clop, clip clop of Middle Billy Goat's hooves, bellowed:

TROLL: Who is that walking on my bridge?

MIDDLE BILLY GOAT: My name is Middle Billy Goat and....

TROLL: Well, what the dickens are you doing on MY BRIDGE?

NARRATOR 1: The mean old Troll asked, angrily,

MIDDLE BILLY GOAT: I'm just crossing it to join my little brother on the hillside, and eat some of the delicious, fresh, green grass there.

TROLL: Oh, no you are not! This is MY bridge, and you get off of it this instant! If you don't, I'll come up there and eat you up!

MIDDLE BILLY GOAT: I wouldn't do that if I were you. I'm not very good to eat, but my Big brother will be along soon. He is much fatter and much tastier than I am. Why don't you wait for him?

TROLL: Even fatter and tastier than you? Very well, then, run along, but be quick about it. I'm mighty hungry.

NARRATOR 2: Well, when Big Billy Goat saw his brothers having a feast on that juicy green grass, he forgot all thoughts of danger, and decided to start across the bridge.

TROLL: Who's that making such a racket on MY BRIDGE?

BIG BILLY GOAT: It is I, Big Billy Goat Gruff. Who wants to know?

Troll: I want to know, that's who. Just where do you think you are going, and what are you doing on my bridge?

BIG BILLY GOAT: I am going across this bridge, just like my

brothers did, and then I am going to eat lunch on the hillside.

TROLL: Oh, no you are not! I'm hungry and I'm coming up there right now and I am going to eat you for lunch!

BIG BILLY GOAT: You don't saaaaaay! Well, you just come right on up here and we'll settle this thing once and for all!!



NARRATOR 1: The troll, not used to being challenged, was furious and he leapt up on the bridge and began yelling and screaming at Big Billy Goat Gruff:

Troll: How DARE you talk to ME like that? YOU GET OFF MY BRIDGE THIS INSTANT!



NARRATOR 2: Then everything happened at once. Big Billy Goat lowered his horns, the Troll put up his hairy, scaly fists, and they rushed at each other...C R A S H ! They backed up and rushed again..... T H U M P, and over went the Troll into the river below. How he screamed and yelled as he was carried out of sight by the strong current.

Narrator 1 & 2: (Together) And NOW, the Three Billy Goats Gruff can cross the bridge any time they want, and there is No mean, old Troll to bother them... AND, they are all well fed and happy!

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