

WRITE  *ON!*
Short Story Contest

The Considerate
Neighbor

by Sedona W.

The Considerate Neighbor

Cautiously, Medium Gruff, stepped from his meadow onto a wooden bridge, as a troll, who lived under the bridge, exclaimed, “Hey there! You must be Medium Gruff. Yer little brother Small Gruff just told me you’d be comin’ by soon. I’ve been waitin’ ta have some goat – I mean company –for supper! Won’t ya come in and stay a while?”

Medium Gruff, who was not fooled, wisely replied, “No thank you, Mr. Troll. I must be getting on my way over this bridge to the lush meadow beyond. Until next time.”

Fearing his substantial snack would escape, the inconsiderate troll cried, “I’ma gonna hafta insist.”

Hiding his laughter, the clever goat explained to the somewhat gullible troll, “I really must decline, sir, but if you would like to have a grand feast, you should wait for my older brother, Large Gruff. He is huge. He is heavy. He has great taste.” When the troll heard this, he gave Medium Gruff consent to cross the bridge unmolested.

After Medium Gruff crossed, Large Gruff leapt confidently onto the bridge with a thud. Suddenly, the hungry troll popped up from under the bridge and announced, “Stop right thar, Large Gruff. I’ma gonna eat ya up!”

“If you can stop me, you can eat me,” laughed Large Gruff as he started crossing the bridge. The troll did not know the goat had two enormous, curling, sharp horns, which were great for butting little trolls off wooden bridges. Before the troll realized he was outmatched, Large Gruff charged.

With one enormous jolt, Large Gruff butted the ridiculous troll of the bridge and into the bubbling stream below. The troll swam to shore. He was soaking wet. He was bitter cold. He was extremely embarrassed. Large Gruff crossed the bridge and joined his brothers in the new

meadow.

The depressed troll started crying like a baby when it wants its mommy. As the three Gruff brothers munched away on sweet, juicy grass, they heard the sobbing troll. Eventually, they felt sorry for him and decided to let him return to his home under the bridge.

“If you permit us to cross your bridge freely, and promise never to eat us or our friends, you may stay under your bridge,” explained Large Gruff.

“That sounds right good and all, but how’ll I eat?” the teary troll complained.

“You may eat what swims under your bridge rather than what walks over it,” declared Medium Gruff. The goat handed the troll a long, slender package.

“Huh?” questioned the bewildered troll.

“The fish, you silly troll. You may eat the fish that swim in the stream under your bridge,” giggled Small Gruff. Sniffing, the troll unwrapped the package, which contained a fishing pole. From that day on, the troll ate fish, and became a considerate neighbor.