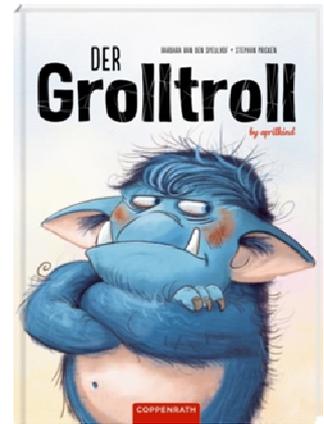


The Grumbletroll

A book by aprilkind,
Barbara van den Speulhof and Stephan Pricken
Translation © Ruth Martin 2019



On the other side of the woods, just a few steps straight ahead, then
one left turn and two right turns, lives a little troll.
What a lovely life he has!
The meadow is full of brightly-coloured flowers.
The stream babbles away cheerfully.
The sun warms his fur.
What a splendid way to live!
At least, most of the time...

“Today, I’m going to build myself a hut,”
the little troll says one morning.
And he knows just how he wants it to look.
A hut where he can play
and hide.
And rest when he gets tired.

The little troll has everything he needs
to build his hut...

... but it still doesn’t work!

No matter how many times he tries,
it keeps falling down.

There is a mighty grumbling
In the little troll’s belly.

“No! No! NO!
This isn’t how it’s supposed to go!”

“I don’t want a hut any more,”
the little troll says stubbornly.
“I want to eat an apple.”

He shakes the trunk of the tree.
But not a single apple falls down.
He shakes it even harder.
Nothing happens.
“I want one! I want one! I want one!”
the troll yells so angrily that the tree trembles
and the worms in the apples all get hiccups.

“Fine: keep your apples!”
the little troll shouts. Then he stomps down to the stream.
He wants to make a little boat and float it.
He likes making boats.
But today, they all sink.

“Why are they doing that? That’s not fair! No! That’s not fair!”
The troll rages and howls until
the water in the stream ripples and the fish
are so scared they forget how to swim.

“It’s rubbish here!
I’m going somewhere else!”
huffs the little troll. And because he doesn’t know
where this somewhere else is, he decides to look
somewhere he’s never been before. If only this gigantic rock
wasn’t blocking his way!
“Could you step aside please?”
asks the troll. But the rock
doesn’t move.
“Go away!”
shouts the troll. But the rock
doesn’t move.

“Roll away, you big dumpling!”
the troll yells. He yells so loudly that the rock
almost starts to wobble. But not quite.
Then the little troll kicks it
as hard as he can.
So hard that it hurts his claws and
nearly makes him cry.

That makes the troll even angrier.
It’s like there’s a storm inside him.
With lightning flashing down from the sky.
And huge rumbles and grumbles of thunder.
Yes, that’s exactly how he feels now.

Like a rumbling, grumbling troll.

A real
GRUMBLETROLL!

zzzchpooohh!!!!!!

rrrraaatzepooohh!!!!!!

In the evening, when it gets dark,
the little grumbletroll is still grumbling.
He's so cross he can't get to sleep.
"Stop making such a fuss!" the hedgehog calls out.
"Go to bed!" the mouse moans.
"You're annoying us," the bird groans.
That makes the grumbletroll angry. Very angry.
And he doesn't go to bed, just to spite them.
Today, he is going to fall asleep sitting up.
"That's what comes of that!" he grumbles.

zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz!!!

But sleeping sitting up isn't very comfortable.
The grumbletroll realises that the next morning.
"Ow!" he mutters, rubbing his back.
His legs have gone to sleep as well.
That's the final straw!
"What's happened?" asks the hare.
"NOTHING!" yells the grumbletroll.
"Shall we blow on it?" asks the mouse.
"NO!" yells the grumbletroll.

He stamps about in a rage.
First one foot, then the other.
Back and forth and back and forth.

No! No! No! No! No!

“Stop it!” cries the hedgehog, making his spikes stand on end.

“You’re driving us all mad!” cries the bird, puffing up his feathers.

“Enough is enough!” cries the mouse. “We’re off!”

“I don’t care,” the grumbletroll growls.

He roams around a bit.

First over there, then over here.

How quiet it is, all of a sudden.

Everyone has gone.

No one is talking, no one is laughing.

It’s so quiet that he can even hear the grass growing.

It’s boring.

“Deadly boring,” the grumbletroll groans.

He wonders what his friends are doing.

They must be having fun.

Without him.

The little grumbletroll gulps.

Has he grumbled them away forever?

He makes another boat and writes something on it.

Then he puts it carefully into the stream.

Hurray, it floats!

It floats off... to his friends.

The boat says SORRY on it.

“Sorry,” says the
little grumbletroll.

“Apology accepted,” says the hare.

“It’s alright,” says the bird.

“Shall we play?” asks the mouse.

What kind of a question is that?! Of course!

On the other side of the woods, just a few steps straight ahead, then
one left turn and two right turns, lives
the little grumbletroll and his friends.

They play together.

They sing and they dance.

And sometimes they build something.

Until the moon blows out the sun and

The first stars start to twinkle in the sky.

aprilkind

Steffi & Michael Gerharz live in Troisdorf, near Cologne, with their three children. The stories and soft toys that they design for their label, aprilkind, are played with by children all over the world. The idea for the grumbletroll came to them when their youngest daughter was sitting at the breakfast table with her arms folded, sulking and grumbling. The little troll quickly took shape as an adjustable soft toy that can show both anger and happiness, along with the concept for his first picture-book adventure.

I grumble when you grumble!

I laugh when you laugh!

Stephan Pricken

As father to a son, Stephan Pricken is also familiar with fits of anger. After short periods in mechanical engineering and architecture, he studied primary school teaching with a focus on art, and then graphic design in Münster, where he now lives and works as a freelance illustrator. Developing the little troll and his world based on the cuddly toy was an unusual but exciting task, which he has carried out with tremendous success: you can't help but love his grumbletroll!

Barbara van den Speulhof

As a passionate children's book author, director and producer of radio plays for children, Barbara van den Speulhof knows that the issue of anger plays a large role in many families – and so she loved the idea of the little troll who thunders out his unfiltered anger, and doesn't realise the effect it has on his friends until they tell him. Her words bring the grumbletroll and his rage to life – in an authentic, heart-warming story without any hint of finger-wagging.