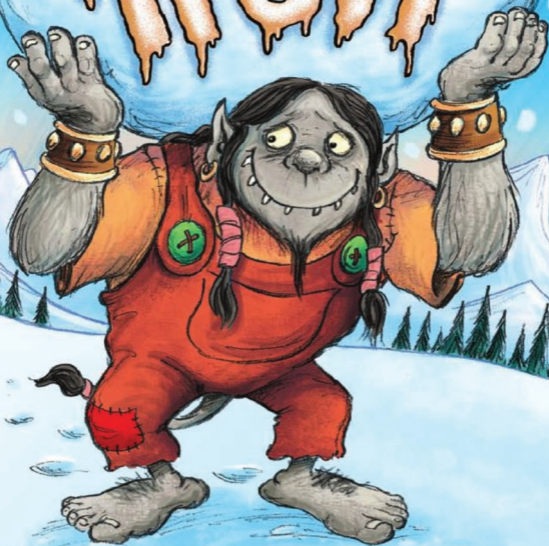




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STARS

SNOW TROLL



Margaret McAllister

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Illustrated by
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For Peter Hood

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Chapter 1

The New Letterbox

Tromso was a tame troll. He lived in a village called Hoppings, at the bottom of a mountain. He was grey and very big.

Everybody liked Tromso. He was very helpful. If anybody asked, he would cut down a tree. Or build a wall.

To thank him, people gave him things to eat. What he liked most were cakes, bananas, bricks, cabbages, old chair legs, and jigsaw puzzles with pieces missing.



Tromso kept everything. He used the things to mend his house. And if he was hungry, he ate them.

Peter and Joy were Tromso's friends.
Joy was Peter's sister.

One morning, Tromso was at their house, when the postman came.



Tromso saw the letters drop through
the letterbox.

"What are those?" asked Tromso.

"Letters," said Peter.

Tromso found the letters
very interesting.



When he went home, he made a letter-
box in his front door.

All the next day and the day after that,
Tromso stayed at home. Peter saw him
at the window and went to see him.

Tromso was sitting sadly on the floor, eating a brick.



“My letterbox doesn’t work,” said Tromso. “I made a letterbox to get letters! But they don’t come.”

“Oh, Tromso!” said Peter. “Somebody has to *send* you the letters!”

Peter ran home and wrote a letter. He put his letter in an envelope, stuck on a stamp, and posted it.



The next day, Tromso came to Peter's house. He was grinning.

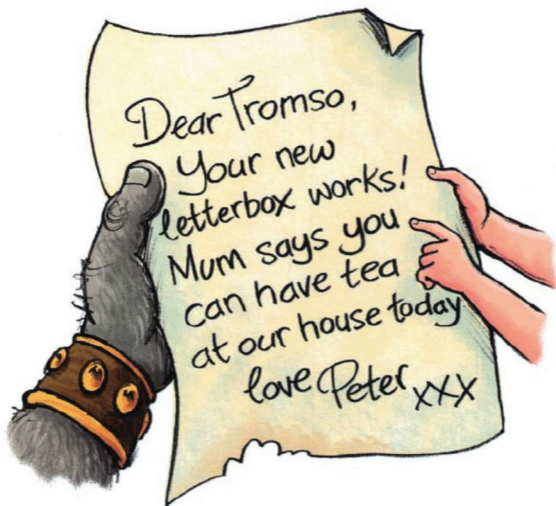
"I got a letter!" he said.

"Good!" said Peter. "Have you read it?"

Tromso looked upset.

"I can't read," he said, sadly.

"I'll read it for you," said Joy.
The letter said:



"I wish I could read," said Tromso.
"I know!" said Peter. "We'll teach you."
"Yes, please!" said Tromso.

Everyone in Hoppings helped Tromso.
They put up signs in the village.



Bit by bit, Tromso learned to read.
He even learned to write his name.
But he took care not to eat the pencils.



Chapter 2

Tromso's Cake

One morning, a bright blue envelope fell through Tromso's letterbox.

There was a card inside. Tromso read it all by himself.

"Come to my birthday party at three o'clock on Saturday! Love, Peter."

Tromso was puzzled. He went to Peter and Joy's house.

"I read my letter," Tromso said.

"Didn't it make you happy?" said Peter.

"I don't understand," said Tromso.

"There are hard words in it. I know
Sunday and Monday and those days.

What is 'birthday'?"





Peter told him about birthdays and parties.

"When is your birthday, Tromso?" he said.

"I've never had one," said Tromso sadly.

"You can share mine," said Peter.

"We'll share a party. Mum always makes a cake for birthdays. I'll ask her to make one for you."

"How does she make cakes?" asked Tromso.

"She mixes up lots of nice things," said Peter. "Then she puts sweets and candles on top."

That gave Tromso an idea.



Tromso looked in his junk heap for things he liked to eat.

He found pebbles, old chairs, string and sand. He stirred them up with plenty of glue. Then he put everything in the sun to dry.



It was even bigger than Tromso. And it didn't look like a cake. So he put sugar and chopped cabbage and a very big candle on top. That was better.

On Peter and Tromso's birthday,
everyone gave them presents.



There were even some things for
Tromso to eat, like an old shopping
basket and a dead tree.

They played Pass the Parcel.
Tromso ate the wrapping paper.



They played Blind Man's Buff.
Tromso fell in the duckpond.



They played Hide and Seek.
Tromso was too big to hide anywhere.



Then Peter and Joy handed round birthday cake.

“Surprise!” said Tromso. And he showed everyone his cake.



“It looks very nice,” said Peter. But it didn’t. Nobody wanted to eat it.

Then Peter had an idea.

"That cake is too special to eat," he said.

"Is it as good as *that*?" said Tromso.

"We'll keep it outside," said Joy.

"We could play on it."



"It's a very strong cake," said Tromso.

"It won't break if you climb on it."

So they put the cake beside the duckpond. And everyone played on it. Peter put up a notice:



Tromso was very happy.

The children loved Tromso's Cake.
And nobody minded if Tromso took
a bite of it now and again!



Chapter 3

The Snow Troll

In winter, snow fell on Hoppings. The mountain was sparkling white.

The children built a huge snowman. It was their best snowman, ever.

It snowed again, and the snow came to the top of Joy's boots. She gave the snowman a hat.

It didn't stop snowing.



Peter's mum looked at the mountain.

"I hope it stops snowing," she said.

"Why?" asked Peter.

"Because there could be an avalanche," she said. "And an avalanche is very dangerous. The snow gets heavier and heavier and slides down the mountain."

But it didn't stop snowing.

Everyone asked Tromso, "Help us to clear away the snow."

"All of it?" said Tromso.

"Yes please," they said. "But don't get cold."

"Trolls don't feel the cold," said Tromso.

He took a big spade. He cleared away heaps of snow. Then he saw the snowman.



"It's a pity to spoil it," he said. "But they told me to clear away the snow. And a snowman is made of snow." He put his hat on a gatepost. Then he cleared up the snowman with his spade.




Soon, the children came out to play. "Where is our snowman?" they cried.

Everyone was very cross when they saw that Tromso had knocked it down. Tromso felt dreadful.

Peter and Joy found Tromso at the bottom of the mountain. A big tear ran down Tromso's face and melted a hole in the snow. Joy hugged him.




Just then, they heard a low, rumbling sound. Something on the mountain was moving.



Snow! It was an avalanche!
"Help!" yelled Peter.
"We must warn everyone!"

Peter and Joy ran to the village.
"Avalanche!" they shouted.
Everyone ran.
Tromso stood still and held out
his arms.

"I don't know if I can stop an
avalanche," he said. "But I can try."

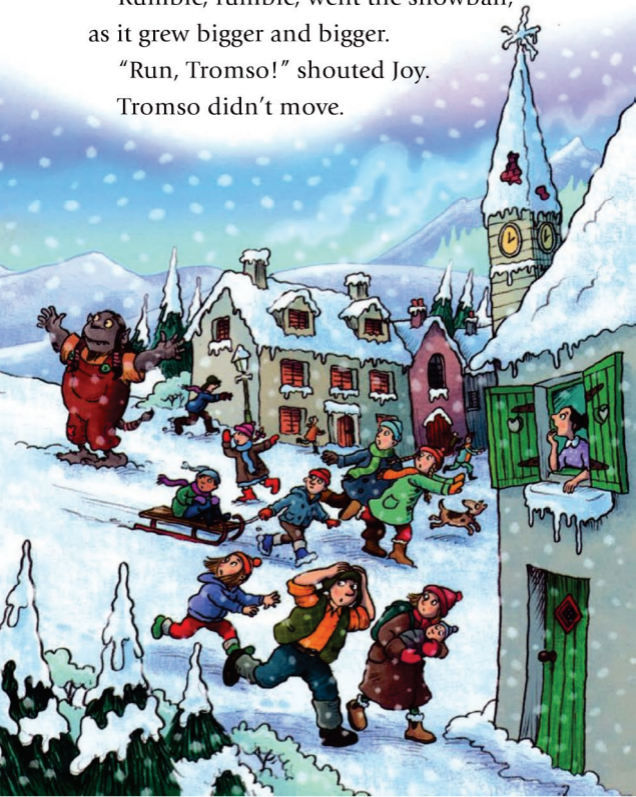


Snow rolled faster and faster down the mountain in a huge snowball.

Rumble, rumble, went the snowball, as it grew bigger and bigger.

"Run, Tromso!" shouted Joy.

Tromso didn't move.



The snowball landed on Tromso.
"Oof!" said Tromso.
The snowball rolled a bit more,
then stopped.



The snowball got up. It had troll feet
and troll hands. It had Tromso's face
smiling out at the top.

"You saved the village!" said Peter.
"I'm a snow troll!" said Tromso.
"He's the best snow troll, ever!"
laughed the children.



About the author

Trolls are meant to be scary, but I wanted to write a story about a friendly troll.

Most troll stories come from Norway, so I named him after a place there.

Tromso likes getting letters, and so do I.

A young friend of mine, Joy Tilbrook, thought of the snowman. Thank you, Joy!





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Tromso the friendly troll loves to help people. And when it snows in the village, he is even more helpful than they thought!

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