The Three Billy Goats Gruff

There were once three billy goats who lived in a field by the side of a river. They were brothers and they were known as the Three Billy Goats Gruff.

Now, the goats were always hungry, and they had by now eaten most of the grass so their field was bare and muddy. On the other side of the river they could see a field of lush green grass and they longed to eat it, but the only way to reach it was to cross the little wooden bridge over the river. And under the bridge lived a terrifying troll who wanted nothing more than to eat the billy goats for his dinner.

Finally, the goats could stand the sight of the lush green grass no longer. They had to have it! The smallest goat tried first. Little Billy Goat Gruff, his knees knocking slightly, put first one hoof onto the bridge, then another, until finally all four were on the bridge. And he went trip trapping over it, his little heart beating hard. All was well until he reached the very middle of the bridge when suddenly the troll rose out of the shadows and cried, ‘Who’s that trip trapping over my bridge?’

‘It’s only me!’ said Little Billy Goat Gruff, shaking and quaking. ‘I’m going to eat you for my dinner!’ roared the troll.

‘Oh no!’ said the little billy goat. ‘You can’t eat me. I’m much too small. Why not wait for my brother? There’s more meat on him. He’ll be much tastier.’

Well, the greedy troll decided to wait, and Little Billy Goat Gruff trip trapped over the bridge and settled down to eat the lush green grass.

The sight of his brother greedily eating grass was too much for Middle-Sized Billy Goat Gruff. With his knees knocking slightly he put first one hoof onto the bridge, then another, until finally all four were on the bridge. And he went trip trapping over it, his medium-sized heart beating hard. All was well until he reached the very middle of the bridge when suddenly the troll rose out of the shadows and cried, ‘Who’s that trip trapping over my bridge?’

‘It’s only me!’ said Middle-Sized Billy Goat Gruff, shaking and quaking.

‘I’m going to eat you for my dinner!’ roared the troll.

‘Oh no!’ said Middle-Sized Billy Goat Gruff. ‘You can’t eat me. I’m much too small. Why not wait for my brother? There’s more meat on him. He’ll be much tastier.’

Well, once again the greedy troll decided to wait, and Middle-Sized Billy Goat Gruff trip trapped over the bridge and settled down to eat the lush green grass.
Now Big Billy Goat Gruff could see both of his brothers greedily eating lush green grass, and he had to have it too. So he too put first one hoof on to the bridge, then another, until finally all four were on the bridge. And he went trip trapping over it, his big heart pounding. All was well until he reached the very middle of the bridge when suddenly the troll rose out of the shadows and cried, 'Who’s that trip trapping over my bridge?’

‘It’s only me!’ said Big Billy Goat Gruff.

‘I’m going to eat you for my dinner!’ roared the troll.

‘Oh no you’re not!’ said the big billy goat, and he lowered his head with its great horns and charged at the troll, flinging him into the river where he disappeared under the water and was never seen again.

So Big Billy Goat Gruff joined his brothers in the lush green grass, and they ate greedily until that field too was bare. But without the troll they could trip trap across the little wooden bridge as often as they needed to.

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