

The Priest and the Troll

A new Priest came to the village and took to walking in the nearby hills. One day he came upon a Troll sitting outside his cave. The frightened Priest made to run away but the gentle voice of the Troll caused him to pause. Before long they were chatting away, and the Priest was invited to return whenever he was in the hills. Over some years a deep friendship developed during which they frequently discussed their different beliefs.

One day the Troll told his friend that he was feeling old, he was over 300 after all, and that he didn't expect to live much longer. As a token of their friendship, he would like to be buried in the village churchyard, but his beliefs prevented him from having a Christian funeral. The Priest promised to follow his wishes.

Not long after, the Priest walked up the hill to visit his friend and found him lifeless on his bed in the cave. He hastened back to the village and summoned all the young men to help him carry the Troll's huge body to the Churchyard. The young men had learned from the Sagas that Trolls invariably have treasure in their caves so were keen to help. On arrival they searched the cave but found nothing of value.

With them was a boy called Magnus who had heard about the friendly Troll from the Priest and had been moved by his kind face, even in death. He wanted some token to take away and collected some of the dried leaves and twigs which had served as the Troll's floor covering.

The disappointed men carried the Troll down the hill and buried him in the churchyard while the Priest stood in silence remembering his promise.

Magnus went home and told his mother what had happened and reached in his bag to show her the leaves and twigs . . . but they had turned to gold.

When they heard about this, the young men hastened back up the hill, but an earthquake had closed the rocks and the Troll's cave had disappeared.

Trausti told us that, in the wall above the door of the village Church, is an iron ring; said to be the ferrule from the Troll's heavy wooden staff.