



Troll Bridge

Terry Pratchett

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Part of a short story tribute anthology to Tolkien, found in *After the King: Stories In Honor of J.R.R. Tolkien*, it was also reprinted in *My Favorite Fantasy Story*, in *The Oxford Book of Fantasy Stories*, in *The Mammoth Book of Comic Fantasy* and was finally released as free online fiction.

Troll Bridge Details

Date : Published January 1992 by Pan Books

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Author : Terry Pratchett

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Kyrie says

Good short story about Cohen the Barbarian and his search for a troll to fight. Pratchett had such a way with words, and how people feel (apologies to the nonhumans- how beings feel). I would have read this one once and thought, yeah, sounds like Granddad, and then, sounds like Dad. It's starting to sound like me.

Shae says

Not as good as the other short stories, but good. I do like Cohen the barbarian, and it is always fun to read about him.

Tammy says

This is probably my favorite Discworld short story thus far, but Cohen the Barbarian is one of my favorite side characters so it shouldn't come as a shock to anyone that a story starring our aging barbarian would be an instant favorite.

Pratchett approaches the nature of change in this short story with a simple tale regarding trolls, bridges, and heroes. With typical Pratchett flair, it's a tale that will make you laugh and make you think. And with most of his short stories, it can be found for free online. So what are you waiting for? :)

Papaphilly says

A very melancholy story. A look at the "good old days" from an old man and a troll. The last of a dying breed unable to move on and understanding that today is not the day either. Terry Pratchett at some of his best and most philosophical.

YouKneeK says

Troll Bridge is a short story in the *Discworld* universe. It can be read for free from here:
<http://loki.ovh.org/T%20Pratchett%20-...>

The story features Cohen the Barbarian, a character we met in previous books from the *Rincewind* subseries. Cohen is a well-known hero in the Discworld, modeled off of Conan no doubt, who's well past his prime. Cohen remembers his father telling him as a child that, if he could defeat a troll in single combat, he could do anything. He decides it's time to cross that task off his bucket list, but naturally things don't quite go quite the way he expected.

This one was pretty cute, although short. I think it has a continuity error in terms of how cold affects trolls as compared to what we learned in *Men at Arms*, but I guess it depends on how you read the sentence.

Ivan says

I have read this short story couple of times by now and it's still just as funny as first time. Must read for all Discworld fans.

Octavia Cade says

Poor old troll. Honestly, though, as well-written as this is, Cohen the Barbarian is on a par with Rincewind for me - amusing enough in a small way, but very far from my favourite Discworld character. This little short is basically his character in a nutshell, but as much as I sympathise with the idea of the adventurous world being lost, I can't get upset about forests cleared out of giant creepy spiders.

Allan says

Ever wondered what happened to Cohen the Barbarian? Well, the saying "old soldiers never die, they just smell that way" sort of rings true but Cohen is still getting on and constantly being a hero is a lot of hard work.

He has a sort of going out in style plan in mind when he approaches the old troll bridge but, like most plans, that first encounter sort of never goes the way you thought it would.

This is an endearingly comical short story about the trials and tribulations of being a hero and of being a villain. Neither role is set in stone - okay in the case of the troll it might be but you get my gist.

Kame-nyan says

Everyone should read this story. Despite their age, gender, nationality. It is always topical, relateable, and slightly, yet beautifully sad. This is just life, as and how we know it. Sooner or later, we all find ourselves on the same bridge, with the same questions to be answered. This short story is pure enjoyment, presented on a few pages.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Troll Bridge (Discworld #16.5), Terry Pratchett

Joey Woolfardis says

Available in *A Blink of the Screen* and *After the King: Stories In Honour of J.R.R. Tolkien, My Favorite Fantasy Story*, *The Oxford Book of Fantasy Stories* and *The Mammoth Book of Comic Fantasy*.

A short story concerning the Discworld character Cohen. Another very human piece, this time about the values of change, but also the disregard change has on those it leaves behind. It is a nice story but it lacks the well-known and loved Discworld humour.

[First read: 26th June, 2015.

Second read: 28th December, 2017.]

Lyn says

Pratchett's 1992 short story featuring Cohen the Barbarian.

Cohen travels to a remote bridge to test his might, mano y mano, against the troll under the bridge. Cohen's father told him it's what a hero should do. And the old man would turn over in his mound if Cohen didn't try.

But these times are a changing and Pratchett delivers a short but effective scene of two old timers reflecting on how things evolve and grow.

"I used to like that forest. It was . . . well, it was darksome. You don't get proper darksome any more. You really knew what terror was, in a forest like that."

Pratchett leaves us with a fitting idea about heroes, heroism and how people believe in both.

Kathleen Dixon says

And again I say . . . SO clever. And poignant. But that's part of Pratchett's cleverness - he mixes humour, the ridiculous, amazing scenic descriptions, and pathos. Others have tried, but nobody does it as well as he.

Oh yes, this another online short short story.

Lance Schonberg says

In remembrance of the good old days, which probably weren't nearly as good in reality as they are in memory.

I rather like Cohen the Barbarian as a character, a crotchety old buzzard who's far too tough to kill but

certainly manages to mete out more than his share of destruction and mayhem. When he was young, his father told him that if you could go one on one with a troll, you could do anything.

And today is the day.

Luciana Darce says

É óbvio que eu não poderia deixar de começar o ano lendo Pratchett – afinal, essa tem sido uma longa tradição, que pretendo manter por ainda muito tempo. Li antes mesmo de levantar da cama, antes de ver qualquer mensagem que tenham me mandado da hora que cheguei em casa da festa de Ano pra agora.

Troll Bridge talvez seja o conto mais famoso de PTerry – se não me falha a memória, existe inclusive um curta feito por fãs inspirado nele. Foi publicado pela primeira vez em 1992, na antologia *After the King*, escrita em homenagem ao Tolkien.

Reencontramos aqui Cohen, o Bárbaro, o mais famoso herói do Disco. Cohen quer enfrentar um troll sob a ponte, em memória de uma época que há muito já se foi. Talvez seja uma missão suicida, uma última tentativa de se provar – ir embora com uma explosão em vez de um suspiro.

“Um dia, você vai morrer,” disse o cavalo. “Pode ser que aconteça hoje.”

“Eu sei. Por que você acha que eu vim até aqui?”

Mas o que termina por acontecer é que ele encontra um companheiro de reminiscências, com quem lembra daquela época em que o mundo ainda era selvagem e inexplorado – quando havia algo pelo que lutar, pelo que acreditar.

Li o conto na edição em ebook de *A Blink of the Screen*, que vem com breves comentários do Pratchett sobre as histórias e fiquei com essa frase na cabeça:

“Você luta uma guerra para mudar o mundo, e então muda o mundo em um lugar que não tem espaço para você. Aqueles que lutam pelo brilhante futuro nem sempre são, por sua natureza, capazes de viver nele”.

Para fazer pensar. Tinha de ser o Pratchett, não?

Lee Broderick says

In *Men at Arms* Terry Pratchett proposed that trolls had a reputation for being stupid due to having evolved in cooler climes - their brains don't function properly in the warmer places where people live. Here, we get to see the effect of that societal change on the trolls left behind - the ones who haven't moved to the city. The first two Discworld short stories were basically sketches, jokes of one form or another. This one is a little

longer and rather different in tone. It's still written with Pratchett's typical humour but it's an essay on nostalgia; a hero and a troll reminisce and talk about change. It should be easy for everyone to relate to: *the world's not like it was when I was a boy...*

Gosia says

Melancholic short story, but really really awesome

Strugglingwriter says

One of my favorite short stories. Classic Pratchett. Funny and poignant. Cohen the Barbarian (along with Death and Rincewind) is probably my favorite character in Discworld. And this is his story.

Tanya says

All my book reviews can be found here.

This is my favorite of the Discworld short stories I've read so far – the others were little more than jokes dressed up as vignettes. This one is slightly longer, more elaborate, and different in tone: Poignant in its nostalgia, it made me sad (these days, most things do).

A Cohen the Barbarian who is well past his prime meets a troll, and together they reflect on the evolving times, the roles of hero VS villain, and the value of change, but also its disregard of those it leaves behind.

As the other stories, it's available to read online for free, so take five minutes out of your day to read it.

Andrew says

'It was an old horse. It was an old rider. The horse looked like a shrink-wrapped toast rack; the man looked as though the only reason he wasn't falling off was because he couldn't muster the energy. Despite the bitterly cold wind, he was wearing nothing but a tiny leather kilt and a dirty bandage on one knee.'

And so Cohen the Barbarian sags into action once again. Contrary to the advice of his knackered old horse.

Pratchett hits a spot, a sweet spot inside me that I feel every other day, and wish I didn't. Trouble with nostalgia - it ain't none of it coming back 'cept in memory. But while someone else tells you a tale of wistfulness that sympathises with your own loss, spend the time reading them. For the sake of the way things should be. For the sake of things that were.

