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THREE BILLYGOATS GRUFF

By Jean Mann

Lyrics by Jean West Penna

Music by Eric Bryce

SET: THE STAGE REPRESENTS A FOREST.
WOOD SCENE L.S.
A BRIDGE R.S. WITH A HILL BEHIND.
THE TROLL LIVES UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE.
THE PLAY OPENS WITH LIGHT ON WOOD SCENE.

ELF (ENTERS L.S. ELF IS IN A FLAP. IT IS LATE AND EVERYTHING HAS GONE WRONG. ELF IS CARRYING A LARGE NOTICE AND A FEATHER DUSTER.

AFTER DUSTING A TREE HE HANGS UP THE NOTICE, THEN STANDS BACK TO ADMIRE HIS HANDIWORK. THE NOTICE READS:

'URGENT MEETING 2 P.M. TODAY'

MOVES FORWARD AND STRAIGHTENS NOTICE)

BILBY (ENTERS L.S.) Hello Elf.

ELF Oh! Hello Pinky.

BILBY I'm not Pinky. I am Bilby.

ELF Sorry Bilby. I keep forgetting.

BILBY That's all right, but please don't call me that again.

ELF I'll try Pin.....Bilby. Oh dear! I've had such a busy day. I can't think straight.
(STRAIGHTENS NOTICE)

BILBY Hey. Aren't you a bit late putting up that notice?

ELF (A LITTLE TESTY) Yes, I am. But it is very hard getting everybody ready for a meeting. (COMMENCES TO DUST FERNS)

BILBY Well. Will anyone come to the meeting? I mean ... how will they know there is a meeting if they haven't read the notice?

ELF Everyone knows about the meeting.

BILBY Then why bother to put up a notice?

ELF Because when you have a meeting, you must put up a notice Pinky. It is

right and proper.

BILBY I keep telling you; my name is Bilby, not Pinky, and in case you've forgotten ... I am an endangered specie.

ELF We'll all be endangered species if we don't get the Three Billy Goats Gruff across the bridge.

BILBY Oh! That's true.

ELF And I haven't been able to find Frog. That's why I am so late. Have you seen him?

BILBY No, I haven't. But he'll turn up.

ELF I'm not so sure. He's such a nuisance. He's always missing when you need him.

BILBY Don't worry about him Elf. He'll come.

ELF Yes, but when? Anyway, I don't think he could help much. He hasn't a brain in his head.

S.B.G.G. (ENTERS L.S.) Who hasn't a brain in his head?

BILBY Elf says Frog hasn't.

S.B.G.G. Hello Pinky.

BILBY (MUTTERS) Bilby.

(ELF AND S.B.G.G. IGNORE
CORRECTION)

ELF Hello Second Gruff. Glad you could come. That Frog. He really is too much. I've spent all morning looking for him.

S.B.G.G. Why bother?

ELF I wanted to tell him about The Troll, and about you three Billy Goats wanting to cross the bridge.

S.B.G.G. Why is it so important for Frog to know?

ELF Even Frog might have one idea that would help us get rid of The Troll.

S.B.G.G. How would he know how to trick the Troll?

BILBY That's it. Trick The Troll. What an idea!

S.B.G.G. Of course. Let's trick The Troll.

(SECOND GRUFF AND BILBY JOIN
HANDS. THEY DANCE AND SING)

ALL Let's trick The Troll, let's trick The Troll,
With every trick we know.
We'll play our tricks and hope that he
Will pack his bags and go!

We'll worry him, and flurry him,
Disturb his peace each day,
Bamboozle him, confuse him,
And lure him far astray!

We'll tantalise and hypnotise,
Taunt and tease and mesmerise,
Subdue, confuse and paralyse,
And hope to win the day!

With long and loud tintabulum,
We'll baffle him and deafen him,
He'll think the Grand Panjanderum
Is marching to the fray.

We'll trick The Troll, we'll trick The Troll,
With every trick we know.
Until in desperation, he
Will pack his bags and go!

B.B.G.G. (ENTERS L.S.) Really!

(S.B.G.G. & BILBY ARE A LITTLE
BREATHLESS FROM THEIR SINGING AND
DANCING BUT THEY MANAGE TO
CHORUS)

S.B.G.G. &
BILBY Hi Big Gruff.

B.B.G.G. Hi. Now what's all that about?

ELF They got carried away. They're hoping to trick The Troll.

B.B.G.G. They'll have to do something better than that. Anyway, they could be too late.

ELF Why? Don't tell us he has gone?

B.B.G.G. Not yet. But Frog's going to do something.

ELF, BILBY
& S.B.G.G. (TOGETHER AND VERY SURPRISED) Frog?

B.B.G.G. Yes. Frog.

ELF, BILBY
& S.B.G.G. (TOGETHER) But how?

B.B.G.G. How would I know?

ELF Well. How do you know he's going to.....

B.B.G.G. (INTERRUPTING) I don't. But he said he would.

S.B.G.G. (DISGUSTED) Ugh!

BILBY But you said.....

ELF (INTERRUPTING) Did you find him? Have you been speaking with him?
And did you tell him about the meeting?

B.B.G.G. Yes. Yes. And yes.

ELF And is he coming?

B.B.G.G. No.

ELF, BILBY
& S.B.G.G. (TOGETHER) Awh!

ELF (CROSSLY) See. I told you. Frog really is the end. Never does anything he
is told. Thinks he knows everything. Why isn't he coming?

B.B.G.G. Frog says he doesn't think there is any need to have a meeting.

ELF Not any need?

B.B.G.G. No. He's going to fix The Troll before the meeting starts.

ELF Fix The Troll! That's what HE says.

S.B.G.G. I wish we could get an idea.

BILBY Let us all try and think. (THEY ALL TAKE UP A THINKING POSE)

S.B.G.G. I know. (THE OTHERS LOOK HOPEFULLY AT S.B.G.G.) Let's blow
him up.

B.B.G.G. (ASTOUNDED) Blow him up. Did you say, blow him up?

BILBY (EXCITEDLY) That's it. Isn't Second Gruff clever? We can blow him up.

ELF (MYSTIFIED) But we haven't got a pump?

S.B.G.G. (ACTIONS WITH IMAGINARY PUMP) Not pump him up Elf. Blow him
up.

ELF (PLACES HANDS TO EARS) Oh! I don't think I like the sound of that.

BILBY Don't worry, Elf. We'll do it. Won't we Second Gruff? We'll blow him up all

on our own.

B.B.G.G. And where is this blow-up going to take place?

BILBY In his house.

B.B.G.G. And where is his house?

S.B.G.G. Underneath the bridge.

B.B.G.G. And what happens to the bridge when you blow up The Troll?

S.B.G.G. It blows up too. (REALISING THIS MISTAKE) Oh!

BILBY (ALSO REALISING THE MISTAKE) Oh!

ELF (DISGUSTED) Honestly. You two are as bad as Frog. You haven't any brains, either. How can you three Billy Goats get across the bridge if there isn't a bridge to cross?

BILBY (TRYING TO MAKE AMENDS) They could fly across.

B.B.G.G. We are Billy Goats, not bats.

BILBY (TRYING TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT) By the way, where is Little Billy Goat Gruff?

L.B.G.G. (ENTERS L.S. HE IS A VERY HAPPY LITTLE GOAT.)
Here's Little Gruff. Hello Wood People.
(THEY ALL SAY HELLO AND GREET L.B.G.G.)
Is everyone here?

ELF All except Frog.

L.B.G.G. (DISAPPOINTED) Oh! Why isn't Frog coming? I like Frog.

B.B.G.G. He isn't coming because he is going to fix The Troll.

L.B.G.G. (SURPRISED) All on his own?

ELF No. Of course he can't.

(THEY ALL NOD AND AGREE EXCEPT
L.B.G.G.)

L.B.G.G. Then why did Big Gruff say Frog was going to fix The Troll?

B.B.G.G. Because that's what Frog said when I told him about the meeting.

ELF (THINKING) Big Gruff. Did you tell Frog The Troll was a big, fat, ugly giant?

B.B.G.G. No. I forgot to tell him that.

L.B.G.G. Have you seen The Troll, Elf?

L.B.G.G. (CONVINCED AND ALSO SURPRISED) No.
S.B.G.G. Then don't argue, Little Gruff. Let's start the meeting, Elf.
ELF Will it be all right to start without Frog?
S.B.G.G. We could be here all day if we wait for Frog.
(THEY ALL SIT IN A SEMI CIRCLE EXCEPT
L.B.G.G. HE WALKS AWAY FROM THE
GROUP)

ELF Will you be chairperson, Big Billy Goat Gruff?

B.B.G.G. All right. But I'd better use my quiet voice. (IMMEDIATELY SHOUTS)
WHAT ARE YOU DOING LITTLE GRUFF?

L.B.G.G. (IS STEPPING VERY HIGH AND CREEPING SOFTLY ABOUT THE
STAGE. HE STOPS WITH LEG IN MID AIR) I'm practicing my creep
walk. (CONTINUES TO CREEP)

S.B.G.G. What's a creep walk?

BILBY Never heard of it. Have you, Big Gruff?

B.B.G.G. Never.

(THEY ALL LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND
SHAKE THEIR HEADS ... THEN BECOME
MORE INTERESTED IN THE CREEP WALK
THAN THE MEETING.
L.B.G.G COMMENCES TO SING AS WELL
AS CREEP.
THE OTHERS GET UP ONE BY ONE AND
FOLLOW L.B.G.G WHO IS BEGINNING TO
ENJOY HIMSELF.
HE TURNS THE CREEP WALK INTO A
DANCE.
EVERYONE CATCHES THE SPIRIT OF THE
MOVEMENT.
SOON THEY ARE ALL SINGING AND
DANCING)

ALL It's a cree-eep walk - not a sleep walk,
But a wily, wide-awake cree-eep walk.
You....slide a foot here,
And....slide a foot there,
You slip through the shadows and don't stop to stare,
You must always - always - always beware,

When setting out on a cree-eep walk.
It's a cree-eep walk - not a sleep walk,
Not a pittery-pattery sheep walk.
You....slither on mud,
And....slide through the slime,
If you come to a hill very softly you climb,
When the going is rough - don't hurry, take time
When wandering off on a cree-eep walk.

It's a cree-eep walk - not a sleep walk,
Not a hoppity-skippity leap walk.
You....steal through the scrub,
And....glide o'er the ground,
You're clever and cautious. You look all around,
And never make even a vestage of sound,
When venturing out on a cree-eep walk.

(ELF IS FIRST TO REALISE THEY HAVEN'T
TIME TO DANCE AND SING. THEY HAVE
URGENT BUSINESS TO DISCUSS. STOPS
DANCING AND THE OTHERS
RELUCTANTLY FOLLOW. ALL, OF
COURSE, EXCEPT L.B.G.G. HE SLOWS HIS
DANCE BACK TO A CREEP WALK)

S.B.G.G. (FIRMLY) Now come on, Little Billy Goat Gruff. You've had your fun.
Come over here.

(L.B.G.G. STOPS THE CREEP WALK AND
JOINS THE GROUP)

ELF Now. Where were we?

B.B.G.G. We've got to get across the bridge as soon as we can.

L.B.G.G. Why do we have to go so soon?

ELF Because Big Billy Goat Gruff has a large appetite.

BILBY And Second Billy Goat Gruff has a large appetite.

L.B.G.G. I haven't got a large appetite.

B.B.G.G. Not yet you haven't, but you will.

S.B.G.G. And the three of us must get over the bridge and climb the hill on the other
side.

L.B.G.G. Why?

B.B.G.G. Because there is a lot of lovely green grass on the hill.

BILBY And there's not much left in The Wood.

B.B.G.G. And soon we'll all be hungry if we don't hurry and get over the bridge.

BILBY And I've heard what it is like to be hungry. My great grandparents told me. They lived at Pinky Flat before the feral predators came.

L.B.G.G. Where's Pinky Flat? And what's a feral predator?

BILBY Pinky Flat is in South Australia, and a feral predator ... well ...er ... a feral predator is kind of like ... (BILBY IS NOT SURE HOW TO EXPLAIN A FERAL PREDATOR, BUT SUDDENLY GETS A BRAINWAVE) The Troll. He could be a feral predator.

L.B.G.G. Are you sure?

BILBY Not really. I only know about feral predators in Australia. One day we're going to get rid of them and I am going back.

L.B.G.G. And you're not a feral predator?

BILBY No. I eat shrubs and grass and stuff like that. I don't eat people or animals.

ELF (HAS HAD ENOUGH) If you two don't stop talking, none of us will be able to eat anything. We have got to get the Gruffs across the bridge.

L.B.G.G. I'll get across. I'll go first.

B.B.G.G. You can't go first. The Troll won't let you.

L.B.G.G. (GETTING EXCITED) Yes he will. Yes he will.

S.B.G.G. The Troll will eat you before you can get across.

L.B.G.G. No he won't. No he won't.

S.B.G.G. Of course he will. Will you please be quiet.

L.B.G.G. He won't eat me up. I'll do my creep walk and he won't be able to hear me.

ELF We'll never get anywhere if Little Gruff keeps interrupting.

S.B.G.G. Let him practice his walk.

L.B.G.G. May I? May I?

B.B.G.G. All right.

L.B.G.G. (BREAKS OUR INTO RHYME AND SHOWS OFF A LITTLE. SPEAKS IN A SLOW SING SONG VOICE) Thank you Big Billy Goat Gruff, I'll go and practice my walk ... and promise not to interrupt while you get on with your talk.

(LIGHT FADES ON MEETING WITH

MURMUR OF ELF'S VOICE)

- ELF Now we might get somewhere.
- L.B.G.G. (LIGHT IS NOW ON L.B.G.G. WE CANNOT SEE THE MEETING. L.B.B.G. PRACTISES HIS CREEP WALK AND GETS CLOSER AND CLOSER TO EDGE OF STAGE. HIS LEGS ARE BEING LIFTED VERY HIGH. ONE MORE STEP AND HE WILL FALL OFF. HE PAUSES WITH FOOT HIGH IN THE AIR AND BALANCES ON ONE LEG. HE THEN APPEARS TO SEE THE AUDIENCE FOR THE FIRST TIME AND PLACES HIS FOOT CAREFULLY DOWN. THIS PREVENTS HIM FROM FALLING. HE GRINS, THEN PLACES HIS HAND ON FOREHEAD TO SHADE HIS EYES AS HE PEERS INTO THE AUDIENCE. HE SPEAKS TO THEM, BUT DOES NOT INCITE OR EXPECT AN ANSWER ... BUT IT IS OK AND GOOD IF HE GETS AN IMPROMPTU REMARK)
- L.B.G.G. Hello. Hello. I didn't see you out there. (LOOKS DOWN AT THE EDGE OF STAGE) Gosh. That was close. I could have had a nasty fall. Must remember to look where I am going when I am creeping. (THINKING - AND NOW SPEAKING MORE TO HIMSELF) On the other hand ... or foot ... if I creep backwards, I will be able to see where I've been. (PAUSE) And that might just trick The Troll. He'll think I'm going instead of coming. (VERY PLEASED WITH HIMSELF) Good idea. I'd better practice. (L.B.G.G. COMMENCES TO CREEP BACKWARDS AND BUMPS INTO FROG WHO HAS ENTERED FROM R.S.)
- FROG Little Billy Goat Gruff, what are you doing?
- L.B.G.G. (GETTING QUITE A SHOCK) Oh! Frog. You did frighten me. I thought you were The Troll.
- FROG Don't be silly. The Troll doesn't live here. He lives underneath the bridge.
- L.B.G.G. I know he does. And that's why I am practicing my creep walk.
- FROG Practicing your what?
- L.B.G.G. My creep walk.
- FROG I heard what you said. But what's a creep walk?
- L.B.G.G. I am going to creep across the bridge, climb the hill on the other side, and eat the grass so I can get fat.
- FROG What a lot of twaddle.
- L.B.G.G. I don't talk twaddle. You do.
- FROG I don't.

L.B.G.G. Yes, you do.

FROG No, I don't.

L.B.G.G. You DO talk twaddle.

FROG (FIRMLY) No, Little Billy Goat Gruff. I talk froggle.

L.B.G.G. Froggle! What's froggle?

FROG Well, er ... (THINKING, GRINNING, THEN ALMOST ADMITTING) I suppose it is a kind of twaddle. (THEN PULLING HIMSELF UP PROUDLY) Being a frog, I talk froggle.

(SOME FROGGLE, OGGLE, OGGLE,
OGGLE NOISES ARE NOW MADE BY
FROG. L.B.G.G. LAUGHS. FROG
RELAXES)

Would you like to hear a froggle song?

L.B.G.G. Oooh! Yes, please.

FROG Then listen carefully. (BREAKS INTO SONG)

If only a frog talks froggle,
And only a dog talks doggerel,
And only a hog talks hoggle,
What is a frog to do?
He can only keep on froggling,
That's all a frog can do!

Goggling, boggling, hoggling, froggling,
That's all a frog can do!
If only rats talk rattle,
And only cats talk cattle,
And only bats talk battle,
What is a frog to do?
He can only keep on froggling,
That's all a frog can do!

Goggling, boggling, hoggling, froggling,
That's all a frog can do!
If only bugs talk buggle,
And only slugs talk sluggle,
And only mugs talk muggle
What is a frog to do?
He can only keep on froggling,
That's all a frog can do!
Goggling, boggling, hoggling, froggling,

That's all a frog can do!

L.B.G.G. (LAUGHING) Frog, you are funny. I like you.

FROG And I like you.

L.B.G.G. Oh Frog! I've just remembered. Why aren't you at the meeting?

FROG I don't like meetings.

L.B.G.G. But this meeting is important. I heard them say so.

FROG No, it isn't.

L.B.G.G. Elf said it was important, and Big Gruff said we must cross the bridge. And Bilby and Second Gruff said they are going to trick The Troll and.....

FROG (QUICKLY) Trick The Troll! How do they think they are going to trick The Troll?

L.B.G.G. I don't know. And I don't think they know either.

FROG (KNOWINGLY) Ha! I do, though.

L.B.G.G. Now I remember. Big Gruff said you were going to fix The Troll before the meeting.

FROG I know. But it took a little longer than I thought.

L.B.G.G. Have you done it then?

FROG No, not yet. But I'm going to.....

L.B.G.G. (QUICKLY) How?

FROG (LOOKS ABOUT) I'm not sure. (WHISPERS) But I've seen him.

L.B.G.G. (SURPRISED AND EXCITED) You have? Is he really big, fat and ugly?

FROG Who said he was big, fat and ugly?

L.B.G.G. Er ... (REMEMBERING THE AUDIENCE) Perhaps my friends will remember.

FROG (LOOKING ABOUT) What friends?

L.B.G.G. (WALKING TO F.S.) There are my friends.

FROG (WALKING DOWN TO JOIN L.B.G.G. PEERS INTO THE AUDIENCE) Gosh, what a lot of people.

L.B.G.G. (INTRODUCES FROG TO AUDIENCE BUT STILL DOES NOT INCITE THEM. IF THEY JOIN IN SPONTANEOUSLY ... ALL THE BETTER) This is my friend, Frog.

FROG Hello. (TURNS TO L.B.G.G.) Have they been there all the time?
(L.B.G.G. IS VERY PLEASED WITH HIMSELF AND NODS)

Well, what do you think of that. Little Billy Goat Gruff, you are a surprise. Fancy having all those friends.

L.B.G.G. I'll share them with you, Frog. They can be your friends too.

FROG Thank you Little Gruff.

L.B.G.G. It's a pleasure.

FROG But who did tell you The Troll was big, fat and ugly?

L.B.G.G. (THINKING) Er ... I can't remember if it was Bilby or Elf. (PAUSE) I know. It was Bilby AND Elf. They both told me.

FROG Then they are both wrong.

L.B.G.G. Both wrong! True?

FROG True.

L.B.G.G. You're not talking froggle?

FROG No. I am telling you the truth.

L.B.G.G. You don't always tell the truth, do you Frog?

FROG I do. (PAUSE) Except when I'm talking froggle.

L.B.G.G. You really are a funny Frog. Oh! I've just remembered. You said you've seen The Troll.

FROG That's right.

L.B.G.G. And you also said he isn't big and fat and ugly.

FROG Right again.

L.B.G.G. Then, what does he really look like?

FROG He's kind of little.

L.B.G.G. (SURPRISED) Little! How little?

FROG He's about as big as us.

L.B.G.G. (MORE SURPRISED) As big as us. Did you speak with him?

FROG No, I didn't. He was talking to himself. (PAUSE) I didn't like to interrupt.

L.B.G.G. (THINKING FROG IS TALKING FROGGLE AGAIN) Frog!

FROG (GRINS AND CROSSES HIS HEART) True.

L.B.G.G. Did he have a voice as loud as Big Billy Goat Gruff?

FROG Good gracious no. He only had a voice like ours. What made you think he had a voice as loud as Big Gruff?

L.B.G.G. Somebody told me. (THINKING) Now who told me that. (TO HIMSELF) Was it Bilby or Elf? Yes. I know. It was Bilby AND Elf. They both told me.

FROG Then they are both wrong.

L.B.G.G. Are you sure?

FROG Of course I am sure.

L.B.G.G. Does The Troll talk twaddle or froggle?

FROG I couldn't hear what he was saying, but I do know The Troll is not a giant.

L.B.G.G. And he's not a dwarf?

FROG No. I said he was as big as us. We're not dwarfs, are we?

L.B.G.G. (BEING PERSISTENT) But we are dwarfs compared with giants.

FROG (GIVING IN) I suppose so.

L.B.G.G. Ah Ha!
(THE FOLLOWING IS CHANTED IN A SING-SONG VOICE)
The Troll is only a dwarf
He's not as big as we thought
He's not ugly or fat.....

FROG (CUTTING IN QUICKLY)
No He's not even that,
Shall we go.....

L.B.G.G. (ALSO CUTTING IN) No. We might get caught.
(THEY BOTH LAUGH AND DO A LITTLE DANCE. THIS TIME CHANTING THE RHYME TOGETHER)

BOTH The Troll is only a dwarf,
He's not as big as we thought.
He's not ugly or fat
No ... he's not even that.
Shall we go.....
No ... we might get caught.
(THEY CEASE CHANTING AND DANCING)

L.B.G.G. (BECOMING SERIOUS) Oh Frog. We're both talking twaddle. Bilby said he could be a feral predator.

FROG A feral predator! I've never heard of a feral predator.

L.B.G.G. Bilby said the Bilbys were endangered species because of feral predators.

FROG Endangered species! Feral predators! Pinky uses big words doesn't he? Are you sure he wasn't talking twaddle?

L.B.G.G. It didn't sound like twaddle and his name isn't Pinky. It's Bilby.

FROG I thought his name was Pinky Flat.

L.B.G.G. Frog, sometimes Elf is right. You DON'T listen, do you? His great grandparents came from Pinky Flat.

FROG Oh! Anyway, we're not talking about Bilbys, we're talking about The Troll and he is only small and he looked ... (TRYING TO FIND THE RIGHT WORDS) ... well, he looked a bit lonely. When I left I think he was going to have a nap.

L.B.G.G. Perhaps we could go and cheer him up.

FROG (REMEMBERING) That's what I came back for ... I wanted to ask you if you would be willing to come with me and see him.

L.B.G.G. (HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS) Are you sure he would want to make friends with us?

FROG Not positively sure ... but almost. How about it?

L.B.G.G. (MAKING A QUICK DECISION) All right. Yes.
(AGAIN SPEAKING IN SING-SONG VOICE)
Please take me to see The Troll,
Let's say Hello and have a chat.
He might be nice ... just like a doll..

FROG (CUTTING IN) A doll! I don't know about that. (BOTH LAUGH)

L.B.G.G. Come on. Let's go. (THEN REMEMBERING THE AUDIENCE) Don't go away, will you. We'll come soon and tell you all about it.
(L.B.G.G..AND FROG EXIT R.S. DOING THEIR CREEP WALK. LIGHT FADES. THE AREA UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE LIGHTS UP SLOWLY)

TROLL (THE TROLL COMES OUT FROM HIS HOUSE UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE CARRYING A LARGE CLOCK. HE IS YAWNING AND PEERS CLOSELY AT THE CLOCK TO SEE THE TIME)
My goodness. I have had a long afternoon sleep.

(TROLL TODDLES BACK INSIDE WITH HIS CLOCK, THEN RE-APPEARS LOOKING MORE CHIRPY)

It is marvellous what a good afternoon's rest can do for you.

(THE TROLL COMMENCES TO WALK ABOUT THE STAGE, SOMETIMES SKIPPING, SOMETIMES DANCING. IT DEPENDS UPON HIS MOOD.

HE IS AWARE OF THE AUDIENCE AND SOMETIMES ADDRESSES THEM, BUT HE ALSO DOES NOT EXPECT AN ANSWER. HE SPEAKS IN VERSE WHICH ALLOWS HIM TO MOVE FREELY)

I like to sing and I like to dance.
I like to frolic and I like to prance.
I like to have fun, I really do.
And I like to laugh, it is good for you.
I like to play tricks and have a joke,
Some people like them, some people don't.
Elf came to the bridge not long ago,
And I tried to have some fun, you know.

I'M COMING TO EAT YOU UP, I said,
And before I could laugh, that Elf just fled.
It was just for fun, I wouldn't do that,
I wanted to be friends and have a chat.

It's hard to make friends, it really is,
As soon as I try, they're off in a tiz
I've often heard the folk in The Wood
Singing and dancing. It sounds so good.
I hope the next one who comes this way,
Will stop and talk and not go away.
I've only lived here for a short while,
I don't like being sad, I like to smile.

Can't think of anyone who likes a grump,
It's good to have fun and not be a frump.
I'm not silly, I'm not even dumb,
Do you know why the Wood people won't come?

(THIS LAST LINE IS DIRECTED AT THE AUDIENCE BUT HE IMMEDIATELY CHANGES HIS MOOD AND TALKS TO HIMSELF)

I wonder if I frightened them away with my big voice. No. I wouldn't have frightened them. Sometimes Big Gruff uses a big voice and nobody is frightened of him.

(THINKS) Wouldn't it be funny if the Wood people thought I was a giant!

No. They wouldn't think that. I'm only as big as they are....see!

(PUTTING OUT HIS HAND TO THE APPROPRIATE SIZE TO NOBODY IN PARTICULAR) I'm only as big as that.

(PAUSE) But they might think I am a big, ugly giant. They might even think I am going to eat them up.
(ANOTHER PAUSE) No. They haven't even seen me. I wouldn't eat anybody up. Especially Wood People. I wouldn't like to eat Wood People. I like ice cream and chocolates. But they're not good for me. Bad for my teeth: especially chocolates.
(THINKING) Do you know, I think somebody might just come along today. (GRINNING AT THE THOUGHT) If they do I'll have another try with my loud voice joke. Just one more try.
(WARMING TO HIS JOKE) I'm beginning to feel better already. I really am. I think I'll go inside again and wait. Ta ta. Cheerio.
(CHUCKLES TO HIMSELF AS LIGHT DIMS)
Ha. ha. Just one more try. Ha. ha.

(LIGHT COMES UP ON FROG & L.B.G.G.
THEY ARE DOING THEIR CREEP WALK.
FROG IS IN FRONT AND STOPS
SUDDENLY.
L.B.G.G. HAS HIS HEAD DOWN AND
BUMPS INTO HIM)

L.B.G.G. (RUBBING HIS HEAD) Oh! Frog.
FROG (RUBBING HIS BACK WHERE L.B.G.G. HAS BUMPED INTO HIM)
Ssssh!
L.B.G.G. (WHISPERS) Why did you stop?
FROG (ALSO WHISPERING) To ask you a question.
L.B.G.G. What was the question?
FROG I've forgotten. You bumped it out of me.
L.B.G.G. I've been thinking too. And now I can't remember what I was thinking about. (RUBS HEAD AGAIN)
FROG (REMEMBERS FIRST) I know why I stopped. Do you think this creep walk will help us surprise The Troll?
L.B.G.G. I don't know. Can you think of anything better?
FROG No. (THINKING) Could we creep more softly?
L.B.G.G. I've been creeping as softly as I can.
I do wish I could remember what I was thinking about.
(SIGHS, SHAKES HEAD, THEN SPEAKS IN SING-SONG VOICE)
Now what was I going to say,
It must have been important.
I thought of it along the way.....

FROG (QUICKLY) P'raps it was ... maybe we oughtant!

L.B.G.G. Maybe we oughtant! Don't you mean maybe we shouldn't?

FROG Yes. That's it. Maybe we shouldn't.

L.B.G.G. Maybe we shouldn't what?

FROG Maybe we shouldn't go to see The Troll.

L.B.G.G. Frog. Are you getting scared?

FROG (KNEES SHAKING) Scared. Who ... me?

L.B.G.G. Yes. You. I can't see anybody else about. And your knees are shaking.

FROG My knees might be shaking. (FIRMLY) But I'm not.

L.B.G.G. If you are sure The Troll isn't a giant ... then tell your knees not to shake.

FROG Please unshake knees, be firm and strong,
I've seen The Troll, he's only small.
I'm sure I'm right; I can't be wrong.....

L.B.G.G. (QUICKLY) Is he really about that tall?
(HAND OUTSTRETCHED, INDICATING
HEIGHT. FROG NODS AND TRIES TO STOP
HIS KNEES FROM SHAKING.
L.B.B.G. TRIES TO HELP HIM.
LIGHT DIMS AND SHOWS THE TROLL)

TROLL (HAS JUST FINISHED HANGING OUT HIS WASHING ON A
CLOTHES LINE STRUNG BETWEEN A COUPLE OF TREES.
STRIPED SOCKS, NIGHT CAP ETC. HE IS ABOUT TO PICK UP HIS
EMPTY BASKET WHEN HE STOPS AND LISTENS)
I thought I heard voices. Ssssh. I can't hear anything now. Ssssh.
I'd better whisper. I don't want to frighten them away. Ssssh.
I am sure I heard somebody talking.
(PLACES HAND TO EAR AND LISTENS)
Can't hear anybody. (PEERS ABOUT) Can't see anybody.
(PAUSE ... THEN PICKS UP EMPTY BASKET)
Just in case, I'll pop back underneath the bridge and get ready for my joke.
(THE TROLL SCUTTLES BACK
UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE.
LIGHTS ARE NOW ON THE WHOLE
BRIDGE SCENE)

(FROG & L.B.G.G. HAVE ALMOST
REACHED THE BRIDGE. THEY STOP)

L.B.G.G. Was that you talking, Frog?

FROG No. I thought it was you.

L.B.G.G. P'raps it was The Troll. (LOOKS AROUND)

FROG Could have been. He does talk to himself. (ALSO LOOKS ABOUT) I can't see him, though.

TROLL (IS SITTING UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE. HE IS GRINNING AND CAN HARDLY WAIT TO TRY OUT HIS JOKE)

(FROG & L.B.G.G. HESITATE. BOTH OF THEM ARE NOW SHAKING. WHICH ONE WILL PLACE THEIR FOOT ON THE BRIDGE FIRST? THE TROLL IS READY)

FROG Let's try and get over the bridge. I'll go first. (HE RAISES HIS FOOT VERY HIGH)

TROLL (OPENS HIS MOUTH TO ROAR, BUT FROG DOESN'T PUT HIS FOOT ON THE BRIDGE. HE PULLS IT BACK. THE TROLL CLOSES HIS MOUTH AND MAKES AN EXASPERATED MOVEMENT WITH HIS ARM. IT MEANS ... 'DASH IT ALL. WHY DIDN'T FROG PUT HIS FOOT ON THE BRIDGE?')

L.B.G.G. Do you want me to go first?

FROG If you really want to.....(HE GENTLY PUSHES L.B.G.G. FORWARD)

L.B.G.G. All right. (THIS TIME L.B.G.G. RAISES HIS FOOT VERY HIGH)

TROLL (AGAIN OPENS HIS MOUTH TO ROAR. L.B.G.G. DOESN'T PUT HIS FOOT ON THE BRIDGE. THE SAME THING HAPPENS.

THE TROLL CLOSES HIS MOUTH AND MAKES THE SAME 'DASH IT ALL' ARM MOVEMENT ETC.)

FROG How about if we both step on the bridge together?

L.B.G.G. That's a good idea. (THEY BOTH RAISE THEIR FEET VERY HIGH)

TROLL (ONCE MORE TROLL OPENS HIS MOUTH. FROG AND L.B.G.G. BRING THEIR FEET BACK. TROLL CLOSES HIS MOUTH. SAME PROCEDURE AS BEFORE)

L.B.G.G. Oh dear! I do wish I could be sure he won't eat us up.

FROG So do I.

L.B.G.G. (REPRIMANDING) Oh Frog! You haven't been talking froggle all this

time, have you?

FROG (WHISPERING) No, I haven't. (THEN ADMITTING)
I didn't say he wouldn't eat us up. I said he wasn't a big, fat, ugly giant.

L.B.G.G. Frog, I'm scared.

FROG So am I.

L.B.G.G. (GATHERING COURAGE) We've come this far. We can't give up now.

FROG (REGAINING COMPOSURE) You are quite right. We WILL go over that bridge. Come on.

(FROG PLACES HIS FOOT ON THE BRIDGE AND BEFORE L.B.G.G. HAS TIME TO FOLLOW. THE TROLL ROARS.)

TROLL WHO IS THAT TRIPPING OVER MY BRIDGE?

FROG (FALLS INTO L.B.G.G'S ARMS) Did you hear that?

L.B.G.G. I would be deaf if I hadn't.

FROG I only put my foot on it. Never had time to walk ... or trip.
(THE TROLL GIGGLES QUIETLY TO HIMSELF)

L.B.G.G. Shall we try again?
(FROG SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS)

Do you think it will be all right?
(FROG SHRUGS AGAIN)

Frog, are you sure The Troll isn't a giant?
(FROG ISN'T TOO SURE ABOUT ANYTHING ANY MORE)

What if we march onto the bridge?

FROG (BRIGHTENING) Yes. That's what we'll do. We will march. Just like soldiers. Are you ready?

L.B.G.G. As ready as I ever will be.

FROG (GETTING CONTROL OF HIMSELF AGAIN) Right. Get behind me.
Quick march. Left. Right. Left. Right.
(THEY MARCH QUICKLY UP TO THE
BRIDGE AND GET
ALMOST HALF-WAY ACROSS)

TROLL (FINDS HIS LOUD VOICE AGAIN) WHO IS THAT TRAMPING OVER
MY BRIDGE?
(FROG & L.B.G.G. FREEZE THEN PULL
THEMSELVES TOGETHER)

FROG (SMALL VOICE) It is Frog.

L.B.G.G. (ALSO A SMALL VOICE) And Little Billy Goat Gruff.

TROLL IS THAT SO. NOW I AM COMING TO EAT YOU UP.
(FROG & L.B.G.G. TURN AND RUN BACK
OVER THE BRIDGE. IN THEIR HURRY
THEY FALL OVER ONE ANOTHER WHEN
THEY GET TO THE END OF THE BRIDGE)

TROLL (COMES OUT FROM UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE AND STANDS
NEAR THEM. HE IS GRINNING AND SPEAKS IN HIS NORMAL
VOICE) Hello there.
(HE PROFFERS A HAND TO HELP THEM
GET UP)

I hope you're not hurt.

FROG (FROG AND L.B.G.G. ARE STILL SCARED BUT FROG PUTS UP A
GOOD FRONT) Don't you touch us.

TROLL Don't you want me to help you?

L.B.G.G. Who are you?

TROLL (PROUDLY) I'm The Troll.

FROG Were you shouting at us?

TROLL Only in fun.

L.B.G.G. In fun! I didn't think it was very funny.

FROG I'd rather you didn't shout.

TROLL I'm not shouting now. (OFFERS HIS HAND AGAIN)

FROG (GAINING CONFIDENCE) I told you not to touch us.

TROLL Oh! (DRAWS HAND AWAY)

FROG Why did you shout when we walked over the bridge?

TROLL I was only having a joke.

L.B.G.G. And you weren't going to eat us up?

TROLL Do you really think I could eat anybody up?

L.B.G.G. Well, I don't suppose you really look like a feral predator.

TROLL Of course I'm not a feral predator.

L.B.G.G. But you are pretty big. Bigger than us.

TROLL No, I'm not.

L.B.G.G. Yes, you are.

TROLL I'm only as big as you.

FROG That's what I first thought. (STARES AT TROLL) But you look bigger now.

TROLL That's because you are lying down.
(FROG AND L.B.G.G. LOOK AT EACH OTHER ... THEN GRIN AND SIT UP)

L.B.G.G. You are still bigger than us.

TROLL That's because you are only sitting up.
(FROG AND L.B.G.G. LOOK AT EACH OTHER AGAIN. THEY LAUGH AND THE TROLL HELPS THEM UP)

TROLL You see. We are about the same size. I couldn't eat anybody up. Now, could I?
(FROG & L.B.G.G. WALK AROUND THE TROLL. THEY LOOK HIM UP AND DOWN AND DECIDE HE REALLY IS ALL RIGHT)

FROG & L.B.G.G. No.

FROG But why did you do it?

TROLL (A LITTLE CRESTFALLEN) I suppose it was a bit silly. But I thought if I could get someone to laugh, I'd have a friend.

FROG Haven't you got any friends?

TROLL Not in The Wood.

L.B.G.G. And you'll never get any if you carry on like that.

TROLL Sorry, Little Billy Goat Gruff.

L.B.G.G. Say sorry to Frog, too.

TROLL Sorry to Frog, too.

FROG Troll talks twaddle. (THEY LAUGH)

L.B.G.G. We'd better go and stop the meeting.

TROLL What meeting?

FROG The Wood People are working out a plan to cross the bridge.

TROLL (SURPRISED) Why can't they cross the bridge?

L.B.G.G. Because they are frightened of you.

TROLL (MORE SURPRISED) Why are they frightened of me?

FROG Well, we were. Weren't we?

TROLL (HAPPY) But you're not now?

FROG Of course not.

TROLL Because I was only joking.

L.B.G.G. You've said that before.

FROG We know it and you know it. But the rest of the Wood People don't know it.

TROLL Can't you tell them that it was only a joke?

L.B.G.G. They wouldn't believe him.

TROLL Why don't you go and tell them?

L.B.G.G. Because they wouldn't believe me, either. I'm too young and Frog talks froggle.

TROLL Froggle! What's froggle?

FROG (BREAKS FORTH INTO A CHANT - WITH ACTIONS)
Froggle's when us chaps, are hopping around perhaps,

And talking about what makes our Froggy day.
We don't go croak croak --- croak croak.

TROLL Oh!

FROG We just fools the human folk,
We talk froggle when we pass the time away.

(SOME FROGGLE, OGGLE, OGGLE NOISES
HERE)

When we've gobbled down some flies,
And our tummy is twice the size.
We close our eyes and froggle this and that.

TROLL (ASTOUNDED) Do you really like old flies?

FROG (CONTINUES HIS CHANT) Any shape and any size. (PEERS INTO
AUDIENCE) Is that one out there on that little boy's cap? I'd like to get the
fat one on that cap.

TROLL Well, if froggle's what YOU do.....

FROG (QUICKLY) Cross my heart, it's true.

TROLL Then I suppose you Gruff's talk gruffle! (THEY LAUGH)
About this meeting The Wood People are having. Couldn't we have a
meeting to decide what to tell their meeting?

L.B.G.G. Frog doesn't like meetings.

FROG That's right. But I've got an idea that just might work.

L.B.G.G. I knew you'd fix it Frog. I just knew you'd think of something. I just knew
you would. Tell us what to do.

(LIGHT FADES AS THE THREE OF THEM
GET INTO A HUDDLE. LIGHT IS NOW
BACK ON THE WOOD SCENE WHERE THE
MEETING HAS BEEN ABANDONED.
IT WASN'T VERY SUCCESSFUL. THE TWO
BILLY GOATS GRUFF AND THE WOOD
PEOPLE ARE SEARCHING FOR L.B.G.G.
WE CAN HEAR THEM CALLING)
Little Gruff. Little Gruff. Little Gruff.

B.B.G.G. (ENTERS L.S. WITH BILBY) I just don't know where Little Gruff can be.

BILBY We've been searching for ages.

S.B.G.G. (ENTERS WITH ELF L.S) Did you see him?

(B.B.G.G. AND BILBY SHAKE THEIR HEADS)

ELF We've looked in all the likely places.

B.B.G.G. (TRYING TO REMEMBER WHERE L.B.G.G. WAS WHEN THEY LAST SAW HIM) We left him here doing his creep walk.

BILBY But that was a long time ago.

ELF Before we even started our meeting.

S.B.G.G. We didn't get very far with that, did we?

ELF We've been far too busy looking for Little Billy Goat Gruff.

BILBY I do wish he hadn't wandered away.

S.B.G.G. You'll have to speak with him, Big Gruff.

B.B.G.G. I'll speak to him alright!

BILBY I wonder if he met up with Frog.

ELF If he has we might never find him.

S.B.G.G. That's true. We all know what Frog is like.

BILBY He's not that bad.

S.B.G.G. He's not that good, either.

(FROG AND L.B.G.G. ENTER FROM R.S. THEY ARE HAPPY AND HUMMING A FROGGLE SONG. THEY STOP SUDDENLY WHEN THEY SEE THE DEJECTED GROUP)

L.B.G.G. Hello everybody.

ELF (IGNORES GREETING) Where have you two been?

(FROG AND L.B.G.G. ARE STILL IN A HAPPY MOOD. THEY HAVEN'T YET REALISED THEY HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE OF SOME CONCERN. THEY ARE FLIPPANT IN THEIR REPLIES. THE FOLLOWING LINES ARE SPOKEN IN A SING-SONG VOICE)

FROG We've been to see The Troll,

L.B.G.G. He's only as big as a doll.

FROG He's not ugly or fat,

L.B.G.G. But he's bigger than a cat

FROG And.....

ELF (STOPS THIS NONSENSE BY CUTTING IN QUICKLY) I said, Where have you two been?

FROG (STILL FLUSHED WITH SUCCESS) We've been to see the Queen.

ELF Really Frog. Have you no sense of responsibility?

L.B.G.G. But we.....

BILBY (INTERRUPTING) Please let Elf finish Little Billy Goat Gruff. We have been very worried about you.

FROG (BEING CHEEKY) You do look a bit flat Pinky. (BILBY LOOKS AT L.B.G.G. AND L.B.G.G. FROWNS AT FROG. FROG APOLOGISES) Sorry Bilby.

BILBY That's all right. But we really have been worried.

S.B.G.G. It's true. We haven't had time to think about our problem.

FROG What problem?

S.B.G.G. You've got a short memory, Frog.

FROG (LOOKING ABOUT) Have I forgotten something?

ELF What about The Troll?

B.B.G.G. You told me you were going to fix him.

FROG Oh yes. I did ... didn't I?

B.B.G.G. That's right. Now will you please tell us where you have been?

ELF And we don't want to hear any more about that Queen stuff.

L.B.G.G. (GETTING EXCITED) Frog and I h.....

B.B.G.G. (INTERRUPTING) We were asking Frog, Little Billy Goat Gruff. Well, Frog?

FROG (SLIGHTLY CHEEKY AGAIN) I'm quite well thank you Big Billy Goat Gruff.

B.B.G.G. (HAS HAD ENOUGH AND SHOUTS) I AM NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR HEALTH FROG.

FROG Oh!

S.B.G.G. Frog. Where did you take Little Gruff?

FROG I took him to see The Troll.

ELF The Queen. Now The Troll. Frog, be serious.

L.B.G.G. He is serious. He did t.....

ELF Nobody is asking you Little Billy Goat Gruff. We know Frog is your friend.....

L.B.G.G. (QUICKLY) Oh why.....

B.B.G.G. (FIRMLY) That is enough. Now Frog will you please explain.

FROG (AT LAST REALISING IT IS GOING TO BE HARD TO CONVINCING THE WOOD PEOPLE) We ... er ... er ... had a meeting of our own ... and ... er ...

ELF (IMPATIENTLY) Go on. Go on.

FROG And ... (QUICKLY) we've thought of a way to get across the bridge and trick The Troll.

B.B.G.G. (SURPRISED) You have!

FROG (GAINING CONFIDENCE) Yes. We have.

ELF (GETTING MORE IMPATIENT) Well. Come on. Come on.

S.B.G.G. Yes. Hurry up and tell us all about it.

FROG We think it would be a good idea to send Little Billy Goat Gruff across first. (THE WOOD PEOPLE SHAKE THEIR HEADS)

BILBY That sounds like a pretty silly idea Frog.

ELF It certainly is.

S.B.G.G. I won't hear of it.

B.B.G.G. And I won't hear of it either.

L.B.G.G. I'll be all right. I really will.

B.B.G.G. NO!

FROG We've worked it out. It will be all right.

BILBY How have you worked it out?

FROG When The Troll threatens to eat him up, Little Gruff will say that he is far too small.

ELF I don't see how that will work.

FROG Yes, it will. The Troll only likes big dinners.

L.B.G.G. And I am going to say:
(IN A SMALL SING SONG VOICE)
Please don't eat me, I am far too small.
I'm only little, I'm not tall.
A larger goat is coming soon,
Wait for him. He'll fill your spoon.

ELF That sounds like some of Frog's froggle.

BILBY But it might just work.

L.B.G.G. It will. It will.

B.B.G.G. And I'll go with him to see that it does.

FROG No ... er ... No ... you can't go ... er ...

B.B.G.G. Why not?

(L.B.G.G. GIVES FROG A 'NOSE' SIGN
LANGUAGE)

FROG Well ... er ... The Troll will smell you and that would spoil everything.

B.B.G.G. (PUZZLED) Smell me!

(MORE SIGN LANGUAGE FROM L.B.G.G.
WHO POINTS TO HIS EARS)

FROG No. Not smell. Hear. He will hear you.

L.B.G.G. That's right. Don't you come. I'll be all right with Frog.

FROG Yes. I'll protect him.

ELF You. Protect him!

L.B.G.G. He will. He will.

S.B.G.G. You know. It could work. But do you think we could take the chance?

B.B.G.G. If he is willing to try, I think we should let him.

L.B.G.G. And when I get across the bridge I will wave to you from the hill.

ELF But what about Second Bill Goat Gruff? How will he manage?

FROG Second Gruff will say the same as Little Gruff.

BILBY And what about Big Billy Goat Gruff?

FROG Er ... he says the same thing.

BILBY But he will be the last to cross the bridge.
FROG We know that. But The Troll won't know ... will he?
ELF That would be cheating.
FROG Please, Elf. Don't be an old fuddy-duddy.
(THE OTHERS AGREE)

S.B.G.G. I'd like to have a practice first.
B.B.G.G. Now, that sounds like a good idea.
FROG All right. Elf, you climb on to Bilby's shoulders.
ELF Why?
FROG You and Bilby can make out to be The Troll.
(ELF AND BILBY LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER. SHRUG, THEN OBLIGE)

L.B.G.G. Try and look fierce and ugly, Elf.
(L.B.G.G. GRINS A SECRET JOKE WITH FROG)

FROG Now off you go Little Gruff and show them what to do.
L.B.G.G. (WALKS SLOWLY ACROSS THE STAGE)
Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap.
(STOPS WHEN HE GETS IN FRONT OF BILBY AND ELF. THEY LOOK FIERCE.
MIMES THERE IS ANOTHER GRUFF COMING SOON.
ELF AND BILBY GIVE HIM THE NOD TO GO ON HIS WAY.
L.B.G.G. QUICKLY CONTINUES)
Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap.
(WHEN HE GETS TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STAGE HE WAVES HIS HAND TO THE OTHERS. THEY WAVE BACK)

FROG Your turn, Second Gruff.
(SAME PROCEDURE AS BEFORE EXCEPT 'TRIP TRAP' IS A LITTLE LOUDER.
THE OTHER CHARACTERS CAN JOIN IN BY SAYING 'TRIP TRAP TRIP TRAP' AS WELL.
WHEN S.B.G.G. JOINS UP WITH L.B.G.G. THEY BOTH WAVE TO THE OTHERS.)

Mustn't think about that. Fancy them thinking I was a feral predator.
Nobody likes feral predators.

They will come back. They will come back.

(TROLL CLOSES EYES AND WALKS UP AND DOWN THE STAGE
REPEATING) They will come back. They will come back.

(FROG & L.B.G.G. ENTER FROM C.S. THEY
SEE THE TROLL WALKING UP AND DOWN
WITH HIS EYES CLOSED. FROG AND
L.B.G.G. STOP AND GRIN. PLACING THEIR
FINGERS TO THEIR LIPS, THEY CREEP UP
TO THE TROLL AND FOLLOW HIM. HE
TURNS AROUND, BUMPS INTO THEM
AND GETS A FRIGHT)

TROLL You frightened me. (LAUGHS)

FROG You did say you wanted us to come back, didn't you?

(MIMICS THE TROLL. HE WALKS UP AND
DOWN THE STAGE WITH HIS EYES
CLOSED AND REPEATS)

They will come back. They will come back. The will come back.

L.B.G.G. (WALKS BEHIND FROG, BUT WITH EYES OPEN) We are back. We
are back. We are back. (THE THREE LAUGH)

TROLL I am so glad, too. Now ... tell me. What happened?

L.B.G.G. They agreed.

FROG They agreed.

TROLL Then let's get into action. If we dilly dally too long they might think I have
eaten you up.

(L.B.G.G. GOES OVER TO THE BRIDGE
AND COMMENCES TO WALK ACROSS.
THE TROLL MAKES OUT HE IS CHASING
HIM. FROG PULLS HIM BACK. IT IS
GREAT FUN AND THEY ARE VERY
HAPPY)

TROLL (IN HIS BIG VOICE) WHO'S THAT WALKING OVER MY BRIDGE?

L.B.G.G. (NOT FRIGHTENED, BUT MAKING OUT TO BE) I'm the Littlest Billy
Goat Gruff.

TROLL THEN I AM COMING TO EAT YOU UP.

L.B.G.G. Oh please don't take me I'm far too small.
Please wait for Second Gruff.
I'm sure you'll find him big enough.

TROLL VERY WELL. BE OFF WITH YOU.

(L.B.G.G. SKIPS ACROSS THE BRIDGE.
LIGHTS DIM ON THE BRIDGE AND COME
UP ON THE HILL AND WOOD SCENES.
L.B.G.G. CAN BE SEEN WAVING TO THE
WOOD PEOPLE. THEY ARE ALL
DELIGHTED AND WAVE BACK.
DARKNESS THEN DESCENDS UPON THE
HILL AND IN THE WOOD. LIGHTS UP
UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE. THE TROLL
AND FROG ARE VERY EXCITED AND
BEGIN TO DANCE. SOON THEY ARE
JOINED BY L.B.G.G.)

L.B.G.G. Whacky Woo! We did it. We did it.

FROG We tricked them. We tricked them.

TROLL We sure did. Soon I'll have lots of friends.

(THEY FORM A CIRCLE AND JOIN HANDS.
AS THEY CHANT THE NEXT FEW LINES
TOGETHER, THEY CLAP HANDS FIRST
TOGETHER AND THEN WITH ONE
ANOTHER)

TOGETHER It is good to have friends,
Friends, friends, friends,
You can walk with friends and talk with friends,
It is good to have friends,
Friends, friends, friends.

(THEY BREAK AWAY AND LAUGH.)

FROG (BECOMES SERIOUS) I think it is about time you went back up the hill,
Little Gruff. It won't be long before Second Gruff arrives.

L.B.G.G. All right, Frog. Make it sound realistic, Troll.

FROG He doesn't want to overdo it. We don't want to frighten Second Gruff away.

L.B.G.G. (SKIPS ON TO THE BRIDGE - WAVES TO HIS TWO FRIENDS THEN DISAPPEARS OVER THE HILL)

FROG I had better hide underneath the bridge with you. We don't want Second Gruff to see us.

(FROG AND TROLL BOTH GO UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE.
S.B.G.G. ENTERS C.S. HE LOOKS A LITTLE SCARED BUT IS THINKING IF L.B.G.G. CAN DO IT, SO CAN HE.
LOOKS ABOUT AND STEPS CAREFULLY ON TO THE BRIDGE)

TROLL WHO IS THAT TRIPPING OVER MY BRIDGE?
(GRINS WITH FROG WHO IS ENJOYING THE JOKE)

S.B.G.G. (SMALLISH VOICE) It is I, Second Billy Goat Gruff.

TROLL (REALLY ENJOYING HIMSELF) THEN I AM COMING TO EAT YOU UP.

S.B.G.G. No. No. Please don't take me.
I am not very large.
There is a bigger goat coming soon.
I'm sure you'll find he'll fit your spoon.

TROLL VERY WELL. BE OFF WITH YOU.
(S.B.G.G. RUNS OVER THE BRIDGE AND THE SAME LIGHTING AS BEFORE.
DARKNESS ON THE BRIDGE AND LIGHTS ON THE HILL AND WOOD SCENE.
L.B.G.G. AND S.B.G.G. CAN BE SEEN WAVING TO THE WOOD PEOPLE. THEY ARE VERY HAPPY AND EXCITED.
DARKNESS THEN DESCENDS UPON THE HILL AND IN THE WOOD.
LIGHTS ARE NOW UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE WHERE TROLL AND FROG ARE ECSTATIC. THEY ARE BOTH DANCING AND CONGRATULATING ONE ANOTHER)

TROLL Wacky Woo. We did it again. Ha ha.

FROG Can't wait to see Second Gruff's face when he sees you.

TROLL Friends, friends, friends. Isn't this fun, Frog?
(FROG AND THE TROLL ARE SOON
JOINED BY L.B.G.G. AND S.B.G.G..)

TROLL Hello Second Gruff.

S.B.G.G. (S.B.G.G. CAN HARDLY BELIEVE HIS EYES) Who is this?

FROG He is The Troll.

L.B.G.G. I told you he was only small.

S.B.G.G. I can't believe it. You've got a voice like a giant.

TROLL No, I haven't.

FROG Yes, you have. That other voice.

TROLL DO YOU MEAN THIS ONE?

S.B.G.G. (SLIGHTLY SHAKEN BY THE EXPERIENCE) You mean you have two voices?

TROLL I only use the other one for fun.

S.B.G.G. Some fun. I'd better go and tell B.B.G.G..

L.B.G.G. (STOPS HIM) No. Don't do that.

FROG Troll has got to prove to everyone that he is really quite nice. It is no good of just telling them. They won't believe you.

S.B.G.G. I suppose you are right. Well. What do we do now? Will we go back on the hill and wait?

FROG No. There is no need to do that. We'll all wait underneath the bridge.

S.B.G.G. All right. Do you know, this is really quite good fun.
(THEY MOVE UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE
AND WAIT

B.B.G.G. ENTERS C.S. AND COMMENCES
TO WALK ON TO THE BRIDGE AFTER
CAREFULLY LOOKING AROUND. HE
DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE VERY SCARED)

TROLL WHO IS THAT TRAMPING OVER MY BRIDGE?

B.B.G.G. (USING HIS BIG VOICE) IT IS I BIG BILLY GOAT GRUFF.

(THE FOUR UNDERNEATH THE BRIDGE
LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER IN SURPRISE.
THEY HADN'T EXPECTED B.B.G.G. TO
USE HIS BIG VOICE)

- TROLL (TROLL IS NOT PERTURBED) THEN I AM COMING TO EAT YOU UP.
- B.B.G.G. (UNBEKNOWN TO THE OTHERS, B.B.G.G. HAS DECIDED TO CALL TROLL'S BLUFF)
COME ALONG THEN AND SEE WHO IS GOING TO EAT WHOM!
(OH DEAR! NOBODY HAD EXPECTED THAT ANSWER. TROLL STARTS TO SHAKE. FROG STARTS TO SHAKE. IN FACT THEY ALL START TO SHAKE)
WELL. COME ALONG THEN. I'M READY WHEN YOU ARE.
- TROLL (SPEAKING IN A SMALL VOICE TO THE OTHERS) I've lost my big voice.
- B.B.G.G. WELL. HAVE YOU LOST YOUR VOICE, OR SOMETHING?
(TROLL HAS NO VOICE. HE JUST NODS)
- LOST YOUR LEGS, TOO?
- TROLL (MORE NODDING FROM THE TROLL. FROG, L.B.G.G. AND S.B.G.G. ALSO NOD)
- B.B.G.G. YOU'RE JUST A BAG OF WIND. ALL NOISE AND NO STOMACH.
- TROLL (LOOKS DOWN AT HIS STOMACH WHICH IS VERY FLAT. HE NODS SOME MORE)
- B.B.G.G. NOW. BEFORE I CROSS THE BRIDGE, I AM COMING DOWN TO EAT YOU UP. HOW DO YOU LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT?
(THE TROLL SHAKES HIS HEAD. B.B.G.G. COMES DOWN FROM THE BRIDGE AND IS ALL READY TO CHARGE WHEN HE SEES FROG)
- B.B.G.G. GOOD GRACIOUS, FROG. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE THE TROLL?
- FROG (SMALL, SQUEAKY VOICE) Of course not. (GETTING BRAVER) But I'm his friend.
- B.B.G.G. YOU'RE THE TROLL'S FRIEND! YOU MUST BE OUT OF YOUR

MIND. YOU CAN'T BE THE TROLL'S FRIEND.

FROG (STANDING HIS GROUND) I am The Troll's friend.

B.B.G.G. YOU'LL BE TELLING ME NEXT THAT LITTLE GRUFF IS ALSO THE TROLL'S FRIEND.

L.B.G.G. (COMING INTO VIEW FROM BEHIND FROG) I am.

B.B.G.G. (TAKES A STEP BACKWARDS. HE CAN HARDLY BELIEVE HIS EYES) I'M SEEING THINGS. I'M HEARING THINGS. (LOSING HIS BIG VOICE) I thought I heard Little Billy Goat Gruff.

FROG (JUMPING UP AND DOWN) You did. You did.

L.B.G.G. (ALSO JUMPING UP AND DOWN) Here I am.

B.B.G.G. I am going mad.

FROG No, you're not.

L.B.G.G. No, you're not.

S.B.G.G. (COMING TO THE RESCUE) Big Gruff, I'm here, too. I'm The Troll's friend and soon you will be his friend.

B.B.G.G. (JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT) His friend! Has everyone gone mad. Where is this Troll?

TROLL (APPEARS FROM BEHIND THE OTHERS AND IN A SMALL VOICE) I am The Troll.

B.B.G.G. You're The Troll. You're The Troll. If you are The Troll ... then I am a Barbie Doll.

TOGETHER He IS The Troll. He IS The Troll.

TROLL I am The Troll. I am The Troll.

(ELF & BILBY ENTER DURING THIS COMMOTION.)

ELF What IS going on?

BILBY Why are you Three Gruffs still here?

ELF Yes. Why aren't you over on the hill?

BILBY And who's that? (POINTING TO THE TROLL)

FROG (PROUDLY) He's The Troll.

(ELF AND BILBY BOTH TAKE A STEP BACKWARDS)

BILBY The Troll! He can't be The Troll.

ELF Frog's talking froggle.

FROG I am not.

BILBY (LOOKING CLOSER AT THE TROLL) He's not big enough.

ELF Yes. And where's his great big voice?

L.B.G.G. He's lost it.

ELF Then he's not The Troll. (TO BIG GRUFF) Is he?

B.B.G.G. (JUST NODS)

BILBY I can't believe it.

FROG (BOASTING) I told you I'd fix him.

L.B.G.G. Frog. Stop talking twaddle.

FROG Froggle.

L.B.G.G. Twaddle or froggle. It doesn't matter. The Troll never needed fixing. He is a jolly funny fellow and I like him.

S.B.G.G. And I like him, too.

B.B.G.G. (MAKING A DECISION) Then if they like him, I like him.

ELF (STILL BEING PERSISTENT) But where is his great big voice?

L.B.G.G. I told you. He's lost it. Haven't you Troll?

TROLL (NODS. HE IS A LITTLE OVERCOME BY THIS FRIENDSHIP)

ELF Then if you promise not to find it again, I suppose we can all be friends.

TROLL (CONTINUES TO NOD AND GRIN)

BILBY And may we come and go over the bridge at any time?

FROG Of course.

ELF We want The Troll to answer.

TROLL (IS STILL NODDING AND GRINNING)

BILBY Can't he talk at all now?

FROG Of course he can.

L.B.G.G. He is just overcome with all of this friendship.

(THE TROLL IS BROUGHT INTO THE
GROUP AND THEY ALL SING AND DANCE

THE FRIENDSHIP SONG)

ALL One of the greatest things of life,
Is to be a friend to someone,
To share the troubles and join the fun
To be a friend to someone.
To have a friend
To be a friend
To meet a friend
To greet a friend
One of the greatest things in life
Is to be a friend to someone.

L.B.G.G. I'm a friend to Second Gruff and he's a friend to me.

S.B.G.G. I'm a friend to Biggest Gruff And jolly good friends we'll be.

B.B.G.G. I'm a friend to friendly Elf and he's a friend to me.

ELF I'm a friend to Froggling Frog And jolly good friends we'll be.

FROG I'm a friend to Happy Troll and he's a friend to me.

BILBY &
TROLL We'll all be friends together And jolly good friends we'll be.
(WHILST STAMPING THEIR FEET TO THE MUSIC, THEY JOIN
HANDS AND SWING THEM TO THE RHYTHM)
One of the greatest things in life
Is to be a friend to someone,
To share the troubles and join the fun
To be a friend to someone.
To have a friend,
To be a friend,
To meet a friend
To greet a friend,
One of the greatest things in life
Is to all be friends together.

(THE PLAY ENDS WITH ALL
CHARACTERS GOING OVER THE BRIDGE
AND SINGING THE FRIENDSHIP SONG
FROG, BILBY, TROLL AND ELF RETURN,
LEAVING THE THREE BILLY GOATS
GRUFF BEHIND ON THE HILL.
THEY WAVE TO EACH OTHER AND THEN
TO THE AUDIENCE.
SLOWLY THE LIGHTS DIM ON ALL BUT
THESE TWO SCENES.

FINALLY FADE ALTOGETHER)

THE END

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