



The story of the troll and the prince

By Oak, 57 years old, 30 years on death row in Florida, 2020

Once upon a time there lived a boy. He was kind, cute and innocent. He lived in the land of giants. There was one giant who was very rough with him. It would tell him he was ugly and that he was a bad boy and a monster. So, he started acting out that role. He grew up in the fashion of a troll. He would rob, steal and kill just to meet his needs. But oh, was he miserable, his inner pain was so haunting. Since he was only concerned with himself, he could never see how beautiful life really was.

Then, on a spring day he went down to a lake with water so clear and pure that he was able to see a face in it. He screamed and hollered at it: "How dare you look upon me in the fashion that you do! Don't you know that I'm the meanest and baddest troll around? With a face like yours I will surely destroy you, for you are weak!"

The face in the water smiled and looked at him with eyes of compassion and said in a gentle voice: "I have known you for a long time, longer than you have known yourself. You have been taught the art of violence and it has brought you much pain as well as others. You have been deceived and you have acted as though your delusions were true. My friend they are not. You are good. You are beauty instead of destruction and darkness. You are a child of light and creativity."

The troll got mad and said "You son of a bitch! How dare you talk to me like that, for I am what I am." With a mighty force he kicked the face in the water causing huge waves to rise and the face disappeared.

The troll left and went down and sat under a tree and fell asleep. He started to dream of a little boy who was so loving and free spirited, so kind and giving, he knew no fear. He saw a giant beating on him and tears of pain in the little boy's eyes. Despite the beating, the little boy was still so sweet. He saw the troll and walked up to him and hugged him, then vanished in the troll's arms.

The troll woke up feeling sad and confused. That dream seemed so real and for some reason he felt as he knew the that boy.

As the sun rose and birds began to chirp their morning love songs to life, the troll listened to them, and wondered why have I not listened to them before? (or have I?)

He decided to go back to the lake, for he was very thirsty. He remembered the face he had destroyed the day before. Now that brought a smile to his face, but only for a second, because when he reached the shore, there was the face with the eyes of compassion looking into his with much warmth.

The troll was really confused and said, "This cannot be for you are dead. How is it that I see you?"

This time the face did not say anything but let his eyes go deeper into the troll's eyes. All of a sudden, the troll began to "see" his whole life from the beginning until the time of his death. The more he realized how false his life had been the clearer the face in the

water became and he realized that it was his own reflection. It was truly his face and it was beautiful, for a radiant light shone from it.

He heard an inner voice say, “My child, you have finally come home. I have been waiting for you all this time. You are no longer called a troll but a prince of light. You have known sadness, pain and suffering, hate and destruction. Now you will know the joy of giving yourself to life. Your radiance shall flow.

No longer will you hate others because you hate yourself. You will share the blessings life has bestowed upon you. There is no longer a need to feel sorry for yourself, for you are truly strong.”

The prince wept with joy for he knew that he was free. The troll died there at the lake of consciousness, and in its place the prince arose.

So, if you ever go to a quiet lake and “see” the eyes of compassion don’t be afraid for they are yours, your true self shining through waiting for you to come home.

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