

A story for Mathilde about the fishing trip to Trollvatnet

This was something Fritz and I had talked about for a long time. We were still young, so our mothers would not let us go up on the mountain without an adult coming with us, but for us the excitement was to go on our own. We had often talked about this. The lake we wanted to go to was “Trollvatnet”, Troll lake, and it was so far in over the mountain that we would have to camp out over night before we could start on our way back home.

It wasn't easy to talk to my mother into letting me go. “You are too young to go that far in over the mountain with Fritz who is even younger than you,” she said. Fritz whined to his mother too, and one day he came running down to our house and was very excited about what would happen now. His mother had said that if I had permission to go, he could come along. My mother looked at us with stern eyes when we told her, but she probably felt it was difficult for her not to give in, and in the end I was allowed to go on this fishing trip, too. We were moving fast. The first thing that came to mind was to find worms for bait. Digging for worms was also exciting because with that the fishing trip had already started. We found a can to keep the worms in, and we had to have a hoe to dig in the soil. We were going to dig under an old cow barn that was used in the summer. We had to crawl to get into the narrow space under the barn. Fritz was going to use the hoe, and my job was to get the worms into the can, but then something dramatic happens: I let out an ear piercing scream, lost the can and grabbed my head. After a while I grew very quiet, and I felt my fingers getting sticky, and I noticed something trickling down my forehead and when I looked at my fingers I saw blood. It frightened Fritz when he saw me bleeding. He had hit me on the head with the hoe. But it wasn't his fault, because I had poked my head under the hoe so fast when he lowered it that he hit me in the head. What were we to do now? Maybe we were not allowed to go after all. There was a lot of blood, but it didn't hurt. It probably looked worse than it was since my face was covered in blood. We had to go to Fritz's house, and you can imagine his mother was upset when she saw me. She brought me inside and tried to wash away the blood and when I was cleaned up it didn't look that bad. I was put on the divan, and had to rest there for an hour. We were very worried at this point, maybe we were not allowed to go on, but after a while we had permission to go on our trip. Fritz's father came with us to the barn to help dig for the worms we needed, and then we were ready to go.

To reach the lake we had to row a boat for a while, and then we had a long hike over the mountain to get to Trollvatnet. We talked about why it was called Trollvatnet - Troll lake – perhaps a real Troll lived there? We were a little scared, but we also thought about the big fish we were going to catch, so we stopped worrying. We had a lot to carry. We were going to sleep in a tent, and with all the supplies we had it was a heavy load. I felt a little sorry for myself, I had a hole in my head after the hoe hit me there, but after a while it wasn't so bad, and I had a bandaid over the cut after all. We had a nice hike up the mountain, and it was a little exciting. At first we saw grouse hatchlings, and the grouse chicks flapped all over the place. They were very cute. Then we saw a little rabbit, but it didn't get too close. It was very shy and set off into the woods. After a while we understood why it was so scared. A large eagle circled above us in the air. An eagle catches rabbits, it is part of what they eat to survive. At this point we were high up on the

mountain, and we were almost there. We had never been there before so we were anxious. But then it was this thing about the troll, maybe a troll lived there after all. We walked through a wooded area so it was a little spooky. At this point we were almost there, but we could not see the lake yet. Then something happens that makes us freeze. We hear a horrendous roar and then we can hear water splashing. We were not sure if we wanted to walk any further. We tried to hide behind a boulder, but we also knew that troll can smell humans from far away, so we cried a little. It was now completely quiet, and then we wanted to continue. We tried to sneak along, and we couldn't step on dry twigs because then the troll could hear us. We were now far enough along that we could catch a glimpse of the lake. Fritz was in front now and all of a sudden he sees something, deep tracks on the ground from something huge that had walked towards the lake. It was too late to turn back and we crawled so we were out of view of the troll. We were so close to the lake at this point that we crawled behind a small mound so we could watch what was going on. We were face down in the grass, and we could barely peek over the mound. Then something happens: away from us at a distance, on the other side of the river's mouth, something moves. At this point we are terrified. We can't see what it is, but it's huge. We can see that it is brown, and it has hair all over. After a few moments we can see that something is happening over there, and then it is too much for us and we have to close our eyes. . We didn't move, and we talked quietly about what to do next. We agreed to wait and see what happens next. Suddenly, with eyes as big as saucers, in the spot where we saw the troll, we now see big antlers, and a huge animal appears. We quickly see that what we thought was a troll is in fact a moose. Guess who were happy now.

I don't know if a moose roars, but we wanted to believe that is what we heard, and that is who splashed in the water when it swam across the river's mouth. Later the moose walked along and disappeared into the woods, and we could continue our fishing trip. The lake was completely still, and we could see fish jumping all over the surface. This happened a long time ago, and at that time most people didn't have fishing rods. We had to make our own from what we found in the woods, that was just the way it was back then, and that was not a problem. We had a piece of string with a hook in one end, and that was it. Now the excitement set in, and we saw many big fishes in the water. It is always like this that when you see a fish in the water it always seems bigger than when you pull it up on land. We spent some time fishing, and then it is Fritz who gets a nice trout on the hook. The first catch. We caught many that evening, and in spite of the excitement earlier on, we agreed that it was a very good fishing trip. It was getting late so we had to pitch the tent, and we were hungry. We had completely forgotten that we had to eat, so we had to build a fire in a hurry. We fried fish and enjoyed ourselves. The following day we had to pack up and go home. The return trip went well. We had probably grown a little from everything we experienced on the way up to the lake. Fritz and I were good friends, and we agreed that it had been a good and eventful trip.

Morfar (maternal grandfather)

(Translated by Schweig Dreyer)