

Nora carefully crept out of her bed being sure to not make any noise. She tip-toed over to her backpack to retrieve the supplies she had purchased earlier in the day. As Nora went through her bag making sure she had everything she needed, she noticed something that wasn't there before. It was an old leather-bound book that looked like it was handwritten. After examining the book, Nora realized that it was someone's journal. Nora started flipping through the pages when a piece of paper fell out and onto the floor. It was a note.

I hope this book finds you before your encounter. These creatures are terrible things. You have no idea what you are going up against. Catching one will not be easy as it has never been done before. I hope this prepares you for what lye ahead. I wish you the best.

Good Luck,

Agatha

Nora had so many questions, how did the old woman manage to get the book in her backpack without her knowing? How did she know so much about sock trolls? Could just a normal girl like herself be the first to catch one? After a moment of doubt, Nora gathered herself and became more determined than ever. "I have to do this." She quietly said.

Nora placed the book back inside her bag and threw it

over her shoulder. After Nora was sure she had everything she needed, she headed down stairs to begin setting her trap. Nora moved with great caution, watching every step trying to remember where all the creeks in the floor were. As she reached the laundry room, she set her backpack down. Nora opened the bag and started pulling out the string, the glue traps, the net, and of course the thick athletic socks. She started by placing a sock in the middle of the room, then she tied a string around the sock and led it to the back corner where she would be waiting. Next came setting the string up around the perimeter of the room, Nora then started placing the glue traps down starting by the door. Piece by piece she laid the glue traps until she cornered herself into the back corner. Finally, she tied the string that led to the sock around her wrist. Once everything was set, Nora took a moment to admire her trap. She smiled with a sense of pride at how well she thought it had turned out. Nora slumped into her corner and began to wait.

Seconds turned to minutes, minutes turned to hours, and still no sign of any troll. Did the old woman fool her? Did Nora spend all this time and energy on some sort of joke? Nora started to lose hope.

"Maybe I just need to take my mind off this for a little bit." she said to herself. Nora pulled out the journal the old woman had slipped into her backpack and began to read.

Sock trolls have plagued mankind since the beginning of time. They are not of this world and must be exterminated. I have seen the sock troll firsthand, a creature so ugly, so vile, and so selfish it made my skin crawl.

Though small in stature, these creatures are vicious. With their razorlike teeth and long sharp yellow nails, they are more than capable of causing harm to a full-grown human. But it is not full-grown humans we must worry about, it is our children who they will eventually come after. Once the trolls learn that our young cannot defend themselves, it will only be a matter of time until they start taking them from us. Cloaked by the dark of night and devouring them in their world. Though I have yet to capture a troll myself, I hope this journal aides in the first recorded capture of a sock troll. Once the first sock troll is captured we can learn more about them and how we can get not just rid them from our world, but destroy their world once and for all.

"That's some dark stuff." Nora said not taking her eyes off the pages.

She then started looking at the drawings inside the journal, and cringed at the hideous creatures depicted in the sketches. A monster with what appeared to be 100 razor sharp teeth, nails that looked like knives, and a long lizard like tongue. Nora kept thumbing through the journal looking at all the blueprints of traps the author had set in the past and notes on why

they had failed. Though she did not see many ideas like hers, she did see a lot more elaborate ones. Nora began to doubt her simple trap. How was it going to work if all these intricate ones that the author of this journal made failed? Nora began to feel her eyes grow heavy as she stared blankly at the journal. She blinked frequently until the blinking stopped and Nora drifted to sleep.

Nora had nightmares about the sock trolls that night. She dreamt that not only was she unable to capture the troll that had been taking from her, but that she was the one who was captured and brought to their world. Nora saw herself tied up and dragged through a crowd of trolls all licking their lips anxiously waiting to get a taste of the human girl. Nora woke herself up in a panic. "Phew! It was just a dream." Nora said with a great deal of relief.

That moment of relief did not last long, someone was awake and heading down the stairs. She heard the footsteps getting louder and louder as they sounded like they were headed directly for the laundry room. Before Nora could even make a move to try and clean up the trap, she heard a loud yelp. It was Nora's dad, he had tripped over the fishing line. Nora's father fell to the floor and onto the glue traps, he rolled and thrashed about. With each movement he made, more and more of the glue traps stuck to him. Nora looked on in horror. After Nora's dad collected himself, now completely covered in the traps, he stood up and flipped on the light. He looked in the corner where

Nora had been crouched.

"Nora!" Her father yelled. "What in the world do you think you are doing!?"

Nora had no response, she was speechless. No excuse she could come up with would make her dad any less furious.

"YOUR ROOM NOW!" Nora's Dad yelled, the anger in his voice reaching a level Nora had rarely encountered.

Nora scooted past her dad, and headed upstairs. Not only was camp now completely out of the question, but any freedom she might have had for the summer was now in serious doubt.

Nora lay in her bed trying to come up with ways to explain this all away, but no matter what she came up with it did not seem believable. She began thinking about what her punishment would be. Would she ever be allowed outside, or would her room become her permanent prison? Before Nora could get a wink of sleep, the sun started to creep into her room. She knew it was almost time to face the music and accept her punishment.

"Nora!" her father called up the stairs. "Get down here!"

Nora got up quickly and hurried down the stairs, so that a delay would not further anger her father. Once Nora

got to the kitchen, she saw her mother and father waiting for her, both with scowls on their faces and their arms crossed. Nora noticed her dad was missing some patches of hair on his arms, likely from having to rip off the glue traps.

"Do you have anything to say for yourself?" Nora's father asked in a stern voice.

Nora knew if she wanted to salvage any part of her summer she needed to think quickly. She struggled to get any sound to come out of her mouth. Her best chance at any leniency would be by telling her parents the truth, no matter how ridiculous it might sound.

"I haven't been losing my socks, something has been taking them." Nora said sounding embarrassed by what she was about to tell her parents. "I was just trying to get them back."

"Who would want your socks?" Nora's dad asked seeming to be rather annoyed by this excuse.

This would be the tough part, telling her parents that she believed a troll had been stealing her socks would almost certainly land her in a therapy session. As Nora was about to answer, she heard Victor jumping down the stairs.

"I think Victor has been taking them to try and stop me from going to summer camp." Nora blurted out "He knows it is the one thing I look forward to every year

and if he could ruin that for me he would. That trap was meant for him, to try and catch him in the act." (So much for the truth.)

Victor walked into the kitchen.

"Is it true Vic?" Nora's dad asked her brother in the same serious tone.

"Um, is what true?" Victor asked not knowing what his dad was referring to.

"Have you been taking your sisters socks so that she would miss summer camp?"

"No way! Why would I do that? The more she's gone the better my summer is." Vic replied defensively.

"Well your sister seems to believe you are responsible, and to be honest I wouldn't put it past you." Nora's dad said staring right at Vic. "So I'll tell you what, I am going to put you guys on the same team. As long as those socks are missing there will be some other things missing as well, T. V., computer, friends, and sports. You two need to work together and get this figured out, and I suggest you work quickly." Nora's father replied.

"So, I'm getting punished because Nora lost her socks? How is this fair?" Vic shouted out, outraged by the harsh and unjust punishment.

"The way I see it is you either took the socks and this

will be resolved quickly or you didn't and you work with your sister to get it resolved. You torture your sister every chance you get, so what comes around goes around." Nora's father concluded

The punishment was final. Nora turned and started heading upstairs when Victor grabbed her shoulder from behind.

"Listen twerp! You are not ruining my summer because you decided to drag me into your mess! I will not help you at all, but if I miss anything this summer and I mean anything, I will be sure to ruin your life in ways you never thought were imaginable. Are we clear?"

Nora had never seen Victor this angry before. She knew he was annoying and rough sometimes, but this kind of anger was new, and she brought it on herself. Nora looked at her brother and nodded. When Nora got to her room she knew now more than ever she needed to come up with a plan and fast.

Nora may not have known much about the sock trolls, but she knew someone who did. Surely the old woman from the bookstore must have some more advice, but how would Nora get out of the house now that she was on lockdown? The only hope she had was to have someone cover for her, she needed Victor.

Nora walked down the hallway and stood outside Victor's door before reluctantly knocking. Nora heard Victor's footsteps approach.

"What do you want?" he said cracking the door just open enough to peak out.

"I need your help Vic. I think I can find those socks, but I need you to help me sneak out." Nora pleaded with her brother.

"I already told you, I am not helping. If I get caught helping you sneak out I will be in even more trouble than you already have me in. Unlike you, I have a life, and I would like to enjoy it at some point this summer." Vic responded, just as angry as he was earlier.

Nora begged her brother, "Please Vic! I'm sorry I got you into this, but please understand that I am trying to get us out!"

"I should have never even been involved in this in the first place. You're on your own. The only thing I will do for you is tell mom and dad that I haven't seen you if they ask where you are." With that, Victor closed the door in Nora's face.

Nora went back to her room and grabbed her bag. She went downstairs and waited for the perfect time to sneak out. Eventually Nora's dad headed into his homeoffice to get some work done, and her mother ran out to do some errands. Nora snuck out the back door, and slid it closed quietly behind her.

Nora ran all the way into town, she knew she had no time to waste.

As Nora entered the old book store she called out.
"Hello? Agatha? Are you here?"

There was no response, Nora walked behind the counter and into the back room. The room seemed endless with old dusty books, many of which Nora had never heard of before. Nora walked up and down the dark aisles trying to figure out what kind of bookstore this was. As Nora reached the last aisle, she saw a book that stood out to her for some reason. Nora reached up to grab it when she felt a hand land on her shoulder.

"AHHHH!" Nora shrieked, dropping the book to the floor.

Nora turned to see it was just Agatha.

"What are you doing in here?" Agatha asked.

"I came to ask for help, but nobody was here when I got here." Nora answered grabbing at her chest from the fright.

"Oh, I am sorry I frightened you, I just ran out to the sandwich shop across the street for some lunch. I must have forgotten to lock the door. What help do you seek?"

Nora explained everything to Agatha, how she set the trap, how her dad got caught in the trap, and how she

got her brother roped into all of it. When Nora finally finished her story she looked to Agatha for advice.

"My child, the trolls do not come every night. Just because you did not catch one last night does not mean it would not work tonight, or the night after. You must be patient."

Nora understood what she was saying, but what Agatha did not understand was that there was no time for patience. There was much more at stake now than there was before.

"Before I go, I have to ask you about this." Nora reached into her backpack and pulled out the journal about the sock trolls. "Did you write this?"

"No I did not, that is from my late husband. He encountered the sock trolls as a young man and spent much of his life trying to prove their existence. Unfortunately, he never got that opportunity. Everything I know about the sock trolls is from him and his research. Go home review his notes, look at what worked and what did not. Maybe then you will find the success he never found."

Nora headed back home, with the journal in hand.

Once Nora arrived home, she noticed that her mom's car was still not in the driveway, which means all she would have to do was avoid her dad. She crawled in

through the front door and around the kitchen. She peered into the living room. Her dad was snoring on the couch with a newspaper on his chest, which was good news, because he would not be sleeping if he knew Nora was missing. Nora ran upstairs and shut the door and began studying the journal.

Nora studied every detail of every trap in the journal. She spent the rest of the day drawing traps she thought would work, but could not come up with one she was confident in. Nora slammed her head onto her desk. "What am I going to do?"

Toby responded with a moan.

"Maybe the difference in my trap compared to the ones in here is its simplicity?" Nora said to herself. "I mean technically the trap worked. I just need that troll to show up tonight instead of dad, but how can I make sure it shows?"

Nora got up and searched the room for all of her mismatched socks. She grabbed every last sock she found lying around, including the pair of athletic socks she had just bought the day before. There was no way a sock troll would be able to resist this haul Nora thought.

Once again Nora waited for everyone to head to bed before setting her trap. Once the coast was clear, Nora repeated the steps from the previous night. She threw the pile of socks in the center of the floor again and tied

strings to as many of the socks as she could. She took what glue traps she had left, which was about five pieces, and placed them strategically around the room. Nora led the strings from the socks back to the corner where she would once again wait with the net in her other hand. Once there, she tied all the strings together and then tied it to her wrist. She was ready.

Nora waited and waited, she did not read the journal this time thinking reading would make her more tired. As the night went on, her eyes once again grew heavy, but she remembered what was at stake. Eventually the exhaustion was too much to fight off. Nora's eyes closed and once again she had fallen asleep.

This night, Nora did not have nightmares about the Trolls, but about what Victor was going to do to make her summer even more miserable than it already was about to be. Nora had reached the deepest part of her sleep when she felt a slight tug, her eyes opened briefly but then closed again. Nora felt a stronger pull on the string and another. This was not a dream. Nora shot up from her daze and pulled back on the string. She felt an even harder yank from the other end.

"I can't believe this!" Nora exclaimed to herself.

The tugs were getting stronger and more aggressive, then with a big yank Nora fell to the ground. Nora was now being dragged across the floor.

"Wow you're a strong little guy." Nora said trying to

pull back while getting herself into a seated position.

Nora tried her hardest to reel the line in, but she couldn't. Nora looked around for anything that would be able to help her. She saw the few pieces of stick paper she had set and thought that if she could just guide the creature onto one of them it would slow it down just enough that she would be able to catch it. Nora tried with all her might to lead the troll to one of the remaining glue traps. Nora tugged and pulled until finally she did it. The sock was on the trap.

Nora stood up and began to approach the sock cautiously.

"Did I do it?" she asked herself.

Nora could not see anything but the sock, there was no sign of the troll. Perhaps the troll escaped somehow. Once she got to the paper she reached out to grab the sock when the sock and the paper suddenly jerked. Nora jumped back and fell to the floor again.

"I did it! I did it! I actually did it!" Nora jubilantly shouted forgetting for a moment that her family was asleep. Nora could still not see the creature, but she knew it was trapped underneath the sock.

Before Nora could begin to celebrate the sock began to move toward the end of the paper. Nora raced to the corner and grabbed the net. By time she got back, the sock was off the paper and running free again. Nora dove

forward reaching out with the net landing it perfectly over the sock.

"Gotcha!" Nora said in an accomplished tone.

The net started pulling hard, and once again Nora was dragged across the floor. Nora's arms were getting tired, but she refused to let go.

Nora was dragged all throughout the house from the laundry room, to the kitchen, into the living room and then back. As Nora was brought back into the laundry room she saw something toward the back of the room that she had never seen in her life.

"What in the world is that?" Nora asked herself in disbelief.

What started off as a blur began to twist and swirl, whatever was pulling Nora was heading straight for it. Nora was dragged all the way across the laundry room floor. She fought and pulled back with all her might, but it was no use. Soon the sock and net reached the blur and were sucked into it. Nora still refusing to let go of her net, started getting pulled closer and closer. She could feel the blur grab a hold of her. Finally, Nora let go of the net, but it was too late. Nora was sucked inside. The blur then disappeared from the laundry room as fast as it had appeared.

Nora was now descending at a rapid rate down a dark hole, screaming the whole way down. As Nora looked

down at her net, she noticed the sock and net getting larger and larger until they were almost the size of her. Nora could vaguely make out a figure in front of the sock, but as she tried to get a closer look, a blinding light appeared from below her. Nora and the creature were about to reach whatever was on the other side. Nora became terribly frightened by what could be awaiting her, as she braced for impact.