

Master Maid

Told by Aaron Shepard

Adapted by LHU Language Center

Characters:

Narrators 1–4, Leif, Troll, Master Maid, Father

NARRATOR 1: Once there was a lad named Leif.

NARRATOR 2: He never wanted to listen to anyone,

NARRATOR 3: and he always had to do things his own way.

NARRATOR 1: His father told him,

FATHER: My son, it's good to make up your own mind. But it's also good to know when others know more than you.

NARRATOR 4: Now, Leif didn't want to hear that either, so he said,

LEIF: Father, I'm going out into the world, where I can do things just as I like.

FATHER: Leif, your stubbornness is bound to land you in trouble. But at least take this piece of advice. Whatever you do, *don't go to work for the troll.*

NARRATOR 3: So where do you think Leif went? Right to the house of the troll!

NARRATOR 1: Leif knocked on the door, and the troll himself answered it.

LEIF: Pardon me, sir. I'm looking for work.

TROLL: Are you, now?

NARRATOR 2: . . . said the troll, feeling the boy's arm.

TROLL: I could use a fellow like you. Since it's your first day, I won't ask much of you. Just shovel out all this dung.

LEIF: Well, that's kind of you, sir. You're surely easy to please!

TROLL: But just one thing. Don't go looking through the rooms of the house, or you won't live to tell about it. (*leaves*)

LEIF: Not look through the house? Why, that's *just* what I want to do!

NARRATOR 4: So Leif went through all the rooms till he came to the kitchen. And there stirring a big iron pot was the loveliest maiden he had ever seen.

MASTER MAID: (*shocked*) Good Lord! What are you doing here?

LEIF: I've just got a job with the troll.

MASTER MAID: Then heaven help you get out of it! Weren't you warned about working here?

LEIF: I was, but I'm glad I came anyway, else I never would have met *you*.

MASTER MAID: What did the troll tell you to do today?

LEIF: Something easy. I've only to clear the dung from the stable.

MASTER MAID: Easy to say! But if you use the pitchfork the ordinary way, ten forkfuls will fly in for every one you throw out! Now, here's what you must do. Turn the pitchfork around and shovel with the handle. Then the dung will fly out by itself.

NARRATOR 1: Leif went out to the stable and took up the pitchfork. But he said to himself,

LEIF: That can't be true, what she told me.

NARRATOR 1: . . . and he shoveled the ordinary way.

LEIF: I guess her way wouldn't hurt to try!

NARRATOR 2: So he turned the pitchfork around and shoveled with the handle. In no time at all, the dung was all out, and the stable looked like he had scrubbed it.

TROLL: Is the stable clean?

LEIF: Tight and tidy!

TROLL: You never figured this out for yourself! Have you been talking to my Master Maid?

LEIF: Master Maid? Now, what sort of thing might that be, sir?

TROLL: You'll find out soon enough.

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NARRATOR 1: The next morning, the troll brought Leif to Master Maid.

TROLL: (*to MASTER MAID*) Cut him up and throw him in the stew. And wake me when he's done.

NARRATOR 4: Master Maid took a butcher knife down from the wall.

LEIF: You wouldn't!

MASTER MAID: Don't be silly!

NARRATOR 4: She pricked the tip of her little finger and squeezed three drops of blood onto a three-legged stool. Then she put some old rags and shoe soles in the stewpot, along with the kitchen garbage, and a couple of dead rats, and some dung for good measure.

NARRATOR 2: Then she gathered a wooden comb, a lump of salt, and a flask of water.

MASTER MAID: Quick! We must flee while we can!

LEIF: Are you sure we need to rush?

NARRATOR 3: But Master Maid pushed him out the door and over to the stable. They saddled two mares and rode away at full gallop.

NARRATOR 1: Meanwhile, the troll was stirring from his sleep. Without opening his eyes, he called,

TROLL: (*eyes still closed*) Is he ready?

NARRATOR 4: The first drop of blood answered in Master Maid's voice.

MASTER MAID: (*voice only, from offstage*) Tough as leather!

NARRATOR 4: So the troll went back to sleep.

NARRATOR 2: A little later, the troll woke again and called,

TROLL: (*eyes still closed*) Is he cooked?

NARRATOR 3: The second drop of blood said,

MASTER MAID: (*offstage*) Still chewy.

NARRATOR 3: The troll went to sleep again.

NARRATOR 1: At last, the troll woke and called,

TROLL: Isn't he done yet?

NARRATOR 4: The third drop of blood said,

MASTER MAID: (*offstage*) Tender and juicy!

NARRATOR 2: Still half asleep, the troll stumbled over to the pot. He scooped up some stew in a wooden ladle, and

took a big mouthful. It was barely in his mouth when he sprayed it across the room.

TROLL: (*spews and sputters*) That little witch!

NARRATOR 2: Then his eyes grew wide.

TROLL: She must have run off with the boy!

NARRATOR 3: The troll raced to the stable and saddled his stallion. Then he rode after them.

NARRATOR 1: In a little while, Leif looked behind and saw the troll chasing them.

LEIF: We're done for!

NARRATOR 4: But Master Maid threw the wooden fork over her shoulder and shouted,

MASTER MAID:

Fork of wood, bless my soul.
Turn to trees and stop the troll.

NARRATOR 2: The fork changed to a thick forest that blocked the troll's way. The troll said,

TROLL: I know how to deal with this,

TROLL:

Forest Chewer, curse her soul.
Chew the forest, help the troll.

NARRATOR 3: The Forest Chewer appeared out of nowhere and devoured the trees, making a path for the troll's horse.

NARRATOR 1: Meanwhile, Leif and Master Maid came to a sea, where they found a sailboat tied up. They left the horses, boarded the boat, and sailed for the far shore.

NARRATOR 4: They were halfway across when the troll rode up to the water.

TROLL: I can take care of this, as well!

Water Sucker, curse her soul.
Suck the water, help the troll.

NARRATOR 2: The Water Sucker appeared and started drinking up the sea.

NARRATOR 3: Soon the boat was scraping bottom.

LEIF: It's the end of us!

NARRATOR 1: But Master Maid took out her flask.

MASTER MAID:

Drop of water, bless my soul.
Fill the sea and stop the troll.

NARRATOR 4: She poured overboard a single drop, and the drop of water filled the sea.

TROLL: (*raging at the Water Sucker*) Drink it up! Drink it up!

NARRATOR 2: But not another drop could the Water Sucker drink,

NARRATOR 3: and Leif and Master Maid landed safe on the other shore.

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NARRATOR 1: It wasn't long then till Leif had Master Maid home, and not long again till they had a wedding.

NARRATOR 4: But when the minister asked Master Maid if she'd love, honor, and obey, Leif told him,

LEIF: Never mind that! It's best if *I* obey *her*.

NARRATOR 2: And he did—

NARRATOR 3: which is *why* they lived happily ever after.