

# MONSTER STORY: TROLL

The stones sing to me.

Their songs are slow  
and heavy like my steps.

They wait and they  
remember.



I am of the stone, I am one with it. I came from it and I will return to it when the time is right. I do not know what that time will be and until then I will travel these halls and guard them from intruders no matter who they are.

Stone is strong. Patient. Ancient. It runs to the very heart of the world. Many would seek to abuse its treasures. Greedy humans with their tools of iron, seeking to rip the stone's treasure from its grasp. The thin creatures of shade and magic in their vast subterranean cities. Dumb little critters digging through, hoping to unearth things they do not understand. They are all weak. Soft. Not like stone. The stone shows its strength as their skulls crack against it, as the mush seeps out and is subsumed by stone as a sacrifice. A fitting apology for their insolence.

Some stones are angry. They bear the scars of the picks and the filth that was imposed by unwelcome squatters. These stones must be calmed. There is but one way to do so and that is through death. Death is cleansing. It restores things to the way they should be – quiet, rumbling, none of the scurrying or digging. The way stones want it.

And so, I will keep my watch. Lumbering from tunnel to tunnel, from cave to cave. One with the stone. Hearing its voice, its laments. Calming the stones with my presence. Scaring off the intruders no matter their purpose. If they are lucky and smart they run. If they are neither – their death pleases the stones. They try to slash and maim my flesh but it is of little use. The stone perseveres and so do I – before long only memories of the wounds remain – a dull pain, no more than a faint echo. And enemies of the stone can be certain that any pain I suffer I will return tenfold.

Crack. Another intruder gone, another dull echo in the eternal primeval song of the underworld.