

Of the Sky, Of the Sea, and of the Stones

Part 3 – The Fields of Agalloch

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Shocked and terrified by the troll's violent reaction, Quil jumped back, fearing attack. Though, the troll did not pursue her. She, instinctively, put the door between herself and the maddened troll. When she did so, however, she could not see or hear the raging of the beast beyond. Mere moments after putting the red door between herself and the troll, it opened once more. This time by barely a sliver. All that she could see beyond was a single black pupil surrounded by yellow.

Quil said that she took a few moments to catch her breath, being immensely startled by the troll's reaction. Though, it was very curious. From this side of the door, she had not noticed the creature's enraged flailing, but the second she looked around it; she had found the wood troll in an uproar. The difference in volume was also notable. No noise seemed to permeate through, or around, the door. She also remarked that it would have been impossible for the troll to quickly change posture from its slight crouch while peeking through the open sliver, to the madly swinging arms it had displayed previously without notice. At the beast's stature, its flailing limbs should have been visible from around the door, but they were not.

The adept then theorized that there must be some sort of spatial distortion around the doorframe. One that must block visual and audio experiences. She had heard the troll screaming in Okeanese, the same as which is used to write this very book; therefore she knew it was capable of speech and using a language that she also spoke. The creature's odd expression while peering through the door made a bit more sense now. As it squinted, it seemed to understand that she was trying to communicate, but simply could not hear her.

Cautiously, Quil peeked around the door again and was greeted once more by a raging troll. As it screamed, she tried to scream back greetings, apologies, and even threats, to which the troll screamed even louder to drown out. In fear of going deaf, Quil retreated once more, this time taking even more note of the change in volume. She also noticed a subtle, yet undeniable change in the wind. Before the door, while facing the peeking troll, a breeze blew to the east. When peering around the door, at the angered troll, the breeze was blowing west.

After quantifying a few variables, Quil decided to take a risk. She sprinted at full speed past the door to see what would happen, and to her alarm the wood troll began chasing her. Apparently, it did not care much for people, and so it shouted at Quil. “Trespasser! Invader! Who dares intrude beyond a door upon this sacred isle?!” it shouted while it chased the scholar. “I AM THE WOODEN DOORS! I CANNOT LET YOU PASS THROUGH ME!”

“I’m deeply sorry, but there was no way for me to seek permission for entry!” Quil called back as she continued her run.

“No permission would ever have been given to an outsider! You defile sacred ground, much like the fools who stole this land long ago! We are now rid of them, as we shall soon be rid of you!” It yelled as it began to close the distance between them. Its long legs carried it swiftly, if heavily, through the tall, grassy fields of Agalloch.

As they ran, Quil noticed wooden doors painted in all manner of colours scattered across the open fields. The ones they passed by within a few metres opened by cracks or slivers, revealing curious troll-like eyes peering beyond at the commotion.



Figure 3. The wooden doors on the Isle of Agalloch were varied in colour and position. Some were bright, some were dark. Some were straight, while others were crooked. All were accompanied by trolls, though.

Quil, beginning to tire, looked ahead at the treeline that approached. The forest looked dense and she hoped that the troll would lose sight of her amongst the vegetation.

Upon entering the shade of the tall trees, she made a hard right turn and hid herself within a bush just beyond a thick stump. Mere moments later, the wood troll crashed through the foliage. It roared angrily as it charged straight ahead, clearly having lost track of its target. Quil remains motionless within the bush until the sound of the trolls stomping completely faded.

She stood up and looked around nervously, but soon established that the troll was no longer in the vicinity. During her scan of the surroundings, she saw a stone structure a bit further into the woods. She took out a small knife and made an arrow in the stump that she hid behind. It pointed towards the way out of the woods. She was not very deep, but she did not want to risk getting lost. Especially since there was a furious troll searching for her amongst these very trees.

Being sure to mark a clear path, Quil made her way towards the stone structure. When before it, it became clear that it was a huge stone doorway. As she stood before it, examining, it opened by a crack. Beyond, she saw familiar yellow and black eyes, but the features of the face she saw looked different from the troll visages that she had seen before. This one was more rugged; bumpier and wider.

This huge door was flanked by a steep cliff to Quil's left and by thick vegetation to the right. There would be no way around this one, so if she wanted to see what was beyond she would need to somehow get through it. As she stared up, into the eyes of the massive stone troll, she got an idea. One that would permit her entry through this door, and all others on the isle of Agalloch.