

COW WARS

By Jeff Dunne

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CHARACTERS

NARRATOR	A simple and kindly narrator who is doing their best to tell a simple story. The script is written assuming a Russian accent, although that can be adjusted as needed.
WIDOW	The mother of Jack Farmwalker, and a decent woman at that.
JACK/DARTH COLUMBIA MAUL	Originally the actor who plays Jack Farmwalker, but then abandons the role because Darth Columbia Maul sounds so much cooler.
MILKY WHITE	The heroine of the story, Milky White is the cow who got traded in for a hamster in Fairy Tales.
PROPS	The props person is precisely that – the crew that is responsible for getting the props where they need to be (but who also gets a little more actively involved in the show).
OTTO	A high-strung servant of Darth Columbia Maul, who also happens to be a rather comfortable footrest.
CHIFFAROBE	Another servant of Darth Columbia Maul. He is a wardrobe.
BIG BAD WOLF	The Big Bad Wolf is a flamboyant French (well, French-ish) fashion designer.
RUMPLESTILTSKIN	Rumplestiltskin is a crotchety elf who is mostly interested in playing computer games and staying out of the story.
MERLIN	Merlin is a wizard, of course. He is wise and powerful, but in this show he is primarily a sous chef.

Note that the name “Darth Columbia Maul” is a play on a nearby (to the author) shopping Mall named “Columbia Mall”. Other productions of the show would likely want to change this name to something that would be more locally recognizable.

SETTING

In or near the Enchanted Forest.

TIME

An unspecified time in Fairy Tale world.

NARRATOR

Good afternoon, and thank you for coming to Story Time. Last time we read the story of Little Red Goldijack and the Three Jedi Pigs, and since we encountered a few, uh, creative challenges along the way (*looks around at cast standing on his left and right, who look sheepish*), today I am looking forward to us reading something more... traditional. So I have selected “Jack and the Beanstalk”. Just Jack and the Beanstalk.

(NARRATOR sits in chair, stage right; cast to wings.)

There was once upon a time an old widow who had an only son named Jack, and a cow named Milky White. (*WIDOW, JACK, and MILKY WHITE come onstage; WIDOW carries metal pail.*) And all that Jack and his mother had to live on was the milk (*WIDOW holds up pail*) that the cow gave each morning, which Jack (*WIDOW hands pail to JACK*) brought to the market and sold. But as Milky White (*JACK hands pail to MILKY WHITE*) got older, she did not produce as much milk, (*MILKY WHITE tips pail over, showing it is empty*) and soon it was not enough to support Jack and his Mother.

WIDOW

We are going to have to sell Milky White...

NARRATOR

Said the widow.

JACK

But Milky White has been with us since I was a little boy. (*Looking at MILKY WHITE and petting her*) I do not wish to sell her. Is there no other way?

NARRATOR

Said Jack.

WIDOW

No, my son. We must sell Milky White.

NARRATOR

And so Jack took Milky White and started the long journey to the town market to sell her. (*MILKY WHITE looks back at WIDOW, JACK, and NARRATOR indignantly, hands pail back to JACK*) As they were—

MILKY WHITE

Excuse me!

NARRATOR

Yes?

MILKY WHITE

That's it? Just like that? A lifetime of service and now they are just going to sell me like I am some mindless... mindless... animal?

NARRATOR

Look, I did not write this story. This is just the way it goes.

MILKY WHITE

I don't think so.

NARRATOR

What do you mean? It is written down right here.

MILKY WHITE

Don't care.

NARRATOR

Don't care? What does this mean, "don't care"?

MILKY WHITE

I want a bigger part.

NARRATOR

What bigger part?

MILKY WHITE

I want to be the hero of the story.

NARRATOR

(Chuckling)

You cannot be the hero of the story.

MILKY WHITE

And why not? Is it because I'm a girl?

NARRATOR

No, it is not because you are a girl.

MILKY WHITE

Then why not?

NARRATOR

It is because you are a cow. Cows aren't the heroes of stories.

MILKY WHITE

And why not?

NARRATOR

Well, for one thing, because they don't do anything heroic. You eat grass, and say moo. That is pretty much the whole "cow biz".

WIDOW

(Adding helpfully)

They also sleep.

JACK

(To Widow, being a smart Alec)

Right. And sleep. Chews, moos, and snooze... *(Jack and Widow share a laugh)*

NARRATOR

Sorry.

MILKY WHITE

No. Sorry is not going to do it. Last time you wrote me out completely. I got traded in for a hamster. Well this time I deserve a big part, and I want to be the hero. *(Walks over and puts arm affectionately around JACK's shoulders)* I'm going to rescue Jack and save the day.

NARRATOR

These people came to have us read a book to them, and that is just not how the story goes.

MILKY WHITE

I knew you would say that, so... *(Claps hooves together at PROPS, who hands MILKY WHITE a script.)* Here. *(Handing the script to the Narrator)*

NARRATOR

(Reading from the cover incredulously)

"Kow Wars..."

MILKY WHITE

Yup.

NARRATOR

(Still reading...)

“The exciting tail of how Milky-Wan Kenobi rescues Jack Farmwalker from the clutches of the evil Sith Lord, Darth Columbia Maul.”

MILKY WHITE

That’s right.

NARRATOR

Milky-Wan?

MILKY WHITE

Has a nice ring to it, don’t you think?

NARRATOR

And you wrote this?

MILKY WHITE

(Proudly)

Yep!

NARRATOR

All by yourself?

MILKY WHITE

I got some help. Mostly with the typing, because I don’t have fingers, you know.

NARRATOR

You misspelled “COW.”

MILKY WHITE

It’s a draft.

NARRATOR

Well, I guess it is a book. If it is okay with the audience, it is okay with me. What do you all think? Should we read Milky White’s new story?

(Hopefully everyone cheers “yes”. MILKY WHITE clears the stage by pushing WIDOW and JACK offstage.)

Okay, then. *(Starts reading)* A long time ago, in a grasslands far, far away, a great—

MILKY WHITE
Oh, oh, WAIT!

NARRATOR
What?

MILKY WHITE
We need the music! (*MILKY WHITE walks downstage center while everyone pulls out kazoos; MW turns around facing cast and begins to conduct as all hum the Star Wars theme.*)

NARRATOR
A long time ago, in a grasslands far, far away, a great adventure took--

MILKY WHITE
(*Turning around to face audience!*)
Oh, oh, WAIT! (Only NARRATOR stops reading; everyone else keeps humming)

NARRATOR
Now what?

MILKY WHITE
Special effects! (*Motions to PROPS*)

(*Music continues, as PROPS brings out a big scroll with the first lines of the story on it. MILKY WHITE helps ready it, then moves next to NARRATOR. BBW and RUMPELSTILTSKIN help unroll the scroll as the Narrator reads the next line so the text scrolls upwards like it does at the beginning of Star Wars.*)

NARRATOR
A long time ago, in a grasslands far, far away, a great adventure took place. (*Pause as the music continues*) Are you sure this is not copyright infringement?

MILKY WHITE
It's fine. Just keep reading.

NARRATOR
Late one night, in the pasturelands of Cudchewing (*pronounced like Tatoonie, i.e. cud-chew-eeng*'), a (*overemphasized*) dark and ominous stranger appeared...

JACK

(Rushing in to stand in front of scroll...)

Oh, oh, WAIT!

(Music stops and scroll gets rolled back up as PROPS carries it off stage right. JACK addresses NARRATOR)

I want to be the *(overemphasized)* dark and ominous stranger! That sounds like an awesome part!

NARRATOR

But you are already playing Jack.

JACK

Maybe we can get someone else to play Jack Farmwalker. How about one of them?
(Pointing to the audience)

(Ad lib lines to get a father from audience to play Jack. PROPS puts costume on him, and gives him script. The actor who was Jack is now Darth Columbia Maul. They stand together center stage.)

JACK, NOW COLUMBIA MAUL

(After getting into new outfit)

Okay. Ready. Continue.

NARRATOR

...a *(overemphasized, but sarcastic)* dark and ominous stranger appeared.

COLUMBIA MAUL

Jack, I am your father, Darth Columbia Maul. The force is strong with you, and I have come to take you away to train you in the ways of the dark side.

NARRATOR

But Jack told the stranger, ...

JACK

(Reading from his script)

“No, I will never go to the dark side!”

NARRATOR

In frustration, Darth Columbia Maul uses his powers of mind control on Jack.

COLUMBIA MAUL
(*Making Jedi mind trick gesture*)

Come to the Dark Side.

NARRATOR

Still, Jack resists, saying...

JACK
(*Reading from his script*)

“Nope.”

NARRATOR

But Columbia Maul is a Sith, with great powers of persuasion.

COLUMBIA MAUL
(*Sinisterly*)

Come to the dark side. (*Very lightly*) We have cookies!!

NARRATOR

Unable to resist, Jack is hypnotized, and they leave together (*CM beckons Jack off with cookie package*), traveling to Columbia’s dark castle. Which is right over there behind those trees (*points to far side of stage where there are a couple of chairs are behind two cardboard trees. CM and JACK walk there and sit down*). In the morning, Jack’s mother comes to wake him up and realizes that he has vanished.

WIDOW

Oh dear, oh dear. My poor son Jack has vanished! Whatever will I do?

NARRATOR

The widow was very distraught, but fortunately the abduction had been witnessed by Jack’s faithful... Oh, you are not serious!

MILKY WHITE
(*Aside, but strongly demanding*)

Just read it!

NARRATOR

...witnessed by Jack’s faithful droid sheep... Ar-two Bleat-two. And I suppose you (*to Milky White*) are going to play the sheep.

MILKY WHITE

Don’t be absurd. I’m a cow.

NARRATOR

So who is going to be... *(looking from cast member to cast member.)* Ah, never mind. Okay, I think we are going to need more help from the audience for this one.

(WIDOW selects someone from audience, and PROPS puts a gold-colored fleece on them.)

NARRATOR

Ar-two Bleat-two, while very intelligent, could only communicate through beeps, whistles, and baa-ing. Yet somehow everyone could understand him/her anyway. R2 told the widow what he/she had witnessed.

(R2B2 makes whatever robotic and sheep noises he/she wants.)

WIDOW

(Said rather quickly)

You say that a mysterious stranger came in the middle of the night, dressed in a black cape and used his magical Force powers to kidnap Jack? That they traveled far and wide to Columbia Maul's secret castle, and now all the universe will be lost if we do not rescue Jack, because the Force is strong in my son, and if he turns to evil then everyone will be in danger of eating only cookies without a balanced diet to provide the necessary nutrition that leads to a healthy lifestyle?

NARRATOR

R2 replies...

(R2B2 says something else.)

WIDOW

You say Timmy has fallen down the well?

NARRATOR

But that is not what Ar-two said, and so Ar-two Bleat-two repeated himself/herself.

(R2B2 speaks)

WIDOW

Why am I called a Widow if Jack's father is still alive, you ask? It is a long story. You see, when I met Jack's father he was a sedentary man named Manikin Farmwalker. But after Jack was born, Manikin was approached by real estate developers, and was soon seduced by the dark side of the Force. He sold most the farm, claiming that vegetables and manual labor had no place in the new galactic order. He left, changed his name to Darth Columbia Maul, and now he... (clearly broken up) well, I have said too much already.

NARRATOR

R2 had an idea for how to rescue Jack, and told it to the Widow.

(R2B2 speaks)

WIDOW

Yes, that is an excellent idea. Milky-Wan Kenobi will know just what to do.

MILKY WHITE

(Entering...)

I sense that someone has been speaking my name.

PROPS

Excuse me... but Jedi's don't do that.

MILKY WHITE

What do you mean?

PROPS

Jedi's can't tell when someone says their name. That's evil wizards. You know, like Voldemort.

MILKY WHITE

Jedi's can do that if they want to.

PROPS

Nuh-uh

(MILKY WHITE and PROPS descend into bickering, perhaps throwing out names like Sauron, Dobbie, other Jedi from the movies, etc. Argument could include other cast members too.)

NARRATOR

Okay, okay. Stop, stop. Never argue with Jedi cow when you are trying to finish a story in under thirty minutes. Now please, let us continue.

WIDOW

(Recovering/reorienting...)

Jack has been kidnapped by Columbia Maul. He has taken him to his secret castle, and I fear that we will never see him again. *(And then, preferably in the corresponding pose and intonation)* Help us, Milky-Wan! You're our only hope! . *(Rewind...)* Help us, Milky-Wan! You're our only hope!

MILKY WHITE

That is troubling. If he has been taken there, we could search forever and never find him, for Columbia's magic is that you can only find what you are looking for if you already know where it is. We could travel right past our destination and never know it!

(Note for those not familiar with Columbia, Maryland: The joke in the last line is that Columbia as a city is designed such that businesses cannot be seen from the road, and a common complaint about the town from outsiders is that it is essentially impossible to find anything unless you already know where it is.)

NARRATOR

Just then, Ar-two Bleat-two had an idea, and told them about it.

(R2B2 speaks)

MILKY WHITE

An excellent idea, my fine young sheep. I must seek out Rumpelstiltskin, who has lived in this land for many hundreds of years and knows every corner of Columbia's principality.

(In the following lines, NARRATOR and MILKY WHITE start talking exclusively to each other, having their own conversation, oblivious to the play going on:)

NARRATOR

Principality. Really. You wrote this all on your own?

MILKY WHITE

Uh... yeah. Of course. Well, pretty much.

NARRATOR

You have quite a vocabulary for a cow.

MILKY WHITE

Well, like I said, I got a little help...

NARRATOR

Right. With typing. *(Milky White holds up her hoofs)* No fingers.

REST OF CAST

Story!?

MILKY WHITE

Oh, sorry! Uh, ...R2, you must take the WIDOW back to the Farmlands while I continue my quest to save Jack Farmwalker.

NARRATOR

So Milky-Wan Kenobi sent the Widow back to the Farmlands with Ar-two Bleat-Two. *(Audience member goes back to seat.)* Then Milky-Wan departed in search of Rumpelstiltskin, in hopes that he could tell her how to find Columbia Maul's secret castle.

(Milky White exits)

In the meantime, Jack was busy learning the ways of *(said with great emphasis)* the Dark Side.

(COLUMBIA MAUL followed by JACK enter, walking towards NARRATOR)

COLUMBIA MAUL

(Lecturing JACK)

Each young padawan starts with the basic milk chocolates, and the Jedi order will try to convince you that you can be satisfied your whole life through by just throwing in some caramel or the occasional almond. But let me show you now what the Jedi order does not want you to see.

(COLUMBIA MAUL waves a hand, gives a call or whistle and CHIFFAROBE enters)

COLUMBIA MAUL

Chiffarobe, show our young apprentice here what can be done with a little cacao!!
(*Chiffarobe opens a side of a trenchcoat "door", and points to things as CM calls them out*) 60% dark! 70% dark! Semisweet! Bittersweet! Couverture!!
Muhahahaha!!!

NARRATOR

And Jack replied...

JACK

(*Reading from his script*)

Now I see why it is called the Dark Side of the Force.

COLUMBIA MAUL

Oh yes. And this is just the beginning...

(*Otto the Ottoman rushes in, walking stiff-leggedly*)

OTTO

(*Breathlessly*)

M'Lord,... m'lord, have you heard?

COLUMBIA MAUL

Jack, this is Otto the Ottoman. Please Otto, tell us your news.

OTTO

The Widow has sent *Milky-Wan Kenobi* to find the boy.

COLUMBIA MAUL

Drat! Indeed, this could be trouble. We must distract her, delay her until it is... too late – until the boy's training in the Dark Side is complete. Quick, summon... the Gingerbread Men!

(*OTTO and PROPS find 2-4 Gingerbread Men/Women from the audience. They line them up facing audience in front of COLUMBIA MAUL, JACK, and CHIFFAROBE.*)

COLUMBIA MAUL

Now, we must arm them. Tell me, my friends, what is the most terrifying thing to a cow?

CHIFFAROBE

Nothing. All cows do is eat. And moo.

OTTO

And sleep.

CHIFFAROBE

Right. And sleep. (*Mimicking how this line was delivered before*) Chews, moos, and snooze. (*OTTO and CHIFFAROBE share a laugh.*)

COLUMBIA MAUL

Wrong! Nothing strikes fear into the heart of a cow like... hamburger buns! Break out the buns!!

(OTTO and PROPS arm each Gingerbread Man with a bun)

COLUMBIA MAUL

Now, go lie in wait for Milky-Wan, and then... you know what to do!

(OTTO and PROPS lead Gingerbread Men into hiding.)

NARRATOR

Jack, who had been considering something for a while now, asked Columbia Maul:

JACK

(Reading from his script)

“Columbia Maul, why are all of your servants furniture?”

COLUMBIA MAUL

Ah, I learned that from watching Disney movies! Now come, my son, I have so much to teach you!

(COLUMBIA MAUL, JACK, and CHIFFAROBE exit stage left, leaving Gingerbread Men center stage crouching with OTTO and PROPS on either side.)

MILKY WHITE comes back on from stage right)

NARRATOR

Just as Milky-Wan approached the edge of the Farmland, she was surprised by Columbia Maul's ruthless Gingerbread Men, who jump out of hiding, waving their hamburger buns threateningly.

MILKY WHITE

Whatever will I do?

NARRATOR

Exclaimed Milky-Wan...

MILKY WHITE

These Gingerbread Men will never leave me alone. They are fearless!!

NARRATOR

But all of a sudden, the Gingerbread Men froze in place at the approach of...

BIG BAD WOLF

(Entering...)

Dahling!!!

NARRATOR

Wait a minute. You are the Big Bad Wolf from our last story!

BIG BAD WOLF

Absolument! *(French pronunciation)*. Eet eez so nice to see you again.

NARRATOR

I am confused. *(To Milky White...)* Why is the Wolf here?

BIG BAD WOLF

I am 'ere to take care of the Gingerbread Men, ov course!

NARRATOR

I have read the Gingerbread Man story, and he is eaten by a fox, not a wolf. But more to the point, don't wolves eat cows?

BIG BAD WOLF

I thought I made thees very clear during zhe last story, but apparently not so I vill tell you again. I am not going to eet anyone. Eeeew.

NARRATOR

Then why are you here?