

FAIRY TALES
(or LITTLE RED GOLDIACK AND THE THREE JEDI PIGS)

By Jeff Dunne

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CHARACTERS

- NARRATOR** A warm, grandfatherly (or grandmotherly) figure, generally patient and enjoying this time reading to the grandchildren (the actors). Gets impatient occasionally when they keep interrupting and changing the story, but wants to make them all happy, even if it means making changes to beloved stories of his/her own childhood.
- WIDOW** The widow is old, in the sense of old people who have gone rigid and lost any sense of imagination. She has a problem, comes up with the first solution that occurs to her, tells her son to do it, and has closed the book on the matter. Anything but the execution of her already established approach is simply undisciplined youth wasting time.
- JACK** Young and impetuous, Jack likes adventure but at the beginning of the story sees this all as a chore. It is only after he gets his hands on the magic beans that it becomes exciting. He is immortal in the sense of all young people who have not considered that the consequences of what they do could result in something more disturbing than having to write “I will not get into trouble” fifty times.
- PAPA PIG** Papa Pig is Ralph Kramden. He thinks himself far smarter than he is, shoots from the hip, and refuses to re-evaluate what he has said or done until all other avenues have been shut off and he is lying on the ground handcuffed. Anyone who corrects him, or even implies that he is anything less than infallible, is a dullard, and it is only the inherent and personally-intended cruelty of the universe that forces him to deal with such inferiors.
- MAMA PIG** Mama Pig is Edith Bunker – quick, insightful, and has a powerful intuition, but absolutely no backbone or self-confidence whatsoever. Were she in charge of the country, the budget would be balanced, the schools would run smoothly, and people would be happy. Unfortunately, her ambitions end at getting a part-time job as a Wal-Mart greeter.

- BABY PIG** Baby Pig is innocent and confused. S/he is struggling hard to resolve how Papa is always treated as being correct when it is clear that Mama is the one who always is. Baby Pig does not like making waves because Papa is scary when he yells, but sometimes it is worth it because it is so much fun to get Papa chasing his own tail in the face of logic that Baby Pig can see easily and Papa Pig never does.
- POLICEMAN** The policeman is big, official, but incredibly frustrated from the realization that his job comes with responsibility, an impressive looking uniform, but absolutely no authority or capability to carry out his duties. He thinks that the world would make a lot more sense if the police operated like the mafia, and secretly wants to be James Bond.
- LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD** Skeptical, bouncy, and charismatic, she's the girl next door who always scores better than you on tests but doesn't think twice about it. Social pressures do not apply to her, making her all but untouchable by any concerns or cares in the world.
- BIG BAD WOLF** The wolf, who might more accurately be named Zsa Zsa Ga-Wolf, takes the adjective "glamorous" to an uncomfortable extreme. She is self-inflated but moral, self-absorbed but reliable, condescending but with a strong ethical core. Everyone else is lucky to have the opportunity to learn from her natural and intrinsic wisdom and insight.
- SALES ASSOCIATE** Smarmy, pushy, and relentless, this is the guy who feels that "no" means "not yet, but probably yes if you just convince me a little more by saying the same thing over and over a few more times".

SETTING

The Enchanted Forest, near Mystic Lake.

TIME

A non-specified age in Fairy Tale world.

(Begins in an unspecified location prior to the start of “storytime”. The characters are not truly “in character” until they appear in the story. Until then, they are the personalities of the actors, or, more accurately, the personalities of various kids under the age of 10.)

NARRATOR

Welcome everyone. Thank you for coming today to this reading of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, by Robert Southey. This story was written in 1837 and has been retold by –

Ah-hem

BABY PIG

What?

NARRATOR

You told me that we were going to be reading the Three Little Pigs

BABY PIG

No I didn't. I said we were doing Goldilocks.

NARRATOR

Nuh-uh. You said The Three Little Pigs. I remember because *three (holds up four fingers in Narrator's face)* is my favorite number.

BABY PIG

You remember the number three (*corrects BABY PIG's number of fingers*) because it is Goldilocks and the *Three* Bears.

NARRATOR

Well, I want to do the Three Little Pigs.

BABY PIG

I want Goldilocks.

MAMA PIG

Pigs!

BABY PIG

But—

NARRATOR

MAMA PIG

Goldilocks!

(Cast descends into general bickering)

NARRATOR

Okay! Okay. We are going to do both.

MAMA PIG

But we only have time for one book.

NARRATOR

Yes, and it is going to be “Goldilocks and the Three Little Pigs”.

JACK

I want to do Jack and the Beanstalk.

NARRATOR

What?

JACK

Jack and the Beanstalk. It is about a boy named Jack who—

NARRATOR

I know the story.

JACK

Well it’s my favorite. I want to read that one.

NARRATOR

But we only have... Okay. Fine. We’ll also—

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

And Little Red Riding Hood.

NARRATOR

Now hang on just a minute. We can’t possibly—

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

(Interrupting, approaching NARRATOR one step with each word)

Little. Red. Riding. Hood.

NARRATOR

Fine. *Whatever*. Anything else?

PAPA PIG

Star Wars!

(Slight pause)

NARRATOR

(In disbelief)

You're kidding me.

PAPA PIG

I like Star Wars.

NARRATOR

(Throws hands up in resignation)

Okay. Fine. This is the story of... *(looking at LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD)* Little Red... *(looking at MAMA PIG)* Goldi... *(looking at JACK)* Jack and the *(looking at BABY PIG)* Three Little... *(glancing at PAPA PIG)* Jedi... *(glaring back to BABY PIG)* Pigs. Happy?

(The narrator picks up the book and begins to read.)

NARRATOR

There was once upon a time a poor widow who had an only son named Jack, and a cow named Milky-White.

JACK

Psst.

NARRATOR

(Continuing like he has not heard)

And all they had to live on was the milk the cow gave every morning, which they carried to the market and sold.

JACK

(Louder)

PSST.

NARRATOR

(Puts the book down, frustrated)

Yes?

JACK
We don't have a cow.

NARRATOR
We don't have—

JACK
No, I couldn't get one.

NARRATOR
Well, it is a pretty important part of the—

JACK
(Interrupting, holding out the hamster)
I have a hamster.

NARRATOR
A....

JACK
Hamster.

NARRATOR
Hamster. *(Shoos JACK back and picks up the book. Taking a pencil, makes a note in the margin on the book.)* Nix the cow, enter one hamster. Okay. There was once upon a time a poor widow who had an only son named Jack, and a hamster named Milky-White. And all they had to live on was the... *(nasty glance back towards JACK)*... was... the money that the hamster was able to bring in from... the neighborhood hamster races.

(Jack makes racing motions with the hamster)

NARRATOR
But... *(clearly struggling)* as the hamster got older, it would not run as fast, and eventually it could not win enough races to support Jack and his mother.

WIDOW
We are going to have to sell Milky-White

NARRATOR
Said Jack's mother.

JACK

Is there no other way? We have food from the garden.

NARRATOR

Said Jack.

WIDOW

Indeed, but we need more than food. Why, just look at your shirt. It is far too small for you. We need new clothes, my son, and we have not the skill to make them ourselves.

NARRATOR

Jack was saddened, but knew his mother was right.

WIDOW

Take Milky-White down to the market and sell her. With the money, you must buy us new clothes.

JACK

Yes mother.

NARRATOR

And so Jack picked up the family hamster and, putting her in a small satchel, began the long journey to the town market. He walked all that morning, and at noon he stopped on the side of the road to eat his lunch as he was too tired and hungry to continue. As he was resting, he was approached by a mysterious stranger.

(There is an awkward pause.)

NARRATOR

...he was approached by a mysterious stranger.

(Another awkward pause.)

NARRATOR

...a...mysterious...stranger. Okay, who is playing the part of the stranger?

MAMA PIG

There aren't any mysterious strangers in Goldilocks.

NARRATOR

Technically, I think Goldilocks *herself* qualifies as a mysterious stranger from the bears' point of view – *(MAMA PIG looks to argue, but NARRATOR raises a hand and cuts her off)*. Can we just move on?

MAMA PIG

We don't have a mysterious strang—*(Stopped by a cold look from the Narrator).*
Okay, okay. I'll get one.

(Mama Pig chooses a mysterious stranger from the audience, and puts a mask on him/her.)

NARRATOR

Excellent. Now, as he was resting, Jack was approached by a mysterious stranger.
(Mama Pig escorts volunteer across to Jack) S/he said to Jack, "Oh my."

STRANGER

<Stranger repeats>

JACK

What is the problem, mysterious stranger?

NARRATOR

The stranger explained. "I simply must find a hamster soon."

STRANGER

<Stranger repeats>

JACK

Really? What a coincidence! I happen to have a hamster here in this satchel.

NARRATOR

The stranger said: "I will trade you these magic beans for your hamster."

STRANGER

<Stranger repeats>

NARRATOR

Jack thought about this. Although his mother had told him that he must return with clothes, and also never to talk to strangers, he could not imagine passing up magic beans.

JACK

I cannot imagine passing up magic beans. It is a deal!

NARRATOR

And so they made the trade. (*During next few lines, Mama Pig slowly escorts volunteer back to audience*) Feeling happy, Jack made his way back home and told his mother what happened. But his mother was very upset.

WIDOW

Jack! I am very upset. How could you have been so foolish? We cannot wear magic beans! We cannot weave them into a new shirt. Why, at best they could be strung together to form a slightly-stylish necklace, but that will not keep us warm.

NARRATOR

Jack felt ashamed, and left again, determined to set things right. He set off to find the mysterious stranger, but although he looked and looked, he could not find him/her anywhere.

JACK

(*Looking around, points at stranger*)

But s/he's right there.

NARRATOR

Er... No s/he's not.

JACK

(*Looking around again*)

This is hopeless. I will never find the stranger who tricked me out of our cow—ah... er... hamster. There is nothing left to do but plant these beans and hope for the best.

NARRATOR

And so Jack made four holes in the ground...

(*Mama Pig picks four kids from the audience and has them hold their hands open*)

NARRATOR

Planted a bean in each hole...

(*Jack puts a jelly bean in each volunteer's hand*)

NARRATOR

And then watered them.

(Another actor tosses a watering can to Jack, who pretends to water the kids. Could possibly make the kids think they are really going to get wet, depending on the props and circumstances.)

NARRATOR

Jack waited all afternoon for something to happen. He waited... and waited... and waited. But nothing did. At last he fell asleep. Once he was fast asleep, four faeries grew from the holes. *(Kids come up and are given streamers)*. The faeries put an enchantment over Jack *(kids do this)*, and he was magically transported to a strange and unknown part of the forest. *(Jack rolls across the stage to left, pushed by the kids)*

NARRATOR

Jack awoke in the morning, and found that he was completely lost.

JACK

This is not where I went to sleep, and I don't think I have ever been here before. I hope I can find a sign of people living here. Then maybe they can tell me where I am, where I can buy some new clothes, and how to get home.

NARRATOR

So Jack began to explore. And after several hours he came upon a strange cottage in the woods.

(A door is brought out)

JACK

Hmm, this looks like a sturdy cottage of bricks, but it is surrounded by all of this straw and sticks. I wonder who would have such an untidy lawn.

(Jack walks to the door and knocks)

JACK

No one seems to be home. Perhaps there will be some clue inside as to who lives here.

NARRATOR

And so Jack opened the door and was about to walk in when a nearby police officer saw him and walked up.

POLICEMAN

Young man, just what do you think you are doing?

JACK

Well, nobody answered when I knocked, so I decided to go inside and look around.

POLICEMAN

And what in the world made you think that this was acceptable behavior?

JACK

Well, everyone does it. Goldilocks did, and even Snow White. And she's a princess.

POLICEMAN

Hmm. Well, just don't try it outside of a fairy tale, or I am going to have to tell your parents.

NARRATOR

Jack assured the police officer that these little incidents of breaking and entering were nothing more than a literary device used when the author didn't know how else to move the story along, and that he would never ever try this in real life.

POLICEMAN

Very well... But I'm watching you.

NARRATOR

Jack entered the cottage. It was warm and well-lit, and smelled faintly of mushrooms. But truly the strangest thing about it was that there was three of everything – three beds, three chairs, three wardrobes, three copies of Entertainment Weekly. There were even three bowls of soup sitting on three separate tables.

JACK

Soup! Do you know, I haven't had a thing to eat since the beginning of the story, and that was quite some time ago.

NARRATOR

And so Jack walked up to the first table, and noticed that the soup was so hot that there was still steam rising from the bowl.

JACK

I can't eat that. I'll burn my mouth.

NARRATOR

The second bowl of soup was so cold, that it was mushy – almost solid.

JACK

That does not look too inviting either.

NARRATOR

The third bowl of soup, however, looked juuuust right. Neither too cold nor too hot.

JACK

This bowl looks juuuust right.

NARRATOR

And so Jack ate the soup.

POLICEMAN

(Glaring in through imaginary window)

Just *what* do you think you are doing?!

JACK

Soup. It does a body good. Want some? *(Realizing)* Oh. No, it's okay. It's like breaking and entering – standard literary activity for the hero of the story. Nothing to be concerned about.

NARRATOR

After finishing the bowl of soup, Jack decides to take a quick nap. He approaches the first bed, but does not find it to his liking.

JACK

This bed is too... *(encourages audience to say "hard", perhaps by having one of the other actors holding up a sign).*

NARRATOR

The next bed was no good either.

JACK

This bed is too... *(encourages audience to say "soft", or someone uses a sign).*

NARRATOR

The third bed, however, was...

(Someone holds up a sign if necessary, so audience says "Juuuust right")

NARRATOR

(With audience...)

Juuuust right, and Jack almost immediately fell into a deep sleep.

MAMA PIG

Finally!

NARRATOR

What? Finally what?

MAMA PIG

Finally some of the rest of us get to be involved. I am SO excited to be Mama Bear.

NARRATOR

But there are no bears in the story. I told you, this is Little Red GoldiJack and the Three Jedi Pigs. Three *pigs*. No bears.

MAMA PIG

But (*stopped by look from Narrator*)... Never mind.

NARRATOR

Soon after Jack was fast asleep, the legitimate-

POLICEMAN

Legal!

NARRATOR

(*Unfazed...*)

...occupants of the cottage came rushing in.

PAPA PIG

Quick! Close the door before that crazy wolf catches us.

MAMA PIG

But *that* door is *too* big!

PAPA PIG

Not *now*, Mama Pig!

BABY PIG

(*Miming closing door*)

There!

PAPA PIG

Thank goodness. If I have to put up with all that huffing and puffing one more time!

MAMA PIG

Well maybe we should just—

PAPA PIG

Ah ah ah. Not another word. Haven't I told you that we are not going to talk about this? Haven't I? Well? Haven't I?

MAMA PIG

(Resigned...)

Yes dear.

PAPA PIG

And so what are we going to do?

MAMA PIG

(Resigned and dejected...)

Not talk about it ever, ever again.

PAPA PIG

Right! Now, how—

BABY PIG

(Who has been looking around, interrupting...)

Papa, I think —

PAPA PIG

And what did I tell you about interrupting? Didn't I tell you not to interrupt me when I'm talking? Well, didn't I?

BABY PIG

But Papa, I think someone— *(noticing his glare)*. Yes, Papa. Sorry Papa.

PAPA PIG

Now, how about our lunch.

(MAMA PIG and BABY PIG clearly notice that something is wrong with their food, one being disturbed and the other being eaten. BABY PIG is about to say something, but MAMA PIG gives him a look to warn him to stay quiet).

PAPA PIG

Baby Pig, you must have been very hungry to have finished your soup so quickly.

BABY PIG

I didn't eat it, Papa. Someone else did.

PAPA PIG

Nonsense. Who would do that? It is not hot enough for me, and it is much too hot for Mama Pig. Besides, we each have our own soup. Are you suggesting that someone broke into our cottage just to eat your soup? Well, are you?

BABY PIG

I'm just sa—

PAPA PIG

Wouldn't the policeman right outside have stopped such a criminal? Wouldn't s/he have told us about it when we came in? Are—

BABY PIG

But we ran in so fast that s/he wouldn't have time—

PAPA PIG

Haven't I told you not to interrupt me? Well, haven't I???

BABY PIG

(Dejected)

Yes, Papa.

MAMA PIG

Dear?

PAPA PIG

Yes, Mama Pig?

MAMA PIG

I think someone has been sleeping in my bed.

PAPA PIG

Nonsense. Who would do that? It is much too soft for me or for Baby Pig. Are you suggesting that someone broke into our cottage just to... *(Noticing his own bed, crossing to it...)* Hey! Someone has been sleeping in my bed too!

BABY PIG

Um, excuse me Papa.

PAPA PIG

Yes?

BABY PIG

I think someone has been sleeping in my bed too.

PAPA PIG

Nonsense. Who would do that? It is too soft for me, and it is too hard for Mama Pig. Are you suggesting that someone broke in to our cottage just to sleep in your bed?!?

BABY PIG

Uh huh.

PAPA PIG

Really. And just what makes you think that someone could have broken into--
(*BABY PIG points at Jack, PAPA PIG pauses.*) Oh.

NARRATOR

The pigs were naturally concerned at finding Jack sleeping in Baby Pig's bed. (*Narrator notices that they are just standing there absently.*) I said, the pigs were naturally concerned at finding Jack sleeping in Baby Pig's bed. (*The pigs now look concerned.*) This was not, after all, the sort of thing that happened every day in the middle of the forest. At first, they could not even decide precisely what Jack was.

PAPA PIG

It is perfectly obvious that this is a horse.

NARRATOR

Said Papa Pig.

MAMA PIG

I think it must be a cucumber

NARRATOR

Added Mama Pig. But in the end, they all concluded that Baby Pig was probably right.

BABY PIG

He's a Mutant Power Ninja Grape.

NARRATOR

And this led them to hatch a most clever plan.

(Pigs huddle conspiratorially together right of Jack)

PAPA PIG

If he's a ninja, we could set him on the wolf!