

‘‘Taxi!’’

Joseph Mack

Fractured Fairy Tales, Sesame St and Pantomime

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DRAFT
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TAXI DRIVER:

FRED WOLFE:

script consultants:

Two chairs representing the front seats of the taxi.

?mins.

buy a halloween wolf mask for Fred, that doesn't mask the actor's face.

Author's introduction:

ACT ONE

FADE IN

1. INT. CAR INTERIOR, --- , DAY

Driver is driving around town, doing taxi driver things, like looking for fares, looks at watch, making comments about other drivers, pedestrians, weather, wondering when her shift will be over. Passenger hails taxi, opens door and gets in.

TAXI DRIVER

Where to mister?

FRED WOLFE

Wolfe, Fred Wolfe. The Three Little Pigs house please.

TAXI DRIVER

OK Fred. What's happening at the Three Little Pigs house this evening?

FRED WOLFE

We're going to have dinner, maybe play some Scrabble(R), do some jigsaws, write a few stories.

TAXI DRIVER

Oh, what's for dinner?

FRED WOLFE

Beans. The Three Little Pigs always stew up a great big pot of beans and carrots, celery, potatoes. Great stuff. I love it.

TAXI DRIVER

So you're a vegetarian wolf?

FRED WOLFE

Oh yes. Have been for ages. Much better for you, you know.

TAXI DRIVER

(suddenly
suspicious)

Say aren't you the Big Bad Wolf?!

CONTINUED

FRED WOLFE
 (delighted to be
 recognised)
 Why yes! You recognised me!

TAXI DRIVER
 (incredulous)
 ... and you're friends with the
 Three Little Pigs?!

FRED WOLFE
 (do "blowing" as if
 for real)
 Absolutely! We've known each other
 for ages. You know that story
 about "I'll huff! and I'll puff!
 and I'll bloooooow your house
 down!"

TAXI DRIVER
 (stage terrified)
 er... yes!

FRED WOLFE
 The Three Little Pigs and I made
 that one up. That was our first
 story together. We did it as a bit
 of a lark. At the time, we thought
 it was too gruesome, especially
 that part at the end, where I fall
 into a pot of boiling water and
 the Three Little Pigs hold the
 lid down. We didn't expect anyone
 to like it, but to our surprise,
 kids everywhere loved it and it
 took off. It turns out that now
 everyone knows the story.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 Now whenever I go on stage, the
 kids all yell out "Look out! Look
 out! It's the Big Bad Wolf! It's
 the Big Bad Wolf!" and they pelt
 me with candy or pennies. They're
 screaming with glee.

TAXI DRIVER
 (looking a bit
 dubious)
 Ah. Were you the one with that
 little girl ... ah, what's her
 name, Little Red Riding Hood?

FRED WOLFE
 Oh yes! That's me too. After
 (MORE)

CONTINUED

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 the surprise success of the
 Three Little Pigs story, I was at
 Grandma's house with Red one day,
 having tea and scones. We realised
 there was another story in the
 off'ing. This story turned out to
 be even a bigger hit than the Three
 Little Pigs story. Grandma wrote
 all the gruesome bits at the end,
 about chopping me up. She's quite
 a fun old bird really, when you get
 to know her.

TAXI DRIVER
 (perplexed)
 You made all this stuff up? I
 thought it was real.

FRED WOLFE
 (hold hand in front
 of face like a kid
 hiding)
 Well, when Red is walking along the
 path through the forest, I'm hiding
 behind a tree so Red can't see me.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 (wave tail in air to
 your side)
 All the kids can see my big bushy
 tail sticking out and waving
 around. The kids don't know what
 to say.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 (poke head around
 hand)
 But when I hear Red coming along
 the path, I poke my head around the
 tree, just to make sure it's her.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 (make big eyes etc.)
 All the kids suddenly see my big
 eyes and my big teeth and my big
 ears. Then they know it's me. To
 make sure they know it's really me,
 I wink at all the kids.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 (put head out, wink
 at taxi driver, pull
 head back in, wave
 (MORE)

CONTINUED

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)

bushy tail)

As soon as I do, the kids all start screaming "Look out! Look out! It's the Big Bad Wolf! It's the Big Bad Wolf!". Then when I see Red coming into view, I pull my head back in behind the tree, so Red can't see me. But the kids know I'm still there behind the tree, because I'm so excited to see Red, I can't stop waving my big bushy tail all around in the air, and I've forgotten that it's poking out behind the tree, where all the kids can see it.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)

All the kids yell like mad, trying to warn Red that I'm behind the tree. "Look out! Look out! It's the Big Bad Wolf! It's the Big Bad Wolf!". Then I jump out and chase Red around in circles on the stage, while the kids pelt me with candies and pennies. Then Red escapes off stage to Grandma's.

TAXI DRIVER

What about that one with a wolf in amongst all the sheep? Is that you too?

FRED WOLFE

Oh yes! There's a whole bunch of sheep and I come out wearing a sheep skin fleece.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)

(spell SHEEP with hands in the air)

I have big black letters on my side saying "S H E E P" so that all the kids know I'm supposed to be a sheep. But all the kids know it's me, because my big bushy tail is waving around above the sheep's backs, for all the kids to see. Then I poke my head around from behind one of the sheep. All the kids suddenly see my big eyes and my big teeth and my big ears. They know it's me. Then to make sure they all know it's me, I wink at the kids. The kids all start screaming, to warn the sheep about

(MORE)

CONTINUED

''Taxi!''

DRAFT

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 me. "Look out! Look out! It's
 the Big Bad Wolf! It's the Big Bad
 Wolf!".

TAXI DRIVER
 What about Peter and the Wolf? Was
 that you too?

FRED WOLFE
 Yes, we did a musical. Oh hold on,
 it's my phone...

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 Red! Long time no hear!!! How's
 Grandma? You took her another
 basket of goodies?! Oh, you must
 be her favourite granddaughter.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 We should do lunch. How about
 the Three Bears House? Goldilocks
 has turned it into a restaurant;
 great location, right in the middle
 of the forest. Momma and Poppa
 bear do the cooking and Goldilock
 handles the business side. Baby
 Bear sings. He does this great
 blues number about how he came home
 one day and someone had eaten all
 his porridge and broken his chair.
 Gotta go! I'm at the Three Little
 Pigs House. Give my regards to
 Grandma.

FRED WOLFE (CONT'D)
 (blows kiss over the
 phone)
 Ciao!

FADE OUT

 Author's comments:

v1.0 29 Apr 2015

The format (a taxi) is a standard acting exercise, where a series of people get into a taxi, being completely different characters. I'm always stumped for characters to be when I'm in the taxi, so today I was thinking about who I should be next time I do it. Last time I was Little Red Riding Hood and Allison was the driver, with Georgina and Fred as the other passengers. I wanted to do something similar here.

Initially when I started to write this, I was Goldilocks

''Taxi!''

DRAFT

going to The Three Bears house, then I became the Wolf.

I've had parts of this rattling around in my head for ages but I couldn't get it to gel. It was only today on a walk that, unbidden, it all fell into place.

The inspiration came from a Sesame St. I saw with my son about 15yrs ago where Katie Couric is interviewing the Big Bad Wolf. The Big Bad Wolf is a cheery friendly fellow, who turns out to be on good terms with everyone in fairystoryland. I don't remember the details, except at the end, the Big Bad Wolf gets a call (landline, Katie picks it up and says to the wolf in puzzlement "it's for you") from Red and arranges to have ("do") lunch with her.

In another Sesame St, Baby Bear plays the piano and sings the blues about how everything in his life is so bad (his porridge is eaten, his chair is broken). It's one of my favourite Sesame St pieces.

So OK some of this stuff isn't mine. Yes I stole some of it.

THE END