



An Excerpt from COW VICTORY

A short story by Rick Spisak

... A huge bull stood head down drinking from my gurgling brook, almost ten feet away. We had been warned, when we arrived at Ray's brother's cabin, we should under no circumstances approach the cattle that roamed the pastures surrounding the cabin. Ray's brother had explained that for expedient's sake, the dairymen who ran the farm, use electric cattle prods. Consequently the cattle hated people, and would attack them. We were even told, to park as close to the cabin as possible because the cattle were truly dangerous. Over and over we'd been reminded don't wander around the cabin and adjacent pastures, because the cattle will attack. We heard story after story of narrow escapes and near misses.

Here in the glade by the brook was a large bull. His horns were impressive and produced the appropriate effect. They extended out very wide and looked very sharp. He had been drinking and raised his head to check me out.

I was looking right into his face just a few feet away: He was too close for me to even consider running. All the trees nearby were small pines with slim and useless branches. Yet, I knew which part of me was here. Was I a city dweller, unaccustomed to the wilderness, or was I a woodland spirit, only partially masked in a human form? I knew that if I related to him as just a human, I had very little to expect except a dangerous confrontation. But instead if I stayed centered as a spirit of the woodland, I was safe.



I could feel my consciousness shifting. Was I just a naked human in these sunset spring woods or was I an eternal shimmering being of light? Was I a life apart from the reality around me?

Or was I a consciousness swimming through all that embraced me, and thus no danger to any his kind. I knew. I would never again be "apart" armored in my skin from nature's embrace. I could see him puzzle a moment along with me, and as I realized my identity and the silly dream of separateness fell fully away. We both nodded,

sharing a mutual respect for the life force within. He returned to slaking his thirst in our brother brook.



He took no further notice of me. We're all just parts of the whole. I had already come to know the falling away of fear, and the re-membering of the unity. I walked carefully along the path of the meandering stream. Not because of any fear or worry, but stemming from a desire to tread lightly as I found my way through the living landscape. I had never felt so much a part of the living world. Not the passive, I'm not alone, but the more active, vital. I could feel those parts of me, the trees, the running brook, the sailing clouds. I was walking along the stream that traced the foot of

the hill which was crowned around a bend by the cabin. It was getting late and much cooler. The spring afternoon had slipped languidly into dusk.

Later I would be told that the afternoon temperature had fallen from the moderate fifties down into the low-forties. I was still unencumbered by any uniform other than my skin. I rounded the hill and decided that I should probably head back toward the cabin since it was nearing dark. The cabin came into view ...



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