

Milton the Green

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Meerfus the Magician had a rival in the wand-making business. Yes, he was probably the most famous wand-maker in the land, a magician of great renown, but he did have a rival: Milton the Green. Milton was a strange fellow, a magician in his own right, but really more of a mischief-maker and a wacky inventor.



Milton's most famous invention was an Amphibious Assault War Vessel. This was a fancy name for a rowboat with two axles on the bottom and wheels. If the conditions were right, the people rowing the boat could catch enough wind in a sail and row fast enough that when they hit the land, they could keep going. The boat would just roll up on shore and the special oars could be used to keep moving along the land.

Milton's normal crew consisted of goblins, which made poor rowers in the best of conditions. They often got stuck in the muck and sand at the edge of lakes and had to drag the boat out with ropes. Still, they did tend to strike terror in the small townfolk, which allowed Milton to collect wand-making materials without much challenge. He was something of a bully.

Milton made lots of wands, often from cheaper materials. Many of his wands were used for mischief. He didn't spend the time and effort to get high-end materials, but he sold a lot of wands. Unfortunately, many of his wands would not last long or would not work exactly as planned. You got what you paid for in magic and just about everything else.

Meerfus and Milton had a strong rivalry over their territory. They both wanted to sell wands, but Milton's mobility as a traveling salesman meant that he reached more customers. Meerfus, on the other hand, relied on word of mouth. Many of his customers traveled to see him, because of good reviews from other customers he'd had. Reputation was very important.

In addition to that, Meerfus' helper apprentice, Duncan, was fairly useful. He was beginning to learn the trade, and could generally follow orders without bungling them. Milton's team of green goblins was pretty useless. It was a good thing there were lots of them, because terrible accidents often befell them when collecting Milton's supplies. It was rather sad really.

Finally, Meerfus liked to fancy himself as being a bit more handsome than his rival. Milton had scabby skin, mostly on account of poor hygiene and associating with goblins. Goblins were known to carry ticks and all manners of diseases. Milton was also balding with a patchy beard. Meerfus had a rather magnificent beard himself, and was known to be complimented for it on a regular basis. It was curly, soft, and tied off with colorful strings or decorations to fit the holidays and seasons. This was not to mention that he was a snappy dresser, unlike Milton, who wore threadbare, stained rags for the most part.

Truly, Meerfus was the superior wizard in matters of fashion, appearance, skills, and professionalism!



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. This story compares what two wizards?
 - A. Merlin and Gandalf
 - B. Milton and Meerfus
 - C. Meerfus and Merlin
 - D. Milton and Merlin

2. What is Milton's most famous invention?
 - A. Amphibious Assault War Vessel
 - B. Self-Winding Watch
 - C. Fire-Starting Wand
 - D. Goblin Tamer

3. Which of the following would probably NOT be used to describe Milton?
 - A. cleanly
 - B. creative
 - C. ambitious
 - D. dangerous

4. Meerfus makes most of his sales because of what?
 - A. showmanship
 - B. sales techniques
 - C. reputation
 - D. traveling to meet customers

5. Meerfus compares himself to Milton in all but one of these areas. Which is it?
 - A. wand-making skills
 - B. appearance
 - C. apprentice and helpers
 - D. general charm

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