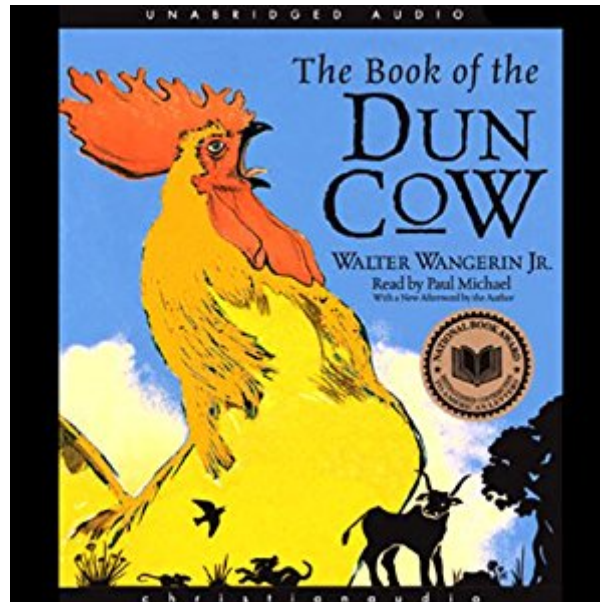




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The Book Of The Dun Cow



Synopsis

Good struggles with Evil as Chauntecleer the rooster fights against the mysterious Wurm. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I thought The Book of the Dunn Cow was a children's book, it is not. I wouldn't recommend the book for children. I think it may be acceptable for teenagers, but with caution. There are a series of adult rated events and it includes vivid violence. There are no humans in the story, animals only. The book is written well, excellent storyline, and character development. In the afterward, Wangerin assures the reader that his story is not an allegory. It is a "beast fable"; Wangerin was inspired by several sources, but the story is completely original. This is the first book of a three book series. This world is different than the one we know. It is filled with talking animals. The animals live on the surface of the earth and one creature lives within. The evil creature is named Wurm, a massive dreadful serpent; "He was angry. And he hated, with an abiding hatred, the God who had locked him within the earth. And what put the edge upon his hatred, what made it an everlasting acid inside of him, was the knowledge that God had given the key his prison in this bottomless pit to a pack of chattering animals." (p. 23-24) The animals are the keepers and there are only a few which

maintain a lord/leadership status. Chauntecleer the rooster, one of the main characters (lord) and heroes of the story, knew nothing about Wyrn. No animal had knowledge of Wyrn.

In a new Afterword, author Walter Wangerin Jr., a Senior Research Professor at Valparaiso University, specifically says that *The Book of the Dun Cow*, which won the National Book Award, "is not nor was ever intended to be an allegory. It is simply a fantasy of good and evil. The story draws upon Geoffrey Chaucer, the early church fathers, medieval cosmologies, romances like *Le Morte D'Arthur*, various mythological figures, and Biblical patterns. On the one hand, there is a moderate amount of cursing, along with some profane use of the terms "God" and "Lord" as interjections and a little bit of childish, near-vulgar slang. On the other hand, some reviewers do not care for what they see as "a heavy-handed religious overtone." Some sources say that *Dun Cow* should be of interest to all age groups, but probably young adults would be most likely to appreciate its message while not being frightened by the fairly violent and scary parts. A few people may have difficulty with the symbolism. The book does not offer any magical solutions to the problem of good and evil, but it does show that life is filled with both sadness and joy.

An intriguing, imaginative tale in which all is well in Chauntecleer's Coop where he presides over 30 hens. Indeed, things are going swimmingly throughout all his kingdom, animals included. For the time being his problems are small and few. Then a dog appears, Mundo Cani Dog, a mournful being that Chauntecleer abuses to no avail. A few small issues arise, but they pale in comparison to Chauntecleer's joy when he meets the beautiful Pertelope, marries her, and she bears him 3 male chicks. Chauntecleer's life is pretty much complete. But Pertelope has a secret. She knows that far away in another coop, evil has been born in the form of Cockatrice, a flying serpent with a cock's head. Cockatrice, a manifestation of the ultimate evil that is Wyrn, has begot innumerable offspring of his own, and they can kill with a single bite. Cockatrice and his minions advance on Chauntecleer's Coop, and the battle between good and evil begins. Chauntecleer feels the advance in his bones. He encounters a dun cow, but she speaks only to Mundo Cani Dog. Chauntecleer, although outmatched, successfully battles Cockatrice and kills him. The battle surges on, but goodness and virtue triumph, although at great cost. Dog himself dispatches Wyrn with one of the dun cow's horns. Curiously, the dun cow of the title plays a rather small role in the great struggle. She counsels the dog about his upcoming fight with Wyrn, but her only participation is to provide the

horn with which he gouges Wyrms' eye. How to categorize such a work? The author's use of animals to wage an epic battle suggests a fable, while the classic good/evil clash has an allegorical bent, although the author, in his notes, insists that the work not be regarded as an allegory. Whatever, it's a highly entertaining tale full of memorable characters.

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