Badjelly the Witch

Set Description

A red curtain is closed across the stage to start. When opened, an empty stage with a black floor covered in fat white squiggles, inspired by the original illustration in the storybook. During the show, a black curtain on the right side of the stage is pulled aside to reveal a tiny purple log cabin with a yellow straw roof. On the roof is a bird’s nest with eggs, and a big yellow flower hangs beside the large window. On the left side of the stage, behind another black curtain is Badjelly’s castle. Also made of purple logs, the castle has a big door with red chili peppers for hinges, a lemon as a doorknob, and a spiky, ugly plant hanging off the side.

Character Descriptions

Tim

Tim is a six-year-old boy in a yellow tee shirt with a brown teddy bear, purple shorts, socks, and sandals. He is played by a fresh-faced young man with curly red hair and a few freckles on his cheeks.

Rose

Rose is a five-year-old girl in a flowered dress and pink shoes, her hair in pigtails. She is played by a bright-eyed young woman who uses a black wheelchair.

The rest of the actors play multiple characters. The characters are described in order of appearance.

The Cleaner is wearing a pink smock dress, a headscarf with curlers, and black shoes. She is grumpy and focused on her work.

The Horsemen both wear rough linen tunics with sun emblems. One helper is laden down with a heavy backpack, and from the pack dangles a toilet roll, headphones, and a pan. The laden helper is dopey and slow; the other helper is prim, proper, and alert. The Prince wears a fancy tunic, a green cape, and an ornate plumed hat.

The Narrator is wearing a yellow shirt with a shiny purple suit jacket. He is full of sprightly energy. He carries a walking cane but doesn’t need it.

Mummy wears a purple spotted dress and chunky black high heels. Mummy is played by a man wearing a long curly auburn wig. She is dreamy and wistful.

Daddy is strong and strapping, wearing gumboots, a tan vest over a purple plaid shirt and a floppy fishing hat. Daddy is played by a woman with her hair tied back under the hat.

PomPom is a pink poodle with frills around his waist, wrists, and ankles, with big floppy ears and big energy.

The Sun wears a sparkling gold and yellow jumpsuit with a huge yellow afro. Long yellow tassels adorn his arms. He struts and bops along with popping hips and disco moves.

Lucy the cow wears frilly purple patterned overalls over a black and white patched cow suit. Big pink udders are on her belly, and she wears a straw hat. She has huge brown eyes, a kind, dopey expression, and rolling, waddling walk.

Binkle-bonk the tree goblin wears a yellow and purple 70s style purple and yellow patterned suit, with a big white lacy frill at their collar. She wears a sequined purple fedora.

Mudwiggle is long and skinny, with his arms held tight to his sides as he wriggles and flops. He’s covered head to toe in a pink striped hooded onesie.

The Apple Tree wears brown trousers textured like bark, the cuffs shaped like tree roots. He wears a white police shirt, black tie and suspenders, and tree branches are growing out of his black police helmet.

Dinglemouse is a smally, scruffy white mouse hand puppet. The puppeteer wears all black and can be clearly see on stage during Dinglemouse’s action.

Badjelly the Witch wears a black and purple dress made of lace and flowing strips of fabric over striped tights. She has a wide wicked smile under her curving, warty hooked nose and flashing eyes. Wild green and black hair pokes out from her black and purple sparkly witch’s hat.

Dulboot wears stilts underneath enormous, long black trousers with suspenders. His shirt says “Security”. He wears orange glowing sunglasses and a beanie covered in eyes, and tattoos cover his arms. He clutches a heavy black staff. Dulboot has a wide goofy grin.

Jim the Eagle is dressed like Elvis Presley, in a white suit with a wide sparkly purple belt, a purple cape for wings, black coiffed hair, and dark sunglasses. He moves with rhythm and exudes cool.

The rest of the characters all wear black pants and black long-sleeved shirts, with small accessories to indicate their role. These minor characters will be described within the notes.

Story Notes

Scene 1

Red curtains at the front of the stage are closed. A fanfare is heard, and the curtains start to open. A Cleaner is revealed, vacuuming the stage. The curtains get stuck. They close. Another fanfare, and the curtains open, and get stuck again. The Cleaner is now dusting. The curtains close and finally open again fully. The Cleaner is mopping. Suddenly, two horsemen gallop onto the stage, clapping coconut shells together to sound like horses’ hooves. They realise they’ve left the Prince behind, and they gallop off again. The Cleaner leaves in a huff.

The horsemen return with the Prince who rides an invisible horse. The Prince dismounts, stumbles a little, then begins giving a passionate speech. Suddenly, the large doors on the right bang open, and the Narrator enters with the Cleaner. The Narrator tells the Prince he is in the wrong theatre, and the Prince and his Helpers ride off. The red curtains close again.

The Narrator tries to introduce the show, but his spotlight won’t stay still. He chases the spot, commanding it to stop. He tries to introduce the show, but he’s forgotten the name. A Prompter in black pop out from the curtain with a script to remind Narrator the name of the show. The red curtains open, revealing a tiny purple cabin with a yellow straw roof on the right side of the stage. Two children, Tim and Rose, enter playing tag. Rose zooms around the stage in her wheelchair as Tim chases after her. Their Daddy enters with a fishing pole full of fish, and their Mummy enters with fresh bread. Together, they sing the Fluffybum song, joined by Fluffybum the cat (his white, fluffy bottom and tail to the audience) and PomPom the dog. At the end of the song, they gather in the cabin for bedtime.

Scene 2

The Sun dances onto the stage. He dances around Mummy, who calls for Tim and Rose. She sends Tim and Rose to milk Lucy, and the children race off. Mummy closes a black curtain, hiding the purple cabin, and leaves. Lucy plods around the stage, looking for grass. She leaves as the children enter. The children look all around, but Lucy is gone. They search, exactly following Lucy’s hoofprints, but they don’t see her- not even when Lucy walks right across the stage behind them! Tim and Rose leave, and Lucy enters, followed by two tall purple trees with yellow vines both in the shape of the letter T. Ominous music and gloomy lights close in on Lucy, who shrugs and waddles off. Tim and Rose enter the forest and four actors wearing sticks across their shoulders with fabric T shapes down their bodies enter as T trees (a visual joke made on tea trees). Rose is scared, but Tim is trying to be brave. Binkle-Bonk the tree goblin sits at the base of a tree, inviting the children to spend the night in his tree. He introduces them to his guard dog, a barking grasshopper called Silly Sausage. Binkle-Bonk sings a song which magically makes his tree grow bigger, as the T trees and the children dance around in a circle.

Scene 3

Now in Binkle-Bonk’s tree, Tim and Rose admire the pretty blankets on yellow beanbags. They get tucked in for bed while Binkle-Bonk makes them some supper. Binkle-Bonk warns them to keep their windows shut tonight, because of Trouser Robbers! Two Trouser Robbers in striped shirts and robber masks dash across the stage, cackling over trousers they have robbed. One of the Robbers rips the trousers off the other, revealing sparkly purple unicorn underwear. They chase each other off stage while Binkle-Bonk and the children laugh. Thunder is heard, with flashes of lightning. The Tin Lion walks upstage, bemoaning the effects of the rain.

The next morning, the Sun dances in to wake the children up. Binkle-Bonk serves them rabbit’s milk, and the children leave to keep looking for Lucy.

Scene 4

A Robin flies over to Tim and Rose. The Robin is made by two actors – one wearing a red glove for the body and beak and the other wearing two white gloves to make the wings. The Robin is tweeting and whistling, but Tim and Rose don’t understand. The Robin waves on an Interpreter in black, who translates what the Robin is tweeting into English and NZ Sign Language. The Robin is warning the children to be careful of the wicked witch, Badjelly. The Robin flies away, and Tim and Rose follow, searching for Lucy.

Scene 5

Dramatic music is heard as a Magician’s Assistant enters in a sparkly purple dress with a purple boa. The Magician follows wearing a long purple cape. He walks across the stage, the purple cape trailing behind him. The cape is taken off him by the Assistant. He performs a magic trick and the fabric cape rises up, forming a long, rippling purple river across the stage. Tim and Rose enter and see the river. They don’t know how to get across. Tim sits down and almost lands on Mudwiggle the worm, who pops out from the river. Mudwiggle is the strongest worm in all the world! He helps the children swim across the river. While Mudwiggle helps Tim across, a Shark appears in the river. Mudwiggle and the Shark have a fight, and the river falls to the floor, revealing that the Shark is only an actor in black holding a fin on a stick, wearing a mask and snorkel. Mudwiggle bashes the Shark in the nose. Paramedics in white coats run on with a tiny purple stretcher and carry off the Shark fin as the hurt Shark actor runs off after them. The children cheer for Mudwiggle, who bounces around the stage then is pulled off stage on the river.

Scene 6

The Sun arrives to dry the children’s clothes. Tim and Rose see an Apple Tree, and they pluck off the apples- only to learn that the Apple Tree is actually a policeman! He was turned into an Apple Tree by Badjelly. The Apple Tree is crying. The children try to comfort him, but as they are feeling awkward decide to make a quick exit with their apples. The Apple Tree leaves, but when the children try to eat their apples he gives one last sob, causing Tim and Rose to jump and drop the apples. They spy Lucy’s footprints and follow them offstage.

Silly music is heard, and three movers in high vis come on stage. They remove the large T Trees, and bring on a giant folding purple M, made of three capital M shapes, which represents a mountain. They fuss about, unfolding the Ms, only saying the sound ‘M’ until it’s in the perfect spot. They leave, and Dinglemouse scurries in across the mountain. Tim and Rose enter, giggling at the mountain’s big yellow beard. They meet Dinglemouse, who sings them a song. Dinglemouse jumps in Tim’s pocket and the three of them climb up to the top of the tall mountain. Purple and yellow snow falls from the ceiling- it’s very cold. Rose wants to go home. Suddenly, Badjelly appears, pretending to be an old woman carrying a large purple sack. She invites the children to come inside the sack to get warm. Tim is happy to go inside, Rose less so. Badjelly the Witch cackles in delight and carries the full sack off, as the children call for help.

Scene 7

The movers come back onstage, now saying only the letter ‘O’ to move the M mountain again. One mover opens a tall black curtain, revealing Badjelly’s castle door- and Dulboot the giant! The movers are scared of Dulboot, but Dulboot looks right over their heads and doesn’t see them. They scurry off, with one declaring the letter ‘P’ as the fright has meant he wants to go for a pee.

Badjelly enters, carrying the sack with the children. She calls for Dulboot, and doesn’t see him walk up behind her. She swings the sack around, hitting Dulboot in the face. She finally sees Dulboot and asks him to take the children to the top of the tower, and keep them in the sack. Dulboot doesn’t understandand keeps getting the instructions mixed up. Badjelly gets frustrated, but finally Dulboot understands what to do and he carries the children off. Badjelly leaves to walk his pet monster, Twinkles.

In the tower, Dinglemouse uses his sharp teeth to let the children out of the sack. Rose is crying, and Tim tries to comfort her. Dinglemouse leaves to fetch his friend, a big strong eagle named Jim.

The small purple cabin is revealed, and we see Mummy and Daddy at the window. They are very sad, because they think Tim and Rose have been eaten by an animal in the forest.

Scene 8

Dinglemouse runs onto the stage, his tail is on fire! A firefighter runs on with a bucket to put out the fire. Dinglemouse scurries up the M mountain, where Jim is sleeping, and tries to wake him up. Jim is asleep and doesn’t want to be disturbed, but Dinglemouse finally convinces him to get up. Jim and Dinglemouse fly off.

Tim and Rose see the sun coming up from the tower window, and they see Badjelly coming up the stairs with a big sharp knife! They are very scared. Tim, Rose, and Badjelly struggle over the tower door, but Badjelly gets inside! Suddenly, Jim the Eagle swoops in. In slow motion, we see the children dodging Badjelly’s knife as they jump on Jim’s back and fly away to safety. Badjelly screams in frustration and calls for Dulboot, who tries to comfort her. She runs off to grab her broomstick and her magic powder.

Irish music plays, and three actors holding big cardboard cut-outs of clouds dance onto stage. Jim, Dinglemouse, Tim, and Rose fly in, chased by Badjelly. They hide behind the clouds as Badjelly swoops around on her broomstick. The clouds turn to reveal the actors talking on the phone, blowing their nose, solving a Rubik’s cube, and stretching as if they were offstage. The clouds turn back, hiding Jim, Dinglemouse, and the children once more. Suddenly, God’s voice booms out from the clouds. God tells Badjelly to leave the children alone. Badjelly says no! God asks one more time, and then gets rid of Badjelly in a blast of gold confetti and dramatic music. The witch is gone, and the children are safe. Jim flies off with everyone to go find Lucy.

Scene 9

Lucy enters by the castle, her leg in a thick chain, mooing sadly. Jim breaks the chain with his strong beak. Dulboot enters and threatens them with his big stick. Dinglemouse runs up the stick and nibbles the back of his trousers to reveal Dulboot’s bare bottom. He runs away to Bare Bottom Land. They all fly off together to go home.

Mummy sees Jim the Eagle coming, and she is very scared! She and Daddy run around in a panic until Jim lands and Rose tells them that Jim is a kind eagle. Mummy and Daddy are very excited to see Tim and Rose, and everyone hugs and cheers. Mummy fetches jelly babies to celebrate, and they all play ‘Follow the Leader’ in a circle. Mudwiggle bounces onto stage, to say that everyone lived happily ever after. The curtain starts to close, gets stuck, and then finally shuts as all the characters wave.

There is a curtain call with the actors bowing to the Fluffybum song from scene 1.

This is the end of Badjelly the Witch descriptive notes.