

BIG ~~BAD~~ WOLF

By Conor McReynolds

SCENE 1 – A TRAVELLER IN THE WOODS

LIGHTS SLOWLY COME UP. THERE IS A DARK FOREST. A MAN ENTERS WITH A LANTERN. HE WALKS SLOWLY, LOOKING ALL AROUND. HE IS CLEARLY LOST.

NARRATOR 1

I'm sure your parents have told you all sorts of fables and fairy tales. These stories teach you all the important things you need to know about love, family, friendship, bravery and honesty. There are the ones where princesses get cursed by witches and rescued by their charming princes. There are the ones where children do all the things their parents warned them not to do, only to find out exactly why their parents told them not to do those things in the first place.

And there are the ones where wolves try to ruin everyone's lives. Remember how that horrible wolf ruined those little pigs' houses, and tried to gobble them all up? Remember how that nasty wolf ate that poor little girl's granny, then tried to eat the little girl up, too?

Yes, literature is full of stories where wolves do all sorts of unimaginably awful things to their poor, unsuspecting victims. Clearly, wolves are unfeeling, villainous, cunning, scheming, evil geniuses.

THE MAN, STILL LOOKING ALL AROUND, BACKS INTO A TREE. MISTAKING IT FOR SOMETHING MORE SINISTER, HE FALLS BACK IN SHOCK. HE GETS UP, TAKES OFF HIS BACKPACK, TAKES OUT A MAP AND EXAMINES IT CLOSELY BY THE DIM LIGHT OF HIS TORCH.

NARRATOR 1

There was once a traveller lost in the deep, dark woods of Austria. He was on a journey to find -

NARRATOR 2

It wasn't Austria.

NARRATOR 1

What?

NARRATOR 2

He wasn't in Austria.

NARRATOR 1

What are you talking about? Of course he was in Austria.

LIGHTS SHINE ON TWO TREES ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE STAGE. THE TWO TREES HAVE FACES.

TREE 2

He wasn't in Austria when *the thing* happened, though.

TREE 1

He absolutely *was* in Austria!

TREE 2

He wasn't.

TREE 1

For goodness sake, where do you think he was?

TREE 2

Holland.

TREE 1

Holland?!

TREE 2

That's right. He was travelling through the deep dark woods of Holland.

TREE 1

That's crazy. The deep dark woods aren't in Holland!

TREE 2

They are. They're called 'The Deep Dark Danish woods'.

TREE 1

'Danish'?!

TREE 2

That's right. Danish, like in Holland.

TREE 1

The Danish aren't from Holland, you plank!

TREE 2

They aren't?

TREE 1

No!

TREE 2

Where are the Danish from then?

TREE 1

They're from the Netherlands. Idiot!

TREE 2

Oh, that sounds right, actually.

TREE 1

Now can I get back to telling the story?

TREE 2

Can I tell it with you? I love telling stories!

TREE 1

I think it's best if you leave it to me. You've got a very wooden way of telling stories.

TREE 2

True, but you tend to branch off on crazy tangents.

TREE 1

That's true.

TREE 2

So can I tell the story, too?

TREE 1

Alright, you can tell the story, too.

TREE 2

Awesome. Okay, where were we?

TREE 1

You mean where was *he*?

THEY BOTH LOOK AT THE MAN EXAMINING HIS MAP.

TREE 2

Where *did* we say he was?

SILENCE.

TREE 1

Hungary?

TREE 2

Not too bad, actually. I'm thirsty, though...

TREE 1

No! I meant the country!

TREE 2

Oh, of course. Yes, he was in Hungary.

TREE 1

A lonely traveller lost in the deep, dark woods of Hungary.

TREE 2

And when we say 'dark', we mean *dark*.

THE LIGHTS DIM SLIGHTLY.

TREE 1

Darker.

THE LIGHTS DIM FURTHER.

TREE 2

Darker.

THE LIGHTS GO OUT.

TREE 1

Slightly less dark.

THE LIGHTS COME UP A LITTLE.

TREE 2

Yeah, that dark. *Seriously* dark woods.

TREE 1

The traveller was completely alone; lost in the middle of the deep, dark woods.

THE TRAVELLER FOLDS HIS MAP, TURNS OFF HIS TORCH AND SITS BACK AGAINST A TREE, LOOKING DEJECTED.

TREE 2

He was journeying around Europe, seeking out the places where all the great fairy tales happened.

TREE 1

He'd been to Germany, where he saw the Gingerbread House where Hansel and Gretel killed that old woman. Time had not been kind to the gingerbread exterior.

TREE 2

How would you know?

TREE 1 LAUGHS.

TREE 1

Ha! Good one!

TREE 2

What? What did I say?

TREE 1

"How would you know"! How *wood* you know! *Wood!* You were making a joke...right?

TREE 1 LAUGHS AGAIN.

TREE 2

Oh, that? Well obviously *that* was a joke.

TREE 1

Anyway, where else had the traveller been?

TREE 2

He'd travelled to Switzerland and visited the tower where Rapunzel let down her long, golden hair.

TREE 1

Blonde hair. She let down her blonde hair.

TREE 2

I know, but you're supposed to say 'golden hair'. That's how the story's told. She had long *golden* hair.

TREE 1

Alright.

TREE 2

Golden hair.

TREE 1

Yes, alright.

TREE 2

You say it.

TREE 1

Golden hair.

TREE 2

That's right. *Golden* hair.

TREE 1

Stop it.

TREE 2

While in Switzerland, the traveller was told of a deep, dark wood. He was told that within this deep, dark wood there lived an old woman.

TREE 1

There lived an old woman?

TREE 2

There lived an old woman, who lived in a shoe.

TREE 1

Seriously?

TREE 2

Seriously.

TREE 1

That's so cool!

TREE 2

Yeah, it's really cool.

TREE 1

The traveller had seen some crazy things on his travels, but an old woman who lives in a shoe? That was on another level.

TREE 2

And so the traveller did what travellers do; he travelled...to the deep, dark woods.

TREE 1

The woods were deep, and dark. Full of big, green trees. Some were bigger than others, which conversely meant that some were smaller than others, too.

TREE 2

Is that a shot at me?

TREE 1

No...

TREE 2

You're about 90 years older than me, of course you're bigger!

TREE 1

Are you calling me old?

TREE 2

Are you calling me small?

TREE 1

Are you -?

FROM OFFSTAGE A WOLF HOWLS. THE TREES FALL SILENT. THE TRAVELLER JUMPS UP AND SHINES HIS TORCH.

TRAVELLER

Hello? Is there anyone there?

THE HOWL IS HEARD AGAIN.

TRAVELLER (cont.)

I've made a terrible mistake.

TREE 2 (whispers)

The traveller had made a terrible mistake.

TRAVELLER

I should never have come in this far into the woods!

TREE 2 (whispers)

He should never have come this far into the woods.

TREE 1

Stop that.

THE HOWL IS HEARD AGAIN.

TRAVELLER

That's it. I'm off!

TREE 2

The traveller picked up his rucksack and went to leave.

THE TRAVELLER PICKS UP HIS RUCKSACK AND GOES TO EXIT. HE STOPS. HE TURNS TO FACE THE OTHER DIRECTION, AND STOPS AGAIN.

TREE 1

He was surrounded on all sides by darkness. It seemed like there was no escape.

TRAVELLER

Which way? Which way?!

TREE 1 & TREE 2 (speaking simultaneously, confusingly over each other)

This way. This is the way to go! This way is the exit. That way's longer. I think there might be roadworks on that route. Trust me, this way is your best bet. That way takes you to *another* wood. I'd go this way. (Etc.)

THE TRAVELLER IS UNSURE ABOUT WHICH DIRECTION TO GO. HE FINALLY DECIDES WHICH DIRECTION TO GO IN (TOWARDS TREE 1), AND MOVES TOWARDS IT.

TREE 1

The traveller decided which way to go -

TREE 2

The wrong way...

TREE 1

He'd taken no more than three or four steps when he stopped suddenly.

THE TRAVELLER STOPS SUDDENLY.

TREE 2

The traveller saw something which made his heart race, his eyes widen, and his legs turn to jelly.

TREE 1

Metaphorically, of course...

THE TRAVELLERS EYES WIDEN.

TREE 1

There in the darkness were two enormous, red eyes, staring at him.

TREE 2

There are many mysteries in every forest, let alone a fairy tale forest, but the traveller knew one universal truth. That where there are eyes, there's a head. And that head is probably attached to a body.

TREE 1

He wasn't wrong, for out of the darkness stepped a huge...

TREE 2

Terrifying...

TREE 1

Hairy...

TREE 2

Stinky...

THE WOLF STEPS OUT FROM THE DARKNESS.

TRAVELLER

WOLF!!!!!!

THE TRAVELLER DOESN'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN. HE IS A NERVOUS, SHIVERING WRECK.

TREE 1

Oh boy, he is going to faint.

TREE 2

He's not going to faint!

THE WOLF MOVES SLOWLY TOWARDS THE TRAVELLER.

TREE 1

He's either going to faint or he's going to wet himself.

TREE 2

Don't be so stupid! He's a grown man; he's not going to wet himself, and he's certainly not going to –

THE TRAVELLER FAINTS.

TREE 2

Oh.

BLACKOUT