

AND THE BROOM YOU RODE IN ON

By Jerry Rabushka

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CAST

Rozelda, a teenage witch

(as a TV commercial) Do you suffer from unsightly warts? Nasty, horrid, unsightly warts? Can't get a date? Embarrassed to go to the gym? The grocery store? Wart-away dissolves the ugliness, making you feel whole again. **(sloganizing)** Just one drop a day melts your warts away!

(as a high school girl and narrator, Rozelda) Look, I'm a witch, okay? Warts are genetic. And we think they're attractive. That was, until they mainstreamed me into the public school system. They took me out of school in Green-witch Connecticut and forced me into a homeroom composed mainly of smooth-complexioned mortals. I'm like, why not just put me into a vat and boil me *now*.

These people were ghastly. Not a blotch on their faces! Okay, Laura Sue Jergenson had this acne problem. But they solved it for her. They made her invisible. No one spoke to her, no one helped her with her homework, and there were several tables at lunch where the main "top of convo" was Laura Sue Jergenson's acne! **(making an awful discovery)** And my warts!

I started to feel. . . well. . . unsightly. I came home one day and I'm like **(humiliated)** "Mom, I have warts!"

And she's like "Duh, Rozelda. . . that's me, Rozelda. . . you're a *witch*. Ugly is pretty. And you're beautiful!"

But mom, I have this horrid nasty wart on the tip of my nose! It's like a raisin!

"Oh," she says. "I had that when I was a girl. That's why your father married me. Then I lost it in that meat cutter accident, and now I'm repulsive!"

Mom didn't get it. Witches couldn't mainstream.

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Oh, and that broom thing. **(answering a taunt)** “No, I will not sweep the hallway; this is a sophisticated transportation vehicle.” **(speaking to someone else)** “No, you may not have a ride – I don’t care if you’re late for class, and I particularly don’t care if you’re late for band practice!” Why should I? If Skyy Bridges was late one more time, they would demote her to last chair in the clarinet section. She’d have to share music with Laura Sue Jergenson. She’d have to acknowledge Laura’s existence on the planet.

Finally, the principal called me. And the guidance counselor. The principal went first. **(as an older gentleman, very authoritative)** “Rozelda, we’d prefer if you simply *walked* to class instead of flying around on a broom. It’s giving the other students a complex.”

I’m like, “They *need* a complex! I have a complex too. No one talks to me because I have warts.”

(as principal) “They probably don’t talk to you because you cast a spell on the class president.”

Well, yes I did do that, I had to admit.

(as principal) “Are you going to change him back?” Ribbit. **(sweetly)** “Uh, no.”

The guidance counselor tried a different tactic. “Have you ever heard of Wart-away? Just one drop a day melts your warts away! I know appearance isn’t everything, but in your case. . .”

This is high school, I reminded him, as if he wasn’t living that dream permanently. Appearance *is* everything.

Like the appearance of my clothing. The goth kids hated on me as if I was trying to be like *them*. Even one of the emo girls stopped cutting herself long enough to look at me and whine, “What are you trying to do, imitate us? Like you know, like, like I want to, like, own my own misery without you horning in on it. Like, you’re trying to adopt the look without the required corresponding depression and I just hope you know how insulting that is.”

I’m like “Witches wear black. It’s not a choice. It’s a heritage. Oh, and don’t worry, we only eat children smaller than ourselves.”

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(embarrassed) Well, there was that problem of declining enrollment in the third grade. **(sharing a secret)** But they fit so well in the vat.

Okay, back to the warts. I looked in this book of spells for some way to get rid of them. Nothing. Nothing about being popular in a school where you don't belong. Nothing about fitting in where everyone's driving a Toyota and a Nissan and you're pulling up with an O Cedar.

Remember Sabrina, the teenage witch? No one was supposed to find out she had magical powers. Yeah? She was 23 and still in high school. I found it better to just be a real witch about things.

The next time someone made fun of the warts? "Hakuna matata!" You're a warthog!

(as a classmate) "Rozelda, my, what an ugly shade of green you are today, as usual!" Ribbit.

(as another classmate) "Rozelda, what are you going to be for Halloween. . . pretty?" Ribbit.

(thinks it over) You know, it's really easy to be the class valedictorian when everyone around you is a toad.

The cauldron pretty much boiled over when I had it out with my English teacher about *Macbeth*. I told him that Shakespeare's portrayal of witches was stereotypical and demeaning and that the play should be banned. Eye of newt, my foot! You put in the whole thing! Doesn't anybody do research anymore?

So finally he's like "Get out of my class! You and the broom you rode in on!"

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