

Opera for the Young's

Hansel & Gretel

Libretto by Adelheid Wette

Libretto Translated & Adapted by Diane Garton Edie

CAST (*in order of appearance*):

Father	baritone
Mother	soprano
Gretel	soprano
Ragamuffins & Gingerbread Cookies	students
Hansel	mezzo-soprano
Sandman	baritone
Sandwoman	soprano
Pixies	students
Witch	soprano & baritone

ACT I

Father: Once upon a time, there lived a poor woodcutter,

Mother: his wife

Father: and two children at the edge of a deep, dark forest.

Mother: The man made brooms to sell

Father: and the woman sold a few items of hand-stitched clothing.

Father: But times were hard and they earned very little money, so the family was hungry.

Mother: One day, after their mother went off to market, the boy, Hansel, and his sister, Gretel did chores around the house. They were joined by several youngsters in raggedy clothes who occasionally

PLEASE NOTE:

Text in italics is sung.

**Text in boldface
(including spoken
lines and singing) is
STUDENTS**

Father: and, mysteriously,

Mother: would wander out of the woods and appear at their door.

Father: Hansel and Gretel didn't ask questions; they were just happy for the company! And, as is often true with children, work soon turned to play...

Ragamuffins *Hansel, dearest Hansel who's there next to you?*
With Gretel: *The little elves are barefoot they haven't a shoe.
 The cobbler has leather to make some brand new,
 but he's rather busy with plenty to...*

Hansel: *Then they'll have to go barefoot.*

Ragamuffins: *...do!*

Ragamuffins *Gretel, dearest Gretel what do the elves say?*
With Hansel: *They'll buy us bread 'n' sausage, they've money to pay.
 Then we'll fill our tummies oh la de dah day!
 Nothing could be better, so let's shout hooooo...*

Gretel: *Well then why am I hungry?*

Ragamuffins: *...ray!*

Hansel: *If mother would hurry back home again-*

Gretel: *Ja, I'm so hungry I cannot wait til then.*

Hansel: *For weeks we've only had dry bread, but when it's gone, oh that I dread.*

Gretel: *Now Hansel you know what father would do when mother cries with me
 and you, let us pray to ease our grief, Heav'n above will send relief.*

Hansel: *But Gretel, I can't tell a lie, all those words sound fine but don't satisfy.
 Oh, sister, how long must we all wait until the day we change our fate?
 Think how wonderful it would be if there were good food for you and me.
 Oh Gretel, how I wish...*

Gretel: *No! don't you start to mope - be patient for a while, give us a smile.
 This awful face - yikes what a mug; does Mister Grouchy need a hug?*

Hansel: C'mon Gretel, admit it... you're hungry too.

Gretel: All right, all right I'm hungry. But - I also have a secret!

Hansel: A secret? What secret?

Gretel: Just look in the pitcher. A neighbor brought us milk and when Mother comes back I know she'll bake a pudding!

Hansel: Pudding? Oh, now I am going to faint. But first, I'll just take a little lick of that milk!

- Gretel:** Don't you dare! Stay away from that pitcher and get back to work!
- Hansel:** Naaaw. I'm too weak to work. Let's play instead.
- Gretel:** Well, all right. What should we play? Do you remember the dance Grandma taught us?
- Gretel:** *Brother come and dance with me, both my hands I offer thee. One step left, one step right, turn around - a lovely sight!*
- Hansel:** *I would dance but I'm no good - when to turn or if I should. Teach me how this movement goes, soon I'll dance with twinkle toes!*
- Gretel:** *With your foot you tap tap tap, with your hands you clap clap clap, one step left, one step right, turn around a lovely sight!*
- Hansel** (repeat, then...) *what a lovely sight!*
- Gretel:** *Brother mine keep watching me, here's a step for you to see: let's link arms and start to skip now, careful please don't lose your grip now, come!*
- Hansel & Gretel:** *I love to dance and sing and laugh and play let's hope it never ends, (repeat)*
- Ragamuffins CHORUS I** *Tra la la, la la la, la la la la la, tra la la, la la la, la la la*
With Gretel: *Come and dance with me my dearest Hansel, Let us have a dance my little Hans!*
- Ragamuffins CHORUS II** *beginning at Chorus I's "dance with"*
With Hansel: *Tra la la, la la la, la la la la la, tra la la, la la la, la la la*
- Hansel:** *Oh sister dear you must see here, your stocking has a hole.*
- Gretel:** *Oh brother dear, there's nothing here, you fooled me, naughty soul! To serve you right I'll turn my back, don't dance with me again!*
- Hansel:** *Oh don't be cross you little boss, I'm clever now and then.*
- Ragamuffins CHORUS I** *Tra la la, la la la, la la la la la, tra la la, la la la, la la la*
With Gretel: *Come and dance with me my dearest Hansel, Let us have a dance my little Hans!*
- Ragamuffins CHORUS II** *beginning at Chorus I's "dance with"*
With Hansel: *Tra la la, la la la, la la la la la, tra la la, la la la, la la la*
- Hansel & Gretel:** *I'll sing a rhyme to keep in time while I dance with you, and if your/my stocking has a hole...our Ma will knit one new! tra la la*
- Gretel:** *Come and dance with me my dearest Hansel, tra la la*

(Mother Enters)

Mother: *Heavens!*

Gretel: *Here's Mother!*

Hansel: *Mother, here's mother*

Mother: *What is going on, oh tell me!*

Gretel: *It's Hansel ...he wanted*

Hansel: *It's Gretel...she wanted*

Mother: *Quiet, naughty and rascally children! Some fine amusement, you call it working, who's going to finish the chores you are shirking? And while your parents from day's first dawning, labor til dusk both weary and yawning. Take that, now come, let's see what you've done. So, Gretel, your stocking still has a hole? And Hans, what's all this straw, now what am I finding? Oh where is that broom you were binding? Just wait and see, you're loafing and lazy - you'll drive me mad, deranged and crazy! (knocks over pitcher) Oh no! What have I done now? Oh Heaven! What else do we have for supper? (Hansel laughs) What? Hansel how dare you laugh? Wait, wait til I give you a swat! Go! Both of you leave! Pick lots of strawberries in the woods! Be off with you now, get out of my sight! Go fill this up if it takes you all night! (Hansel & Gretel exit)*

Mother: What kind of mother am I? Losing my temper like that, punishing the children for my mistake? Oh, if only I weren't so hungry...and tired.

Father: *Tra la la...hello Mama, here is Pa! Tra la la la bringing news, I shout Hurrah! Oh for you and me, poor mother, every day is like another: in the stomach we have an ache, children so hungry my heart could break, tra la la, Mother, look what I have here...*

Come, come now, Mama, it's time to cheer up...let's dance! (does polka)

Mother: Crazy old man! What are you up to?

Father: I had a good day...a very good day! Look in that bag!

Mother: Food!

Father: There was a festival in the village and everyone wanted a new broom to clean their home. I sold all my wares!

Mother: Oh... I feel light-headed.

Father: It's just hunger; let's have dinner. Where are the children? Hansel, Gretel, I'm home!

Mother: I sent them off to gather berries.

Father: *But what if they're lost in the gloomy wood all alone without moon or stars?*

Mother: *Oh heaven!*

Father: *Do you not know that dark and awful place? It's there that the evil one dwells.*

Mother: *The evil one? who is it?*

Father: *The gobbling sorc'ress*

Mother: *The gobbling sorc'ress? Please, tell me - what use is the broomstick?*

Father: *The broomstick, the broomstick, oh, what is it for oh what is it for?
They ride on it, they ride on it - the witches!
Deep within the woods at midnight hour a sorc'ress rules with the devil's pow'r!
At 12 o'clock the world is asleep - she's off for a witch's date to keep!
Up the chimney so high, on her broomstick she'll fly – over hill and dale through a breeze or gale,
whether foul or fair they fly through the air on a broomstick, on a broomstick, up high, up high, the witches!*

Mother: *The witches... but the gobbling witch?*

Father: *Well at first you'd find she seems quite kind, but her hocus, pocus focus'd mind
enchants the children tender and sweet, - she gives them cake and candies to eat.
On evil bent, with foul intent, she lures the babes, so hungry and spent
-in the oven so hot she shoves ev'ry tot, she shuts the door down and when they're baked brown...
from the oven, from the oven... come gingerbread children*

Mother: *And the gingerbread children?*

Father: *Are gobbled at dinner*

Mother: *By the sorc'ress?*

Father: *By the sorc'ress.*

Mother: *The sorc'ress? Heaven help us, the children, oh what can we do?*

Father: *Hey mother, mother, wait for me - we'll both find our children and set them free!*

ACT II

Ragamuffins

With Gretel: *A magic little elf's hiding in the wood,
He watches o'er us children both bad and good.
Happy now oh let us be, so the elf sees you and me
Playing well together just as we should.
It looks as if he's whisp'ring, oh can you hear?
"Don't wander in the forest, there's much to fear."
Little elf don't worry us, we are brave, no need to fuss –
join us while we frolic both far and near!*

Hansel: *Hurrah for me! Look – my basket's almost full!*

Gretel: Good boy! And see my flower crown? Here, try it on...

Hansel: Ohhh no, don't stick that icky thing on my head. But look: this crown is perfect on you! Oh Gretel, you look like the Queen of the Wood. I now present you with the strawberries... but don't eat them all!

Gretel: Mmmm. A dish fit for a queen!

Hansel: Now my turn!

Gretel: And mine!

Hansel: Hey, I picked 'em ... give me that basket!

Gretel: *Hansel, what have you done? You're awful! All the strawberries eaten, how greedy! Listen: we'll both be punished! You heard mother! I'll say it was you!*

Hansel: *Oh Gretel, Gretel, oh what shall we do? What naughty and thoughtless children we've been. We should have taken the berries to Mother.*

Gretel: Let's pick more!

Hansel: It's too dark! (cuckoo heard in background)

Gretel: *Listen, there's a noise in the bushes.*

Hansel: *Let's hear what the forest says –*

Sandwoman & Sandman: *Hansel, Gretel, dear ones, do not be afraid.*

Gretel: But we're lost!

Hansel: (hiding behind her skirt) No we're not.

Gretel: And a little scared.

Hansel: nuh uh.

Sandman & Sandwoman: *We come to help you sleep now as darkness starts to creep now.
We love and will protect you, all creatures will respect you.
And from this tiny bag in hand, we'll sprinkle magic grains of sand.
And then your droopy eyelids close, you both relax from head to toes
And soon you drift so quietly off to sleep.*

Ragamuffins
W/Sandman: *Dream while the starry skies above
Shine down with twinkling lights of hope and love and
Bring all children peaceful dreams while watch they keep.
Now close little eyes oh dearest children
For happy dreams will fill your hours of slumber deep.*

Hansel: *It's time for bed.*

Gretel: *We should both kneel and say our prayers.*

Hansel &

Gretel: *When at night I go to sleep, fourteen angels watch do keep-
Two my head are guarding, two my feet are guiding,
Two are on my left side, two are on my right side,
Two who softly cover, two who closely hover,
Two who lead me and guide my steps to paradise.*

(THREE PIXIES enter)

Pixie 1: GOOD
Pixie 2: MORNING
Pixie 3: CHILDREN!
All Pixies: YOOO HOOO!

Pixie 1: WE
Pixie 2: ARE
Pixie 3: PIXIES!
All Pixies: WAKE UP SLEEPY HEADS! WAKE UP SLEEPY HEADS!

Pixie 1: WE COME WITH GOLDEN SUNSHINE
Pixie 2: AND LITTLE DROPS OF DEW
Pixie 3: TO WAKE YOU FROM YOUR SLUMBER

Pixie 1: YOO HOO
Pixie 2: YOO HOO
Pixie 3: YOO HOO! (Pixies tickle Hansel & Gretel and exit)

Hansel &

Gretel: Hansel/Gretel, stop tickling me!
I wasn't tickling you! (both look around)
Then who...

Hansel: Let's

Gretel: get

Hansel &

Gretel: out of here!

ACT III

Hansel: *Oh my! Look there! It's a cottage in the wood! It's made out of candy, cookies, cake, and all things good!*

Gretel: *It smells so delicious, could this all be a dream?*

Hansel &

Gretel: *A cottage with mortar of buttery cream. The roof made of gumdrops and big candy canes. The windows*

have frosting instead of glass panes. I wonder do you think they melt when it rains? And look all around, there's a gingerbread fence.

Oh glorious cottage, a palace made of treats, but where is the queen who's allowed so many sweets? If only she saw us, perhaps she'd ask us in, invite us to join her, but where to begin? She'd invite us to join her, but here would we begin? She'd ask us in, shall we begin?

Hansel: *Nobody's here..knock – this home is empty, Come, why don't we enter?*

Gretel: *Have you gone cuckoo? Brother! I see you have lost your mind! Who knows what is lurking in this magic place?*

Hansel: *Bah! Let's munch on a piece of the cottage*

Gretel: *Ja, let's munch on it like two mice so very hungry*

Witch: *Munchy, munchy mousie, who's munching on my housie?*

Hansel: *Did you hear that?*

Hansel & Gretel: *The wind, the wind, that sound was the wind.*

Gretel: *Wait you greedy mousie, There might be a cat in the housie!*

Hansel: *Eat all you like, but leave me alone!*

Gretel: *Come on and share, oh let's be fair!*

Hansel: *Why do you care? There's plenty to spare!*

Hansel & Gretel then Witch: *Hahahahah*

Hansel: *Let go! Who are you? Let me go!*

Witch: *Angels mine, two kiddies – how divine! You've come to visit me – that is sweet, you darling children, a lovely treat.*

Hansel: *Who are you? Ugly hag! Let me go!*

Witch: *Now dear heart don't you try to play tough. Calm down, you need not be afraid. I am Rosina Daintymouth, I dearly love all boys and girls. I'm innocent as a newborn babe. That's why I love all the children so much, so much, so much, I could gobble you up!*

Hansel: *No! Leave me alone let me go! I hate you, you ugly witch!*

Witch: *Ha ha!
These dainty tidbits all nervous and shaking, and that dear maid quite ready for baking!
Come little mousie, come into my housie,
feast on something so scrumptious - forget your manners so bumptious.
Some chocolate cakes and donuts glazed. You shall both be quite amazed.
Try lollipops and fresh custard with berries, a light meringue fit for angels or fairies*

*Chew raisins and gumdrops, and bubblegum, ice cream and candy
These treats are just simply quite handy, And all truly dandy!*

Hansel: No thank you... lady. I'm not going inside.

Gretel: You're a stranger and just a little bit too friendly.

Witch: My, my, my – aren't they just so very clever? Little smarty-pants. Why my delicious – hmmm – darling children. I just want to welcome you to my home. We're going to have a yum, yum, yum – ahhh – fun, fun fun time together. Now let's see – first I'll eat (whistle) feed your little brother; he looks even hungrier than you, sweetie pie, and you could use a few gumdrops. Here you are, my puny little dumpling...eat up!

Witch: *Wait! Hocus pocus witch's spell, you will do just as I tell:
Forward backward do not try, feel the strength of evil eye,
things look bad, I cannot lie! Hocus pocus, let us focus-
Children watch my magic wand, you are bound by mystic bond,
soon to come: the great beyond!
Hocus pocus, bonus jocus, malus locus, hocus pocus.*

Witch: Now then, Gretel, be a good little girl and don't move –
I'm going to get some nuts and raisins to feed your brother. (Witch exits)

Gretel: Yikes! What a horrible, scary, yucky witch!

Hansel: (from cage) Shhh! Gretel - be quiet and listen. Try to figure out the witch's magic, but be careful - it's powerful! Uh oh, here she comes!

Witch: *Hocus pocus rigid girl! You may move now, wiggle, whirl!
This magic wand is a real pepper-upper, go little girl, set the table for supper.
You are skipping, that's the way! Keep from tripping, and obey.
Little plate, little spoon, don't be late, pretty soon I'll be eating by the light of moon.
Now do all your work quick as a wink, or you will be locked up like Hans in a blink!
He he he! The fire is hot; see how the flames are burning. Ah, how for baked gingerbread I'm yearning!
Yes, Gretel dear, soon you will disappear, See, see clever me!
While in the oven she's peeping, nimbly behind her I'm creeping...
One little shove – wham! Close the door – slam! Then soon will Gretel mine be baked so fine.
For when she comes out of the oven, a cookie she'll be for my coven.
In toasty flames so red, she turns to gingerbread...see, clever me! He he he!*

Witch: *Prepare to zoom oh trusty broom, now pay me heed, my wooden steed!
At dawn of day I zip away and hold on tight with all my might.
At midnight dark just for a lark we witches form a ghastly swarm!
With three and four come five and more, Add seven friends it never ends,
And nine plus one makes ten for fun, I'll make my date, I won't be late!
My comrades ride close by my side! (wheee!) brrrrrrr broom stick hi!*

Witch: Now, time to check on the groceries... come, my little appetizer, show me your finger –
Jumpin' Jiminy! Skinny as a skeleton – yech, blech – we'll have to fatten you up, beanpole. Gretel!!

(Gretel appears) Fetch more nuts and berries for your hungry little broth –

Gretel: Here you are

Witch: EEEEEK! You're quick! (Gretel steals wand)

Gretel: *Hocus pocus locked up boy, you are free now, jump for joy!*

Witch: *What were you saying, pretty pet?*

Gretel: *Only – have some goodies, please enjoy.*

Witch: *He he he, my little miss, now you try some of this - here skinny, eat your fill, I don't want you to get ill.*

Hansel: *Sister dear, danger here!*

Witch: *She makes my mouth water, so lucky that I caught her.
Come Gretel mine, it is time to dine. Peep in the oven, be steady, see if the gingerbread's ready.
Carefully look here...does it seem cooked, dear? But if it needs more, I'll shut the door!*

Hansel: *Sister dear, danger here!*

Gretel: *I don't understand, won't you lend a hand?*

Witch: *Just stand on tiptoe, lean yourself forward. Try it oh please, it's done with ease!*

Hansel: *Sister dear, danger here!*

Gretel: *I'm such a dunce, just show me once, you'll have to show me how to peek in the oven.*

Witch: *Watch what I do - here, just for you!* (Gretel shoves witch into oven)

Hansel &

Gretel: *Just one little shove – wham! Close the door – slam!
Then the evil witch will be dessert for me!
Hurrah the wicked witch is dead, she is dead, no more to dread!
Hurrah, we both are very proud, sing out loud, oh, how we are proud.
The witch's spell is done, we have won, now time for fun...
Yes, let us celebrate, she earned that toasty fate.
That evil one is dead, happiness lies ahead! Hey, hurrah!*

Gretel: Hansel, we did it!

Hansel: We outsmarted the witch!

Gretel: Oh, look at the gingerbread cookies!

Hansel: Why Gretel, they're children ..they're our friends– we must have broken the witch's spell.

Gingerbread: *We're saved, we're free, forever free*

Gretel: *The gingerbread – how can they sing? They're cookies, and everyone's asleep.*

Gingerbread: *One touch for our sake, then we will be awake*

Hansel: *Please touch them for me, I'm afraid I can't*

Gretel: *Yes, I will touch them all – wait and see!*

Gingerbread: ***Oh touch my hand, please touch mine, too, I'll open up my eyes for you***

Hansel: *Hocus pocus, cookie crew, No more evil magic, shoo!*

Gingerbread: ***We thank you both! The spell is gone and we are free,***

Hans & Gret: *We'll sing and we'll dance and we'll laugh for glee.*

Gingerbread: ***All children now come form a ring,***

Hansel & Gretel: *Join hands together while we sing.*

Gingerbread: ***We'll sing and dance and dance and sing, yes sing and dance and dance and sing!***

Hansel & Gretel: *So through the wood our merry voices raise, and all may hear our song of praise!*

Father: *Tra la la la – where or where can our children be? Tra la la, mother, look oh can you see-*

Hansel & Gretel: *Father, Mother!*

Mother: *Children dear!*

Father: *We've found our beloved children here.*

ALL: *Look!* (holds up giant Witch cookie)

Father: *Children, here's a lesson learned: how the witch her fate has earned. She was smart at the start, you have won with brav'ry and heart*

ALL: ***We all see the lesson learned - how the witch her fate has earned. She was smart at the start, we have won with brav'ry and heart.***

Father: *Evil will not be ignored, goodness has a just reward. When our lives are filled with grief, Heav'n above will help us find relief.*

ALL: *Yes, when our lives are filled with grief, Heav'n above will send relief.*

THE END