

"Hansel" Version

Hansel running through the woods, with his pet wolf in tow. They're chasing a deer.

Hansel. Just—a little faster. Come on, Wiglaf!

The deer is a little too lucky for them, though. Wiglaf takes a wrong step and gets caught on a tripwire set up between two trees.

Hansel. Wiglaf, you okay? *He examines the rope.* That's weird. I don't remember setting up any traps this far into the woods.

Wiglaf paws irritably at the rope.

Hansel. Well. That's dinner gone then. Gretel's going to be so pleased.

Gretel's voice, from afar. Hansel? Haaaaansel! Are you there?

Hansel. Not that she wouldn't scare the deer away *anyway*, yelling like that... Over here, sis!

Gretel emerges from among the trees.

Gretel. There you are.

Hansel. Heere we are. What's up?

Gretel. I figured you wouldn't be home for dinner, so I brought you something to eat. *She produces a loaf of bread from her bag.* Not much, but since *someone's* been out here for hours and hasn't caught anything...

Hansel. *Snatches the bread and chomps a big bite out of it.* Maybe if you weren't so loud, there'd still be animals around to hunt!

Gretel. You can't even catch a rabbit, and that's when I'm not even here!

Hansel. *Waves bread around emphatically.* Oh yeah? Well if *you*—hey!

Wiglaf has stolen his chunk of bread. Gretel laughs. Hansel gives up, and they sit down to eat.

Gretel. You don't usually come out this far. It took me a while to find you.

Hansel. Yeah, well, Wiglaf knows his way around. Right, buddy?

As they eat, a creepy-looking fog starts to gather around their clearing...

A strange voice (unheard by the twins). Children wandering in my forest? How *sweet*.

Gretel. It'll be dark soon. We should go home.

Hansel. Lead the way, Wig.

They start to try to make their way home, but soon find themselves lost. Even Wiglaf looks confused at every crossroads.

Hansel. Never been this way before...

Suddenly Wiglaf bounds off into the trees.

Hansel. Hey—Wiglaf! *But the wolf's too quick for the twins.* Maybe he saw something...

Gretel. Let's try to follow him?

They do, and they happen across a demure-looking cottage with an appealing curl of smoke rising from the chimney.

Hansel. Whoa. Is this—made out of *candy*?

Gretel. *Chips a piece of chocolate from the gate at the entrance to its garden.* Mm—yep. Tasty, too.

Hansel. Wonder if they'd let us stay here for the night?

Gretel. I dunno about that...

Hansel. Well we have to do something! We can't sleep out here!

Gretel. I guess...

They head into the yard and knock on the door. The Witch, in the form of an old woman, answers.

Witch. Who's there? Travellers, so close to nightfall? Children your age shouldn't be wandering in the forest.

Gretel. We're lost. We were wondering if we might be able to stay the night here.

Hansel. We don't have much to repay you, but I can chop some wood for you or whatever needs doing...

Gretel. And I make a mean breakfast!

Witch. I dare say you might. *Pause. The fog from earlier begins to creep toward the edges of the cottage's clearing. Best come inside. We can sort out what's what in the morning.*

The cottage is roomier inside than it looks. Everything's still made out of candy—and there are big baskets of it on the table in the kitchen, in a towering heap.

Hansel. No way... Can I have some?

Witch. Of course... growing boys need to eat.

The kids both dig in, until Hansel collapses in a heap on the floor near the table.

Hansel. Aww, man. I'm stuffed.

Witch. *Bustling around the cottage with some blankets.* Children should be in bed soon.

Gretel. I am... really sleepy, all of a sudden.

They pile up in some blankets and the scene shifts to a Dramatic Flashback Nightmare™. Hansel and a puppy-sized Wiglaf are running through the woods. Ominous-sounding roars sound from a distance.

Young Hansel. Dad? Dad!?

Hansel and Wiglaf reach the clearing in question and find Dad facing off against a giant bear-monster-thing, with Young Gretel hiding behind him/s a tree. Dad has a big lumber axe but it proves of no use against the bear, which wounds his axe-arm.

Young Hansel. Dad!?

Dad. Hansel! Take your sister and run!

Young Hansel. What about you?

Dad. *Rrrn, Hansel!*

In present time, Hansel wakes up in the Witch's cottage. The old woman and Gretel's voices drift in from out in the garden.

Gretel. This house is amazing.

Witch. Yes, I... stumbled upon this house one day. I'm not even really sure how it works.

Gretel. And your vegetable garden!

Witch. Well, I can't always eat candy.

Hansel. *Joins them outside.* I bet I could!

Witch. Perhaps you could help me carry these inside, young man. *She gestures to some baskets of vegetables.*

Hansel. No problem.

Back in the cottage, while Gretel's cheerful humming drifts in from outside, the Witch offers Hansel a caramel apple. He takes a big bite of it and...

Hansel. Wow... guess I was more tired than I thought... *and collapses on the floor. The Witch gives an evil, toothy grin.*

The scene changes to Gretel, outside. Wiglaf bounds up from outside the yard.

Gretel. Wig? There you are! Where'd you run off to?

The wolf growls toward the door of the cottage, baring his fangs. He knows something's up.

Gretel. I guess we should go tell Hansel you're all right...

But inside the cottage, the Witch is nowhere to be found. The huge pile of candy baskets in the kitchen has been swept aside, revealing a cage, which now has Gretel's groggy brother in it.

Gretel. Hansel! *She runs up to it and rattles the door. No luck.*

Hansel. What...

Gretel. Hansel! What happened?

The Witch appears suddenly in an outpouring of smoke from the fireplace.

Witch. Meddlesome girl!

Gretel. What have you done with my brother!

Witch. Nothing yet—and it looks like I'll have to deal with *you* first!

As she speaks, the Witch begins to transform into a terrible beast—the same bear creature from Hansel's nightmare.

Wiglaf leaps into action. He bowls over the cage, which breaks it open, and Hansel wrambles out and grabs a poker from the fireplace.

Hansel. Run, Gretel!

Gretel. No!

In the ensuing fight, Wiglaf helps distract the bear-witch long enough for Hansel to stab it with the poker. The bear turns back into the Witch, who sets herself aflame with magic in a last effort to burn down the house with Hansel and Gretel still in it.

Witch. I'll destroy you all! EVERYTHING! You'll all burn!

Hansel. Now run!

The twins and Wiglaf barely escape the Giant Epic Conflagration of Doom™. They watch the cottage melt into a gundroppy puddle from the forest outside.

Gretel. That—that was the thing that killed Dad.

Hansel. I know.

Gretel. What... *why?*

Wiglaf howls morosely in agreement.

Hansel. I think—she said she was going to *eat* me.

Gretel. Let's go home, Hansel. Let's get out of the woods.

Hansel. Yeah. Let's go.

"Gretel" Version

Ext. woods. It's getting dark. Hansel and Gretel are in a small clearing; Hansel paces, while Gretel sits on a rock.

Hansel. Where's Dad?

Gretel. I... don't know.

Gretel [thoughts]. He said he would be back for us. He said he would be right back... What happened? I don't think he's coming to take us home.

Hansel. It's getting cold.

Gretel rummages in her bag and brings out a loaf of bread.

Gretel. Eat some of this.

As he does, he gets crumbs all over the ground. Brief zoom in on those, and back to Gretel as an idea strikes her.

Gretel. Let's get out of here.

Hansel. How? I have no idea where home is. You don't either. We've never been this far into the forest before.

Gretel [thoughts]. And the Black Forest is huge... No. We can do this!

She grabs the rest of the bread from Hansel and begins to explain.

Gretel. We can leave these crumbs as a trail so we'll know where we've been. We'll be back home by morning. Come on!

Layout indicating passage of time and the twins getting lost after all—and a cute fluffy owl is following them at a distance and eating their breadcrumbs.

Hansel. Face it. We're lost.

Gretel [thoughts]. *(Even she looks doubtful.)* I can't find the trail—but I know we've seen this tree before.

Hansel. Hey—what's that over there?

Gretel. What?

Hansel. Come on!

They break into a gap in the trees where stands a large princess-castle type building made of candy. Which Hansel promptly runs up to...

Hansel. Gretel! It's gingerbread!

Gretel. I don't think we should eat that—Hansel!

Hansel. The whole thing is candy!

Gretel. It's someone's house!

But she caves. They chip off tasty bits of candy until:

Gretel. Let's see what's inside!

She leaves the rest of the bread loaf outside in her distraction, and little Owlly snatches it and perches in a nearby tree, watching... There turns out to be more candy inside. Along with:

Witch. Welcome to my castle, children.

Hansel drops the giant gumdrop he's eating, a deer-in-the-headlights look on his face.

Witch. Please—enjoy yourselves.

Gretel. Really? We can...

Witch. I can always make more... *(She conjures some more candy.)* And sweets are more fun to share, no?

She conjures up a candy throne for herself and watches H&G enjoy the castle. After a short time, Gretel comes up to her.

Gretel. Thank you. We were lost in the woods—and so hungry.

Witch. It's no trouble, child. No trouble at all...

Owly pops up in the background, looking concerned at the certifiably evil look on the Witch's face... Scene shift.

Gretel wakes up in one of two fluffy beds in a darkened room, but Hansel is gone.

Gretel. Hansel? Where are you?

She grabs her cloak and runs off to find Hansel.

Gretel [thoughts]. Where is he? Hansel... Why do you always manage to get yourself into trouble...

Dramatic Childhood Flashback™

Young Gretel. Hansel? Hansel!

Dad. Don't worry, Gretel. We'll find him.

Young Gretel. Hansel!

They find Hansel fallen into a ravine in the forest, with what appears to be a broken leg.

Dad. Hansel! Are you all right, son?

Young Hansel. No! No! She's dead and she'll never come back!

Dad. It's all right, son. We'll get you home.

Young Hansel. I don't want to go home! I don't want...

Present:

Gretel [thoughts]. After Mom died... He was never the same after that. *(aloud)* Hansel?!

She finds her brother locked in a cage in the kitchen.

Hansel. Gretel—get out of here! That woman, she's a witch!

Gretel. What?

Hansel. The woman who lives in this castle—she's a witch! She said she'd feed me to her pet dragon! You have to run.

Gretel. Not without you. *(She starts trying the lock.)*

Hansel. But—

Gretel. No buts. You're my brother. We go home together.

She gets him out by bashing the lock with something she finds in the kitchen. A frying pan?

Witch. Or perhaps you don't go home at all. Children shouldn't wander in the forest alone...

Gretel. Why? Why are you doing this?

Witch. Two children alone in the woods? Abandoned by the only family they have left? No one would miss you. Would they. *(She smiles cruelly. Hansel and Gretel look crushed for a moment.)*

Gretel [thoughts]. But we still have each other. *(aloud)* You're wrong.

Witch. *(archly)* Oh?

Hansel. I'll distract her—

Gretel. No. *(picks up her frying pan again)* You're wrong, Witch. Together we're stronger. And we will always have each other!

She doesn't get the chance to rush at the Witch with her frying pan. Instead, the Witch snaps her fingers and conjures ropes out of licorice to tie up the twins—

Witch. Isn't that what you thought about your father?

—one of which Owly dives through the chimney to handily catch in his beak, leaving Gretel free.

Gretel. Don't—say—anything—about my father!

Owly hops onto Hansel's shoulders and starts pecking at the licorice ropes. Meanwhile, who should burst into the room with a hunting rifle but H&G's father.

Dad. Gretel! Hansel! Are you all right?

Gretel. Dad?

Hansel. Dad!

The Witch moves to conjure something else—it's taking her more effort, so something big. But Dad notices just in time to shoot her.

Dad. Thank God you're all right. I was so worried—I got lost somehow in the forest, until this bird led me to you.

Only looks cute.

Hansel. But you always know your way around in the forest.

Gretel. The Witch must have enchanted you. Oh, I knew it! I knew you wouldn't have left us!

Dad. I think that's enough excitement for one day. What do you say we go home?

Hansel. *(not without looking ruefully at the candy kitchen table for a moment...)* Yeah. Home.

Gretel [thoughts]. Home. Where we all belong.

Cutey walking off hand-in-hand into the woods moment. Awwwww.

HANSEL



Gretel

