

A FAMILY MUSICAL COMEDY



Music, Book & Lyrics by
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HANSEL AND GRETEL
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Characters

HANSEL: A feisty, puckish little fellow and a bit of a smart aleck. Can, and has, been played by a female.

GRETEL: An innocent little girl, somewhat more mature than Hansel and accustomed to handling him.

FATHER: A well intentioned man too easily swayed by his new wife.

STEPMOTHER: Evil, wicked, mean, and bad and nasty.

THE WITCH: Same as above. But add that she is also very flamboyant and outgoing.

FRITZ: The Witch's Assistant. Probably the dumbest person anyone could possibly meet.

HANSEL & GRETEL'S FRIENDS

JOHANN: A young boy very much into machismo.

FRIEDREICH: Likes everybody, agrees with everything and exaggerates.

RUSSEL: Very dense mentally and likes to eat.

KATRINA: Everybody's mother.

HELGA: Very stuck-up.

ELSIE: A very nice girl, likes to dance.

LIESL: A crybaby.

SCENES & SONGS

- SCENE I** **ON THE ROAD TO THE VILLAGE**
“At The Fair” The Kids
“Just Imagine”Hansel, Gretel
- SCENE II** **(SPLIT STAGE) INTERIOR & EXTERIOR OF HANSEL
& GRETEL’S HOUSE**
“Hansel and Gretel”..... Stepmother
“Father’s Farewell”..... Father
- SCENE III** **DEEP IN THE DARKEST PART OF THE FOREST**
“Who Can Tell”.....Hansel, Gretel, Father
- SCENE IV** **OUTSIDE THE WITCH’S HOUSE (Next Morning)**
“Kids For Dinner Tonight”...Witch
- SCENE V** **DEEP IN THE FOREST (*Crossover In front of
Curtain*)**
“Searching High, Searching Low”
..... Father, The Kids
- SCENE VI** **BACK AT THE WITCH’S HOUSE**
“I Like Being Mean”..... Witch
- SCENE VII** **BACK IN THE FOREST...SOMEWHERE (*Crossover in
front of curtain*)**
“Hansel And Gretel”.....Father
- SCENE VIII** **BACK AT THE WITCH’S HOUSE**
“I Like Being Mean”..... Witch
“Help!”..... Hansel, Gretel
“Searching High, Searching Low” *Fugue*
..... Everyone
“At The Fair” (*Reprise*)..... Everyone

PRODUCTION NOTES

This show can be produced using simple, suggestive settings.

The cast can be expanded by simply adding more village children.

One actress can play both the STEPMOTHER and THE WITCH, if desired.

The costumes should be from the appropriate era.

The emphasis in the first part of the show should be on the comic-melodrama of the character relationships. At this point the show almost takes itself seriously.

However, after FRITZ and THE WITCH are on the scene, the emphasis should switch to slapstick fun.

The blocking should be very active. This show should be fun for cast and audience alike.

Hansel & Gretel

SCENE ONE

ON THE ROAD TO THE VILLAGE. AS JOYOUS PARTY MUSIC PLAYS, WE HEAR LAUGHTER AND PLAYFUL VOICES. THE LIGHTS COME UP TO REVEAL THE VILLAGE CHILDREN HAVING A GREAT TIME. THEY SING:

SONG: "AT THE FAIR"

ALL: At the Fair,
 There's a lot of laughter and fun,
 Dances and a prize for everyone.
 Only at the Fair.

 At the Fair,
 You can win a contest or two,
 Eat a cherry pie when you are through.
 When you're at the Fair.

 Games and singing and tug of war,
 Carillons ringing from near and far,
 Friends and fun make a great time for all,
 Whether you're big or you're small.

 At the Fair,
 There is not a trouble or care.
 Think of all the good things we'll share,
 When we're at the Fair.

FRIEDREICH: Boy, this is going to be the best fair ever!

ELSIE: Oh, yes Friedreich. I can hardly wait to see all the people dancing. (SHE WHIRLS AROUND DANCING WITH AN IMAGINARY PARTNER)

RUSSEL: (LICKING HIS LIPS) And Elsie, think of all the food! (HE TAKES A BIG BITE OF AN APPLE)

JOHANN: I'm going to enter the arm wrestling contest.

HELGA: (STUCK UP) Oh Johann, you know you don't have the slightest chance of winning.

KATRINA: (REPRIMANDING) Helga! That wasn't a nice thing to say. (HELGA SNOOTILY WALKS AWAY FROM KATRINA)

FRIEDREICH: I'm going to do a zillion different things!

HELGA: Stop exaggerating, Friedreich.

LIESL: (POUTING) Oooh, I hope my mother will let me go.

JOHANN: (SKIPPING BY WITH A BALL) Crybaby. (HE AND THE OTHER BOYS BEGIN TOSSING THE BALL BACK AND FORTH)

KATRINA: Now Liesl, I'm sure she will.

FRIEDREICH: (AS HE TOSSES THE BALL) Katrina is right. Nobody's mom is mean enough to keep them from going to the Fair.

HELGA: I know someone whose mother is that mean.

EVERYONE: Who?

HELGA: Hansel and Gretel's mother, that's who. (SHE GRABS THE BALL AND THE OTHER BOYS CHASE HER)

FRIEDREICH: That's right. She's probably the meanest mother in this whole, entire world!

ELSIE: (CORRECTING HIM) Stepmother...

HELGA: (RUNNING BY) Close enough.

KATRINA: Hmmm. I wonder if Hansel and Gretel are going. Has anyone seen them today?

(GENERAL "NO'S" AND "I HAVEN'T")

RUSSEL: (SEPARATE FROM THE GROUP, LOOKING OFFSTAGE) I've seen them. (STILL EATING HIS APPLE)

JOHANN: Where, Russel?

(HANSEL AND GRETEL ENTER, EACH CARRYING SEVERAL BROOMS)

RUSSEL: (POINTING AT THEM) Right here!

OTHER KIDS: (RUSHING TO H & G) Hello...They're here!... etc.

FRIEDREICH: We we were just talking about you.

HANSEL: You were?

ELSIE: Yes, everyone was wondering if you were going.

GRETEL: Going where?

FRIEDREICH: To the Fair....

SONG: "AT THE FAIR"

ALL: At the Fair
JOHANN: I will show how strong that I am,
RUSSEL: I will eat potatoes and ham.
ALL: When we're at the Fair.
ALL: At the Fair,
HANSEL: I will take a real pony ride,
GRETEL: On a pair of skates I will glide.
ALL: When we're at the Fair.

DANCE BREAK

ALL: Games and singing and tug of war,
Carillons ringing from near and far.
Friends and fun make a great time for all,

GROUP ONE: Whether you're big or you're...
GROUP TWO: Whether you're big or you're...
ALL: Whether you're big or you're small.

ALL: At the Fair,
Think of all the good things we'll share
When we see you there
When we're at the fair
When we're at the fair
When we're at the fair

KATRINA: Will we see you there?

HANSEL: Of course!

GRETEL: Hansel, maybe we should ask Stepmother first.

HANSEL: Nonsense, Gretel. (TO THE KIDS) We'll be there.

THE KIDS CHEER.

LIESL: Now, I'm sure I'll get to go.

JOHANN: (TO HANSEL) We'll stop by for you on our way to the village.

ELSIE: I'm going to wear my prettiest dress...how about you, Gretel?

GRETEL: (EMBARRASSED) Oh, I'll just wear this one.

JOHANN: I'm going to enter the arm wrestling contest.

HELGA: (SARCASTIC) You shouldn't have any trouble winning that one.

THEY ALL LAUGH

KATRINA: Helga... (TO HANSEL AND GRETEL) Well, we'll see you later then... C'mon everyone, let's go home and get ready...

FRIEDREICH: For the Fair. (THEY ALL CHEER)

ALL EXCEPT HANSEL AND GRETEL EXIT SINGING "AT THE FAIR"...THE

VOICES FADE IN THE DISTANCE.

KIDS: At the fair. At the fair. At the fair.

GRETEL: Hansel are you sure Stepmother will let us go?

HANSEL: Don't you think she will?

GRETEL: I'm not sure. You know how she is, and we didn't sell a single broom today. She's not going to like that one bit.

HANSEL: Father will understand. Besides, I'm tired of selling brooms. None of our friends have to sell brooms.

GRETEL: Maybe someday we won't have to, either: but now, we must sell the brooms if we expect to eat.

HANSEL: You sound like Stepmother.

GRETEL: (SLOWLY) It's true you know..we're very,very poor.

HANSEL: I know Gretel... But just imagine if we weren't... Just imagine if we were the richest family in the world.

GRETEL: Then Father wouldn't have to chop wood all day.

HANSEL: And Stepmother wouldn't be so angry all the time.

GRETEL: And I could have a new dress.

HANSEL: And I, a real pony. (HE PANTOMIMES) Giddyup..woah!(GRETEL LAUGHS) Oh Gretel, just imagine...

SONG: "JUST IMAGINE"

HANSEL: Think of being rich as kings.

GRETEL: Think of wearing diamond rings.

BOTH: Lovely times begin when we imagine.

Just imagine,

Brand new clothes to wear.

Just imagine,

Happy thoughts to share.
Just imagine all that we could do
A pretty dress so new,

HANSEL: A real live pony too.

BOTH: Just imagine,

GRETEL: Dancing at a ball.

BOTH: Just imagine,

HANSEL: Being six feet tall.

BOTH: Just imagine, oooooo, just imagine.

GRETEL: If my public should demand it,
I might become the queen.

HANSEL: And wouldn't it be really grand
if Stepmother weren't so mean.

BOTH: Just imagine,

HANSEL: Having lots of toys.

BOTH: Just imagine,

GRETEL: Meeting lots of boys.

BOTH: Just imagine living in royalty,
It can be if we.....

Just imagine...just imagine.

AFTER THE SONG

HANSEL: C'mon Gretel, let's go ask Stepmother if we can go to the Fair.

GRETEL: Alright Hansel. (THEY START TO LEAVE BUT SHE STOPS)
Hansel, wouldn't it be lovely if those things could really happen?

HANSEL: Yes Gretel...

BOTH: (SING) Just imagine. (IN A SINGLE SPOT)

FADE OUT.

SCENE TWO

SPLIT STAGE. WE CAN SEE BOTH THE INSIDE AND THE AREA OUTSIDE THE FRONT DOOR OF HANSEL AND GRETEL'S HOUSE. THE FURNISHINGS IN THE HOUSE ARE VERY MODEST. THERE IS A TABLE CENTER.

STEPMOTHER: (TALKING TO HERSELF, ANGRY) Where are those good for nothing children? They should have been home a half-hour ago. They're probably "playing" somewhere or wasting their time on some other kind of nonsense. I'll bet they haven't sold a single broom.... and if they haven't... they'll regret it. Those spoiled little brats. I should have gotten rid of them a long time ago.

SONG: "HANSEL AND GRETEL"

STEPMOTHER: Hansel and Gretel,
Spoiled rotten, best forgotten.
Hansel and Gretel,
Ugly little gnats.
Hansel and Gretel,
Always crying, always spying.
Hansel and Gretel,
Putrid stupid brats.
"Stepmother why don't you buy us this?"
and "Stepmother get us these."

That Gretel's such a little pries,
I'd like to see her freeze.
Hansel and Gretel,
Stubborn, lazy, drives me crazy.
Hansel and Gretel,

Oinking little pigs.
Hansel and Gretel,
Screaming, shouting, scheming, pouting.
Hansel and Gretel,
Useless thing-a-ma-jigs.

Someday I will find a way
to get them out of here.
And leave them where they'll have to
stay, and never reappear.
Hansel and Gretel,

I'll get you my darling two.
Hansel and Gretel,
I hate you,
I hate you.

AFTER THE SONG WE SEE HANSEL AND GRETEL HAPPILY RUNNING TOWARD THE HOUSE.

HANSEL: Gretel, I can hardly wait to get to the fair. It's going to be so much fun. **(STEPMOTHER HEARS THEM OUTSIDE AND LISTENS SECRETIVELY THROUGH THE DOOR.)**

GRETEL: I hope Stepmother isn't too upset that we didn't sell any brooms. **(STEPMOTHER REACTS)** I'm afraid to even tell her.

HANSEL: **(BOLDLY)** I'll handle that. **(THINKING)** I'll tell her that nobody wanted to buy any brooms today because... because the village burned down. **(GRETEL SHAKES HER HEAD)** No? **(THINKS)**... Uh, because the King outlawed them? **(GRETEL SHAKES HER HEAD AGAIN)**... Hmm... how about... because nobody could find any dirt?

GRETEL: No Hansel. I don't think we should lie.

STEPMOTHER: **(INSIDE MIMICKING)** "I don't think we should lie."

HANSEL: **(HEARS SOMETHING)** What was that?

GRETEL: I don't know. Come on Hansel, let's go in and tell Stepmother the truth... maybe she'll let us go anyway. **(STEPMOTHER SMIRKS AND HIDES BEHIND THE DOOR AS THE CHILDREN OPEN IT AND WALKS INSIDE. CALLING OUT)** Stepmother, we're home.

STEPMOTHER: **(FROM BEHIND DOOR, AS IF AN ECHO)** "Stepmother, we're home..."

GRETEL: (PUZZLED) Hmmm, Hello...!

STEPMOTHER: "Hello..."

HANSEL: (EXCITED) Wow Gretel!.. I think we have an echo in the house..

GRETEL: (SUSPICIOUS) Hansel, I don't think that...

HANSEL: (BREAKING IN... CALLING OUT) Hello, my name is Hansel.

STEPMOTHER: (ECHOING) "Hello, my name is Hansel."

HANSEL: See Gretel. (CALLING OUT AGAIN) And our mean old Stepmother isn't here!

STEPMOTHER: (ECHOING. PEEKING OUT.) "And our mean old Stepmother isn't here."

HANSEL ... And so, Gretel and I are going to the Fair. (HE STARTS TO LEAVE WITH GRETEL.)

STEPMOTHER: (SUDDENLY STEPPING OUT IN FRONT OF THEM, ANGRY) Oh, no you're not!

GRETEL: (STARTLED) Stepmother!

HANSEL: (SCARED. SWALLOWS HARD) Hi. (STEPMOTHER JUST GLARES AT HIM)

STEPMOTHER: So...(CROSSING TOWARDS THEM)... you didn't sell any brooms today, eh?

HANSEL: Well, you see... we couldn't.

STEPMOTHER: (LEADING HIM TO LIE) Why not?

HANSEL: Uh... because nobody could find any (GRETEL PUTS HER HAND OVER HIS MOUTH. MUFFLED)... dirt.

GRETEL: (TRUTHFUL) We didn't sell any brooms today because we

didn't go into the village. We stopped to play with our friends.

STEPMOTHER: Just as I thought. You lazy good-for-nothings.

HANSEL: Uh... Stepmother... I'm not sure if this is a good time to ask... but, would it be alright if Gretel and I went to the fair? (STEPMOTHER SAYS NOTHING, BUT WALKS TOWARD HIM STEAMING)... Uh, you see our friends are stopping by later on their way to the village and...

STEPMOTHER: (SLOWLY) I wouldn't let you go to the fair... if you were the last two children on earth.

GRETEL: But Stepmother...

STEPMOTHER: Quiet! Now get to bed, both of you!

HANSEL: But, we haven't had any supper.

STEPMOTHER: (MIMICKING) "And you're not going to have any either." (LOUD) Now do as I say before I... (SHE RAISES HER ARM TO SWING AT THEM, BUT THEY RUN TO THEIR ROOM)... Simpering brats!

LIGHTS CROSS FADE TO A SMALL AREA THAT IS HANSEL AND GRETEL'S ROOM.

HANSEL: (QUIETLY) Now what'll we do, Gretel? Our friends will be here any minute.

GRETEL: I don't know, Hansel. I guess there's nothing we can do.

HANSEL: When father comes home we can ask him. Maybe he'll let us go.

GRETEL: Maybe, but I don't think he'll go against what Stepmother says. (THEY SIT DOWN)

HANSEL: (RUBS TUMMY) I'm hungry, Gretel.

GRETEL: So am I.

THE OTHER CHILDREN MERRILY SKIP UP TO THE FRONT DOOR

SINGING "AT THE FAIR".

KIDS: *"At the fair. At the fair."*

FRIEDREICH: (KNOCKING AT THE DOOR) Hansel, Gretel... are you ready to go?

GRETEL: It's Friedreich... they're here. (THEY PEEK OUT OF THEIR ROOM)

STEPMOTHER: (IN KITCHEN MIMICKING) "Hansel... Gretel... are you ready to go?"

JOHANN: (OUTSIDE) What an ugly sounding echo.

KATRINA: Knock again, Friedreich. Maybe they didn't hear.

FRIEDREICH: I've already knocked a million times.

HELGA: Oh quit exaggerating and do it!

FRIEDREICH KNOCKS AND THEY ALL BEGIN TO CALL OUT.

KIDS: Hansel... Gretel... it's us... etc.

STEPMOTHER: (SWINGING OPEN THE DOOR, STARTLING THE CHILDREN) What do you brats want?

RUSSEL: ... Uh, we were wondering if Hansel and Gretel were ready to go?

STEPMOTHER: Go where?

CHILDREN, NOT AS EXUBERANT AS BEFORE.

ELSIE: To the fair... to see all the people dancing.

LIESL: ... And hear the beautiful music.

JOHANN: ... And watch me in the arm wrestling contest.

RUSSEL: ... And eat all the food.

STEPMOTHER: (PAUSE AND TAKE) "And eat all the food..."(PAUSE YELLS) Get out of my sight!! (SHE STARTS TO GO IN)

JOHANN: But what about Hansel and Gretel?

STEPMOTHER: (REELING AROUND) They're not going. (GETS AN IDEA) In fact, Hansel and Gretel are leaving on a long trip, so you won't be seeing them for quite a while.

HELGA: Where are they going?

STEPMOTHER: None of your business.

LIESL: (CRYING) Oh, they were my best friends. (KATRINA COMFORTS HER)

JOHANN: I don't believe that... they would have told us... (OTHERS AGREE)

STEPMOTHER: You insolent animals! Get away from my house this instant!!!

KATRINA: We want to see Hansel and Gretel.

KIDS: (CALLING OUT) Hansel... Gretel..!

STEPMOTHER: (PICKS UP A BROOM AND CHASES THEM) I'll teach you to have some respect for your elders.

FRIEDREICH: Run everybody!

STEPMOTHER CHASES THE CHILDREN... SHE CORNERS JOHANN BY THE HOUSE AND STARTS TO HIT HIM WITH THE BROOM WHEN FRIEDREICH AND RUSSEL SWAT HER ON THE RUMP WITH ANOTHER BROOM.

STEPMOTHER: (TURNING ON FRIEDREICH AND RUSSEL) Oh!.. I'm going to kill you! (SHE STARTS To RUN AFTER THEM. THEY RUN OFF, SHE FOLLOWS, BUT STOPS INNOCENTLY WHEN SHE SEES HER

HUSBAND APPROACHING)

FATHER: What's going on here, Matilda?

STEPMOTHER: Oh, just some of the village brats trying to cause me trouble.

FATHER: I see. (HE WALKS WEARILY INTO THE HOUSE. SIGHS) I didn't sell even one stick of wood today.

HANSEL AND GRETEL LISTEN FROM THEIR ROOM.

STEPMOTHER: (BITTER) And Hansel and Gretel sold no brooms, either.

FATHER: Are they home?

STEPMOTHER: Yes, (LYING) they were weary from playing all day so they went to bed early.

FATHER: Oh. Did they have dinner?

STEPMOTHER: Oh yes, a hearty meal. (HANSEL AND GRETEL EXCHANGE GLANCES AND RUB THEIR TUMMIES) And I saved you this bread. (SHE SETS BREAD ON THE TABLE)

FATHER: Good. I haven't eaten all day. (HE BEGINS TO EAT THE BREAD)

STEPMOTHER: I'll pour you some milk. (SHE DOES)

FATHER: (DEPRESSED) I don't know what we're going to do, Matilda. We have no more money... and no one is buying much wood to burn now that spring is here.

STEPMOTHER: And this is the last of our food. (FATHER STOPS EATING)

FATHER: What are we to do? (HE PUTS HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS)

STEPMOTHER: (PLOTTING) It's not your fault, Karl. You've tried your best. It's just impossible for you to make enough money to support the four of us. If it were just you and I, I'm sure we could manage fine.

FATHER: But we do have to think of the children.

STEPMOTHER: Of course, of course we do. (PAUSE) I know how much you love them, Karl. It's just so cruel to see them suffer so .

FATHER: What do you mean?

STEPMOTHER: How long do you think the children will last without food? They go hungry much of the time, now. They're so thin the entire village pities them.

FATHER: But what can I do?

STEPMOTHER: There is only one kind thing you can do... (PAUSE) You must give them up.

FATHER: (STANDS) No, I will never do that! They are my children!

STEPMOTHER: But, it is for their own good. Do you want to see them starve?

FATHER: No. But, there must be another way. I'll find different work. I'll earn the money somewhere.

STEPMOTHER: What else do you know how to do?

FATHER: I will steal if I have to.

STEPMOTHER: And what kind of father would you make for your children then?...A common street criminal. (HE SITS, DEFEATED) No Karl, you are no thief. You must do this my way.

FATHER: (SLOWLY) What do you want me to do?

STEPMOTHER: You must take the children deep into the forest and leave them there.

FATHER: They are intelligent children.They would find their way back.

STEPMOTHER: Then you must take them deeper, into the darkest part of the forest, so that they cannot. (PAUSE) You must Karl. Some other

family will find them and care for them as their own. (HANSEL AND GRETEL ARE STILL LISTENING) They will soon forget us and be happy with their new life.

FATHER: (PAUSE) Do you really think they will be better off?

STEPMOTHER: (CONVINCING) Yes, I do. (LONG PAUSE) Karl, it's for their own good.

FATHER: (LONG PAUSE) Alright, I'll take them in the morning.

STEPMOTHER: No, Karl, you must do it now. It will be kinder this way.

<End of excerpt>