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Hansel & Gretel’s GREAT ESCAPE

A Contemporary Tale with Classic Characters

by Robert E. McCarthy

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Hansel & Gretel’s Great Escape
by Robert E. McCarthy

CHARACTERS

5F / 5M / 19-22 Either Gender
Roles may be doubled or tripled for smaller cast size or played by a cast of 8 for touring

HANSEL
GRETEL
MOM (offstage voice)
THE WITCH
THE BIG BAD WOLF
SUPER PIG
BAT PIG
EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
JACK
GINGERBREAD MAN 1
GINGERBREAD MAN 2
RUMPLESTILTSKIN
THUMBELINA
PINOCCHIO
THE LITTLE MERMAID
CAPTAIN NEMO
SCHOOL BUS DRIVER
CHILDREN ON BUS
12-15 STAGEHANDS

NOTES ON STAGEHANDS:
Much of this play relies on the teamwork and coordination of stagehands during and in-between scenes. The stagehands are an integral part of the production and serve an important purpose throughout the play. It is suggested that the stagehands wear all black so as not to distract from other characters in the scenes. However, the director should feel free to costume or create specific characters for each stagehand in each scene. It is the playwright’s intention that the director and production team feel free to be as creative as possible in utilizing the stagehands in the show.

PRODUCTION NOTE

The play takes place on a bare stage. Props are brought on and off the stage according to the different settings and action during the play.
**SCENES**

SCENE 1:   BEDTIME  
SCENE 2:   INTO THE WOODS  
SCENE 3:   SUPERHERO PIG FIGHT  
SCENE 4:   THE WITCH AND WOLF REGROUP  
SCENE 5:   JACK’S GIANT HOLE  
SCENE 6:   UP, UP, AND AWAY!  
SCENE 7:   THE GINGERBREAD CASTLE  
SCENE 8:   TRAPPED!  
SCENE 9:   THE BIG ESCAPE  
SCENE 10:  SOARING WITH SWALLOW  
SCENE 11:  SPLASH!  
SCENE 12:  CAPTAIN NEMO’S NAUTILUS  
SCENE 13:  BATTLE AT THE BUS STOP  

TOTAL RUNNING TIME: APPROXIMATELY 60 MINUTES.

**PROPS LIST AT END OF PLAY**
Hansel & Gretel’s Great Escape  
by Robert E. McCarthy

SCENE ONE: BEDTIME

Evening: HANSEL AND GRETEL’s bedroom. There are two blankets on the stage representing their beds.

HANSEL and GRETEL sit on the stage. They are both dressed in casual and comfortable attire. GRETEL is texting on her cell phone. HANSEL is playing a video game, and we hear video game sounds from offstage, or on speaker. Also, there is a STAGEHAND on the opposite side of the stage, who is miming being the character HANSEL is controlling in his video game. The STAGEHAND is running and ducking and pretending to shoot a rifle, all in a very exaggerated and comic way.

HANSEL
C’mon, C’mon... Move it! Over there. No, that way! Up there. Get it! Yes. Yes! Oh, no. Watch out. Watch out! NOOO!!

There is a loud beeping sound, and the STAGEHAND collapses on the stage.

HANSEL, Continued
What?! I have to start again? It took me all night to get to level 51. This game is ridiculous.

STAGEHAND gets back up, and HANSEL begins to play again; the STAGEHAND once again acting out the character in the game.

GRETEL
(Looking at phone)  
You’re ridiculous. Becca says, “OMG. Hansel, just start it again u loser.”

HANSEL
Who asked her?
I did.

HANSEL
Well Gretel, you can text Becca back—

GRETEL
—I will.

HANSEL
— you can text her back that if she’s never played Alpha-Demon-Death-Squad 12, then maybe she should mind her own business.

GRETEL
I thought you beat that one last week?

HANSEL
That was Alpha-Demon-ZOMBIE-Squad 12. Who’s the loser now?

GRETEL
Whatever. Same stupid game. Becca says, “Lol, is Hansel the Dummy vaporized yet?”

HANSEL
Hi Becca, bye Becca.

GRETEL
I think she likes you.

HANSEL
Gross!

GRETEL
Or not. You know she’s probably just bummed because summer’s over, and we have to go back to school tomorrow.

HANSEL
Who isn’t? It’s the fifth grade! The worst one. That’s what everybody says. (Back to video game) Ugh! MISSED!!!

We hear the same loud beeping as before, and STAGEHAND collapses again. HANSEL’s video game character STAGEHAND is then quickly picked up and carried off the stage by TWO OTHER STAGEHANDS, as the scene continues.
HANSEL, Continued
But you know, we made it through the fourth grade. Maybe the fifth won’t be that bad?

GRETEL
Lots of confidence from the kid that thought ten times ten was a “trick question” on his final quiz.

HANSEL
I went with my gut.

MOM, Off
Hansel! Gretel! Get ready for bed, please! You’ve got school tomorrow!

HANSEL & GRETEL
Yes, Mom!

MOM, Off
And that means no video games, Hansel.

HANSEL
Okay!

HANSEL turns off the console, while GRETEL is furiously texting on her phone.

GRETEL
Too bad, so sad.

MOM, Off
And no texting, Facebooking, Twittering, Googling, pic sharing, or Instagramming, Gretel.

(Sarcastically)
Oh, no!

HANSEL
Okay, Mom. Okay.

GRETEL

(To MOM offstage)
I think she’s on Snapchat!

A short pause as GRETEL glares at him.

MOM, Off
I don’t know what that is, but it’s time for bed. Turn it off!
GRETEL
Ok, Mom! Geez. (To HANSEL) I guess we just have to go to bed.

HANSEL
Yeah, we’ll see what tomorrow brings.

They lie down in their beds.

GRETEL
Goodnight, Hansel.

HANSEL
Goodnight, Gretel.

As they sleep, a STAGEHAND enters and holds up a large, empty window frame meant to represent the window in their bedroom. We then see the WOLF and WITCH creep onto the stage. The WITCH is dressed all in black with a large witch’s hat. The hat has a gingerbread man glued to the front of it. She is also holding an old broom. The WOLF is dressed in beaten up clothes, has lots of fur, and a long tail. They are whispering as they speak, and constantly looking around to make sure they are not noticed.

WITCH
Did you set the trap?

WOLF
Oh yes, Your Majesty. It’s all set.

WITCH
Good. And I’m sure we won’t have any difficulties, will we?

WOLF
Oh no, Your Majesty.

WITCH
No, problems?

WOLF
Oh, no. No, no.
WITCH

(Grabbing his ear)
Not like last time!

WOLF

(Wincing in pain)
Ouch! No, Your Majesty! I promise, I promise!

WITCH

(Letting go and looking around)
Shhhh, you fool! Now you know how I love little boys and girls. Almost as much as my oven loves them. You had better not fail me.

I won’t, I promise.

WITCH

(Very nice all of a sudden)
Alright then. (Tosses a dog treat into the middle of the stage) Get to work, “boy.” There’s more wolf treats where that came from. Ha-ha-ha!

The WITCH laughs as she exits. Once she leaves, the WOLF creeps over to the treat and picks it up.

WOLF

This is a DOG treat! (To AUDIENCE) Do I look like a dog? I mean, do I? I’m a Wolf! I’m a wild animal. (Tastes it) Yuck! (Threws it offstage in disgust) One of these days...

The WOLF creeps over to the window frame, crouches in front of it, and knocks.

GRETEL

What’s that?

HANSEL

What’s what?

WOLF knocks again.

GRETEL

That, dummy.

HANSEL

Maybe it’s your phone’s new ringtone?
GRETEL
No, it’s someone knocking on the window.

WOLF knocks very loudly.

HANSEL
What the— (Getting up) Okay. If this is you and Becca playing some practical joke—

HANSEL goes to the window and the WOLF springs up with a big smile on his face.

WOLF
Hello!

HANSEL & GRETEL
Ahhh!

WOLF
(Climbing in through the window)
It’s ok. It’s ok. I’m a wolf.

HANSEL & GRETEL
Ahhhhhh!!!

WOLF
But – er – I’m a FRIENDLY wolf! Look, I can dance.

WOLF dances in place.

GRETEL
Hansel?

WOLF
And sing! (Singing) “I’m a wolf, I’m a wolf, I’m the big, bad – er – nice, friendly wolf. I’m just here to dance, and sing, and not do anything bad.” Really, I’m nice!

HANSEL
What are you doing here?

WOLF
(Exploring their room)
Oh, nothing. Just came by to say “hello.” Word in the woods is that you have a really nice room. Not very big though.
HANSEL
Well, look. Thanks for... stopping by. But we really have to get some sleep. We’re starting the fifth grade tomorrow and—

WOLF
The fifth grade? Did you say the FIFTH grade?!

HANSEL & GRETEL
Yes.

WOLF
Well, that’s the worst one.

HANSEL
That’s what I heard.

GRETEL
Hansel...

WOLF
You don’t even get desks in the fifth grade. You have to stand up in cages all day. Rotten, stinky cages!

HANSEL & GRETEL
Cages?

WOLF
And no food for lunch. You have to MAKE food for the teachers, and then watch them eat it...in your cages!

HANSEL & GRETEL
Watch them eat it?

WOLF
And instead of “RE-cess,” you have “NO-cess.”

HANSEL & GRETEL
What?

WOLF
It’s where instead of getting a break to go out on the playground, you stay inside and do twice as much work!

GRETEL
In the cages?
Yes!

HANSEL

I knew it.

WOLF

Oh, well. You’ll get through it. Some kids do... Anyway, enjoy. I guess I’ll just be going. Nice room.

*The WOLF starts to exit through the window.*

Wait. You have to help us.

GRETEL

Should we tell our parents?

WOLF

(Stopping; returning)

Oh, no. No, no, no. They’ll never tell the parents what really goes on in the fifth grade, anyway. You’re wasting your breath. There is one chance though.

HANSEL & GRETEL

What?

WOLF

Well, it’s a longshot.

HANSEL

Tell us.

WOLF

You see... my master – er – partner, has magical powers. And maybe, just maybe, if we went to see her, she could magically skip you to the SIXTH grade, which is really fun, and cool, and all the kids are treated really well.

HANSEL & GRETEL

Let’s do it!

WOLF

Shhhh... Okay, okay. Let’s get a move on, but be quiet.

GRETEL

I’ll get my cell phone. *(Grabs it)*
HANSEL

Of course. Never without your best friend.

WOLF, HANSEL and GRETEL continue talking as they exit through the window. STAGEHAND with window, picks up blankets and remaining props and exits.

SCENE TWO: INTO THE WOODS

HANSEL and GRETEL’s back yard.

WOLF leads HANSEL and GRETEL about the stage.

GRETEL

At least my best friends aren’t zombies and demons.

HANSEL

Those are enemies, dummy.

GRETEL

Like it matters. Why don’t you get out more, Hansel? No one’s gonna judge you for playing in the sandbox every once in a while.

HANSEL

Shhhhh!

GRETEL

You know you want to.

HANSEL

How far is it, Mr. Wolf?

GRETEL

Nothing to say about that?

WOLF

Oh, not far. You’ve got a nice backyard by the way. Here’s the path! We’ll be there in no time.

WOLF leads HANSEL and GRETEL on a path that zigzags around the entire stage and into the woods.
GRETEL
Into the woods? How far are we going?

WOLF
Not far. Not far.

GRETEL
You know, we’re not really supposed to come all the way out here. Mom and Dad—

HANSEL
Forget what they say, Gretel. Do you want to be making lunch for all the teachers in a stinky cage for the next year? Come on.

WOLF
Those cages really stink.

GRETEL
But they say it’s really easy to get lost out here.

HANSEL
He’s showing us where to go. And he’ll help us find the way back, right?

WOLF
Ha!...oh, I mean “Ha! Of course I will.” Easy to get back. Come along now.

GRETEL
(Stopping; looking at her phone)
Oh geez, there’s no signal out here. My GPS won’t work.

HANSEL
Don’t worry Gretel, we’re not that far from home.

*GRETEL pulls a handful of candy corn out of her pocket.*

GRETEL
Oh, I know. We can drop these on the ground so we’ll be able to find our way back.

HANSEL
You keep candy corn in your pockets?

GRETEL
Is it a crime?

WOLF
Will you two hurry up!!?
HANSEL

Ok, just do it.

GRETEL drops candy corn pieces as they continue following the WOLF.

WOLF

Faster, you two. Faster.

They speed up. As they walk, THREE STAGEHANDS come onstage carrying leaves and branches. They crouch down together and form a bush on the stage.

WOLF, Continued

Faster!

HANSEL

Okay, we’re right behind you.

GRETEL

Can we slow down?

WOLF

We’re almost there!

HANSEL

Does your partner know we’re coming?

WOLF

Oh, sure. She’s very excited to meet you. Oh, watch out for that spot, we’d better go around this way.

The WOLF leads them straight into the bush. As HANSEL and GRETEL step into it, their hands and feet are grabbed by the stagehands.

HANSEL & GRETEL

Ahhhh!

WOLF

Haha! It worked! It worked! My master will pleased!

HANSEL

I can’t move.
Help! We’re trapped! Help!

HANSEL

Ouch! Help! Let us go, Mr. Wolf!

WOLF

Fat chance! I put a lot of work into this.

HANSEL

Call 911.

GRETEL

There’s no signal, dummy! *(To WOLF)* You won’t hurt us, will you?

**SCENE 3: SUPERHERO PIG FIGHT!**

*Deep in the woods; the scene continues.*

*The THREE LITTLE PIGS enter, walking along the path and picking up the candy corn pieces laid out by GRETEL. SUPER PIG is dressed in a superhero costume with a red cape. BAT PIG is dressed in a super hero costume resembling a bat. EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG wears a green costume and carries a green flashlight. They all have pig snouts, pig ears and pig tails. HANSEL and GRETEL struggle to free themselves as the scene continues.*

WOLF

Well...why shouldn’t I?

GRETEL

We’re really handy. We can dust and clean for you every day.

WOLF

I like dust, and I live outside.

HANSEL

We could make you a house. Plenty of room out here for a yard, too.
I don’t want a house, too confining.

GRETEL
We could find you some friends. There are lots of cute puppies at the pet store.

WOLF
I’m a wolf, not a DOG! I think I’ve heard enough. Now, once I deliver you to my master, she’s got a nice, hot oven that makes the tastiest little girls and boys I’ve ever had! That’s a good enough treat for me!

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS
Hold it right there!

WOLF
What the—!?

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
“What-the-what”, Wolf?

SUPER PIG
(Stepping forward)
Super Pig!

SUPER PIG throws candy corn into the WOLF’s face.

WOLF
Ouch!

BAT PIG
Bat Pig!

BAT PIG sneaks up behind the WOLF and trips him.

WOLF
Ugh!

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG runs over to the WOLF and shines his green flashlight into the WOLF’s eyes.

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
Emerald Flashlight Pig!
There is an awkward silence.

WOLF
Huh?

SUPER PIG
Retreat Emerald Flashlight Pig. Do not engage.

BAT PIG
Yeah, we got this.

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
But you said I could—

SUPER PIG and BAT PIG
(Charging)
Ahhhhh!

SUPER PIG and BAT PIG grab the WOLF. They throw him back and forth between them as they speak. The WOLF is in a daze, stumbling and spinning around as he is tossed from one to the other. EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG attempts to help by dramatically shining his flashlight at the WOLF.

SUPER PIG
(Tossing WOLF)
Here you go, Bat Pig!

BAT PIG
Here wolfie-wolfie. Ah-ha! (Tossing WOLF back) Just another walk in the park, Super Pig.

SUPER PIG
Come on over. (Catching WOLF) Nice one.

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
Over here! Over here!

BAT PIG
What’s that? Do you hear something, Super Pig?

SUPER PIG
(Tossing WOLF) Oh yeah, I think it’s the sound of being totally useless.
EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
(Pointing to flashlight)
If it were nighttime, this would really come in handy.

BAT PIG
It is nighttime! (Tossing WOLF) And the new world record for wolf-toss is...

WOLF
(Ducking SUPERPIG and escaping them both)
Now you see me, now you don’t.

SUPER PIG and BAT PIG chase the WOLF around the stage.

Get back here!

SUPER PIG
Whatcha gonna do, Wolf?

WOLF
I’m gonna huff.

Yeah?

BAT PIG & SUPER PIG
And I’m gonna puff!

Yeah?!

BAT PIG & SUPER PIG
And I’m gonna...get the heck outta here!

WOLF runs offstage.

Wait!

SUPER PIG
Get ‘em!

BAT PIG
BAT PIG and SUPER PIG exit after the WOLF. EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG frees HANSEL and GRETEL from the grip of the STAGEHANDS’ bush as the
scene continues. As they exit, the STAGEHANDS pick up all of the pieces of candy corn on the stage and exit.

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG

(Freeing them)
There you go, guys. Just gotta get this one, and that one, and you’re all set.

HANSEL
Thank you!

GRETEL
Yes, thank you so much Emerald Flashlight Pig.

GRETEL hugs EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG.

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
Aww shucks. It’s all in a day's work for me, I guess.

SUPER PIG, Off
Hey, I can’t see anything! Where’s the wolf?

BAT PIG, Off
It's so dark! Where’s Flashlight?!

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
I’ll be right there! (To HANSEL and GRETEL) Gotta go guys, sorry.

HANSEL
But how do we get back?

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
(Pointing several different ways)
Um, that way, no there, no, that way, over there.

SUPER PIG & BAT PIG, Off
Emerald Flashlight Pig!

EMERALD FLASHLIGHT PIG
See ya! (Exits)

GRETEL
What are we going to do?
SCENE 4: THE WITCH AND WOLF REGROUP

HANSEL and GRETEL sit and think. The WITCH enters on the opposite end of the stage. She is accompanied by a STAGEHAND carrying a giant, magic ball.

WITCH

(Looking into the ball)
That’s it. Take a break. You’re so tired, just relax. Take some time to consider your options.

The WOLF enters panting and wheezing.

WOLF

Your Majesty I, I’m sorry. I’m so sorry, I just—

WITCH

I know, I know. Capture two little children, helpless and alone in the forest, and bring them to me. Such a simple, little task for a mangy canine like you. And it still didn’t get done, did it?

WOLF

It was only—

WITCH

“Only”?! Only that you don’t think I should be ALLOWED, to make my favorite child soufflé this month?

WOLF

No, it’s wonderful.

WITCH

Or perhaps you are critical of the texture of my kiddie jalapeno poppers?

WOLF

Oh no, they melt in my mouth. I’ll do better next time.

WITCH

Next time?! What makes you think there will be a next time? (Claps her hands loudly) Hahaha!

THREE STAGEHANDS enter holding up large drawings of monsters, and start circling and scaring the WOLF.
WITCH, Continued
Maybe instead, I’ll have a wolf pizza for dinner?

WOLF
No!

WITCH
Or a nice wolf burger, with ketchup only!

WOLF
Ahh!

WITCH
Or wait, what about a lazy, no-brained, coyote-wanna-be, taco night?

WOLF
(Falling to his knees)
No, please. I’ll do better, I promise. I promise.

WITCH
Yech! Too furry anyway.

The WITCH claps her hands again and the STAGEHANDS carrying the monsters exit. She stares again into the giant ball.

WITCH, Continued
Well, well, well... Wondering where to go from here, eh? Good luck with that cell phone—don’t you know those batteries aren’t built to last?

GRETEL
Oh Hansel, what happened?

HANSEL
What?

GRETEL
My phone just went dead all off a sudden.

HANSEL
Probably because we’re way out here, dummy.

GRETEL
It had half the battery left.

HANSEL
You can plug it into a tree, maybe lightning will strike it.
GRETEL

(At phone)
C’mon. C’mon!

WOLF
Oh, that was great Your Majesty.

WITCH
Did I ask for your opinion?

WOLF
Oh no! Just admiring your work. Just admiring!

WITCH
Maybe... I could FREEZE them first, then defrost them, and then cook them in the oven? ( Conjuring magic ) Let’s see how they like the cold. Getting frosty out there...

HANSEL

( Shivering )
Brrrr... How did it get so cold all of a sudden?

GRETEL

( Shivering )
It is technically fall, you know. This happens.

HANSEL
What happens?

GRETEL
Cold happens.

HANSEL
Not like this. It’s like someone flipped a switch.

GRETEL
It sure is freezing.

HANSEL

(Rubbing his arms)
Ugh!

WITCH
Oh, but wait. Frozen food is always stale no matter what. Wolf?

WOLF
Yes, Your Majesty!
What’s your favorite food?

WITCH

My what? Well, I just, I guess—

WOLF

What is it?

WITCH

Well, I just had some great fish sticks with tartar sauce and milk, and this great aged cheddar sauce—

WOLF

That’s it!

WITCH

Do you want some?

WOLF

No idiot! Aged meat is the bestest. Let’s send them down a hole for a good month or two. See how they turn out. Haha! Off we go, off we go...

The WITCH, WOLF and STAGEHAND carrying the magic ball exit.

GRETEL

Hansel, the phone is on. It has a full battery!

HANSEL

I told you those things are finicky.

GRETEL

The GPS works, and it’s leading us home!

HANSEL

Signal out here? Not likely.

The GPS voice is heard from offstage, and it is the WITCH’s voice.

GPS, Off

Destination, please.

GRETEL

Home.
Calculating...

Doesn’t it need an address?

Shhh! It’s brand new.

So?

Go ahead ten feet, please.

Okay.

They move forward 10 steps.

Bear left, please.

Okay.

They bear left.

Full circle around the trees.

That’s right here.

They walk in a full circle.

Look up, up, up, please.

(Looking up)

Okay...

Walk ahead three steps.
GRETEL & HANSEL

(Walking)
One…Two…

HANSEL & GRETEL
Three.

GPS
And fall down! Hahaha!

SCENE 5: JACK’S GIANT HOLE

HANSEL and GRETEL fall into a deep hole. They put their hands up in the air and scream “AHHHHHH!” while wiggling their bodies to simulate falling. As they fall, the THREE STAGEHANDS come out and circle around them with the same cardboard monsters as in the last scene, scaring them as they fall. OTHER STAGEHANDS bring out three bales of hay and drop them on the stage. ALL STAGEHANDS exit. HANSEL and GRETEL “land” on the hay bales.

HANSEL & GRETEL

Ugh! Ouch! That hurt.

Are you okay?

I think so.

(Looking up)
Wow. How far did we fall, Gretel?

(Looking up)
It's a long way up.

What are we gonna do?
JACK jumps onstage and frightens them. He is wearing rubber boots, work pants, a Hawaiian shirt and sunglasses. He speaks with an exaggerated, comical accent.

JACK

Frettin’?

HANSEL & GRETEL

Ahh!

JACK

Don’t you be frettin’. I’ve been down ’ere fer a long time lil’ whippersnappers. A looooong time!

HANSEL

Who are you?

JACK

Well flibbertity gibbet, thanks fer askin’! I’m Jack! And it is nice to meet you. Welcome to my home, sweet...hole.

HANSEL

Thank you, I think.

GRETEL

It sure is cozy.

JACK

Well, thank ya!

A STAGEHAND comes out carrying a glass of lemonade with a paper umbrella in it, a rolled up beach blanket, and a straw hat. As JACK continues speaking, the stagehand gives JACK the drink, puts the straw hat on JACK’s head, spreads the beach blanket out in front of a hay bale, and the exits.

JACK, Continued

Yep, this here is just about the most relaxin’, chillaxin’, serene, superb lil’ getaway spot you will ever see. Not a soul to bother ya, maybe a little bird’ll come on down and chirp a “howdy-doo.” Sometimes I just go ahead and chirp on back. (Laying down on blanket, and leaning against the hay bale) Might not be the best spot to be workin’ on the ole’ sun tan, but you can always try. You can always try.
GRETEL

(Looking up)
Oh Hansel, how are we going to get out of here? It's so high up.

HANSEL
I know Gretel.

JACK
Well, don't be tellin' me yer thinkin’ about leavin’ already? Pull up a hay bale and stay a spell. Ya just got here!

HANSEL
We're sorry Jack, but we'll be in big trouble if we don't get home soon.

GRETEL
And our parents will be worried sick when they find out we're gone. They'll call the police!

HANSEL
Is there any way to climb up there?

JACK
(Sipping his lemonade; looking up)
Well...you could climb up to that spot, but then you’d slip on that thingy n’ fall. Or you could climb up to that little spot right there, but then you’d lose yer footin’ on that big thing and whack, ding, SPLAT! Really fall. Very painful. Hurt yerselves. Nope. No climbin’ up there, that’s for sure. No climbin’.

GRETEL

(Angrily)
Oh, no!

JACK
Now, now. I'm not that bad. It’s just been awhile since I had a visitor, is all.

HANSEL
No, it's not you Jack. She's just worried we'll never get home.

JACK
(Standing and walking to them)
Oh, so you didn't WANT to come down here and see me?

HANSEL
Well, we didn't mean to.

JACK
You didn't MEAN to come and pay me a visit? Say “hi” to old Jack?
HANSEL
We just fell down the hole Jack, honest. Why do you live down here, anyway? Who put you here?

JACK
Who PUT me here?! I put me here! I love it here. It's just a little getaway I have from the waking world up there. Everything is just so crazy and busy. “Milk the cow, Jack. Go to town, Jack. Time for bed, Jack. Wake up, Jack. Milk the cow. Go to town.” Down here I can play solitaire, meditate, have a nice quiet meal all by my lonesome. It really is a nice lil’ spot, don't ya think?

GRETEL
But what about your family? Friends? Don't you miss them?

JACK
Well, Ma was a little tiffy with me this mornin’. Can't say I miss ‘er yet today, though.

GRETEL
But if you're trapped down here, how do you—

JACK
Trapped?! Ha! You gotta be kiddin’. I’m not trapped, this is just a nice way to spend an evening, silly. Trapped?! Ha! You know what you need? Some beans.

As they talk, A STAGEHAND takes JACK’s lemonade, mimes giving him a handful of beans in return then exits.

HANSEL
Beans?

JACK
Beans.

HANSEL
We’re not hungry, Jack. We wanna go home.

JACK hands HANSEL the beans.

JACK
These'll do ya every time.

GRETEL
Jack, we need to get up there.

JACK
Beans, give 'em a try.
Beans?

HANSEL

JACK

Beans. Beans. Beans...

( Helping HANSEL bury the beans )

As they bury the beans SEVERAL STAGEHANDS enter with the beanstalk. It has a wide base with room enough for HANSEL and GRETEL to stand on, and a long pole pointing up with vines and leaves either drawn on it, or attached to it. The STAGEHANDS start dancing in a circle around the beanstalk once they set it down.

GRETEL

Wow!

HANSEL

It’s huge!

JACK

Grab on there, pardner. She grows fast, enjoy the ride.

HANSEL and GRETEL step onto the beanstalk and grab it.

HANSEL

Hold on, Gretel!

GRETEL

It’s growing so fast.

JACK

Hold on now, don’t be lettin’ go!

HANSEL & GRETEL

Goodbye Jack! Thank you!

JACK quickly drifts offstage as he waves goodbye to HANSEL and GRETEL. MORE STAGEHANDS enter and remove the hay bales and beach blanket. The STAGEHANDS AROUND THE
BEANSTALK start dancing faster and faster.

JACK
Thanks for visiting! Good luck whippersnappers! (Exits)

SCENE 6: UP, UP AND AWAY!

GRETEL
Wow, this is amazing!

HANSEL
I know, we’re halfway up already!

The WITCH quickly enters along with the giant, magic ball carried by A STAGEHAND.

WITCH
Well, well. Out of my lovely little trap, eh?

HANSEL
We’ll be home in no time, Gretel.

GRETEL
I hope it slows down soon.

WITCH
(Conjuring a new spell)
Home?! But why would you want to go home, when you could go for a nice long ride? Haha! See you soon...

The WITCH and STAGEHAND exit. As they leave the, STAGEHANDS dancing around the beanstalk start to dance faster and faster around it.

GRETEL
We're out of the hole, Hansel. But it's still growing!

HANSEL
Don't get off, Gretel. It's too dangerous.

GRETEL
But we're getting so high.
It'll stop soon.

GRETEL

We are REALLY high.

HANSEL

I'm sure it'll stop very soon.

SEVERAL STAGEHANDS enter with large pictures of clouds and a full moon. They move slowly and expressively around the stage.

HANSEL, Continued

Wow! The moon is so bright, I can see the whole town.

GRETEL

I can see our house. Hansel, we're getting so high.

HANSEL

It HAS to stop soon!

GRETEL

I don't know about that. Hansel we're up in the clouds!

The DANCING BEANSTALK STAGEHANDS abruptly stop and freeze in place.

HANSEL

It stopped!

GRETEL

Hansel, I'm scared. We're way up in the clouds! What do we do?

HANSEL

(Sticking his foot out and touching the floor) Gretel, I think I can stand on it.

GRETEL

Don’t! It’s a cloud, not a trampoline!

HANSEL

It feels solid.
GRETEL
Just stay on, we’ll climb down the beanstalk.

HANSEL
Here goes nothing!

HANSEL jumps off the beanstalk.

GRETEL
(Covering her eyes)
Ahhh!

HANSEL
(Standing unsteadily)
Look! It’s fine!

GRETEL
It’s fine?

HANSEL
Yeah!

GRETEL
Well, I guess...

GRETEL steps off of the beanstalk. THE BEANSTALK STAGEHANDS pick it up and exit.

GRETEL, Continued

(Standing: unsteady)
It’s hard to stand, though.

HANSEL
Use your arms. It’s like standing on a giant marshmallow.

GRETEL
(Falling down)
It’s so soft, like when we went shopping for Mom and Dad's new bed.

HANSEL
(Lying down)
I know. It’s like a giant, mile long, mold to your body, foam mattress. So comfy.
GRETEL
Hansel, how do we get home? One minute we’re being chased by a wolf, then some pig superheroes save us, and then we’re riding a beanstalk up into the clouds. I don’t care about the fifth grade, I miss Mom and Dad.

HANSEL
It’s okay, Gretel.

GRETEL
(Crying)
I just wanna go home.

HANSEL
(Comforting her)
We will get home. I promise.

GRETEL
How?

HANSEL
Well... (Stands; helps GRETEL to her feet) We can stand and walk up here, right?

Right.

GRETEL

HANSEL
That means other people might be standing and walking up here too, right?

Right.

GRETEL

HANSEL
Other people might LIVE up here!

Right.

GRETEL

HANSEL
So, let’s go find them, and see if they can help us get home!

GRETEL
Okay.

HANSEL and GRETEL hold hands and walk in a circle around the stage. As HANSEL and GRETEL walk around, they struggle to keep from falling over. As the
scene continues, the CLOUD STAGEHANDS occasionally drift by and help them keep their balance.

GRETEL, Continued
Wow, I can see the whole sky and all the stars.

HANSEL
I know, it’s amazing.

GRETEL
Do you think you can walk on all those clouds?

HANSEL
I dunno, this one’s really big. That’s the main difference. You can’t walk on the small ones.

GRETEL
Are you sure?

HANSEL
Yes. It has to do with the...density...of the...fluffiness...of this cloud, versus that cloud. And it’s also because we’re so low to the ground. Those other clouds are higher, so they’re thinner.

GRETEL
Wow, you’re so creative dear brother. I wish I could make up stuff like that, too.

HANSEL
Now wait a minute—

GRETEL
You should write stories.

A STAGEHAND runs out with a drawing of the Big Dipper and exits.

GRETEL, Continued
What constellation is that?

HANSEL
That’s the Big Dipper.

Another STAGEHAND runs out with a drawing of the Little Dipper and exits.

GRETEL
Look, that’s the Little Dipper.
HANSEL

Duh.

A STAGEHAND runs out with the constellation Scorpio and exits.

HANSEL, Continued

That one’s Scorpio, like a scorpion.

Another STAGEHAND runs out with the constellation Orion and waits impatiently until HANSEL gets the name right.

HANSEL, Continued

And that’s, that’s...

As HANSEL stares at the Orion picture, OTHER STAGEHANDS rush out with a candy cane gate and hold it up.

HANSEL, Continued

It’s, um—Orville, Oleron, Olidude...

Hansel, look!

No, I know what it is.

It’s—

No, don’t tell me!

Hansel just—

Orion! Yes! Orion!

The ORION STAGEHAND throws hands up in relief and exits.

GRETEL

Turn around!
GRETEL turns HANSEL around to see the gate.

GRETEL & HANSEL

It’s a Gingerbread Castle!

SCENE 7: THE GINGERBREAD CASTLE

HANSEL and GRETEL run through the gate and into a Gingerbread Castle. The STAGEHANDS carry off the gate as HANSEL and GRETEL check out the castle. DIFFERENT STAGEHANDS run on and off with pieces of gingerbread. [Each stagehand has a unique way of presenting a piece of gingerbread to the children. One stagehand may bring a gingerbread man out on a fancy dinner tray, another may hook a gingerbread man to a fishing pole, another may strike a funny pose onstage, etc.] HANSEL and GRETEL constantly collect the pieces of gingerbread during the scene.

HANSEL

Wow, would you look at this place!

GRETEL

It’s so huge, and there’s candy everywhere!

HANSEL

I know, the whole place is delicious! Yum!

GRETEL

The walls look like they’re—

HANSEL

Brownies! And the doorways are—

GRETEL

Banana bread! And the balcony is—

HANSEL

Triple layer chocolate cake!
GRETEL

(Holding up her gingerbread)
This is the best ever. It tastes like it’s just out of the oven. I wonder how much there is?

HANSEL
Tons! And the icing’s got extra sugar in it, or something. That’s what I’m talkin’ about.

GRETEL
I know, it’s so creamy. Mmmmmmm!

HANSEL
I’m gonna eat until I’m sick. Wow!

A STAGEHAND runs out onstage barking like a dog, with a piece of gingerbread around his/her neck.

HANSEL, Continued

Even the dog has gingerbread!

GRETEL
Here puppy... C’mere!

They chase after the DOG STAGEHAND who leads them to the side of the stage where GINGERBREAD MAN 1 and 2 appear. They are dressed in large, awkwardly moving cardboard costumes. They enter together and grab both HANSEL and GRETEL.

HANSEL & GRETEL

Ahhh! Let us go!

GINGERBREAD MAN 1

Gotcha! Not so fast now, huh?

GINGERBREAD MAN 2

It’s like goin’ fishin’.

GINGERBREAD MAN 1

Yeah, except they ain’t fish.

GINGERBREAD MAN 2

Anyway, Her Majesty is gonna have a good time with you two. Ha ha!
WITCH, Off

Oh, yesss!

The WITCH enters and approaches the children. She is wearing the same costume as before, except now she is also wearing a baking apron, and carries a rolling pin instead of her broom.

WITCH, Entering

And what do we have here, eh? Some little thieves?

HANSEL

Oh no! We’re sorry ma’am, we just—

WITCH

Ma'am?! How about "Your Majesty"?

GRETEL

We just thought your house was so beautiful, Your Majesty.

You mean my...CASTLE?!

WITCH

Yes! Your beautiful castle.

HANSEL

Oh really? It was just so beautiful that you had to run all over it, stomp your dirty little feet on it, and drop crumbs all over it, and...and...AND...EAT MY GINGERBREAD!???

GINGERBREAD MAN 2

They stuffed their little faces full of it, Your Majesty!

GINGERBREAD MAN 1

Yeah. We saw it all, Your Majesty. Look at all the stuff they took.

You can have it back.

GRETEL

HANSEL

We’re so sorry, it just looked so delicious.

WITCH

Oh, it is, it is. And do you know what makes it so delicious?
HANSEL & GRETEL

No.

WITCH

It’s my secret ingredient.

GINGERBREAD MAN 1 & 2

(Excited)

Yeah!

WITCH

It makes the batter just thick enough,

WITCH, GINGERBREAD MAN 1 & 2

But not too thick.

WITCH

And the icing just sweet enough,

WITCH, GINGERBREAD MAN 1 & 2

But not too sweet.

GRETEL

I’m sure it’s a wonderful recipe, Your Majesty.

WITCH

Well you know, if you’re really nice, I’ll let you help me with my cooking.

HANSEL & GRETEL

Yes, please!

WITCH

After all, I have to replace all the gingerbread you stole.

HANSEL

Anything, we’ll do anything!

GRETEL

Yes, just please let us go!

WITCH

Oh, I’ll let you go alright. Right into the oven! Little girls and boys make my gingerbread just right!

WITCH, GINGERBREAD MAN 1 & 2

laugh hysterically.
HANSEL & GRETEL

Ahh!

WITCH

See you soon. Take them away! *(Exits)*

The GINGERBREAD MEN drag HANSEL and GRETEL across the stage.

HANSEL & GRETEL

No! Help! Help!

SCENE 8: TRAPPED!

STAGEHANDS bring out three hay bales and place them on the side of the stage. RUMPELSTILTSKIN and the WOLF are hidden offstage beside them. The two GINGERBREAD MEN dump HANSEL and GRETEL onto the hay bales.

GINGERBREAD MAN 2

Welcome to the Hotel Jail Cell. We really hope you enjoy your stay.

*(Locking a mimed door)*

Yeah, sit tight in there. And no pay per view movies.

GINGERBREAD MAN 1

Yeah, and don’t go ordering out for pizza, neither. Ha!

GINGERBREAD MAN 2 & 1

*(As they exit)*

Ha, yeah. Pizza. Good one. Hey, do they deliver up here? Pizza. Yeah, pizza. Haha, pizza...

HANSEL

Hey, let us out of here!

GRETEL

Yeah, we didn’t do anything wrong! *(Cries)*

HANSEL

What’s wrong with you?
GRETEL
Oh Hansel, I’m scared. That Witch is so mean, and she’s going to...EAT US!

The WOLF pops out from behind the hay bales. He has his arm in a sling, and a bandage around his head. He is very tired and worn out.

WOLF
Oh, she ain’t gonna eat nothing!

HANSEL & GRETEL
Ahhh! Wolf! Keep away!

WOLF
Not to worry. Not to worry. I don’t think I’ll be stalking any little children today. (Pointing to his injury) Who knows, I may even be due for a career change.

GRETEL
But how did you get here? What happened to you?

WOLF
Well, let’s just say the Witch and her gingerbread goons out there don’t have much of a sense of humor. At least when it comes to failed missions to catch little children. And that pig beating didn’t help either, I must say.

GRETEL
Is she going to eat you too?

WOLF
No, no! Now just listen. She just likes baking. She has all these recipes, who knows which one she’s going to make next.

HANSEL
So she won’t eat us?

WOLF
Oh, no. No, no, no. She’ll just turn you into gingerbread after she COOKS you, but she won’t EAT you.

GRETEL & HANSEL
What?!

WOLF
I told you she wouldn’t eat you, she’ll just cook you.
That’s the same thing!

Oh Hansel, what are we gonna do? We have to get out of here!

You’re telling me.

(Struggling as carried out)

Now, come on fellas. Let’s talk this one out. How about it?

Time to “talk it out” with Her Majesty again, flea-bag.

We’ll see what she has to say about it.

Yeah, I heard she’s reconsidering coyote taco night.

Hahaha!

(To HANSEL & GRETEL)

Don’t worry you two, they’ve been having some trouble with the oven lately, anyway. You got at least twenty minutes before it’s pre-heated! Better than nothing, right? Too-da-loo!

Too-da-loo! Hahaha!

Yeah, lots of time.

The GINGERBREAD MEN exit with the WOLF.

Oh Hansel, they’ll be back for us in no time. What can we do?
HANSEL

Gretel, I wish I knew. I wish I knew.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

WISHES?! What wishes?

GRETEL

Ahh!

HANSEL

Who are you?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

(Yawning)

Oh, wouldn’t you like to know. (Blows a bubble) The seer of superbly-stupendous sights, the teller of triumphantly-terrific tales, the knower of... “knowledge?”…And I grant wishes. That’s all I really do. Just one though, you only get one. I grant wishes.

A pause as they stare at RUMPELSTILTSKIN.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN, Continued

What are you looking at? I-GRANT-WISHES!

GRETEL

Wishes?

HANSEL

I thought he/she said dishes.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

WISHES!

HANSEL

Ok, ok. Um...really? I think that’s impossible.
RUMPELSTILTSKIN

It's a talent, had it since I was a kid. I was playing with my toys in class one day, got in big trouble. Big trouble. Never paid any attention in school. So they sent me to the principal's office, and he said he was gonna call my Mom, and then he said he knew she'd blame the teacher, and the teacher would blame him, and then the school board would roast him like a chicken. So then he said he wished he WAS a chicken, so he could just run away and not have to deal with me, or my Mom, or the teachers. So I just said “your wish is granted” and KAZAAM! He turned into a chicken, right there in the principal's office. Right in front of me! That’s a true story. *(Blows a bubble; pause)*

GRETEL

Wow.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

*(Looking at the bubble)*

Wow.

HANSEL

So why do you live here, in a prison cell, if you can grant wishes?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

*(Menacingly)*

HAY!

HANSEL & GRETEL

*(Hugging each other in fear)*

What???

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

*(Laying on hay bales)*

Hay. I like hay. Don’t ask why, I couldn’t tell ya, but the stuff is great. You can lay on it, chew on it, light a fire. Hay makes my day.

HANSEL

Can you send us back to our parent’s house?

GRETEL

Yeah, we have our first day of the fifth grade tomorrow, and Mom and Dad will be worried sick about us.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

You got directions? Latitude? Longitude? Because if you don’t have an exact GPS location, you’ll have to WISH for an exact GPS location, and then there goes your wish, so you’d have to wish again, and you only get—

HANSEL, GRETEL & RUMPELSTILTSKIN

ONE WISH!!
HANSEL
What if we wish that we could open the door, and we could escape.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
You'll get caught. It's the creakiest door in the castle. Those gingerbread dummies will hear that door opening a mile away.

GRETEL
Well, what if we were able to fly?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
Still gotta open the door.

HANSEL
What if we were gigantic so the Witch couldn't stop us?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
How do you get back to normal size afterwards?

GRETEL
Or if we could go back in time, and never go into the castle?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
Then you'd never meet me, and never get out of the castle to begin with.

HANSEL
But if we went back in time, we'd never have been in the castle at all.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
Yes, but you'd have to have met me FORWARD in time in the castle originally, otherwise you couldn't have gone BACK in time in the first place.

GRETEL
But we would BE back in time before we met you!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
But BEFORE that, you were ahead in time, and that's how you went back in time, to begin with!

HANSEL & GRETEL
(Pause)
Wow.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
(Blowing another bubble)
Wow. You know, you two really have a lot to learn. The fifth grade is just what you need. What if I just shrink you so you can sneak under the door?
HANSEL
But how do we get big again with only one wish?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
Oh, well you’re allowed two wishes, but only if you pass the test. No one ever has. A riddle so... RIDDLE-o-biddle-ous. A trial so... TRIAL-ipt-ial-ous. A puzzle so... “puzzling?” (Awkward pause) A problem never solved even by a master’s master’s master’s master. And you’ve only got twenty minutes before that oven is ready! Ha!

GRETEL
What is it? Tell us, what’s the riddle?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
(Again, menacingly)
What’s – my – name?

Pause as HANSEL and GRETEL look at one another.

HANSEL & GRETEL
Rumpelstiltskin?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
What!? How did you know that? It’s the weirdest name my parents could’ve given me!

HANSEL
There’s a book about you.

GRETEL
Yeah, and a bunch of TV shows.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
(Angry; stomping on floor)
What?! No!

HANSEL
Yeah, I’ve seen at least five TV shows where one of the characters is Rumpelstiltskin.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN
Wow! That’s just... I don’t know what to say.

The GINGERBREAD MEN approach.

GINGERBREAD MAN 1, Off
Did you know you have to push the bake button BEFORE the start button, to preheat the oven?
GINGERBREAD MAN 2, Off

You gotta be kidding.

HANSEL & GRETEL

Oh no, they’re coming!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

(Angrily throws his bubbles offstage)
I always thought I was an individual. Unique! That’s what I thought!

HANSEL

Please, hurry. Can you shrink us? Please?!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

Why didn’t my parents just call me...Joe? Life could’ve been so different. But no, “Rumpelstiltskin.” Great name. Thanks a lot.

GRETEL

Please, Rumpelstiltskin.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

Oh. Oh yeah. Fine, whatever.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN stands on one of the hay bales, speaking dramatically.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN, Continued

HOCUS...POCUS!

HANSEL

That’s it?

GRETEL

Nothing’s happening!

HANSEL

Are those really the words?

SEVERAL STAGEHANDS enter. They remove the hay bales, lift up RUMPELSTILTSKIN to carry him off.

GRETEL

We’re shrinking!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

That’s it! Good luck with the mice little ones. Haha! (Exits)
SCENE 9: THE GREAT ESCAPE

HANSEL
Duck under the door, Gretel.

HANSEL and GRETEL run and duck.

GRETEL
Wow, we’re so small.

HANSEL
Over this way.

There is a loud creaking sound of a door opening. [The voices and sounds for the rest of the scene either come from offstage or on speaker.]

GINGERBREAD MAN 1, Off
They’re gone! Where did they go?!

GINGERBREAD MAN 2, Off
Her Majesty ain't gonna be happy about this. I’ll look over here.

As HANSEL and GRETEL run to one side of the stage, a giant cardboard foot of one of the gingerbread men sticks out, and almost steps on GRETEL.

GRETEL
Ahh!

(Grabbing her)
HANSEL
Watch out!

GINGERBREAD MAN 1 & 2, Off
Close the gates! Shut all the doors!

We hear sounds of a gate clanking down and doors shutting.

HANSEL
Run Gretel! This way, quick!
HANSEL and GRETEL run to the other side of the stage. A large cardboard cat’s paw reaches out at them, and we hear a cat’s hisses.

GRETEL & HANSEL

Ahh!

HANSEL

Hide under the chair!

GRETEL & HANSEL crouch down and hide. We hear the voices of the GINGERBREAD MEN: “Where are they? Look everywhere! Find them... etc.

GRETEL

Oh Hansel, what are we going to do?

HANSEL

Maybe the cat won’t smell us over here.

We hear a cat meow.

GRETEL

Oh no, it sees us!

SCENE 10: SOARING WITH SWALLOW

THUMBELINA, Off

Hey you two, up here!

FOUR STAGEHANDS comprising the SWALLOW accompany THUMBELINA onstage. THUMBELINA is dressed in an old-style aviator’s outfit, with a leather jacket and goggles. A stagehand holding up the SWALLOW’s head is in front of her, with another stagehand behind her acting as the SWALLOW’s tail. There are two other stagehands on either side of her acting as the SWALLOW’s wings. The stagehands hold and creatively use several large, white paper cutouts meant to be SWALLOW’s feathers.
Throughout the scene, THE STAGEHANDS and CHARACTERS work to simulate SWALLOW’s movements and flying.

THUMBELINA  
(Entering)  
Jump on board and hold on tight!

HANSEL and GRETEL stand, run to the SWALLOW and grab on. As they do, we hear a cat attack them and miss.

THUMBELINA, Continued  
Close one! Bye-bye, kitty.

WITCH, Off  
Where are they?!  
GINGERBREAD MAN 2, Off  
They’re up there!  
WITCH, Off  
They’re getting away! Get back here!

THUMBELINA  
We’re outta here kids.

THUMBELINA flies off on SWALLOW with HANSEL and GRETEL.

The WITCH enters with her rolling pin, along with the GINGERBREAD MEN.

WITCH  
(Entering)  
What did you two do?!  
GINGERBREAD MAN 1  
We’re sorry! It was him.  
GINGERBREAD MAN 2  
No, it was him.  
GINGERBREAD MAN 1  
It was him!
WITCH

(Poking them with her rolling pin)
Why you no good, half-baked, stale—

GINGERBREAD MAN 1 & 2
Ouch! Your Majesty! Ouch! Stop! We’re sorry!

The WITCH and the GINGERBREAD MEN continue to argue. As they exit, their voices fade away. SWALLOW REENTERS carrying THUMBELINA with HANSEL and GRETEL still holding on. HANSEL and GRETTEL look down.

HANSEL
Wow, we made it!

GRETEL
We made it!

HANSEL
Thank you so much! (Almost loses his grip; recovers) Oops!

THUMBELINA
Watch it there H-Man. Woo-hoo!

GRETEL
Gosh, I can see the whole castle from up here. And the cloud we were on is so big.

THUMBELINA
It’s a biggie, that’s for sure.

GRETEL
Where are you taking us?

THUMBELINA
Where do you want to go? Up, down, all around? Swallow and I are at your disposal.

HANSEL
Anywhere but back there.

THUMBELINA
Well, anywhere it is. This is the fastest flying swallow east of Cloud Nine. Here we go! Yee-haw!

SWALLOW glides around the stage as the scene continues.
Hold on, Gretel.

I’m trying!

Hold on tight!

*SWALLOW* “flies” quickly from one side of the stage to the other.

Wowwwww...

Takin’ a right.

Wowwwwwwwwwwwww...

And flip-see-doo!

AHHHHHHHHH!

*SWALLOW* stabilizes itself.

(Patting SWALLOW’s head)

Good job, Swallow.

Coo, coo...

She sounds like a pigeon.

(Angrily)

Coo, Coo!

Oh, don’t ever call her a pigeon. Oh, no. She’s just the fastest, flippiest, zippiest, easiest to fly swallow you ever did see.
SWALLOW
(Affectionately)
Coo, coo...

GRETEL
But where are we going? I have no idea where we are.

THUMBELINA
Then I guess we’re going anywhere. Wasn’t that the plan?

HANSEL
We need to get home. We’re starting school tomorrow.

THUMBELINA
School?

HANSEL
The fifth grade.

THUMBELINA
Oh, good for you two! That’s the best one.

GRETEL
Really? Not what we heard.

HANSEL
But we’ll be in so much trouble if our Mom finds out we’re missing. And Dad’ll call the cops!

THUMBELINA
Well, hold on then. I guess we gotta take you home.

GRETEL
Really?

HANSEL
Thank you!

THUMBELINA
So there’s no time to visit Tarzan’s Jungle?

HANSEL
Nope.

THUMBELINA
Or Cinderella and the Prince?
GRETEL

Nope.

THUMBELINA

No Willy Wonka’s Chocolate Factory either, I guess?

GRETEL

Nope, just home.

HANSEL

Is that close to here? Maybe we could—

Hansel!

GRETEL

Hansel!

HANSEL

Okay. Okay. Just home.

THUMBELINA

Alright. Well, it was fun meeting you, anyway. Swallow and I just don’t meet many people in our travels. Lots of birds and squirrels and moles. Even the occasional monkey, but not many people. Where do you live?

HANSEL

(Looking down)

Somewhere...the town right down there. The sun is starting to come up; I think I can see it.

THUMBELINA

Oh no, we’ve come a long way. Those are ocean waves.

GRETEL

The ocean?! But that’s miles away! How did we get so far?

THUMBELINA

Told ya—fastest Swallow you ever did see!

SEVERAL STAGEHANDS enter quickly, holding foreboding grey clouds. They create a windstorm by shaking them and making loud wind and thunder noises. SWALLOW begins to shake and becomes unsteady.

THUMBELINA

Uh oh, looks like we’re in for some turbulence. Hold on you two!
I can’t!

GRETEL

Hold on, Gretel!

HANSEL

This is a bad one, do your best Swallow!

THUMBELINA

(Struggling)

COO, COO...

SWALLOW

Bear into the wind!

THUMBELINA

SWALLOW turns quickly and HANSEL and GRETEL lose their grip. They simulate falling again, by waving their arms up in the air and wiggling around the stage. SWALLOW and THUMBELINA fly toward their exit.

HANSEL & GRETEL

Ahhhhh!

THUMBELINA

Don’t worry kids! Feet first! Just land feet first!

SWALLOW

COO! COO! COOOOO!

SCENE 11: SPLASH!

The SWALLOW and THUMBELINA exit and the thunderstorm STAGEHANDS run circles around the two children as they scream and fall. When HANSEL and GRETEL hit the water, they fall abruptly on the floor. The STAGEHANDS exit. The children then stand and mime swimming to the surface, where they start treading water in place. Several STAGEHANDS then enter, and creatively use movement and “wave” props, to simulate a blue ocean during the entire scene.
Oh Hansel, we made it. We’re alive! What do we do now?

Keep swimming, Gretel. I’ll think of something. And hey, I think we’re back to regular size!

What good will that do us now?

Just keep swimming.

I’m trying.

PINOCCHIO and THE LITTLE MERMAID enter holding onto a long, wooden plank. PINOCCHIO is dressed in a puppet’s outfit, and has a longer than usual nose. THE LITTLE MERMAID is dressed in a shiny, pretty outfit, and has a fishtail covering up her legs. They float over to HANSEL and GRETEL.

Hey, there they are!

Over here you guys!

Swim Gretel!

HANSEL and GRETEL swim toward PINOCCHIO and THE LITTLE MERMAID. They grab onto the plank. All the characters continue to drift side to side, and bob up and down during the scene to simulate floating in the ocean.

Welcome aboard. I'm Pinocchio.

Nice to meet you.
THE LITTLE MERMAID
And I’m the “Little” Mermaid, but I’m growing.

PINOCCHIO
Her friends call her the shrimp mermaid.

THE LITTLE MERMAID
Ha-ha-ha! *(Flicks water in PINOCCHIO’s face)* There goes my funny hubby-to-be again. *(To HANSEL)* It’s very nice to meet you. What’s your name?

HANSEL
*(Staring into THE LITTLE MERMAID’s eyes)*
Hi...

GRETEL
*(Elbowing HANSEL)*
Hansel.

HANSEL
Oh, I mean... "hi"?

GRETEL
That's better.

THE LITTLE MERMAID
So what happened? We just saw you fall out of the sky. You’re so lucky you landed in the ocean.

PINOCCHIO
I guess you are—we've been out here for days. My foot’s starting to rot.

THE LITTLE MERMAID
It's been wonderful. So much swimming and diving and floating. He can float all day if he wants to.

PINOCCHIO
One of the advantages of being made out of wood, I guess.

THE LITTLE MERMAID
You have so many advantages.

PINOCCHIO
Yeah. Yeah.

THE LITTLE MERMAID
Don’t you just love the ocean? So full of life and mystery. Just floating around we've seen ten dolphins.
Three sharks.

PINOCCHIO

Five sea turtles.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

One octopus.

PINOCCHIO

Twelve of the cutest goldfish.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Five electric eels.

PINOCCHIO

And a whale.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Tell me about it!

PINOCCHIO

Oh, Pinocchio was so brave. That great big whale just shot him out of his blowhole and I saved him!

PINOCCHIO

(Avoiding her gaze)

That was very nice, very nice. I'm sure Geppetto will give you some fancy fish food or something when we get to land.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

But why do we need land? We have everything we need right here! Just you and me.

As THE LITTLE MERMAID hugs
PINOCCHIO, PINOCCHIO breaks away
and starts swimming around the stage.

PINOCCHIO

Break time.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Oh Pinocchi, do you need me to save you again?

PINOCCHIO

No, that's ok. I'm doing just fine. Wood floats, remember? I'm just fine.
THE LITTLE MERMAID

But you might float away?

PINOCCHIO

And that's a problem, because?

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Oh Pinocchi, what about the wedding? *(To HANSEL and GRETEL)* We're getting married under the sea.

PINOCCHIO

Um... I actually think that that might NOT be happening!

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Oh don't be silly! I've got it all planned out.

PINOCCHIO

I KNOW you do.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Well, don't say it like that. I've put a lot of thought into this!

PINOCCHIO

I KNOW you have.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Days and days.

PINOCCHIO

One week, four days, ten hours, and twenty-two minutes to be exact. Well, I'm sure that we'll be hitting land soon. My father will be very happy to see me.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

*(Whispering to HANSEL and GRETEL)*

He won’t be that happy if he just threw him out, like I heard.

PINOCCHIO

What was that?

PINOCCHIO starts swimming back toward them.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Oh nothing, I was just wondering if I should put clamshells or oyster shells in my wedding veil. Or little, white, snail shells.
PINOCCHIO

My father loves me. I’m his favorite puppet. He would never throw me out.

*PINOCCHIO grabs hold of the plank.*

THE LITTLE MERMAID

It was probably the nose.

PINOCCHIO

Oh, here we go.

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Even when he’s telling the truth it sticks out. Look at it.

GRETEL

It's a cute nose.

PINOCCHIO

Cute? It’s just a nose. Regular nose. What's the big deal?

HANSEL

Did your father really throw you out because of your nose?

PINOCCHIO

He didn't throw me out at all. I went away to join the circus, made friends with a cricket, and then I went to a magical island, and then I got swallowed by a whale, it spewed me out, and then I met her. *(Pause)*

HANSEL

The nose story sounds a little more believable.

PINOCCHIO

It's just a nose!

THE LITTLE MERMAID

You should see it when it grows, it gets this big!

*THE LITTLE MERMAID spreads her arms so far apart she falls off of the plank and starts to swim away.*

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Hahaha! Tell a lie, do it! Make it grow. See how big it gets!

PINOCCHIO

Well if you hate my nose so much, why do you want to marry me?
THE LITTLE MERMAID
Somebody has to! Haha!

PINOCCHIO
Arg!

PINOCCHIO lets go of the plank and swims after THE LITTLE MERMAID.

THE LITTLE MERMAID
But I thought you wanted to go home?

PINOCCHIO
Oh, now YOU’RE bailing on our marriage?

THE LITTLE MERMAID
Oh, what marriage is that?

PINOCCHIO
I changed my mind. And look, if I were lying my nose would be growing, right?

THE LITTLE MERMAID
(Avoiding him)
I guess. Puppets are so confusing. (Exits)

PINOCCHIO
(To HANSEL and GRETEL)
Later dudes! (Calling out to THE LITTLE MERMAID) Look, I’m sorry I called you the shrimp mermaid. It was insensitive. Wait up! (Exits)

HANSEL
Gretel, can you see land anywhere?

GRETEL
I can’t, but it’s so foggy. We couldn’t have flown that far, it was just a bird.

HANSEL
Oh, Gretel. How can we get back now?

SCENE 12: CAPTAIN NEMO’S NAUTILUS

Enter CAPTAIN NEMO. He is dressed in a dark sailor’s outfit with a captain's hat. In front of him is a STAGEHAND holding a nautical ship’s wheel. They both steer themselves around the stage while making loud, exaggerated machine
noises. They then move toward HANSEL and GRETEL, who cannot see them yet.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Holding here. (Stops; speaks into a mimed intercom) All hands ready. Rising to the surface. Almost there... Almost there... Blow the hatch!

There is a loud “spew!” sound of the hatch blowing open.

HANSEL & GRETEL
Ahhhh!

CAPTAIN NEMO
Ahoy there!

HANSEL
Wow! A submarine.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Nautilus actually...but “submarine,” I like the sound of that. What are you two doing out here?

GRETEL
Who are you?

CAPTAIN NEMO
Nemo’s the name, Captain Nemo. Perhaps you’ve heard of my many exploits?

HANSEL
Um, not exactly.

CAPTAIN NEMO
But... the great battle with the giant squid? Attacking enemy ships that think I’m a monster from the deeps? Surely you’ve read 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea? It’s the best book in the fifth grade.

GRETEL
But we’re supposed to start the fifth grade today.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Today!? 

HANSEL
We’ve got to get home! We’ve been chased by a witch that wants to eat us—

GRETEL
—and captured by a couple of gingerbread bullies—
HANSEL
—and we’ll be in so much trouble if we miss our first day, and our parents—

CAPTAIN NEMO
Well, you need to get back. Come aboard children, you will certainly not be achieving any headway utilizing your current flotation device.

Pause as HANSEL looks at GRETEL.

HANSEL
What?

CAPTAIN NEMO
You’re rotten board is less useful than a seagull with its wings clipped. Get in.

They climb into the Nautilus. As they enter it, the OCEAN-WAVE STAGEHANDS take the plank from them and exit with it.

CAPTAIN NEMO, Continued
(Into mimed intercom)
All hands, prepare for immediate descent! (To HANSEL and GRETEL) Hold on.

HANSEL & GRETEL
Yes, sir.

HANSEL and GRETEL mime grabbing onto handles on the inside of the Nautilus. CAPTAIN NEMO pushes many pretend buttons, and pulls several pretend levers as they descend.

CAPTAIN NEMO
All steady. Twenty meters...fifty meters...one hundred meters...

As the Nautilus descends, SEVERAL STAGEHANDS come out and float around the stage with drawings of fish, sharks and other underwater creatures.

GRETEL
Wow, look at this thing go.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Amazing creation, I must say. 200 meters...
GRETEL
How deep can it go?

CAPTAIN NEMO
Well, as deep as it gets. The ocean, that is. 400 meters...

HANSEL
This is amazing, so much better than Water City.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Water City?

HANSEL
Oh, it’s just a theme park.

GRETEL
Hansel, look! It’s a jelly fish.

HANSEL
Ew! Look, a shark!

GRETEL
Ahh! They can’t get us, can they?

CAPTAIN NEMO
Oh, no. We are well protected. Now I have to ask you children, what is going on? How did you end up in the middle of the ocean, instead of going to school? Do you not WANT to start the fifth grade?

HANSEL
We are a little nervous.

GRETEL
We hear it’s very scary, but we really need to get home and—

CAPTAIN NEMO
Oh how I remember the fifth grade. It’s where I learned everything. My teacher was... Mr. Johnson. He was a great teacher, taught me everything I needed to know.

GRETEL
Even how to build this sub-Naughty-less?

CAPTAIN NEMO
Nau-til-us. Well, not exactly. But you see, in the fifth grade I learned all of the basic concepts that allowed me to understand everything else later on.
HANSEL
Well, I sure wish I knew how to build this.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Oh, the fifth grade. I learned addition, subtraction, division—

HANSEL
And multiplication. I know that.

CAPTAIN NEMO
All in the same problem? And what about fractions? Surely you know something about fractions?

HANSEL
Not really.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Not YET. And Science.

GRETEL

CAPTAIN NEMO
Joules and Newtons and Mass and Volume. The Theory of Relativity!

HANSEL
That’s sounds hard.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Not that hard. And the book list! Oh, that was the best! Swiss Family Robinson, James and the Giant Peach, Anne of Green Gables, and 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea, of course.

GRETEL
And Harry Potter?

CAPTAIN NEMO
Haven’t heard of him. Late addition, maybe. And all the basics of geography. Longitude, Latitude, and other directions like... where are we going?

HANSEL
Well...land.

CAPTAIN NEMO
North America? Asia? Europe?

HANSEL
Just land! Where we live.
CAPTAIN NEMO
Oh, that’s right. No time for lessons today. That happens in the fifth grade. Which is today! Haha.

GRETEL
Mr. Nemo, sir, is there a cell phone charger on your Naughty-less boat?

HANSEL
It’s a submarine, Gretel. Not the Verizon store.

CAPTAIN NEMO
NAUTILUS!

GRETEL
But without the GPS, I have no idea where we are.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Here, use a compass.

(CAPTAIN NEMO hands GRETEL a compass.)

GRETEL
But this doesn’t draw a circle.

CAPTAIN NEMO
No, a compass! A compass. North, East, South, West. Compass! You’ll learn all about it in the fifth grade!

HANSEL
But how do we know where we are?

CAPTAIN NEMO
Well, we’ve been heading south-east for the last ten minutes, the board you were on was floating slowly north for about five minutes, and the cloud you were on was drifting south-west, so we need to head ... north!

GRETEL
The needle says south.

CAPTAIN NEMO
Well, hang on kids. (Into intercom) Right full rudder! Here we go!

They all lean to one side as CAPTAIN NEMO spins the wheel.
CAPTAIN NEMO, *Continued*

Now let’s make up for lost time. Full speed ahead!

*CAPTAIN NEMO pulls levers and pushes buttons. They all have trouble keeping their balance as the boat speeds up.*

CAPTAIN NEMO, *Continued*

Hold on. Hold on!

*After almost falling over backwards, they all lurch forward and then freeze in place.*

CAPTAIN NEMO, *Continued*

ALL STOP! And here we are children. Right at Sea level. Blow the hatch!

*There is a loud “spew!” sound.*

CAPTAIN NEMO, *Continued*

Go on, jump out. Just a short swim to the shore. Your town is right down the road.

*HANSEL and GRETEL crawl out of the Nautilus.*

HANSEL

Thank you, Captain!

GRETEL

Yes, we really appreciate the ride on your Nautilus, sir.

CAPTAIN NEMO

No problem. *(Commands) Submerge!* *The STAGEHAND with the wheel and CAPTAIN NEMO exit together, making loud machine noises again as they leave. HANSEL and GRETEL mime swimming and quickly shake the water off their clothes when they reach the shore.*

GRETEL

Oh Hansel, the town is right over there, we might make it home in time for the school bus!

HANSEL

Let’s go, Gretel!
HANSEL and GRETEL start running about the stage

GRETEL
Do you know what time it is?

HANSEL
No idea.

GRETEL
Do you think that wolf was telling the truth about the fifth grade?

HANSEL
I don’t think so.

GRETEL
I wonder who my teacher will be?

HANSEL
Who cares.

GRETEL
I really hope we get recess, can you imagine if we really had no recess?

HANSEL
We’re almost to the bus stop, Gretel. Faster!

GRETEL
Oh, I think I can see it!

SCENE 13: BATTLE AT THE BUS STOP

Enter the WITCH and the two GINGERBREAD MEN. They spring onstage together, and HANSEL and GRETEL suddenly stop in fear. The WOLF limps onstage after them. He is even more beaten and bruised than before, and he now hobbles with a crutch. The WITCH has her broom, and is no longer wearing an apron.

WITCH
Ah-ha! Stop right there! Nice to see you again, don’t move a muscle. This time my oven will be nice and hot! Hahaha!
GINGERBREAD MAN 1

Don’t move!

GINGERBREAD MAN 2

Yeah, wouldn’t wanna send you out to sea again.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes

Continue to next page for Props List
PROPS LIST

GENERAL NOTES ON PROPS:
Some props are necessary to the action – candy corn, Gretel’s cell phone, etc. – but some can be mimed at the discretion of the director. Props are indicated in the script. In regards to props, it is suggested that whenever possible they be very large and hand drawn, made of cardboard or large pieces of paper. The props are a key part of keeping the show artistically engaging and offer an opportunity for the cast and crew to create artwork to be part of the show. Hand drawn artwork also helps give the show a surreal or dream-like quality throughout. Some props are significantly large and will need to be constructed. However, depending on production values, they could be mimed or implied by the actors.

SCENE 1:
Two blankets
Gretel’s cell phone
Video game controller and machine
Large, empty window frame
Witch’s broom
Dog treat

SCENE 2:
Candy corn
Leaves and branches for stagehand’s bush

SCENE 3:
Green flashlight

SCENE 4:
Large silver or white ball
Four large drawings of scary monsters

SCENE 5:
Three hay bales
Lemonade with paper umbrella
Straw hat
Beach blanket
Beanstalk (Larger prop)

SCENE 6:
Four large drawings of clouds
One large drawing of a full moon
Big Dipper drawing
Little Dipper drawing
Scorpio drawing
Orion drawing
Candy cane gate (Larger prop)
SCENE 7:
Eight to twelve gingerbread men – some edible – and various improvised stagehand props
Rolling pin

SCENE 8:
Wolf's sling, bandage and crutch
Bubble soap

SCENE 9:
Giant cardboard foot
Giant cardboard cat's claw

SCENE 10:
Swallow's feathers
Swallow's head
Swallow's tail
Grey clouds

SCENE 11:
Blue waves
Wooden plank

SCENE 12:
Nautical wheel
Shark drawing
Jellyfish drawing
Other drawings of underwater creatures
Compass

SCENE 13:
School bus (Larger prop)

NOTES REGARDING LARGER PROPS:

The beanstalk in Scene 5 will require a small wooden platform for Hansel and Gretel to stand on, and a pole attached to it. The pole could then be decorated with leaves and vines, or these leaves and vines could be drawn on paper and taped to the beanstalk. If this is too difficult to create, it could easily be mimed by Hansel, Gretel, and the dancing “beanstalk stagehands.”

The candy cane gate at the end of Scene 6 could be constructed by creating two large, doorway-sized, candy canes out of construction paper and cardboard.

The school bus in Scene 13 should be between 8 and 12 feet long, and several feet high. It could be made out of cardboard or wood, or a combination. It is carried on and off stage by the Bus Driver and the children in it. It could be gripped from behind handles in the back. If this is too difficult to create for the production, it could be implied by pretending the children and bus driver are on a bus, or they may remain offstage so that we only hear their voices.