

Scene 2

G: *(holds Hänsel back, stunned)*

But wait! But wait!

H: *(surprised)*

Oh heavens!

What miracle is that there!

*(Utmost excitement)*

No cottage I ever saw

Could compare!

G: *(gradually snaps out of her shock)*

The scent that comes from it,

Delicious, oh my gosh!

A house made of candies

And cakes on this spot!

With flapjacks and pies on its

Pointed rooftop!

The windows are made

Of spun sugar so pure,

And plump, juicy raisins

The gables adorn!

And, wait!

'Round it straight

Runs a gingerbread gate!

A cottage

With pies upon its rooftop.

The windows of sugar so pure,

And raising the gables around,

And wait!

'Round it straight

Runs a gingerbread gate!

H&G:

Oh tiny castle,

The only of its kind,

What Forest Princess

Within it might we find?

And if she's at home, our [pron: "our" as two syllables]

Forest Princess kind,

She'll ask us to join her

For pastries and wine.

To feast and make merry,

She'll ask us both inside.

H:  
There's not a sound.  
I think it's abandoned!  
Come, let us go in there!

G: *(shocked, holds him back)*  
Are you a madman?  
Hänsel, that's reckless!  
Oh don't you dare!  
Who knows who we'll find  
in that cottage fair!

H:  
See how inviting the cottage appears!  
Ha! The angels, they must have brought us here!

G: *(agreeing)*  
The angels  
Yes, well, that explains why!

H:  
See, Gretel? They kindly ask us inside!  
Come, let's nibble a bit from the cottage!

H&G:  
Come, let's nibble,  
Yes, come let's nibble  
Like two small, hungry mousies!

*(They skip hand-in-hand Upstage...stay still...then tippy-toe up to the cottage. Hänsel hesitates, then breaks a piece of cake off the edge of the house)*

A Voice from Inside the House:  
Nibble, nibble mousies,  
Who nibbles on my housie?

*(Hänsel startles and drops the piece of cake)*

H:  
Did you hear that?

G: *(somewhat hesitantly)*  
It's wind, like angelic wings!

H:

It's wind, like angelic wings!

G: *(picks the piece of cake up off the ground and tries it)*

Mmm!

H: *(watches Gretel greedily)*

You like it?

G: *(gives Hänsel a bite)*

You also try it!

H&G: *(clasping their hands to their chests in enchantment)*

Oh joy!

Oh crumpets and creampuffs,

Delectable cake!

It's just what the angels

In Heaven would bake!

H:

Oh how it tastes!

G:

Take some for later!

H:

How sweet!

G:

Delicious!

H:

Some...

G:

How sweet!

H:

...for later!

G:

Could this be home to a candy maker?

H: *(calls out)*

Hey, candy maker!

Better watch out!

Two mousies have

Nibbled a hole in your house!  
*(He breaks a big piece of cake off the wall)*

Voice from the House:  
Nibble nibble mousies,  
Who nibbles on my housie?

H&G:  
It's wind, it's wind,  
Like angelic wings!

*(The top half of the cottage front door opens and we can see the Nibble Witch's head. The children don't notice and continue to feast joyfully. Door opens fully. The Witch creeps gingerly up on the children and throws a snare around Hänsel's neck. He has his back to her, oblivious)*

G:  
Wait, you snack-happy mousie--  
Here comes the cat from her housie!

H: *(still chewing)*  
I'll nibble on,  
So leave me alone!

G: *(grabs a piece of cake from his hand)*  
You little rascal,  
Not so fast!

H: *(takes it back)*  
Don't be a nag!  
Dessert's here at last!

G:  
Hahaha...

H:  
Hahaha...

Witch: *(shrill laughter)*  
Heeheeheeheeheehee!

H: *(horrified)*  
Let go! Who are you!  
Let me go!

W: *(pulling the Children to her)*

Angel coy,  
And you, my rascal boy!

*(pets the Children)*

You've come for a visit?  
Oh how sweet.  
You darling children  
Are such a treat!

H: *(makes a confused effort to free himself)*  
Who are you, wicked one?  
Let me go!

W:  
You, sweetie, mustn't struggle so.

It's time for introductions now.  
I'm Raisinette McYummymouth.  
I deeply love my fellow men  
With pure and childish innocence.  
And I love little children so much, so much, so much  
I could eat them all up!

H: *(gruffly defending himself)*  
Hey --stop it and leave me alone!  
*(stamps his foot)*  
Got that? You let me go!

W: *(shrill laughter)*  
Heeheehee!  
What darling, delectable little bratwursts! [pron: "brat" to rhyme with "cat"]  
And you my girl, I don't need to fatten first!

Come, little mousies,  
Come in my housie!  
Be my honored guesties!  
I'll feed you only the besties!

You'll have plumbs and chocolates and marzipan,  
Cinnamon rolls and Spanish flan,  
Zucchini bread and cherry nut cake,  
Rice pudding, in the oven just baked.  
And raisins and dates, too,  
And figgies and almonds await you.  
They're all in my housie to satiate you.  
(They all make you taste great, too!)

H:  
I won't go with you, horrible hag!

G:  
You are far too friendly!

W:  
My, my,  
Clever child!

You children, I want for you  
All the best.  
Come home with me  
To your heavenly rest!

Come, little mousies!  
Come into my housie!  
Be my honored guesties!  
I'll feed you only the besties!

G:  
So say, what will you  
To my brother do?

W:  
I --oooh--  
I'll feed him, stuff him and plump him  
With endless nuts and fruities and dainties.  
I'll make him tender and tasty.

And if he's good then and he's meek,  
And patient and obedient as a sheep,  
Then, Hänsel, to you I'll confide:  
You're going to get a great big surprise!

H:  
So say out loud what you'd confide.

W:  
eeh?

H:  
So tell me what's this great big surprise?

W:

Well, children dear, I'll get to the point.  
From this surprise you will die of delight!

H:  
Well, I'm alive and I'm feeling alright.  
Better watch out --I know how to fight!  
Gretel, don't trust a word that she spouts!  
Come, sister dear, we're getting out!

*(During the previous, Hänsel has managed to free himself from the snare. Runs Downstage with Gretel.)*

*Here, the Witch holds them back, using the magic wand hanging from her skirt to command them:)*

W:  
Halt!  
Hocus pocus tetanus shot!  
*(the stage gradually darkens)*  
Now you're rooted to the spot!  
Can't go forwards, can't go back!  
Fixed you with an evil look!  
Head stays frozen on your neck!

*(the tip of the magic wand begins to glow)*

Hocus pocus clever joke-us:  
Children, watch the magic wand!  
Eyes into their sockets bond!  
To your stable stall, be gone!

*(With new gestures she leads Hänsel, who can't take his eyes from the wand's glowing tip, to the stall and locks the barred door.)*

*The stage gradually gets light again as the tip of the magic wand gradually dims)*

Hocus pocus  
Clever joke-us  
Evil focus  
Hocus pocus

*(Cheerfully to Gretel, who continues to stand motionless)*

Now, Gretel, be a dear, not a brat.  
Soon Hänsel will be nice and fat.

Our little Hans  
Should want for nothing.  
With sugared nuts and  
raisinettes we'll stuff him.

I'll go inside  
And get a whole lot.  
Now don't move an inch  
From your spot!

*(Grinningly wags her finger at Gretel and goes into the house)*

G: *(stiff and motionless)*  
Ooh --Hänsel, how will we get out?

H: *(whispering quickly)*  
Gretel --pst! Not quite so loud!  
Be bright and quick--  
Watch every step,  
Watch everything  
The witch does next!

Pretend to do just  
What she asks.  
That's her! She's coming--  
Ssh! --back!

*(The Witch returns, makes sure that Gretel is still frozen in place then begins to feed Hänsel from a basket of almonds and raisins)*

W:  
Now little one,  
Come stick out your little tongue.

*(Sticks raisins in his mouth)*  
Eat, birdie, eat or die!  
Soon you'll be fit to fry.

*(Turns to Gretel and lifts the hex with a juniper branch)*  
Hocus pocus elderbush,  
frozen limbs move freely, woosh!

*(Gretel can move again)*

Now that you're chipper again, little missie,  
Run on your round little legs to the kitchen!

Go, my puppet plump and sweet,  
Set the table for a feast!  
Bowlsies and platsies  
And fine center pieciekins,  
Little napkins  
For my beakikins.  
Now do everything quickly and well  
Or I'll lock you, too,  
In a stable cell.  
*(a threatening giggle)*  
Heeheehee!

*(Gretel hurries Off)*

*(To Hänsel, who pretends to be sleeping)*  
The little lummoX  
Is sleeping fast.  
Only the young can sleep like that.

So pleasant dreams,  
My little sheep,  
Soon you'll have  
Your eternal sleep!  
*(Stretches her arms out in an incantation)*

But! First his sister  
Must come back.  
She'll make, will this girl,  
Quite a snack.  
She's so tender,  
Plump and sweet!  
Perfect for a  
Witch to eat!

*(She opens the oven door and peeks inside. Her face glows dark red from the fire's light)*

The batter's done!  
The next step we can tackle!  
My! How the logs  
In the oven crackle!

*(Cheerfully rubbing her hands together)*  
Yes, Gretel sweet,  
You'll soon a pretzel be.

Tee hee! Clever me!  
I'll say to look in the oven,  
See how the cookies are coming.  
When you look in --bam!  
Goes the door --slam!  
I've turned our Gretel in  
To pretzel bits!

The pretzel will turn into cake made  
Delicious with sugar and raisins.  
My magic oven then  
Turns that to gingerbread men.  
See? Clever me! Tee hee!

*(Stage gradually darkens; thunder is heard in the distance)*

*In wild joy she grabs a broom and sits astride it)*

Hur hop hop hop  
Gallop lop lop!  
My broomstick mule's  
No lazy fool!

*(She frolics around on the broom; thunder continues in the distance)*

On orders mine  
In bright sunshine  
He jumps about  
My Nibble House.

*(She rides around some more; Gretel observes from the window; the stage darkens and the thunder gets closer)*

But then at night  
We both take flight  
Out chimneys [pron: three syllables, chi-me-neys]  
To witches' feasts!

Turn five and six,  
So says the witch,  
To sev'n and eight:  
It's done post haste!  
Turn nine to one  
And ten to none!  
Well who needs math?  
I've got witchcraft!

We ride like this all night, you know.

*(Heavy thunder; with great leaps, she rides around Upstage and disappears behind the cottage. Reappears, comes Downstage. Suddenly stops...)*

Prrrr!

Broomstick whoa!

*(...and dismounts*

*She limps to the stall and tickles Hänsel awake with a broom bristle.)*

Wakey-wake, my little one!  
Stick out your little tongue!

*(Hänsel sticks his tongue out)*

Yummy yummy  
*(Flicks her tongue)*  
For my tummy!  
*(And again)*

Yummy, rascally little kid,  
Show me your fingerlet!  
*(Hänsel holds out a stick)*

Jiminy! Oh no!  
Like a stick, he's all bone!  
Boy, oh boy, your fingerlets  
Are pitiful thing-a-lets!

*(She calls)*

Little Gretel!

*(Gretel appears at the door)*

Come bring raisins and almonds out.  
Hänsel needs to stuff his mouth.

*(Gretel runs into the house and comes right back out with a basket full of raisins and almonds)*

G:  
Here are the almonds!

*(As the Witch feeds Hänsel, Gretel stands behind her, takes the juniper branch and removes the hex:)*

Hocus pocus elderbush,  
Frozen limbs move freely, woosh!

*(Hänsel can move again)*

W: *(turning quickly)*  
What was that my little goose?

G: *(somewhat confused)*  
I said, "Hänsel needs a lot of food."

W:  
Eeh?

G: *(louder)*  
"Hänsel needs a lot of food."

W:  
Heeheehee, my little puppet,  
Let's stick this in your gullet!

*(Sticks a raisin in Gretel's mouth)*

Eat, birdie, eat or die.  
Soon you'll be fit to fry!

*(She opens the oven door; the glow from the fire has lessened a little. Meanwhile, Hänsel makes emphatic gestures to Gretel)*

H: *(quietly opening the cage door)*  
Sister dear,  
Take good care!

W: *(greedily eyeing Gretel)*  
My tummy is a-rumbling  
To eat this little dumpling!

Come, Gretel sweet,  
Little petal sweet!

*(Gretel approaches her)*

Now you will look in the oven.

See how the cookies are coming.  
Carefully check and  
See if they're brown yet  
Or they're underbaked.  
It's a piece of cake!

*(Gretel hesitates)*

H: *(slips out of the stall)*  
Sister dear,  
Take good care!

G: *(feigning ignorance)*  
I don't follow you.  
What am I to do?

W:  
Darling, it's nothing.  
Go to the oven,  
pop your head in.  
Easy as sin!

H: *(holding Gretel back by her dress)*  
Sister dear,  
Take good care!

G: *(coyly)*  
I'm such a dunce,  
Please show me once  
Only this one thing:  
How to look in the oven.

W: *(gestures impatiently)*  
Pop your head in.  
Easy as sin!

*(The Witch goes, muttering to herself, to the oven. Opens the door, sticks her whole upper body in. Hänsel and Gretel give her a great big shove. The Witch goes flying into the oven and Hänsel and Gretel quickly slam the door closed.)*

H&G: *(mocking the Witch)*  
Once you are in --bam!  
Goes the door --slam!  
We turned you, not Gretel, in-  
To pretzel bits!  
*(Hänsel and Gretel fall rejoicing into each other's arms)*

Nibble Waltz (Finale)

H&G:

Oh joy! The wicked witch is gone,  
Dead and gone,  
And our freedom won!

Oh joy! The wicked witch is dead,  
Gone and dead,  
Turned to gingerbread!

To her just dessert she fell  
Into Hell  
And we broke the spell!

*(They take each other's hands)*

Ah, let us joyful be,  
Dancing so merrily!  
Here in the Nibble House  
Let's set a banquet out!

Joy, oh joy!

*(They hug, then waltz together, first Downstage then gradually Up toward the Nibble House.)*