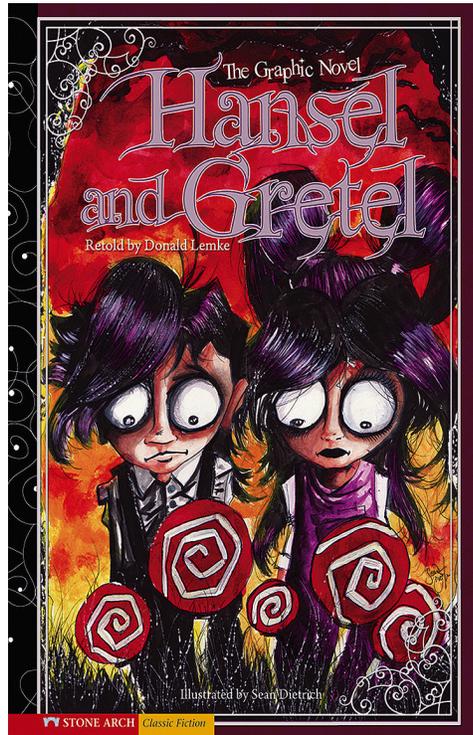




## READER'S THEATER



### **Hansel and Gretel retold by Donald Lemke**

**Characters:**      **The Father**  
                         **Hansel**  
                         **Gretel**  
                         **The Old Woman**  
                         **The Stepmother**  
                         **Narrator**

**Genre:**              **Fairy Tale**

**Ages:**                **8-13**

# Hansel and Gretel page 1

**Narrator:** On the edge of a great forest lived a woodcutter and his family. The woodcutter made very little money, and his wife and children had very little food to eat. His son, Hansel, and his daughter, Gretel, often went to bed hungry. The family's troubles kept the poor woodcutter up at night.

**Father:** How will we feed the children, when we can't even feed ourselves?

**Stepmother:** We'll take the children into the forest, give them each a piece of bread . . . and leave them there.

**Father:** No! I can't leave my children alone in the forest. They will never survive!

**Stepmother:** Then we'll all die of hunger, you fool!

**Narrator:** The woodcutter felt he had no other choice.

**Father:** You're right, dear. Tomorrow we will get rid of the children to save ourselves.

**Narrator:** Meanwhile, in the next room, Hansel and Gretel heard everything their parents had said.

**Gretel:** Oh, Hansel! What are we going to do?!

**Hansel:** Don't worry, Gretel. I'll find a way to save us. I promise.

**Narrator:** The next morning, Hansel and Gretel's stepmother woke them up early.

**Stepmother:** Get up! We're going into the forest to gather wood. Here's a piece of bread for each of you. Don't eat it now. You won't get anything else the rest of the day.

**Gretel:** Yes, Stepmother.

**Narrator:** As they walked deeper into the forest, Gretel noticed Hansel was breaking up his piece of bread and dropping the crumbs on the ground.

**Gretel:** What are you doing, Hansel? That's all we have to eat!

## Hansel and Gretel page 2

- Hansel:** You'll see Gretel. I have a plan of my own.
- Stepmother:** Hurry up, you little worms!
- Hansel:** Coming, Stepmother!
- Narrator:** A long walk later, they finally stopped.
- Stepmother:** Stay here, children. We'll come back when we're finished collecting wood.
- Father:** Good-bye, my dearest children! I love you both very much.
- Stepmother:** Stop groveling, dear. We'll be back soon.
- Narrator:** But, of course, they weren't . . .
- Gretel:** I'm getting cold, Hansel.
- Hansel:** Me too.
- Gretel:** The sun has almost set. We'll be lost out here in the dark.
- Hansel:** Don't worry, Gretel. My trail of bread crumbs will shine in the moonlight. We'll follow it all the way home.
- Narrator:** That night, when Hansel and Gretel tried to make their way back home, they ran into a major problem.
- Hansel:** What happened to the bread crumbs?!
- Gretel:** The birds must have eaten them, Hansel.
- Hansel:** Then, we are truly lost! It's all my fault!
- Gretel:** Don't give up, brother. We can still find our way out.
- Narrator:** Soon, however, the hours turned into days.
- Hansel:** We can't go on much longer, Gretel. We need to eat.
- Narrator:** Just then, Gretel spied something up ahead.

## Hansel and Gretel page 3

**Gretel:** Look!

**Narrator:** Up ahead was a beautiful house.

**Hansel:** Look, Gretel, the walls are built with bread and cake!

**Gretel:** The windows are made of sugar! And it's all held together by sugary sweet frosting, Hansel!

**Hansel:** Well, what are we waiting for?

**Narrator:** Hansel and Gretel were starving, and they began eating bits of the house hungrily.

**Hansel:** You have to try the roof! It tastes like a gooey, chocolate chip cookie.

**Gretel:** Not until I'm finished with these shutters. They're sweeter than a lollipop!

**Narrator:** Suddenly, a frightening voice interrupted their feast . . .

**Old Woman:** Nibble, nibble, like a mouse. Who is nibbling at my house?

**Gretel:** What was that?

**Hansel:** I don't know. Look! The door is opening!

**Hansel and Gretel:** AAAGGHH!!!

**Old Woman:** Oh, dear! Are you children lost?

**Hansel:** Yes, ma'am.

**Old Woman:** Come inside. You can stay with me, and I'll give you plenty of food. Don't be frightened. I won't harm you . . .

**Narrator:** The old woman led Hansel and Gretel into her house.

**Old Woman:** Oh, my! You children are hungry! Would you like anything else to eat?

## Hansel and Gretel page 4

**Gretel:** No thank you, ma'am.

**Old Woman:** Now, you two get some sleep. Tomorrow there will be plenty more to eat.

**Hansel:** I wish we could stay here forever.

**Gretel:** Me, too.

**Old Woman:** (Under her breath) That's good, because you will never escape . . .

What will happen to Hansel and Gretel now that they're trapped in the Old Woman's house? Will they ever find their way out of the forest? To find out, read *Hansel and Gretel: The Graphic Novel* from Stone Arch Books.

**THE END**