

# **Little Red Gretel**

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## **Characters**

(Little Red) Gretel

Hansel

Mother

Father

Physician

Witch

(Hunter)

Wolf

Voice

Old Lady

A long time ago, just last week...

*Mother loads the children's plates with vegetable stew. Hansel plays with his food, while Gretel complains.*

**MOTHER** (To Gretel): eat!

**GRETEL**: but I'm not hungry

**MOTHER**: what do you mean you're not hungry?

**GRETEL**: I'm just not.

**MOTHER**: you're so rude. do you even realize how much food costs these days and how much time I spent cooking? I'll tell your father how you're acting, and you'll have to deal with him when he gets home...

*Hansel giggles mischievously and looks at his sister.*

**MOTHER**: what now?! you're not hungry either?

**HANSEL**: I've got training in half an hour. the coach said we shouldn't train on a full stomach

**MOTHER**: Jesus, what's the matter with you two? other children would be grateful... and you...

*Gretel forces herself to eat, slowly, against her wishes.*

**HANSEL**: I gotta get ready. is the old man giving me a ride?

**MOTHER**: no. he's at work.

**HANSEL** (moping): why does he always work?

**GRETEL**: are you going to pay the bills this month?

**HANSEL**: did anyone ask you anything?

**MOTHER**: your sister will take you

**HANSEL**: oh, great!

**GRETEL**: but mom! I've got plans! I can't take him

**MOTHER**: you have no plans. finish your food.

*Gretel eats apathetically. Hansel packs the dogi into his bag.*

**HANSEL**: I don't want her to take me

**MOTHER**: be quiet and get ready

*Gretel puts her spoon down. She's hardly finished half her food. Mother watches her for a moment, then gets up, picks up the plate filled with stew, and pours it over the girl's head. Gretel is stunned. Even Hansel stops giggling.*

*They walk next to each other. Gretel is deep in thought, while Hansel frantically scrolls on his cell phone.*

**HANSEL:** she's totally nuts

**GRETEL:** I know

**HANSEL:** she's out of her mind

**GRETEL:** there's nothing we can do

**HANSEL:** we can run away

**GRETEL:** and where would you go, buddy?

**HANSEL:** to Mallorca!

**GRETEL:** what's in Mallorca?

**HANSEL:** I don't know, but everybody's going there

**GRETEL:** c'mon, you don't know what you're talking about

**HANSEL:** and you have no sense of adventure

**GRETEL:** every day is an adventure for me

**HANSEL:** well, we don't have it that bad. we've got a roof over our heads and something to eat

**GRETEL:** if a roof over the head and food on the plate were all anyone needed, orphanages would be the finest places in the world

**HANSEL:** I don't feel like training

**GRETEL:** you don't say! why did you sign up?

**HANSEL:** I didn't sign up, they did it for me

**GRETEL:** don't be such a brat. my workout consists of cleaning the apartment

**HANSEL:** not my fault that you're a woman

**GRETEL:** oh shut up, you're gonna go do that wild thrashing of yours, end of story

**HANSEL:** it's not thrashing, it's nanbudo, a sophisticated technique of attack and defense

**GRETEL:** alright alright

**HANSEL:** chikara-da, yuki-da, shinen-da

**GRETEL:** I don't care, whatever-da

**HANSEL:** strength, courage, confidence

**GRETEL:** you haven't lost them along the way, have you?

**HANSEL:** have you?

**GRETEL:** if I get you, nan-budo won't save you

**HANSEL:** you know the therapist told mom that no one should be beating me

**GRETEL:** only because you wet the bed. it's so unfair. if only I still pissed my bed

**HANSEL:** start working on it

**GRETEL:** I tried, but it's not working. I always pee myself only after she beats me up

**HANSEL:** bad luck

**GRETEL:** eh, it is what it is. but what is this street? it doesn't look familiar...

**HANSEL:** of course it does, this is... um

**GRETEL** (*typing on the cell*): I have no clue where we are right now

**HANSEL:** all the streets and buildings look the same to me

**GRETEL:** me too

**HANSEL:** shouldn't we be in the woods?

**GRETEL:** that's in the old version, when woods still existed

**HANSEL:** so now we're getting lost in the city?

**GRETEL:** yep

**HANSEL:** but the woods have their symbolism

**GRETEL:** and so does the city

**HANSEL:** and what exactly is that?

**GRETEL:** I don't know, I'll google it

**HANSEL:** are you really looking up "city"?

**GRETEL:** here you go, I'm googling *concrete blocks symbolism*

**HANSEL:** and what's it say?

**GRETEL:** it says concrete building or a concrete house—proof that some part of your life is stable and firm

**HANSEL:** no part of my life is stable and firm

**GRETEL:** yes, we know that. but at least you're training. maybe your brain will catch up with your body

**HANSEL:** right, as if that would happen this instant, right when we get lost

*Gretel starts looking things up on her cell.*

**HANSEL:** we better go home

**GRETEL:** no way! they'll figure out we didn't go to the gym, and then I'm fucked. plus, now I don't even know how to get back... and you, of course, haven't been dropping the stones...

**HANSEL:** what stones?

**GRETEL:** you've just been staring at your phone, as usual...

**HANSEL:** oh, give me a break! why didn't you do it? why is it that the man has to be the one dropping the stones? where does it say that?

**GRETEL:** that's what they wrote!

**HANSEL:** who did?! nobody wrote me in...

**GRETEL:** the Brothers

**HANSEL:** whose brothers? not mine!

**GRETEL:** you're so useless, you can't follow the simplest instructions

**HANSEL:** you know what? I'm going my way, and you can find yourself someone else to drop your stupid stones

**GRETEL:** you'll get lost, you dumbass!

**HANSEL:** I'm already lost! at least you won't be annoying me...

**GRETEL:** c'mon, wait up, Hansel! that's not the right way... Hansel!

*Hansel goes his way. Gretel, not knowing what to do, stops dead in her tracks.*

*Gretel runs into a stranger sitting on the wall and smoking a cigarette.*

**WOLF:** hello, kitten, need a ride?

*Gretel is silent, pretends not to hear him.*

**WOLF:** hi princess, which fairytale are you from?

*Gretel remains quiet.*

**WOLF:** hey, sweetie, cat got your tongue?

*Gretel hesitates.*

**GRETEL:** what you're doing is illegal in some countries

**WOLF:** hahaha, what is illegal? offering a ride to a pretty girl?

**GRETEL:** catcalling is punishable in Belgium, Canada, America...

**WOLF:** ah, those western concepts. anyway, that's not a thing here. god forbid it were ever illegal to have a little fun with pretty girls.

**GRETEL:** everyone always says they were just having fun.

**WOLF:** alright, then, what are you? some sort of interpreter?

**GRETEL:** as a matter of fact, I am. I interpret mother tongue into mother tongue

**WOLF** (*sarcastically*): I see that business is really booming.

**GRETEL:** and what do you do?

**WOLF:** busy climbing my short career ladder

**GRETEL:** how so?

**WOLF:** well, my dear, if you don't grow up here... but never mind that, now that we're friends, you want to tell me where you're going?

**GRETEL:** does anyone know where they're going?

**WOLF:** aren't we all going to the same place? only along the way some of us get stuck in hospitals. some of us stay longer than others. some of us arrive peacefully by ourselves, while some of us arrive under dramatic circumstances.

**GRETEL:** in a nutshell. good job.

**WOLF:** I like to cut a long story short.

**WOLF:** listen, if you know where you're going, I can give you a ride. my car is nearby

**GRETEL:** and if I don't...

**WOLF:** and if you don't, I can still give you a ride. my car is nearby

**GRETEL** (*smiling*): so kind of you, Mister...

**WOLF:** (*extending his hand*): ...Wolf

**GRETEL:** (*offering her hand*): nice to meet you

**WOLF:** the pleasure is mine

*Hansel is hooked to the medical equipment in the hospital. The parents are talking to the physician.*

**MOTHER:** but he was on his way to training thirteen years ago

**PHYSICIAN:** Mam, I don't know where he was, but they brought him here with a .13 blood alcohol content

**MOTHER:** and his sister wasn't with him?

**PHYSICIAN:** no

**MOTHER:** unbelievable! that irresponsible cow! and her only job was to take care of him...

**FATHER:** calm down, please, don't make a scene in front of these people

**PHYSICIAN:** we'll keep him here until he's stable

**MOTHER:** is his life no longer in danger?

**PHYSICIAN:** no. except that we also found stones in his kidneys.

**MOTHER:** dear god, that, too! how do you even get that?

**PHYSICIAN:** I don't know, Mam. that's how they wrote the story, I suppose.

**FATHER** (*offers him a flaglike checkered bag*): here, a small gesture of gratitude from us

**PHYSICIAN:** Sir, I don't accept bribes (*mutters*) under five thousand euro. don't embarrass yourself. goodbye.

**MOTHER:** didn't I tell you?

**FATHER:** I just wanted, you know. I didn't mean to bribe him. it was supposed to be a nice gesture...

**MOTHER:** if you want to exchange nice gestures, you first need to be in the game

**FATHER:** what game?

**MOTHER:** the opportunistic game

**FATHER:** I always told him, beware the company you keep. it's his friends' fault...

**MOTHER:** that's right. friends and those two idiot brothers that wrote us

**FATHER:** no one wrote me

**MOTHER:** that's what you think

**FATHER:** again, you're being cynical

**MOTHER:** I'm not cynical, I'm honest

**FATHER** (*whimpers*): dear god, what have we done wrong?

**MOTHER:** who says we've done anything wrong? we just happened to have bad, misbehaving children. that's how they wrote it. look, even the audience gets it. see how they're nodding?

**FATHER:** you're always right, aren't you

**MOTHER:** unlike you

**FATHER:** oh really?

**MOTHER:** really

(...)

*They leave the hospital quarreling "oh really—really."*



*Wolf and Gretel are in bed. He takes her from behind.*

**WOLF:** did you like it? want more?

*Gretel shakes her head.*

**WOLF:** smart girl

*They are both quiet for a moment.*

**GRETEL:** hey, how about you rescue me?

**WOLF:** rescue you from who?

**GRETEL:** myself.

**WOLF:** um, how would that work?

**GRETEL:** simple. like, you come and rescue me. be all I ever dream of

**WOLF:** okay, but how would I know what you dream of?

**GRETEL:** well, you'd ask me

**WOLF:** eh, I don't feel like doing that

*Gretel gets quiet. She absentmindedly stares into space.*

**WOLF:** you're not upset now, are you?

*Gretel shakes her head.*

**WOLF:** you look upset

**GRETEL** (*gets up and starts putting her clothes on*): nah, I'm fine, everything's fine

**WOLF:** okay

*Gretel gets dressed. Wolf triumphantly stretches across the bed, placing his hands behind his head.*

**WOLF:** I still think you're upset

**GRETEL:** everything is fine, don't worry

**WOLF:** alright, then why are you leaving?

**GRETEL:** because we're done with what we set out to do

**WOLF** (*taken aback*): so cold and feisty

**GRETEL:** leave me alone

**WOLF:** so you used me and now you're dumping me like an old rag just because I said I didn't want to listen to what you dream of?

**GRETEL:** is this the part when I explain myself and apologize even though it's you who acts like a cretin?

**WOLF:** yeah, that's it

**GRETEL:** ok. here. I'm sorry. I really didn't mean to hurt your feelings. I don't want you to think that I'm using you... that would be really bad. I don't want that

**WOLF:** well, if you don't want to hurt my feelings, then come back and blow me

**GRETEL:** is this when I innocently suck your dick thinking that later you'll take me out for a cup of coffee, or for a walk, and that you'll hold me tight and listen closely as you ask how I am and what I dream of?

**WOLF:** yep, that's it

**GRETEL:** eh, I don't feel like doing that

**WOLF:** c'mon, don't be silly. that's the good part, you'll see

**GRETEL:** your eyes are suddenly so large

**WOLF:** the better to see you with, beautiful

**GRETEL:** and your ears are suddenly bigger

**WOLF:** the better to hear what you dream of, darling

**GRETEL:** and your hands, it seems, are getting bigger and bigger

**WOLF** (*grabs and pulls her into the bed*): the better to get you with!

**GRETEL** (*resists*): let me go!

*Gretel fights back, things are approaching rape.*

**WOLF:** don't be angry. you're ugly when you're angry

*Gretel pushes him off.*

**WOLF** (*lets her go*): fine. go. go now! you're free like a bird

*Resigned, Gretel continues to lie in bed.*

**WOLF:** what now? when I do let you go, you don't leave

**GRETEL** (*turns her face to him*): even your mouth is bigger

**WOLF** (*charmingly*): the better to lick you with

*Wolf pulls her panties off and plunges between her thighs. She moans.*

**WOLF:** you see you can be a good girl when you try

*Hansel and Gretel are at a party in Witch's cottage, which is made of colorful pills and powders, various kinds of cigars and cigarettes, multicolored bottles filled with booze. Wolf greedily consumes everything he reaches, simultaneously entertaining a group of young ladies. Gretel stands to the side, bored.*

**WOLF** (carefully arranging powder lines from the bag he took off the wall): here you go, my ladies. you take what you cut...

*Scantly clad women giggle around him and jostle to get in line.*

**GIRL 1:** Wolfy, you're god's gift to women!

**GIRL 2:** we wouldn't stand in line for anyone else

*The rest of them giggle.*

**WOLF:** let's go, let's go, my ladies. there's got to be some order... form a queue!

*Giggling and whispering, the young women fall into place. As each one snorts a line, Wolf merrily slaps her ass. Gretel stands to the side and watches, until someone taps her shoulder.*

**HANSEL:** Gretel!

**GRETEL:** Jesus Christ! Hansel!

*Gretel hugs her brother.*

**GRETEL:** I haven't seen you in forever! what're you doing here?

**HANSEL:** I should be asking you that...

**GRETEL:** I'm just hanging here with a friend...

**HANSEL:** oh really?

**GRETEL:** really...

**HANSEL:** where's this friend of yours?

**GRETEL** (*looks around*): he should be around here somewhere...

*Nearby Wolf and his harem indulge in the debauchery.*

**HANSEL:** let's have a drink, we'll feel better

**GRETEL:** are you sure?

**HANSEL:** of course I'm sure, what kind of response is that?

**GRETEL:** suitable to the plot, you moron

*Gretel's face turns sour. Hansel pulls a bottle from the wall and mixes them drinks.*

**HANSEL:** after the surgery, I went through hell in the hospital. Mother and Father kept watch over me like the fucking secret police, and then all that getting clean bullshit. I could hardly get rid of them. now I'm my own man. my friend and I have a small business, fairly lucrative, maybe a smidge illegal, but Sis, I'm a business owner now! let's make a toast! cheers to our Balkan capitalism!

**GRETEL** (*hesitates to take her glass*): I don't really feel like drinking, but... do tell, what kind of business...

**HANSEL:** ah, never mind that. we're not going to talk shop now! tell me what's new with you, when are you getting married?

*Wolf approaches Gretel from behind, puts his arms around her and kisses the back of her head.*

**WOLF:** who's my favorite pet, huh?

**GRETEL:** Wolf, this is my brother, Hansel. Hansel, this is Wolf.

**HANSEL** (*doesn't extend his hand*): Wolf, you say. nice name. where from?

**WOLF** (*brazenly*): I'm a citizen of the world.

**HANSEL:** is that right? no, where are you *really* from?

**WOLF:** what's your problem? what, you want foreigners to hang off willow trees?

**HANSEL:** other trees are just as fine

*Wolf charges towards Hansel. They start to fight.*

**GRETEL:** stop it! you idiots!

*Wolf bites Hansel.*

**HANSEL:** you motherfucker!

*Hansel pulls a knife from his back pocket.*

**HANSEL:** I swear I will rip you open

*Wolf steps back.*

**WOLF:** you're crazy, man

*Wolf straightens his suit and hair.*

**WOLF:** and now you totally fucked up the plot

**HANSEL** (*nods at the young women Wolf was gallivanting with*): there's a village missing its idiot

**HANSEL** (*to Gretel*): where did you find this dirtball? he needs to go back to where he's from

**GRETEL:** what do you care? is he hurting your national pride, huh?

**HANSEL:** as if we don't have our own thieves and liars

**GRETEL:** you moron

*Gretel turns and leaves.*

**HANSEL** (*sings*<sup>1</sup>): ...the wolves are hiding and drinking your water...

<sup>1</sup> This is from a song by Thompson, a Croatian folk-rock singer known for its pro-fascist lyrics.

*Hansel sits outside the cabin and calmly cuts a line. He hears an unknown woman's voice from somewhere.*

**WITCH:** who's causing all this rouse? someone snorting my house?

*Hansel hovers his hand over the powder on the table to hide it. An older lady, very attractive, walks out in front of him. Upon seeing her, Hansel realizes this is the party host, and he removes his hand.*

**HANSEL:** I thought we could take as much as we wanted...

**WITCH:** that's right... pray tell, my child, how'd you make it to my party?

**HANSEL:** a little birdie told me

**WITCH:** hahaha, is that so

**HANSEL:** that's right. and this is definitely the best party in town

**WITCH:** why thank you, I try

**HANSEL:** you've got a good reputation

**WITCH:** we all know there's nothing better than that

**HANSEL** (*offers his hand*): I'm Hansel, nice to meet you

**WITCH:** Witch, pleasure to meet you, too

**HANSEL:** I always had a fetish for witches

**WITCH:** do tell!

**HANSEL:** yes, yes, they're so *hawt*

**WITCH:** what a coincidence. I have always liked sweet boys, just like you

**HANSEL:** there we go, we have all it takes for love at first sight

*Witch gives him a sweet, flirty smile.*

**WITCH:** I heard you were causing trouble a moment ago

**HANSEL:** you heard wrong

**WITCH:** you must have been poorly raised

**HANSEL:** maybe I need a little discipline

**WITCH:** is that right?

**HANSEL** (*scrolling on his cell*): maybe you could get me sorted out

**WITCH:** well, that's my specialty

**HANSEL:** what is?

**WITCH:** disciplining bad boys like you

**HANSEL:** ohh my, now I'm intrigued...

**WITCH:** but if you want me to crack the whip, I'll need to get to know you better

**HANSEL:** I'd love for you to get to know me better

*Hansel snorts one of the two lines. He offers Witch the other one.*

**WITCH:** so it seems

*Witch snorts the offered line.*

**HANSEL:** I think you're not nearly as dangerous as you make yourself out to be

**WITCH:** and I think you're not nearly as naughty as you make yourself out to be

*They both smile.*

**HANSEL:** we need to get to know each other better, compare your fantasy to mine...

**WITCH:** I agree

**HANSEL:** do you have a room nearby for getting acquainted?

**WITCH:** indeed, I have several rooms for getting acquainted...

**HANSEL:** what're we waiting for? take me there

**WITCH:** not yet sure yet if you're that good of an investment

**HANSEL:** hahaha, what's wrong with me?

**WITCH:** you're skinny

**HANSEL:** and you like buff guys?

**WITCH:** everyone likes some beefcake...

**HANSEL:** you know, I used to train nanbudo when I was little...

**WITCH:** it doesn't show

**HANSEL:** it's a sophisticated technique of defense and attack

**WITCH:** oh, you were so sophisticated just a moment ago

**HANSEL:** listen, it's not my fault, that's how they wrote me

**WITCH:** so easy to get a rise out of you...

**HANSEL:** what else would you like to get out of me...

*Hansel smiles mischievously, Witch stands up and beckons him to follow her. Hansel gets up after her.*

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## what happened next

*Gretel and Witch are sitting in a café having coffee.*

**WITCH** (to Gretel): and? what happened next?

**GRETEL**: what can I tell you? I wasn't stupid enough to stay with him, but sadly I wasn't smart enough to get rid of him either...

**WITCH**: well, okay, where are you two at now?

**GRETEL**: I don't know

**WITCH**: how do you not know?

**GRETEL**: I just don't know

**WITCH**: sweetheart, when you don't know where you stand with someone, that can only mean one thing

**GRETEL**: and what exactly is that?

**WITCH**: that they have placed you on the back burner in case they need you later

**GRETEL**: mhm

**WITCH**: and it's on you, my dear, whether you want to take on the role of a side dish

**GRETEL**: I'm not sure, it's complicated. I got a job, you know. that's something.

**WITCH**: for real? that's awesome

**GRETEL**: it is. and then I got another, then another, then one more, and now I finally make enough to be able to move out of Wolf's

**WITCH**: why don't you move in with us? and save on the rent?

**GRETEL**: hm, I'm not so sure...

**WITCH**: why not? the house is huge. Hansel is, as you already know, always busy

**GRETEL**: oh I don't know...

**WITCH**: come on, you and I are practically family now

**GRETEL**: thank you. I mean it. I'll think about it...

**WITCH**: what's there to think about? it'll be great

**GRETEL**: oh I'm not sure. I'd prefer to rent a place

**WITCH**: don't be silly. I'm offering for you to move in for free, and you insist on paying rent? rent is for losers, my dear.

**GRETEL**: from what I can tell nothing is free

**WITCH**: of course it is. but to enjoy free goodies you first have to start playing the game.

**GRETEL**: what game?

**WITCH** (takes a sip of coffee): the game of opportunism

*It's morning, breakfast time. Witch, Hansel and Gretel sit at the table filled with food. Hansel doesn't take his eyes off the phone and is completely uninterested in eating. He drinks coffee, smokes, makes his semi-legal business arrangements. Witch pours black milk from a carton into their glasses.*

**WITCH** (to Gretel): this brother of yours, he doesn't eat at all

**GRETEL**: eh...

**WITCH**: we cook so much, and he—he's always going somewhere, rushing someplace

**GRETEL**: unlike me, I'm constantly masticating

**WITCH**: hm, yes, but you're not getting fat either... very odd

**GRETEL** (chewing): mhm

**WITCH**: you'll be better off if you gain some weight now. you'll have fewer wrinkles later

**GRETEL**: yeah, right

**WITCH**: for real! and men like women with a bit of meat on their bones...

**GRETEL**: alright, alright. I'm stressed out enough as it is, without your wisecracking

**WITCH**: you're stressed out? my goodness, from what? you've never had it easier. you've got a place to stay, and food, plus you don't have to work the first or second or third nor the fourth job...

**GRETEL** (chews): mhm

**WITCH**: and for all this generous hospitality, I ask for nothing in return

**GRETEL** (swallows): except...

**WITCH**: except what?

**GRETEL**: except to do everything you want me to do and think the way you want me to think and be everything you want me to be

**WITCH**: I think that's fair

**GRETEL** (chews): mhm

**WITCH**: sweetheart, some people work all day to cover the rent and food, and you've got everything laid out for you

**GRETEL**: if I remember correctly, I set the table, and I cooked all the food

**WITCH**: are we really going to count who did what? you're really being petty this morning...

**GRETEL** (swallows): mhm

*Hansel hangs up the cell, approaches the table, grabs a bun and shoves it in his mouth.*

**HANSEL**: I gotta go

**WITCH**: but baby, didn't we say we'd spend some quality time together today?

**HANSEL**: I got a shipment I've got to take care of

*Witch gets up and seductively curves her body around his. She takes a piece of cheese from his hand and sensually dips it into one of the jars of jam on the table. She then slowly brings it to his lips. He bites down.*

**WITCH**: but baby, darling, the shipment can wait, and your pleasure can't...

**HANSEL** (chews): mmm

**WITCH**: after all, you work so hard and you're always under stress. isn't it time to reward yourself...



*Witch wipes a bit of jam off his lips and offers him her finger to lick it off, which he does.*

**WITCH:** because you deserve it...

*Witch pours a drink into a crystal glass and brings it to his lips.*

**HANSEL:** you're right, baby...

*Hansel drinks. Gretel watches them with disgust. Witch puts her arms around his waist and gently leads him to the cage with the large bed in the middle. Gretel continues to eat.*

**WITCH:** I know what you need...

**HANSEL:** are you sure?

*Hansel enters the cage and sits on the edge of the bed. In front of the cage, Witch pulls her panties off from under her tight skirt and throws them at Hansel. He grabs and licks them. She steps into the cage, shuts the door, and mounts him. The cage darkens. On the other side of the stage Gretel sticks a finger down her throat and throws up.*

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## at the edge of the woods

*Mother watches TV, Father returns from work.*

**FATHER:** hello

**MOTHER:** hi

*Father quietly changes his clothes and enters the kitchen. He pulls food out of the fridge, silently eats.*

**MOTHER:** how was work?

**FATHER:** terrible. yours?

**MOTHER:** a shade worse

*Mother gets quiet. Father chews.*

**MOTHER:** It's been a while since we heard from Hansel

**FATHER:** he called yesterday

**MOTHER:** and?

**FATHER:** and nothing

**MOTHER:** what do you mean, nothing? what did he say?

**FATHER:** nothing. he started a business with a friend of his

**MOTHER:** what kind of business?

**FATHER:** I don't know

**MOTHER:** how do you not know? did you talk to him or not?

**FATHER:** I did

**MOTHER:** how do you not know then?

**FATHER:** I just don't

**MOTHER:** of course you don't... instead of taking care of yourself and your family... instead of knowing what your children are up to, who they spend time with and what they do...

**FATHER:** our children are grown up

**MOTHER:** one's children are always one's children

**FATHER:** then we're all children

**MOTHER:** what do you know about children? I am a mother! I've got the main role

**FATHER:** you'd think I have a role, too

**MOTHER:** very minor

**FATHER** (*pushes food away from himself*): my stomach hurts

**MOTHER:** so what. my back has been hurting the entire day.

**FATHER:** alright, so we're both in pain.

**MOTHER:** yes. except that sometimes your pain stops, and mine's constant.

**FATHER:** is this some kind of pain competition?

**MOTHER:** it is! and I'm winning!

**FATHER:** oh really?

**MOTHER:** really

(...)

*"Oh really—really" quarrel fades out.*

*Satisfied and content Hansel lays inside the cage, scrolls on his phone. Gretel approaches the cage.*

**GRETEL:** what are you doing?

**HANSEL:** growing up

**GRETEL:** you should've done that already

**HANSEL:** you're trying to pick a fight again

**GRETEL:** don't you fucking see what's going on?

**HANSEL:** sure I do, let me update you. Witch is throwing a saturnalia themed party in two days, just for a select crowd

**GRETEL:** please put your phone away for one moment and listen to me

**HANSEL:** Christ, you're such a drag, it's unreal

**GRETEL:** I don't know what exactly she's planning on doing, but I'm sure she's up to no good

**HANSEL:** you have trust issues, Gretel. you see problems in everything... if I thought like you, I'd get nothing built or accomplished

**GRETEL:** and what have you built or accomplished, for god's sake?

*Gretel approaches the lock. She tries to open it, but it won't give. Hansel continues to absentmindedly scroll on his phone.*

**HANSEL:** that's one of our games. you wouldn't get it

**GRETEL:** for fuck's sake, Hansel, wake up... something stinks here

**HANSEL:** wow, she just updated the menu... woo-hoo, it'll be awesome...

**GRETEL:** what are you talking about?

**HANSEL:** boob soup, liver pâté, lung noodles, barbequed thighs, kidneys in wine and tomato sauce, Ragu sauce with heart, seared Adam's apple... oh my... cheek mousse...

**GRETEL** (*horrified*): something is...

**HANSEL:** and at midnight, fairy dust

**GRETEL:** you're really beyond help

*Witch enters.*

**WITCH:** Greeeeteeeee! my deeeeeeeaaar! where are youuuuu?

**GRETEL:** I am heeeere

**WITCH:** I need you

**GRETEL:** what is it

**WITCH:** I'm preparing a dinner party, my dear. will you please run out to get me a few things, I can't cook without spices...

**GRETEL:** why me?

**WITCH:** sorry, sweetheart, that's how they wrote it

**GRETEL:** no one wrote me

**WITCH:** that's what you think

**GRETEL:** but I don't feel good. I think I'm getting sick

**WITCH:** listen, there's an old lady who lives not too far from here. she's got the best spices in town. she's easy to find. I'll give you the address. just take the shortcut across the park and you'll be there in two

shakes of a lamb's tail

**GRETEL** (*reluctantly*): mhm

*Witch hands her the list of spices and a credit card. Gretel quietly takes both.*

**WITCH**: hurry back. I'll need you to help me with the meat

**GRETEL**: what meat?

**WITCH**: the best meat, my dear, the best... come on, now, hurry up, chop chop

*Gretel reluctantly departs.*

*Gretel walks through the park in a mini skirt. Disguised Wolf sits on the bench. He's surrounded with flower planters.*

**WOLF:** do you happen to know what time it is

**GRETEL:** it's seven o'clock

**WOLF:** oh, it's time!

*Gretel smiles confused.*

**WOLF:** you're probably wondering what it's time for

**GRETEL:** not really

**WOLF:** you'll find out anyway

**GRETEL** (*absentmindedly*): I'm in a rush, bye

**WOLF:** beware of the hunter

*Gretel stalls and looks at him in bewilderment.*

**WOLF:** don't say later that I didn't warn you

*Gretel looks at him confused.*

**WOLF:** you know hunters are murderers and rapists, don't you?

*Gretel is quiet.*

**WOLF:** there's evidence for it, look it up

*Gretel resumes walking.*

**WOLF:** I mean, those hunters are all misogynists

*Gretel waves to him. Wolf quickly jumps towards her, invites her to sit back at the bench with him.*

**WOLF:** wait, wait! hey! listen, can I say something? but don't get upset. you seem terribly tense. sorry if I'm overstating things, but... I can't, you see, I really have to speak the truth when I feel this...

*Wolf moves to the side, makes room for her to sit.*

**WOLF:** wait, sit down for a minute, rest up. here, have a smoke (*he offers her a cigarette*)

**GRETEL** (*still standing up*): thank you, but I'm in a big...

**WOLF:** hurry? ah... how come nature doesn't hurry, yet everything is still accomplished...

**GRETEL:** and I quit smoking

**WOLF:** well alright if you don't smoke, no one is forcing you. go if you want to... but it's sad when a person doesn't have time to stop and smell the roses... to truly hear another human being...

**GRETEL** (*stands up*): I agree, you're right, but you see...

**WOLF**: do tell me, when was the last time you smelt the roses?

**GRETEL** (*turns around*): to be honest... I can't remember

**WOLF**: sad, that's really sad...

**GRETEL**: I've got more important things on my mind right now...

**WOLF**: so terribly sad (*mournfully*)... how much we people are asleep... we don't see ourselves or those around us...

**GRETEL** (*starts walking*): mhm, yes

**WOLF**: can I ask you for a favor? don't get upset, please. for me, will you make my day?

**GRETEL**: which day?

**WOLF**: the day that you stop and smell the roses...

**GRETEL**: are you fucking with me? what kind of dialogue is this (*turns to the audience*) who wrote this?

**WOLF** (*seriously*): ok, you truly are a lost cause

**GRETEL**: oh alright, here. I'll smell your damn roses! how long do I need to keep sniffing them, do tell!

*Gretel bends down.*

**WOLF** (*approaches her from behind*): not very long... it's the thought that counts

*Wolf pounces on her. Lights go off. Screaming, scratching, fighting. A single gunshot is heard.*

*The old lady sits in her house full of herbs, tinctures, cremes, potions and spices. Gretel, messy-haired and dirty comes to the door. She knocks. The old lady opens. Gretel moves slowly, every word and movement of hers is sluggish.*

**OLD LADY:** dear lord, child, what happened to you?

**GRETEL** (*resigned*): I don't know

**OLD LADY:** how do you not know?

**GRETEL:** I don't

*Old lady takes her in and walks her to the sofa. She puts on tea.*

**OLD LADY:** who attacked you?

**GRETEL:** he seemed so familiar...

**OLD LADY:** who attacked you?

**GRETEL:** that hand...

**OLD LADY:** you're safe now

**GRETEL:** I'm not so sure

**OLD LADY:** you got away

**GRETEL:** the hunter saved me. had he not passed by...

**OLD LADY:** so long as you're safe

**GRETEL:** I don't feel saved

**OLD LADY:** okay, so how do you feel? (*turns to the audience*) this is the most important retort in this piece.

**GRETEL:** I don't know. scared, humiliated, helpless. I'm ashamed.

**OLD LADY** (*puts her arms around her*): dear child

**GRETEL:** I'm stupid and naïve... I should've...

**OLD LADY** (*hugs her*): it's going to be okay

**GRETEL:** I shouldn't have...

**OLD LADY** (*pours tea and offers it to her*): drink, it will calm you down

**GRETEL** (*props herself up*): I have to go back

**OLD LADY** (*gently pushes her back onto the bed*): you don't have to do anything. close your eyes, lie down, rest now.

*Gretel takes a sip of the tea. She lays down. She pulls the list of spices from the pocket of her jacket. She offers it to the old lady, who gets up and goes over to the spice shelf. She reads the list and pulls out the spices.*

**GRETEL** (*from the couch, in a listless voice*): do you take American Express?

**OLD LADY:** of course

**GRETEL:** wonderful

**OLD LADY:** I don't have cardamom

**GRETEL:** I suppose we'll make do without it

*Old lady packs the spices into a bag. Gretel falls asleep.*

---

## stretch your finger

*Gretel returns to Witch's house. Witch sits at the table filled with cookware—pots, pans, blender, ladles, cutting boards, knives. She scrolls on the phone.*

**WITCH:** what took so long?!

**GRETEL** (*tired*): something came up, I couldn't have made it back any sooner... I'm sorry...

**WITCH:** do you know how many prominent and special people I invited here tomorrow? do you know how important this dinner is for me? fucking hell! do you realize that now I'll have to work through the night, only because you are irresponsible and ungrateful!

**GRETEL** (*meekly*): there was no carda...

**WITCH** (*imitates Gretel's voice*): there was no carda..

**GRETEL:** mom. there was no cardaMOM

**WITCH:** I'd love to know what came up that was so important... I asked you nicely to be fast, and this is how you express gratitude... for all I've done for you... you deserve such a hard slap across the face, but (*she turns to the audience*) since people are watching us, I'll hold back

**GRETEL:** where is Hansel?

**WITCH:** he's resting

**GRETEL:** what from?

**WITCH:** from you. but don't fear, soon it'll be your turn to catch some Zs, and you'll sleep like you've never slept before! (*pause*) and since you've caused me so much stress, I think that now you should be extra accommodating to me

**GRETEL** (*curiously*): how so?

**WITCH** (*takes a piece of paper from the table and counts things off the list*): so, I need... a piece of lung...

*Gretel draws back.*

**WITCH:** ... one thigh

*Gretel steps further back.*

**WITCH:** gluteus maximus

*Another step.*

**WITCH:** seven to eight fingers, a piece of liver, one kidney, larynx... the whole thing, both eyes... and if it's no trouble, the heart

*Gretel freezes.*

**WITCH:** what now? what's with that face? didn't you say that nothing was free?

**GRETEL:** excuse me?

**WITCH:** sweetheart, my special guests are expecting a special menu

**GRETEL:** human flesh?

**WITCH:** it's hard to be innovative nowadays.

**GRETEL** (*resolutely*): I don't want to be your innovation.



**WITCH:** hold on, hold on, think about it—didn't you always long to be special? don't you see that this is your once in a lifetime opportunity? consider it...

**GRETEL:** um, I did. I would like to keep my organs and my limbs. and remain ordinary.

**WITCH:** I knew it. you ungrateful little bitch. I did so much for you. I give you a finger and you take the whole hand... and now that I'm offering you something others can only dream about... you say no. unreal.

*Witch drops into the chair resigned and starts sobbing.*

**WITCH:** what now, poor me... everyone always leaves me high and dry...

**GRETEL:** but...

**WITCH:** you think I'm some kind of villain, some evil monster? if anyone is a victim, it's me! for years I have been persecuted, falsely accused, suffered the worst tortures and torments... if only you knew what I have been through... no living person has experienced anything like that, no one!

**GRETEL:** I'm sorry, but...

**WITCH:** I want to leave all that behind me. start from scratch. be like others—but more special, of course. and now that I'm asking you for a small favor, you not only betray my trust and disappear for hours, but you look at me with such contempt... as if you're outraged... *(breaks into tears)* that pain... unbearable... *(grabs at her chest)*

**GRETEL:** I think you might be asking too much...

**WITCH:** dear god, will this torture ever end!... is this how you thank me for all that I gave you two... I treated you like family... what you're doing to me is so cruel... I can't do this anymore, I can't. get out of here, please... this is too painful...

*Gretel stands confused at first, then approaches Witch, puts her arms around her, tries to make her feel better.*

**GRETEL:** calm down, now, you've gone a bit far...

*Witch sobs.*

**GRETEL:** I'm sure we can find a solution...

**WITCH** *(between sobs)*: of course we can, but you are too selfish and too self-centered to find it.

**GRETEL:** there's always room for compromise...

**WITCH:** compromise? I hate that word! I feel sick to my teeth when I hear it... what kind of compromise do you want, huh? that I use my own liver, kidneys and lungs, and you, say, you give the larynx, fingers and a thigh?

*Gretel is silent.*

**WITCH:** but then who's going to cook us?! who's going to host the dinner? who will get all the recognition and glory? there is no compromise, Gretel... you either love me or you don't... things are very simple...

**GRETEL:** well, they are really not... I love you and I don't love you

**WITCH:** you're crazy. I always sensed it, but now I am positive. you need professional help.

**GRETEL:** and you want to cook human flesh, but you don't need help?

**WITCH** *(screams)*: I am an innovator! and you? an anonymous nobody!

**GRETEL:** some people know of Gretel

**WITCH:** remember, Hansel is always before Gretel! you're nothing without him!

**GRETEL:** Hansel is naïve, and he's not very bright

**WITCH:** still, he's got means of production! and you—you've got no means, no connections, nothing. you can't even fetch some fucking spices when I send you—even that's too complicated for you.

**GRETEL:** I was attacked, if you really want to know

**WITCH** (*sarcastically*): oh really?

**GRETEL** (*seriously*) really

**WITCH:** too bad the attack wasn't more successful... maybe I'd be peacefully cooking now, instead of having this crazy argument... (*gets up*) I need something to calm me down... I can't take much more

*Witch walks over to the medicine cabinet, pulls out the green bottle of diazepam, swallows two pills, and goes to lay down. Gretel remains frozen and stares at the table with cookware and knives.*

*Gretel quietly makes a call, speaks in a hushed voice.*

**GRETEL:** hello?

**VOICE:** hello

**GRETEL:** is this the association of hunters the protectors and saviors of abused women?

**VOICE:** yes, it is. how may I help you?

**GRETEL:** I have reason to believe that someone wants to eat me

**VOICE** (*ironically and suspiciously*): aaall-right

**GRETEL:** can you maybe send help?

**VOICE:** send someone. hm, listen, Mrs...

**GRETEL:** I'm no Mrs.

**VOICE:** okay, whatever you are, unfortunately you called during the closed season

**GRETEL:** what does that mean?

**VOICE:** that means that temporarily we don't have any available hunters, because this is the part of the year when the hunting of wild men, wild animals and wild women is legally prohibited

**GRETEL:** so that means no one can come to help me

**VOICE:** I didn't say that, Mrs.

**GRETEL:** I am no Mrs.

**VOICE:** listen, hunters need to rest, that's the law. what I can do to help you, and to justify the funding we receive, is to connect you with our counselor on call

**GRETEL:** a counselor?

**VOICE:** yes, she can help you overcome the feelings of anger and resentment toward the potential abuser and strengthen your confidence

**GRETEL:** do you hear me? I am telling you that someone is trying to cut me up and serve me for dinner, and you're talking to me about self-confidence?

**VOICE:** but Mrs... Ms., studies have shown that confidence plays the key role in the fight against predators...

**GRETEL** (*ironically*): no shit...

**VOICE:** no need for cynicism. I want to help you, and I understand that you're struggling...

**GRETEL:** so how long is this closed season?

**VOICE:** usually until the moment you resolve the problem on your own. then typically the closed season comes to an end, and the hunters again become available to you

**GRETEL:** brilliant

**VOICE:** but we are also here for you the whole time, and our team of counselors will gladly educate you on how to transform your negative emotions into . . .

**GRETEL:** baked human flesh!!

*Brief silence on the other end.*

**VOICE:** ... if, on the other hand, you fear for your life, perhaps it is best you run away as soon as possible...

**GRETEL:** but my brother...

**VOICE:** what about him?

**GRETEL:** oh never mind...

*Gretel ends the call in resignation.*

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## pretty boys burn pretty

*Witch sings softly and builds the fire. Gretel stands at the door and watches her. Witch doesn't notice her.*

**WITCH** (*sings*): love is a burning thing, and it makes a fiery ring...bound by wild desire, the boy fell into a ring of fire... (he fell into a burning ring of fire, he went down, down, down and the flames went higher\*)... and the rainforest burns, the ring of fire, the ring of fire

*\*the text in parenthesis is mumbled unclearly, but melodiously*

*Witch turns to Gretel, as if she sensed her presence.*

**WITCH**: who were you talking to a moment ago?

**GRETEL**: excuse me?

**WITCH**: I heard you speaking on the phone, don't act like you don't understand me

**GRETEL**: no one

**WITCH**: mhm

**GRETEL**: what will happen with Hansel?

**WITCH**: here we go again. he will contribute, too, don't you worry

**GRETEL**: you will serve him, too?

**WITCH**: of course not. he hardly eats anything. he just drinks and wears himself away. his meat is useless

**GRETEL**: so instead?

**WITCH**: we will snort him! hahaha! what do you think of that? isn't that a revolutionary idea? he will become one with everyone! one for all, and all for one!

*Gretel is horrified, but she doesn't show it.*

**GRETEL**: so you plan on burning him?

**WITCH**: first burn, and then...

**GRETEL**: and you think he will agree on such a big sacrifice?

**WITCH**: of course not. (*ironically*) he's not as noble as you are, haha

**GRETEL**: so how do you plan on doing this?

**WITCH**: don't you worry about other people's problems

*Gretel approaches the oven and starts studying it.*

**GRETEL**: where did you get this?

**WITCH**: Germany, of course, the best quality

*Gretel tries to stand behind Witch and push her inside the oven, but Witch deftly keeps slipping away.*

**GRETEL**: mhm. and what's this?

**WITCH**: sensors

**GRETEL**: and this?

**WITCH**: temperature control

**GRETEL**: I see

**WITCH:** look, here you adjust the speed, and here you control the proportions

**GRETEL:** mhm

**WITCH:** I mean, you can burn all kinds of things in here. as you can see, the door is generously sized

*Gretel comes very close to the back of the oven and reads the small letters.*

**GRETEL:** I didn't know they made anything like this in *(pause)* Malaysia?

**WITCH:** there's a lot you don't know Gretel. those cheap fuckers probably just connected the parts

**GRETEL:** hm, usually it's not just the labor force, it's also the raw material that...

*Witch steps away from the oven and turns to Gretel.*

**WITCH:** oh shut up already, you bore me! what are you, some kind of high-tech expert now?

**GRETEL:** no, but...

**WITCH:** you know, I have to say, now that I've calmed down, I see your points... and I wanted to say that I do understand you... even though... now I'm a little worried that you're planning to push me into the fire...

*Gretel looks at her startled.*

**WITCH:** but, you know, that's not so bad either. at least now I can see who I'm dealing with... there's no compromise with the likes of you. you will always screw someone over, use them, betray them when they need you most...

**GRETEL:** but...

**WITCH:** no butts! *(approaches Gretel and pinches her cheeks)* don't you run away, my main course. hahaha, you know that's not possible anyway...

*Witch goes to the bathroom.*

**WITCH:** ... because that's how they wrote it...

*Gretel runs to Hansel's cage.*

*Hansel sleeps on the big bed in his cage.*

**GRETEL:** Hansel! Hansel! wake up!

**HANSEL** (*turns to the other side*): leave me alone

*Gretel runs to the other side.*

**GRETE:** listen, you dumbass, she wants to burn you

**HANSEL:** what are you talking about

**GRETEL:** I'm serious

*Hansel covers his head with a pillow.*

**GRETEL:** Hansel! listen to me—you have to believe me

**HANSEL:** dear god, what a crazy woman

**GRETEL:** yes, yes! she's totally nuts! she ordered this sick oven, and she plans on cremating you and then snorting your ashes with her saturnalia guests

**HANSEL:** you! you are the crazy one!

**GRETEL:** Hansel, for god's sake, why would I lie to you?

**HANSEL** (*irritated lifts the pillow and props himself up*): because you're jealous, because I finally have a dope chick, and you know I like older broads, while you, as usual, don't have anybody. you're frustrated and pissed off and from the moment you moved in, you haven't stopped scheming and plotting... you don't know what to do with yourself... there, end of story. (*throws himself back onto the bed*) now leave me alone.

**GRETEL:** that's nonsense, Hansel. your story doesn't hold water. what's wrong with you?

**HANSEL** (*rolls around pillows*): let me sleep, for fuck's sake. I gotta be in top form. the party's gonna go on for at least two days...

*Desperate, Gretel starts crying.*

**HANSEL:** if you're going to be crying, then get away from my cage

**GRETEL:** come to your senses, you moron

**HANSEL:** you're such a drama queen

**GRETEL:** do you hear what I'm saying? we are both going to die!

**HANSEL:** you're always so negative, Gretel...

*Hansel curls up and goes back to sleep.*

*Witch is in the large bathroom. In front of her are various tools for cutting, a big knife and a saw. Gretel enters the bathroom, pulled by an invisible force.*

**WITCH:** be my girl and lie down here like you're getting a massage. we'll put you to sleep nicely and pull the curtains... (*Witch pulls the curtain around the table*) we don't want anyone to know what's really going on

*Inexplicable force pulls Gretel onto the table.*

**GRETEL:** I had a strange dream last night...

**WITCH:** really?

**GRETEL:** I dreamt this whole scene

*Then she suddenly pushes Witch away, grabs the knife and jumps to the other side of the table.*

**WITCH:** oh, what a drag. you're, like, trying to resist. but you're forgetting that I have magical powers...

**GRETEL:** let us go!

**WITCH:** ...and that I can change any story...

**GRETEL:** open the cage, admit your plans, and let us go!

**WITCH:** oh my, can you hear yourself? what kind of fairytale ending would that be? terrible

**GRETEL:** do as I say. we're going to Hansel.

*Witch sits on the edge of the table, relaxed.*

**WITCH:** you are delusional, my dear. you see things that aren't there. you've convinced yourself in narratives that have nothing to do with reality

**GRETEL** (*approaches Witch with the knife in her hand*): quit making a fool of me, let's go

**WITCH:** we aren't going anywhere, my dear. you need help

**GRETEL:** that's for sure

**WITCH:** look at what you're doing to yourself

*Gretel suddenly starts flailing the knife around and hurting herself.*

**GRETEL:** no! no! stop! please, stop it, it hurts! ah, no!

*Witch laughs. Gretel manages to toss the knife aside, but she's already bleeding in multiple places.*

**WITCH:** I could call the loony bin now, tell them you lost your mind, that we barely managed to stop you from killing yourself...

*Gretel keeps slapping her face, hitting herself and pulling her hair.*

**GRETEL:** stop! stop it, please!

**WITCH:** oh, that soft heart of mine...

**GRETEL:** Hansel! Hansel!

**WITCH:** ah, your silly little attempts...

*Gretel runs to the cage where Hansel is locked up.*

**GRETEL:** Hansel! Hansel!

**HANSEL** (*props himself up in the bed*): Jesus Christ! what happened to you?

**GRETEL** (*desperately*): Hansel, you've got to believe me. she wants to cook me and serve me at the saturnalia party tomorrow! and she wants to burn you! (*cries*) Hansel, you must believe me... you must (*collapses on the ground next to his cage*)

*Witch arrives. She walks straight to Hansel's cage and unlocks it.*

**WITCH** (*to Hansel*): your sister is not feeling well

**HANSEL:** alright, will somebody explain to me what the fuck is going on here?

**WITCH:** your sister is not feeling well... I found her in the bathroom. she wanted to slit her wrists... she kept talking about some rape...

**GRETEL** (*leaps from the ground, screams uncontrollably*): she's lying, Hansel! she's lying through her teeth!

**WITCH** (*to Hansel*): I tried to pull the knife from her hand... but then she started threatening to stab herself and wave it around... see what she looks like... (*to Gretel*) Gretel, sweetheart, we are here to help you, we are your family... calm down... we'll get help...

*Witch proceeds to call the psych hospital. Gretel runs into her and knocks the phone out of her hand.*

**GRETEL:** you liar! Hansel, come. she's crooked as a barrel of fishhooks. I'll show you. she tried to cut me up, she even got a saw ready...

*Gretel goes to the bathroom. Witch keeps shrugging her shoulders and shaking her head, glancing at Hansel in a meaningful manner. They follow Gretel into the bathroom. When she enters the bathroom, Gretel sees that the saw is no longer there.*

**GRETEL:** it was here! right here! but now it's gone, everything is gone... of course she removed everything... that bitch!

**HANSEL:** hey hey, don't forget she's my...

**GRETEL:** you idiot! I should've run away and let you die!

**WITCH:** don't talk to him like that... Gretel, you need help...and we are here to get you the help you need. . .

**HANSEL:** you're really not well, Gretel... (*to Witch*) ... damn, give her something to calm her down . . .

**WITCH** (*worried, to Hansel*): I'm afraid that she'll try something again... besides, look. she's bleeding. we have to call the ambulance... we'll tell them what happened... let them decide... I mean, who knows, she could hurt herself again... herself or someone else, god forbid... I mean, I don't know what she's capable of... I'm really afraid that...

*Gretel runs towards Witch and pushes her with all her strength.*

**GRETEL:** aaaaaaaaaa! you lying cow!!! I hate you!

*Witch loses her balance and falls into the tub. Water starts spraying.*

**WITCH:** no! nooo! not water! those goddamn brothers! goddamn patriarchy! (*she starts to thrash as if each drop of water is hurting her*) where is my immortality?! where is my fame?!!



*Witch lets out a painful scream and exhales her final breath. Gretel bursts into tears and collapses onto the ground. Hansel is frozen in disbelief.*

---

## treasure

*Hansel, Gretel and Mother sit at the table.*

**MOTHER:** this is what I get... my children are murder suspects... what a shame... I'm sure all the neighbors are talking about me

**HANSEL:** we didn't kill her, how many times do we need to tell you

**MOTHER:** what does that matter when everyone thinks you did... and they found a saw... Jesus Christ

**GRETEL:** Mother, we didn't kill that woman

**MOTHER:** what were you doing in her house in the first place?

**HANSEL:** we fucking lived with her, are you even listening to what we're saying to you . . .

**MOTHER:** but why? I don't understand

**HANSEL:** do I need to write it down for you?

**GRETEL:** Hansel was in a relationship with her

**MOTHER:** with that old hag? she was a hundred years old

**HANSEL** (*rolls his eyes, lights a cigarette*): maybe this wasn't the best idea

**GRETEL:** Mother, we tried to suggest, now that Father is gone, to help you... financially... we inherited her house... and we are going to sell it

**MOTHER:** I want nothing from you... you never even call

**HANSEL:** good lord, so much drama

**MOTHER:** and then you embarrass me like this...

**GRETEL:** we just want to help...

**MOTHER:** I don't need your help... where were you when your father was dying?

**HANSEL:** oh listen to you, dying. how long does one go on DYING from a heart attack?

**MOTHER:** his whole life! I always used to say to him, what rotten luck to have such atrocious and disobedient children.

**GRETEL** (*gets up*): I think we all said what we wanted. we can end this story now.

*Hansel remains in his chair. He lights a cigarette.*

**MOTHER** (*to Gretel*): and you, you were always so selfish... I remember when I sent you to take Hansel to training... and you simply walked off and went on your own way... you were always like that...

*Gretel looks at her silently.*

**GRETEL:** you are right.

*Gretel gets up to leave. She closes the door behind her. Mother stares at the table. Hansel rocks in the chair and smokes.*

**MOTHER:** smoking isn't healthy, you know. you'll get lung cancer.

**HANSEL:** oh really

**MOTHER:** really

*Hansel playfully blows out rings of smoke.*

**HANSEL:** oh really

**MOTHER:** really

*"Oh really—really" quarreling goes on a little longer. Lights go out.*

*... and they lived happily ever after.*