

ACT I SCENE 6

*Gretel is outside cleaning the
Stepmother's blouse.*

GRETEL

(Pounding the blouse)

Stupid blouse. I'll just imagine it's her head. Ha!

Hansel enters, wrapped up for the day.

HANSEL

Gretel! What are you doing?

GRETEL

(Stopping)

Cleaning.

HANSEL

Papa's taking me into the forest today to teach me woodcutting.

GRETEL

Ha-ha! You can't even chop firewood, how are you going to cut down a whole tree!

HANSEL

I don't know.

GRETEL

Why don't you tell him you don't want to do it?

HANSEL

I can't.

The Woodcutter enters.

WOODCUTTER

There you are! This is a big day for you.

GRETEL

Can I come? I've nearly finished with the blouse, I promise!

WOODCUTTER

No Gretel, you must stay here. There's more cleaning for you to do indoors, it will be good for you to learn.

GRETEL

Yes Papa.

The Woodcutter and Hansel leave. Gretel continues washing.

GRETEL

(Furiously scrubbing)

You're a good girl Gretel, just wash and clean Gretel. I hate it, I hate it, I won't do it! I'm not a washerwoman, I'm an adventurer!

Gretel throws down the blouse and picks up her stick.

GRETEL

Bold and dashing! I could be a knight - Sir Gretel to the rescue! Is there a problem? Monsters? My speciality! Is it purple and evil with green tentacles, don't worry, I'll cut them off with one swipe of my stick! Bam! Or maybe it's yellow and scaly and lives at the bottom of a great lake, I'll dive in, holding my breath for ages, then crawl slowly along the slimy bottom of the lake until I spot it - there! Stab, stab! I've got it again.

She turns and sees the washing tub.

GRETEL

Or is it white and mushy and lives in a soapy washing up tub, ready to leap and pounce on unsuspecting children? Never fear - Gretel is here! Rip, slash, the evil blouse monster is dead! Never again will it terrorize the village!

Gretel sits down with a plump.

GRETEL

Bored now.

Suddenly she sniffs the air.

GRETEL

There's that smell again! Sort of sweet and sugary and like..gingerbread??!

She stands and sniffs around.

GRETEL

That's funny - it's gone!

She looks inside the cottage.

GRETEL

Does Sir Gretel go into the cottage and clean? No! Sir Gretel must go on adventures, because that is her mission. Sir Gretel is going into the forest - monster hunting!!

Gretel bounds off.