

ACT I

PRELUDE

HANSEL & GRETEL appear in a special on stage.

HANSEL

Did you know that the world is full of witches and warlocks? Oh, yes...they are everywhere. Some are good and some are bad and some are downright wicked.

You can't spot an enchanter. They look like most people. In fact, many of them are quite attractive. Sometimes the prettiest witches and the most handsome warlocks are the most wicked but they remain beautiful because they live off of the sweet tears of children.

GRETEL

Especially children who eat sweets. You see it's a little known fact that enchanters, no matter where they live, good or bad cannot eat candy.

HANSEL

Just one lick of a lollipop, one chomp on a chew and they go into anaphylactic shock.

GRETEL

Good witches and warlocks are just naturally attractive because of the nice things they do. But wicked witches and warlocks, who don't do anything nice, are cursed with all kinds of warts and boils and other assorted ticks. They have had to develop ways to melt the sweetness right out of a child for their own gain. And that is what our story is all about. The time: 1934. The Great Depression. The place: A boardroom somewhere in the world

TRANSITION TO....

SCENE 1

THE BOARDROOM OF WICKED WITCHES INCORPORATED

WILHELMA, HIGH PRIESTESS - WITCH stands at the head of a table surrounded by other WITCHES. They are all speaking on top of each other, cackling and screaming as the leader bangs her gavel.

DAKMAR

Have you seen CATS? Such a ridiculous travesty. Everyone knows that cats don't dance. Well, anyone who has an ounce of a brain in their head. What's next? A musical about witches, for goodness sake. I mean, come on.

ROMILDA

I've been working on developing my vibrato, so I went to Switzerland where I hooked up with this amazing yoodler. My goodness, was he good? I say was, because once he got wise to me, I had to turn him into a St. Bernard, but until then, wow.

BURGHARD

I think I'm really onto something with this new technique I've been developing. It's avant-guard. I throw paint onto the canvas and wait to see what sticks. Then I use that for inspiration. I call it canvass collective.

*

GULLVIEG

You can never have enough butter in a recipe. Honestly, who ever heard of too much butter? But this chef I was working with just kept telling me that my recipes were too rich. Too rich? Tell that to escargot! I had to leave. The man was a charlatan.

FRIEDBERTA

I was on this lake all by myself, you know, enjoying the peace and quiet when summer arrived and along with that came all these young people on water skies. Honestly! Who cares about water skies? All I can say is that the loon population has never been bigger.

WILHELMA

Order! Order I say!! Quiet.

The WITCHES are silent.

WILHELMA (CONT'D)

That's better. Now, I've called this emergency meeting of Wicked Witches Incorporated to discuss a grave issue that threatens our very existence. As you know this 'Depression' has greatly reduced the number of sweets consumed by children, which means that even their tears do not contain the appropriate amount of sugar to keep us young and beautiful. We only have a few vials of tears left and even those have already been watered down. At the rate we are deteriorating, we will be completely annihilated in less than a year.

DAKMAR

Surely the situation is not that bad.

WILHELMA

Isn't it? When was the last time you looked in the mirror? Go ahead. Open your compacts.

(MORE)

"STICKY FINGERS"

3.

WILHELMA (CONT'D)

What do you see? Huh?

(#01) COME UP WITH A PLAN

THERE'S A MOLE ON YOUR NECK
AND A WART ON YOUR CHIN
HAS YOUR HAIR STARTED TURNING INTO WIRE?
HAVE YOU NOTICED THE SCALES ON YOUR BACK?
AND YOUR SKIN KIND OF FEELS LIKE IT'S JUST BEEN SET ON FIRE?

(To BURGHARD)

THERE ARE HAIRS ON YOUR FINGERS
AND HAIRS ON YOUR TOES

(To FRIEDBERTA)

AND I WON'T EVEN MENTION THE HAIRS FROM YOUR NOSE
THERE IS NO TIME TO WASTE
BEFORE WE'VE BEEN DISGRACED
IT'S TIME WE COME UP WITH A PLAN

GULLVIEG

WE CAN'T HIDE HOW WE LOOK
THERE'S NO MAGIC VENEER
THAT DISGUISES THE REAL ME AND YOU

BURGHARD

WICKED INSIDE AND OUT THAT'S THE WAY WE APPEAR
AND THERE'S ONLY ONE THING THAT WE CAN DO

GULLVIEG

WE NEED TEARS FROM A CHILD
WHO HAS EATEN A SWEET
THEN THE DECOMPOSITION CAN FINALLY BE BEAT

DAKMAR

BUT THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE
WE NEED CLARITY POSTHASTE
SOMEONE HAS TO COME UP WITH A PLAN

FRIEDBERTA

ALL THOSE SWEET OTHER WITCHES
WITHOUT MALICE OR GREED
MAKES ME SICK TO MY STOMACH
WITH EACH SWEET LITTLE DEED

ROMILDA

AND THEIR JOY, I SUPPOSE
IS THE REASON THAT WE CHOSE

ALL

TO BE WICKED
REALLY WICKED
FROM OUR HEAD DOWN TO OUR TOES

WILHELMA

SO WE MUST FIND A WAY
AND IT HAS TO BE NOW

TO ADDRESS WHAT COULD SOON BE OUR DEMISE
WE MUST FIND A SOLUTION WHILE TIME WILL ALLOW
OR EACH ONE OF US LOSES OUR DISGUISE

 DAKMAR
TIME IS TICKING AWAY
SOON WE ALL WILL BE HAGS

 ROMILDA
WITH A LONG POINTY NOSE
AND A WARDROBE OF RAGS

 ALL
THERE IS NO TIME TO WASTE
SO BEFORE WE ARE ERASED
AND END UP LOOKING AS WE DID
WHEN GOD CREATED MAN
WE HAD BETTER COME UP WITH A PLAN

GULLVIEG raises her hand.

 WILHELMA
Gullvieg?

 GULLVIEG
 (standing)
What if we had a way of making our own sweets
that we could give to children...for free.

 WILHELMA
Go on...?

 GULLVIEG
Well, we could entice them with cupcakes and
caramels and coco puffs.

 WILHELMA
Go on...?

 GULLVIEG
Then we could arrest them and ---.

 WILHELMA
No! Parents would object. It has to be
something that would benefit adults as well as
children. Something they can't afford, but wish
they could.

BURGHARD raises her hand.

 WILHELMA (CONT'D)
Burghard?

BURGHARD
(standing)

We could open a store and just give sweets
away.

WILHELMA
Too suspicious. Next?

DAKMAR raises her hand.

WILHELMA (CONT'D)

Dakmar?

DAKMAR
We could "accidentally" put gum drops in their
brussell sprouts and--

WILHELMA
What are you talking about? Brussel sprouts?
Kids won't go within a mile of a Brussel
sprout. Really Dakmar, I'm disappointed in you.

DAKMAR
Sorry.

FRIEDBERTA
Then we have nothing.

WILHELMA
Not so. Anticipating your overall ineptitude
I've sought the help of an expert.

There is unrest in the coven

ROMILDA
An expert?

DAKMAR
What kind of expert?

WILHELMA
Someone more desperate than even you to retain
their good looks. Norgard Von
Hillsenbergerstaff.

GULLVIEG
Norgard von Hillsenbergerstaff! Here? In the
flesh?

WILHELMA
None other than he.
(calling)
Norgard!

NORGARD enters. They are an eccentric array of wigs and outlandish makeup. The overall look is of a 1970's rock star like Keith Richards or Alice Cooper or Steven Tyler. Someone androgynous who at the moment appears to have jet lag.

NORGARD

Don't yell, Wilhelma darling. I am still suffering from passing through several international time zones. My flying isn't quite what it used to be.

WILHELMA

Apologies and welcome.

The witches give NORGARD some polite applause.

NORGARD

No need. No need. Unless you feel compelled in which case, thank you. Now, I've been giving the situation a great deal of thought and I've come up with what I think is a brilliant idea, if I do say so myself...which I won't because you will say so for me.

GULLVIEG

(under her breath)

Blow hard!

NORGARD

Sorry? What was that?

GULLVIEG

I said, no hard working respectable witch would ever question anything you had to say.

NORGARD

How kind of you to notice.

GULLVIEG

Think nothing of it.

NORGARD

I won't.

WILHELMA

Your idea?

NORGARD

Right. Camps.

GULLVIEG
(excitedly)

Cramps?

WILHELMA
Camps. Go on...?

NORGARD
Parents send their children to them for a
certain period of time.

WILHELMA
For what purpose?

NORGARD
As I understand it, they learn how to "do
things" that human children have no aptitude
for and in the process they also get homesick,
and poison ivy, and capsize canoes...

DAKMAR
It sounds wonderful!

FRIEDBERTA
Children like this sort of thing?

NORGARD
No. They cry.

WILHELMA
Perfect. So, we'll advertise this camp as a
sort of opportunity to escape the harsh
realities of life. A place where they can
forget their troubles and have fun.

GULLVIEG
Then while they are there we stuff them with
starch and sugar--

DAKMAR
And, when they've been thoroughly sweetened up,
we make their lives so miserable they cry and--

WILHELMA
Eureka. Tears.

ROMILDA
How do we convince the parents to relinquish
their children unto us?

DAKMAR
We can make it look like an opportunity. Say
things like, "Your brilliant child deserves a
chance to bloom."

FRIEDBERTA

"This is where they'll find themselves."

ROMILDA

"Our amazing instructors will be able to develop their talents."

WILHELMA

Perfect! We need a name.

ROMILDA

How about "Camp Muncha Buncha Sweets"?

WILHELMA

Too on the nose.

FRIEDBERTA

"Camp Crybaby?"

WILHELMA

No.

BURGHARD

"Camp Stay for a Spell?"

WILHELMA

Perfect!

(Pointing to a witch)

Burghard, you design the brochure. Make it look disgustingly sweet? Use words like, "fun" and "laughter" and "memories to last a lifetime".

BURGHARD

On it.

WILHELMA

And make sure you talk about bursaries, which of course every child will get.

BURGHARD

Say no more.

BURGHARD exits.

WILHELMA

Romilda, go find us some children.

ROMILDA

On it.

ROMILDA exits.

WILHELMA

(pointing to another witch)

Friedberta, you find me a nice piece of real-estate in the middle of nowhere surrounded by dense forest with wolves and bears and fresh water filled with eels.

FRIEDBERTA

Consider it done!

FRIEDBERTA exits.

WILHELMA

Dakmar, design your programs to include frustration and panic!

DAKMAR

Will do.

DAKMAR exits.

WILHELMA

(pointing to another witch)

And Gullvieg, you start coming up with the dessert recipes.

GULLVIEG

Absolument!!!

GULLVIEG exits.

WILHELMA

(hammering her gavel)

Meeting adjourned. Come along Norgard. We need to get this camp ready for business

**WILHELMA exits followed by
NORGARD.**

TRANSITION TO THE HOME OF HANSEL
& GRETEL

SCENE 2

HANSEL & GRETEL'S HOUSE

**The table and chairs are removed
by REPO-MEN who are in the process
of repossessing the contents of a
house.**

**HANSEL & GRETEL enter carrying two
largish sized boxes containing all
of their belongs.**

HANSEL

Hey, that's my water pistol!

GRETEL

Or my sock monkey?

HANSEL

My jar of buttons...

GRETEL

My roll of string...

HANSEL

My collection of elastic bands...

GRETEL

My paper clip necklace.

***A REPO-MAN re-enters and grabs
HANSEL'S box.***

HANSEL

Hey, that's my box of lint.

***HANSEL refuses to let go. They
struggle.***

Let. Go. Or. I'll. Bite You!!!

***REPO-MAN yanks the box out of
HANSEL'S hands and carries the box
away.***

I really thought that would work.

(#02) IF YOU DON'T PAY

REPO-MEN

ALL FOR US
NONE FOR YOU
SUCH A SHAME
YOU CAN CUSS
TILL YOU'RE BLUE
BUT THE BLAME
IS ON THE WORLD WHICH INSISTS
THAT YOUR NAME GOES ON OUR LISTS
IF BY SUCH AND SUCH A DAY
YOU DON'T PAY

GRETEL

But we're just kids.

REPO-MAN #1

HIGH AND DRY
YOU'RE WITHOUT
WE DON'T CARE

YOU CAN CRY
SCREAM OR SHOUT
LIFE AIN'T FAIR
BUT THE COMP'NY INSISTS
THAT YOUR NAME GOES ON OUR LISTS
IF BY SUCH AND SUCH A DAY
YOU DON'T PAY

REPO-MAN #2
IT'S A SIGN OF THE TIMES
NOTHING MUCH YOU CAN DO
SO THERE'S NO POINT IN STIRRING UP A FUSS

REPO-MEN
YOU CAN CRY, YOU CAN SCREAM
HOLD YOUR BREATH TILL YOUR BLUE
IN THE END ALL YOUR TOYS BELONG TO US
YOU PRETEND
YOU CAN RUN
YOU CAN HIDE
IN THE END
EVERYONE
MUST ABIDE
BY THE WORLD WHICH INSISTS
THAT YOUR NAME GOES ON OUR LISTS
IF BY SUCH AND SUCH A DAY
YOU DON'T PAY
THEN WE COME TO TAKE YOUR GOODIES AWAY

REPO-MEN exit

***They both sit down defeated as
their MOTHER comes inside. She
takes in the missing furniture.***

MOTHER
Oh my.
(Noticing the children)
Now, now...No need to be glum. Things could be
worse. We still have a roof over our head--

A REPO-MAN re-enters.

REPO-MAN #2
Almost forgot. This is your eviction notice.

REPO-MAN exits.

MOTHER
Something will work out. You'll see. It always
does.

(#03) BELIEVE

WHEN YOU'RE FEELING SAD

AND THE WORLD IS GREY
AND THE SITUATIONS WORSE THAN YOU PERCEIVE
JUST REMEMBER THAT THE SUN WILL SHINE BEFORE THE DAY IS
THROUGH
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS JUST BELIEVE

GRETEL
THOUGH YOU MIGHT BE LOST
YOU WILL FIND YOUR WAY

HANSEL
THERE IS NOTHING IN THIS WORLD YOU CAN'T ACHIEVE
EVEN THOUGH YOU MIGHT BE SMALL, YOU CAN CLIMB THE HIGHEST
PEAK

HANSEL & GRETEL
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS JUST BELIEVE

MOTHER
THIS IS JUST A HICCUP
JUST A CHALLENGE TO GET THROUGH
NOTHING WE CAN'T MANAGE
AND YOU KNOW THAT THAT IS TRUE
THINK OF THIS AS SOMETHING
WE WILL LAUGH ABOUT ONE DAY
I PROMISE THAT IN NO TIME WE'LL BE BETTER THAN OKAY

ALL
WHEN YOU'RE OUT OF TIME
AND YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK
USE THE ONE TRICK YOU HAVE HIDDEN UP YOUR SLEEVE
IT MIGHT BE THE VERY THING THAT HELPS YOU UP WHEN YOU ARE
DOWN
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS JUST BELIEVE

MOTHER coughs

MOTHER
Now, it just so happens that those men didn't
manage to get everything.

**She holds out her hands and
produces two pieces of candy.**

One for you.

She hands one to HANSEL.

And one for you.

HANSEL
But, mother...you never let us eat candy.

MOTHER
This isn't ordinary candy. Try it. You'll see.
It has the power to make you feel instantly
better.

She hands one to GRETEL. They both look at each other but don't eat.

What's wrong? You don't want them?

HANSEL

Oh we do. But we'd rather save them.

GRETEL

For when we really, really, really need them.

HANSEL

It's easier to manage the hunger just knowing we have them.

MOTHER

I understand.

MOTHER coughs

There is a knock on the door.

Quick, hide them.

HANSEL & GRETEL stick the candy in their pockets as MOTHER answers the door to ROMILDA.

ROMILDA

Good evening. I'm so sorry to disturb you, but I couldn't help overhearing your beautiful song as I was walking by your house.

MOTHER

Really? It was a lullaby which by definition is pretty quiet.

ROMILDA

I have excellent hearing.

MOTHER

I see.

ROMILDA

Such lovely children.

MOTHER

(coughing)

Can I help you?

ROMILDA

Actually I think it's me who might be able to help you!

(hands MOTHER a brochure)

You see, I'm recruiting children for a kind of camp.

MOTHER

Oh, we can't afford--

ROMILDA

No. No. It's free.

MOTHER

Free?

ROMILDA

Free for children with exceptional talent.

MOTHER

Oh?

ROMILDA

Your charming, enchanting children would make a delightful addition to our wonderful, scrumptious, assortment of appetizing singers and dancers and tuba players who make our tummy's tingle with delectable displays of mouth-watering artistic feasts.

MOTHER

I'm not sure I understand?

ROMILDA

We offer fishing and boating and camp fire jamborees with three square meals a day. All you have to do is sign right here, and we'll make arrangements to transport your darling angels to "Camp Stay for a Spell?" the day after tomorrow.

MOTHER

I don't know...
(coughs)

ROMILDA

(forgetting herself for a moment)

Are you kidding? What's there to think about? I mean really?

MOTHER

What?

ROMILDA

I mean...a really, really wonderful place for children to make memories that last.

MOTHER looks at HANSEL & GRETEL.

MOTHER

What do you think?
(coughs)

ROMILDA

(interjecting)

That's a nasty cough you have. Maybe a few months of rest would be good for you...and the little darling children.

MOTHER

A few months? Maybe by then things will be back to normal.

HANSEL

But mom...

Mother coughs.

GRETEL squeezes HANSEL'S arm.

GRETEL

(under her breath)

It will be easier on mom if we go.

(to her MOTHER)

It sounds great.

MOTHER

Okay then. Where do I sign?

ROMILDA

(Holding out the clip board)

Right here.

MOTHER signs the paper.

A very loud rumbling sound comes from ROMILDA's stomach

MOTHER

Was that...?

ROMILDA

Apologies, just something in your house smells delicious.

MOTHER

You must be imagining things. We haven't a crumb to eat.

ROMILDA

Are you sure? Because I... smell... a... candy.

MOTHER

Sadly, no.

MOTHER starts to close the door in ROMILDA's face.

Good night.

ROMILDA

Tell the children to be ready at dusk on Tuesday night. A school bus will come by to pick them up.

MOTHER

Dusk on Tuesday.

MOTHER closes the door.

I think that's enough excitement for one night. Time for bed.

HANSEL & GRETEL head to bed with their MOTHER following close behind.

TRANSITION TO...

SCENE 3

CAMP STAY FOR A SPELL

The WITCHES run around preparing for the arrival of CAMPERS.

WILHELMA

Witches, the little germ carrying brats will be here any minute. Gullvieg, have you managed to create an assortment of appetizing confections for our guests?

(#04) WHEN ALL OF THE CHILDREN ARE HERE

GULLVIEG

THE CUPBOARD IS STOCKED WITH GOODIES CHILDREN LOVE TO EAT
THE KITCHEN IS FULL OF CAKES AND PIES
THE FREEZER IS CRAMMED WITH SODAS SYRUPY AND SWEET
THE KIDDIES WILL NOT BELIEVE THEIR EYES
THEY'LL GOBBLE EVERY TART
DEVOUR PUDDINGS TOO
THEY'LL DRINK THEIR FILL OF GINGER BEER
KIDS LOVE A GOOD FLAMBÉ
I'LL MAKE IT RIGHT AWAY
WHEN ALL OF THE CHILDREN ARE HERE

BURGHARD

THERE'S NOTHING AS TEMPTING AS A BAGGIE FULL OF SWEETS
OR CROCKERY FULL OF PEAR SORBET

GULLVIEG

I'LL MANAGE TO WIN THEIR TRUST BY PLYING THEM WITH TREATS
INCLUDING A CHOCOLATE FUDGE BUFFET

BURGHARD

THEY'LL EAT, AND EAT AND EAT
THEN EAT AND EAT SOME MORE
NOT ONE OF US WILL JUDGE OR SNEER
WHATEVER THEY DEMAND
THEIR WISH IS OUR COMMAND
WHEN ALL OF THE CHILDREN ARE HERE

DAKMAR

The school bus has just entered the forest!!

*The WITCHES giggle with
excitement.*

WITCHES

IN A WEEK WHEN THEY'RE DONE
EATING DONUTS, CAKE AND PIES
WE CAN LET DOWN OUR GUARD
WE CAN LOOSEN OUR DISGUISE
WATCH THEIR SHOCK AND AMAZEMENT
WHEN WE START TO CRITICIZE
WE'LL COLLECT THEIR TEARS
WHEN ALL OF THEM EVENTUALLY CRIES

NORGARD

THEIR SOBBING WILL HELP DIMINISH OUR WRINKLES AND OUR LINES
THE SWEETER THEIR TEARS THE MORE RESTORED

IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO STOP DEGENERATING SIGNS

FOREBEARANCE WILL BRING ITS OWN REWARD

WILHELMA

THE SADDER CHILDREN ARE
THE HAPPIER WE'LL BE
WE'LL CELEBRATE THIS DAY NEXT YEAR
CAUSE ALL OUR WITCHY HARM
IS HIDDEN BY THIS CHARM
WHEN ALL OF THE CHILDREN ARE HERE.

WILHELMA (CONT'D)

Okay, to your battle stations everyone. Smile.

(to GULLVIEG)

Gullvieg, you call that a smile?

*GULLVIEG tries to the best of her
ability but it's still not much
more than a grimace.*

Keep working on it. Ready?

All the WITCHES stand side by side like the receiving line at a wedding.

NORGARD

How do I look?

DAKMAR

Stop it, Norgard. You know you are the prettiest one of us all. Must you always dig for compliments?

The doors open and the CAMPERS enter speaking simultaneously.

SIEGFRIED

Statistically speaking this is a pretty small percentage of kids for a camp this size.

ZELDA

I protest the fact that my parents have subjected me to this place.

INGRID

That bus ride has ruffled my outfit and taken all the body out of my hairdo.

WERNER

That was the most boring bus ride I've ever been on in my life. I deserve a medal.

WILHELMA

Welcome little children. Welcome. I am Wilhelma, head mistress of the camp. We are so excited to have you here. Let me introduce the staff.

FRIEDBERTA

I am Friedberta the head tear collector.

WILHELMA coughs.

And canoe instructor. Also water boarding and swimming.

BURGHARD

I am Burghard. I paint. Pictures. Portraits and landscapes.

NORGARD

I am Norgard. Dance instructor...also shot put, weight-lifting and jiu jitsu.

NORGARD demonstrates a fancy move.

DAKMAR

(under her breath)

Show off.

ROMILDA

Romilda. Music. singing.
IT'S TIME TO TRY
DEFYING GRAVITY

WILHELMA

Thank you.

ROMILDA

I THINK I'LL TRY
DEFYING GRAVITY

WILHELMA

Thank you.

ROMILDA

AND YOU CAN'T PULL ME DOWN!

WILHELMA

Thank you for that.

(to CAMPERS)

Romilda can hardly contain herself at times.

GULLVIEG

Gullvieg. I cook and clean. If your toilet
isn't working...don't come to me. Use the
outhouse.

DAKMAR

I am Dakmar. Drama instructor. Also crafts.
Drama and crafts. Crafts and drama. Mostly
drama. My life is the theatre. That is me.

WILHELMA

And now Dakmar will read the roll call. When
she says your name, step forward and

(holding out her hand)

Take a sweet.

DAKMAR

Siegfried Zettenbower.

***SIEGFRIED steps forward and takes
a candy. He holds it in his hand.***

SIEGFRIED

Toffee. A confection made up of one part
caramelized sugar, one part molasses, and one
part butter.

WILHELMA

So smart. Go ahead. You may eat it.

SIEGFRIED shoves the sweet into his mouth. The WITCHES all clap.

GULLVIEG

Excellent! Was it good? It looked good? Nice consistency? Just the right amount of sugar and butter?

WILHELMA

That will be all Gullvieg. Let the poor boy eat his candy in peace. Next...

DAKMAR

Ingrid Igbar?

INGRID

That's me.

INGRID steps up eagerly holding out her hand for a sweet.

The WITCHES are amused.

INGRID is about to put the sweet in her mouth when...

BURGHARD

Would you mind if I took your picture?

INGRID

Of course not.

(posing)

I'm naturally photogenic

(posing)

People are always asking to take my picture

(posing)

And when you are naturally photogenic it doesn't seem fair to rob the general public of your natural beauty.

(poses)

BURGHARD snaps a photo.

BURGHARD

This will look great on the cover of the Witch--ita newsletter.

HANSEL

Wichita?

BURGHARD

Ya, our sister camp community. Go Kansas!

DAKMAR

Zelda Binx?

WILHELMA

Zelda step right up.

ZELDA

Give me a candy or I'll scream my head off!

WILHELMA

No need, you may have two candies.

Handing ZELDA some sweets

FRIEDBERTA

Can she scream her head off anyway? I'd like to see that.

ZELDA

What?

WILHELMA

Friedberta is such a comedian.

ZELDA

I don't think she's funny at all. A joke at someone's expense can be hurtful.

NORGARD

Is that a fact?

WILHELMA

Of course it is. Councillors, let that be a lesson. Children have feelings.

GULLVIEG

What do they taste like?

WILHELMA

(cautioning)

Gullvieg!

GULLVIEG

I mean, it's not good to eat your feelings.

DAKMAR

Werner Luchman?

WERNER

(Whining)

I'm bored. You're boring.

WILHELMA

You wish for me to entertain you?

WERNER
(Whining)

Do something interesting before I die of boredom.

FRIEDBERTA
I could make you cry...out, "STOP. STOP" from so much laughter.

WERNER
I doubt it.

FRIEDBERTA
Why did the chicken cross the road?

WERNER
To get to the other side. Duh.

GULLVIEG
Where I am waiting for it with an axe.

WERNER
What?

FRIEDBERTA
And a pot of boiling --

WILHELMA
Okay, enough of the comedy routine. So many jokes.

WILHELMA encourages the other WITCHES to laugh which they do to cover up FRIEDBERTA's faux pas.

(handing WERNER a candy)
Here. We sincerely hope this makes you as happy as it makes us.

DAKMAR
Hansel Lederhose?

HANSEL
That's me.

HANSEL steps forward.

WILHELMA
Here you go.

WILHELMA hands him a sweet.

HANSEL
No, thank you.

WILHELMA

What!!?

HANSEL

No, thank you. We aren't supposed to take candy from strangers.

DAKMAR

Gretel Lederhose?

WILHELMA

Surely you will have a sweet?

GRETEL

Thanks all the same but candy is bad for my teeth.

NORGARD

(whispering to BURGHARD)

What did she say?

DAKMAR

That candy is bad for her teeth.

ZELDA

I'll have their candy! I still have baby teeth. They can rot for all I care.

WILHELMA

In that case...Of course, darling child. Here.

WILHELMA hands the candy to ZELDA.

WILHELMA (CONT'D)

Well children, you must be hungry and exhausted. If you will follow us into the dining hall, we've prepared a feast for you. Then once you've eaten your fill, we'll take you to your cabins and tuck you in. Everyone form a line and follow Gullvieg. Romilda, a word.

ROMILDA lags behind. Once the others are out of sight, WILHELMA grabs her by the lapels.

WILHELMA (CONT'D)

What have you done? You bring me children who don't eat candy?

ROMILDA

But they do...they must. I smelled sugar in the house.

WILHELMA

You'd better be right or you will be the chicken crossing the road. Understand?

WILHELMA exits with ROMILDA following.

TRANSITION TO....

SCENE 4

IN THE CAMPERS'S CABIN

The Kids in their sleeping bags on cots. Boys on one side and girls on the other.

WERNER

My stomach hurts.

INGRID

I ate so much, I feel like I will burst.

SIEGFRIED pulls out his camera to take her photograph.

SIEGFRIED

Let me get a picture of that!

He shoves the camera in her face.

Smile!

INGRID

NO! Don't! I look like a blimp.

SIEGFRIED

Smile. Come on.

INGRID

Stop! Stop!

ZELDA grabs the camera from SIEGFRIED who chases her for it.

SIEGFRIED

Give it back. Come on. I mean it. Give it back!

ZELDA drops it on his bunk and then glowers at the group from the door.

GRETEL

There is something weird about this place.

SIEGFRIED

Weird about you, you mean? What kind of kid doesn't eat candy?

ZELDA

Yeah. What's with all that goody two shoes act about it being bad for your teeth?

GRETEL

Well, it is.

ZELDA

So what? Who ever heard of a kid who cared about their teeth.

INGRID

Especially when they would look so much better capped.

SIEGFRIED

You just made all of us look bad.

WERNER

I think I'm going to be sick.

WERNER exits to throw up.

SIEGFRIED

See what your little Miss Perfect act has done?

GRETEL

We don't think we are perfect. We're just...nice.

ZELDA

What?

SIEGFRIED

Nice. Pleasing and agreeable.

INGRID

Are you saying we're not nice?

HANSEL

Perhaps not as nice as you could be.

ZELDA

Oh yeah? Go soak your head in a bucket of ice water.

GRETEL

That's what we mean. Saying things like that is actually kind of mean.

ZELDA

You saying I'm mean is actually mean, so who's not nice now? Huh?

GRETEL

Seems like we are at a standstill.

WERNER returns.

WERNER

I'm back. What did I miss?

INGRID

Hansel and Gretel were about to teach us a lesson in how to be nice.

WERNER

Oh yeah?

SIEGFRIED

I want to see them teach me anything.

HANSEL

It's a really easy.

(#05) NICE

GRETEL

OUR MOTHER ALWAYS TOLD US
IT DOESN'T PAY
TO LOSE YOUR TEMPER OR BE RUDE

THERE ARE SOME SIMPLE RULES
WE PRACTICE EVERY DAY
TO HELP IMPROVE OUR ATTITUDE

GRETEL (CONT'D)

IF A KID CALLS YOU A NAME, IT'S OKAY

ZELDA

Give me a break!

GRETEL

IF THEY CHEAT PLAYING A GAME, DON'T DISMAY

WERNER

What?

GRETEL

IF SOMEONE TAKES YOUR TOY WHICH THEY THREATEN TO DESTROY
SHOULD YOU FIGHT?

ZELDA

Yes!

GRETEL

NO YOU SHOULDN'T
IT'S ALRIGHT.
COUNT TO TEN IF YOU MUST IN YOUR HEAD

SIEGRIED

One. Two. Three...

GRETEL

YOU COULD KNOCK THEM TO THE GROUND OR INSTEAD
YOU COULD CHOOSE TO THINK TWICE
IF YOU WANT MY ADVICE

ZELDA

Not really.

GRETEL

IT ALWAYS PAYS TO TRY AND BE NICE

ZELDA

What a load of --

HANSEL

Don't say it. Instead, take a deep breathe. Go ahead.

ZELDA inhales deeply.

Good. Now exhale.

ZELDA exhales.

How do you feel?

ZELDA

Like clocking you.

HANSEL

IF YOU'RE THREATENED WITH STONES, WALK AWAY

WERNER

Forget it.

HANSEL

WHEN YOU ASK BUT THEY REFUSE TO LET YOU PLAY
SHOULD YOU RETALIATE FIGHTING PETTINESS WITH HATE

ZELDA

Yes, you should!

HANSEL

NO YOU SHOULDN'T.
JUST BE GOOD.
USE FORGIVENESS THEN TRY TO MOVE ON

INGRID

Oh brother!

HANSEL

IT'S A MOMENT IN TIME AND THEN IT'S GONE

WERNER

I doubt it.

HANSEL

IT'S A SMALL SACRIFICE
TO SPREAD SUGAR NOT SPICE
IT ALWAYS PAYS TO TRY AND BE NICE.

INGRID

Who said anything about fighting? I would never
put my perfect nose in harm's way.

HANSEL

EVERYBODY HAS THEIR BAD DAYS
WHICH CAN MAKE THEM ACT IN BAD WAYS
EVERY PERSON KNOWS THIS IS TRUE
YOU HAVE A CHOICE
WHAT WILL IT BE?
IN THE END IT'S ALL UP TO YOU

WERNER

I still don't get it. What's in it for us?

HANSEL

The satisfaction of knowing that you've de-
escalated a potentially ugly situation.

INGRID

In English.

HANSEL

You'll just feel better.

ZELDA

Who said we don't already feel good?

INGRID

Yeah?

SIEGFRIED

Yeah?

ZELDA

I ALWAYS FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD

INGRID

I JUST DON'T DO THE THINGS I SHOULD

ZELDA
CAUSE WHEN I'M BAD THEN I FEEL GOOD
IT'S JUST THE WAY I AM

WERNER
QUITE HONESTLY I'M ALWAYS BORED
UNLESS I GET A BIG REWARD

SIEGFRIED
LIKE MONEY WHEN MY IQ SCORED
TOP MARKS IN MY EXAM

ALL
TO GAIN THE WORLD'S ATTENTION
YOU CAN'T BE TOO CONTROLLED
CAUSE NO ONE LIKES A KID WHO ALWAYS DOES WHAT THEY ARE TOLD

GRETEL
I'm not sure if that's true.

INGRID
You are so judgmental. Just like everyone else
in my life. I get a zit and it's like the whole
world is falling apart. I mean, come on!

ZELDA
Do you ALWAYS think you are the centre of the
universe?

SIEGFRIED
According to all current observations, there is
no centre to the universe. For a centre point
to exist, that point would have to somehow be
special with respect to the universe as a
whole.

WERNER
I am so bored
(Leaning on ZELDA)

ZELDA
Get off me Weiner.

WERNER
WERNER!

ZELDA
Whatever.

HANSEL
IF YOU WANT TO FEEL LIKE YOU BELONG
WHY NOT CHOOSE WHAT IS RIGHT INSTEAD OF WRONG?

GRETEL

TO IMPROVE THE ATMOSPHERE WHILE THE GROUP OF US ARE HERE
LET'S ALL TRY
TO BE KINDER

ZELDA

TELL ME WHY?

HANSEL

OUR SURVIVAL, I THINK, ALL DEPENDS
ON THE SIX OF US JUST BEING FRIENDS
IT'S A TINY PRICE
FOR A TASTE OF PARADISE
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TRY AND BE NICE

What do you say?

*There is a slight pause. Then
overlapping....*

ZELDA

Forget it. I refuse to let
anyone tell me what I should
or shouldn't be. You got
that!!!

INGRID

Stop looking at my zit! I
know what you are thinking
you snot nosed Bolshevick.

SIEGFRIED

Technically speaking a lesson
in how to behave is probably
the most unlikely way of
achieving any reasonable
success.

WERNER

I refuse to do anything
unless I'm rewarded. A
trophy. A sandwich. Cupcakes.
I have to have something in
return.

HANSEL & GRETEL
(Looking at each other.)

Oh, dear!!!

TRANSITION TO...