

HARVEY AND GRETTA

Written by

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Based on
Hansel and Gretel by Brothers Grimm

FADE IN:

EXT. PLAINS - DAY

INTERCUT: KANSAS, 1934

Two children- HARVEY, (9, malnourished, dirty/beaten) and
GRETTA (6, malnourished, plain)- stagger across the plains,
exhausted. Their stomachs GROWL.

In the distance they see the foggy image of a tidy, well
cared for farmhouse.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Outside of the house is a large, luscious garden filled with
fruits and vegetables. They're ripe and unusual in the
deserted dust bowl setting.

Harvey and Gretta greedily devour the garden's vegetation.
Juices drip over their chins and stain their clothes.

MARGARET (mid-30s, housewife, well-kept) exits the home,
gardening supplies in hand. She's taken aback by the
children.

MARGARET

Goodness! And where did you come
from?

The children ignore her entirely. Margaret glances around,
sets her tools down.

MARGARET

Are your parents nearby?

Margaret pulls a tomato and a carrot away from the protesting
children, holds them up in the air.

MARGARET

Do you know how to speak?

HARVEY

No.

MARGARET

Cheeky. Alright then.

Margaret returns the tomato. Harvey devours it. Gretta hops
for the carrot, too short to reach.

MARGARET
Where are your parents?

GRETТА
Gone!

Margaret returns the carrot. Gretta eats, but watches Margaret with suspicion.

MARGARET
Gone?

HARVEY
We ran away.

GRETТА
We're helping. They'll eat now.

Margaret pulls out a handkerchief from her pocket, grabs Gretta's face, wipes the fruit/vegetable juice away. Gretta tries to pull away, unsuccessful.

MARGARET
Let's make sure you do the same.
Come inside.

Harvey rushes in the open doorway. Gretta hesitates.

MARGARET
Well come on. Unless you want to
eat raw carrots all day.

Gretta looks at her carrot, follows Margaret.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

A large variety of foods sit around the table, all delicious and mouth-watering. Harvey devours, Gretta nibbles. Margaret sits across, watching.

MARGARET
Are you not hungry?

Gretta nods. Margaret nudges another plate in her direction.

HARVEY
What kinda cow is this?

Harvey holds up a piece of steak on his fork.

MARGARET
My favorite kind; dead and cooked.

Harvey LAUGHS, continues eating.

MARGARET

Your parents will be coming for you both, I imagine.

HARVEY

Nuh-uh. We didn't say a thing.

MARGARET

Well that's no good. They won't know where to look then.

Margaret nudges another plate towards him. Harvey eagerly accepts.

MARGARET

I'll have to insist you stay with me, then. Until your parents find you, of course.

Gretta has stopped eating entirely, stares at Margaret. Margaret notices, shoves another plate toward her.

MARGARET

Keep eating, dear. I'd hate for you to catch scurvy.

Gretta stares at the plate. She doesn't take a bite.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A very neat, small, children's bedroom. There are two beds across from each other, with a dollhouse and a rocking horse.

Harvey SNORES in the second bed, back to Gretta. He's spread out, comfortable, fast asleep.

Gretta watches him, rolls onto her back. Shadows move across the ceiling and walls. She huddles into the blanket, uneasy.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Margaret gardens outside. Harvey follows behind, eats whatever she passes to him.

Gretta examines the other side of the garden. A large crate marked "FERTILIZER" sits on the other side of the house. Flies surround it.

Gretta, disgusted, glances back at Margaret and Harvey, who are distracted.

She approaches the fertilizer, peeks in one of the cracks. Something flesh-like sticks out between piles of dirt.

MARGARET (O.S.)

Gretta!

She turns, Margaret and Harvey stand behind her, basket and arms full of vegetables and fruits. Margaret's smile is tight.

Margaret grabs Gretta's wrist, pulls her away.

MARGARET

Let's not make a mess. Come inside
and wash off the fruits, will you?

Gretta stares at the fertilizer box as she is dragged back to the house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Margaret cleans in the adjacent living room. Gretta washes off vegetables in the sink, on a step stool, while Harvey practices dicing said vegetables.

Gretta glances toward the freezer, sets a tomato in a nearby bowl. She looks back toward the living room; Margaret is not in sight.

She climbs off the step stool and sneaks behind Harvey, watching Margaret's shadow in the living room all the while. She tugs Harvey's shirt.

Harvey grunts, nudges her off. Gretta SHUSHES him, waves him across the kitchen. Harvey rolls his eyes, follows. Gretta keeps watch on Margaret's shadow the entire time.

HARVEY

What?

GRETTA

I want to go home.

HARVEY

Oh, give it up, Gretta. We can't go home.

Harvey turns to leave, Gretta pulls him back.

GRETTA

Something's wrong! I feel bad in here.

Gretta rubs her stomach. Harvey rolls his eyes.

HARVEY
You're just hungry. I'll ask Miss Margaret to start supper. Go wash up.

Harvey leaves. Gretta trails after.

GRETTA
Harvey!

HARVEY
Wash up!

Gretta watches him go, rubs her stomach.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Gretta, Margaret, and Harvey eat dinner; indistinguishable meat and fresh garden vegetables. Gretta pokes at her food, while Harvey devours his.

MARGARET
Are you feeling ill, Gretta?

Gretta shakes her head, squishes her food.

GRETTA
Where's the animals?

MARGARET
Pardon?

GRETTA
The farm animals.

Gretta points to the meat on her plate. Harvey slows his eating, curious.

GRETTA
Where are they?

Margaret hesitates, sets her fork down. She looks up to the dining room clock, wipes her lips with her napkin.

MARGARET
It's getting late, don't you think?
Harvey, go run a bath. I like you clean before bed.

Harvey glances at Gretta, slowly pulls away from food. He nods, walks to the bathroom. Margaret nods at Gretta.

MARGARET
You too, missy.

Gretta stares at the meat on her plate, but follows her brother.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gretta stares at Harvey across from the room, neither able to sleep.

GRETТА
Harvey?

Harvey rolls over to face her.

HARVEY
Can't sleep?

Gretta shakes her head. Harvey opens his blanket. Gretta scurries across the room, crawls in with him.

GRETТА
I don't like it here.

HARVEY
I'm startin' to think so, too.
Somethin' don't feel right.

GRETТА
I wanna go home.

Harvey sits up, visibly stressed. Gretta sits with him, hopeful.

HARVEY
We can't do that to ma and pa. You know they can't eat with us there.

GRETТА
We can work!

Harvey shakes his head, but climbs out of bed. He helps Gretta out, each slipping into slippers.

HARVEY
You're too young. I'll talk to pa about workin' the fields for him, though. Maybe he can find work in the market or somethin'.

GRETTA
And I can help ma with the
cleaning.

HARVEY
Yup.

Harvey leads Gretta to the door, slowly opening it.

HARVEY
We ought to say goodbye to Miss
Margaret, though. Wouldn't be hos-
pit-able if we didn't.

Gretta nods, but clearly doesn't want to.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The children tiptoe through the hall, Harvey in the lead. He gently knocks a nearby door, nudges it open.

HARVEY
Miss Margaret...?

The bedroom is empty. The children look around, confused.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The children tiptoe down the stairs, searching around for Margaret. The home is eerily empty. A faint SAWING can be heard.

Harvey is about to turn toward the kitchen, but Gretta tugs his shirt, points to an ajar door in the downstairs hallway.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

They tiptoe a few stairs down, peeking under the banister.

Margaret's back faces the children, focused on an old metal desk in front of her. She saws away at something on the table. There is a cooler on her one side with a crate labeled "FERTILIZER" on her other.

The children look closer, realize that she's tossing bloody limbs into the fertilizer crate and organs into the other.

Gretta GASPS. Harvey covers her mouth, they stumble noisily upstairs. Margaret freezes, turns around.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Harvey and Gretta dash out of the basement, gasping in horror.

MARGARET (O.S.)

Gretta?

Gretta slams the door shut. She searches for a lock, but there's none. Harvey tries to shove a wooden bookcase in front of the door, but he's too weak.

Margaret's footsteps are LOUDER as she walks up the stairs.

MARGARET (O.S.)

Harvey? Did you have a nightmare?

Harvey gives up on the bookcase, shoves a chair underneath the door.

Margaret rattles the door handle.

MARGARET

Children, this isn't funny. Open the door.

The knob rattles violently with her rising anger.

Gretta and Harvey make a run for outside the house.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Gretta runs out, faster than her brother. Harvey runs after.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The chair BREAKS. The door SLAMS open.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Harvey runs out after his sister, but Margaret yanks him back by his hair.

MARGARET

You really should have stayed in bed, children.

Margaret drags Harvey back inside. Gretta runs after him.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Margaret drags Harvey down the stairs. Harvey CRIES in protest, tries hanging on the banner, etc. But is violently pulled away.

Gretta runs after, stumbles down the stairs.

Margaret pulls Harvey to the desk, he and Gretta are sobbing now. Gretta pulls weakly at Margaret's hand on her brother.

GRETTA

Let him go! Let him go!

Margaret slaps Gretta away. Gretta crashes to the floor.

Margaret ties rope around Harvey's wrist, ties him to the desk. Harvey tries to claw it off, but it unable to.

She drags Gretta to the desk, ties her to the desk as well.

MARGARET

This won't take long. I'll be right back.

She walks back upstairs, slams the door behind her. Gretta and Harvey SOB, desperately trying to claw off the rope. Gretta notices the saw left on the desk.

Margaret walks downstairs. Gretta and Harvey huddle together, tear-stained. Margaret holds up a long needle.

MARGARET

Just close your eyes. Pretend it's a long nap.

Margaret kneels by Harvey, positions the needle over his arm.

Gretta slashes at Margaret with the saw from behind. Margaret drops the needle.

Margaret grabs Gretta's hair, wrangles with the saw.

Harvey grabs the needle, his rope having been sawn off, and jabs it into Margaret's leg.

Margaret fumbles with the needle. Gretta and Harvey slash at her with the saw. Blood gushes around her.

The children take a few steps back. Margaret's body twitches, low GASPS from her throat. Blood forms in large pools around her. Gretta drops the saw.

EXT. PLAINS - MORNING

Gretta and Harvey walk across the plains, their nightclothes covered in blood.

A car drives by, but stops immediately. A man, PA (40s, rough, exhausted), and a woman, MA (30s, disheveled, malnourished), hop out of the car.

They rush to their children and pull them into a tight embrace.

MA

Gretta! Harvey! Where have you been?!

PA

We've searched everywhere!

MA

Don't you two ever leave again!

PA

Is this your blood?! Where did all of this blood come from?!

Ma and Pa break down into SOBS, petting their children and assuring that they're very well there.

Harvey and Gretta slowly break down into SOBS as well, clutching onto their parents.

The family holds onto each other, shaking in the midst of the plains. They are whole.

FADE TO BLACK.