

ACT II SCENE 5

*The Old Lady is in another room
in the Gingerbread House, looking
at herself in the mirror. The
Bird flies in and lands next to
her.*

THE BIRD

I'll need to put more dirt on the floor if you make Gretel sweep any more.

OLD LADY

Punishment for running off and leaving me to do the work.

THE BIRD

Ready to eat little Hansel are we?

OLD LADY

(Looking at her aging skin in
the mirror)

Yes.

THE BIRD

And Gretel?

OLD LADY

She'll stay locked up here until next month.

THE BIRD

And what will you tell your loving husband when you return without his children? Or are you going to live with him as a hypnotised moron for the rest of your life? That sounds like fun! Not that there's much difference between him now and how he was before.

OLD LADY

I'll tell him that I looked all night and couldn't find them. That they must have gone for a walk and got lost in the snow.

THE BIRD

He will be inconsolable.

OLD LADY

I'll make it up to him, I'm all he needs. We'll be happy together.

(The Old Lady waves her hand over
the mirror.)

OLD LADY

Show me the Woodcutter.

(The Old Lady and The Bird peer
into the mirror)

THE BIRD

There he is - sitting by the fire crying! Poor man! The door is banging slightly, he looks up - is it Hansel? Is it Gretel? Has even one of his children come back? No - it's just the wind blowing against the door. Oh dear. What is he doing now? Is he getting down those pathetic little wooden toys he made for the children, which they liked so much? Yes he is! And now he's crying over them. - He looks very happy to me.

(The Old Lady waves her hand and
turns away from the mirror.)

OLD LADY

Come bird it's time. Let's prepare the oven.