

## The life of Engelbert Humperdinck

- 1854: Born 1 September in Siegburg.  
Started piano lessons at an early age;  
First compositions written at the age of twelve
- 1876: Mozart scholarship, student at the Royal  
College of Music in Munich
- 1879: Winner of Mendelssohn scholarship, stay in  
Italy until 1881
- 1881/82: Assistant to R. Wagner in Bayreuth
- 1885–87: Teacher of composition in the  
Barcelona Conservatory
- 1888: Editor for Schott in Mainz
- from 1890: Teacher at the Conservatory in Mainz
- 1900–1920: Director of a music festival in Mainz at the  
Academy of Music
- 1921: Died on 2 September in Mainz
- The History of  
Hansel and Gretel*
- 1912, 1913 in Weimar, conducted by Richard Strauss.  
Immediate enormous success, achieving great  
international popularity.  
by Adelheid Wette (sister of the composer)  
based on the well-known fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm

## The Characters

Peter, a broom-maker

Gertrude, his wife

Hansel { their children  
Gretel }

The Gingerbread Witch

The Sandman

The Berry Man

Fourteen angels

Children

Villagers

PREVIEW  
Low Resolution

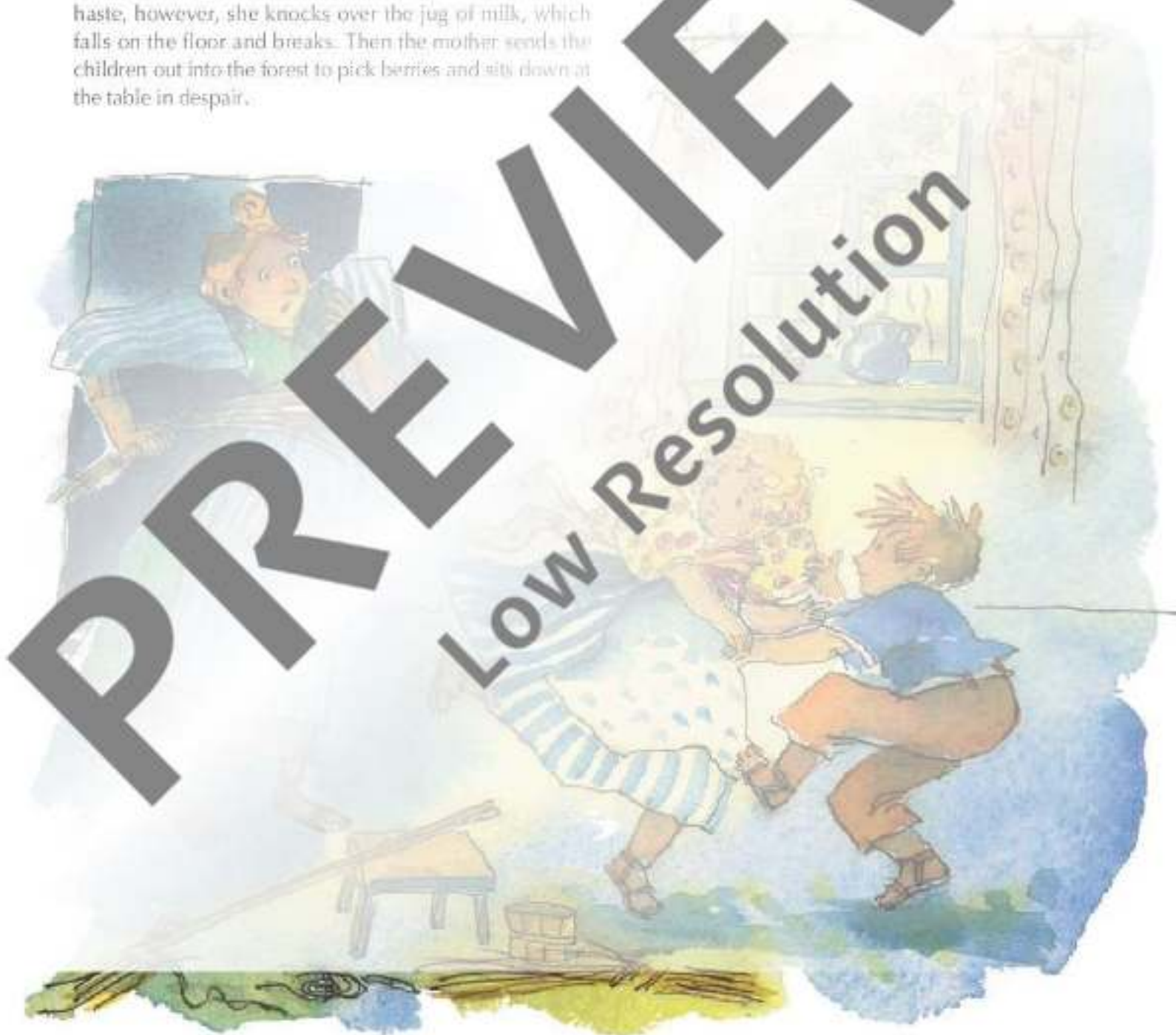
# The Plot

## Scene 1

The first scene takes place in the broom-maker's little cottage. Hansel and Gretel are alone at home with household chores to do. Very soon, though, they abandon their broom-making and darning and start singing and dancing. Gretel cheers up her unhappy brother by telling him that their neighbour has brought round a jug of milk. While they are dancing, their mother comes in. Angered by their laziness, she reaches for a cane to beat them with. In her haste, however, she knocks over the jug of milk, which falls on the floor and breaks. Then the mother sends the children out into the forest to pick berries and sits down at the table in despair.

In the distance we can hear the song of the broom-maker who has sold all his brooms and is looking for a new market full of good things to sell.

When he finds that the children are missing, the mother is very worried. He is very worried to look for his children.





## Scene 2

Meanwhile, Hansel and Gretel sing as they collect berries until their little baskets are full up. When the children notice that it is getting dark, however, and they cannot find their way home, they become frightened. They cuddle up close together and listen to the sandman's song.

When Hansel and Gretel have said their prayers, they lie down on the moss and fall asleep, watched over by fourteen angels.



## Scene 3

Next morning, Hansel and Gretel wake up. To their astonishment, they discover a little gingerbread house hidden behind the trees. Too hungry to be frightened, they both start nibbling away at the house.

Too late, the children realise that they have fallen into the clutches of a witch. Rosina Sweet-tooth casts a spell on them with her magic wand.

Hansel is locked inside a cage for fattening up and Gretel has to help with the housework. In anticipation of the tasty roast she hopes to enjoy, the witch rides around wildly celebrating her catch.

Next she orders Gretel to check inside the oven, to see whether the gingerbread is done. The little girl pretends she doesn't know how, though. When the witch sticks her head inside the oven to show how it is done, Gretel pushes her right in and shuts the oven door.

Hansel, who has managed to escape from his cage, runs to Gretel and they fall into one another's arms, laughing. With a great din the oven collapses and Hansel and Gretel see a lot of children in a fence of greenwood, set there by the witch's spell.

The broom-maker and the witch's cat come to their arms around their children. The witch's cat is well – now baked – gingerbread. The witch's broom is in the oven, there is a great din.

All is a final, wild dance. The children dance home.

