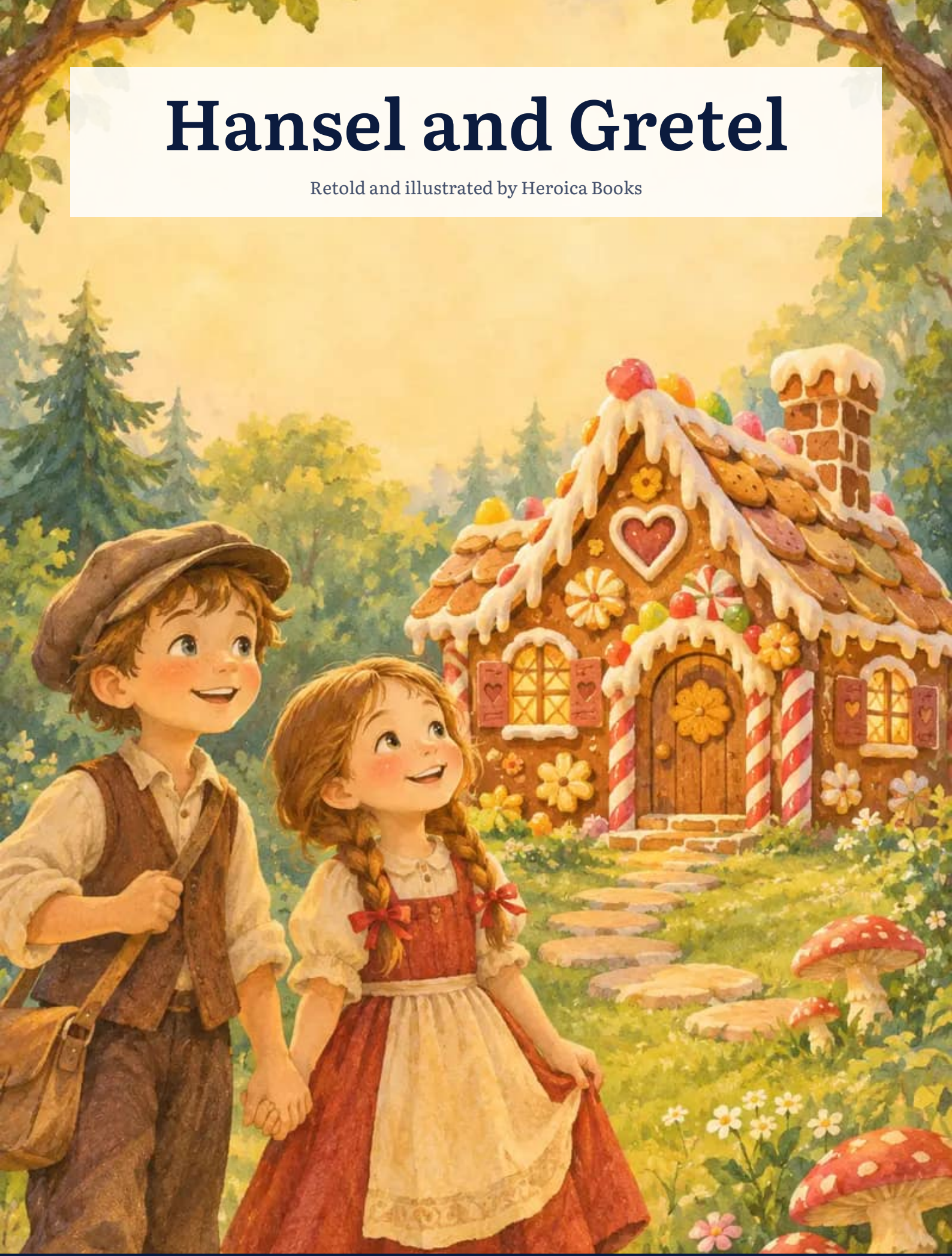
Hansel and Gretel

Retold and illustrated by Heroica Books



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Where does this story come from?

The Brothers Grimm published the tale in Germany in 1812 as "Hänsel und Gretel". In the original the children are abandoned in the forest and the witch ends up in the oven. In this retelling for young children they get lost while gathering firewood, and Gretel locks the witch in the cage.

What is the moral of the story?

Cleverness and courage help us out of tight spots, and not everything that looks sweet is good for us.



What if the hero of the next story were your child?

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At the edge of a great forest lived a poor woodcutter with his two children, Hansel and Gretel. One day the children went to gather firewood far away among the trees. Hansel, who liked to be prepared, filled his pockets with white pebbles before they left.

Along the way he dropped one pebble after another. That night, when the moon came out, the pebbles shone like silver coins, and the two of them followed the trail all the way home.



A few days later they went back to the forest. This time Hansel only had a piece of bread, so he marked the way with crumbs. But the birds ate every one! When night fell, Hansel and Gretel were lost among enormous trees.

The next morning a little white bird landed on a branch and sang so sweetly that they decided to follow it. "Come on, Gretel, it's showing us the way," said Hansel.



The bird led them to a clearing. There stood the most wonderful little house: its walls were gingerbread, its roof was frosted cake and its windows were clear sugar.

Very hungry, Hansel broke off a piece of the roof and Gretel tasted a sweet from the window. "Mmm, delicious!" they said at the same time.



Suddenly the door opened and an old woman in a pointed hat appeared, leaning on a cane. "Come in, children, come in! I have milk, pancakes and soft beds," she said in a voice that was much too sweet.

But the old woman was a witch with poor eyesight who wanted the children all to herself. As soon as they were inside, she locked Hansel in a cage and set Gretel to work in the kitchen.



Gretel was very clever. One day she pretended she didn't know how to open the cage door. "Could you show me how?" she asked. The impatient witch stepped into the cage to show her.

In a flash Gretel pulled Hansel out, shut the door and turned the key: click! The witch was locked in, grumbling, and could never harm anyone again.



In the witch's house the children found a chest full of pearls and precious stones and filled their pockets. On the way home they came to a wide lake, and a kind white duck carried them on her back to the other side.

There was their father, who had been searching for them for days. He hugged them so happily that he cried. With the treasure the family never went hungry again, and they lived together happily ever after. The end.

NOW IT'S YOUR CHILD'S TURN

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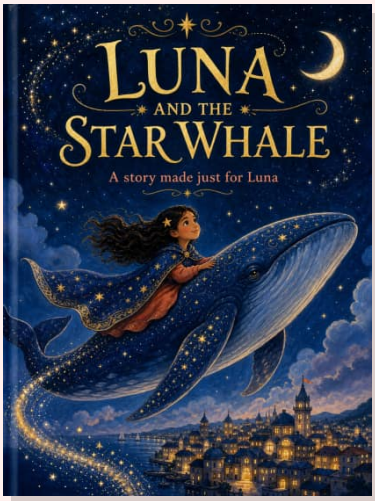

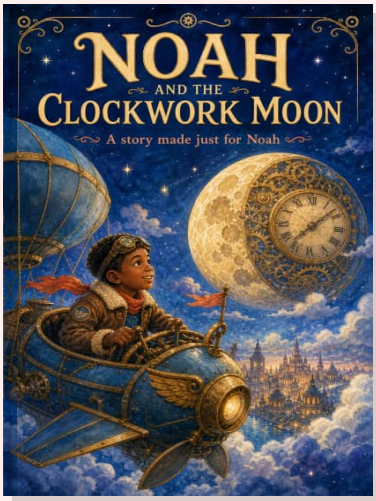



- A story written for your child's age, from 2 to 12
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