

LITTLE BROTHER AND LITTLE SISTER

BILL “No, no, no, no, no”, the boy shouts out. “I’ve had enough”.

GILL What?

BILL “Enough of being starved and bully-beaten by our wicked step-mother”.

GILL No, I mean what are you doing?

BILL Starting the story.

GILL Is that how you start a story?

BILL Why not? It got everybody’s attention.

GILL But that’s not a start. That’s not a start to a story. “Once upon a time” – now that’s a start to a story.

BILL There isn’t time for “once upon a time”. Little Brother and Little Sister have got to decide in a hurry of haste.

GILL Decide what in a hurry of haste?

BILL What to do.

GILL To do?

BILL About their lives. What to do about their terrible tipped-up lives.

GILL So then, “Once upon a time, Little Brother and Little Sister had to decide.”

BILL She bully-beats us.

GILL She starves us.

BILL She wants us to die.

GILL Do you think so?

BILL I’m sure so. She’s a malevolent monster.

GILL She’s not very kind.

BILL She’s a wicked witch.

GILL That’s not a nice thing to say.

BILL But it’s true. I’m sure she has magical mystical powers.

GILL Then what do we do?

BILL We run away.

GILL But this our home.

BILL Run away into the big wide world.

GILL We've always been safe here.

BILL Not anymore.

GILL As long as we're good I'm sure she'll be kind.

BILL I can't be good – not the kind of good she wants.

GILL Back straight. Stop talking. Hands out of pockets. Silence. Let me see your nails. Don't talk with your mouthful. Silly little boy. Noisy little boy. Horrid little boy.

BILL Whatever I do, it's never good enough.

GILL No food for you – snivelling little snot-nose.

BILL Don't hit me again. Please, don't hit me.

GILL Drivelling pea-brain.

BILL I'll try to be good. You can stay – she's nice enough to you.

GILL Only because I do exactly what she says the moment she says it. She doesn't like me at all. And I can't just be me.

BILL You said you feel safe.

GILL That was before our father died. Not anymore – she's just waiting to catch me out. Anyway, there's you to look after.

BILL I can look after myself.

GILL Don't be silly – you wouldn't know where to begin.

BILL I'm not that little.

GILL You are – that's why you're called Little Brother. You need your big sister.

BILL If you're my big sister why does everyone call you Little Sister?

GILL Because I'm not quite a grown-up. But I can still look after you.

BILL Yes you can. I'm glad you're coming too. Shall we go?

GILL No time to lose.

BILL So now a new scene.

GILL A new chapter.

BILL It's called a scene if it's a play.

GILL And a chapter if it's a story – like in a book.

BILL So is this a story or a play?

GILL We're acting it out, aren't we.

BILL So it's a play.

GILL Yes it's a play. So you're right, it's a new scene.

BILL Where are we?

GILL We've run away into the forest.

BILL The tree-tangle dark of the forest.

GILL This is frightening.

BILL This is exciting.

GILL Danger in the dark of the shadows.

BILL Comfort in the shafts of sunlight.

GILL She won't be able to see us here in the thick of the forest – our wicked step-mother. Here we're safe.

BILL They both think that, don't they.

GILL They do.

BILL Actually I don't think Little Brother does think that, because Little Brother doesn't think about much at all really. He just sort of does things and says things without thinking.

GILL Little Sister does lots of thinking. And she thinks they're safe – she thinks their wicked stepmother can't see them.

BILL But she's wrong.

GILL She is. Because the wicked stepmother does have magical mystical powers

BILL Just like Little Brother said.

GILL And she knows the children are in the forest.

 I can see you. You think I can't but I can.

BILL And she casts a spell.

GILL She casts a spell over all the streams in the forest.

BILL So that if Little Brother or Little Sister drink from any of the streams she can see, something terrible will happen.

GILL You waters, that splish and splosh your way through the deep of the woods, I conjure you with my most magical, mystical powers to turn any little boy or any little girl who drinks a drop of water into a fearsome wild beast.

 And the sun climbs high in the sky.

BILL And the day gets hotter.

GILL And the children get hotter too as they trudge further and further into the forest.

BILL And Little Brother is especially hot and sticky and sweaty and thirsty – so terribly thirsty. Such a fierce thirst.

 I so need a drink.

GILL It's as bad for me.

BILL You don't sweat as much as I do.

GILL But I'm just as thirsty.

BILL Then let's find a stream. Quick, before our throats dry up.

GILL Look.

BILL Look.

GILL And they race to the stream.

BILL They tear through thorns to the sparkle of the stream.

GILL But the girl hears a voice.

BILL "Children, my children – listen to me. Who drinks from the stream, a tiger will be."

GILL Did you hear that?

BILL What?

GILL A voice.

BILL What voice?

GILL It sounded like our mother's voice.

BILL But she's dead.

GILL It still sounded like her voice.

BILL "Who drinks from the stream, a tiger will be."

GILL It's there again.

BILL I still can't hear it. What's it saying?

GILL She's warning us.

BILL What about?

 "A tiger will be"

GILL If we drink from the stream we'll turn into tigers.

BILL That's daft. That sort of thing only happens in stories.

GILL This is a story.

BILL No, it's a play.

GILL It's the play of a story.

BILL So it could happen.

GILL Yes it could. And if you turned into a tiger you might attack me.

BILL I wouldn't do that.

GILL But you might not be able to help it if you turned into a tiger. You might eat me all up.

BILL And if you turned into a tiger you might eat me all up.

GILL I'm not going to turn into a tiger because I'm not going to drink.

BILL Well if we both drink and we both turn into tigers that would be all right – because tigers don't eat each other up.

GILL I don't want to be a fierce ferocious tiger. I want to be a girl.

BILL But I want a drink.

GILL You mustn't.

BILL I have to.

GILL Please.

BILL And despite his terrible thirst, little brother agrees.

 But only one hour later:

 I'm going to have to drink. My tongue's sticking to the roof of my mouth it's so dry. We need to find another stream that won't turn us into tigers.

GILL Look.

BILL Look.

GILL And they stumble down the hillside.

BILL They break their way through the bracken.

GILL And they cup their hands ready to drink.

BILL “Children, my children listen to me. Who sips from the water, a wolf will be.”

GILL You hear that?

BILL No I don’t hear anything – and I don’t want to hear anything.

GILL Mother’s voice again.

BILL I don’t want to hear.

GILL Warning us.

BILL That we’ll turn into tigers?

GILL That we’ll turn into wolves.

BILL Wolves aren’t as fierce as tigers.

GILL They’re fierce enough.

BILL I wouldn’t mind being a wolf, it might be fun.

GILL You’d attack me.

BILL I’d try very hard not to.

GILL You mustn’t drink.

BILL I have to.

GILL Please.

BILL And again, despite his terrible thirst, the boy agrees.

 But only one hour later:

 I’m going to have to drink. My lips are sticking together, my mouth’s so dry. I don’t care what the voice says. I don’t care if I turn into a lion or a bear or a wild hyena, I’ve got to drink.

GILL Little Brother, we have to be strong.

BILL We have to drink. We need water or we’ll die.

 Look.

GILL And they stagger towards a stream.

BILL But when they get there, the stream has dried up.

 Look.

GILL And they stagger towards another stream.

BILL But when they reach it, that stream has dried up too.

GILL I think it's mother drying up the streams. She's trying to save you from turning into a beast.

BILL Does she want me to die?

 And then Little Brother sees a tiny splash of water at his feet. Right there at his feet.

GILL There was a little hoof print. A neat little hoof print. The sweet little hoof print of a deer. A roe deer.

BILL And the hoof print has filled up with water. Muddy water, but water all the same. Water to quench my thirst.

GILL And as Little Brother stoops to drink.

BILL "Children, my children listen to me. Who drinks from the puddle, a roe-deer will be."

GILL Brother.

BILL I'm not listening.

GILL You mustn't drink.

BILL I have to.

GILL Please.

BILL And this time he does.

GILL And no sooner has the water touched his lips than Little Brother finds himself turned into

BILL A roe-deer.

GILL Oh dear.

BILL That's not funny.

GILL Not at all funny.

BILL And not much fun. I mean, being a wolf, that could be great fun, prowling around, snarling at people, terrifying flocks of sheep.

GILL Not much fun for the sheep.

BILL But a deer. A little roe-deer. Slipping away into the shadows. Hiding from the hunters. That's not much fun at all.

I wish I had that moment again.

GILL Which moment?

BILL The moment when the water touched my lips. If I had that moment again, I wouldn't drink.

GILL But you don't have that moment again. And you did drink. And now you're a deer and we must do the best we can.

BILL I'm suddenly afraid. I've never been afraid before.

GILL What are you afraid of?

BILL I don't know. Everything. The rustle of the leaves. A twig snapping.

GILL You might be right to be afraid. Perhaps it's useful to be afraid.

BILL I'm even a bit afraid of you, Little Sister. I might just have to run away.

GILL No, you mustn't run away. Then you really would be in danger – you really would have something to be afraid of. Stay with me. I'll protect you. There's a good deer.

And Little Sister slips off a sash she wears around her waist and puts the sash round the little roebuck's neck. So that he can't run away.

BILL And she leads her little brother deeper and deeper into the forest.

GILL Until at last they are so deep in the forest

BILL that their wicked witch of a stepmother can't see them anymore.

GILL Even with my mystical, magical powers I can longer see Little Brother and Little Sister. I hope the waters of the wood do what I ask and turn them into wild beasts.

BILL And right in the middle of the forest they find a house.

GILL A little house.

BILL An empty little house.

GILL And they do a bit of mending and tidying.

BILL Well Little Sister does most of the mending and tidying because it's quite difficult for a deer to help with things like that. It's the hooves you see, they do rather get in the way.

GILL And soon the little house is snug and tidy.

BILL And there's plenty of water and plenty of food.

GILL And they live happily.

BILL But not ever after.

GILL Not ever after, no. Not yet.

BILL Not happily ever after because that would be the end of the story.

GILL It would.

BILL Because that's how stories end.

GILL They do.

BILL But this isn't the end.

GILL No.

BILL Because there's still lots more to happen.

GILL That's right.

BILL Do you think happily is the right word? How happy were they?

GILL They were content.

BILL Content. What's the difference?

GILL Well content means they weren't sad. And they weren't really exactly happy, but they were right in the middle.

BILL So it could have been worse.

GILL Yes it could have been worse - they could still have had the wicked stepmother doing terrible things to them.

BILL And it could have been better.

GILL Yes, it could have been better - they could have been free to live their lives without hiding away.

BILL But it was in the middle. They were content.

GILL There were content.

BILL And then suddenly – a few years later.

GILL That's right – we change the scene again.

BILL To a few years later.

GILL They're still in their little house in the woods.

BILL Feeling content. When they hear a hunting horn.

GILL Hunters in the forest.

BILL Little Brother tip-toes – on his hooves – to the window.

GILL Keep down, the hunters'll see you.

BILL I wish I could be out there.

GILL But it's you they'd be after. They'll be hunting deer like you.

BILL So exciting.

GILL So dangerous.

BILL I want to be out there – I so much want to be out there.

GILL Of course you don't.

BILL Of course I do. I can't bear being shut in the house. Tied up so I can't run away.

GILL It's for your own good, Little Brother – to keep you safe.

BILL Let me go, sister. Let me run free. I know the forest – they'll never catch me.

GILL They have dogs and horses and spears and arrows.

BILL I'll outrun them all.

GILL I can't put you in danger.

BILL It's not you putting me in danger. It's me deciding. The years have passed. I'm old enough to decide for myself.

GILL You're right, aren't you Little Brother. I have to let you go. If that's what you're sure you want, I have to open the door.

 And that's what she does.

 She takes the sash from round the roebuck's neck. And she opens the door.

BILL And out the roebuck bounds, out through the door, out into the freedom of the forest.

 And he stretches his legs, and he pricks up his ears, and he twitches his nose, and he smells the hunt on the breeze.

GILL The horses' sweat.

BILL The hounds' breath.

GILL The men's excitement ready for a kill.

BILL And he runs.

GILL And he bounds.

BILL And he leaps.

GILL And he swerves this way

BILL and that

GILL to the right

BILL to the left

GILL And the hunters see him

BILL A handsome young buck

GILL And they're quick to chase

BILL to pursue their prey

GILL and they spread themselves out

BILL to try to trap him

GILL but it doesn't work

BILL he's too quick

GILL too light on his feet

BILL on his hooves

GILL he get's away

BILL every time

GILL and leads them a merry dance through the rest of the day

BILL till at last the sun sinks behind the trees to sleep

GILL and the Roebuck

BILL Little Brother

GILL creeps his way back to his sister, left behind, waiting anxiously for news

BILL So much fun

GILL I was worried

BILL I outran them all.

GILL Worried sick.

BILL I'm exhausted.

GILL You were gone so long.

BILL But they're even tireder than me.

GILL You've shown you can do it.

BILL Faster than them all.

GILL That's right. So you don't need to go again. Not again. You don't have to go again.

BILL But I might...

GILL Please Little Brother. Don't make me worry like that again.

BILL All right Little Sister.

 But when next morning comes and he hears the hunter's horns.

 Listen to them sister.

GILL Yes.

BILL Ready for the hunt.

GILL Yes.

BILL So much fun.

GILL No. Not for me.

BILL For them. For me.

GILL Please Little Brother. You said.

BILL You saw I easily I outran them.

GILL I didn't see that, no. I was shut inside, waiting for you to come home.

BILL But I can't stand being shut inside. Don't you see, Little Sister? It isn't me.

GILL Please.

BILL I'm sorry.

GILL And he's away.

BILL More alive than he's ever felt. Heart pounding, lungs bursting.

GILL But Little Sister spends a terrible day in the little house in the middle of the forest. She hears the horns, the cry of the dogs, the shout of the hunters

BILL Now this side

GILL Now that

BILL Now near

GILL Now far

 And the day seems to last an eternity – more like a week.

BILL A month.

GILL A year.

BILL She can't breathe.

GILL Her heart thumping in her chest.

BILL At times her blood runs cold with fear of what might happen to Little Brother.

GILL But yesterday he escaped – and this is what he has to do. He'll be fine.

 The sun has set, he'll be back any moment.

 Back any moment.

 It's completely dark.

 Back any moment.

BILL At last she hears a scuffle at the door.

GILL She runs to let him in.

 Blood.

 Blood on your shoulder.

BILL It's nothing.

GILL You're hurt.

BILL A scratch.

GILL Let me see. Let me look after you.

BILL A graze.

GILL A thorn?

BILL An arrow.

GILL An arrow?

BILL It's nothing.

GILL It's not nothing. An arrow could have killed you.

BILL But it didn't. I was too quick. Just a graze. I'm here – I got away.

GILL Not tomorrow.

BILL We'll see.

GILL No, please Little Brother. Not tomorrow – promise me – not tomorrow.

BILL I'm tired. I must rest.

 And tomorrow comes. And with it the hunter's horn.

GILL And even before Little Sister has fully opened her eyes...

BILL Little Brother is off – into the freshness of a bright new day.

 But it isn't like before.

GILL His shoulder aches.

BILL Where the arrow had scraped.

GILL His limbs are tired.

BILL From the past two days.

GILL His hooves feel heavy.

BILL His hooves that tripped so light through the forest yesterday and the day before.

GILL And now he knows what it is to be hunted.

BILL These dogs, they're not playing games.

GILL They want to bite.

BILL To sink their teeth in my flesh.

GILL To kill him if they can.

BILL Not just a game. And the hunters.

GILL They're not the fools he took them for.

BILL They lie in wait.

GILL They drive him this way and that.

BILL Drive me away from my usual paths.

GILL Not sure where he is anymore.

BILL My shoulder is throbbing.

GILL The wound that he wouldn't let his sister tend is infected now.

BILL Swollen with poison. Stiffening up.

GILL It's slowing him down.

BILL Hobbling – off-balance.

GILL Dizzy.

BILL Out of breath.

GILL Heart thumping.

BILL Beating in my chest.

GILL Horse- hooves tramping.

BILL Beating on the forest-floor.

GILL His heart and the horse-hooves

BILL Thumping, beating, beating, thumping.

Sister.

GILL Thumping, beating, beating, thumping.

BILL Sister.

Thumping

GILL Beating, beating.

BILL Thumping. Sister.

GILL Little Brother. You're safe.

BILL Not again Little Sister. I won't go out again. I promise.

But this time the hunters are not so far behind.

GILL This time the hunters see the house.

They see the door open and the deer disappear.

BILL They see the door open and the deer creep in.

GILL And the hunters fetch their king and tell him what they've seen.

BILL And the young king approaches the house.

GILL And the young king knocks on the door.

 I won't let them take you.

 Who's there?

BILL I'm your king.

GILL What do you want?

BILL Is that the way to speak to your king?

GILL How do I know you're who you say you are?

BILL Open the door and you'll see for yourself.

GILL What is it you want?

BILL Please open the door.

GILL And so she does. She does open the door. Slowly. And fearfully.

BILL And there stands the king.

GILL And there stands Little Sister.

 And for a moment they forget about Little Brother.

BILL Forget about the deer they've been hunting.

GILL And are only aware of each other.

BILL Will you marry me? Will you live with me in the royal palace? Will you be my Queen?

GILL Yes.

 And then Little Sister remembers Little Brother.

 And you must let my brother come too.

BILL Your brother?

GILL My deer. The roebuck. I think of him as my brother.

BILL The deer we've been hunting?

GILL Yes, the deer you've been hunting. You must promise not to harm him.

BILL I promise.

GILL And so Little Sister and Little Brother leave the house in the middle of the forest and go to live in the royal palace. Little Sister is now a Queen.

BILL And Little Brother, of course, is still a deer. A roebuck. Once more tied up with a sash around his neck to stop him from running away.

GILL Now that they're no longer in the middle of the forest their wicked stepmother can see them again.

 What? What's this? Little Sister in a palace. I thought her long gone by now. Long since dead.

 In a palace? Dressed like a Queen. How thoroughly revolting, what a dreadful state of affairs.

 And where's Little Brother? Horrible little boy. Not there – well thank goodness for that. A deer? Why has she got a deer with her in the Palace. Ah wait, but of course, so something worked at least. Little Brother is trapped in the shape of a deer. How thoroughly amusing.

 But what to do about Little Sister?

BILL What she does is this.

 First she magics herself into the shape of a washerwoman and gets herself a job at the palace washing clothes. This way she can see exactly what's going on.

 Then she waits for her chance.

GILL The King can't stop hunting. He loves his hunting. It seems perhaps he loves his hunting more than he loves his Queen. She's left alone in the palace for days on end.

BILL And still the wicked step-mother waits and watches for her chance.

GILL Until one evening Little Sister decides to take a walk by the river.

 It's a lovely late-summer evening.

BILL A warm evening – heavy with heat.

GILL A lazy buzz from the bees. Dragonflies snapping up midges.

BILL An early hoot from an owl.

GILL The deep dark waters of the river. Too deep, too dark to see the bottom. And Little Sister lost in thought as she gazes into the deep dark waters of the river.

BILL Doesn't see that she's being followed.

GILL Followed by the wicked stepmother, moving like a shadow between the trees at the edge of the wood that borders the river.

BILL The wicked stepmother creeping nearer. Nearer and nearer to Little Sister lost in thought.

GILL The wicked stepmother's eyes fixed on Little Sister. Fixed so fast, with such fierce intent that she doesn't notice the deer following them both.

BILL The timid deer watching the wicked stepmother watching Little Sister.

GILL Little Sister lost in thought, gazing into the deep dark waters of the river doesn't hear the wicked stepmother creeping towards her.

BILL But the deer sees.

GILL Doesn't hear the wicked stepmother right behind her.

BILL But the deer sees.

GILL Isn't aware that the wicked stepmother is there until too late.

BILL But the deer sees the wicked stepmother push Little Sister into the deep dark waters, where the reeds hold Little Sister tight in a tangled embrace and the fish gaze at her beauty.

GILL The wicked stepmother magics herself to look like the Queen – though all the magic in the world can't make her quite as beautiful as Little Sister. And off she goes to the Palace to take Little Sister's place.

BILL The deer runs to the river - but too late. Tears trickling down his muzzle, splashing into the water. And he sings a song to his sister, who lies tangled in the reeds.

Little Sister, Little Sister swim to me
 Leave the fishes in the river – let them be
 Swim your way to the riverside
 Wipe away the tears I've cried
 Little sister little sister swim to me

I saw you fall
 Saw the hand that pushed you
 Deep in the dark of the river blue
 I saw you fall
 Now I sing my song
 That the world may know the wrong that's done to you

GILL The King returns from the hunt and is happy to be back home with his Queen – he thinks that she's his Queen.

BILL But where's your little brother?

GILL My brother?

BILL The deer.

GILL What deer?

BILL The little deer you think of as your brother.

GILL Ah yes. The deer. Of course, the little deer.

BILL Are you all right?

GILL Of course I'm all right.

BILL You seem a little...

GILL A little?

BILL Not quite all there.

GILL That's not a nice thing to say.

BILL So where's the deer?

GILL I have no idea.

BILL Perhaps we better find him.

GILL Perhaps we should.

 So a search party is sent to find the deer.

BILL They search through the Palace.

GILL Nothing.

BILL They search through the Palace Gardens.

GILL Nothing.

BILL They search the surrounding countryside.

GILL The king and his huntsmen search through the forest.

BILL Nothing.

GILL The farmers join in to search through the fields.

BILL Nothing.

GILL It is the wicked stepmother who finds him.

BILL Finds him down by the river still singing to his sister tangled in the reeds.

 I saw you fall
 Saw the hand that pushed you
 Deep in the dark of the river blue
 I saw you fall

GILL And the wicked stepmother understands. Understands that if anyone else hears his words that will be the end. They'll know what she's done. The game will be over.

 So she tries to grab him.

BILL But the deer skips away.

GILL So she tries to chase after him.

BILL But the deer speeds away.

GILL So she summons up her magical mystical powers and she flies through the air like a banshee determined to catch him.

BILL But he darts this way and that and he leaps high and low

GILL So that she is forced to give up.

 But the wicked stepmother is still worried that someone will hear the deer's words and that her crime will be revealed. So she comes up with a plan. And when she and the king sit down to supper that night:

BILL I'm so sorry we haven't been able to find the deer.

GILL Perhaps it's a sign.

BILL What do you mean?

GILL Perhaps it's a sign that I must let the deer go.

BILL Let him go?

GILL Now that we are married, man and wife, perhaps I must let the deer go.

BILL But you love the deer. Like a brother you say.

GILL It's you that I love.

BILL I'm sure you have enough love for a deer as well as for me.

GILL No, I think I should let him go. More than that. I think perhaps we should make a meal of the deer.

BILL Eat him you mean.

GILL Yes, that it is what I mean. I think perhaps we should eat the deer as a sign that I am yours and yours alone.

BILL I don't really think that's necessary.

GILL Will you catch him for me?

BILL What?

GILL You and your hunters.

BILL Catch the deer?

GILL Will you? As a token of your love.

BILL A token of my love?

GILL To prove you love me.

BILL If that's what you want.

GILL It is.

BILL And so the king orders his huntsmen to hunt the deer to the death.

GILL And the wicked stepmother – disguised as the Queen - orders the cooks to prepare for a feast.

BILL And the huntsmen let loose the dogs.

GILL And the dogs sniffle and snuffle their way into the forest.

BILL Where soon they sniffle a scent of deer.

GILL And the dogs bay.

BILL And the huntsmen sound their horns.

GILL And the horses gallop into the forest with riders on their backs ready with bows and arrows to shoot down the deer.

BILL The roebuck runs like the wind. None of the joy that he felt when the king first led the hunt. Back then he thought it a game. Now he knows it's for real.

 However fast he runs he can't outrun the hunters.

GILL Too many of them.

BILL However fleet he flees, he cannot dodge the dogs.

GILL Nipping at his heels.

BILL Only a matter of time before an arrow hits home.

GILL One whistles past his ear.

BILL He heads for the river.

GILL But that can't help. By the river there's nowhere to hide.

BILL He's not wanting to hide. He's calling for help.

GILL By the river he stops. Tears welling in his eyes.

BILL He throws back his head.

GILL And he sings.

BILL I saw you fall
 Now I sing my song
 That the world may know the wrong that's done to you

GILL The hunters stand spellbound, the horses transfixed, the dogs still as statues.

BILL Who in all their life had ever heard a deer to talk?

GILL Let alone sing?

BILL As they stand there so wonderfully still the King arrives with his Queen - so he thinks
 – at his side.

GILL And now the King hears for himself the miracle of the singing deer.

BILL And swim back to dry-land
 To save your brother

GILL And the King understands this is no ordinary deer. And so he himself dives into the
 river to find who it is that the deer is singing to.

BILL Normally you'd expect a king to order a servant to do such a thing.

GILL But this is so strange that the king dives in himself.

BILL And in less than a moment the king is spluttering up to the surface with a body in his
 arms.

GILL The body, of course, of Little Sister.

BILL And she isn't dead.

GILL Freed from the weeds she comes back to life in the arms of the king.

BILL And the stepmother...

GILL the wicked stepmother - the moment Little Sister opens her eyes and breaths again,
 the wicked stepmother turns back into her own shape.

BILL Much to the King's surprise.

GILL And the stepmother screams.

BILL The wicked stepmother - a scream that terrifies all who hear.

GILL A scream of rage, a scream of frustration. Because she knows her powers are at an end.

BILL And she runs. Like a wild animal. Runs for her life.

GILL And she's right to run for her life.

BILL Because the hunters are after her. Pounding after her on horse back.

GILL Dogs howling, horns braying.

BILL Chasing her deep into the darkness of the forest.

GILL And as far as we know they're chasing her still because they never came back with her out of the forest.

BILL But we haven't told you about the other thing that happens when Little Sister opens her eyes and breathes again.

GILL Another transformation takes place.

BILL No longer a deer Little Brother is back in his human shape.

GILL And Little Brother and Little Sister and the King...

BILL What happens to them?

GILL Well the King didn't go hunting anymore. How could he leave the Queen by herself after all that had happened? And how could he hunt for deer when he learnt that Little Brother and once been turned into a roebuck?

BILL So then, they all lived happily ever after. Which means it must be the end of the story. So, Little Sister, is that a good place to stop?

GILL That's a very good place to stop, Little Brother.

BILL But what really happened to the wicked step-mother?

GILL "They all lived happily ever after" is a very good place to stop.