



SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

Once upon a time, there was a kingdom ruled justly and kindly by its king and queen. They had always dreamed of having children, and one day, they finally had a beautiful baby girl. Their daughter had hair as black as a raven, skin as white as snow and lips red as blood. She was born on a snowy day in the winter, and they decided to name her Snow White. For a while they were very happy, but one day the queen got very sick and died.

Years passed and the king found himself a new wife. There was a lavish royal wedding. The new queen was very beautiful, but she was also arrogant and deceitful. No one saw her for the mean witch she really was.

The queen's most prized possession was a magic mirror that she had secretly brought to her chamber in the palace.

Every evening before she went to bed, she would ask, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest one of all?" And the mirror would always answer truthfully.

"You, my queen, are the fairest in the land."

One day the king got suddenly ill and died. A great sorrow spread across the whole kingdom and everyone mourned for their beloved king. His wife, the queen, became a ruthless ruler.

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From that day on, Snow White lived alone in the palace with her evil stepmother. The queen did not like her stepdaughter, but mostly ignored her. On the eve of the girl's eighteenth birthday, however, the queen went to her chamber as she always did, sat in front of the magic mirror, and started brushing her hair with a golden brush. As always, she looked at the mirror and said: "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest one of all?"

"You are very beautiful, my queen," the mirror said. "But Snow White is the fairest in the land."

The queen was furious. She flung her golden brush at the floor so hard it broke into a dozen pieces, and she decided she would get rid of Snow White as soon as she possibly could. She sent for her best hunter.

"I want you to take Snow White deep into the woods and kill her," she said. "Cut out her heart and bring it back to me so I know the deed is done."

The next evening, the hunter took Snow White into a dark forest. The girl realised something bad was about to happen and started begging for mercy.

"Please, don't kill me!" she said. "I'll run away and no one here will ever see me again, just let me live, please!" She was so pure and kind that the hunter couldn't bring himself to hurt her. He thought for a long moment.

"Very well, but you will have to run and you mustn't stop. You can't ever come back here. Everyone needs to think you're dead, or else the queen will have both of us executed." Snow White thanked him and ran as far as she could into the dark forest. She ran and ran through the murky, mysterious trees and didn't stop to look back even once. Fear started to seep into her bones. It sometimes looked as if the trees and shrubs were turning toward her, trying to get her attention. She ran until she couldn't feel her legs anymore and she tripped over a branch, fell to the ground and started rolling downhill. When she finally stopped, she saw a small house completely covered with moss. Scared, she walked closer and knocked on the door.

No one opened the door, so she decided to go inside. It was very cosy, indeed. She saw food and water on the table and her belly started to rumble very loudly. She couldn't remember the last time she'd eaten. There were seven small plates and

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seven small clay cups on the table. She ate and drank a little bit from each, then entered the next room to find seven small beds next to each other. She stretched across them and immediately fell asleep.

Now, the house belonged to seven dwarves, who had been at work all day and were just about to return home. As soon as they walked in they noticed something was amiss.

“Who’s been eating my bread?” asked the first.

“Who’s been drinking from my cup?” asked the second.

Then the third: “Who’s been sitting in my chair?”

The fourth: “Who’s been eating with my fork?”

And the fifth: “Who’s been eating my vegetables?”

And the sixth: “Who’s been cutting with my knife?”

The seventh opened the bedroom door a crack and peeked inside.

“Who’s this lying on our beds?”

The dwarfs entered the room quietly and stared at the sleeping Snow White.

“What is it?” one of them asked.

“Who knows? She’s awfully lovely, though!” Said another.

“Let’s wake her up!” suggested a third.

“But why is it sleeping in our beds?” asked the fourth, frowning.

“Let her sleep. I’m sure she’ll explain everything when she wakes up,” said the fifth.

And so they waited impatiently for Snow White to wake up.

When she finally opened her eyes, she saw seven small bearded men staring at her and she let out a frightened shriek. When she sat up and took a better look at their little faces, though, her fear melted away. They had kind eyes, and they seemed rather startled.

“Who are you? How did you get here?” asked the fifth dwarf, who was the oldest and wisest.

“What are you?” asked the second, who was rather silly.

“My name is Snow White,” she explained. “My stepmother, the queen, ordered her hunter to kill me and cut my heart out, but I escaped. I ran through the

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woods until I came across your house. Please forgive me, I should never have intruded but I was so terribly hungry and tired.”

“So you’re a princess?” asked the sixth dwarf.

“I am. Please, don’t send me back. Can’t I stay here? I can cook and keep the house clean for you!” She was desperate to stay as far away from the castle as possible.

“Alright, love. From now on, you can be one of us,” said the seventh dwarf, and he shook her hand.

The dwarves’ house had never been so clean before! The dwarves loved having Snow White live with them – the house was squeaky clean, and they danced and sang and made merry. Every morning, when they left for work in the mines, she would see them out the door and hand them bags with their favourite lunches, and when they returned in the evening a tasty meal would already be waiting for them on the table. Secretly, though, they worried about leaving Snow White alone every day, and so they warned to be careful and never let anyone inside the house.

Back in the palace, the evil queen held a box with her stepdaughter’s heart inside and felt triumphant. She had rewarded the hunter handsomely, and now she stood in front of her mirror once again and asked,

“Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s the fairest one of all?”

“You are very beautiful, my queen, but still Snow White is the fairest in the land.”

The queen screamed and threw the box with the deer heart to the ground. The hunter had tricked her! He hadn’t killed Snow White at all! She couldn’t live with the knowledge that her stepdaughter was more beautiful with her, and so she transformed herself into a wrinkled old woman and set out to the woods to find Snow White.

When she came to the dwarfs’ house, she called out,

“Come buy my wares! Come closer and take a look in my basket!”

Snow White pulled aside the curtain and looked outside, but she couldn’t see what was inside the woman’s basket. She opened the door and went to admire the beautiful colourful bands and ribbons the woman was selling.

“I will give you this one for free, dearie. It’s a gift, because you’re so very lovely!”

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said the disguised witch, and she held up a pretty red sash. “Here, let me tie it for you.”

She stepped behind the girl and tied the ribbon around her waist so tight that poor Snow White couldn’t breathe. She fell to the ground, gasping for air. The queen turned to leave and cackled,

“Who is the most beautiful now, Snow White?”

Luckily the dwarves were already on their way home, and when they saw Snow White lying on the ground, they rushed to untie the ribbon. When she began to breathe normally and woke up, the dwarves implored her not to trust anyone who even passed their house. Obviously, the queen had found out that Snow White was alive and living there.

The queen returned to the palace and resumed her normal face. She hurried to her mirror and asked,

“Mirror, mirror, who’s the fairest of them all?”

“You are very beautiful, my queen, but Snow White is still the fairest in the land.”

The queen couldn’t believe her ears. How was the girl still alive? The next day, she disguised herself as an old woman again, but this time she came selling hair brushes dipped in poison.

When she came to the dwarfs’ house, she started shouting: “New goods! Come take a look! Oh, what wonderful things I have for sale today!”

“I don’t want anything from you, go away,” Snow White called out, and she quickly closed the window.

“Won’t you at least take a look?” the old woman asked. She walked up to the window and held up a beautiful golden hairbrush. The girl let herself be fooled once again, enchanted by the beautiful brush, and opened the door. The old woman offered to brush Snow White’s hair, and as soon as the brush touched her head, the poison began to take effect and the girl fell to the ground.

“There, that should do the trick!” the queen said, spitefully.

Once again, the seven dwarves returned home to find Snow White collapsed on the ground. They rushed to her side, and one of them noticed the brush tangled in her hair. As soon as he pulled it out, Snow White woke up.

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“It must have been that evil queen, she’ll try anything to get rid of you!” shouted one of the dwarfs angrily. He dug a deep hole and carefully buried the poisoned brush deep underground.

“Snow White, you can’t trust anyone but us,” they said. “Don’t open the door for anyone, and don’t take anything from anybody.”

Snow White was ashamed that she’d let herself be fooled a second time. She promised the dwarves she really wouldn’t open the door for anyone again.

That evening, the queen looked at herself in the mirror once again.

“Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s the fairest of them all?”

And, once, again, the mirror replied that Snow White was the fairest of all.

The queen raged, furious that she should have failed a second time. She wouldn’t rest until Snow White was dead.

“I’ll have to poison her from the inside, this time, and make sure no one ever wakes her again” the queen muttered to herself, and she hurried to the kitchen to brew a terrible poison.

The next morning, the dwarves again left for the mine and the queen changed into an old beggar. She was gaunt and wore ragged clothes, knowing that the kind-hearted Snow White wouldn’t be able to help but take pity on her.

As she approached the dwarves’ house, she shouted: “Sweet apples! Buy one to help an old beggar.”

Snow White looked out the window and saw a wretched old woman with a basket full of beautiful red apples.

“Have an apple, fair lady,” offered the beggar.

“No, thank you, I can’t,” replied Snow White from the kitchen window. “I’m not supposed to take anything from strangers.”

“Oh dearie, you don’t think I would sell you a dangerous apple?” She took one of the apples from the basket, cut it in half and handed one of the halves to the girl.

“Here, we can share this one.”

The disguised queen smiled at the girl and ate her half of the apple. She knew just what she was doing, as she had poisoned only one half of the apple – the one Snow White was just about to bite into. Snow White didn’t think that half the

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apple might be poisoned, so chomp! She took a bite and – oh no! The bitter taste of the poison spread through her body and she fell into a deep slumber.

When the dwarves returned from the mine, they tried to revive her, but the poor girl couldn't be saved. They searched through her hair and clothes, but they couldn't find anything suspicious. Snow White simply wasn't breathing anymore. The devastated dwarfs cried for a whole day and that evening made her a coffin. It wasn't just any coffin, though. The box was made of glass so that anyone could admire Snow White's beauty, and instead of burying her underground, they carried her up a hill and built a shrine. On the side of the coffin, they inscribed the words PRINCESS SNOW WHITE.

That night, the queen proudly asked the mirror,

“Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest one of all?”

“You, my queen, are the fairest in all the land,” the mirror responded.

The queen laughed wickedly and her voice echoed throughout the whole palace. She could finally rest, knowing that she was the most beautiful woman in the entire land!

All the animals from the surrounding woods heard the evil laugh and knew that the queen must have triumphed. They gathered around Snow White's coffin, where the dwarves spent every day sitting and mourning their friend.

One day, a prince passed by the hill. He looked to the top and saw the crowd of mourners around the coffin. Curious, he decided to go and take a closer look. When he reached the coffin, he saw the most beautiful woman he had ever laid eyes on.

“I've never seen anyone so extraordinary,” he said. “How did she come to be here?”

One of the dwarves explained what had happened, and the prince asked if perhaps he could bring her to his castle to have his wizard try to save her. The dwarves didn't like the idea of moving her, but when they heard he might be able to help they eventually agreed. The eight of them picked up the coffin and began carrying it to the castle, but one of the dwarfs tripped suddenly over a stone. He dropped his corner of the coffin and everyone else lost their grip, but it turned

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out to be a lucky event as the coffin fell to the ground and the bump knocked the apple out from the girl's mouth. The poison stopped working and, suddenly, she could breathe again.

Slowly, she sat up and looked at her friends.

"Where am I? What happened?" she asked, confused.

The dwarves were overcome with joy when they saw that she was alive and well. It was a miracle! They thanked the prince for insisting they move the coffin, and introduced him to their beautiful friend. They immediately liked each other and he asked if she would do him the honour of marrying him.

"I'll take care of you and make sure nothing bad ever happens to you again," he said. He had very kind eyes and said her friends the dwarves would always be welcome at the palace, and so she agreed.

The evil queen, of course, had no idea that this had happened. That night, she once again sat in front of her magic mirror.

"Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest one of all?"

"You are very beautiful, my queen, but the prince's young bride is the fairest of them all," the mirror said, perhaps a little smugly.

The queen had no idea that the bride was Snow White, but she still wasn't going to tolerate the existence of another beauty.

She went to the prince's castle just in time for the great wedding. When she saw Snow White in a magnificent wedding dress, she couldn't believe her eyes. How was the girl alive?

The dwarves, of course, were the first to see the queen lurking, and they immediately told the prince. He called his guards and banished the evil witch from his land forever. Back in her palace, her servants took the mirror off her wall and locked it up in a safe and dropped it into the ocean, never to be used again.

From that day on, everyone in the land lived happily. Bells rang merrily to announce the new royal couple, and Snow White lived happily and safely ever after.