

Snow White

Based on the text by the brothers Grimm

It was winter, and the snow-flakes were falling, and a queen sat embroidering at her open window of ebony. And as she worked, she pricked her finger, and three drops of blood fell on the snow. And when she saw how red it looked, she said "Oh that I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as ebony!" Nine months later she had a daughter, with skin as white as snow, lips as red as blood, and hair as black as ebony, and she was named Snow-white. The queen died, and the king took another wife, a beautiful woman. She had a magic looking-glass, and she liked to stand before it, and say,

"Looking-glass upon the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"

And the looking-glass would answer,

"You are fairest of them all."

And she was contented.

Now, Snow-white was growing up and becoming beautiful. So one day when the queen went to her mirror and said,

"Looking-glass upon the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"

It answered,

"Queen, you are full fair, 'tis true,
But Snow-white is fairer than you."

This gave the queen a great shock, and her heart turned against Snow-white.

At last she sent for a huntsman, and said, "Take the child out into the woods, so that I may never see her again. You must kill her, and bring me her heart as proof." The huntsman consented; but when he drew his knife to cut Snow-white's innocent heart, she said, "Oh, dear huntsman, do not take my life; I will go into the forest, and never come home again." And as she was so beautiful the huntsman had pity on her. Just at that moment a deer came by, so he killed it, and took the heart to the queen as proof.

Now, when Snow-white found herself alone in the forest, she felt full of terror. Then she began to run. She ran she came to a little house, and she went inside to rest. Everything there was very small. There was a little table covered with a white cloth, and seven little plates, and seven knives and forks, and drinking-cups. By the wall were seven little beds. Snow-white was very hungry and thirsty, so she ate from each plate a little porridge and bread, and drank out of each little cup a little wine. After that she felt so tired that she lay down on one of the beds, and fell asleep.

When it was dark, the masters of the house came home. They were seven dwarfs, whose occupation was to dig underground among the mountains. When they had lighted their seven candles, the first dwarf said, "Who has been sitting in my little chair?" The second said, "Who has been eating from my little plate?" The third said, "Who has been taking my little loaf?" The fourth said, "Who has been tasting my porridge?" The fifth said, "Who has been using my little fork?" The sixth said, "Who has been cutting with my little knife?" The seventh said, "Who has been drinking from my little cup?" Then the seventh looked at his bed, he saw little Snow-white asleep. She was so beautiful, they let her sleep. When it was morning, and Snow-white awoke and saw the seven dwarfs, she was very frightened; but they seemed quite friendly, and asked her what her name was, and she told them; and then they asked how she came to their house. And she told them Then the dwarfs said, "If you will keep our house for us, and cook, and wash, you may stay with us, and you shall lack nothing." So Snow-white

stayed. In the morning the dwarfs went to the mountain to dig for gold; in the evening they came home, and their supper was ready.

Now the queen, sure that now she was the first and fairest, came to her mirror, and said,

"Looking-glass upon the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"

And the glass answered,

"Queen, thou art of beauty rare,
But Snow-white living in the forest
With the seven little dwarves
Is a thousand times more fair."

Then she was very angry; she painted her face and dressed like an old woman. In this disguise she went across the forest to the house of the seven little dwarfs, and she knocked on the door and cried, "laces of all colours;" and Snow-white bought the pretty lace, but the old woman laced so tight that it took Snow-white's breath away, and she fell down as dead. "Now you are not the fairest," said the old woman.

That evening, the seven dwarfs came home, and when they saw how tightly she was laced they cut the lace; then she began to breathe, and the dwarfs said, "The old woman was the wicked queen; you must not let any one in when we are not here!"

And when the wicked woman got home she went to her glass and said,

"Looking-glass against the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"

And it answered as before,

"Queen, thou art of beauty rare,
But Snow-white living in the forest
With the seven little dwarves
Is a thousand times more fair."

When she heard that she was furious. And by magic she made a poisoned comb. Then she dressed to look like another different old woman. So she came to the house of the seven dwarfs, and knocked on the door. Snow-white said, "I must not let anybody in." So the old woman, took the poisoned comb and put the comb in her hair, and Snow-white fell down senseless.

It was now evening, and the seven little dwarfs came home. When they saw Snow-white lying on the ground as dead, they found the poisoned comb, and took it out of her hair and Snow-white woke up. Then they told her never again to let any one touch her.

And the queen went home and stood before the looking-glass and said,

"Looking-glass against the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"

And the looking-glass answered as before,

"Queen, thou art of beauty rare,
But Snow-white living in the forest
With the seven little dwarves
Is a thousand times more fair."

The queen trembled with anger. "Snow-white shall die," she said. And she made a poisonous apple. Then she

went to the house of the seven dwarfs. And she knocked at the door. Snow-white said, "I must not let anybody in; the seven dwarfs told me not." There, take this beautiful apple." - "No," answered Snow-white, "I am afraid of poison" "Then, I will cut the apple in two pieces; you shall have the red side, I will have the white one." Said the queen. For the poison was in the red half. Snow-white wanted the beautiful apple, and took the poisoned half. She fell to the earth as dead. And the queen went home and asked the looking-glass,

"Looking-glass against the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"

at last it answered,

"You are the fairest now of all."

The dwarfs, when they came home in the evening, found Snow-white dead. They they laid her on a bed, and sat and lamented three days. And they made a coffin of clear glass, and wrote in golden letters her name, and that she was a king's daughter. Then they set the coffin out upon the mountain, and one of them always remained by it. One day a king's son rode through the forest to the mountain and saw the coffin, and beautiful Snow-white, and he read what was written in golden letters . Then he said to the dwarfs, "Let me have the coffin, and the good little dwarfs had pity upon him and gave him the coffin, and the king's son called his servants and told them to carry it away. But one servant fell, and the bit of poisoned apple flew out of Snow-white's throat. She sat up, alive and well. The king's said, "Come with me to my father's castle and you shall be my wife." And Snow-white was kind, and went with him, and their wedding was held with great splendour.

But Snow-white's wicked step-mother was also invited, and she went to her looking-glass and said,

"Looking-glass upon the wall,
Who is fairest of us all?"

The looking-glass answered,

"O Queen, although you are of beauty rare,
The young wife is a thousand times more fair."

Then she was full of anger. And when she saw Snow-white, she could not move For the dwarves had made red-hot iron shoes, in which she had to dance until she fell down dead.