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The Tale of Snow White

by
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THE TALE OF SNOW WHITE

Cast of Characters

QUEEN VANITY - majestic, beautiful, commanding. In royal garb including crown. May be double cast (See Production Notes.)

SNOW WHITE - young, very pretty, dressed simply

GROVELLA - any age close to Theo's. Lady-in-waiting

THEODORE the Huntsman - any age close to Grovella's. Dressed in vest or jerkin, tights or boots, hunter's hat

The Dwarfs may be male or female. Dressed very similarly - tights and tunics. Identical hats except in different colors. All are short (obviously) except Mel who is very tall.

DIGBY - The "head" dwarf, also the narrator

DILLY - The gourmet cook

DALLY - The would-be dancer

DINKY - The less-than-ambitious dwarf

DODIE - The fastidious dwarf

DERRY - The "tough guy/gal"

MEL - The tall dwarf

PRINCE WILLIAM - young, handsome. Dressed in white.

The VOICE of the Mirror (spoken from offstage or taped)

The TALE OF SNOW WHITE takes place in three locales: the castle interior, the forest, the clearing with the dwarfs' cottage. (See Production Notes.)

PROLOGUE

SETTING: In front of the curtain or in darkness. DIGBY enters and is illuminated by a spotlight.

DIGBY: Hello. Welcome to The Tale of Snow White. Our play will begin shortly, but first, there are a few things you should know. My name is Digby and I am a dwarf. Dwarfs are very important to this story. But then, I think dwarfs are important to most stories. Dwarfs have been around for hundreds and hundreds of years. So I know how the Snow White story really began long before she was even born.

There once was a witch, a very cruel but beautiful witch named Vanity. (*VANITY enters, hit with spotlight. She pantomimes DIGBY'S story.*) There was nothing more important to Vanity than her looks. All day she would stand in front of her mirrors and look lovingly at her reflection. Every day she would look carefully for any sign that her beauty was fading. She was very afraid of that so she did a very selfish thing. She went throughout the whole world stealing every speck of magic she could find. (*See Production Notes*). One night when the moon was full, Vanity cast a terrible spell. She trapped all the world's magic into one place - her hand mirror. And that is how she stayed forever the same, forever beautiful. (*VANITY exits slowly while admiring herself in the mirror*). For hundreds of years Vanity's face never changed. She remained beautiful and the world remained without magic. One day a king saw Vanity and was entranced by her. His own dear wife had died and in his loneliness the king could not see the wickedness in Vanity's heart, only her lovely face. He married her. That is how the Witch Vanity became Queen Vanity and the stepmother of Princess Snow White. Our story begins several years after the death of the king. Oh, but before we open the curtain, can I ask all of you something? If I need any help - would you be willing to give it? (*The audience will repeat all of DIGBY'S actions.*) Nothing difficult, but suppose I ask you to clap - like this (*he clap*) - can you do that? Or maybe I'll ask you to do this (*He waggles his fingers beside his ears.*) Can you? Very good. How about this? (*He gives a "raspberry".*) Somehow I knew you'd be good at that one! Right! And, now, the Tale of Snow White.

SCENE ONE

SETTING: Castle interior. The castle is the stone-walled, medieval type. There is a black velvet-covered throne on a small platform. There is also a table with benches. On the table is a small wooden box. The walls may be adorned with draperies, weapons, etc. A doorway is SR. GROVELLA, a maidservant, is sweeping. SNOW WHITE enters.

GROVELLA: Oh, princess, good morning to you.

SNOW WHITE: (*Stretching and yawning.*) 'Morning, Grovella.

GROVELLA: My, my but you look happy this morning. Did you sleep well?

SNOW WHITE: Oh yes. I slept very well.....Grovella, I had the dream again.

GROVELLA: Again? The same dream? (*SNOW WHITE nods.*) Oh, tell me! I love to hear it. It's so romantic.

SNOW WHITE: Well, let me try to remember.... Usually it begins as I'm sitting up - as though I've been startled. And out of nowhere there he is. He's tall and strong and he walks toward me with his hand stretched out. Like this. And when he speaks, his voice is deep but very gentle. He calls to me. But he doesn't say Snow White. He calls me Dream Child.

GROVELLA: (*Sighing romantically.*) Dream Child?

SNOW WHITE: Yes, then he comes and stands by me, takes my hand and we.....talk. I can never remember all of it except.....well, it's like we both know that we are dreaming. And we both want so badly to meet when we're awake! Isn't that silly and foolish, Grovella?

GROVELLA: Of course not, Princess. We all must have our dreams.

SNOW WHITE: But he's so real, Grovella. I know him.

GROVELLA: I know, dear. I know. Oh goodness, it's getting late. Her Majesty will be arising soon.

SNOW WHITE: My stepmother is still asleep?

GROVELLA: Yes, yes. Getting her beauty sleep I guess. (*yelling offstage*) NOT THAT SHE NEEDS IT. THE QUEEN IS SO BEAUTIFUL THAT SHE COULD STAY UP ALL NIGHT AND STILL.....

SNOW WHITE: Grovella, do you remember my mother - my real mother? (*GROVELLA nods.*) What was she like?

GROVELLA: (*Remembering*) Your mother Oh your mother, Snow White she was ever so lovely (*yelling offstage*) THOUGH NOT AS LOVELY AS QUEEN VANITY

SNOW WHITE: I don't care how she looked, Grovella. What was she like?

GROVELLA: Very sweet, princess. Very gentle. I remember her sitting - right there (*points to throne*) before you were born. She was sewing a piece of white linen. I said something that made her laugh and she accidentally pricked her finger with the needle. Three drops of blood fell on the pure white cloth. "Oh look, Grovella," she cried, "The colors. Oh, I hope my baby is a girl. With hair like black velvet.....and skin as pale as my linen. And lips as red as the drops of my blood." And then, my dear, when you were born we knew she had gotten her wish.

SNOW WHITE: Oh, I wish I remembered her!

GROVELLA: Well, there's always your step-mother, the Queen (*they both look at each other and giggle.*) She isn't very motherly, is she? (*suddenly fearful and calling offstage*) ALTHOUGH THE QUEEN IS GORGEOUS. (*QUEEN VANITY appears sleepily and poses in doorway. She is wearing a robe and has a small mirror on a ribbon around her neck.*)

QUEEN VANITY: Who's gorgeous?

GROVELLA: (*Standing quickly*) Oh, you are, Queen Vanity. Your Most Loveliness.

QUEEN VANITY: Good answer, Grovella. I do love it when you talk like that.

SNOW WHITE: Good morning, stepmother (*attempts to kiss her*).

QUEEN VANITY: (*Avoiding kiss*) Yes, yes good morning, Snow White. Aren't you supposed to be somewhere? Camp or school or something?

SNOW WHITE: I'm too old for all that. I'm all grown up, stepmother.

QUEEN VANITY: (*Bored*) My oh my, you are, aren't you? Congratulations. Now run along. Go pick flowers or whatever . . .DO something.

SNOW WHITE: Pick flowers?

QUEEN VANITY: Pick weeds for all I care. Just go. It is too early to listen to your cheerful chirping.

SNOW WHITE: I'm sorry, stepmother, I'll go. Good-bye, Grovella. (*She exits.*)

QUEEN VANITY: Ta-ta, dear. (*After SNOW WHITE has exited*) Namby pamby little twit. Grovella!

GROVELLA: Yes, yes, my queen, Most Beauteous One.

QUEEN VANITY: Today, after the morning routine

GROVELLA: Oh, I hate the morning routine. It's so spooky.

QUEEN VANITY: Silence, you little toad. As I was saying - after the morning routine I shall write some letters. All grown up is she? Funny. I hadn't noticed. Anyway, Grovella, it is time to find a husband for Snow White. The kid is starting to get on my nerves.

GROVELLA: Oh, how exciting! You know how romantic the princess is! Why she's already has this dream man she talks about. And we'll write letters today? May I tell her? Oh goodness! A royal wedding!

QUEEN VANITY: (*Laughing*) Royal Wedding. Hardly. I'll marry her off to aa....dwarf if I have to. Anyone - as long as she is out of my sight. Well, that's settled. Morning routine, Grovella.

GROVELLA: (*Groan*) Yes, ma'am.

QUEEN VANITY: Ma'am? ?

GROVELLA: I mean yes, yes, yes, your Most Exquisiteness.

QUEEN VANITY: That's better. Gently, Grovella. Pinch me and you'll spend next month in a swamp. (*She sits in throne. GROVELLA stands behind and massages her face with upward strokes. The QUEEN holds the mirror before her. The lights dim. A single spot illuminates QUEEN VANITY.*)

QUEEN VANITY: Mirror, mirror, in my hand, who's the loveliest in the land?

MIRROR: Oh set me free, thou wicked queen.
No longer are you the loveliest to be seen.

QUEEN VANITY: WHAT! WHAT DID YOU SAY! Explain, Mirror.

MIRROR: She doesn't need magic, she doesn't need me,
Snow White's more beautiful, NATURALLY.

GROVELLA: Fancy that! I never thought I'd hear the mirror say that anyone but you.... Imagine, the little princess is more beautiful.....(sees QUEEN VANITY'S livid expression) Oh, I'm sure the mirror is wrong.....It's having a bad day, that's all.....Very unreliable, magic mirrors.....

QUEEN VANITY: Silence! I'm trying to think.....

GROVELLA: Now remember, Majesty, you had planned to send her away.

QUEEN VANITY: AWAY - Why, I'll, I'll do more than that. I'll.....

GROVELLA: A few years in a hot climate and Snow White will be tanned and wrinkled.....

QUEEN VANITY: Will you be silent, Grovella! I'm trying to think.....
(*pause - an idea occurs*) Grovella, go and fetch Theodore the Huntsman.

GROVELLA: Theodore . . . but why?

QUEEN VANITY: Obey me, Grovella!

GROVELLA: Yes, yes, I'm going. (*She exits.*)

QUEEN VANITY: (*Looking into mirror*).....it's true. I can't believe it, but it's true. Snow White has grown more lovely than I. How could it have happened? That little brat. Well, I won't stand for it! I simply won't! But it's easily fixed. (*THEODORE and GROVELLA enter.*) Theodore, come in. Grovella, let go of the man!

THEODORE: (*Bowing*) Your majesty.

QUEEN VANITY: Theodore, as my Huntsman you are sworn to obey me. Keep that in mind as I give you this commission. Listen carefully.

This morning you are to go into the woods. You are to take the Princess Snow White with you. When you are at the deepest, darkest part of the forest you are to take up your bow and kill her.

GROVELLA: Kill Snow White? Oh no!....but why?.....just because of that stupid mirror.....

THEODORE: Your Highness....forgive me.....but this is a dreadful charge you give.

QUEEN VANITY: Stop your sniveling, both of you! I have given you a command, Huntsman, and as you know.....I am accustomed to obedience! Do you understand your orders, Theodore?

THEODORE: Yes . . . yes, I understand.

GROVELLA: Oh, Theodore . . .

QUEEN VANITY: Good! And, in case you think to trick me, I will require one more thing. (*She picks up box from table.*) Do you see this little chest? (*He nods.*) It is empty now. Take it. But I want it returned, Huntsman. Filled.... filled with the heart of Snow White.....

GROVELLA: (*Gasp*) Oh no!

QUEEN VANITY: Yes. The heart. So I will know for certain that you have obeyed your queen. That's all. A simple request, really. Go now, Huntsman. (*GROVELLA starts to follow him.*) Grovella, where do you think you're going?

GROVELLA: I was just....

QUEEN VANITY: You may watch from the window. (*GROVELLA does.*) What fools you are. All of you. Soon....soon....Snow White will be dead. And once again I will take my rightful place as the most beautiful woman in the world! (*She laughs, wickedly.*)

SCENE TWO

SETTING: The Forest. Snow White and Theodore enter. Snow White is carrying flowers and humming.

SNOW WHITE: Oh, Theodore, what a glorious day. Isn't it beautiful? Look at the sky. So incredibly blue. And there's just a hint of a breeze. Why, Theodore, you look so glum! How can anyone be sad on such a perfect day? Put down your bow and arrow, Theodore. It's too glorious a day to think about killing anything. Oh, did you see Grovella waving to us from window? She looked so sad. Really, Theodore, you should be nicer to her. She's so obviously in love with you.

THEODORE: What? Me? In love with me? Surely you are mistaken!

SNOW WHITE: Not at all. Don't tell me you've never noticed how she looks at you!

THEODORE: Really. You think so? I guess I hadn't been paying attention ...

SNOW WHITE: Well, you should. Oh Theodore, look at the sun dancing through the trees. (*She twirls with delight.*) I wish we could stay here forever and never go back!

THEODORE: Sometimes we have to do things we don't want to do, Princess. Sometimes....

SNOW WHITE: Sometimes what, Theodore?

THEODORE: Nothing..... (*Pointing SR*) Look, isn't that a bluebird? Over there.

SNOW WHITE: (*Turns and follows his gaze as he raises bow and arrow and aims in her direction.*) Where? Oh, I missed it! I love bluebirds. You know, Theodore, we really should have packed a picnic lunch and invited Grovella along. Although the silly goose is frightened of the forest. (*THEODORE cannot do it. He puts the bow down and buries his face in his hands.*)

SNOW WHITE: Why, Theodore, what is wrong?

THEODORE: Oh, princess. I am so sorry. It's....the Queen. She ordered me to bring you into the woods and.... kill you.

SNOW WHITE: My stepmother....ordered you to...but why . . . why would she want me dead?

THEODORE: Maybe it's because you are good and sweet and everyone loves you. I do not know why. But I do have a plan. Listen, princess, this is what you must do. Go deep, deep into the woods. Farther than we have ever gone. Stay there and hide so the queen cannot find you. I will return to the castle and convince her that I have carried out her foul order.

SNOW WHITE: Can I ever leave the forest, Theodore? Or must I stay in hiding forever?

THEODORE: It's only for a short while, Princess. After I have spoken to the Queen I will travel to other kingdoms. Somewhere I will find a king or prince who will help you. Have no fear. I shall return. Be brave, princess, and do as I say. Please. Go now.

SNOW WHITE: I will, Theodore. Kiss Grovella for me. Thank you. Good-bye. *(She exits SL.)*

THEODORE: Good-bye, little Snow White. *(After she is gone.)* Hear me, beasts of the forest, this is Theodore the Huntsman. I must kill one of your number so that I may present the Queen with a heart. For this I am deeply sorry. But I swear to you now that I shall never again harm a creature of this woods. In return, you must guide the Princess Snow White. Lead her to a place of safety where she may await my return. *(He exits SR)*

SCENE THREE

SETTING: Forest, exterior Dwarfs' cottage. Snow White enters.

SNOW WHITE: I never knew how deep this forest was. I've gone miles and miles without stopping. But, it's odd. Even though I'm all alone in this wood, I'm not frightened. It's as if all the creatures who live in the forest are watching out for me. Oh, but I am getting tired. *(She spies the cottage.)* Why...it's a little house. I wonder if anyone is at home? *(She knocks. No answer.)* Maybe I could just sit here for a few minutes to rest. If the owner returns I can beg a bit of food. *(She sits on a bench outside the cottage. Her head nods and she sleeps. The lighting changes to denote her dreaming. The PRINCE enters, all in white, with hand extended. SNOW WHITE opens her eyes and sits up.)*

PRINCE: Dream Child. Dream Child.

SNOW WHITE: Oh...oh...it's you again. Then I must be...I'm asleep, aren't I?

PRINCE: Yes, you are, Dream Child. And so am I.

SNOW WHITE: Isn't this strange? I mean, how odd. The only time we can see each other is when we're asleep. *(She laughs.)* Do you want to know something? I've come to dread the mornings.

PRINCE: So do I, Dream Child, so do I. All day you are in my thoughts. I welcome the night and this other life where we can meet. It's almost as if my dreams are the only part of me that's really alive. You know exactly what I mean, don't you?

SNOW WHITE: *(Nodding.)* Yes. But sometimes I become afraid. Frightened that you'll go away. That I'll fall sleep and you won't be here.

PRINCE: I'll always be here for you, Dream Child.

SNOW WHITE: Yes, but only in my dreams. Is it selfish that I to want to be with you when I'm awake too? To hear you say my name. My name is . . .

PRINCE: Hush. Don't say it. Just be my Dream Child. *(They kiss.)* I have to leave you now.

SNOW WHITE: Please don't go! I don't want to wake up!

PRINCE: I'll see you again, Dream Child.

SNOW WHITE: Please don't! Oh goodbye, goodbye! *(The PRINCE exits and the lights change to indicate the "real world". SNOW WHITE sleeps again. The dwarfs can be heard offstage. SNOW WHITE awakens, and hears them. She looks around frantically before hiding behind a tree. The dwarfs march onstage, in step, DIGBY in the lead. He stops in front of the house and all the others bump into him with a chorus of "ows." MEL, who is last, falls down.)*

MEL: That's it, that's it. I'm not going to be at the end of the line anymore. I'm tired of Dilly making me fall.

DILLY: It wasn't my fault! Dally keeps marching on his tip toes.

DALLY: Well, of course I do! How else can I strengthen my legs for ballet class?

DERRY: Hey, I don't care if ya wear a tutu into the mines - but if ya're s'posed to march, ya march, see.

DINKY: Derry, did it ever occur to you that some of us don't LIKE to march. Some of us don't LIKE being miners. I mean - we have to get up so-o-o early, march to the mines, work down there for 8 hours, march home. Is that all there is, guys?

DODIE: Not to mention how filthy the mine is. Think a minute, fellas. Wouldn't it be great to work in a nice bright, clean place? What say we just take a day to spiff up the old mine? Scrub down a few walls... It's awfully dirty down there.

DERRY: It's dirty 'cause it's dirt.

DALLY: Maybe we could hang some paintings too!

DODIE: Ooh, good idea.

DERRY: You can stop right there - this is one dwarf who's not having a thing to do with any of this.

DILLY: Me neither!

DINKY: Talk about dumb ideas. Weird. Pictures! Cleaning up the mine!

DODIE: Well, I suppose you would think it weird to be clean. When's

the last time you had a bath, Dinky, hmmm?

DERRY: Same as me! Last month! Wanta make something out of it?

MEL: *(To DILLY)* He knows he had a bath last month 'cause it's also the last time he washed his socks.

DALLY: That way he doesn't even have to take 'em off!! *(The others laugh.)*

DERRY: Who are you laughin' at? Why.... you little....*(A general pushing, shoving, slapping match ensues until DIGBY restores order.)*

DIGBY: O.K. O.K. Break it up. Break it up. I'm hungry - who's turn is it to cook?

MEL: Dilly's. *(There is a collective groan.)*

DILLY: Oh yes, I put it in the oven this morning so it would have all day to simmer. We're having turnips and brussel sprouts in a parsnip-cranberry sauce. *(Another groan.)*

DODIE: Why can't you just fix something plain, Dilly? Like roast beef or fried chicken or something?

DERRY: Pizza, tacos.

DINKY: Macaroni & cheese. *(The dwarfs call out their favorite foods - "Lasagna, ribs, hot dogs" etc.)*

MEL: *(After putting his head inside the cottage window)* Whew! You oughta smell it in there!

DINKY: It stinks!

DILLY: It smells fine to me.

DALLY: Oooh. Smells like Derry's socks.

DERRY: *(Putting up his fists and dancing boxer-style.)* I told ya once. This time I'm gonna show ya. *(Another shoving, shouting match which ends when DIGBY holds up his hand for silence, puts finger to his lips, and points to the spot where SNOW WHITE is hiding. She has peeked out and is giggling at their antics. Upon being spotted, she quickly hides again.)*

DIGBY: Alright, you. Come on out! We see you.

SNOW WHITE: *(Coming slowly from her hiding place.)* Hello. Hello. I'm sorry....I didn't mean to eavesdrop. But I've been alone in the forest for so long that when I heard you coming I was frightened. So I hid. How do you do? My name is Snow White. Princess Snow White. *(There is a chorus of "oohs" and "ahs" and "a princess!", etc.)*

DIGBY: *(Bowing to SNOW WHITE.)* How do you do, Snow White? Welcome to the forest. We are the seven dwarfs.

SNOW WHITE: *(Realization.)* I know who you are! *(To DILLY)* You must be Sneezy. *(To DINKY)* You must be DOC. *(To DERRY)* And you must be Dopey!

DERRY: *(To the dwarf standing next to him.)* Where do they get this stuff?

DIGBY: Princess. Please, allow me. *(The dwarfs bow as they are introduced.)* This is Dilly, Dally, Dinky, Dodie, Derry and Mel. My name is Digby.

SNOW WHITE: *(Pointing to Mel, whispers.)* He's a dwarf? But he's so . . . so . . . TALL?

ALL DWARFS BUT MEL: SSSH!

DIGBY: Sshh...I know.....we never mention it.....He's very sensitive.

SNOW WHITE: Oh.

DILLIE: What are you doing this far into the forest, Snow White?

SNOW WHITE: Oh dear. It's rather complicated. Well, you see, my stepmother, Queen Vanity *(they recoil in horror)*. Oh, you know her? I've always been afraid of her, too. She can cast spells and she has this magic mirror. And now . . . well . . . she wants to kill me - so Theodore the Huntsman told me to go deep into the woods and hide. I'm not sure how much further I need to go in order to be safe.

DINKY: You poor thing!

DODIE: How awful!

DIGBY: Princess, you don't have to go any further. You have found a home.

DINKY: You're going to stay right here with us! *(They all nod in agreement and cry out "yes, yes!")*

SNOW WHITE: Really?? Do you mean it? I can stay here?

MEL: Of course. We are happy to have you.

DALLY: You can stay for as long as you like.

DERRY: But don't call me Dopey, O.K.?

SNOW WHITE: Oh thank you. All of you. And I'll help out, really I will. I can go down into the mines with you....

MEL: Oh no you won't. It's too crowded now.

DINKY: Yoo hoo - she can have my space. *(They all glare at him.)*

DIGBY: No, no, Snow White. It will be safer for you to stay near the cottage during the day. And don't worry. We'll take care of you, won't we, dwarfs? *(There is a chorus of agreement.)*

SNOW WHITE: You are all so kind. I just wish I could do something for you! Maybe I could teach you some games. *(They give her puzzled looks)* You do know how to play games, don't you?

DINKY: Play??

SNOW WHITE: Oh, you know - have fun.

MEL: We don't have time for fun. We're miners, you see.

SNOW WHITE: Yes, yes. I know. But everyone should play as well as work. And sing and dance.

DALLY: Dance? Did you say dance? You can dance? I've wanted to take lessons but I just haven't had the time.

SNOW WHITE: Oh yes, I can dance. You mean you can't? *(They all shake heads)*. Well, I can fix THAT right now. Do you want to learn? *(Chorus of "Oh yes, please.", etc.)*

SNOW WHITE: Alright, you line up over there.....*(SNOW WHITE teaches them a dance.)*

SCENE FOUR

SETTING: The Forest. Grovella enters and watches as Theodore enters, carrying the wooden box.

GROVELLA: Oh, Theodore. You didn't do it? Say you didn't do it! You couldn't kill the Princess Snow White, could you?

THEODORE: Here, Grovella, give this to the Queen.

GROVELLA: *(Sobbing.)* Oh, no, Theodore! Don't tell me this is . . .

THEODORE: Of course not. I couldn't bear to harm the child.

GROVELLA: I knew it! I knew it! But, if that is so....what's in this chest?

THEODORE: It's the heart of a deer. Maybe it will fool the Queen into thinking that Snow White is dead. . . .

GROVELLA: But it if doesn't . . . Oh Theodore, she'll be so angry . . .

THEODORE: I know. That is why I must leave - to find someone noble and brave enough to help us against the Queen.

GROVELLA: But we can never win. She's too powerful.

THEODORE: Nevertheless, I must try. And you must also. For the little princess' sake.

GROVELLA: Oh....I'll try....it's just that the Queen frightens me so . . .
.(From offstage VANITY calls.)

QUEEN VANITY: Grovella!

GROVELLA: Oh, there she is! Go, Theodore! Hurry! *(THEODORE exits SL aisle. VANITY enters onstage.)*

QUEEN VANITY: There you are, you stupid woman! Who were you talking to just now?

GROVELLA: It....it was Theodore. He asked me to bring you this.

QUEEN VANITY: Ah, yes. The heart. *(She opens the chest.)*

GROVELLA looks inside, and makes a face. VANITY closes the box.) The heart of Snow White. *(She looks to GROVELLA, to gauge her reaction. After a second, GROVELLA responds.)*

GROVELLA: *("Overdoing" it.)* Snow White!! Oh no....you mean.....*(She "sobs" loudly.)* The poor, poor child. How could anyone do such a wicked, horrible thing?

QUEEN VANITY: Silence! You wretched creature! How dare you speak to me in that manner! Do you remember the last time you spoke to me like that? Do you? Do you? Do you remember what happened?

GROVELLA: *(Falling to her knees.)* Oh, yes! Yes! I remember! You turned me into a frog! It was horrible. All those flies! I'm sorry. I'll obey, really I will!

QUEEN VANITY: That's better. Here hold this. *(She gives GROVELLA the box.)* Now that Snow White is dead I must make sure that I am most beautiful in the land. *(She holds up mirror.)*

GROVELLA: I'm sure you must be. No one can even come close to your beauty. You don't have to ask an old magic mirror. Tomorrow! We'll do the morning routine tomorrow and you can ask it then.

QUEEN VANITY: Oh, I suppose you're right. *(Puts down the mirror.)*

GROVELLA: Why don't we just go back to the castle and I'll fix you a nice hot bath and a....???

QUEEN VANITY: Still . . . I'd like to make sure.

GROVELLA: But.....

QUEEN VANITY: Oh, do be quiet, Grovella! *(She lifts the mirror.)* Mirror, mirror in my hand, who's the fairest in the land?

MIRROR: My Queen, your beauty is that which magic gives,
But Snow White's more lovely in the woods where she lives.
(VANITY howls in rage and frustration.)

QUEEN VANITY: Oh I've been tricked! I've been tricked! That wretched Huntsman tricked me. But I'll take care of him later. He thinks he's clever enough to hide from me, but I'll find him. Snow White is still alive! Oh, I cannot bear this! She must die! Die! Only this time I'll make certain. This time I'll make sure. This time I'll do it MYSELF. *(She whirls around, points a finger at the box in GROVELLA'S hand. There is*

a thunderclap. The stage goes black except for a spot on VANITY, GROVELLA and the box. She speaks to GROVELLA.) Open it!

GROVELLA: But...but....the heart....

QUEEN VANITY: Open it! (GROVELLA does so. She reaches inside and takes out a brilliant red apple.)

QUEEN VANITY: Let me see. Give it to me.

GROVELLA: It's...it's It's just an apple.

QUEEN VANITY: Not JUST an apple. Not an ordinary apple. A most extraordinary apple. A poisoned apple. One bite will be enough to kill her.

GROVELLA: Oh, no!

QUEEN VANITY: Yes. Oh, yes. But before I can take care of Snow White, there is one other thing I must do. (She turns and faces US as the lights dim to a single spotlight. This gives her an opportunity to begin her transformation into the crone. She smears eye makeup and whatever else is possible. To the audience she will give the appearance of taking a "last look." in the mirror. See Production Notes) And there is something you must do. (She steps out of the spotlight to complete the transformation - with the aid of dressers, etc., if necessary.)

GROVELLA: Me.... Oh, no.....I couldn't. (VANITY'S hand appears, holding the mirror.)

QUEEN VANITY: Take it, Grovella! Take the magic mirror!

GROVELLA: The mirror? No, no!! I cannot. It frightens me! I don't want it.

QUEEN VANITY: Take it, I say! Guard it with your life!! I command you! And give me the apple. (Reluctantly, GROVELLA complies.) When I return, Snow White will be dead. THEN YOU WILL GIVE THE MIRROR BACK TO ME! Do you understand?

GROVELLA: Yes, I understand, except . . . won't Snow White recognize you? (Stepping again into the light, VANITY is now a bent-over old crone. Even her voice is changed.)

QUEEN VANITY: Do you think so, Grovella? Do you really think so? (She laughs wildly as she exits.)

SCENE FIVE

SETTING: Exterior Dwarf's cottage. SNOW WHITE is busy fixing shutters on the house with hammer and nails as she sings to herself. QUEEN VANITY enters with basket of apples.

QUEEN VANITY: (*Singing*) Apples. Sweet, juicy apples. Red shiny, apples. Try my apples.

SNOW WHITE: Oh dear. Digby and the dwarfs told me not to talk to anyone. But I hate to be rude. I'll just hide inside and maybe she'll think no one is home. (*SNOW WHITE runs and hides inside the cottage.*)

QUEEN VANITY: (*Singing*) Apples. Won't you have one of my apples? Hello, hello! Is anyone at home? I'm just a poor old woman selling her apples. (*She pauses.*) I know you're in there, little one. Won't you answer me? Oh, please!

SNOW WHITE: (*From inside the cottage.*) No thank you, no apples today.

QUEEN VANITY: Are you sure? Won't you please come out? At least look at my pretty apples. Don't be afraid. I wouldn't harm a soul. I know I'm ugly and frightening looking. But I can't help that, dearie.

SNOW WHITE: (*Slowly peeking out window*) I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be unfriendly. You see, I'm not supposed to talk to anyone.

QUEEN VANITY: I'm not really a stranger, darlin'. (*She laughs.*) Why, I'm the Old Apple Woman. Everyone knows me. Wouldn't you like to try one of my shiny, delicious apples? You're such a pretty, pretty child, I'll even give you one. Or better yet (*she reaches into pocket*) I've got a special one here that I've been saving. (*She takes it out.*) Go on, sweetie, take it.

SNOW WHITE: (*She starts to reach, then draws back.*) No- I really shouldn't.

QUEEN VANITY: Why not, little one? What harm can come from a beautiful apple like this?

SNOW WHITE: No harm at all. I guess...(*She reaches out to take it.*)

QUEEN VANITY: A beautiful apple for a beautiful girl. (*SNOW WHITE*

draws back again.) Go on, darlin', take it *(slowly, finally, SNOW WHITE does.)*

SNOW WHITE: It is bright and shiny, isn't it? *(She holds it up.)*

QUEEN VANITY: Take a bite, my pretty. You won't believe how sweet it is.

SNOW WHITE: *(Starts to bite into the apple, stops)* Oh, I think I'll save it and share it with my friends.

QUEEN VANITY: But I want to see your face when you taste it. Please. Make an old woman happy. One little bite.

SNOW WHITE: *(Hesitates)* All right. *(She bites into the apple.)* It's very good, but it....it has a funny....Oh...I feel faint. *(She collapses.)*

QUEEN VANITY: *(She leans over, examines the body and begins her wicked laugh.)* Dead. *(Triumphantly)* She's finally dead. No more "pretty little Snow White." Only dead little Snow White. Well, I am finished here. Now I must find Grovella. I must get my mirror back. My lovely mirror. My lovely, magic mirror. *(She exits. Dwarfs enter marching. As they approach DIGBY points to SNOW WHITE. They cry out, rush onstage and crowd around her.)*

DODIE: Oh, no, Snow White!!

DINKY: Wake up, please wake up, Princess!

DILLY: What's wrong? Why isn't she moving?

DALLY: Please be alright, oh please, Snow White.

MEL: Oh, Digby, is she . . . dead?

DIGBY: I'm afraid so. *(They begin to cry and comfort one another.)*

DIGBY: *(Picking up apple)* Look.

DINKY: It's just an apple. Someone took a bite. Oh . . . Digby, Snow White has been poisoned.

DERRY: I'd like to get my hands on whoever did this . . .

DODIE: *(Taking SNOW WHITE'S hand.)* She's still warm.

DINKY: Then her murderer can't be far away.

MEL: It's that Queen Vanity! It has to be. *(The others join in. "The Queen . . . the wicked Queen" etc.)*

DILLY: Wait. Wait, listen. Maybe we could find the Queen and force her to use her magic to bring Snow White back to life. . . .

DIGBY: I don't know . . . That's a slim chance.

DALLY: It's worth a try, Digby. Please. *(The others join in. "Come on. Let's find her." etc.)*

DIGBY: All right. This is what we'll do. Derry and Mel will come with me to look for the Queen.

DODIE: How about us?

DINKY: Yeah! We want to go too!

DALLY: I'm goin' too!

DIGBY: Stop! Stop! All of you. This is what you must do - build a bower for Snow White. Make a beautiful bed, covered with flowers and lay her upon it....so that, even if we cannot bring her back, she will have a resting place befitting a princess.

DINKY: All right. We'll do it, Digby! You go on. Find the Queen. Find the magic! *(DIGBY, MEL and DERRY exit to a chorus of "Find her", "Go get 'em" etc.)*

SCENE SIX

SETTING: The Forest. GROVELLA enters, looking for VANITY.

GROVELLA: Yoo hoo! Your Majesty! Your Most Gorgeousness! Queen Vanity! Darn it! I'm lost. All I want to do is get rid of this blasted mirror. Your Highness! Somebody! Oooh, these woods are scary. (*DIGBY, MEL and DERRY enter quietly, see GROVELLA and the mirror.*)

MEL: Derry - Look, do you see?

DIGBY: Do you see what's in her hand?

MEL: It's just like the magic mirror Snow White told us about!

DERRY: Do you think we could use it to bring her back to life?

GROVELLA: Queen Vanity! Your Majesty!

DIGBY: I'd say it was a good possibility. (*To GROVELLA*) Excuse me, miss.

GROVELLA: Oh, thank goodness! I thought I'd never find anyone. Ooh, are you a dwarf?

DIGBY: That's right. I am a dwarf. Well, now, Miss. I don't know you. You're not from around here, are you? But I know that you must be very important if Queen Vanity trusted you with her Magic Mirror.

GROVELLA: Well, yes, I suppose I am. Though I really just want to get rid of the thing. That's why I'm trying to find the Queen.

DIGBY: It has such an interesting handle. May I see it a moment? I'd love to hold it . . . for just a second.

GROVELLA: Oh no! You're not serious? Do you know what she'd do to me if she knew I let anyone touch it?

DERRY: Let me, Digby. I have a certain expertise in this kind of situation. (*To GROVELLA*) Hand it over, sister, before someone gets hurt.

GROVELLA: Hurt? Try KILL. That's what she'll do to me if I lose her stupid Magic Mirror! She'll turn me into a bug or something. You don't know how powerful she is!!

DIGBY: But, don't you see? All her magic is in the mirror. Without it she can't hurt you at all.

GROVELLA: I....I don't know. (*VANITY enters.*)

QUEEN VANITY: Grovella, there you are, you disgusting creature. I've been looking everywhere for you!

DIGBY: Quick, Grovella, give it to me. Give me the mirror!

QUEEN VANITY: Give me my mirror! NOW!

DIGBY: Don't do it, Grovella! Can't you see? She's powerless without that mirror!

QUEEN VANITY: Grovella! Are you going to believe me or this, this - DWARF?

DERRY: Oooh, oooh, let me at her!

GROVELLA: Oh dear, I don't know what to do. I wish Theodore was here . . .

QUEEN VANITY: (*Coaxing*) Come on dear, hand it to me.

DIGBY: She'll have magic powers again!

QUEEN VANITY: I WANT THAT MIRROR! AND I WANT IT NOW.

DIGBY: Don't do it!

GROVELLA: When in doubt - RUN. (*What follows is a chase scene - onstage and through the audience. The mirror changes hands several times until GROVELLA once again retrieves it. She is onstage with the DWARFS. QUEEN VANITY is still in the audience when she screams.*)

QUEEN VANITY: I'm giving you one more chance, Grovella.

DIGBY: See, Grovella! She's powerless! If you won't give me the mirror, Grovella, then BREAK IT, BREAK IT!!! That will set the magic free and she will stay ugly forever.

GROVELLA: (*Stopping, out of breath*) Wait a minute! You mean, if I break the mirror she'll look....she'll look like THAT forever? (*DIGBY nods.*) Well, why didn't you say so before? (*GROVELLA drops mirror. Sound of breaking glass. See Production Notes. Just then QUEEN*

VANITY arrives onstage, rushes to broken mirror, hides face.)

DIGBY: Quickly, children. Grab the magic. It's all around you! It was trapped in the mirror but now it's free! You can't see it, but it's there. Take it! Hold it! Like this. *(He grabs at air.)* Hold onto it tightly. Don't let her get any of it.

QUEEN VANITY: What are you doing? My magic! My magic! Where is it? What have you done with it?

DIGBY: Don't let it go, children!

QUEEN VANITY: You! You! *(pointing to children)* I'm the only one who can use it. Give it back! It's mine! You don't know what to do with it. Let it go or I'll....

DIGBY: She can't do anything. She's powerless now.

QUEEN VANITY: *(Stamping foot)* You're nasty, mean little kids! I want my magic back! I want my magic back!

DIGBY: Go away, Vanity. You're just a horrible, nasty, ugly old witch.

QUEEN VANITY: Horrible? Nasty? Ugly? Me?

DIGBY: Yes.....and you're going to get uglier, and uglier *(QUEEN VANITY backs away)* and uglier . . . *(he gestures for the children to join in)* Say it, children...UGLIER and UGLIER and UGLIER...*(QUEEN VANITY covers face and exits screaming, passing THEODORE and the PRINCE as they enter.)*

MEL: Well, that takes care of her. But, now what'll we do , Digby? No magic mirror.

GROVELLA: *(Spotting THEODORE)* Theo, Theo! Look it's Theodore the Huntsman. He's Snow White's friend, too.

THEODORE: Grovella! I must find Snow White. This is His Royal Highness, Prince William. We've come to save the Princess.

DIGBY: You're too late. We're all too late. That horrible creature who just ran past you was.....the Queen.

THEODORE: That.....thing.....was Queen Vanity?

DERRY: Yeah! We took care of her all right. She's not gonna hurt

anyone else!

PRINCE: Anyone else?

DIGBY: That's what we meant. Too late. You see, when she still had her powers, the Queen poisoned Snow White.

MEL: She's . . . dead. We tried to protect her. (*Grief-stricken, GROVELLA is comforted by THEODORE.*)

THEODORE: If only we'd come back sooner.

GROVELLA: Or if I had been brave enough to stop the Queen.

PRINCE: I'm sure you all tried your best to save her. I did too. It just wasn't enough, I guess. I feel so badly that I didn't even get to meet her. Oh, I know, you are wondering why a stranger would go to such lengths for a girl he's never met. But you see - as soon as Theodore told me about her - instantly - I felt like we had met. Not here . . . but somewhere. Does that seem foolish?

GROVELLA: (*Crying*) Not to me, sir.

PRINCE: Do you think....? Could I ask.....? Will you let me see her? Will you take me to her?

DIGBY: Of course we will. Come with us.

THE FINAL SCENE IS NOT INCLUDED IN REVIEW SCRIPTS. IF YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST HAVE THE ENTIRE ACTING COPY BEFORE MAKING A DECISION ABOUT PRODUCING, PLEASE CONTACT US:

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PRODUCTION NOTES

While the original production of THE TALE OF SNOW WHITE was performed onstage, it is possible to present it in other locales, even “trouping” to schools, etc. Lighting and other effects can create the same atmosphere as a set with drops, etc. For example, lightweight “trees” and “boulders” can be moved about during scene changes to indicate different parts of the forest, for example. Since only the exterior of the dwarfs house is scene, this can be a simple scenic piece.

Musical underscoring is very effective and almost necessary in certain scenes - the prologue and dream sequence for example. The dance should be a folk style, or square dance, with changing of partners, etc. Find a fast-paced piece for the chase. The chase scene should involve the audience area, as well as the playing area and should be staged with madcap antics, characters “backing into” each other, hiding behind trees, etc.

For “magic” we used a mirror ball lit by a spot. It reflected on the walls of the audience area, accompanied by a tinkling sound effect. It stopped when it was trapped by Vanity and then repeated at any time when the magic is “released.”

You may double cast Vanity if you have two actresses of similar body type. OR, you can take advantage of dim lighting, have Vanity face upstage and do as much makeup change as possible. (The actress in the original production added a fake nose which she attached more firmly after coming off stage.) Posture and facial expression are, however, more important than makeup.

For the dream sequence, we were able to use a trap which had the Prince rise from the floor, with fog. Even without a trap, fog is a nice touch here.

PROPS

Broom for Grovella

Ornate hand mirror on ribbon for Vanity

Breaking glass effect (can be taped)

Bow and arrow for Theo

Wooden box for "heart"

Hammer for Snow White to "fix" something on the dwarf house

Very large, shiny red apple