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SNOW WHITE

Once upon a time, there was a princess named Snow White. She was a very sweet, kind, and beautiful girl. Her skin was as white as snow, her lips were as red as an apple, and her hair was as black as the night. She lived in a great castle, but her life was not as happy as it seemed.

After her mother died, the king married a new queen. At first, everything seemed fine, but that queen was very proud and vain. She loved to admire herself in her mirror and believed that no one in the whole kingdom was more beautiful than she was.

Every day, the queen would stand before her magic mirror and ask:

—Mirror, mirror, tell me this: who is the fairest of them all?

And the mirror would always answer:

—You, my queen, are the fairest of all.

The queen would smile happily when she heard those words. But one day, the mirror said something different.

—My queen, you are very beautiful, but Snow White is even more beautiful.

When the queen heard that, she became full of anger. She could not bear that anyone could be more beautiful than she was, and especially not Snow White. From that moment on, her heart was filled with envy.

—That cannot be —she said angrily—. Snow White cannot be more beautiful than I am.

So she decided to get rid of her. She called for a hunter and gave him a very cruel order. But when the hunter saw Snow White, he could not hurt her. The young princess was kind, innocent, and did not deserve such a fate.

—Run, Snow White —the hunter told her—. Escape into the forest and do not return to the castle.

Snow White felt very frightened, but she understood that she had to flee. She ran among the trees, crossed little paths, and went farther and farther away from the castle. The forest was big and dark, and the sounds of the animals scared her.

—Where will I go now? —she asked sadly.

She walked for a long time until, tired at last, she saw a small and charming cottage in the middle of the forest. The door was low, the windows were tiny, and everything looked clean and neat.

—Perhaps someone lives here —she thought.

Snow White entered carefully. Inside, she found a table with seven little plates, seven cups, and seven small chairs. She also saw seven little beds lined up in a room.

—What a curious place —she said softly.

Because she was very tired, she tasted a little bit of food from each plate and then lay down on one of the beds. In truth, the bed was

a little too short, so she tried another one, and then another, until she found one where she could rest better. There she fell asleep.

At nightfall, the owners of the cottage returned home. They were seven dwarfs who worked in a mine during the day. When they came inside, they noticed at once that something was different.

—Who has been sitting in my chair? —asked one.

—Who has tasted from my plate? —said another.

—And who is sleeping in my bed? —asked one more as he entered the room.

Then they saw Snow White asleep, and they were very surprised. She looked so gentle and so tired that they felt sorry for her.

The next morning, when Snow White woke up, the dwarfs looked at her with curiosity, but also with kindness.

—Who are you? —they asked.

—My name is Snow White —she answered—. I had to run away from the castle because the queen wants to harm me.

The seven dwarfs listened to her story and decided to help her.

—You may stay with us —they told her—. Here you will be safe.

Snow White thanked them with a big smile. From that day on, she lived with the dwarfs in the little cottage in the forest. While they worked, she cleaned the house, prepared food, and cared for the home with great kindness. Little by little, they all became good friends.

Before leaving each morning, the dwarfs always told her the same thing:

—Be careful, Snow White. Do not open the door to anyone.

—I will remember —she answered.

Meanwhile, back at the castle, the queen once again asked her magic mirror:

—Mirror, mirror, tell me this: who is the fairest of them all?

And the mirror replied:

—My queen, you are very beautiful, but Snow White is still the fairest.

The queen was furious when she discovered that Snow White was still alive. So she thought of a new plan. She disguised herself as

an old woman and prepared a poisoned apple. Then she went to the little cottage in the forest.

When she arrived, she knocked gently on the door.

—Good afternoon —she said in a sweet voice—. I have some delicious apples.

Snow White remembered the dwarfs' warning and at first did not want to open the door.

—I cannot open the door —she said—. I was told to be careful.

But the false old woman kept speaking kindly and showed her a beautiful red apple.

—Look how lovely it is —she said—. I only want to give you one.

Snow White, not knowing the danger, came closer. The apple looked fresh, shiny, and delicious. At last, she took a bite. As soon as she did, she fell to the ground in a deep sleep from which she could not wake.

When the dwarfs returned and found her like that, they were filled with sorrow.

—Snow White! —they called in worry.

They tried to help her, but they could not wake her. Because she looked as if she were only asleep, and because she still seemed so peaceful and beautiful, they placed her gently in a glass coffin so they could watch over her and remember her with love.

Time passed, and one day a prince traveling through the forest saw the glass coffin. When he came closer, he was deeply moved by Snow White's beauty and by the sadness of the dwarfs.

—Who is she? —he asked.

The dwarfs told him the whole story. The prince felt touched and wished to say goodbye to Snow White with great respect. At that moment, the spell was broken, and Snow White slowly opened her eyes.

The dwarfs were filled with joy.

—Snow White is awake! —they cried happily.

The prince smiled, and Snow White smiled too. Little by little, she regained her strength and left her sadness behind. She was no longer alone, because she had friends who loved her and a new future before her.

As time passed, Snow White and the prince came to know each other better. He discovered that, besides being beautiful, she was kind, gentle, and brave. And Snow White found in him a good and sincere person.

Soon after, they celebrated a great feast full of music, flowers, and joy. The seven dwarfs were there too, happy to see their dear friend smiling once again.

And so, after going through many difficult moments, Snow White found a life full of love, friendship, and hope. From then on, everyone remembered that kindness shines brighter than envy, and that a good heart always leaves a special light along the way.

THE END

