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# Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

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**ABSTRACT:** "Snow White" is a German fairy tale, first written down in the early 19th century. The Brothers Grimm published it in 1812 in the first edition of their collection *Grimms' Fairy Tales*, numbered as Tale 53. The original German title was *Sneewittchen*; the modern spelling is *Schneewittchen*. The Grimms completed their final revision of the story in 1854, which can be found in the 1857 version of *Grimms' Fairy Tales*.

**KEYWORDS:** Snow White, seven dwarfs, fairy tale, german, 19<sup>th</sup> century

## I. INTRODUCTION

The fairy tale features such elements as the magic mirror, the poisoned apple, the glass coffin, and the characters of the Evil Queen and the seven Dwarfs. The seven dwarfs were first given individual names in the 1912 Broadway play *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and then given different names in Walt Disney's 1937 film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The Grimm story, which is commonly referred to as "Snow White",<sup>[3]</sup> should not be confused with the story of "Snow-White and Rose-Red" (in German "*Schneeweißchen und Rosenrot*"), another fairy tale collected by the Brothers Grimm.

In the Aarne–Thompson folklore classification, tales of this kind are grouped together as type 709, Snow White. Others of this kind include "Bella Venezia", "Myrsina", "Nourie Hadig", "Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree",<sup>[4]</sup> "The Young Slave", and "La petite Toute-Belle".

### Plot



The fable's antagonist the Evil Queen with the protagonist Snow White as depicted in *The Sleeping Snow White* by Hans Makart (1872)

At the beginning of the story, a queen sits sewing at an open window during a winter snowfall when she pricks her finger with her needle, causing three drops of red blood to drip onto the freshly fallen white snow on the black windowsill. Then she says to herself, "How I wish that I had a daughter that had skin as white as snow, lips as red as blood and hair as black as ebony."<sup>[1,2,3]</sup> Some time later, the queen dies giving birth to a baby daughter whom she names Snow White. (However, in the 1812 version of the tale, the queen does not die but later behaves the same way the step-mother does in later versions of the tale, including the 1854 iteration.) A year later, Snow White's father, the king, marries again. His new wife is very beautiful, but a vain and wicked woman who practices witchcraft. The new queen possesses a magic mirror, which she asks every morning, "Mirror mirror on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?" The mirror always tells the queen that she is the fairest. The queen is always pleased with that response because the magic mirror never lied. But when Snow White is seven years old, her fairness surpasses that of her stepmother. When the queen again asks her mirror the same question, it tells her that Snow White is the fairest.<sup>[1][5]</sup>

This gives the queen a great shock. She becomes envious, and from that moment on, her heart turns against Snow White, whom the queen grows to hate increasingly with time. Eventually, she orders a huntsman to take Snow White into the forest and kill her. As proof that Snow White is dead, the queen also wants him to return with her heart, which



she will consume in order to become immortal. The huntsman takes Snow White into the forest, but after raising his dagger, he finds himself unable to kill her when Snow White realizes her stepmother's plan and tearfully begs the huntsman, "Spare me this mockery of justice! I will run away into the forest and never come home again!" After seeing the tears in the princess's eyes, the huntsman reluctantly agrees to spare Snow White and brings the queen a boar's heart instead.<sup>[1][5]</sup>

After wandering through the forest for hours, Snow White discovers a tiny cottage belonging to a group of seven dwarfs. Since no one is at home, she eats some of the tiny meals, drinks some of their wine, and then tests all the beds. Finally, the last bed is comfortable enough for her, and she falls asleep. When the dwarfs return home, they immediately become aware that there has been a burglar in their house, because everything in their home is in disorder. Prowling about frantically, they head upstairs and discover the sleeping Snow White. She wakes up and explains to them about her stepmother's attempt to kill her, and the dwarfs take pity on her and let her stay with them in exchange for a job as a housemaid. They warn her to be careful when alone at home and to let no one in while they are working in the mountains.<sup>[1][5]</sup>

Snow White grows into an lovely, fair and beautiful young maiden. Meanwhile, the queen, who believes she got rid of Snow White a decade earlier, asks her mirror once again: "Mirror mirror on the wall, who now is the fairest one of all?" The mirror tells her that not only is Snow White still the fairest in the land, but she is also currently hiding with the dwarfs.<sup>[1]</sup> The queen is furious and decides to kill her herself. First, she appears at the dwarfs' cottage, disguised as an old peddler, and offers Snow White a colourful, silky laced bodice as a present. The queen laces her up so tightly that Snow White faints; the dwarfs return just in time to revive Snow White by loosening the laces. Next, the queen dresses up as a comb seller and convinces Snow White to take a beautiful comb as a present; she strokes Snow White's hair with the poisoned comb. The girl is overcome by the poison from the comb, but is again revived by the dwarfs when they remove the comb from her hair. Finally, the queen disguises herself as a farmer's wife and offers Snow White a poisoned apple. Snow White is hesitant to accept it, so the queen cuts the apple in half, eating the white (harmless) half and giving the red poisoned half to Snow White; the girl eagerly takes a bite and then falls into a coma, causing the Queen to think she has finally triumphed. This time, the dwarfs are unable to revive Snow White, and, assuming that the queen has finally killed her, they place her in a glass casket as a funeral for her.<sup>[1][5]</sup>

The next day, a prince stumbles upon a seemingly dead Snow White lying in her glass coffin during a hunting trip. After hearing her story from the Seven Dwarfs, the prince is allowed to take Snow White to her proper resting place back at her father's castle. All of the sudden, while Snow White is being transported, one of the prince's servants trips and loses his balance. This dislodges the piece of the poisoned apple from Snow White's throat, magically reviving her.<sup>[6]</sup> (In the 1812 version, the prince becomes so obsessed with Snow White that he carries her coffin wherever he goes, until one of his servants, in anger, lifts Snow White from the coffin and strikes her on the back, causing the piece of apple to come out of her throat<sup>[7]</sup>). The Prince is overjoyed with this miracle, and he declares his love for the now alive and well Snow White, who, surprised to meet him face to face, humbly accepts his marriage proposal. The prince invites everyone in the land to their wedding, except for Snow White's stepmother.

The queen, believing herself finally to be rid of Snow White, asks again her magic mirror who is the fairest in the land. The mirror says that there is a bride of a prince, who is yet fairer than she. The queen decides to visit the wedding and investigate. Once she arrives, the Queen becomes frozen with rage and fear when she finds out that the prince's bride is her stepdaughter, Snow White herself. The furious Queen tries to sow chaos and attempts to kill her again, but the prince recognizes her as a threat to Snow White when he learns the truth from his bride. As punishment for the attempted murder of Snow White, the prince orders the Queen to wear a pair of red-hot iron slippers and to dance in them until she drops dead. With the evil Queen finally defeated and dead, Snow White's wedding to the prince peacefully continues.

## II. DISCUSSION

Snow White

Snow White is the main character in the story and is born from her [former] mother. She is described by the Evil Queen's mirror as the fairest of the land. She found the dwarves' cottage after travelling in the forest for a while and decides to eat their dishes, drink the wine, and slept on a comfortable bed. However, the dwarves find her sleeping on one of their beds and she informs them about her [step]mother's plan to murder her.<sup>[4,5,6]</sup> Snow White then grew up to be a pretty lady and is told that she is more beautiful than before by the mirror and hiding in the dwarves' home. She was murdered a few times by the Evil Queen, such as the laced bodice by choking, the poisoned comb who is from a disguised Evil Queen as a farmer's wife, and a poisoned apple, which the dwarves did successfully revive her in the





previous incidents but couldn't when she was poisoned. She was later transported in a glass coffin by the servants of Prince Charming but one of them trips over, which causes the apple to dislodge from her throat, reviving her one again and marries Prince Charming.

#### The Queen

The Queen is an incredibly evil and arrogant woman who married Snow White's father after his wife passed away. She deeply envies Snow White for her looks and this leads to her attempting to murder Snow White to become the fairest of them all.

#### The Seven Dwarfs

#### The Huntsman

#### Appearance in the fairy tale

When the Evil Queen had learned from her Magic Mirror that Snow White will be the fairest of them all, she orders an unnamed Huntsman to take Snow White into the deepest woods to be killed. As proof that Snow White is dead, the Queen demands that he return with her lungs and liver. The Huntsman takes Snow White into the forest. But after raising his knife, he fails to kill her as she sobs heavily and begs him not to. The Huntsman leaves her behind alive, convinced that the girl would be eaten by some wild animal. He instead brings the Queen the lungs and liver of a big wild boar, which is prepared by the cook and eaten by the Queen.

#### 1916 film

In the 1916 silent movie adaption, the Huntsman is named Berthold (portrayed by Lionel Braham).<sup>[8]</sup>

#### Disney films

The Huntsman appears in the 1937 American animated musical fantasy film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* voiced by Stuart Buchanan.<sup>[9][10]</sup> The Evil Queen is so jealous of Snow White's beauty that she orders the Huntsman to take Snow White far into the forest and kill her while stating that he knows the penalty should he fail. She further demands that the Huntsman return with Snow White's heart in a jewelled box as proof of the deed. When he is about to use his knife on Snow White, the Huntsman cannot bring himself to kill Snow White. After revealing the Queen wants her dead, he tearfully begs for her forgiveness. The Huntsman urges Snow White to flee into the woods and never come back to the castle. When the Evil Queen shows the Magic Mirror the heart in the jewelled box as the proof she holds of Snow White's death later that night, the Magic Mirror reveals that the heart in the box is actually that of a pig, causing the repulsed and furious Queen to take matters into her own hands by descending a winding staircase down to a dark dungeon room, taking the box with her. The Huntsman doesn't appear again afterwards in the film.

In "The 7 Dwarfs and King Arbor's Crystal" comic that showed the Evil Queen's hag form having survived the fall, the Huntsman had gotten his revenge on the Evil Queen by setting fire to her castle just as her hag form on a stretcher and the two royal guards that were loyal to her returned to the burning castle.

In the musical adaptation, the Huntsman is seen with the Prince when they tell the King of the Evil Queen's plot to dispose of Snow White.

In 1994, the Huntsman was added when the attraction *Snow White's Scary Adventures* was modified. Here, the Huntsman is voiced by Peter Renaday, who also voiced the character in the 1990 Disney Read-Along of the film.

#### 1987 film

The Huntsman appears in the 1987 *Snow White* film portrayed by Amnon Meskin. When the Huntsman takes Snow White away from the King to kill her on the Evil Queen's orders, Snow White figures out her stepmother's plot and escapes from him.

#### Grimm's Fairy Tale Classics

The Huntsman appears in the "Snow White" episode of *Grimm's Fairy Tale Classics* voiced by Mike Reynolds in the English dub. He is sent by the Evil Queen to eliminate Snow White. This plan fails when Snow White's friend Klaus buys Snow White enough time to get away. When the Huntsman goes after Snow White, he is attacked by a wild boar and knocked off the cliff into the forest below.

#### Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales for Every Child

In the *Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales for Every Child* rendition of *Snow White* that is set to a Native American theme, the character Gray Wolf (voiced by Zahn McClarnon) is in the role of the Huntsman. He is from the same tribe as his older sister Sly Fox. Gray Wolf is summoned by Sly Fox where he is instructed to take White Snow into the forest and kill her while bringing her liver as proof. When Gray Wolf does take her into the forest, he cannot bring himself to kill



Snow white as it is not a warrior's way to kill a child. When White Snow learns that Sly Fox wants her dead, Gray Wolf instructs her to flee into the woods and never return. Once White Snow has fled into the woods, Gray Wolf takes the liver of a deer offscreen to pass off as White Snow's liver. Later that night, he visits Chief Brown Bear's tribe and states that he cannot stay. Before leaving, he gives Sly Fox a bag containing the liver which Sly Fox claims is the bear's liver that he promised her as Sly Fox plans to cook it up immediately.[7,8,9]

#### Muppet Snow White

In the four-part comic Muppet Snow White as part of The Muppet Show comics, the Huntsman is played by Sweetums. The Evil Queen (played by Miss Piggy) orders the Huntsman to kill Snow White (played by Spamela Hamderson). But the Huntsman refuses to kill Snow White, tells her that the Queen wants her dead, and orders her to flee as far away from the kingdom as she can.

#### Once Upon a Time

The Huntsman appears in the first season of Once Upon a Time played by Jamie Dornan. The Huntsman is a nameless hunter who is a solitary recluse, raised by wolves. He considers the wolves to be his true family, and is greatly saddened by the deaths of animals. He is considered by the Evil Queen Regina the perfect assassin, and is hired to kill Snow White, though he spares her for selflessness. When he offers the Queen a stag's heart instead, she realizes she has been tricked and tears out the Huntsman's heart, keeping it in her vault and using it to make him her slave.<sup>[11]</sup> When Prince Charming is led to his execution, the Huntsman helps him escape. The Prince asks him to assist him, but he states he cannot leave and not to let the sacrifice of his heart be in vain.<sup>[12]</sup>

In Storybrooke, he is Sheriff Graham Humbert, the town's handsome and level-headed police officer. In the earlier parts of Storybrooke, Sheriff Graham helps Mayor Regina Mills in preventing Owen and Kurt Flynn from leaving town. When Emma Swan arrives, he is one of the few residents who go against Regina, making her his deputy. He and Emma are attracted to each other, though he has a secret sexual relationship with Regina, which Emma later discovers, feeling betrayed and disgusted. As he experiences flashbacks of his previous life, he seeks advice from Henry Mills, who tells him of his story. After Graham is unable to locate his heart, he ends his relationship with Regina and starts a new relationship with Emma, regaining his lost memories in the process. However, Regina crushes his heart and he dies in Emma's arms, shortly after thanking Emma for helping him remember who he truly was.

#### Snow White and the Huntsman

The Huntsman is one of the two title characters in the film Snow White and the Huntsman, played by Chris Hemsworth.<sup>[13]</sup> Eric is a huntsman whose wife, Sara, was seemingly killed while he was fighting in a war. After Snow White escapes into the Dark Forest, Queen Ravenna and her brother Finn make a bargain with Eric the Huntsman to capture Snow White, promising to bring his wife back to life in exchange. The Huntsman tracks down Snow White, but when Finn reveals that Ravenna does not actually have the power to do what she promised, the Huntsman fights him and his men while Snow White runs away. Throughout the film, Eric becomes Snow White's ally in the fight against Queen Ravenna. His allegiance slowly becomes both absolute (after finding himself smitten by the same purity in the princess that he loved in his wife) and resolute (after the revelation of the Queen's duplicity having been the cause of the death of his wife).

#### The Huntsman: Winter's War

The Huntsman is the title character in the film The Huntsman: Winter's War. Chris Hemsworth reprises his role as Eric the Huntsman, the film opening with a prequel scene exploring his growth as a Huntsman under the command of Freya, the sister of Ravenna. He flees her kingdom after his wife Sara is killed due to Freya's attempts to make her huntsmen reject love (it is never clarified how Sara's death as shown here can be reconciled with Finn claiming that Ravenna was responsible). Seven years later, after the events of the original film, Eric is called upon to ensure the destruction of Ravenna's mirror, but in the process he is pitted against Freya and reunited with Sara, who reveals that her 'death' was staged by Freya, who used her magic to make Eric see Sara's death while Sara saw Eric apparently leave her behind. Eric is able to convince Sara of the deception, but Freya briefly uses the mirror to resurrect Ravenna, only for Freya to assist her huntsmen in killing Ravenna when she learns that her sister was responsible for the death of her baby daughter.

#### Ever After High

In Ever After High, the character Hunter Huntsman (voiced by Grant George) is the son of the Huntsman.



## The Prince Inspiration



Illustration by Otto Kubel

Scholars have theorized about the possible origins of the tale, with folklorists such as Sigrid Schmidt, Joseph Jacobs and Christine Goldberg noting that it combines multiple motifs also found in other folktales.<sup>[14][15]</sup> Scholar Graham Anderson compares the fairy tale to the Roman legend of Chione, or "Snow," recorded in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.<sup>[16][17]</sup>

In the 1980s and 1990s, some German authors suggested that the fairy tale could have been inspired by a real person. Eckhard Sander, a teacher, claimed that the inspiration was Margaretha von Waldeck, a German countess born in 1533, as well as several other women in her family.<sup>[18]</sup> Karlheinz Bartels, a pharmacist and scholar from Lohr am Main, a town in northwestern Bavaria, created a tongue-in-cheek theory that Snow White was Maria Sophia Margarethe Catharina, Baroness von und zu Erthal, born in 1725.<sup>[19][20]</sup> However, these theories are generally dismissed by serious scholars, with folklore professor Donald Haase calling them "pure speculation and not at all convincing."<sup>[21][22]</sup>

### Variations[10,11,12]

The principal studies of traditional Snow White variants are Ernst Böklen's, *Schneewittchen Studien* of 1910, which reprints fifty Snow White variants,<sup>[23]</sup> and studies by Steven Swann Jones.<sup>[24]</sup> In their first edition, the Brothers Grimm published the version they had first collected, in which the villain of the piece is Snow White's jealous biological mother. In a version sent to another folklorist prior to the first edition, additionally, she does not order a servant to take her to the woods, but takes her there herself to gather flowers and abandons her; in the first edition, this task was transferred to a servant.<sup>[25]</sup> It is believed that the change to a stepmother in later editions was to tone down the story for children.<sup>[26][27]</sup>

A popular but sanitized version of the story is the 1937 American animated film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* by Walt Disney. Disney's variation of Snow White gave the dwarfs names and included a singing Snow White. The Disney film also is the only version in which Snow White and her prince meet before she bites the apple; in fact, it is this meeting that sets the plot in motion. Instead of her lungs and liver, as written in the original, the huntsman is asked by the queen to bring back Snow White's heart. While the heart is mentioned, it is never shown in the box. Snow White is also older and more mature. And she is discovered by the dwarfs after cleaning the house, not vandalizing it. Furthermore, in the Disney movie the evil queen tries only once to kill Snow White (with the poisoned apple) and fails. She then dies by falling down a cliff and being crushed by a boulder, after the dwarfs had chased her through the forest. In the original, the queen is forced to dance to death in red hot iron slippers.<sup>[28]</sup>

### Variants and parallels to other tales

This tale type is widespread in Europe, in America, in Africa<sup>[29]</sup> and "in some Turkic traditions,"<sup>[30]</sup> the Middle East, in China, in India and in the Americas.<sup>[31]</sup> Jörg Bäcker draws a parallel to Turkic tales, as well as other tales with a separate origin but overlapping themes, such as those in Central Asia and Eastern Siberia, among the Mongolians and Tungusian peoples.<sup>[32]</sup> Due to Portuguese colonization, Sigrid Schmidt posits the presence of the tale in modern times in former Portuguese colonies, and contrasts it with other distinct African tales.<sup>[33]</sup>



## Europe

A primary analysis by Celtic folklorist Alfred Nutt, in the 19th century, established the tale type, in Europe, was distributed "from the Balkan peninsula to Iceland, and from Russia to Catalonia", with the highest number of variants being found in Germany and Italy.<sup>[34]</sup>

This geographical distribution seemed to be confirmed by scholarly studies of the 20th century. A 1957 article by Italian philologist Gianfranco D'Aronco (it) studied the most diffused Tales of Magic in Italian territory, among which Biancaneve.<sup>[35]</sup> A scholarly inquiry by Italian Istituto centrale per i beni sonori ed audiovisivi ("Central Institute of Sound and Audiovisual Heritage"), produced in the late 1960s and early 1970s, found thirty-seven variants of the tale across Italian sources.<sup>[36]</sup> A similar assessment was made by scholar Sigrid Schmidt, who claimed that the tale type was "particularly popular" in Southern Europe, "specially" in Italy, Greece and Iberian Peninsula.<sup>[33]</sup> In addition, Swedish scholar Waldemar Liungman [sv] suggested Italy as center of diffusion of the story, since he considered Italy as the source of tale ("Ursprung"), and it holds the highest number of variants not derived from the Grimm's tale.<sup>[37][38]</sup>

Another study, by researcher Theo Meder, points to a wide distribution in Western Europe, specially in Ireland, Iceland and Scandinavia.<sup>[31]</sup>

## Germany

The Brothers Grimm's "Snow White" was predated by several other German versions of the tale, with the earliest being Johann Karl August Musäus's "Richilde" (1782), a satirical novella told from the wicked stepmother's point of view. Albert Ludwig Grimm (no relation to the Brothers Grimm) published a play version, Schneewittchen, in 1809.<sup>[39]</sup> The Grimms collected at least eight other distinct variants of the tale, which they considered one of the most famous German folktales.<sup>[40]</sup>

## Italy

The Pentamerone, published 1634-1636, contains some stories with similarities to Snow White, such as an enchanted sleep in "The Young Slave" and a female character with snow-white skin in "The Raven." In most Italian versions of Snow White, the heroine is not the daughter of a king but an innkeeper, the antagonist is not her stepmother but her biological mother, and instead of dwarfs she takes refuge with robbers. For instance, in La Bella Venezia, an Abruzzian version collected by Antonio De Nino, the mother asks her customers if they have seen a woman more beautiful than she. If they say they did not, she only charges them half the price, if they say they did she charges them twice the price. When the customers tell her that her daughter is prettier than her, she gets jealous.<sup>[41]</sup> In Maria, her Evil Stepmother and the Seven Robbers (Maria, die böse Stiefmutter und die sieben Räuber), a Sicilian version collected by Laura Gonzenbach the heroine also lives with robbers, but the antagonist is her stepmother and she's not an innkeeper.<sup>[42][43]</sup>

Sometimes the heroine's protectors are female instead of male, as in The Cruel Stepmother (La crudel matrigna), a variant collected by Angelo de Gubernatis in which, like in the Grimm's version, Snow White's counterpart, called here Caterina, is the daughter of a king, and the antagonist is her stepmother, who orders her servants to kill her stepdaughter after she hears people commenting how much prettier Caterina is than she. One day the two women are going to mass together. Instead of a male protector, Caterina takes refuge in a house by the seashore where an old woman lives. Later a witch discovers that Caterina's still alive and where she lives, so she goes to tell the queen, who sends her back to the cottage to kill her with poisoned flowers instead of an apple.<sup>[44]</sup> A similar version from Siena was collected by Sicilian folklorist Giuseppe Pitrè, in which the heroine, called Ermellina, runs away from home riding an eagle who takes her away to a palace inhabited by fairies. Ermellina's stepmother sends a witch disguised as her stepdaughter's servants to the fairies' palace to try to kill her twice, first with poisoned sweetmeats and the second time with an enchanted dress.<sup>[45]</sup> Pitrè also collected a variant from Palermo titled Child Margarita (La 'Nfanti Margarita) where the heroine stays in a haunted castle.<sup>[46][47]</sup>

There's also a couple of conversions that combines the ATU tale type 709 with the second part of the type 410 Sleeping Beauty, in which, when the heroine is awakened, the prince's mother tries to kill her and the children she has had with the prince. Gonzenbach collected two variants from Sicily, the first one called Maruzzedda and the second Beautiful Anna; and Vittorio Imbriani collected a version titled La Bella Ostessina.<sup>[48][49]</sup>

In some versions, the antagonists are not the heroine's mother or stepmother, but her two elder sisters, as in a version from Trentino collected by Christian Schneller,<sup>[50]</sup> or a version from Bologna collected by Carolina Coronedi-Berti. In this last version, the role of both the mirror and the dwarfs is played by the Moon, which tells the elder sisters that the youngest, called Ziricochel, is the prettiest, and later hides her in his palace. When the sisters discover Ziricochel is still alive, they send an astrologer to kill her. After several attempts, she finally manages to turn her into a statue with an enchanted shirt. Ziricochel is revived after the prince's sisters take the shirt off.<sup>[51]</sup>





Italo Calvino included the version from Bologna collected by Coronedi Berti, retitling it *Giricoccola*, and the Abruzzian version collected by De Nino in Italian Folktales.

France[13,14,15]

Paul Sébillot collected two variants from Brittany in northwestern France. In the first one, titled *The Enchanted Stockings* (*Les Bas enchantés*), starts similarly to Gubernatis' version, with the heroine being the daughter of a queen, and her mother wanting to kill her after soldier marching in front of her balcony says the princess is prettier than the queen. The role of the poisoned apple is fulfilled by the titular stockings, and the heroine is revived after the prince's little sister takes them off when she's playing.<sup>[52][53]</sup> In the second, titled *La petite Toute-Belle*, a servant accuses the heroine of stealing the things she stole and then throws her in a well. The heroine survives the fall and ends up living with three dragons that live at the bottom of the well. When the heroine's mother discovers her daughter is still alive, she twice sends a fairy to attempt to kill her, first with sugar almonds, which the dragons warn her are poisoned before she eats them, and then with a red dress.<sup>[54]</sup> In another version from Brittany, this one collected by François Cadic, the heroine is called *Rose-Neige* (Eng: *Snow-Rose*) because her mother pricked her finger with a rose in a snowy day and wished to have a child as beautiful as the rose. The role of the dwarfs is played by *Korrigans*, dwarf-like creatures from the Breton folklore.<sup>[55]</sup> Louis Morin collected a version from Troyes in northeastern France, where like in the Grimm's version the mother questions a magic mirror.<sup>[56]</sup> A version from Corsica titled *Anghjulina* was collected by Geneviève Massignon, where the roles of both the huntsman and the dwarfs are instead a group of bandits whom *Anghjulina's* mother asks to kill her daughter, but they instead take her away to live with them in the woods.<sup>[57]</sup>

Belgium and the Netherlands

A Flemish version from Antwerp collected by Victor de Meyere is quite similar to the version collected by the brothers Grimm. The heroine is called *Sneeuwvitje* (*Snow White* in Dutch), she is the queen's stepdaughter, and the stepmother questions a mirror. Instead of dwarfs, the princess is taken in by seven *kabouters*. Instead of going to kill *Snow White* herself, the queen twice sends the witch who had sold her the magic mirror to kill *Sneeuwvitje*, first with a comb and the second time with an apple. But the most significant difference is that the role of the prince in this version is instead *Snow White's* father, the king.<sup>[58]</sup>

Another Flemish variant, this one from Hamme, differs more from Grimm's story. The one who wants to kill the heroine, called here *Mauricia*, is her own biological mother. She is convinced by a demon with a spider head that if her daughter dies, she will become beautiful. The mother sends two servants to kill *Mauricia*, bringing as proof a lock of her hair, a bottle with her blood, a piece of her tongue and a piece of her clothes. The servants spare *Mauricia's* life, as well as her pet sheep. To deceive *Mauricia's* mother, they buy a goat and bring a bottle with the animal's blood as well as a piece of his tongue. Meanwhile, *Mauricia* is taken in by seventeen robbers who live in a cave deep in the forest, instead of seven dwarfs. When *Mauricia's* mother discovers that her daughter is still alive, she goes to the robbers' cave disguised. She turns her daughter into a bird, and she takes her place. The plan fails and *Mauricia* recovers her human form, so the mother tries to kill her by using a magic ring which the demon gave her. *Mauricia* is awoken when a prince takes the ring off her finger. When he asks her if he would marry her, she rejects him and returns with the seventeen robbers.<sup>[59][60]</sup>

Iberian Peninsula

One of the first versions from Spain, titled *The Beautiful Stepdaughter* (*La hermosa hijastra*), was collected by Manuel Milà i Fontanals, in which a demon tells the stepmother that her stepdaughter is prettier than she is when she's looking at herself in the mirror. The stepmother orders her servants to take her stepdaughter to the forest and kill her, bringing a bottle with her blood as proof. But the servants spare her life and instead kill a dog. Eight days later the demon warns her that the blood in the bottle is not her stepdaughter's, and the stepmother sends her servants again, ordering them to bring one of her heart and bare-toes as proof. The stepdaughter later discovers four men living in the forest, inside a rock that can open and close with the right words. Every day after she sees the men leave she enters the cave and cleans it up. Believing it must be an intruder, the men take turns to stay at the cavern, but the first one falls asleep during his watch. The second one manages to catch the girl, and they agree to let the girl live with them. Later, the same demon that told her stepmother that her stepdaughter was prettier gives the girl an enchanted ring, that has the same role that the apple in the Grimm's version.<sup>[61]</sup> The version in Catalan included by Francisco Maspons y Labrós in the second volume of *Lo Rondallayre* follows that plot fairly closely, with some minor differences.<sup>[62]</sup>

In an Aragonese version titled *The Good Daughter* (*La buena hija*) collected by Romualdo Nogués y Milagro, there's no mirror. Instead, the story starts with the mother already hating her daughter because she's prettier, and ordering a servant to kill her, bringing as proof her heart, tongue, and her little finger. The servant spares her and brings the mother the heart and tongue from a dog he ran over and says he lost the finger. The daughter is taken in by robbers living in a cavern, but despite all, she still misses her mother. One day an old woman appears and gives her a ring,





saying that if she puts it on she'll see her mother. The daughter actually falls unconscious when she does put it on because the old woman is actually a witch who wants to kidnap her, but she can't because of the scapular the girl is wearing, so she locks her in a crystal casket, where the girl is later found by the prince.<sup>[63]</sup>

In a version from Mallorca collected by Antoni Maria Alcover i Sureda titled Na Magraneta, a queen wishes to have a daughter after eating a pomegranate and calls her Magraneta. As in the Grimm's version the queen asks her mirror who's the most beautiful. The dwarf's role is fulfilled by thirteen men who are described as big as giants, who live in a castle in the middle of the forest called "Castell de la Colometa", whose doors can open and close by command. When the queen discovers thanks to her mirror that her daughter is still alive she sends an evil fairy disguised as an old woman. The role of the poisoned apple is fulfilled by an iron ring.<sup>[64]</sup>

Aurelio Macedonio Espinosa Sr. collected two Spanish versions. The first one, titled Blanca Flor, is from Villaluenga de la Sagra, in Toledo. In this one the villain is the heroine's own biological mother, and like in Na Magraneta she questions a mirror if there's a woman more beautiful than she is. Instead of ordering a huntsman or servant to kill her daughter, after the mirror tells the woman her daughter has surpassed her, she tries to get rid of her daughter herself, inviting her to go for a walk in the countryside, and when they reach a rock she recites some spells from her book, making the rock swallow her daughter. Fortunately thanks to her prayers to the Virgin the daughter survives and gets out the rock, and she is later taken in by twelve robbers living in a castle. When the mother discovers her daughter is still alive, she sends a witch to kill her, who gives the daughter an enchanted silk shirt. The moment she puts it on, she falls in a deathlike state. She's later revived when a sexton takes the shirt off.<sup>[65]</sup> The second one, titled The Envious Mother (La madre envidiosa), comes from Jaraíz de la Vera, Cáceres. Here the villain is also the heroine's biological mother, and she's an innkeeper who asks a witch whether there's a woman prettier than she is. Instead of a shirt, here the role of the apple is fulfilled by enchanted shoes.<sup>[66]</sup> Aurelio de Llano Roza de Ampudia collected an Asturian version from Teverga titled The Envious Stepmother (La madrastra envidiosa),<sup>[16,17]</sup> in which the stepmother locks her stepdaughter in a room with the hope that no one will see her and think she's more beautiful. But the attempt fails when a guest tells the mother the girl locked in a room is prettier than she is. The story ends with the men who found the heroine discussing who should marry the girl once she's revived, and she replies by telling them that she chooses to marry the servant who revived her.<sup>[67]</sup> Aurelio Macedonio Espinosa Jr. collected four versions. The first one is titled Blancanieves, is from Medina del Campo, Valladolid, and follows the plot of the Grimm's version fairly closely with barely any significant differences.<sup>[68]</sup> The same happens with the second one, titled Blancaflor, that comes from Tordesillas, another location from Valladolid.<sup>[69]</sup> The last two are the ones that present more significant differences, although like in Grimm's the stepmother questions a magic mirror. The Bad Stepmother (La mala madrastra) comes from Sepúlveda, Segovia, and also has instead of seven dwarfs the robbers that live in a cave deep in the forest, that can open and close at command. Here the words to make it happen are "Open, parsley!" and "Close, peppermint!"<sup>[70]</sup> The last one, Blancaflor, is from Siete Iglesias de Trabancos, also in Valladolid, ends with the heroine buried after biting a poisoned pear, and the mirror proclaiming that, now that her stepdaughter is finally dead, the stepmother is the most beautiful again.<sup>[71]</sup>

One of the first Portuguese versions was collected by Francisco Adolfo Coelho. It was titled The Enchanted Shoes (Os sapatinhos encantados), where the heroine is the daughter of an innkeeper, who asks muleteers if they have seen a woman prettier than she is. One day, one answers that her daughter is prettier. The daughter takes refuge with a group of robbers who live in the forest, and the role of the apple is fulfilled by the titular enchanted shoes.<sup>[72]</sup> Zófimo Consiglieri Pedroso collected another version, titled The Vain Queen, in which the titular queen questions her maids of honor and servants who's the most beautiful. One day, when she asks the same question to her chamberlain, he replies the queen's daughter is more beautiful than she is. The queen orders her servants to behead her daughter bring back his tongue as proof, but they instead spare her and bring the queen a dog's tongue. The princess is taken in by a man, who gives her two options, to live with him as either his wife or his daughter, and the princess chooses the second. The rest of the tale is quite different from most versions, with the titular queen completely disappeared from the story, and the story focusing instead of a prince that falls in love with the princess.<sup>[72]</sup>

#### British Isles

In the Scottish version Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree, queen Silver-Tree asks a trout in a well, instead of a magic mirror, who's the most beautiful. When the trout tells her that Gold-Tree, her daughter, is more beautiful, Silver-Tree pretends to fall ill, declaring that her only cure is to eat her own daughter's heart and liver. To save his daughter's life, the king marries her off to a prince, and serves his wife a goat's heart and liver. After Silver-Tree discovers that she has been deceived thanks to the trout, she visits her daughter and sticks her finger on a poisoned thorn. The prince later remarries, and his second wife removes the poisoned thorn from Gold-Tree, reviving her. The second wife then tricks the queen into drinking the poison that was meant for Gold-Tree.<sup>[73]</sup> In another Scottish version, Lasair Gheug, the King of Ireland's Daughter, the heroine's stepmother frames the princess for the murder of the queen's firstborn and manages



to make her swear she'll never tell the truth to anybody. Lasair Gheug, a name that in Gaelic means Flame of Branches, take refugee with thirteen cats, who turn out to be an enchanted prince and his squires. After marrying the prince and having three sons with him the queen discovers her stepdaughter is still alive, also thanks to a talking trout, and sends three giants of ice to put her in a death-like state. As in Gold-Tree and Silver-Tree the prince takes a second wife afterwards, and the second wife is the one who revives the heroine.<sup>[74]</sup> Thomas William Thompson collected an English version from Blackburn simply titled Snow White which follows Grimm's plot much more closely, although with some significant differences, such as Snow White being taken in by three robbers instead of seven dwarfs.<sup>[75]</sup>

#### Scandinavia

One of the first Danish versions collected was Snehvide (Snow White), by Mathias Winther. In this variant, the stepmother is the princess' nurse, who persuades Snow White to ask her father to marry her. Because the king says he won't remarry until grass grows in the grave of the princess' mother, the nurse plants magic seeds in the grave so grass will grow quicker. Then, after the king marries the nurse, Snow White gets betrothed to a prince, who chooses her over the nurse's three biological daughters, but after that the king and the prince had to leave to fight in a war. The queen seizes her opportunity to chase Snow White away, and she ends up living with the dwarfs in a mountain. When the queen finds out Snow White is still alive thanks to a magic mirror, she sends her daughters three times, each time one of them, with poisoned gifts to give them to her. With the third gift, a poisoned apple, Snow White falls into a deep sleep, and the dwarfs leave her in the forest, fearing that the king would accuse them of killing her once he comes back. When the king and the prince finally come back from the war and find Snow White's body, the king dies of sorrow, but the prince manages to wake her up. After that we see an ending quite similar to the ones in The Goose Girl and The Three Oranges of Love the prince and Snow White get married, and the prince invites the stepmother and asks her what punishment deserve someone who has hurt someone as innocent as Snow White. The queen suggests for the culprit to be put inside a barrel full of needles, and the prince tells the stepmother she has pronounced her own sentence.<sup>[76]</sup> Evald Tang Kristensen collected a version titled The Pretty Girl and the Crystal Bowls (Den Kjønne Pige og de Klare Skåle), which, like some Italian variants, combines the tale type 709 with the type 410. In this version, the stepmother questions a pair of crystal bowls instead of a magic mirror, and when they tell her that her stepdaughter is prettier, she sends her to a witch's hut where she's tricked to eat a porridge that makes her pregnant. Ashamed that her daughter has become pregnant out of wedlock she kicks her out, but the girl is taken in by a shepherd. Later a crow lets a ring fall on the huts' floor, and, when the heroine puts it on, she falls in a deathlike state. Believing she's dead the shepherd kills himself and the heroine is later revived when she gives birth to twins, each one of them with a star on the forehead, and one of them sucks the ring off her finger. She's later found by a prince, whose mother tries to kill the girl and her children.<sup>[77][78]</sup>

A Swedish version titled The Daughter of the Sun and the Twelve Bewitched Princes (Solens dotter och de tolv förtrollade prinsarna) starts pretty similarly to the Grimm's version, with a queen wishing to have a child as white as snow and as red as blood, but that child turned out to be not the heroine but the villain, her own biological mother. Instead of a mirror, the queen asks the Sun, who tells her that her daughter will surpass her in beauty. Because of it the queen orders that her daughter must be raised in the countryside, away from the Royal Court, but when it's time for the princess to come back the queen orders a servant to throw her in a well before she arrives. In the bottom, the princess meets twelve princes cursed to be chimeras, and she agrees to live with them. When the queen and the servant discover she's alive, they give her poisoned candy, which she eats. After being revived by a young king she marries him and has a son with him, but the queen goes to the castle pretending to be a midwife, turns her daughter into a golden bird by sticking a needle on her head, and then the queen takes her daughter's place. After disenchanting the twelve princes with her singing, the princess returns to the court, where she's finally restored to her human form, and her mother is punished after she believed she ate her own daughter while she was still under the spell.<sup>[79]</sup>

#### Greece and Mediterranean area[18,19]

French folklorist Henri Carnoy collected a Greek version, titled Marietta and the Witch her Stepmother (Marietta et la Sorcière, sa Marâtre), in which the heroine is manipulated by her governess to kill her own mother, so the governess could marry her father. Soon after she marries Marietta's father, the new stepmother orders her husband to get rid of his daughter. Marietta ends up living in a castle with forty giants. Meanwhile, Marietta's stepmother, believing her stepdaughter is dead, asks the Sun who's the most beautiful. When the Sun answers Marietta is more beautiful, she realises her stepdaughter is still alive, and, disguised as a peddler, goes to the giants' castle to kill her. She goes twice, the first trying to kill her with an enchanted ring, and the second with poisoned grapes. After Marietta is awoken and marries the prince, the stepmother goes to the prince's castle pretending to be a midwife, sticks a fork on Marietta's head to turn her into a pigeon, and then takes her place. After several transformations, Marietta recovers her human form and her stepmother is punished.<sup>[80]</sup> Georgios A. Megas collected another Greek version, titled Myrsina, in which the antagonists are the heroine's two elder sisters, and the role of the seven dwarfs is fulfilled by the Twelve Months.<sup>[81]</sup>



Austrian diplomat Johann Georg von Hahn collected a version from Albania, that also starts with the heroine, called Marigo, killing her mother so her governess can marry her father. But after the marriage, Marigo's stepmother asks the king to get rid of the princess, but instead of killing her the king just abandons her daughter in the woods. Marigo finds a castle inhabited by forty dragons instead of giants, that take her in as their surrogate sister. After discovering her stepdaughter is still alive thanks also to the Sun, the queen twice sends her husband to the dragons' castle to kill Marigo, first with enchanted hair-pins and the second time with an enchanted ring.<sup>[82]</sup> In another Albanian version, titled Fatimé and collected by French folklorist Auguste Dozon, the antagonists are also the heroine's two elder sisters, as in Myrsina.<sup>[83]</sup>

Russia and Eastern Europe

According to Christine Shojaei Kawan, the earliest surviving folktale version of the Snow White story is a Russian tale published anonymously in 1795. The heroine is Olga, a merchant's daughter, and the role of the magic mirror is played by some beggars who comment on her beauty.<sup>[84]</sup> In the Russian tale, titled "Сказка о старичках-келейчиках", a merchant has a daughter named Olga, and marries another woman. Years later, the girl's stepmother welcomes some beggars in need of alms, who tell her Olga is more beautiful than her. A servant takes Olga to the open field and, in tears, tells the girl the stepmother ordered her to be killed and her heart and little finger brought back as proof of the deed. Olga cuts off her little finger and gives to the servant, who kills a little dog and takes out its heart. Olga takes refuge in a cottage with hunters, and asks the beggars to trade gifts with her stepmother: Olga sends a pie, and her stepmother sends her a poisoned pearl-studded shirt. Olga puts on the shirt and faints, as if dead. The hunters find her apparently dead body and place it in a crystal tomb. A prince appears to them and asks to take the coffin with him to his palace. Later, the prince's mother takes off the pearl-studded shirt from Olga's body and she wakes up.<sup>[85]</sup>

Alexander Afanasyev collected a Russian version titled The Magic Mirror, in which the reason that the heroine has to leave her parents' house is different from the usual. Instead of being the daughter of a king, she is the daughter of a merchant, who's left with her uncle while her father and brothers travel. During their absence, the heroine's uncle attempts to assault her, but she frustrates his plans. To get his revenge he writes a letter to the heroine's father, accusing her of misconduct. Believing what's written in the letter, the merchant sends his son back home to kill his own sister, but the merchant's son does not trust his uncle's letter, and after discovering what's in the letter are lies, he warns her sister, who escapes and is taken in by two bogatyr. The elements of the stepmother and the mirror are introduced much later, after the merchant returns home believing his daughter is dead and remarries the woman who owns the titular magic mirror, that tells her that her stepdaughter is still alive and is more beautiful than she is.<sup>[86]</sup> In another Russian version the heroine is the daughter of a Tsar, and her stepmother decides to kill her after asking three different mirrors and all of them told her her stepdaughters is more beautiful than she is. The dwarfs' role is fulfilled by twelve brothers cursed to be hawks, living at the top of a glass mountain.<sup>[87]</sup>

Arthur and Albert Schott collected a Romanian version titled The Magic Mirror (German: Der Zauberspiegel; Romanian: Oglinda fermecată), in which the villain is the heroine's biological mother. After the titular mirror tells her that her daughter is prettiest, she takes her to go for a walk in the woods and feeds her extremely salty bread, so her daughter will become so thirsty that she would agree to let her tear out her eyes in exchange for water. Once the daughter is blinded her mother leaves her in the forest, where she manages to restore her eyes and is taken in by twelve thieves. After discovering her daughter is still alive, the mother sends an old woman to the thieves' house three times. The first she gives the daughter a ring, the second earrings, and the third poisoned flowers. After the heroine marries the prince, she has a child, and the mother goes to the castle pretending to be a midwife to kill both her daughter and the newborn. After killing the infant, she's stopped before she can kill the heroine.<sup>[88]</sup>

The Pushkin fairytale The Tale of the Dead Princess and the Seven Knights bears a striking similarity to the tale of Snow White. However, the Dead Princess befriends 7 knights instead of dwarfs, and it is the Sun and Moon who aid the Prince to the resting place of the Dead Princess, where he breaks with his sword the coffin of the Tsarevna, bringing her back to life.

### III. RESULTS

Americas

In a Louisiana tale, Lé Roi Pan ("The King Peacock"), a mother has a child who becomes more beautiful than she, so she orders her daughter's nurse to kill her. The daughter resigns to her fate, but the nurse spares her and gives her three seeds. After failing to drown in a well and to be eaten by an ogre, the girl eats a seed and falls into a deep sleep. The ogre family (who took her in after seeing her beauty) put her in a crystal coffin to float down the river. Her coffin is found by the titular King Peacock, who takes the seed from her mouth and awakens her.<sup>[89]</sup> The King Peacock shares "motifs and tropes" with Snow White, according to Maria Tatar.<sup>[90]</sup>



Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs is a 1937 American animated musical fantasy film produced by Walt Disney Productions and released by RKO Radio Pictures. Based on the 1812 German fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm, it is the first animated feature film produced in the United States and the first cel animated feature film.<sup>[3]</sup> The production was supervised by David Hand, and the film's sequences were directed by Perce Pearce, William Cottrell, Larry Morey, Wilfred Jackson, and Ben Sharpsteen.

Snow White premiered at the Carthay Circle Theatre in Los Angeles, California, on December 21, 1937. Despite initial doubts from the film industry, it was a critical and commercial success, with international earnings of more than \$8 million during its initial release against a \$1.5 million budget, becoming the highest-grossing film of 1937, and briefly held the record of highest-grossing sound film. It was also the highest-grossing animated film for 55 years. The popularity of the film has led to its being re-released theatrically many times, until its home video release in the 1990s. Adjusted for inflation, it is one of the top-ten performers at the North American box office and is still the highest-grossing animated film. Worldwide, its inflation-adjusted earnings top the animation list.<sup>[4]</sup>

Snow White was nominated for Best Musical Score at the Academy Awards in 1938, and the next year, producer Walt Disney was awarded an honorary Oscar for the film. This award was unique, consisting of one normal-sized, plus seven miniature Oscar statuettes. They were presented to Disney by Shirley Temple.<sup>[5]</sup>

In 1989, the United States Library of Congress deemed the film "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" and selected it as one of the first 25 films for preservation in the National Film Registry.<sup>[6]</sup> The American Film Institute ranked it among the 100 greatest American films, and also named the film as the greatest American animated film of all time in 2008. Disney's take on the fairy tale has had a significant cultural effect, resulting in popular theme park attractions, a video game, a Broadway musical, and an upcoming live-action film.

#### Plot

Having lost both of her parents at a young age, Snow White is a princess living with her wicked and cold-hearted stepmother, the Queen. Fearing that Snow White's beauty will outshine her own, the Queen forces her to work as a scullery maid and asks her Magic Mirror daily "who is the fairest one of all." For years, the mirror always answers that the Queen is, pleasing her.

One day, Snow White meets and falls in love with a prince who overhears her singing. On that same day, the Magic Mirror informs the Queen that Snow White is now the fairest in all of the land. Angered, the Queen orders her Huntsman to take Snow White into the forest, kill her, and bring back her heart in a jeweled box as proof. The Huntsman cannot bring himself to kill Snow White and reveals to her the Queen's plot. He then urges her to flee into the woods and never return.

Lost and frightened, Snow White is befriended by woodland animals who lead her to a cottage deep in the woods. Finding seven small chairs in the cottage's dining room, Snow White assumes the cottage is the untidy home of seven orphaned children. With the animals' help, she proceeds to clean the place and cook a meal. Snow White soon learns that the cottage is the home of seven dwarfs named Doc, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy, Bashful, Sneezy, and Dopey, who work in a nearby mine. Returning home, they are alarmed to find their cottage clean, and suspect that an intruder has invaded their home. Snow White introduces herself, and the dwarfs welcome her after she offers to clean and cook for them. Snow White keeps house for the dwarfs while they mine for jewels during the day; and at night, they all sing, play music, and dance.

Back at the castle, the Magic Mirror reveals that Snow White is still living, and with the dwarfs. Enraged that the Huntsman tricked her, the Queen creates a poisoned apple that will put whoever eats it into a death-like sleep. She learns the curse can be broken by "love's first kiss," but is certain Snow White will be buried alive before this can happen. Using a potion to disguise herself as an old hag, the Queen goes to the cottage while the dwarfs are away. The animals see through the disguise, but are unable to warn Snow White; they rush off to find the dwarfs. The Queen fools Snow White into biting into the apple, and she falls into a death-like slumber.

The dwarfs return with the animals as the Queen leaves the cottage, and give chase, trapping her on a cliff. She tries to roll a boulder onto them, but lightning strikes the cliff before she can do so, causing her to fall and get crushed to death by the boulder. In their cottage, the dwarfs find Snow White asleep by the poison. Unwilling to bury her in the ground, they instead place her in a glass coffin in the forest. Together with the animals, they keep watch over her.

The following spring, the prince learns of Snow White's eternal sleep and visits the coffin. Saddened by her apparent death, he kisses her, which breaks the spell and awakens her. The dwarfs and animals all rejoice as the prince takes Snow White to his castle.<sup>[19,20]</sup>





## Voice cast



Walt Disney introduces each of the Seven Dwarfs in the film's original 1937 theatrical trailer.

- Adriana Caselotti as Snow White,<sup>[7]</sup> an innocent and pure-hearted young princess who is forced to hide from her stepmother's jealousy in the cottage of the seven dwarfs.<sup>[8]</sup>
- Lucille La Verne as the Queen,<sup>[7]</sup> Snow White's vain and envious stepmother who seeks to become the "fairest one of all". Disney publications of the 1930s, such as the film's comic strip adaptation,<sup>[9]</sup> indicate that her actual name is Grimhilde.<sup>[10]</sup>
  - La Verne also voiced the Witch,<sup>[7]</sup> the Queen's alter ego that she uses to deceive Snow White.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Roy Atwell as Doc,<sup>[7]</sup> the pompous yet good-hearted leader of the seven dwarfs, who is prone to using malapropisms when he speaks.<sup>[11]</sup>
- Pinto Colvig as Grumpy,<sup>[7]</sup> the most stubborn and easily-irritated of the dwarfs, who initially dislikes Snow White but grows to care for her as the film progresses.<sup>[11]</sup>
  - Colvig also voiced Sleepy,<sup>[7]</sup> the most relaxed and drowsiest of the dwarfs.<sup>[11]</sup>
- Otis Harlan as Happy,<sup>[7]</sup> the most cheerful and optimistic of the dwarfs.<sup>[11]</sup>
- Scotty Mattraw as Bashful,<sup>[7]</sup> the most sentimental and shyest of the dwarfs.<sup>[11]</sup>
- Billy Gilbert as Sneezzy,<sup>[7]</sup> a dwarf who suffers from hay fever.<sup>[11]</sup>
- Eddie Collins as Dopey,<sup>[7]</sup> the clumsiest and most childlike of the dwarfs, who communicates through sounds and pantomime instead of speaking.<sup>[11]</sup>
- Harry Stockwell as the Prince,<sup>[7]</sup> a romantic young man who falls in love with Snow White and later saves her with a true love's first kiss.<sup>[12]</sup>
- Moroni Olsen as the Magic Mirror,<sup>[13]</sup> a mystical object containing the Queen's familiar demon, from whom she learns that Snow White has become the "fairest one of all".<sup>[12]</sup>
- Stuart Buchanan as the Huntsman,<sup>[14]</sup> the Queen's reluctant servant, whom she orders to kill Snow White. At one point of the film's development, he was intended to be named Humbert.<sup>[15]</sup>

## Production

## Development

Walt Disney considered making his first feature-length film as early as in 1933,<sup>[16]</sup> when his animation studio specialized in producing innovative animated short films, such as the Silly Symphonies series.<sup>[17]</sup> Although they were popular with the audience, Disney believed that the shorts did not bring enough profit for the further growth of the studio;<sup>[18]</sup> he also saw the full-length film as a way to expand his "storytelling possibilities",<sup>[17]</sup> allowing for elaborate plots and character development.<sup>[19]</sup> By late March 1933,<sup>[20]</sup> he was approached by Mary Pickford (co-founder of United Artists that was distributing Disney's works at the time) with a proposal for a feature-length animated/live-action version of Lewis Carroll's novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865);<sup>[16]</sup> however, the project was soon scrapped when Paramount Pictures began production of their own film version.<sup>[21]</sup> Disney then considered using the same concept for a film adaptation of Washington Irving's short story "Rip Van Winkle" (1819) starring Will Rogers,<sup>[22]</sup> but it did not work out either due to Paramount, which held the rights to the story, refusing to give permission.<sup>[23]</sup>

After the successful release of the Silly Symphony short *Three Little Pigs* in May 1933,<sup>[16]</sup> Disney was strengthened in his decision to make a feature film<sup>[24]</sup> and began introducing the idea to his staff through a "slow infiltration" – telling everyone about it individually during casual conversations.<sup>[16]</sup> He also entered into negotiations with Merian C.



Cooper to produce a full-length animated version of Victor Herbert's operetta *Babes in Toyland* (1903) in Technicolor;<sup>[25]</sup> the project was offered to RKO Radio Pictures, which owned the rights to the play, but RKO executives rejected it.<sup>[26][a]</sup> In July 1933, Disney first revealed his plans on making a feature film to *The Film Daily* (although he had not yet managed to find a response from the United Artists executives),<sup>[27]</sup> and around the same time,<sup>[28]</sup> he was approached with an offer for an animated version of Felix Salten's novel *Bambi, a Life in the Woods* (1923) in alliance with Sidney Franklin,<sup>[29]</sup> who had acquired the rights earlier that year.<sup>[30]</sup> However, Disney rejected the idea, feeling that his studio was not ready for the technical challenges that *Bambi* would have presented.<sup>[28][b]</sup> Homer's poems *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, as well as Jonathan Swift's book *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), were also suggested to Disney at the time.<sup>[29]</sup>

I don't know why I picked *Snow White*. It's a thing I remembered as a kid. I saw Marguerite Clark in it in Kansas City one time when I was a newsboy. They had a big showing for all the newsboys. And I went and saw *Snow White*. It was probably one of my first big feature pictures I'd ever seen. That was back in 1916 or something. Somewhere way back. But anyways, to me I thought it was a perfect story. I had the sympathetic dwarfs and things. I had the prince and the girl. The romance. I had the heavy. I just thought it was a perfect story.

Walt Disney, on choosing "Snow White" for his first feature film<sup>[18]</sup>

Disney settled on the Brothers Grimm's fairy tale "Snow White" (1812) in the spring of 1934.<sup>[17]</sup> He had been familiar with the story since he was a teenager, having seen the 1916 silent film version, which he would later cite as one of the main reasons for choosing "Snow White" for his first feature production.<sup>[31]</sup> Disney had originally planned to produce *Snow White* as a *Silly Symphony* short,<sup>[26]</sup> but reconsidered, believing that the story had enough potential for a feature film adaptation.<sup>[32]</sup> In June 1934, he formally announced the production of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* to *The New York Times*, estimating that the film could be produced for a budget of \$250,000, which was roughly ten times the budget of an average *Silly Symphony*.<sup>[33]</sup> The project (then known as the "Feature Symphony")<sup>[34]</sup> was initially developed by a small unit of writers that Disney personally supervised;<sup>[18]</sup> he introduced his plans to the studio staff at large on October 30, 1934,<sup>[35]</sup> when the basic story outline was completed.<sup>[18]</sup> As some animators would later recall,<sup>[36]</sup> Disney assembled them on the sound stage in the evening and acted out the entire story of *Snow White* for three hours,<sup>[35]</sup> concluding with announcement of their first feature film.<sup>[37]</sup>

Although the studio staff were excited about the project,<sup>[38]</sup> they were unsure if the audience would be ready for a full-length cartoon.<sup>[39]</sup> Both Disney's wife Lillian and brother Roy (who was also his business partner) unsuccessfully attempted to talk him out of it,<sup>[40]</sup> with the movie-industry insiders derisively referring to the film as "Disney's Folly" while it was in production.<sup>[41]</sup> According to Ward Kimball, they were told by the Hollywood moguls, such as W. C. Fields,<sup>[42]</sup> that "it was OK, six-seven minutes, like the shorts, but an hour and a half, no way! Big reason was that you run out of funny things to do, you had to have a laugh-a-minute. And the bright colors would hurt your eyes, everybody would get up and walk out ... Walt [Disney], of course, plugged ahead, he didn't believe that. He felt that if you had a solid story, not only laughs in it, but tragedy, it would go."<sup>[39]</sup>

Early writing

The earliest known story outline – entitled "Manuscript" – was compiled by staff writer Richard Creedon on August 9, 1934,<sup>[28][c]</sup> featuring twenty-one pages of suggestions for characters, scenes, and songs (including "Some Day My Prince Will Come").<sup>[45]</sup> At the time, Disney adopted a "wide-ranging approach", remaining open to any idea that could be proposed,<sup>[28]</sup> notably, one of the suggestions included *Snow White* traveling through a series of enchanted sites – such as the Sleepy Valley, the Morass of Monsters, and the Valley of the Dragons – before arriving at the dwarfs' cottage.<sup>[32]</sup> *Snow White* was originally envisioned to be more tomboyish,<sup>[46]</sup> with the Queen described as "stately, beautiful in the way of a Benda mask ... a cool serene character who demonstrates her fury only in moments of great passion."<sup>[47]</sup> One of the potential storylines developed for "Manuscript" involved the Queen imprisoning the Prince in her dungeon, after seeing his affection for *Snow White*,<sup>[48]</sup> with the Prince later fighting his way out of her castle with "tricks that Doug Fairbanks would like to have thought."<sup>[49]</sup> Other story suggestions included the Queen having a collection of her former enemies reduced to a few inches in size,<sup>[50]</sup> a Gilbert and Sullivan-style musical number for the scene where the Queen orders the Huntsman to kill *Snow White*;<sup>[51]</sup> and the sequence of the Queen trying to break the mirror upon learning that *Snow White* has survived, with the mirror detaching itself from the wall and smashing against the Queen after chasing her around the chamber.<sup>[52]</sup> Disney also decided from the beginning that each of the Seven Dwarfs – whom he considered the "strongest lure" of the story because of their comedic potential – should have a distinctive personality,<sup>[53]</sup> identified by a respective name;<sup>[54]</sup> a pool of over fifty possibilities was compiled for "Manuscript"<sup>[55]</sup> (with names such as Sleepy, Hoppy, Bashful, Happy, Sneezy-Wheezy, Biggo-Ego, and Awful as the top contenders).<sup>[43]</sup>



In October 1934, Disney began holding weekly story meetings with a small unit of writers,<sup>[36]</sup> which included Creedon, Larry Morey, Ted Sears, Albert Hurter, and Pinto Colvig.<sup>[53]</sup> During the first meeting on October 3, several scenes were proposed: the "Soup Eating" (where Snow White has dinner with dwarfs)<sup>[56]</sup> and "Bed Building" (where dwarfs build a bed for Snow White)<sup>[57]</sup> sequences; Snow White teaching the dwarfs to pray; and the climactic scene of the dwarfs chasing the disguised Queen, followed by her death from falling off a cliff.<sup>[44]</sup> For the next meeting, held on October 9,<sup>[44]</sup> a typed sheet was compiled, featuring a redefined selection of names for the dwarfs – Wheezy, Jumpy, Baldy, Grumpy, Happy, Doc, and Sleepy – and their respective characteristics;<sup>[44]</sup> several alternatives were also suggested (including Hickey, Gabby, Nifty, Sniffy, Lazy, Puffy, Stuff, Shorty, Wheezy, Burpy, Dizzy, and Dopey).<sup>[58]</sup> From the outset, Disney decided to discard the part from the Grimms' original story where the Queen tries to kill Snow White with a tightly-laced bodice,<sup>[59]</sup> but considered retaining the other two attempts (with a poisoned comb and a poisoned apple),<sup>[48]</sup> both of which were discussed at the meeting.<sup>[58]</sup> The storyline of the Prince's imprisonment by the Queen, first introduced in "Manuscript",<sup>[48]</sup> was also elaborated: after failing to kill Snow White with the comb, the Queen would throw the Prince into a dungeon and use magic to make the skeletons of her previous victims dance for him (identifying one skeleton as "Prince Oswald"). When the disguised Queen would have left for the dwarfs' cottage with the poisoned apple, Snow White's bird friends were to help the Prince escape from the dungeon, fight the Queen's guards, and find his horse; the Prince would then go after the Queen, taking the wrong road in the process.<sup>[44]</sup> Other discussions included the dwarfs' discovery of Snow White in their cottage;<sup>[60]</sup> two disguises for the Queen – a "fat, bulgy" peddler and a "thin, hawk-faced" witch – for each of her attempts to kill Snow White;<sup>[61]</sup> and the scene of Snow White kissing the dwarfs goodbye before they leave for work.<sup>[62]</sup> At the meeting, Disney also insisted that the writers refer to the dwarfs as "seven little men", which was maintained for the rest of the production.<sup>[54]</sup>

Other examples of the more comical nature of the story at this point included suggestions for a "fat, batty, cartoon type, self-satisfied" Queen.<sup>[63]</sup> The Prince was also more of a clown and was to serenade Snow White in a more comical fashion. Walt Disney encouraged all staff at the studio to contribute to the story, offering five dollars for every 'gag';<sup>[64]</sup> such gags included the dwarfs' noses popping over the foot of the bed when they first meet Snow White.

Disney became concerned that such a comical approach would lessen the plausibility of the characters and, sensing that more time was needed for the development of the Queen, advised in an outline circulated on November 6 that attention be paid exclusively to "scenes in which only Snow White, the Dwarfs, and their bird and animal friends appear". The names and personalities of the dwarfs, however, were still "open to change". A meeting of November 16 resulted in another outline entitled 'Dwarfs Discover Snowwhite', which introduced the character of Dopey,<sup>[63]</sup> who would ultimately prove to be the most successful of the dwarf characterizations.<sup>[65]</sup> In the original storyboard, Dopey was very talkative, but no suitable voice actors could be found. Mel Blanc was given a try without success. It was suggested to make him mute instead.<sup>[66][67]</sup> For the rest of 1934, Disney further developed the story by himself, finding a dilemma in the characterization of the Queen, who he felt could no longer be "fat" and "batty", but a "stately beautiful type", a possibility already brought up in previous story meetings.<sup>[68]</sup>

#### Reworking

Disney did not focus on the project again until the autumn of 1935. It was believed that the Silly Symphony short *The Goddess of Spring* (1934) may have placed doubt in his studio's abilities to animate a realistic girl.<sup>[68]</sup> Apparently, a three-month trip to Europe that summer restored his confidence. At this point, Disney and his writers focused on the scenes in which Snow White and the dwarfs are introduced to the audience and each other.<sup>[69]</sup> He laid out the likely assignments for everyone working on the film in a memorandum of November 25, 1935 and had decided on the personalities of the individual dwarfs.<sup>[70]</sup>

It had first been thought that the dwarfs would be the main focus of the story, and many sequences were written for the seven characters. However, at a certain point, it was decided that the main thrust of the story was provided by the relationship between the Queen and Snow White.<sup>[71]</sup> For this reason, several sequences featuring the dwarfs were cut from the film. The first, which was animated in its entirety before being cut, showed Doc and Grumpy arguing about whether Snow White should stay with them. Another, also completely animated, would have shown the dwarfs eating soup noisily and messily; Snow White unsuccessfully attempts to teach them how to eat 'like gentlemen'. A partially-animated sequence involved the dwarfs holding a "lodge meeting" in which they try to think of a gift for Snow White; this was to be followed by the elaborate 'bed-building sequence', in which the dwarfs and the forest animals construct and carve a bed for the princess. This was also cut, as it was thought to slow down the movement of the story.<sup>[71]</sup> The soup-eating and bed-building sequences were animated by Ward Kimball, who was sufficiently discouraged by their removal to consider leaving the studio; Disney, however, persuaded him to stay by promoting Kimball to supervising animator of Jiminy Cricket in his next feature *Pinocchio* (1940).<sup>[72]</sup>



## Casting

For the role of Snow White, Disney was searching for a voice that would be "kind of away from every day... kind of off in another world."<sup>[73]</sup> Adriana Caselotti was the first actress to be tested for the part<sup>[74]</sup> in September 1934.<sup>[44]</sup> She was invited to audition after Disney's casting director telephoned her father, who was a vocal coach, to get some voice talent references;<sup>[7]</sup> overhearing their conversation, Caselotti picked up the phone to offer her candidacy, singing and bantering in a childlike voice.<sup>[8]</sup> More than 150 other actresses and singers auditioned for the role,<sup>[75]</sup> including Deanna Durbin, whose voice sounded too mature for Disney's liking.<sup>[18]</sup> Virginia Davis, who had portrayed the title character in the Alice Comedies series, was almost cast as Snow White and provided some preliminary live-action reference for the character,<sup>[76]</sup> but eventually refused, as her mother found the contract unacceptable;<sup>[77]</sup> Davis herself later elaborated that she also dropped out of the role because her singing was not good enough.<sup>[78]</sup> However, some miscellaneous vocal tracks, which were provided by Davis, were used in the final film.<sup>[79]</sup> Caselotti was eventually cast as Snow White in September 1935, exactly one year after her first audition,<sup>[44]</sup> and recorded her first tracks on January 20, 1936;<sup>[76]</sup> she was called in for forty-four days of recording sessions within two years,<sup>[44]</sup> receiving \$20 for each day<sup>[80]</sup> (in total, Caselotti was paid \$970).<sup>[75]</sup> Thelma Hubbard provided Snow White's screams in the forest flight scene<sup>[79]</sup> and would later voice the character in the film's 1938 Spanish dub and Lux Radio Theatre adaptation.<sup>[81]</sup>

Story meeting notes from October 9, 1934, indicate that Eddie Holden and Billy Bletcher were initially considered for the role of Doc<sup>[44]</sup> until Atwell was cast in early 1936.<sup>[82]</sup> Radio actor John Gibson initially auditioned for the part of Sleepy and recorded some dialogue at a prerecording session in February 1936.<sup>[83]</sup> After reading about the casting in a Variety article, Gilbert, who was known for his signature sneeze, telephoned Disney to try out for the role. Disney agreed to audition him and, upon witnessing Gilbert's "sneezing routine", hired him on the spot.<sup>[84]</sup>

The studio auditioned dozens of actresses for role of the Queen<sup>[76]</sup> before Lucille La Verne was cast because of her "regal, with a lot of depth" voice;<sup>[7]</sup> several members of Disney's staff, however, contended that her voice was too deep and a bit "old" for the character.<sup>[85]</sup> La Verne also auditioned for the Witch; the animators initially felt that her voice was "too smooth and not rough enough" for the part,<sup>[86]</sup> but La Verne managed to achieve the desired result by removing her false teeth.<sup>[76]</sup> Kenny Baker, who provided vocals for several Silly Symphony shorts, was temporarily considered for the role of the Prince<sup>[49]</sup> until Stockwell was cast in 1936.<sup>[87]</sup> His voice acting was performed in the style of the operetta, which was often used in musical films of the 1930s.<sup>[18]</sup> Reginald Barlow and Cy Kendall originally auditioned for the role of the Huntsman until Buchanan, who was hired in 1936 as a studio casting director and dialogue coach, was cast.<sup>[15]</sup>

## Animation

### Art direction

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs features contributions from three European artists who came to work at the Walt Disney Studios in the 1930s.<sup>[88]</sup> By 1936, Albert Hurter was assigned to supervise the film's art direction;<sup>[89]</sup> all the designs used in the film, from character costume designs to layouts and backgrounds, had to meet his approval before being finalized.<sup>[90]</sup> Having had an academic art training, Hurter was instrumental in devising the film's overall Germanic look, incorporating European illustrations and painting techniques into the animation.<sup>[91]</sup> Ferdinand Horvath, who had been working at the studio since 1934,<sup>[92]</sup> was also hired as the film's inspirational sketch artist, providing a number of dark concepts for the film. Many of his other designs were ultimately rejected since they were less easily translated into animation than Hurter's, and Hovarth didn't receive a credit for the film.<sup>[93]</sup> By the spring of 1936, as the animation process begun, Hurter and Hovarth were joined by Gustaf Tenggren. Tenggren was used as a color stylist and to determine the staging and atmosphere of many of the scenes in the film, as his style borrowed from the likes of Arthur Rackham and John Bauer and thus possessed the European illustration quality that Walt Disney sought.<sup>[94]</sup> He also designed the posters for the film and illustrated the press book. Other artists to work on the film included Joe Grant, whose most significant contribution was the design for the Queen's Witch form.<sup>[95]</sup>

### Character animation

Don Graham really knew what he was teaching, and he "showed" you how to do something – he didn't just talk. He taught us things that were very important for animation. How to simplify our drawings – how to cut out all the unnecessary hen scratching amateurs have a habit of using. He showed us how to make a drawing look solid. He taught us about tension points – like a bent knee, and how the pant leg comes down from that knee and how important the wrinkles from it are to describe form. I learned a hell of a lot from him!

### Art Babbitt<sup>[96]</sup>

Art Babbitt, an animator who joined the Disney studio in 1932, invited seven of his colleagues (who worked in the same room as him) to come with him to an art class that he himself had set up at his home in the Hollywood Hills.





Though there was no teacher, Babbitt had recruited a model to pose for him and his fellow animators as they drew. These "classes" were held weekly; each week, more animators would come. After three weeks, Walt Disney called Babbitt to his office and offered to provide the supplies, working space and models required if the sessions were moved to the studio. Babbitt ran the sessions for a month until animator Hardie Gramatky suggested that they recruit Don Graham, an art teacher from the Chouinard Institute. Graham taught his first class at the studio on November 15, 1932, and was joined by Philip L. Dike a few weeks later.<sup>[33]</sup> These classes were principally concerned with human anatomy and movement, though instruction later included action analysis, animal anatomy and acting.<sup>[96]</sup>

Though the classes were originally described as a "brutal battle", with neither instructor nor students well-versed in the other's craft,<sup>[33]</sup> the enthusiasm and energy of both parties made the classes stimulating and beneficial for all involved. Graham often screened Disney shorts and, along with the animators, provided critique featuring both strengths and weaknesses. For example, Graham criticised Babbitt's animation of Abner the mouse in *The Country Cousin* as "taking a few of the obvious actions of a drunk without coordinating the rest of the body", while praising it for maintaining its humour without getting "dirty or mean or vulgar. The country mouse is always having a good time".<sup>[96]</sup>

The first duty of the cartoon is not to picture or duplicate real action or things as they actually happen—but to give a caricature of life and action—to picture on the screen things that have run thru the imagination of the audience to bring to life dream-fantasies and imaginative fancies that we have all thought of during our lives or have had pictured to us in various forms during our lives [...] I definitely feel that we cannot do the fantastic things, based on the real, unless we first know the real. This point should be brought out very clearly to all new men, and even the older men.

Walt Disney in 1935<sup>[97]</sup>

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Very few of the animators at the Disney studio had had artistic training (most had been newspaper cartoonists); among these few was Grim Natwick, who had trained in Europe. The animator's success in designing and animating Betty Boop for Fleischer Studios showed an understanding of human female anatomy and, when Walt Disney hired Natwick, he was given female characters to animate almost exclusively. Attempts to animate Persephone, the female lead of *The Goddess of Spring*, had proved largely unsuccessful; Natwick's animation of the heroine in *Cookie Carnival* showed greater promise, and the animator was eventually given the task of animating Snow White herself. Though live action footage of Snow White, the Prince and the Queen was shot as reference for the animators, the artists' animators disapproved of rotoscoping, considering it to hinder the production of effective caricature. Nevertheless, all of the above-mentioned characters were fully rotoscoped and utilized by their respective artists, some more, some less.<sup>[98]</sup> Despite Graham and Natwick's objections, however, some scenes of Snow White and the Prince were directly traced from the live-action footage.<sup>[96]</sup>

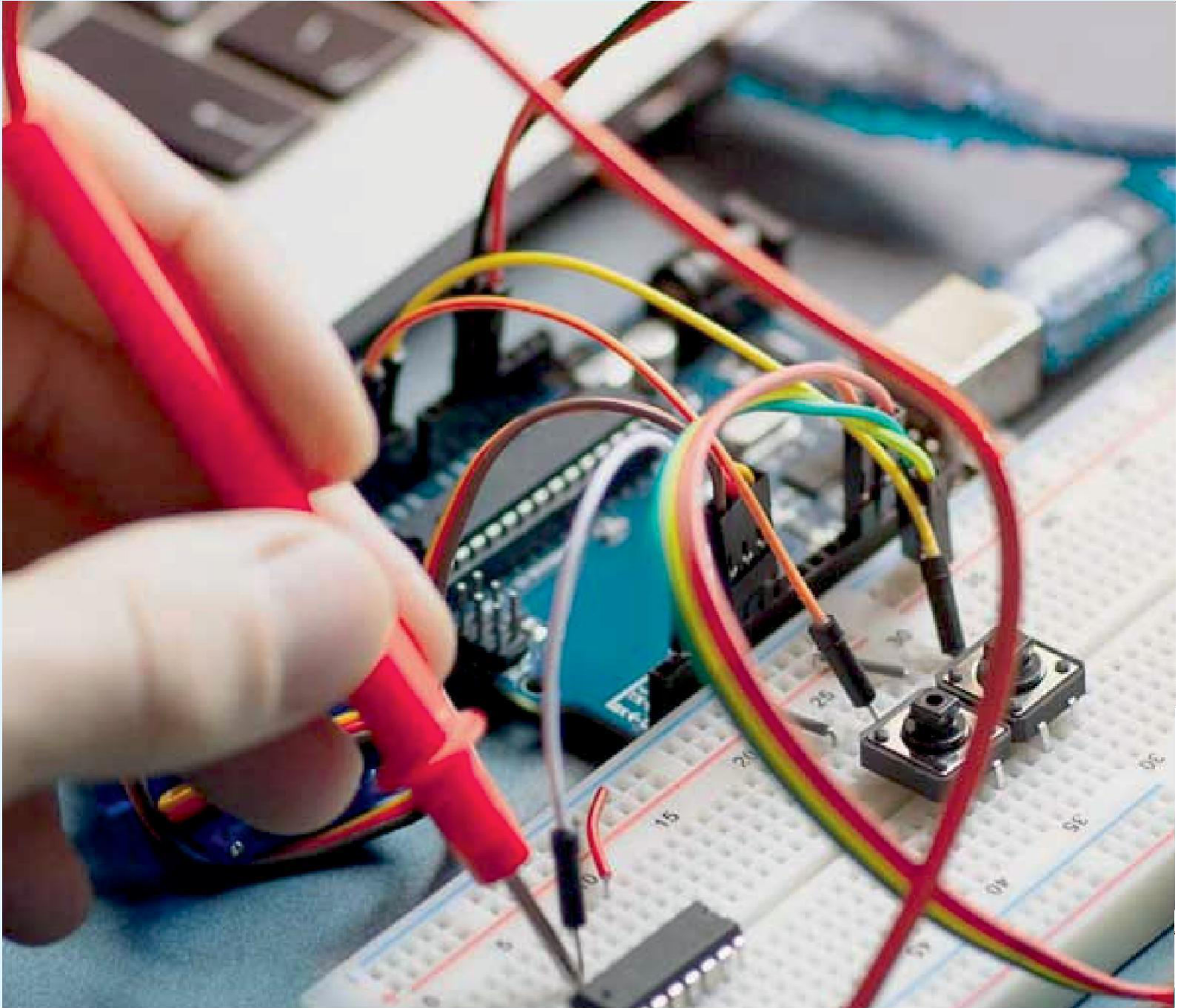
It proved difficult to add color to Snow White's and the Queen's faces. Eventually, they found a red dye that worked and which was added with a small piece of cotton wrapped around a tippie pencil on each individual cel. Helen Ogger, an employee at the ink department, was also an animator and decided to use the same system used in animation. The method was so time-consuming that it was never used again on the same scale. It was also used to a smaller degree in *Pinocchio* and *Fantasia* but, after Ogger left the studio in 1941, there was no one else with the same skills who could replace her<sup>[20]</sup>

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