

“Bibbity Bobbity Boo!”, says the fairy godmother as she transforms Cinderella, into a beautiful girl fit for a ball. We all know the story of Cinderella, but would it surprise you that the original had no fairy godmother? And that the ball was actually three days, not just one? And that the stepsisters were actually pretty? Many of the Grimms’ Fairy tales we know today have been changed from the originals into what they are today.

All of us know at least one fairy tale, but the Brothers Grimm wrote many of the mainstream ones. In 1812, the Brothers Grimm released a book containing 87 children’s tales. Many of the stories were old folktales but the brothers were one of the first to write them down. They also had their own take on the stories. The book was originally published in German but was later translated many times into English. Many famous tales we know today that were told in their book are Cinderella, Rumpelstiltskin, Little Red Riding Hood, Sleeping Beauty, Hansel and Gretel, Snow White, and Rapunzel, to name a few.

Although there are many tales to choose from, Cinderella is every little girl’s dream. The main thing that comes to people’s mind when they hear “Cinderella”, is the 1950 film that Disney made or the more recent 2011 live action film. Both tales are very similar and mainly geared towards children, while the Grimm fairytale has a creepy, more conniving tone. Their version would be considered more for adults, due to several rather ugly scenes that definitely weren’t in the movie. One such scene is when the sisters get their eyes pecked out by Cinderella’s magical birds at the end of the story.

The tone of the story is definitely more dark and sinister in the Grimm version, and two of the main contributing factors to this is the prince and Cinderella’s father. In the Disney movie, her father dies, and then her stepmother shows her true colors. In the Grimm version, her father is completely ignorant to his daughter’s suffering. He even calls her stunted when the prince shows up to see if she’s the maiden. The prince is well, creepy. He’s enchanted with her the minute she sets foot at the ball, but he won’t let her dance with anyone. He also follows her home after the first 2 days of the ball, and asks her father if anyone is there. Her father cuts down a tree and shed while thinking *someone* might be there, just because the prince said to. The characters of the prince and father aren’t the same in the 1950 film and Grimm version, but in 2011 Disney version of Cinderella the father’s ignorance is slightly noted.

We now know the tone of Cinderella is very different in the more modern versions, but many of the iconic scenes we think we know are also very different. One iconic scene is where Cinderella is running away from the prince, the guy of her dreams, and her *perfectly* fitting glass slipper falls off. In the Grimm version, the ball actually lasts three days not just one, and the glass slipper? It’s made of gold, not indestructible glass that you can run in. There’s also a reason as to why her slipper falls off. The prince actually covers the stairs in lather so her slipper will get stuck, and he can find her through her shoe size.



Cinderella as she sees the prince's palace. (*Jonathon Olley/Disney*)

If there was another iconic scene that is very different from the Grimm tale, it would be when the fairy godmother gets her ready for the ball. The main difference in this scene is that there is no fairy godmother! In the Brothers Grimm tale, the “fairy godmother” is actually a bush that Cinderella planted over her mother’s grave which is filled with birds that fulfill her wishes. The birds are actually the ones that clean out the fireplace for Cinderella, much like the mice in the film. The step-mother still doesn’t let her go in both versions which is one of the few similarities in the tale and movie.

Cinderella is a well-loved tale, so there are bound to be a lot of adaptations. Some include, *Another Cinderella Story*, set in more modern times with a famous pop-star and a girl mistreated by another pop-star. There was also the movie *Into The Woods*, which is actually a musical with multiple fairy tales overlapping into one giant story. Cinderella was one of the stories, and it was very close to Brothers Grimm version, with gold slippers, stairs covered in lather/pitch and the tree over her mother’s grave. However, the prince is later unfaithful with another woman.

Cinderella is an example of how the Grimm’s fairy tales have changed, but another tale we all love that has changed is Snow White. For the most part, the basic story hasn’t changed, but there are some key differences.

One of the main key differences is again, the tone. The tone isn't as dark as the Brothers Grimm tale of Cinderella, but there are some gruesome scenes. When the Huntsman brings back the supposed liver and lung of Snow White, the queen *eats it*. In the 1937 Disney classic, thankfully for the child audience, the huntsman brings back a heart, but it's never shown, except for the box which it is kept in. In addition to this, in the movie, the queen dies by falling off a cliff and getting crushed by a boulder. In the written tale the queen is forced to dance in hot iron slippers until she drops dead. The Brothers Grimm version is, well, grimmer and definitely more of a young adult read.

As with the tone being different in Snow White, the scenes are also different. For example, the scene where the evil queen offers her the poisoned apple. For starters, the queen actually tried killing her two times before that, with lace that prevented her from breathing and a poisoned comb. The queen also only appeared as an old lady during the lace murder attempt. She appeared as a farmer's wife during the apple murder attempt, which actually makes more sense in terms of her offering an apple.



The Evil Queen offers Snow White the apple. (*Snow White Wikia*)
<http://snowwhite.wikia.com/wiki/File:Snow-white-apple.jpeg>

While the attempted murder of Snow White is very different in the movie vs. the Grimm version, you should also know the prince never kisses Snow White in the Brothers' tale. The prince actually sees the glass coffin and asks to take it from the dwarves, since he's in love with the dead girl he has never met. Instead of kissing her to wake up, like in the Disney film, he asks his servants to carry her coffin to conveniently place at his palace. As the servants leave they trip over a stump and the shock dislodges the apple. Voila! The princess is saved.

As well as the poisoned apple and prince, the scene where Snow White first finds the dwarves house has also changed. In the 1937 version, she cleans the dwarves house. However, in the Brothers version she basically makes herself at home, by eating their food, drinking their wine, and sleeping in one of their beds.

Many of the famous scenes are different, but there is one more detail that is different in the original tale. According to the Brothers Grimm tale, Snow White is around 7 when the huntsman is sent to kill her. In the Disney movie she's around 14, but definitely more mature.

The Disney movie is widely acknowledged, but Snow White has been made into many other films with rather loose interpretations. In *Snow White and the Huntsman*, she's more of a warrior, and the Huntsman is the love interest. Another was the movie *Mirror, Mirror* where the queen was rather dorky and kept trying to get the attention of the prince. Overall, there have been many mainstream versions, but the Disney film is the most well-known and is the closest to the original.

Snow White is dear to all, but my personal favorite of all the Grimm tales is the story of Rapunzel. I was greatly surprised by the differences in the Grimm version and the one I believed to be the true tale. In 2010, the movie *Tangled* was released, which is based upon Rapunzel. However, there were many drastic differences between the movie widely adored and the Brothers' tale.

A huge difference is the fact that Rapunzel falls in love with a thief (AKA Flynn Rider) while in the Grimm tale she falls in love with a prince. In the story, the prince hears her singing and stops near the tower to try and climb it. There isn't a door, but he is mesmerized by the voice and soon comes every day. One day he sees the enchantress and finally figures out how to get to her, by calling, "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!" They finally meet and fall in love. In *Tangled*, Flynn stumbles across the tower and Rapunzel offers him a deal, so she can see the floating lanterns she has dreamed about her entire life. They fall in love more gradually, while with prince it's pretty much instantaneous.

As with all the other Grimm fairy tales mentioned above, the audience and tone are very different for both versions. For *Tangled*, it is very much designed as a family movie, intended for kids. It has the knife and the scheming Mother Gothel, but it comes across as funny and kid-friendly. The Grimm version has a rather chilling tone. This one however, handles more twisted scenes than the others and some other things as well. Some of these include the fact

that Rapunzel was stolen by the enchantress due to her father stealing rampion from the garden of the enchantress and that the enchantress left Rapunzel stranded in the desert pregnant with twins, while she simultaneously chucked the prince off the tower and blinded him with the thorns on the tower, after she found out about their love.

The tale of Rapunzel is rather chilling in the Grimm fairytale, yet a character in the movie and short story are very similar. Mother Gothel, or the enchantress in the Brothers tale have very similar personalities. They both take what they want, Mother Gothel through taking Rapunzel for her magical hair, and the enchantress by taking Rapunzel to punish the father for stealing her rampion. They both also punished the loves of Rapunzel. In *Tangled*, she stabs Flynn Rider with a knife. The enchantress actually throws him off the tower. They both even use the same method to lure them up the tower. They used the golden braid, pretending to be Rapunzel. They're also clever and cruel, through how they keep Rapunzel locked up and the ways they punish her dearly, whether it be stranding her in the desert without the love of her life, or killing the love of her life.

Mother Gothel and the enchantress may have some alarming similarities, but there are definitely a lot of differences in the storyline. To start off, Rapunzel doesn't have magical hair in the Brothers Grimm tale. Her hair looks like spun gold, but it isn't magical. In both tales however, it is used to go up the tower, since it is so long. Another major difference in the story is that in the Brothers version, she's a peasant's daughter while in *Tangled* she's the lost princess. Her parents miss her and want her back. In the Brothers version her parents disappear from the story. They gave her up to the enchantress for rampion. It makes me wonder if that's why she was so eager to accept the prince's love, since she was missing love in her life. This is also another difference, because the Rapunzel in *Tangled* is "loved" by Mother Gothel. She's also loved by her parents and Flynn.



Mother Gothel (*Spotern*)

<https://www.spotern.com/en/spot/movie/tangled/105535/mother-gothel-s-wig-in-tangled>

While the tale of Rapunzel is a mash-up of similarities and differences between old and new, the iconic line, "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!" is the same, except in the Grimm tale they add to me at the end. The prince and thief also use this line in both versions, before they're seriously injured.

Although Rapunzel hasn't been made into quite as many versions as Cinderella and Snow White, there are still quite a few out there. *Into The Woods* has Rapunzel as one of the supporting stories. She's actually the adopted daughter of the witch in that story, and she is with the prince. He becomes blind and she is stranded in the desert as well. Later though, Rapunzel is killed by a giant and in this version the witch truly loved her. Another version is *Barbie as Rapunzel*, in which Barbie escapes through a magic paintbrush and is a servant to the enchantress.

While the Brother Grimm fairy tales have stayed the same in certain aspects, they have also changed drastically. Many of the changes have been to the tone and audience of the story, which in turn has affected the iconic scenes we believe to be true today. Even though the originals have been changed, it is in some ways better for all the children who would've read gruesome and cruel scenes if they hadn't changed. In the end, many of Grimm fairy tales we think we know have been changed.