

White as Snow

By Kaleb Stone

Once upon a time, in a magical faraway land, there was a young princess. The princess lived in the uppermost room in the tallest tower of a lavish castle, surrounded by forests and highlands all covered in the finest green blanket fathomable.

The princess had skin as white as snow, lips as red as blood, and hair as black as ebony – yet she still did not think herself to be beautiful. Her stepmother, a truly wicked woman, always told her: “You may have skin as white as snow, lips as red as blood, and hair as black as ebony, but you will *never* be nearly as beautiful as I!” This had a profound effect on the young princess, and so she toiled tirelessly every single day about her appearance. Tragically, she always thought she was not pretty enough, no matter what she did.

One day, in the green forests surrounding the magnificent castle that would one day be hers, she found an old mirror. She was puzzled by it initially, but then the mirror began to speak to her, and her demeanor became fearful. It told her that if she rescued it from its mossy grave, it would grant her one wish.

“Any wish at all?” The young princess asked the mirror, remaining hesitant and fearful.

“Anything your heart desires,” replied the magic mirror.

So the princess brought the mirror to her room at the peak of the highest tower. She cleaned it up and placed it on the wall. Looking into it, she realized that she did not show up in the mirror, but instead, there was a frightful-looking phantom looking back at her. She was less scared than before, however, as she correctly assumed that this was the same being who spoke to her in the forest.

“You have rescued me from nature and brought me to an acceptable home. What is thy wish, young one?” asked the magic mirror, in a voice that seemed to echo throughout the skull of the young princess.

The princess thought for a minute. She thought about her aspirations, which were few. She then thought about her family, whom she loved, but failed to think of anything they needed. Finally, she thought long and hard about her stepmother, whom she despised to no end. Though any truly malicious thoughts never surfaced, as the princess was a truly kind and benevolent girl. Therefore, she settled on this wish:

“Mirror, mirror, on the wall, please make me the fairest of them all.”

The phantom inside the mirror laughed heartily, and then everything went dark as the young princess was quickly put to sleep. While she dozed, a sinister purple mist poured out of the magic mirror and filled the castle completely.

When the princess awoke, she quickly looked into the mirror. The first thing she noticed was that she did not seem to appear any different at all. The second thing she noticed, after the initial confusion wore off, was that the magic mirror seemed utterly regular.

After a while, the young princess crept downstairs to roam the castle, noticing that everything seemed oddly quiet. She wound down the stairs, thirty steps in total, but met nobody along the way. She trod down the hall, a dozen gorgeous paintings lining the wall, but not a soul in sight. She peeked inside the kitchen, looking upon a delicious meal yet unfinished, and saw not a single chef remaining therein.

When she reached the main hall, she looked upon a terribly ominous tree grown mysteriously in the middle of the room, in front of the thrones. As she crept forwards, slow as a snail, she noticed that the bark was as black as ebony, the eerily glowing apples sprouted at the tips of the branches were as red as blood – and the corpses strewn under the roots of the demonic tree were as pale as snow.

The young princess screamed, fell backward, and cried. She somehow immediately knew this was her fault, that the demon inside the mirror caused this by some dark magic. She was horrified by the tree itself, and all the more horrified of seeing its victims lying dead underneath it. Most of all, however, the innocent young princess was deeply horrified of herself. In the midst of all of these terrible doings, when she saw the pained face of her stepmother protruding out from beneath the tree – forever paralyzed in an expression of mortal fear – she felt a tinge of joy.

She spent the entire night sitting vigil beside the wicked tree, crying every single second of every single minute of every single hour. Her tears ran with no end in sight until they had completely dried up by dawn. As the sun rose, three birds came upon the castle to pay their respects to the countless dead: first an owl, then a raven, and last a dove.

Meanwhile, the demon from within the mirror roamed carelessly and free. He had been saved from the brink of death and now he lived happily ever after...

White as Snow Artist Statement

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I decided, for this piece, to take many different elements from the story of Snow White and shuffle them around to create a whole new tale. The main aspects of the story I used were these:

- ❖ The description of the princess
 - “Skin as white as snow, lips as red as blood, and hair as black as ebony.”
- ❖ The apples on the tree
 - Alluding to the poisoned apple that puts Snow White into a coma.
- ❖ The three grieving birds
- ❖ “Mirror, mirror, on the wall, _____”
 - Twisted the question “who is the fairest of them all” into “please make me the fairest of them all”.
- ❖ The wicked stepmother

Alongside those specific pieces of inspiration, I made an effort to write this whole story like a fairytale. I even ended it with “lived happily ever after” :)