

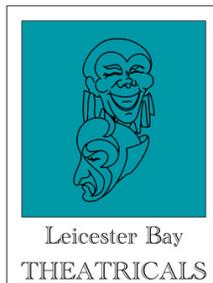
PERUSAL SCRIPT

THE WORLD OF



SNOW WHITE

BY
R. REX STEPHENSON



Newport, Maine

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THE WORLD OF SNOW WHITE

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CAST:

Queen -- She gives birth to Snow White

Lady Wicka -- An evil elderly lady

Magic Mirror -- An off stage voice that sounds very mysterious

Narrator (Jacob Wilhelm) -- A pleasant fellow who is really the Huntsman

The King -- A father unable to control his daughter, Snow White

Lord Sommerset -- Chief Advisor to the King and husband of Lady Wicka

Lady Anne -- Daughter of Sommerset and Wicka; she is easily controlled by her mother.

Snow White -- There are 2 or preferably 3. (LITTLE SNOW WHITE (7), YOUNG SNOW WHITE(12) and SNOW WHITE the older teen. We watch them grow up in the first act.

Clara Forest -- A commoner and good friend to Lady Anne

Ally Bungaly -- Royal Braziarre of Algerz

Lady Braziarre -- Giggling wife of Ally Bungaly

Royal Astrologer -- A light hearted, often silly magician

Prince Jack -- The son of Ally Bungaly and suitor of Snow White

Seven Dwarfs -- Good natured, short folks that can be of either gender.

3 Mice (not blind)

Preacher

Servants

Crowd Members

CASTING:

The play with careful doubling, needs 20 actors; 30-35 would make the directors life much easier. Seven women, five men and seven dwarves of either sex, and one female child are the basic requirements of the show.

THE SET:

The setting can be as simple or as complex as the director desires or can afford. Basic requirements are four acting area. Stage Right is where the narrator sits. Down Center is used as the forest, a spot to fight the dragon, etc. Up Center is used for King's throne, Dwarves' cabin and Lady Wicka's garden. Stage Left is Lady Wicka's evil music room and the location of the Magic Mirror. We did this rather simply by putting the throne on a wagon and on the other side was Lady Wicka's garden. The Dwarves' house was also on a wagon. Wagons were shifted or turned around to meet the requirements of the scene. Lady Wicka's music room includes a piano, which she plays occasionally throughout the play, and the Magic Mirror. The mirror should be an elaborate one that lights up when it speaks.

THE COSTUMES:

Again, the elaborateness of the costumes can depend on budget or wishes of the director; however, it is important for both the costumes and the setting to reflect a time past: "Once upon a time, when there were Kings, Queens and royal courts."

THE MUSIC:

If you cannot find an actress who plays the piano, the music could be pre-recorded either on piano, or use some instrumental track. This then could be summoned by Lady Wicka, instead of actually needing her to be a proficient enough piano player to make it work.

THE WORLD OF SNOW WHITE adapted by R. Rex Stephenson. 6M 6W 1 or 2 girls 8either + 3mice, minister, servants and crowd. Roles can be doubled to make 20 actors. Ideal cast is 30-35. 4 playing areas with several simple, or elaborate locations in each. *The World of Snow White* is a modern adaptation, yet very true to the varied classic source material in bringing the darker situations of many versions of the story from around the globe together in one script. It moves quickly and plays well for all audiences. The legends and stories of a Snow White character come from more than 30 countries around the world, like Albania, Turkey, Mozambique, Germany, England, France, and others. These international tales lend a totally new vision to the characters and a unique play for any group to produce. **Order #3150**

R. Rex Stephenson earned his Bachelor's degree in middle and secondary education at Ball State University. Upon graduation, Stephenson taught at Bayshore Middle School in Florida and Redkey High School in Indiana. He received his M.A. from Indiana State University in theatre and later accepted a position as drama professor at Ferrum College in Virginia. In 1984, he received his Ph.D. in educational theatre at New York University. Stephenson has had 13 plays for children and adults published: *The Jack Tales*, *The Liberated Cinderella*, *Treasure Island*, *Galileo: Man of Science*, *The Jungle Book*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Connecticut Yankee*, and *Glorious Son of York*. Stephenson has been a winner in two major playwriting contests: The American Alliance for Theatre and Education 1995 for *Too Free For Me* (Published by Encore), and he was awarded the IUPUI National Youth Theatre Playwriting Competition "Excellence in Playwriting" for *Jack's Adventures with the King's Girl*. In 1996, he received an Appalachian College Association, "Faculty Research Fellowship," to research and write *The World is My Parish*, a drama about the life of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Stephenson lives in Ferrum, Virginia and he has three daughters, Janice, Jessica, and Juliet.

Act I

SCENE: In fog and green light, LADY WICKA plays her evil MUSIC.

MIRROR:

Love comes and love goes,
Children come and mothers go,
Summer fades but not the rose,
Summer fades but not the rose.

(LADY WICKA exits and LIGHTS up center.)

NARRATOR: My name is Jacob Wilhelm. I have a part in this story—as well as telling it to you—and later you will see me don my cap and vest and enter into the tale as a full-fledged character. We found more than 100 different versions of this classic tale in Europe, Asia, Africa, and even right here in America. So we have combined many of these fairy tales to make a brand-spanking new story called *The World of Snow White*. We begin during the winter.

(Eight DANCERS appear all in white, dropping snowflakes, and exit.)

It is snowing, and the Queen of our kingdom is doing some mending when she pricks her finger with a needle and a drop of blood falls onto the snow.

QUEEN: Someday I shall have a child...

(Seeing the blood in the snow)

...and she will be as white as snow and her cheeks will be as red as blood and she will have ebony hair as I have, and I will name her Snow White.

NARRATOR: And when the winter turned into the summer, our Queen was with child. And the entire kingdom was overjoyed....

(DANCERS enter doing an English style country dance.)

There were singing and dancing all over the land to celebrate this wondrous occasion.

(At the end of the dance all pass by the QUEEN and congratulate her as they exit.)

On one particularly warm day a noble lady passed by with a basket of apples.

(LADY WICKA appears carrying a basket of apples.)

LADY WICKA: My Queen, isn't the entire kingdom so excited about the baby you soon will have? I know I am.

QUEEN: Thank you, Lady Wicka. I know this child will be a girl. I already have a name picked out for her, and I know her favorite flower will be a red rose.

LADY WICKA: You are so fortunate to live in this palace, to be married to a King, especially one who is so kind and gentle.

QUEEN: Yes, if my baby is healthy, I will have everything that any woman could possibly ask for.

LADY WICKA: I am sure she will be. Would you care for one of my apples?

QUEEN: I would love one; they look so red and so delicious. But Lady Wicka, I don't know if I should. My midwife has limited the amount of fruit I can eat.

LADY WICKA: Take it as a present, a present to the luckiest woman in all the world. I only hope that my

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daughter, beautiful as she is, may have the good fortune to marry a man as powerful and generous as your husband. Please take the apple. It is a special apple, you know.

(QUEEN takes apple and LADY WICKA exits. QUEEN takes a bite and we hear LADY WICKA'S evil MUSIC. Then great THUNDER is heard.)

QUEEN: *(Fearfully)* I feel cold.

(To SERVANT GIRL off stage)

Girl, girl, send for the King.

SERVANT GIRL: *(Entering)* Yes, my lady.

QUEEN: Bring the King here immediately. Do not delay.

(SERVANT GIRL exits. QUEEN rubs her arms)

A moment ago everything was perfect, and now...

(KING enters in a rush.)

KING: My dear, are you all right? Do I need to send for a physician?

QUEEN: No, no, I am fine. I just had a premonition.

KING: What are you talking about, my dear? You are as white as snow.

QUEEN: Lady Wicka gave me an apple.

KING: Yes...

QUEEN: She gave me an apple and when I took a bite out of it, suddenly I saw...

KING: What did you see?

QUEEN: I want a promise from you.

KING: I will promise you anything.

QUEEN: If something should happen to me while giving birth to this child, I want you to name her Snow White, and you must promise that you will never marry again.

KING: This is nonsense.

QUEEN: I am serious. I want your word and I want it now. I don't want my child raised by a stepmother. If you should marry again, it can only be after Snow White is married.

KING: Dearest, I couldn't ever marry again; no one could ever take your place, but I give you my word, the child's name shall be Snow White and I will never remarry.

(ALL exit. LIGHTS fade.)

NARRATOR: I am sad to say that the Queen's premonition, her belief that something bad was about to happen, did come true. The Queen died while giving birth to a beautiful girl that the King named Snow White.

(NARRATOR crosses center. LIGHTS up, the throne is set.)

Now Snow White was healthy, and she was as pretty as her mother, and she was—how can I put this?

(LITTLE SNOW WHITE runs across the stage holding the KING'S crown and scepter. KING enters and chases her across stage.)

KING: Give me back my crown, Snow White. Give me back my scepter. Snow White, you must behave.

NARRATOR: She was as wild as a barbarian.

(KING re-enters followed by four WOMEN, all shoeless searching for SNOW WHITE.)

KING: Where did she go?

WOMAN 2: We don't know, your Majesty.

KING: First, I hired you to take care of my daughter and you...

(KING points to one of the WOMEN.)

... said you couldn't handle her. Next I hired you...

(He points at another WOMAN.)

...to help and you both pleaded for a third. Then I hired you and you pleaded for a fourth. Surely four grownups can take care of one small girl.

WOMAN 1: Maybe if we had just one more adult to help us.

KING: No, no, no. Where are all of your shoes? You can't run around the palace without shoes. You must set an example for Snow White.

WOMAN 2: *(Meekly)* She took them.

KING: Who took them?

WOMAN 3: Snow White took them.

KING: A seven-year-old child took all of your shoes?

WOMAN 4: Well, she took your crown and scepter.

KING: Don't be insolent. I want the four of you to go find my crown, go find my scepter, and go find your...

(KING gets hit by shoes that are thrown from behind the throne.)

I guess you don't need to find your shoes.

WOMEN: *(Pointing towards ceiling)* She must be up there.

(LITTLE SNOW WHITE sneaks in and bangs all their toes with mallet. All scream in pain; then she runs in the opposite direction.)

KING: Quick, after her.

(All four WOMEN run off stage hopping on one foot, improv-ing lines about what a wicked child Snow White is. NARRATOR crosses to KING, center.)

NARRATOR: As you can see, Snow White was...

KING: Out of control. My child is as wild as...as...

NARRATOR: A barbarian.

KING: A barbarian.

(Talking to NARRATOR)

It's because she doesn't have a mother. If the Queen were still alive, she would know how to take care of this lovely, high-spirited child, but I'm helpless. I've got a meeting; I have to find my crown and scepter.

(KING exits.)

Snow White!

NARRATOR: It may be hard to imagine, but during the next four years Snow White not only grew in stature and in beauty, but also, if you can believe it,

(NARRATOR crosses back to his area.)

became even wilder than she was before. Now she wasn't mean; it was just that nobody could make her do what she didn't want to do, and once they told her what to do, she often would do the exact opposite. The palace was bedlam.

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE comes running across stage, followed by six women with a rope, yelling

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and improv-ing lines.)

WOMAN 1: Come back, Snow White.

WOMAN 2: It is time for your bath.

WOMAN 3: When we catch you we are going to tie you in the bathtub.

(All exit. YOUNG SNOW WHITE enters with a rope tied around her. YOUNG SNOW WHITE exits on other side of the stage and drags in six WOMEN hanging onto the rope. We can't see YOUNG SNOW WHITE, but assume she is off stage still tied to the rope.)

WOMAN 1: We have to hold on.

WOMAN 2: She shan't get away this time.

(WOMEN move up on rope.)

Let's pull her to us.

WOMAN 3: The King will be so happy.

(WOMEN move up on rope until they are center stage.)

WOMAN 1: Are you pulling with all your might?

WOMAN 2: *(To the WOMAN behind her)* Are you pulling with all your might?

WOMAN 3: *(To the WOMAN behind her)* Are you pulling with all your might?

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE sneaks on and picks up the end of the rope.)

WOMAN 4: *(To YOUNG SNOW WHITE)* Are you pulling with all your might?

YOUNG SNOW WHITE: *(Letting go of rope)* No.

(Slack goes out of the rope and they all fall down.)

No bath for Snow White today.

(ALL run off. KING and SOMERSET enter.)

SOMERSET: If I might be so bold, your Highness.

KING: Yes.

SOMERSET: I have a matter of some delicacy; I am even hesitant to bring it up.

KING: Yes, Yes.

SOMERSET: It concerns your um...um...

KING: Yes, yes.

SOMERSET: Your daughter.

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE chases two of the CAREGIVERS across the stage with a bucket of water.)

KING: Snow White.

SOMERSET: Yes.

KING: Yes?

SOMERSET: She is, well, when she is in the palace, you know what I am trying to say...she is a...

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE chases them back across stage with water bucket.)

KING: Holy terror.

SOMERSET: Yes.

KING: I know. What am I to do?

(CAREGIVERS enter, move center. They are looking for YOUNG SNOW WHITE, who sneaks in

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from behind throne and appears to throw water on women. They move, but the bucket is full of confetti. All SERVANTS and YOUNG SNOW WHITE exit.)

SOMERSET: If I might presume to be so bold.

KING: You may presume.

SOMERSET: My wife.

KING: The Lady Wicka?

SOMERSET: Yes.

KING: Yes?

SOMERSET: She has asked me if you would be willing to allow her to take over the care of Snow White.

KING: Do you think she would? I now have a dozen women that are totally helpless. No one can control my child.

SOMERSET: I am sure that she would be an excellent caregiver to Snow White. She did such a wonderful job with our child. It's like magic.

KING: Yes, yes. I am desperate...at my wits' end. The child needs a mother. I haven't the heart to punish her. Whenever I get up the courage, I remember the poor thing has no mother.

SOMERSET: My wife assures me that she could discipline Snow White, while still being loving and caring.

KING: Then it is settled. Your wife will take over complete care of the Princess, Snow White.

(LIGHTS fade to half. Stage fills with people milling about. The KING is on the throne. TRUMPETS sound.)

WOMAN 1: Have you heard the news?

CHILD: No, Mother. Why is the King having this celebration?

PAGE: Today the King will appoint a new nanny for the Princess, Snow White.

MAN 1: Taking bets, taking bets. How long will this nanny last?

MAN 2: I'll take two days. Surely, she will last two days.

WOMAN 1: I want three hours.

WOMAN 2: Give me two hours.

(LIGHTS up full.)

PAGE: Presenting her royal highness, Princess Snow White.

(The TRUMPETS sound; ALL look stage right, but Snow White isn't there.)

KING: *(Gesturing stage left)* Eh, eh, ehm.

PAGE: Presenting her royal highness, Princess Snow White.

(The TRUMPETS sound, KING gestures stage right. ALL look right.)

KING: Where is Snow White?

(Coming off throne)

Where is the Princess Snow White?

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE sneaks out from behind the throne and stands on it.)

YOUNG SNOW WHITE: *(In powerful voice)* I command you, find the Princess Snow White.

WOMAN 3: I'll take ten minutes.

KING: Snow White, how could you do this to me? This is a royal appointment.

LADY WICKA: Please, allow me.

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(LADY WICKA crosses to the throne and touches the King's sleeve.)

KING: But, but...

LADY WICKA: It will be all right.

(Lady Wicka's MUSIC)

Give me your hand, Snow White. Let us do as your father wishes.

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE starts to run; the flashbox goes off. MUSIC ends. YOUNG SNOW WHITE is transformed. LADY WICKA walks YOUNG SNOW WHITE to stage right, turning back to the KING.)

We may proceed now, Page.

(KING sits on throne.)

PAGE: Presenting her royal Highness, Princess Snow White.

(ALL bow. TRUMPETS sound. LADY WICKA and YOUNG SNOW WHITE walk hand in hand to the throne. CROWD is in shock and disbelief. The KING is dumfounded.)

LADY WICKA: *(To YOUNG SNOW WHITE)* My child, you must show your father the respect that he deserves.

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE crosses to the KING and bows.)

YOUNG SNOW WHITE: My gracious father, what is it that you desire?

(Beat)

SOMERSET: *(To KING, who is speechless)* You may proceed, your Highness.

KING: *(To SOMERSET)* Yes, um...What was I about to do?

SOMERSET: Appoint my wife the royal caregiver.

KING: I hereby appoint Lady Wicka to be the royal nanny to Snow White, the Princess of this land.

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE crosses to LADY WICKA and takes her hand.)

YOUNG SNOW WHITE: I will try in every way to please both you and my father.

MAN 3: Can I change my bet?

(ALL cheer, CANNONS fire, TRUMPETS sound. LIGHTS cross fade to NARRATOR. ALL exit.)

NARRATOR: I bet you well-nigh forgot about me. But the story was moving along nicely. Quite a transformation, right?

(LADY WICKA, YOUNG SNOW WHITE and several CHILDREN pantomime in background what is being said.)

Oh yes, Lady Wicka took over completely the upbringing of Snow White. She read to her, schooled her in music, supervised her instruction, watched her as she played...

(A couple of KIDS are jumping rope; YOUNG SNOW WHITE messes it all up.)

...and corrected her when she was naughty.

(LADY WICKA corrects Snow White.)

At the end of five years, Snow White was not only the most beautiful, but the most obedient child in the kingdom.

(YOUNG SNOW WHITE exits and the older SNOW WHITE comes running on with the King's shoes. KING chases her barefooted.)

Well, almost always obedient.

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(LADY WICKA gets shoes and hands them back to KING.)

Especially to Lady Wicka.

(ALL exit stage except KING, LADY WICKA and SOMERSET.)

SOMERSET: King, my wife wishes to discuss with you a concern she has.

KING: Anything.

(To LADY WICKA)

Anything you want. I lay my kingdom at your feet. No one in heaven or on earth could have done what you have done with Snow White.

LADY WICKA: No, no. You have been more than gracious, more than kind, my King. It's just that at my age, I think maybe I should allow someone else to continue supervising your child.

KING: No, no, I won't hear of it. You have been such a blessing to me.

LADY WICKA: I must retire and go back to just tending my apple orchard.

KING: *(Turning to SOMERSET)* Surely your wife cannot be serious.

SOMERSET: I am afraid she is.

KING: But Snow White will be broken-hearted.

(To SOMERSET)

She dearly loves your wife.

LADY WICKA: I am aware of that, King, but she needs to be supervised now by someone younger, someone who would be closer to her mother's age, if she were alive today.

KING: I won't have it; you are perfect.

LADY WICKA: I have another in mind.

(LADY WICKA crosses away.)

Another that I know will do an even better job than I have done.

KING: Is there such a woman?

LADY WICKA: Yes. However, there is only one woman that I would trust Snow White with. Our daughter, Lady Anne.

SOMERSET: *(He is as surprised as the KING.)* Our daughter? Our daughter, Lady Anne?

KING: Naturally, I have seen her. I really don't know her, but if she is anything like you...

(SOMERSET crosses to LADY WICKA.)

SOMERSET: I don't think our daughter is suitable for this position.

LADY WICKA: *(Very sweetly)* Dear husband, she is the only one that could ever fill my shoes.

SOMERSET: But I don't see how...

LADY WICKA: *(Annoyed that he should doubt her)* Enough.

(Changing her tone)

You never did see her full potential.

(She turns back to KING.)

Then is it settled?

KING: Yes. Your daughter shall become the new royal nanny to Princess Snow White, if that is your recommendation.

(ALL exit but Lady Wicka.)

LADY WICKA: Good. Huntsman, attend.

(NARRATOR enters.)

Now, find my daughter and bring her to me at once.

NARRATOR: *(Throne turns around for LADY WICKA'S garden.)* So it's all set; there will be a new, younger, and if I might be so bold, lovely nanny.

(LADY ANNE enters; NARRATOR crosses to take her arm, as if they had been walking.)

ANNE: I certainly have enjoyed our walk. Oh, are we here so soon?

NARRATOR: Maybe we could walk together another time.

ANNE: I would love that.

(LADY WICKA enters.)

LADY WICKA: Daughter, I have the most wonderful opportunity for you.

(To HUNTSMAN)

You may go, Huntsman.

(HUNTSMAN bows and exits.)

ANNE: He certainly is a gallant gentleman.

LADY WICKA: He is a commoner. Pay him no mind. Now about your opportunity.

ANNE: What is it that you wish, Mother?

(LADY WICKA sits.)

LADY WICKA: My dutiful daughter and the fairest in all the land, tomorrow morning you shall begin as the royal nanny to Snow White.

ANNE: Me? Mother, only you have been able to control that child. I have none of your abilities.

LADY WICKA: Nonsense, nonsense. You are my daughter. I know what you are capable of.

ANNE: But mother, I don't especially like children.

(She crosses away from LADY WICKA.)

I don't want to spend my days and nights in the castle taking care of a sixteen-year-old. I don't want to talk to her about boys and help her write poems and teach her to sew. Please Mother, I don't want to be disobedient, but I have no desire to raise that girl.

LADY WICKA: Tut, tut. You will enjoy it. Your mother knows.

ANNE: But why are you asking me to do this? You know...

LADY WICKA: *(Cutting her off by raising her hand)* I am not asking.

ANNE: Why are you telling me to do this?

LADY WICKA: Because you, my child, shall marry the King.

ANNE: What, Mother? What makes you think the King will want to marry me?

SOMERSET: *(Enters)* What is this talk of marrying? Who, daughter, are you going to marry?

ANNE: Mother thinks the King will want to marry me.

SOMERSET: No. The King has made a vow never to marry. Remember, it was a promise he made to his long-departed wife.

LADY WICKA: Promises come, promises go. You, my husband, have no insight into the workings of the King's mind. When he sees what a loving nanny our daughter is to Snow White, he will instantly fall in love with her. Now husband, go back to the palace and keep silent about all that you know.

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(SOMERSET exits.)

And you, my child, you will love Snow White and care for her and show the King that you are the best mother in the realm.

(LIGHTS cross fade to NARRATOR; ALL exit.)

NARRATOR: Now Lady Wicka had a mirror, a magical mirror, a talking mirror. And when she had concerns, she went to her mirror.

(LIGHTS up on Mirror)

LADY WICKA:

Mirror, mirror on the wall.
Who is the most evil of them all?

MIRROR: *(Off stage voice)*

Lady Wicka, I know 'tis true,
No one is as wicked as you.

LADY WICKA:

Mirror, mirror on the wall.
Whose music enchants them all?

MIRROR:

Play it sweetly. Play it slow.
Evil comes, but no one knows.

(LADY WICKA plays evil MUSIC; LIGHTS fade to half. LADY WICKA exits and the throne is reset. CLARA and ANNE are on stage when LIGHTS come up.)

CLARA: I was very surprised, Anne, to hear that you are going to become the new royal caregiver to Snow White. I didn't think you liked children.

ANNE: I don't know if I like children or don't like them. I have had no experience. As you know, I have no brothers or sisters. You, cousin, are really the only friend I have ever had.

CLARA: Well, I was not all that sure, when we were children, that you ever really liked me.

ANNE: No, no, it was Mother. She always thought that you were, well, how should I say this?

CLARA: Beneath you in social standing.

ANNE: No, no.

CLARA: Well, that is what she said.

ANNE: How did you know?

CLARA: This little pitcher had big ears

ANNE: I am sorry she said that. I never believed it.

CLARA: So now you are off to be Snow White's babysitter, for what purpose? I'd guess Lady Wicka has some plan in mind.

(The KING enters.)

KING: Now which of you is going to have the honor of taking care of my darling Snow White?

CLARA & ANNE: *(They point at each other.)* She is.

KING: No. Now aren't you

(Talking to ANNE)

Lady Wicka's daughter?

ANNE: Yes.

CLARA: And she is so looking forward to it, too.

KING: *(Speaking to Clara)* I have seen you around the palace.

ANNE: Allow me to introduce my cousin, Clara Forest.

KING: Pleased to meet you. Auburn hair, the hair color of queens.

ANNE: What?

KING: You know, Elizabeth I of England, Isabella of Spain, and the beautiful Queen Raspona of Hungary.

CLARA: You are too kind, my King.

(CLARA curtsies.)

KING: However, Lady Anne, I have sought you out because I am worried about this transition period between your mother and you ...

(Four WOMEN run through shrieking. SNOW WHITE follows, carrying a mouse by the tail. SNOW WHITE stops.)

SNOW WHITE: Mouse, anyone?

(WOMEN shriek. SNOW WHITE pulls a snake out from behind her.)

Or possibly a snake?

KING: Snow White! Snow White!

SNOW WHITE: Oh, you can have them.

(Throws fake mouse and snake at CLARA and ANNE. Both women faint.)

KING: What are you doing?

SNOW WHITE: Daddy, they aren't real.

(She walks over to LADY ANNE.)

It was just a test for my new nanny. She fails.

KING: *(Running back and forth between women)* Wake up. They are fakes.

(KING has picked up mouse and snake.)

Wake up. They are toys. See, they are not real.

(CLARA and LADY ANNE wake up, assuming the mouse and snakes are real, so they scream and run off.)

SNOW WHITE: *(As LIGHTS fade)* Daddy, do you think I'll get Lady Wicka back? Or maybe I am too old for a nanny. You do just fine, Father.

KING: Snow White, there never was a girl like you.

SNOW WHITE: Do I disappoint you, Father?

KING: No. Never. You are my pride and joy.

SNOW WHITE: Was my mother anything like me?

KING: Spirit. She had spirit, too. I mean, I never saw her scare two women completely out of their wits, as you did Miss Forest and the Lady Anne.

SNOW WHITE: I guess that was mean, but all the time Lady Wicka was my nanny, I seemed under a spell. I wanted to do fun things, but somehow when she was present, I could not. Does this make any sense?

KING: I don't know. What I want you to know is that you remind me of your dear mother every day. You have her beauty and her wit. And I can't imagine loving anyone more than I love you.

SNOW WHITE: Father, that is so sweet.

(She kisses him on the cheek.)

I am the luckiest girl in the world to have a father like you. Shall we walk?

(They exit. ANNE and CLARA enter. ANNE sits on throne crying.)

CLARA: It will be all right. I am sure when Snow White gets to know you, that she...

ANNE: She hates me. And the King! You remind him of the queen of somewhere or another.

CLARA: The beautiful Queen Raspona of Hungary.

ANNE: Oh, don't remind me. I would be better off if I were dead. I can't please Snow White, or my father, and especially not my mother.

LADY WICKA: *(Entering)* What an awful thing to say, daughter. Just because your first encounter with Snow White was an unpleasant one.

CLARA: How did you know?

LADY WICKA: My dear... Clara Forest, isn't there somewhere you are supposed to be, like with all the other commoners?

ANNE: Mother.

LADY WICKA: *(Harshly)* Hush, daughter.

CLARA: If you will excuse me.

(CLARA exits.)

ANNE: Do you know what that child did?

LADY WICKA: Scaring one with a toy snake and a toy mouse is just fun. You must learn to enjoy Snow White's sense of humor. She is a child with spirit.

(She walks away speaking to herself.)

Which I wish you had some of.

ANNE: How did you know she scared us with those creepy toys? And for that matter, how do you always know when things happen?

LADY WICKA: It's just being a mother. But this, dear child, is what you must do. You must enjoy Snow White's spirit. When she steals shoes, you help her. When she hides the King's crown, you are to be her accomplice.

ANNE: Mother, I couldn't do that.

LADY WICKA: Will you disobey your mother? For once, my child, do not be so afraid. Enjoy life and I shall have what I want.

ANNE: But will I?

LADY WICKA: What makes me happy, dear child, will also make you happy.

(LIGHTS fade, then up on NARRATOR.)

NARRATOR: Now, this order from Lady Wicka completely changed the manner in which Lady Anne dealt with Snow White. They did everything together, but mostly they were mischievous together.

(LIGHTS up full)

They continued to steal shoes...

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(In pantomime, they play monkey in the middle with shoes.)

... and then they would take the King's crown...

(The KING comes in and when he looks at one, the other has it; when he looks at the other, the first has it.)

... and they were very good at concocting beautifully devious plans. What's about to happen now...

(TRUMPETS sound.)

... is that Ally Bengally Trallilie la Fallie Royal Braziarre of some place near, I kid you not, Algerz, and his wife the Lady Braziarre, also known as Madame Tangerz, are arriving to pay a state visit to our little kingdom. Oh, it was a royal occasion.

(Stage fills with CROWD. Procession from Algerz enters; then ALL stop and TRUMPETS sound again. In role:)

Presenting Ally Bengally Trallilie la Fallie, Royal Braziarre of some place near, Algerz, and his wife Lady Braziarre, also known as Madame Tangerz.

(Great applause, fireworks machines go off. KING comes down off the throne.)

KING: I am so happy that you would grace our humble kingdom with your presence.

ROYAL B: The pleasure is all mine.

TANGERZ: Yes, hee hee hee, the pleasure is all ours.

KING: This is my minister of state, Lord Somerset.

(SOMERSET moves forward and bows.)

SOMERSET: Where is the Prince, your majesty?

ROYAL B: I regret to inform you the Prince has a cold in his nose.

TANGERZ: Yes, hee hee hee. We regret to inform you.

SOMERSET: I know your visit will allow us to link our countries not only politically, but also economically.

ROYAL B: That is because I am a highly intelligent and an extremely astute Potentate.

TANGERZ: He is, hee hee hee, a highly intelligent and an extremely astute Potentate.

KING: I would like to present to you my lovely daughter, the Princess Snow White, and her royal nanny, Lady Anne.

(KING turns and notices that SNOW WHITE, who was beside him, has now disappeared.)

Where are they? They had better not be up to any tricks.

SOMERSET: I warned them, your Majesty, I told them. I told them both.

ROYAL B: Your daughter, the Princess Snow White, where is she? I don't see her.

TANGERZ: Yes, hee hee hee, we don't see her.

KING: Well, she was here just a second ago.

ROYAL B: We take this as an affront. It is an insult to my country that is located somewhere near Algerz.

TANGERZ: Yes, hee hee hee, an affront, an affront to where we live, somewhere near Algerz.

KING: Please, we meant no disrespect.

(Turning to SOMERSET, looking for help)

SOMERSET: On behalf of our little kingdom, Allie Bengally Trallalie la Fallie Royal Braziarre of some place near Algerz, we mean no disrespect...

ROYAL B: *(Cutting him off)* Say no more. Such an insult as this can only be reconciled...

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(He draws his sword.)

... by war!

TANGERZ: Yes, hee hee hee, we will have a war. Because you insulted us at your very door.

(TRUMPETS sound.)

KING: *(To SOMERSET)* Can you stop those trumpets?

(SNOW WHITE and ANNE enter.)

SNOW WHITE: Father, Father, I am sorry that I am late, but I have a good excuse.

KING: You had better.

ANNE: Oh, she does, sir, she does.

SNOW WHITE: I have had the royal pastry chef prepare two of the most exquisite pies for the Royal Braziarre and his wife.

(PASTRY CHEF enters carrying enormous pies.)

KING: What a wonderful, thoughtful thing to do.

ROYAL B: I am still insulted. Pie or no pie.

TANGERZ: But dear husband, they are for us and they look very delicious.

ROYAL B: An affront is an affront. And war is war. A handsome and intelligent ruler such as myself cannot suffer an insult.

SNOW WHITE: Please forgive me, most Royal Braziarre.

ANNE: Her heart was in the right place, most Royal Braziarre.

TANGERZ: She is such a lovely and spirited young lady, dear husband. Couldn't we just taste the pies, dear? They look so yummy.

SNOW WHITE: *(Taking one of the pies)* Oh yes, it would fill your tummy.

(ANNE takes other pie.)

ROYAL B: Hush, Madame Tangerz, we will eat no pie.

SNOW WHITE and ANNE: Oh yes you will.

(Both smack ROYAL B with pie. Big gasp, then dead silence.)

TANGERZ: *(Giggles while looking at her husband covered in pie)* Hee, hee, hee.

(Taking a taste of pie)

It tastes very good.

(Then the KING starts laughing. Then SOMERSET and then everyone in the whole crowd join in. Finally, ROYAL B tastes it and begins to laugh. LIGHTS fade. ALL exit. LIGHTS up on NARRATOR.)

NARRATOR: The Royal Couple enjoyed their visit and ate lots of pie. But now we must see what Lady Wicka is up to.

(LADY WICKA, ANNE and SOMERSET are on stage; LADY WICKA has an apple.)

She is convincing her husband and her daughter that Clara Forest must persuade the King to break his vow never to marry and then to propose marriage to their daughter.

SOMERSET: But she will resist.

ANNE: Why should Clara convince him to marry me? I think the King sort of fancies her.

LADY WICKA: When Clara protests, offer her one of these.

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(LADY WICKA hands SOMERSET an apple. LADY WICKA exits. CLARA enters.)

SOMERSET: So good to see you.

CLARA: Really?

ANNE: Clara, you don't have to do this for me.

CLARA: Do what?

SOMERSET: I think you can see, Clara, that my daughter and the King would make an ideal match. She is so very, very good with Snow White and I know the King well enough to believe that he has fallen in love with my precious child.

CLARA: He has? I haven't seen it.

ANNE: Father, neither have I.

SOMERSET: What Lady Wicka wants, I mean, what I want, is for you to convince the King that he should ask for my daughter's hand in marriage.

CLARA: But the King has made a vow never to marry again. At least until Snow White marries.

ANNE: And besides, Father, I think the King fancies Clara.

SOMERSET: Ridiculous, ridiculous! She is a commoner. You are a commoner, aren't you Clara Forest?

CLARA: Yes, I am a commoner and I think I had best leave now.

SOMERSET: No, stay. Sit.

(He hands her an apple.)

Have an apple.

CLARA: No, I must be going.

SOMERSET: Daughter!

ANNE: Yes, Clara, have an apple.

CLARA: Really? Anne, you want me to eat this apple?

ANNE: Well, I mean...not if you...uh don't...

SOMERSET: Remember, daughter, your mother's wishes.

ANNE: Yes, Clara, eat the apple.

(CLARA takes a bite of apple. We hear LADY WICKA'S evil MUSIC in background; CLARA's manner changes...semi-robotic.)

NARRATOR: Presenting his Royal Highness.

(KING enters.)

KING: Well, what kind of gathering do we have here?

SOMERSET: One in which we are discussing your future, my King.

KING: Mine? My life is full. I love my kingdom. My daughter seems very happy and there is a lovely woman that I enjoy strolling around the palace gardens with.

SOMERSET: Hold out your hand, daughter.

(KING passes ANNE and takes CLARA'S hand. They take a few steps.)

KING: I have so enjoyed our time together.

SOMERSET: Daughter, please excuse us.

(ANNE exits.)

I think Clara, a woman of true insights and visions, has a proposal for you. Don't you, Clara?

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(Lady Wicka's MUSIC is heard.)

Have another bite of the apple.

CLARA: Your majesty, I have not enjoyed our walks because I know the woman, the only woman, that could ever truly make you happy.

SOMERSET: That would be my daughter, correct Clara?

CLARA: Yes, only Lady Anne could be a mother to Snow White and the Queen of our fair kingdom. She will also be the loving and dutiful wife you deserve.

KING: I had never thought of her but...

CLARA: But you must. You must think of her. And you must realize that the promise you gave to your wife before her death was only given because she was afraid that Snow White would end up with an evil stepmother, and we can all see that Lady Anne will make an excellent mother. Besides, Snow White wants it.

KING: I don't know; this all seems...

(LADY WICKA enters and watches in the background.)

SOMERSET: But Snow White has told Lady Anne that she wished my daughter was her mother.

(ANNE enters and listens but no one sees her.)

KING: Did she really?

CLARA: Have a bite of my apple, my Liege.

(CLARA offers KING the apple.)

KING: No thank you. Clara, walk with me for a minute or two. Somerset, find my daughter and bring her here.

(SOMERSET exits.)

CLARA: I'll be happy to walk with you, my Liege. It will allow me to arrange the wedding; between you and Lady Anne

(KING and CLARA exit.)

ANNE: *(Moving down stage)* I never heard Snow White say anything about me becoming her mother. Why would my father say this? And what has happened to Clara? I'll ask my mother about all of this.

(ANNE exits. SOMERSET and SNOW WHITE enter.)

SOMERSET: So, as I said before, your father loves Lady Anne and wants to marry her.

SNOW WHITE: Are you sure? I've never even seen them alone.

SOMERSET: Yes, well...uh...ah. But your bedtime is at 9:30. After that...well...

SNOW WHITE: Will that make my father happy?

LADY WICKA: *(Moving to join them)* Very happy, my dear child. Very happy.

KING: *(Entering)* Somerset, Lady Wicka, leave us.

(They exit.)

I understand that you would like a mother?

SNOW WHITE: And I understand that you would like a wife?

KING: I want what is best for you.

SNOW WHITE: And I, dear Father, want what is best for you.

(KING kisses SNOW WHITE on forehead. SNOW WHITE exits. KING turns to NARRATOR.)

KING: Tell the royal Astrologer to meet me at midnight.

NARRATOR: Well, the royal Astrologer did indeed meet the King at midnight.

(LIGHTS dim to half; blue up to signify night.)

KING: Where is the Royal Candle Lighter?

NARRATOR: Ohhh. I forgot to tell him. I will have to do it myself.

(NARRATOR lights three or four candles.)

ASTROLOGER: *(Entering with telescope)* I fear I am late, your Majesty. It is hard to tell time without the sun.

KING: I need you to read the stars for me. I have a very important question for you and I hope the stars hold the answer.

ASTROLOGER: Well, as you know, your highness, the stars know all, they show all, and they can tell all.

KING: What is that device?

ASTROLOGER: It is called a telescope. I have been working in my laboratory to perfect this wonderful instrument. It allows me to magnify the stars seven times.

KING: I've heard of the telescope. I thought that Italian, Galileo, invented it.

ASTROLOGER: Italians—they will take credit for everything. Remember last year, when I invented that new food—pizza? Some Italian tried to take credit for that. So what does your Majesty desire from me?

KING: This marriage.

ASTROLOGER: I've heard.

KING: Between...

ASTROLOGER: Lady Anne...

KING: And myself has caused me...

ASTROLOGER: Some doubt...

KING: About whether I should break my...

ASTROLOGER: Vow. To put it succinctly, you want to know whether you should marry Lady Anne or not. So you want to know what I think.

KING: No, I want to know what the stars say.

(ASTROLOGER moves to the KING.)

ASTROLOGER: Let me draw a circle in the sand; in the center you shall stand.

(Celestial MUSIC is heard. Astrologer uses flash paper to create a bit of magic.)

Fire here, Fire there,

Fire comes from everywhere.

KING: All right. I am impressed.

(He isn't.)

Now look through that telescope and tell me if I should marry or not. I have a great foreboding about all of this.

(ASTROLOGER looks in telescope.)

ASTROLOGER: Jupiter is about to intersect with Venus. Pluto is popping about the heavens like a dog's tail and Uranus is gone tonight.

KING: Yes, yes.

ASTROLOGER: And the constellation, the one—you know the one where the guy holds the bow. You know the one where the bunch of stars look like...

KING: Orion.

ASTROLOGER: Yes, it's there.

KING: So, so.

ASTROLOGER: You will be happy to know, my King, that by plotting the exact position that Jupiter is in, the answer is, yes, you should marry Queen Anne. Oops, hold everything, but Mars says "No."

KING: So which is it? Is it yes or is it no?

ASTROLOGER: Let me check Venus. Uh ha. There is a definite answer. Yes, here is an answer. If you marry Anne, I must perform the ceremony.

KING: I don't know any more than I did before I called you.

ASTROLOGER: Oh wait. Look! The Aurora Borealis.

KING: The what?

ASTROLOGER: The Great Northern Lights. This means something.

KING: What? What does it mean?

ASTROLOGER: I don't have the faintest idea. But it means something.

(LIGHTS cross fade to NARRATOR. KING and ASTROLOGER exit.)

NARRATOR: The King decided to marry Queen Anne and he allowed the Astrologer to perform the ceremony. Let me assure you that Snow White was on her best behavior. And, she took the idea of having a stepmother quite well, for she wanted her father to be happy. There is, I am afraid, a bit of irony here, for the King believed if he married Lady Anne, he would be making Snow White very happy. That made Lady Wicka the Queen Mother.

(NARRATOR exits. LIGHTS up on MAGIC MIRROR.)

LADY WICKA:

Mirror, mirror on the wall.

Who is the happiest of them all?

MIRROR: Lady Wicka it has to be...

LADY WICKA: *(Interrupting)* Magic mirror, I am now Queen Mother Wicka, and don't you forget it. And now who is the happiest of them all?

MIRROR: It has to be the Queen Mother that we all see.

LADY WICKA: Now, magic mirror, I need to ask you about my daughter and her new husband. You noticed as a bride, she was both radiant and beautiful. And she and the King made such a lovely couple. So,

Mirror, mirror on the wall.

Who does the King love most of all?

MIRROR:

Lady Anne was a fair bride, I recall,

But the King loves Snow White most of all.

LADY WICKA: That cannot be, mirror. My daughter was never lovelier. Surely the King loves my daughter with all the affection his heart can muster.

MIRROR:

The mirror that hangs on this wall:

Knows Snow White is loved, above all.

LADY WICKA: Arrrrrgarra. I must have a plan.

(She sits down and plays her evil MUSIC.)

MIRROR:

Play it sweetly. Play it slow.

Evil comes but no one knows.

Oh, Queen Mother, I know 'tis true;

No one is as wicked as you.

(Music ends.)

LADY WICKA: Huntsman, attend!

(NARRATOR enters with bow. LADY WICKA moves toward center.)

NARRATOR: That's me. I am THE Huntsman.

LADY WICKA: Huntsman, I have a job for you.

HUNTSMAN: I am at your service, Lady Wicka.

LADY WICKA: Queen Mother Wicka.

HUNTSMAN: Sorry, Queen Mother Wicka.

LADY WICKA: You know Snow White, my step-granddaughter, as it were.

HUNTSMAN: Oh yes, the one the King dotes on. Why, his life is centered around her....not to exclude your lovely daughter, Queen Anne.

LADY WICKA: You know, Huntsman, sometimes a stepchild, no matter how well meaning, can stand in the way of true love between a husband and a wife.

HUNTSMAN: No, I didn't know that.

LADY WICKA: But then, what does a Huntsman know? It is true, and it has never been more true than with that malicious Snow White.

HUNTSMAN: I am sorry to hear that, Queen Mother.

LADY WICKA: So you will solve Queen Anne's problem? You will take her out into the forest, far from the castle, and shoot an arrow through her heart.

HUNTSMAN: I don't know if I can do this. Snow White is so beautiful, so loving.

LADY WICKA: And you will bring me the arrow that has pierced her heart.

HUNTSMAN: I cannot. I will not do this. I have often done things that may not have been exactly legal, but I have never harmed another human being.

(She hands him an apple.)

LADY WICKA: This is a magic apple. Bite into it and it will become your conscience.

HUNTSMAN: I don't know.

LADY WICKA: And this bag...

(She hands him a bag.)

...of gold is to ease your guilt.

(Calling)

Step-granddaughter, come in.

(SNOW WHITE enters.)

SNOW WHITE: Yes, Queen Grandmother.

LADY WICKA: This Huntsman will take you for a walk in the forest.

SNOW WHITE: Oh, I would love a walk in the forest...

(Noticing his bow)

...but we aren't going to harm any tiny little animals, are we?

HUNTSMAN: Oh, no. No tiny little animals.

(LIGHTS fade. Lady Wicka's MUSIC is heard. They exit. KING is quickly on stage as is the entire entourage of the COURT. Time has passed; LIGHTS rise quickly.)

ASTROLOGER: I have no idea where Snow White can be.

KING: You know magic. Use it to find Snow White.

ASTROLOGER: This is beyond my powers.

MAN 1: Your highness, we have searched for miles to the west of the palace and no one has seen Snow White.

MAN 2: And I, sire, have searched to the east of the palace, nor did I find anyone who had seen or heard from Snow White.

KING: It has been three days. What could have happened to my darling Snow White?

SOMERSET: We still have not heard from the north, nor from the south. Maybe she is there.

ANNE: Yes, my dear, do not assume the worst.

(MAN 3 and 4 enter from opposite directions.)

KING: Speak. What news?

MAN 3: Snow White is not to be found to the north.

MAN 4: Nor to the south, my King.

KING: Where can she be? She has always been a free spirit, but she has never run away. You don't think it has anything to do with our marriage?

SOMERSET: Don't even think of such a thing. Snow White was so happy at the wedding.

(LADY WICKA enters.)

ANNE: Mother, come join us in our grief.

SOMERSET: Have you heard from her, my dear wife?

(ANNE crosses to LADY WICKA.)

ANNE: Yes, Mother, have you heard?

(There is a pause; we know she has information.)

Have you any information? The poor King's heart is breaking.

(LADY WICKA brings forth the arrow.)

LADY WICKA: This arrow, I am sad to say, pierced our lovely granddaughter Snow White's heart.

(KING runs and takes arrow.)

KING: No, no. This cannot be. Who would shoot my lovely Snow White?

LADY WICKA: A hunting accident, I understand.

KING: But her body—where is her body?

ANNE: Yes Mother, where is her body?

(LADY WICKA leans over and whispers into ANNE'S ear.)

KING: *(Demanding)* Queen Mother, where is her body?

SOMERSET: Yes, wife, where is the body?

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ANNE: My mother is too overcome with grief to say it out loud, but Snow White's body has been carried off by the creatures of the forest...

KING: *(Holding arrow)* No, no, this cannot be.

(The CROWD drifts off.)

Not Snow White. Not the loveliest, most precious daughter in the world.

(The KING is overcome with grief.)

Are you sure, Queen Mother? Are you sure?

LADY WICKA: The King is prostrate. Husband, you must plan the farewell.

SOMERSET: Yes, yes, I will do it.

(To ANNE)

Daughter, you are his wife. You must comfort him.

(ANNE turns to LADY WICKA.)

ANNE: Mother, I am miscast in this role. I cannot comfort him; I cannot even comfort myself.

LADY WICKA: I have made you a Queen. Now act like one.

ANNE: I can't. I can't.

SOMERSET: Then help me with the arrangements.

(ANNE and SOMERSET exit. Funeral MUSIC is heard. MOURNERS enter carrying torches. LIGHTS dim. CLARA comes in with a torch and she is followed by an empty litter. On top of this litter are red roses. Beside the litter are four little CHILDREN carrying red roses. Following are other MOURNERS and TORCH BEARERS. They cross to the litter and place roses in it. The funeral procession exits into the audience. The KING is still on his knees prostrate with grief. LADY WICKA crosses to the KING and hands him an apple as the LIGHTS fade on them.)

END OF ACT ONE

16 more pages in act two