

SCENE E

(EVIL QUEEN is standing, looking at a MAGIC MIRROR and admiring herself in it. She begins a sort of acceptance speech.)

EVIL QUEEN: Today marks ten years that I outgrew this world's beauty and entered into a realm all my own. I do say a word of thanks to my hands and face for being so idle in that time that I have obtained no wrinkles in the least; and, though I'm ashamed to even mention you, thanks to my stomach for living only on tea that entire time. I must say, we've had a great run these past ten years, and I look forward to maintaining this beauty until the end of all time, as soon as those thousands of dim-wit servants find the water of youth. *(looking closer)* Ah—eyes! Have we worked you too hard, you're developing some sort of unnecessary bags underneath. *(quickly)* Very well, we shall accommodate with – extra sleep! And three hours of relaxing and meditation. Deal? Ah, yes, I'll have to cut down rations to half a cup of tea. Fine. And now—never enough about me, but the moment we've all been waiting for – Looking glass upon the wall, who's the fairest of us all?

MAGIC MIRROR: Queen, you are full fair, 'tis true, but Snow White is fairer than you. *(prolonged silence)*

EVIL QUEEN: What. Did. You. Say?

MAGIC MIRROR: My queen, you know I speak all true; you heard me the first time I spoke to you.

EVIL QUEEN: AarrrrAGH! Would you care to be smashed into a thousand little pieces?! Who is Snow White?

MAGIC MIRROR: *(sigh)* Snow White is your stepdaughter, my Queen; you sent her to servants' quarters where she's never seen.

EVIL QUEEN: That little brat covered in SOOT is more beautiful than I am?

MAGIC MIRROR: I cannot deny what is true and right. Would you care to see the face of the pure Snow White?

EVIL QUEEN: NO! No, of course not. Well, then. She must be destroyed. *(thinking)* Mirror, is it a valid expectation that a princess should be equally as skilled as a miller's daughter?

MAGIC MIRROR: In different ways, the two have skill; they cannot each other's role fulfill. Though, I say, with the tasks you've given her, this princess's skills are most certainly similar.

EVIL QUEEN: Excellent. I heard of a girl to be married to some Earl, and her skills were most remarkable. I shall have to give this Snow White a similar test... and if she fails, she is no longer worthy to be a princess, and I shall have her executed. I shall enjoy bringing ruin upon her pretentious little – beautiful – face.

SCENE 6

ROBIN HOOD: Here's a good spot.

SNOW WHITE: What's the first thing I should know about shooting?

ROBIN HOOD: The first thing? Well, don't be afraid of the bow. *(starts demonstrating with the bow)*
The bow is your tool, you can handle it roughly – but not too roughly, mind you, this is my favorite.

SNOW WHITE: You have multiple?

ROBIN HOOD: Well sure, different bows shoot differently, and carving bows is a lot of fun.

SNOW WHITE: I've always wanted to learn to carve wood. Will you teach me that, too?

ROBIN HOOD: I'll teach you anything you want. *(beat, blushing)*

SNOW WHITE: *(speaking over each other)* So, I just hold the bow like this?

ROBIN HOOD: *(speaking over each other)* Yeah, take the bow.

SNOW WHITE: So – did your father teach you how to do archery?

ROBIN HOOD: No, my tutor did, actually.

SNOW WHITE: Really? Your tutor? I always thought that tutors taught you about math and science and language. *(through the next lines, SNOW is trying to pull back the bow, accidentally releasing at the wrong time, etc. while ROBIN HOOD is standing off to the side)*

ROBIN HOOD: My tutor was a singular man, that's for sure. He's a friar who's fighting would put fire in your blood as much as his preaching and teaching did. I learned numbers and history and astronomy, sure, but then he would take me out to the forest. He taught me archery while telling the most exciting stories. I don't spend that much time with my father. Or, I didn't. I still don't, I suppose, now that I've run away.

SNOW WHITE: Oh, so he's your stepfather, then? Not your real one?

ROBIN HOOD: No, he's my real one, all right.

SNOW WHITE: *(lowering the bow)* Oh. I'm so sorry. I had no idea that even real families could... not be as kind.

ROBIN HOOD: I don't have it so bad, really. My father cares about me, he just didn't take much time to tell me that. My friend Marian – her father was unaware at times, but he loves her so much and took such

good care of her. Tried to set her up with a prosperous marriage with her best friend from childhood, doing everything he could to help her be happy in this world.

SNOW WHITE: Well, that's wonderful! I'm so glad that she got her happy ending.

ROBIN HOOD: Everyone's human, Snow. Even when someone seems to do everything right, it doesn't always turn out that way.

SNOW WHITE: (*almost to herself*) I should know that better than anyone. I still don't know why my stepmother is trying to kill me.

ROBIN HOOD: (*sympathetically but simply*) I know, Snow. (*beat*) I was Marian's fiancée. I tried to act like a romantic gentleman, but she's my best friend, like a sister to me. I couldn't marry her.

SNOW WHITE: What happened?

ROBIN HOOD: I helped get her out of a jam by stealing from a rich fellow in the neighborhood. That, of course, made me an outlaw, and I ran here. Not bad, really, I always wanted to live in Sherwood. Here, let me help you with that. (*picks up bow and illustrates again*) You're going to take your arrow and slip the nock onto the string. Then, hold your left arm straight out in front of you, and angle your body a bit so the arrow has room. Feet firm on the ground. Grab the string with your three center fingers directly under the arrow, and pull back to about your ear. Then, release by opening your hand. (*bow twangs, he hands the bow to SNOW WHITE*) Make sure the tip of the arrow is pointing at your target before you release.

SNOW WHITE: What should I aim at?

ROBIN HOOD: How about that apple tree over there?

SNOW WHITE: Ooh, there's an apple hanging over that branch! I'm going to shoot it.

ROBIN HOOD: (*chuckling*) Sure, go for it.

SNOW WHITE: (*under her breath*) Nock onto string. Left arm straight, give the arrow room, feet firm. Pull back to your ear, and...release.

(*SNOW WHITE shoots, and an apple falls from the tree.*)

ROBIN HOOD: (*astonished, excited*) What – how did you...?

SNOW WHITE: (*ecstatic*) I did it, Robin, I shot an apple! I told you that you were a good teacher!

ROBIN HOOD: And you told me you were a fast learner, but that was incredible!

SNOW WHITE: It was?

ROBIN HOOD: It was! I – that was amazing, your precision, your patience, once you learned how to do it...

SNOW WHITE: Well, that's what you get for years of princessing and servanting.

ROBIN HOOD: Really? Come on, tell me while we head back. (*ROBIN HOOD starts walking quickly, excited and nervous. SNOW WHITE has trouble keeping up.*)

SNOW WHITE: I was balancing books on my head before I learned to walk. And I learned to walk very early. I had a governess who taught me how to move, how to sit, how to tilt my head back and forth. (*out of breath*) Could we sit for a minute?

ROBIN HOOD: Sure. (*they sit*)

SNOW WHITE: I learned to read a bit, too, but never so that I could study. I've always been taught to be precise, punctual, and practically perfect when it comes to appearance. That's one thing my stepmother was able to pass through the ranks of her servants down to me. (*standing up*) I'm good now. (*they start walking again, a bit slower this time*) And, when it comes to patience in the moment, I've done enough dishwashing and laundry to know how to do it right the first time.

ROBIN HOOD: And it pays off. My word, that was amazing!

SNOW WHITE: (*blushing*) Thank you. I mean, I'm sure that was also just beginner's luck, right? There's still more to learn than just that.

ROBIN HOOD: Well, sure. But that was great for a first lesson. (*they arrive at the cottage*)

SNOW WHITE: Yeah, first lesson. Well, guess we're back.

ROBIN HOOD: Yeah.

SNOW WHITE: Yep. (*awkward silence*) You have anything to do the rest of the day?

ROBIN HOOD: (*starts talking as she does, but quickly cuts off and changes what he's saying*) Well, I guess I ought to head – no. No, I'm not doing anything.

SNOW WHITE: You want to – stick around? For a little while?

ROBIN HOOD: Sure. (*another awkward silence*) So, did you actually like being royalty? You'd think that I would know myself, but I grew up more running around in the woods than I did in my house. After my arranged marriage setup, I figured all stuff pertaining to nobility and riches was bad.

SNOW WHITE: Oh, please, there's a reason why people have riches and use them! Money isn't bad inherently, and rich people can actually do some really wonderful things.

ROBIN HOOD: Name one that isn't completely useless.

SNOW WHITE: Like my father paying for water pumps in the capital – like your education and all the books you read – like – BALLS!

ROBIN HOOD: Balls? You mean those dancing parties? How are those useful?

SNOW WHITE: Dancing is possibly the most singular wonderful thing this world can offer! When you dance, it's the closest you could ever get to flying. You glide along the dance floor, moving perfectly with a dance partner, and you feel safe and dangerous all at once. You get to wear fancy clothes and feel your best, thrills flying through your feet; and when your partner dips or lifts you, you learn to trust them quite quickly! Dancing is what makes me feel free, Robin, free. I never had to think about what the next day would bring or what my governess would say, because everyone was dancing around me, whirling in a mosaic of moving, brilliant colors. I never had to worry that my father would let me fall, because his strong hands were holding me. And I got to be the daughter of the King and fly in complete comfort around the most beautiful room I've ever seen. Dancing just makes you happy. Besides, you don't even need to spend much money on a ball; a simple open space is all that you need.

ROBIN HOOD: Wow. That's almost what I feel like exploring Sherwood. But not half as beautiful.

SNOW WHITE: No, Robin, Sherwood is beautiful too, in its own way. Don't you see it? Look at how the sunlight catches those leaves to turn them gold. Listen to the creek nearby, and the birds that sound like they're so happy their hearts might burst if they don't sing. I'm so glad I came here, or else I never would have seen it.

ROBIN HOOD: (*getting an idea*) Snow – any chance I could come by later? I'd love to see you again, but I just remembered something I should do.

SNOW WHITE: Well, sure thing! Better find shelter quick, though, there's a cloudfront coming in.

ROBIN HOOD: Don't you worry about me. I'll see you later, Princess. (*exits*)

SCENE 8

(The DWARVES enter, whistling cheerfully. They walk in a clump, not a line, with the oldest few in front leading down to the end. They're all a little clumsy, but they're having a jolly good time as they walk in. PAPA and MAMA see SNOW WHITE on the ground and gasp.)

MAMA: SNOW!

(MAMA runs to SNOW WHITE and bends over her, trying to figure out what happened, while PAPA looks over her shoulder, his worry and temperature rising. In all the chaos, the others start to figure out what's going on.)

SAM: Mama?

PAM: *(confused)* Snow?

FLO: Hey!

JO: Snow!

SAM: What's this?

PAPA: You tell me!

MAMA: Poor baby!

PAM: Oh, goodness!

FLO: My gosh!

JO: My gosh!

BALTHAZAR: Calamity has fallen on this house!

(ALL fall silent. MAMA has been trying to wake her up and is now looking frantically for the cause of the problem. She realizes that SNOW WHITE'S corset is too tight.)

MAMA: My lands!

PAM: What, Mama?

MAMA: *(leans over to Pam and whispers in her ear)* Now, you boys skedaddle. We've got some women stuff to do. She'll be fine. Come on, Flo.

FLO: Fine. *(The three female DWARVES pick up SNOW WHITE and carry her into the house, the set transitions, and the male DWARVES leave.)*

MAMA: Look, this is what happened – little Snow thought it was a good idea to practically strangle herself in her corset!

FLO: Who would make a stupid mistake – no, who *could* make that mistake?

PAM: Oh, you're sure she'll be alright?

FLO: If she tied herself up, she'll be fine, Mom. Nobody can really tighten it that much if they're doing it themselves.

(The corset is undone, SNOW WHITE coughs and slowly sits up.)

PAM: Are you alright, sweetie?

MAMA: How many fingers am I holding up?

FLO: What were you *thinking*?

SNOW WHITE: I...I don't know.

PAM: *(talking over the others)* What do you need? What can I get you?

MAMA: *(talking over the others)* Oh my lands, Snow, what month is it? What's your name?

FLO: *(talking over the others)* You *think*? That was the most insane—how did you even do that?

SNOW WHITE: No, wait—*(others silence)* I was only saying I don't know to answer Flo's question – I'm fine, Pam. Mama, you were holding up three fingers. *(MAMA and PAM breathe a sigh of relief.)*

MAMA: Thank goodness. But what do you mean, you don't know? Why would you do this?

SNOW WHITE: Oh, well, it was just—Robin and I spent the day together—

FLO: You what?

SNOW WHITE: And I thought that he liked me –

FLO: You thought *what*?! *(MAMA hushes FLO)*

JO: You thought *what*?!

SNOW WHITE: But then I realized that he didn't, he was being awkward around me because he's goofy sometimes. So, I thought if I could make myself more attractive—

PAM: By changing your body? Because of Robin?

SNOW WHITE: *(still unaware of what really happened)* Yeah, I guess.

MAMA: Snow, you've got the wrong idea of what it means to be beautiful! I would have thought that you, of all people, would know how to see the beauty in yourself as well as in others. Am I right, ladies?

PAM & FLO: She's right!

JO: She's right!

MAMA: We women dwarves have had to learn how to be okay with our size.

PAM: Our men, for some reason, keep changing their minds!

FLO: They'll say, "skinny's pretty," and you work to lose all those curves—

MAMA: Then they say, "A strong, bulky woman's what a miner deserves."

PAM: The beards are another level of pressure. They start growing at ten.

FLO: Unless you're me and fifteen—mine didn't grow in until then! Then they've got to be curly and thick to look good—

PAM: And mine grew in thin and straight as wood!

MAMA: Papa Dwarf told me I *needed* makeup on.

FLO: Robin always tells me my hair looks wrong.

PAM: And Sam thinks I should grow my beard out long.

MAMA: BUT – that is not the end of the story. We know that just because they say it, doesn't mean it's true.

PAM: And just because they're awkward doesn't mean they're through.

FLO: You want to learn something from a dating guru?

MAMA: --she means me. Guys should be interested in nothing but *you!*

JO: In nothing but *you!*

FLO: If you change yourself for them or put on a mask,

PAM: You give them each and every reason not to ask. Dear, you don't need to be perfect. You shouldn't be fake.

MAMA: Just go and be your beautiful self, goodness' sake! Your style, your humor, if that's not enough,

FLO: Then they've got the wrong reasons. Oh well, for them that's tough.

JO: For them, that's tough.

PAM: While we're at it, let's give her the lesson on self-care.

MAMA: Listen up, honey, we're almost there.

SNOW WHITE: This is all so new to me, I'm so blessed with a family like you!

MAMA: Every day, wake up and say to a mirror: there's nothing wrong with my body, nothing inferior.

PAM: Make healthy habits for the rest of the day; work hard, take breaks, and laugh lots all the way.

FLO: Each day, eat an apple, or greens if you can, and when you're sad, snuggle up in a warm afghan.

MAMA: Choose who you spend time with –

PAM: Make sure it's life-giving—

MAMA/PAM/FLO: And focus on happy,

JO: And focus on happy,

MAMA: And be self-forgiving. Does that make sense, Snow?

SNOW WHITE: Yes! Oh, yes. Thank you all so much for teaching me! I love you all. Now I've got a whole new life ahead of me—I'm going to start making healthy habits today. Pam, could you pass the apples?

PAM: *(passing a bowl of apples to her)* We love you too, sweetie. So very much.

MAMA: Now Papa and the boys are probably worried. I'll go talk to them.

SCENE 9

EVIL QUEEN: A terrifying little freak, eh? Who had the power to turn straw into gold...I wonder...

(RUMPELSTILTSKIN pops out of a hiding place)

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Wondering won't do you much good, I'd say, but a little freak can surely make your day!

EVIL QUEEN: *(surprised, but really not caring)* Ah, perfect. Freakish troll-dwarf, do you know who I am?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Aye, prune-face, you're the queen's grace.

EVIL QUEEN: How DARE you insult my face! Clearly you have no clue who you're dealing with.

MAGIC MIRROR: Look to his face – your answer lies there. He knows who you are, Queen, he just doesn't care.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Earthquakes and hail, bolts and thunder! Who have we here, I come to wonder?

EVIL QUEEN: Oh, great. Now I have two people talking at me in verse. How quaint.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Ah, a soul in a magic mirror, well-trapped. Queen, you're cruel to have one thus kidnapped.

EVIL QUEEN: Kidnapped? The looking glass is ... a looking glass. There's nothing there besides some magic to make it tell the truth.

MAGIC MIRROR: *(as close to losing it as she ever will be)* It, you say? Queen, you're a knave – did you ever consider I might be a slave? The mirror gives me truth to answer your questions, but my soul, personality, that's what gives you suggestions. Take a moment, Queen, to sit back and reflect – did you really think I'm just a mere object?

EVIL QUEEN: Of course, you're a person inside the mirror – that must be why you annoy me past distraction! Well, you've been my slave for the past ten years, and you're powerless to stop me from asking you questions. Nothing changes now, looking glass, you're still mine. *(turning to RUMPELSTILTSKIN)* Now, you ugly little pipsqueak, would you care to change the subject from my servant? I have a deal to strike up with you.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Though I can't say I envy her position, I'd much rather discuss this business proposition.

EVIL QUEEN: I hear you're powerful, and you work up some sort of magic for gold in return, is that correct?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: (*gleaming eyes*) Yes, lump-face, this is true indeed, and you have gold a-plenty to feed to my greed.

EVIL QUEEN: Good. I need a poison, a special kind of potion. I need one that penetrates through skin and bone, as well as digestive.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Now here's the rules, I won't say them twice. I make the poison, you get revenge, but it all comes at a price. Gold, half your wealth, is given to me—TWENTY-FOUR HOURS is all I offer thee! Pile the gold in a fireplace, among ashes and soot – it's a mailbox for me, a way for your output. If you dare keep the money any longer that night, you will soon find yourself in a terrible plight. I warn you, unless you make gold a stranger, you'll find yourself in my hands and my danger.

EVIL QUEEN: Understood. And agreed.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: (*hands over the poison*) Then here's the potion, deadly by digestive or lotion. Forget not the gold—I made it quite clear – if you don't pay up, you'll pay quite dear.

(*RUMPELSTILTSKIN exits*)

MAGIC MIRROR: Delightful little troll, there. And his name, I can tell, is one most rare.

EVIL QUEEN: Forget that creep, looking glass, I have the poison! Now Snow White in the woods has nothing to offer him as payment. I'll simply give her the perfect way out—for free!

(*EVIL QUEEN takes a fancy comb out of her hair and drips poison onto the tips, holding it far away from her as she and the MAGIC MIRROR exit*)