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The tale of the young princess and her evil stepmother, the Wicked Queen, is widely known. Despite a few variations from telling to telling, the story remains the same—the Queen was jealous of the girl's beauty, and this jealousy culminated in the Queen's attempt on the sweet, naive girl's life.

Another tale far less often spoken of is the one that explains what caused the Queen to become so contemptuously vile. Still, some have attempted to guess at the reason. Perhaps the Queen's true nature was that of a wicked hag and her beautiful, regal appearance a disguise used to fool the King. Others claim that the Queen might have hated the girl for her resemblance to the King's first wife. Mostly, the Queen is painted as a morally abhorrent woman who never loved another being during the course of her miserable life.

In fact, the theories about exactly what cause the Queen's obsessive vanity and jealous rage are too numerous to catalog. This book recounts a version of the story that has remained untold until now. It is a tragic tale of love and loss, and it contains a bit of magic. It is a tale of the Wicked Queen...

Fairest of All: A Tale of the Wicked Queen Details

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From Reader Review Fairest of All: A Tale of the Wicked Queen for online ebook

Sarah Churchill says

I like the twist on the Evil Queen's backstory, but this one didn't really do it for me. Disjointed, the pacing was way off, and it just didn't make much sense a lot of the time. Years passed without mention, then a month, then a few more years. It felt like she had to try to fit it to the timescale of Snow White growing up, and so just did that by saying the Queen got a bit more mad during that time.

I really liked the first few chapters, with the Queen being young and how she met the king. But after that it felt mostly like filler, and nothing really happened outside of the story we already know.

Compares to Poor Unfortunate Soul which had so much more to it, I'm disappointed in Fairest of All.

Jordan says

This book was cute. I love the Disney princes and the fairy tales that they are based on. At the begging of the book, I kept getting confused about which villain the book was about. There were so many references to the story of Sleeping Beauty that I began to become confused.

The three cousins of the queen were such disturbing and evil characters. They literally talked about chopping up a little girl the first time they met her.

And when the Queen is having second thoughts about killing Snow White they give her a drink that takes away her emotions. They were definitely good and creepy villains.

I also liked how we got to see the story from the Evil Queen's perspective. To see how much she loved Snow and to see how she took care of her in the beginning. It was also nice to see how the Queen regretted her decisions because she still loved Snow. I am glad that, through the mirror, the Queen got to tell Snow that she always loved her.

Katie.dorny says

This book hurt my heart a little bit. The queen was so much more complicated and hurt and loving and..human..then I ever expected her to be portrayed. She deserved more. She deserved better. She needed help and she rejected it and I'm so glad I stumbled upon this book. I loved it.

Emerald says

"The words wounded deeper than the bruises and the scars from any physical pain he inflicted on me. At least those wounds healed."

Brittany Batong says

This was one of those books that I really wanted to like, because I had such high hopes for it. It starts off well enough, chronicling the early years of Snow White and "the Queen", as she is simply called (I actually read somewhere that during development of the 1937 film the Queen was called by the name Grimhilde). I particularly enjoyed the warmth of the relationship between the two, laying down a nice contrast between past and present. Unfortunately, the book was oftentimes laden with awkward and simply juvenile phrasing. I really have to be picky about this, because strong authors like J.K. Rowling have taught us that juvenile writing does not have to be dumbed down to be universally appealing. Also, because my 6-year old son has a major obsession with the original film, and I have watched it soooo many times, I found myself somewhat disappointed in the weak explanations (or lack thereof) for events that occur in the film, during the final third of the novel. Who was that skeleton that the queen kicks once she has assumed her old crone disguise? Where the heck is the Prince all this time (Disney animators had developed an intriguing premise for his capture that did not make it to the original film)? While I don't expect most folks to think of these things while watching the original movie, I did and I am surprised and disappointed that someone writing a counterpoint to such popular source material did not. I'm disappointed that Disney would license something that left so many holes and so much to be desired.

Dannii Elle says

This is the first instalment in the Villains series, which rework the original tales from the initial villain's perspective.

This book had big boots to fill, given the renown of the similarly themed and big-hit movie, Maleficent. I think it did so extraordinarily well. Despite the difference in Disney villain chosen, there were many similarities that linked the two, yet I liked it no less for that.

This traditional villain is given a backstory that belies her following evil and, instead, exposes a vulnerable and authentic character. She is not the stereotypical evil step-mother, so beloved in fairy tales and lore, but is an individual who suffers from the very real feelings of unworthiness and insecurity. The author deftly recreated the way her character is viewed and brings to the fore deeper questions, concerning societal expectations and gender inequality, missing from the Disney adaptation of this story.

Alaina Meserole says

[So, *Fairest of All* is obviously from the Wicked Queen's perspective. The story breaks down that she marries a man that she fell in love with - which is Snow White's dad, the King. But we all know what happens next within that marriage. However, we don't exactly know

Shelby *trains flying monkeys* says

*****possible spoilers*****

The Queen (her name never is mentioned) marries the love of her life- (Bleck) becomes stepmommy to little Snow White and is just all peaches and cream. She is almost sugary sweet.

The King gives her a mirror that her late father made before his death. Queen thinks she sees someone in the mirror but everyone just poo-poops her into thinking she imagined it. We then find out that the Queen has had a horrible childhood with an abusive father. (Guess who's soul is trapped in the mirror?)

Alas, as the story goes the King is killed at battle. The Queen begins changing. She is crushed and can't stand any happiness.

She begins with depression bordering on madness and then gets pushed over the edge completely by her lovely mirror and three witch hags.

Even at her worst though she realizes she loves the little twerp Snow White...but a girls gotta be the fairest in the land after all.

Red_Queen_Lover says

Re-telling of Snow White!!!

This was very beautiful. I enjoyed Snow White in a way I've never have. I look forward to continue reading more books in this series! Highly recommend tho anyone who loves re-telling and fantasy.

Jamie (ReadsInTrees) Dacyszyn says

Did not finish. Literally made it about five or six pages before quitting. It read like amateurish fanfiction.

For example, the main character is briefly introduced as she gets ready in front of her mirror...and then does a lot of thinking and info dumping/reminiscing right away. No no no...either just go ahead and GIVE us the history of the story (like a prologue perhaps), or have something happen in the NOW and give us the history gradually. Don't have literally nothing happening in the now (she's looking at herself in the mirror) while dumping all of the history on us all at once. Especially don't have said person "break away from her reverie" to refocus on the present briefly before going off on another daydream down memory lane...while continuing to stare at the mirror. It's tedious. There were also random page breaks (punctuated by an extra large capital letter beginning the new paragraph) that were completely unnecessary.

Also, purple prose. I noticed that right away on the first page. TOO MANY WORDS. The example that popped right out at me (on page 1) was, "One hundred attendants, fitted in the finest garments of deep blue edged in silver trim...". That right there: "deep blue edged in silver trim". Just say either "deep blue edged in silver" or "deep blue with silver trim". Edged and trim are literally the same thing in this instance, so eliminate one word or the other. Gah. The first description of Snow White was also awful. "She was a lovely creature of three or four with a joyous bounce in her step and an inextinguishable sparkle of happiness

twinkling in her eyes." First, she's the royal princess, so the new queen damn well knows whether or not Snow White is three or four, don't pretend otherwise. And again, sparkle and twinkle basically mean the same thing in this example, so just pick ONE. An inextinguishable sparkle in her eye. Done. Jesus Christ.

Leslie says

This is not a book for the kiddies. This is a rather very depressing story. We are introduced to 'the Queen', Step mother of Snow White, commoner married to the king. The King met her when she was working at her father's mirror shop. Her father is the greatest mirror craftsman in the Kingdom and the King is overwhelmed by her beauty.

Alas 'the Queen's' birth lead to the death of her mother and her father cursed her every day for killing the woman he loved. He tells her she is ugly, he belittles her, when she attracts the King he calls he a witch. She suffers endless abuse at his hands; when he dies the King comes and marries her. But her self-esteem is no existent and she is easily manipulated by black magicians. Since she has nothing of her self and only the parts reflected by the King's admiration she falls into depression when he leaves on his frequent quests. (Hey King did you want a wife or a nanny?)

His death leaves her with only the words of her father and her father in a mirror.. She descends further into madness. She turns to the black arts and isolates herself further. She turns away Snow's suitors and forces Snow to act as a servant. (I would look into the rules of succession for kingdom I don't see how a non royal King's wife gets to keep ruling). Her madness grows and grows and we all know how the story ends.

The original story is a tale of obsessive vanity but this is a story of neglect, abuse and insanity.

Aaron says

Sometimes it can be really interesting to look at things from a different perspective. In this instance, Valentino presents the story of Snow White from the perspective of the Queen, her step-mother. The tale starts shortly after the Queen has married Snow White's father. They seem to have formed a very happy family. The Queen is an adoring mother figure for poor Snow White, whose mother died years before.

Things start to change when the King must join his men on the battlefield, leaving the Queen and Snow White alone in the castle. It is then that the Queen starts to remember the insecurities she developed at the harsh words of her own father while she was growing up. Her doubts about her appearance take on a greater role as she misses her husband more and more.

This is made none the easier, when the King's three sisters come to stay at the castle. They are very clearly dark witches who are unhappy with the Queen and Snow White. They taunt the poor girl, forcing the Queen to come to her rescue, but doing so only brings about their ire, setting fate in motion.

Thanks to their influence, the Queen finds herself drawn to one of her marriage gifts from her husband, a beautiful mirror made by her father for her own mother. She soon learns that it is enchanted, and it (along with her own obsession with her beauty) on the path that we have all come to know thanks to the Brothers Grimm and Walt Disney.

This interesting insight into the Queen's mind really makes the reader feel a lot of compassion. While her

actions can never be forgiven, it is hard to dismiss how her own life experiences and the harsh treatment by the sisters influenced her actions. There is even a bit of hope for her soul in the concluding moments of the story.

I have always been a big fan of retold fairy tales, and this one does a really good job of capturing the essence of the story (at least, the Disney version) with a new twist. It is fun. I actually started it this morning and read it in a single day before work and on my lunch and dinner breaks. I definitely didn't want to put it down!

Karen Whittard says

I have a little bug bear. Just a little one that I need to get off my chest before I continue with without this bug bear would be a glowing review. This series of books are published by Disney Enterprises. Which to me means that they should vet the books before they go out. But it doesn't seem like they have. I was disgruntled reading the beast wishing because they kept calling Prince Adam, The Prince and not by his name which is a little annoying. Then I read this book and instead of calling the Queen by her name Grimhildie. They keep calling her the Queen. Which gets rather annoying after a while. I mean The Queen and The Prince are just their titles. Everyone has a name. Perhaps it's the fact that I'm a big Disney nerd that I know the names of the characters. Seeing as they aren't actually named in the films. But when you are creating lots of different characters with lots of different names. It's really not that hard to use the name of the Prince/the Queen as it was intended to be. They could even put a little note in it to say the name of the character. Grrrr

Other than that little bug bear. I am enjoying this series of books. I am enjoying finding out more insight into what happens before they get enchanted/turn evil. It lets you see more of a perspective. In these days of Disney movies being remastered such as Meleficent. It's good to see the other part of the story.

In this book we are looking at The Evil Queen /snow whites evil step mother. But it's not as simple as that. Grimhildie was once a lovely person. A kind and gentle soul. Whose mother dies when she is a baby and whose father always blames her for her mother's death.

Grimhildie's parents were rather rich and they made mirrors. Not knowing her mother Grimhildie has always wanted the love of her father but never got it. So when she marries into the White household. Grimhildie is determined to show Snow all the love she deserves.

Sadly when snows dad dies Grimhildie turns into a mean and nasty lady. Her heart is full of blackness. When presented with a magic mirror that speaks to her and is her father. Grimhildie seeking love and seeking to heal her broken heart. Turns even more wicked and unkind. Which links into the Snow White and the seven dwarfs story we know today.

It was good to see a different more kinder and compassionate side of Grimhildie at the start of the book. It is easy to feel compassion for her when her husband dies. You still think she's an evil witch thou when she tries to kill Snow.

All in all a pretty good book. I just wish they would use the characters name and not just their title.

Let me know what you think of the book.

Happy reading everyone

Destiny | myhoneyreads says

Actual rating: 2.7

I thought it was nice to hear from the Queen's perspective, and everything actually made sense. With that being said, I didn't care for the changing perspectives mid chapter, the odd language (that tried to sound old and fairy tale like but failed), the added characters, or the almost word for word overlap of the Disney movie.

The ending was, okay. Overall, it was an enjoyable story with its fair share of problems.

J.T. Whitesell says

A wonderful story about how the wicked queen from Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs became so wicked. I like to casually browse the Young Adult section at Borders and B&N and I'm very influenced by cover art. Reading the inside flap, I only needed one sentence to sway me. I bought it immediately and started reading once I got home. I have to say that the author caught the Disney version of the characters perfectly and I believe that's the way it should be.

The writing was well written and it moved quickly for me. The end of each chapter made me want to know what would happen next and it provided great imagery for my imagination. I watched the classic Snow White right away with the thought of the Queen's life and it changed the whole movie for me-in a good way! It even has a nice twist at the end. I definitely recommend this to anyone who appreciates an alternate view on a classic.
