**Snow White**

**The Origins of the Snow White Story**

Contrary to what some may think, Snow White was not the brainchild of Walt Disney or any of his colleagues. In fact, the original story of Snow White is much older than America itself. The first known accounts of the Snow White story come to us from the Brothers Grimm, who, during the early years of the 19th century, collected and published a number of old European folktales, many of which dated back to the Middle Ages (Snow White possibly being one of them). The original Snow White story (known in German as Schneewittchen) has several different twists that make it unique from the Disney tale we all know and love. Here are just a few:

- In the Grimm tale, Snow White is but a 16-year-old girl.

- The dwarfs (more than 7) DEMAND that Snow White work and cook for them in order for her to have their protection.

-The evil queen step-mother actually tries to kill Snow White on three different occasions. First she ties Snow White up and leaves her for dead, only to discover that the dwarfs have freed her just in time. Second, she disguises herself as a poor peddler and combs Snow White's hair with a poisoned brush but is again unsuccessful when the dwarfs come to save her. And finally, the part we all recognize, Snow White is poisoned by an apple.

-The "handsome prince" does not meet Snow White prior to her fleeing into the woods. Instead, he stumbles upon her in her coffin and pays the dwarfs to take her and the coffin with him. While in route to his kingdom, the coffin shakes open and a piece of the poisoned apple is released from Snow White's throat causing her to regain consciousness. The "handsome prince" and Snow White then (after vomiting the apple, not embracing in a romantic kiss) ride off into the sunset to live "happily ever after."

-The evil queen stepmother, who is shocked to see Snow White alive at the wedding of her and the prince, is hunted down by the dwarfs and is forced to dance for hours on end while wearing a pair of heated iron shoes, which eventually burn her to death.

This original version of the Snow White tale (which most experts agree probably dates back to at least the 16th century) may seem strange at first to those of us in the modern era, but it was a huge hit for those who heard it first hand. In fact, the Snow White tale was not confined to Germanic lands.