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Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon – 2021 Edition

(one-act)

By Don Zolidis

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One-Act Comedy
5-20+ actors

Two narrators attempt to recreate all 209 of the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm in a wild, fast-paced extravaganza. To make it more difficult, they attempt to combine them into one gigantic fable using Rapunzel, Rumpelstiltskin, Hansel and Gretel, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella and other more obscure stories like Lean Lisa and The Devil's Grandmother. A wild, free-form comedy with lots of madcap fun.

Cast of Characters

NARRATOR 1 *(female - maybe)*
NARRATOR 2 *(male - maybe)*
ACTOR
GIRL
DIRT MERCHANT
RUMPELSTILTSKIN
ENCHANTRESS
THE DEVIL
PRINCE
RAPUNZEL
AUDIENCE MEMBER
HANSEL
GRETEL
WITCH
DWARF 1
DWARF 2
SNOW WHITE
WITCH 2
PRINCE 2
JOHANNES
RAVEN
KING
QUEEN
PLINKIE PLIE
CINDERELLA

How to cast this show:
Smallest cast:
This play could be done with a total of 5 actors. With a small cast, the narrators become characters in the scenes as indicated. Everyone should have lots of costumes available.

Largest cast:
Every role is played by a different actor. Different narrators may play the narrator roles in each fairy tale.

Gender, Race, Ethnicity, of actors: Any of the roles may be played by any actor of any gender, race, or ethnicity. There are some moments, when actors switch roles, that it might be funnier if Dwarf 2 was played by a male-presenting person and Snow White was played by a female-presenting person, but in general there's no reason to be overly restrictive in casting. This is all make-believe here.

Running Time: Speed is of the essence with this show. Keep scene changes absolutely minimal. The one-act version of this play runs about 1 hour, maybe a little longer. If you need to make it shorter, feel free to make any cuts necessary for time. You can also remove an entire fairy tale

(Hansel and Gretel or Snow White or Faithful Johannes) if you need to. Feel free to adjust lines as necessary to make it make sense.

The stage can be anything, really.
NARRATOR 1 enters.

NARRATOR 1

Hello and welcome to the Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon.

NARRATOR 2 bursts onto the stage.

NARRATOR 2

SUNDAY SUNDAY SUNDAY! It's EXTREME! See! Monster slaying action as the three-headed pig battles the wolf-o-bot in a bone-crushing cage match of death! They'll huff and they'll puff and they'll kick some iron! Aaaaaaaaah!

Short pause. Narrator 1 blinks.

NARRATOR 1

What we are going to do here today—

NARRATOR 2

And then the battle you've been waiting for: Snow White vs. Sleeping Beauty in a mud-wrestling death match. Who's the toughest of them all?!

NARRATOR 1

Can you stop please?

NARRATOR 2

We've got unhinged princess action! Elsa and Rapunzel in a hair-pulling smackdown! Let go! Let IT GOOOOO!

NARRATOR 1

Okay, stop. We're not doing that.

Narrator 2 ignites a Firestarter.

NARRATOR 2

Flames! Flames!

NARRATOR 1

<Actor's name> You're doing it again. What did we talk about?

NARRATOR 2

About not being awesome?

NARRATOR 1

This – Is the Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon!

NARRATOR 2

That's right. And what we are about to today is going to blow your mind. You will never be the same. Forget your marriage. Forget your children. If you haven't already.

NARRATOR 1

If you need to go to the bathroom, we'll wait. We don't want accidents.

NARRATOR 2 points to someone in the audience

NARRATOR 2

You look a little touch-and-go miss. Are you sure? You okay? All right then.

(to the other NARRATOR)

Keep an eye on that one.

NARRATOR 1

A little background to begin:

NARRATOR 2

The Brothers Grimm were brothers named Grimm. They are dead. But in the period before they died the Brothers Grimm wrote 209 fairy tales that we know today—

NARRATOR 1

They didn't write them.

NARRATOR 2

The Brothers Grimm did not write 209 fairy tales that we know today, they were frauds. We should dig up their bodies and spit on their corpses.

NARRATOR 1

No I'm just saying they were collectors of stories.

NARRATOR 2

Never mind that last part.

NARRATOR 1

And these stories have become extremely popular. We all know them today:

NARRATOR 2

Such stories as The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids—

NARRATOR 1

The Pack of Ragamuffins—

NARRATOR 2

And Straw, Coal, and Bean.

NARRATOR 1

I forgot about that one.

NARRATOR 2

Oh yeah. Straw, Coal, and Bean? Only the best fairy tale in the entire history of the world. I'm literally like crying buckets by the end of it. Changed my life. I can't even look at straw, coal, or beans anymore.

NARRATOR 1

What's it about?

NARRATOR 2

No idea.

NARRATOR 1

Those might not be household names, but quite a few of these stories have become immortalized in film and television—

NARRATOR 2

Of course they've all been changed by "the mouse"

He lifts a sign into view that says "Disney."

To feed their enormous octopus-like animation empire which sucks the life out of existence and crushes your soul in a death-grip of happy happy songs and talking objects. I can't even speak their name aloud because they're for a way to sue me right now.

He swings a light saber.

You'll never take me alive, imagineers!

NARRATOR 1

You know they own Star Wars too.

NARRATOR 2 *(dropping light saber)*

Ah! They're everywhere!

NARRATOR 1

O-kay. What we are going to do for you right now is return these fairy tales to their original glory. We have assembled the greatest troupe of actors the world has even seen and –

ACTOR enters, scratching themselves.

ACTOR

I thought there was supposed to be catering back here?

NARRATOR 2

There's like a beef thing somewhere.

ACTOR

Where?

NARRATOR 2

I don't know—in the back somewhere.

ACTOR

Is there anything to drink?

NARRATOR 2

No.

Actor exits, annoyed.

NARRATOR 1

These actors are so insanely talented that—

ACTOR *(off-stage)*

I don't see it!

NARRATOR 2

Do you see the radiator?

ACTOR *(off-stage)*

No! Oh wait! No.

NARRATOR 2

There's probably someone sitting on it. Move them.

ACTOR *(off-stage)*

Oh here it is.

ANOTHER ACTOR *(off-stage)*

Hey!

NARRATOR 1

Anyway, in the short time we have, our crack team of actors is going to perform all 209 fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm.

NARRATOR 2

That's like three stories per minute.

NARRATOR 1

Or a different number if you know math. And we're going to keep the original endings intact!

NARRATOR 2

Blood! Violence! Death! People being cut open with scissors!

NARRATOR 1

And to make things more difficult, we're going to perform them as originally intended, which is…

NARRATOR 2

That it's all one giant super mega-juicy story.

NARRATOR 1

Are you ready?!

NARRATOR 2

I'm so excited I'm going to throw up. Does anyone have a hat? Nope? Excuse me then.

NARRATOR 2 exits. NARRATOR 1 stretches and does warm-ups. Perhaps a few wind sprints.

NARRATOR 1

Well I don't know when he'll be back –

We hear sounds of him vomiting off-stage.

So… Once upon a time…

GIRL enters.

There was a girl who was raised by wolves and whose mother died in childbirth and she was abandoned by her father who could spin straw into a gold and made a deal with a series of elves if they would help him make shoes. There was also a talking fox in there somewhere.

NARRATOR 2 *(returning)*

And she was beautiful—

NARRATOR 1

Because no one cares about ugly people.

NARRATOR 2

Whoah.

NARRATOR 1

Point me to an ugly Disney princess.

NARRATOR 2

Snow White.

NARRATOR 1

Literally the Fairest of them all.

NARRATOR 2

Not my thing, sorry. She's got that whiny voice.

NARRATOR 1

Anyway, there was a girl.

NARRATOR 2

And she was poor.

GIRL

Oh I am poor.

NARRATOR 2

Dirt poor.

NARRATOR 1

She couldn't even afford dirt.

DIRT MERCHANT enters.

DIRT MERCHANT

Dirt for sale! Dirt for sale! Hey, you! Get off the merchandise!

He exits.

GIRL *(crying)*

I shall flood the ground with my tears!

Dirt Merchant returns.

DIRT MERCHANT

You're getting it wet! Stop it!

He exits.

GIRL

If only I could live in a boot or make some deals with elves or find a talking fox.

An ENCHANTRESS (played by Narrator 1) enters.

ENCHANTRESS

Excuse me—but I couldn't help overhearing your tale of misery and woe. Tell you what—I will grant you your heart's desire if you give me one small thing.

GIRL

That sounds like a great bargain. I won't even ask what the small thing is because I'm so trusting!

ENCHANTRESS

Excellent.

She makes a magical signal.

I vanish.

She does not actually appear to vanish. Enchantress looks around and covers Girl's eyes.

I vanish again.

she quickly hides behind something.

GIRL

What a nice lady.

THE DEVIL (played by Narrator 2) enters.

THE DEVIL

Hey there hot stuff. Oh wait, that's me. Ha ha ha ha!

GIRL

Are you a prince?

THE DEVIL

Of darkness.

He laughs at his own joke.

Oh that's clever! Now, I happened to overhear your tale of misery and wore and I'm here to help.

GIRL

Well actually I just –

THE DEVIL *(handing her a contract)*

Just sign this one small contract and you shall conceive a daughter so beautiful she will be selected to be in a gameshow with 22 other attractive women competing for the love of –

GIRL

Done.

She signs the contract.

THE DEVIL

Moo ah ha ha ha ha ha!

He looks around. Then runs off.

GIRL

This is a busy street.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN enters, limping and grotesque.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

Hello there.

GIRL

You're hideous and deformed!

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

That's hurtful, but I have a great bargain for –

Skipping Forward

Through magic! Magic of the devil! And that's where babies come from.

Narrator 2 goes back to being the Prince.

PRINCE

I've always wanted a baby. Let's go back to my kingdom.

Prince and Girl hop forward. Girl (possibly) puts a pillow under her shirt.

GIRL

It's terrible here.

PRINCE

Ha ha yes.

GIRL

Ah! The baby's coming!

PRINCE

Dang it! I mean – push or breath or something!

GIRL

You're not helping!

PRINCE

I'm not trying to! You can do it! I'm gonna be over here!

NARRATOR 1

The miracle of childbirth.

GIRL

I hate you I hate you I hate you I hate you

PRINCE

Focus your anger! Focus your anger!

GIRL screams.

GIRL

Aaaaaaaah!

PRINCE

Aaaaaaaah!

GIRL screams. Nothing happens. She screams again.

I can see her little head!

GIRL screams again. A baby doll is thrown in from off stage. PRINCE snatches it out of the air like a Frisbee.

Oh it's so beautiful!

NARRATOR 2

Years passed.

The PRINCE throws the baby off-stage like a Frisbee.

And she grew into a beautiful young teenager, Rapunzel.

PRINCE

I want to revisit the name Rapunzel. What about Amber?

GIRL

That was the name of your ex-girlfriend!

PRINCE

AMBER WAS NICE TO ME!

RAPUNZEL enters, wearing headphones and ignoring everyone.

Are you going to wear your hair like that?

RAPUNZEL

Shut up.

GIRL

Honey, we're going to have dinner so wash your hands.

RAPUNZEL

You can't tell me what to do.

PRINCE

Don't talk to your mother that way. She sold her soul to the devil just to have you—

RAPUNZEL

I don't care. I didn't ask to be born! I'm going out.

GIRL

You're not walking out of this house, young lady!

RAPUNZEL

I do what I want. You don't know me.

PRINCE

I've had just about enough of this "parenting"! I'm going golfing.

Prince exits.

RAPUNZEL

Real winner you chose there, Mom.

GIRL

You don't have a lot of time to be choosy when you fall in love at first sight.

NARRATOR 1

And just then…

Narrator 1 switches back to the Enchantress.

ENCHANTRESS

I have returned.

The Devil pops in.

THE DEVIL

Your time is up.

Rumplestilskin returns.

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

You know I was in the neighborhood and I was thinking that I forgot something like eighteen years ago, and then I was like, oh yeah, I was supposed to get that thing from that girl. And then here I was, right at your house?

GIRL

What do you want?

ALL THREE

Your child!

They all start arguing amongst themselves.

Girl takes Rapunzel aside.

RAPUNZEL

Mom?!

GIRL

What.

RAPUNZEL

How many deals did you make?

GIRL

Just three. And I may have promised your hand in marriage to a talking rabbit. What? I was young, I needed the money – and the baby – and the prince – but mostly just the money and the baby.

RAPUNZEL

This is why I'm in therapy!

GIRL

Oh honey you're not in therapy because of my deals, you're in therapy because we're terrible parents.

THE DEVIL

You heard what I said – witch.

ENCHANTRESS

For the last time, I'm an Enchantress!

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

Girl, if you can guess my name, I will release you from our bargain.

THE DEVIL

It's Rumplestiltskin.

GIRL

Rumplestiltskin.

Enchantress becomes Narrator 1 for a moment.

NARRATOR 1

And the little man stomped his feet so hard they broke through the floor, and when tried to pull them out, he broke in half.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

Seriously? That's how I die? I get my foot caught and break in half trying to get it out?

NARRATOR 1

Yep.

THE DEVIL *(pointing)*

Ha ha.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

That's gotta be the stupidest way to die ever.

Rumpelstiltskin breaks himself in half.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

Aaaagghh!

Narrator 1 jumps back into being the Enchantress.

RAPUNZEL

I'm not cleaning that up.

ENCHANTRESS

Now that that horrid little man is gone, I will take Rapunzel.
She grabs one of Rapunzel's arms.

THE DEVIL

Um… excuse me? I'm the Devil.
He grabs her other arm.
I've got more claim than some stupid little witch.

ENCHANTRESS

Enchantress!

THE DEVIL

Whatever. Witch.

ENCHANTRESS

That's it! Let's go!
She drops Rapunzel's arm and takes out a wand.

THE DEVIL

Oh you want some, huh?
He starts feinting towards her.

RAPUNZEL

Mom, let's get out of here!

GIRL

Quiet honey I'm watching this. Go Devil!
She takes out a Duke or Arizona State (or just a sign that says "Go Devil") pennant and starts waving it.

ENCHANTRESS

Expelliarmus!

THE DEVIL

That's a witch spell!

ENCHANTRESS

Fine I curse you!

THE DEVIL

You know what, this is stupid. Tell ya what, if you sign this contract here, I will let you take Rapunzel.
He takes out a contract. It says "EVIL CONTRACT WITH THE DEVIL"

ENCHANTRESS

Oh this seems legit.

She signs it.

THE DEVIL

Moo ah ha ha! And I disappear in a cloud of brimstone!

He slowly disappears making weird motions with his hands. Returns momentarily as Narrator 2.

ENCHANTRESS

Well, come along Rapunzel.

RAPUNZEL

Where are we going?

ENCHANTRESS

I've got this great tower for you.

GIRL

Run along dear.

RAPUNZEL

But Mom, I don't want to go with the evil enchantress.

GIRL

Yeah I didn't want to raise a spoil brat, but sometimes you don't get what you want. Unless you make a deal with the devil and some other weird people. See ya.

Rapunzel exits with the Enchantress.

NARRATOR 2

So the Enchantress took Rapunzel and locked her in a high tower without stairs or door. As for the girl and her prince –

PRINCE returns.

PRINCE

I'm back from my golf trip. What did I miss?

GIRL

The forces of darkness battled it out for our daughter's soul.

PRINCE

Cool. You want to go to Hawai'i?

GIRL

Rock on.

They skip off-stage.

NARRATOR 2

And they lived happily ever after.

NARRATOR 1

But our story is not even remotely finished.

NARRATOR 2

No wait, it is finished. It's not yet begun.

NARRATOR 1

That's right.

NARRATOR 2

So let's go back to that girl—Rapunzel's mother.

NARRATOR 1

You might be familiar with her mother.

GRETEL enters.
Narrator 2 becomes HANSEL.
Both Gretel and Hansel speak with exaggerated German accents.

HANSEL

Gretel! What are you doing out?!

GRETEL

Nothing.

HANSEL

You seem moody lately. As if something were bothering you.

GRETEL

Ya… It's… our mother. You see, our mother died before we were born.

HANSEL

I remember.

NARRATOR 1

Our next story: Hansel. And. Gretel. Or: The original horror movie.

GRETEL

I'm haunted Hansel. Haunted by her memory.

HANSEL

Ya I too am haunted. Perhaps we ought to go into the woods where it's dark and scary.

Skipping Forward

Narrator 1 points again.

AUDIENCE

DON'T GO IN THERE!

HANSEL

Huh. Let's go in there.

Narrator 1 makes a sound effect like a door creaking open.

GRETEL

It's dark in here.

Narrator 1 points to a group.

AUDIENCE

Ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a. Ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a.

Narrator 1 points to the other group.

AUDIENCE *(heavy breathing)*

GRETEL

Is that your hand?

Narrator1 points again.

AUDIENCE *(heavy breathing)*

HANSEL

Is that… your hand?

Narrator 1 points again.

AUDIENCE

Ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a. Ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a.

WITCH enters, sneaking up behind them.

An AUDIENCE MEMBER (a plant in the front row munching on popcorn, freaks out – would be great if this were an adult).

AUDIENCE MEMBER

She's behind you! Look behind you! Turn around!

Audience Member stands up and screams, pointing at the witch .

TURN AROUND LOOK BEHIND YOU THERE'S A WITCH BEHIND YOU! SHE'S RIGHT THERE! SHE'S RIGHT THERE!

WITCH

Are you eating my house?

HANSEL and GRETEL

Aaaaaaah!

AUDIENCE MEMBER

I TOLD YOU! I TOLD YOU BUT YOU DIDN'T LISTEN! WHY DIDN'T YOU LISTEN TO ME?! I SAID `DON'T GO IN THERE' AND YOU WENT IN! YOU WENT IN! WHYYYYY?!

NARRATOR 1

Sir?

AUDIENCE MEMBER

What?

NARRATOR 1

Can we keep doing the play please?

AUDIENCE MEMBER

You said it was a horror movie so –

NARRATOR 1

Let's take it down a notch, all right?

Audience Member sits back down.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

My bad, my bad.

GRETEL

Were you eating the house, Hansel?

HANSEL

Maybe? I was hungry. It was made of candy! You should try the floorboards, they're really tasty.

WITCH

I'm so disappointed in today's young people. You think you can build a house out of candy and no one's going to disturb it, but noooo… I'm going to have to teach you a lesson.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

OH DANG IT! I KNEW IT! GET OUT! GET OUT OF THE HOUSE!

GRETEL

What kind of lesson?

AUDIENCE MEMBER

SHE'S GONNA EAT YOU! WHY ARE YOU TALKING TO HER?! RUN!

WITCH

But first, why don't you want more candy?

AUDIENCE MEMBER

NO! SHE'S JUST FATTENING YOU UP! THAT'S ALL SHE'S DOING!

NARRATOR 1

So Hansel and Gretel stayed with the witch and ate and ate –

Audience Member stomps around and throws things, protesting.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

DUMB!

NARRATOR 1

And they got fatter and fatter – and the witch was very nice to them.

HANSEL

Why does my cologne smell like gravy?

Audience Member raises their hand vigorously.

GRETEL

Look, she gave me this apple to put in my mouth? Wasn't that nice?

Gretel puts the apple in her mouth.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

OH COME ON!

WITCH

Well, my children, I am just an old woman in the woods –

AUDIENCE MEMBER

NO SHE AIN'T! I'VE GOT THE PROGRAM RIGHT HERE!

WITCH

And I could use some help.

HANSEL

What is it?

WITCH

I need some help cleaning out… my oven.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

OH HECK NO! NOOO! DON'T DO IT!

HANSEL

Oh I can help with that.

Narrator 1 points to the audience group.

AUDIENCE

DON'T GO IN THERE!

AUDIENCE MEMBER

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY WE HAVE TO TELL YOU!

WITCH

Come along, Hamsel.

HANSEL

It's Hansel.

WITCH

Oh right. Hansel.

She chuckles evilly.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

OHHHH I CAN'T WATCH!

GRETEL

Oh. Hey. I dropped a quarter. Can you pick it up?

WITCH

A quarter?

She bends down.

GRETEL

Eat this, witch!

Gretel makes a shoving motion towards the witch.

WITCH

Aaaaaaaah!

AUDIENCE MEMBER

YESSSS! WOOO! YESSS! YESS!

HANSEL

You did it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

Wait a minute. She ain't dead. This is where they get you. Don't let your guard down.

GRETEL

Yes, it is all happy now.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

No it isn't! She's coming back! I've seen this movie!

HANSEL

How about we eat the rest of the house?

GRETEL

Good idea.

They start snacking. Witch rises up.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

NO I SEE HER! SHE'S BEHIND YOU AGAIN YOU IDIOTS!

Gretel turns and shoves her back in.

WITCH

I'm melting! Oh wait… I'm burning!

She dies.

HANSEL

Ding dong the witch is dead!

NARRATOR 1

Wrong story.

HANSEL

I get so confused.

NARRATOR 1

So they made it. But the horror wasn't over. Because early childhood trauma can affect a lot of fairy tale heroes. And Hansel… well… let's just say he developed a problem.

HANSEL

Gretel, you want to try fairy dust?

GRETEL

No, Hansel. You have a problem and you need help.

HANSEL

It lets you fly.

GRETEL
It doesn't let you fly, Hansel. Drugs are bad.

HANSEL
These are natural. From ground-up fairies. Let me show you.

NARRATOR 1
And he jumped off a cliff.

HANSEL
I can fly! Maybe.

NARRATOR 1
It's up to you, audience. If you clap hard enough, Hansel will live. Come on people!

HANSEL *(imploring the audience)*
Come on people! Let me live!

NARRATOR 1
Come on! Don't you believe a boy can fly!?! Come on!
A light begins to shine on Hansel, growing brighter.
Come you can do it!
The light and noise crescendo.

HANSEL *(desperate)*
Come on out there! Please!
The light suddenly goes out.

HANSEL
Aaaaaaaah.
Hansel makes a "splat!" noise.
Pause. Narrator 1 looks sad.

NARRATOR 1
You didn't clap hard enough. He died. You know I've… done this show a lot. And every time the audience clapped hard enough to let Hansel live. Every time. I just don't know what to say.
NARRATOR 1 picks someone in the audience.
I think really it comes down to this guy. This guy right here. He didn't clap hard enough. His heart wasn't really into it. How do you face your children, sir? How do you face your children?
if the AUDIENCE member is about to respond.
Don't talk to me.

GRETEL
Hansel?

NARRATOR 1
He's in a better place now, Gretel. Where his stupidity can't hurt him anymore.

GRETEL
Canada?

NARRATOR 1
If you want it to be Canada.

NARRATOR 1 *(suddenly chipper again)*
Anyway, after Hansel's untimely death, thank you very much Mr. <*describes audience member*>, she married a wandering woodcutter. And they had a daughter. Who would grow up to make a deal with several supernatural entities who would eventually imprison her daughter in the tower.

Narrator 2 returns.

NARRATOR 2
But.

NARRATOR 1
There's always a but.

NARRATOR 2
One question remains:

NARRATOR 1
Where did the witch come from?

NARRATOR 2
Ooh I know. Once upon a time. There was a dwarf.

DWARF 1 enters.

DWARF 1
I prefer little person.

NARRATOR 1
In fact, two dwarves.

DWARF 2 (played by Narrator 2) enters.

DWARF 2
I prefer dwarf.

NARRATOR 1
And these dwarves worked all day in the mines.

DWARF 1 *(singing)*

I've been workin' on the railroad—

NARRATOR 1

Mines!

DWARF 2 *(singing)*

Whistle while you work

NARRATOR 1

We can't use that song.

DWARF 2

I do what I want.

NARRATOR 1

No it's like copyrighted, we can't use it. The Mouse will sue us. So the dwarves worked in the mines, they sang their little song, and then one day they came home to find—

SNOW WHITE enters. She whines petulantly and falls asleep.

DWARF 1

What the heck is that thing?

DWARF 2

She's huge! Get her away from me! She's going to eat me!

Dwarf 2 dives and hides.

NARRATOR 1

You see, in those days, most people were cannibals. Which explains the witch from before. The first Dwarf, though, who we will name… Slappy, wasn't afraid.

DWARF 1

Gar. I like ladies. So… uh… baby, I couldn't help noticing that you're in my bed—

He moves towards her.

NARRATOR 1

Whoah! This is a childrens' story.

DWARF 1

So I'm going to chop you up and eat you.

Dwarf 1 takes out a fork and knife.

NARRATOR 1

Time out. Time out. Put away the hot sauce.

Dwarf 1 hides a bottle of hot sauce behind his back.

DWARF 1

What? I'm just going with what my character wants.

NARRATOR 1

You do not get to eat Snow White. You're not the villain of the story.

DWARF 1

No. Look. I've been doing some character work. Slappy has had a hard life. He's been discriminated against for being a dwarf. And he hates the world. He just hates it—

NARRATOR 1

He does not!

DWARF 1

And he wants revenge against the humans who have wronged him, so when this giant chick comes into his home and sleeps in his bed… dinner time.

Narrator 2 enters.

NARRATOR 1

No. We are going to do this story as written! Snow White cleans house for the seven dwarves, then she gets poisoned by an apple, then a prince shows up and falls in love with her because she's unconscious and can't talk back.

NARRATOR 2

You know, maybe this fairy tale is a little antiquated.

NARRATOR 1

This is a classic. What girl out there didn't want to be a house maid to seven freaky bearded dudes and then have no choice in who she was going to marry?

NARRATOR 2

Sometimes the classics are… how do you say, bad?

NARRATOR 1

They're beautiful!

NARRATOR 2

Really? Let me show you one.

Narrator 2 takes out the big book of Fairy Tales.

Here we go—number 191. Lean Lisa.

NARRATOR 1

Never heard of it.

Snow White wakes up.

SNOW WHITE

Question: Why is it that I have to clean and cook for the dwarves? If I'm a princess, shouldn't they be cooking and cleaning for me?

NARRATOR 2

Both of you stop, okay? We're doing a new one, Lean Lisa.

SNOW WHITE

Never heard of it.

NARRATOR 2

So once upon a time, Lean Lisa lay in bed with her husband, Long Laurence.

DWARF 1

Do I get to be Long Laurence?

NARRATOR 2

Yes.

DWARF 1

Sweet.

Dwarf 1 and Snow White rearrange themselves.

SNOW WHITE

Dear husband, I was thinking.

DWARF 1

I'm trying to sleep, woman.

SNOW WHITE

I'm tired of being poor and hungry. What if we took the cow in the field and tried to get her to have calves? Then we could raise the calves and sell them and we'd have enough money to buy more animals. And then we wouldn't have to starve any more.

DWARF 1

That sounds like a lot of work.

SNOW WHITE

You're lazy!

DWARF 1

Quiet your wagging tongue woman!

Dwarf 1 strangles Snow White.

NARRATOR 2

And she died. The end.

Snow White falls over. The end.

NARRATOR 1

Seriously? That's what it says?

NARRATOR 2

Right here.

NARRATOR 1

Wow. That story's awful.

Snow White wakes up again.

SNOW WHITE

Can I go back to being Sleeping Beauty now?

NARRATOR 2

I thought you were supposed to be Snow White.

SNOW WHITE

Can anyone really tell the difference? Seriously, they're the same story.

NARRATOR 2

Anyway, what I'm saying is that these stories need some spicing up here and there. A new angle. A new way of putting them together.

NARRATOR 1

Fine. I don't care anymore. Whatever. I'm sure this Dwarf is going to do a better job than me. Go ahead take my place.

Dwarf 1 jumps up.

DWARF 1

Sounds good.

NARRATOR 1

Wait, I didn't—

DWARF 1

All right, you're gonna be Dwarf 1, all right?

Narrator 1 puts on a beard.

<*Narrator 2 actor's name*> You're Dwarf 2. I'm the new narrator.

SNOW WHITE

Am I still Snow White?

Skipping Forward

DWARF 1

That's okay—I wrote them down for you.

Dwarf 1 hands a sheet of paper to Snow White.
Snow White takes the sheet and looks at it.

SNOW WHITE

This says I cook dinner and clean the house and leave the thinking to my husband.

DWARF 1

It's a perfect marriage.

SNOW WHITE

This is disgusting! I'm a modern woman!

DWARF 1

Well you're not going to live happily ever after then!

SNOW WHITE

I'm going to tell the story my way!

She throws down the lyrics.
Dwarf 2 and WITCH 2 enter.

WITCH 2

Are y'all gonna need me any time soon?

SNOW WHITE

Yes. We are starting over right now. Once upon a time there was a beautiful girl.

The actors look around. Snow White points at Dwarf 2.
Witch 2 exits, annoyed.

You're going to be Snow White this time.

Author's note: Whatever the double-casting, it is imperative that DWARF 2 be played by a male-presenting actor.

DWARF 2

ABOUT DANG TIME! YES!

Dwarf 2 grabs a stash of clothing. He has ALL of the Snow White stuff. Dress – tiara – wig – gloves - roses. He talks while he's putting on the dress and everything.

I've just been waiting for my chance but I will ROCK THIS. Oh yeah. It's my time. It's all coming true just like I dreamed. You can do this*, <Dwarf 2's actor's real name>*.
Time for this diamond to shine.

Dwarf 2 prepares mentally, perhaps stretches, perhaps takes out a mirror to apply a beauty mark.

Showtime.

NARRATOR 1

All right then.

SNOW WHITE

She was the most beautiful girl in the entire kingdom.

Dwarf 2 struts up and down, as if he's on a runway.

DWARF 2

You know it!

SNOW WHITE

But her step-mother was jealous.

WITCH 2 returns as Dwarf 2 struts.

WITCH 2

Snow White.

DWARF 2

Stepmother.

WITCH 2

Is that a zit I see on your face?

DWARF 2

You'd like that, wouldn't you?

WITCH 2

I do believe you're skipping your exercise routine.

DWARF 2

Not on your life, sister. These curves are tight and streamlined like a racing yacht owned by a hip hop mogul.

WITCH 2

I think you might need to tweeze your eyebrows. They're looking… puffy.

DWARF 2

No, they are fierce like a chained tiger with ghost peppers stuffed up his –

SNOW WHITE *(cutting him off)*

Moving on. And the wicked stepmother went to her room and gazed into her magic mirror.

Dwarf 1 becomes the magic mirror.

WITCH 2

Mirror, mirror, on the wall. Who's the fairest of them all?

DWARF 1 *(as the mirror, a drawn-out ghostly voice)*
Well it's certainly not you.

WITCH 2
Curses!

DWARF 1 *(as the mirror)*
Hey that's a good idea. You should try that.

SNOW WHITE
Meanwhile, Snow White was only becoming more fierce.
Dwarf 2 continues to strut.

DWARF 2
Work it. Work it.

SNOW WHITE
And just then –
WITCH 2 faces DWARF 2.
It was her stepmother.

WITCH 2
Stepmother.

DWARF 2
Snow White.
They look confused. Snow White gestures that they have it reversed.

WITCH 2
Snow White.

DWARF 2
Stepmother.

WITCH 2
I'm afraid it's over for you, Snow White. For I have a lot of money and have been though a lot of plastic surgery in Hollywood. Now, I am more beautiful than even you.

DWARF 2
Unlikely. BEGIN.
Dwarf 1 starts some thrilling runway music.
Dwarf 2 and Witch 2 strut back and forth, throwing fierce looks at each other.
Narrator 1 becomes PRINCE 2 and enters. (Whoever plays Prince 2 should be female-presenting.)

PRINCE 2

Yaaas Queen! Slay!

DWARF 1

Enough!
They stop.
Snow White is still the fiercest.

WITCH 2

Dang it! Well, how about an apple as a peace offering?

DWARF 2

How bout I take you out with my martial arts skills?

WITCH 2

Oh it's on!

PRINCE 2

Not to interrupt but I was just in the neighborhood looking for a girl in a coma to make out with and—whoah! Chickfight!
Dwarf 2 and Witch 2 circle each other.

SNOW WHITE

And it was a glorious battle.

WITCH 2

Expelliarmus!

DWARF 2

Expelliarmus yourself!
They start slap-fighting. It's ridiculous.

PRINCE 2

Go Snow White!

SNOW WHITE

A titanic struggle of good and evil. Purity versus corruption.
Dwarf 2 pokes Witch 2 in the eyes, 3 Stooges-style. Witch 2 throws stuff at Dwarf 2.
Until finally.

WITCH 2

I shall transform myself into a black dragon! Ah ha ha ha!
Pause.

SNOW WHITE

No that was in the Sleeping Beauty movie.

WITCH 2

I thought we were doing Sleeping Beauty.

SNOW WHITE

No this is Snow White.

Dwarf 2 takes a sword and stabs her.

DWARF 2

Eat this, witch!

WITCH 2

Ah! I'm melting! Actually I'm… bleeding! Aaaaaah.

Witch 2 dies.

PRINCE 2

That was so hot.

DWARF 2

Like somebody else I know, Prince.

PRINCE 2

You're very forward.

DWARF 2

I'm a modern woman. Come on, let's get married.

Dwarf 1 returns.

SNOW WHITE

And just then.

DWARF 1

Hi ho. Hi ho.

DWARF 2

What'd you just call me?

DWARF 1

Um. Nothing. Look, I'm living with a bunch of other dwarves—

DWARF 2

I've heard enough! You are lucky enough to become my servants. Come with me.

SNOW WHITE

And they all lived happily ever after and avoided traditional gender roles. And the seven little dwarves cooked for them, cleaned the house, and did all that other junk that Snow White was supposed to do in the story. The end.

Narrator 1 and Narrator 2 return.

NARRATOR 1

That was enlightened.

SNOW WHITE

Thank you.

She exits.

NARRATOR 2

But the witch was not dead.

WITCH 2

It's just a flesh wound!

NARRATOR 1

Stop it. We're doing this without any Monty Python references.

WITCH 2

`Tis but a scratch.

NARRATOR 1

I said stop it!

NARRATOR 2

Anyway, the witch felt bad and built a house made of candy and decided to eat children instead.

WITCH 2

There aren't many career options for me.

She exits.

NARRATOR 1

But the true secret origin here is of dwarf number 2.

NARRATOR 2

Which brings us to the darkest, most disturbing fairy tale ever told: Faithful Johannes.

JOHANNES enters. He's all smiles. Very, very happy.

NARRATOR 1

Never heard of it.

NARRATOR 2

There's a reason for that. Welcome to Faithful Johannes – the original psychological thriller.

Lights change on Johannes in a creepy fashion. Perhaps a red light? He's no longer all smiles. He looks terrified.

Narrator 1 changes into the QUEEN.

KING enters.

Once upon a time there was a noble servant, Faithful Johannes, who served his king faithfully, as you might glean from his name.

KING

Hey everybody! Check out my servant, Faithful Johannes!

JOHANNES

You're too kind, your majesty.

KING

He's the best! All your other servants are GARBAGE. Faithful Johannes would do anything for me! Eat a bug. Do it.

JOHANNES

Of course, sire.

Johannes eats a bug and smiles afterwards.

KING

HE LOVES IT. All your other servants are LOSERS. Nobody like Faithful Johannes here! Slap yourself in the face for me.

Johannes slaps himself in the face. Smiles afterwards.

AMAZING. All right, I'm goin' to bed. In conclusion: Faithful Johannes is the best, and all other servants are STUPID.

King exits.

NARRATOR 2

Johannes loved his life.

JOHANNES

This is great. Nothing like eating bugs and slapping myself in the face for my king.

He sighs and tries to keep it together.

NARRATOR 2

But one night he was visited…

RAVEN enters (or Narrator 2 transforms into Raven). Raven is dressed in a black trenchcoat or looks suitably sketchy.

By a talking raven.

RAVEN

Skipping Forward

KING

WHAT THE HECK?

JOHANNES

I didn't like the look of that horse, sire.

KING

THAT WAS AN ADORABLE HORSE. Why would you do that?!

JOHANNES

Um… stress at home. Sorry.

KING

Man. You got problems.

King exits.

NARRATOR 2

Later that night.

Raven enters behind Johannes.

Johannes stands, shaking, eyes wide.

RAVEN

Psst. Yo Johannes. C'mere.

JOHANNES

Ah! Stay away from me! I can't do this!

RAVEN

Attempt number two is comin' tomorrow. At the King's wedding rehearsal.

JOHANNES

I don't want to hear it!

RAVEN

It's gotta be you, Johannes. The King's wedding shirt is cursed. If he puts it on, he'll burn to death.

JOHANNES

I don't believe you! That horse was innocent! And I killed her! I… killed… her…

RAVEN

All you need to do is stop the king from taking the shirt, and tear it up in front of him. That's all you gotta do. But remember – you don't say nothing to nobody, or I'll turn you to stone.

JOHANNES

How do I know you're telling the truth?!

RAVEN

You don't.

Raven chuckles.

Ca-CAW!

Johannes jumps.

KING and QUEEN enter as the Raven flies off.

Johannes watches, freaking out, twitching.

QUEEN

Welcome friends. It's so nice to see all of you mostly recovered from the plague. And I'm here to tell you I love this big guy. Come here, ya big galoot. This is a day of celebration. Cause I love you, honey bear.

KING

I love you more, honey bear!

QUEEN

Even our nicknames are cute! This is the happiest day of my life! And – as a little present – I made you something.

She reaches down and takes out a t-shirt.

I sewed this myself! It's the only thing I've ever done myself. And I made it… for you.

KING

Oh it's –

Johannes lunges and snatches it out of the Queen's hand.

JOHANNES

AHHHHHHHHHHH!

He tries to rip it up, can't – grabs some scissors and tears holes in it. He throws it on the ground and stomps on it again and again.

I HATE THIS SHIRT! I HATE IT!

Pause. He stops. Everyone is looking at him.

KING

Um… WHAT. THE. HECK.

JOHANNES

It's not your color, sire. It is an affront against fashion.

Queen bursts into tears.

KING

Oh Honey Bear!

QUEEN

I'm never going to try again!

She sobs. Runs off.

KING

I gotta deal with this. Johannes? Not. Cool.

He follows her off.

NARRATOR 2

That night.

Johannes looks around, freaking out.

JOHANNES

I don't want to hear from any talking birds tonight!

Raven enters.

No! No! Get out!

RAVEN

Yo Johannes. You did good, kid.

JOHANNES

Everyone thinks I'm crazy!

RAVEN

Tomorrow, the Queen is gonna die.

JOHANNES

Stop it!

RAVEN

She's gonna be poisoned. And the only way to stop it is for you… to suck three drops out of blood out of the queen's breast.

JOHANNES

WHA-A-A-A-T?

RAVEN

Upper chest region.

JOHANNES

STILL.

RAVEN

Fine. Don't do it. She'll die. No difference to me. Remember – don't tell nobody nothing.

JOHANNES

I'm not doing it! You can't make me!

RAVEN

Ca-CAW!

Raven flies off.

Johannes paces nervously.

King and Queen enter. Both have glasses of wine.

QUEEN

Okay I had a rough night remembering that shirt, but I'm feeling a little better. Obviously, it was traumatic for everyone and I'm going to be okay with fifteen or twenty years of therapy. But today is not about the terrible trauma of yesterday, today is about putting a happy face on … and… and… urk…

She falls over.

(It's important she falls over behind something so that we can't see her body.)

KING 2

Oh no! Are you all right, Honey Bear? Say something! Is there a doctor in the house?

Johannes just stares.

Can anyone save the Queen's life? Anyone at all?

Johannes just stares.

Oh no this is terrible! Someone do something! If only someone could save her!

Johannes drops down where the Queen has fallen (so that the audience can't see him.)

King watches in horror.

WHOAH. WHAT. THE. HECK.

Queen and Johannes get back up.

QUEEN

Thanks. I feel better.

KING

DUDE! JOHANNES. EXPLAIN YOURSELF.

JOHANNES

Um…

KING

THAT IS IT. You are sentenced to death for being a jerk! Where's my guillotine?

JOHANNES

Wait! I always served you faithfully, sire! But there was a talking raven who was threatening me and telling me – urk…

NARRATOR 2

And just then, Johannes turned into a statue. Because when a magic raven says stuff to you, you better listen.

NARRATOR 1

Okay, that was mildly traumatic but not super traumatic –

NARRATOR 2

Ten years passed. And every day the King would stare at the statue of Faithful Johannes and sigh…

QUEEN

Are you coming up to bed?

KING 2

Hold on. I'm gonna spend some more time with this statue. He was such a good servant.

QUEEN

All right I'm going to sleep.

King mimes stroking the statue.

KING

If only there was some way to bring you back. No one eats bugs or slaps themselves in the face for me any more.

NARRATOR 2

And just then a ghostly voice emanated from the statue…

JOHANNES

Ooooooohhhhh… there is one way…. To….. bring me back…..

KING 2

What is it?! I'll do anything!

JOHANNES

Take what you love most in the world…

KING 2

That would be my two boys. I love my two boys so much.

He holds up two puppets.

Daddy loves you.

(as the puppets)

`I love you, Papa.'

`You're the best, Daddy.'

JOHANNES

Chop off their heads and smear their blood on me…

KING

Done!

He rips off the puppets' heads – (or throws them down and stomps on them.)

Then pulls out two headless puppets with red on their necks and mimes smearing their blood on the statue.

Johannes comes back to life.

JOHANNES

Ohhh. I feel so much better!

KING

You're alive! Air hug!

They air hug.

They dance and dance, high-five each other.

King and Johannes dance off, hand-in-hand.

NARRATOR 2

And the king and Johannes lived happily ever after. The end.

Narrator 1 enters, stunned.

NARRATOR 1

What did I just watch?

NARRATOR 2

That's the fairy tale. Right there.

NARRATOR 1

He kills his children to bring back his servant?

NARRATOR 2

A good servant is really hard to find. You can always make more kids. Okay fine – Johannes resurrects the kids later because he's got super-powers, and then one of those kids runs away from home, becomes a dwarf, and lives in the mines.

NARRATOR 1

Wow. That is messed-up.

NARRATOR 2

Yup.

NARRATOR 2

Well, I think we're running out of time.

NARRATOR 1

But we didn't get to The Frog Prince, or Little Red Riding Hood, or the Devil's Grandmother.

NARRATOR 2

We've done the important ones though.

CINDERELLA enters.

CINDERELLA

Ahem.

NARRATOR 2

What?

CINDERELLA

Aren't you forgetting something?

NARRATOR 2

Oh.

CINDERELLA

Yeah.

NARRATOR 1

All right one last one. Once upon a time—

CINDERELLA

Thank you.

She does some deep breathing exercises.

NARRATOR 2

There was a little orphan girl.

Cinderella overacts.

CINDERELLA

Oh I am orphaned! Oh I am sad!

ACTOR enters as Cinderella whimpers piteously.

ACTOR

Can we pause here for a second?

CINDERELLA

Oh how sad I am!

ACTOR

Just hold on.

NARRATOR 1

What is it?

ACTOR

There was like some really bad beef in the catering

CINDERELLA

Oh the catering is bad!

ACTOR

So like everybody is throwing up back here.

NARRATOR 1

Excuse me.

Narrator 1 runs off.

ACTOR

So we don't have enough actors to do this one.

Cinderella stops acting.

CINDERELLA

What?

NARRATOR 2

Well I guess we can skip it then.

CINDERELLA

NO WE ARE NOT SKIPPING IT.

End of Excerpt.

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