

THE ALTERNATIVE

SNOW WHITE

A PLAY IN TWO ACTS WITH SONGS

**SCRIPT BY
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Dramatis Personae

Snow White

The Wicked Queen

The Huntsman

The Lord Chancellor

Sir Edward Scrubbs

Rodney, Earl of Essex

Trixie the Dog no lines, sings

A Cat Could be a stuffed toy

Horace, a footman

Doris, another footman

Inspector from the Ministry of Political Correctness

Chief Inspector from the Ministry (The Director in Disguise)

Sergeant few lines

Guard few lines

Page few lines

Mouse 1

Mouse 2

Mouse 3

Mouse 4

Happy

Dopey

Bashful

Sleepy

Sneezy

Grumpy

Bjorn

Chorus of Servants and Courtiers

Chorus of Forest Animals

Scene 1, In the Palace

The great hall of the palace is furnished and decorated in formal medieval style. Candelabra are hanging from ceilings and walls and the tables are draped with purple cloths and decorated with more candles. The walls are hung with tapestries and decorated with shields and weapons, such as crossed pikes and maces. Paintings of the royal ancestors brighten the walls. The atmosphere is merry and jovial.

SONG 1 Servants Just Love to Wear Tights
(Tune: My Bonny Lies Over the Ocean)

Verse 1:

In Rome we wore chic, stylish togas,
Gold bracelets and laurels of green.
But making our way to the senate,
We looked like a bunch of old queens.

Chorus:

Roll up, roll up, vote for the great British pantie hose,
Fish nets, lycra; servants just love to wear tights.

Verse 2:

As Britons we dressed rather cheaply,
We painted our bodies with woad.
The minimal look raised some eyebrows;
Our enemies legged-it back home!

Verse 3:

As Saxons we wore polished leather,
Our tunics came down to the calf.
They tended to shrink in bad weather
And strangle our Old English parts.

Verse 4:

In Scotland we loved kilts and sporrans,
And garters on knee-length red socks.
They made us look cheekily tartan,
And let the wind blow up the jocks.

Verse 5:

Today, when you see us in public
We're sure to be wearing our tights.
But not the blond wigs or suspenders
Until we get home every night.

(Enter the queen. All suddenly goes still and quiet.)

Queen And what is the cause of this hilarity? It is against my orders. The only day for celebration is **my** birthday – and it is **not** my birthday today.

Sir Edward We're sorry, my lady. We just felt that the audience needed cheering up a little.

Queen Cheering up? Cheering up? Since when did people need to be cheerful? I'm miserable – so everyone must be miserable! That's life!

(To the crowd) If there is any further outbreak of good cheer, I will personally cut off the heads of those responsible. Do you understand?

All Yes, queen.

Queen Good! Now, go about your business, all of you.

(They do not move.) At once, I say, at once!

(There is a bustle as the crowd begins to disperse.)

Not you, Edward. I want a word with you.

Sir Edward My lady?

Queen There has been too much hilarity in the palace lately – and I hold you responsible.

Sir Edward I, my lady?

Queen You are my chief minister, not my chief minstrel.

Sir Edward But, my lady, what do you expect me to do?

Queen I expect you to pass some new laws; that's what I pay you for. I do pay you, do I?

Sir Edward Yes, my lady, but...

Queen A law against dancing for a start, and playing music.

(Nervous, muted reaction of horror from those of the crowd who are left.)

And ban those jokes; they are quite unnecessary.

Sir Edward *(Aghast)* Ban the jokes?

Queen Good! You're getting the idea. Now, about the ladies. I have seen ladies at the court wearing make-up and they are wearing outrageous modern dresses. This must stop! They must not show their arms,

ankles or, I can hardly bring myself to say it, *(spoken with distaste)*
their cleavage! *(Gasps from the crowd.)*

Sir Edward But my lady, I like to see.....
(He notices the queen has a face like thunder.)
Yes, my lady!

Queen That will be all, Edward. Now, leave me in peace; I wish to consult my
mirror.

Sir Edward As you wish, my lady. *(He exits.)*

Queen *(Noticing some of the courtiers still present.)*
Get out! All of you. Is there no privacy for a queen.
GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!
(The rest of the crowd exit rapidly, leaving the queen alone.)
Why, oh why must I be surrounded by fools and idiots?
I shall consult my mirror. At least that will talk sense.
*(She crosses to the mirror and pauses to adjust her hair and admire
herself before speaking.)*

Queen Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?

Mirror Thou, o queen, art blessed with the most pulchritudinous physiognomy
in the land.
And thou dost possess the most ambrosial charisma of all.

Queen Yes, but mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?

Mirror Thou, o queen, art blessed with the most alluring visage in the land.
And thou dost possess the most captivating disposition of all.

Queen Yes, but mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?

Mirror Thou, o queen, art blessed with the most sexy curves in the land.
And thou dost possess the biggest pair of.....

Queen Yes, yes, yes, that's better.
Now, tell me, mirror, is this the truth?

Mirror No, not at all. I'm just saying what you would like to hear. Last time I
told the truth you broke my glass.

Queen I'll do more than break your glass, I'll fracture your frame, I'll bruise your burnishings and I'll dislocate your tenons and mortices. But first, tell me who **is** the fairest of us all?

Mirror Snow White is more delectable than thee; more angelic, bewitching and elegant; her radiant beauty throws light into the corners of every room; her wit and charm beguile the hardest of hearts; her...her...

Queen Silence, you foolish mirror. Have you no pity?

Mirror No less than you when you beat me up.

Queen I'll deal with you later.
(Aside) There is only one way to deal with this crisis; Snow White must die. But, how to accomplish this? I could poison her! No that may fail. I shall have a servant take her to the forest and come back with her heart. And who better to do this deed than the huntsman? He is familiar with the techniques of butchery.
(Calls into wings) Huntsman, come here at once! At once I say!
(Enter the huntsman, breathless and flustered.)

Huntsman My lady, you called me?

Queen You know very well I called you.

Huntsman Yes, my queen.

Queen Thoughts of a foul deed have crossed my mind.

Huntsman *(Aside)* That wouldn't have taken very long.

Queen Look, Horace, you must go to the forest. I would like you to take my daughter where you didn't oughter.

Huntsman What would I wish with that little dish?

Queen Less of that cheek, close your beak. You must take Snow White and it must be tonight.

Huntsman But, she'll be afraid, the poor little maid.

Queen That's the idea - to instil some fear.

Huntsman I don't think I should, it's dangerous in the wood.

Queen If you want to keep your head, keep her there till she's dead.

Huntsman Dead, my lady? You must be crazy!

Queen Don't delay, just do as I say, I want her out of the way, today! O.K.?

Huntsman But what if she will not agree to go with me in the dark to the royal park. After all, it's not the ball and I'm of a lower social order than your daughter.

Queen She'll be more keen if you tell her the queen would otherwise lock her in the cellar; you tell 'er.

Huntsman I've a good mind forthrightly to go forth forthwith and sever the security of my situation.

Queen Don't be ridiculous, I like to retain my retainers. All you need is to saddle your steed, drag her off with the utmost speed and do the deed.

Huntsman But, I can't keep calm - I'm in alarm at the thought of causing Snow White harm.

Queen You kill with skill and are not sorry for the quarry when it's furry. Just, pretend she's a deer, dear.

Huntsman It's not the same as shooting game, the girl's quite tame.

Queen It's your duty through good and ill to obey my will, Will.

Huntsman Quick, I feel sick, my guts feel nuts, I need to chuck it in the bucket.

Queen Ill or nil, I **will** have my will, Will!

Huntsman My face is white and throat is tight; my knees are all a'quiver, there's a pain in my liver.

Queen Pull yourself together, you're not under the weather, you're just afraid 'cos your nerves are frayed and your knees knock, Jock.
(His knees knock. Sound effect of wood block.)

Huntsman But, but, but....

Queen Stop butting, you're not a goat.

Huntsman *(Aside)* I wish I were.

Queen If you are successful in ridding the world of Snow White, you will be handsomely rewarded.

Huntsman What might be the nature of the reward, my lady?

Queen You'll find out, **if** you are successful.

Huntsman As my queen, perhaps you might be disposed to give me a knight-hood or something like that.

Queen Do not try my patience! Now go, go, GO! And return with the girl's heart.

Huntsman *(In a small squeaky voice.)* Her heart! *(He clears his throat, nervously.)*
Very good, my lady. *(He backs off-stage rather hurriedly.)*

Queen *(Cynically)* Perhaps I might be disposed to give him a knighthood!
Perhaps I might be disposed to dispose of him in the same way as he
will dispose of Snow White. For, when she is dead **I** will once more be
the most beautiful woman in the land.
(Evil cackles of laughter.)

End of Scene

Scene 2, Later, in the Palace

The Chancellor and Sir Edward are alone in the hall, except for a few servants, who are clearing the remains of the meal.

- Chancellor What on earth is that intolerable noise, Sir Edward?
- Sir Edward That, my dear Chancellor, is that mad Scotsman, Mackenzie, doing his bagpipe practice.
- Chancellor My goodness, men have been executed for lesser crimes.
- Sir Edward Did you know that bagpipes were really invented by the Irish?
- Chancellor No, I didn't know that.
- Sir Edward They gave them to the Scots for a joke and the Scots have not seen the joke yet.
- Chancellor That racket is intolerable.
*(Calls into wings) Guard, bring the piper to me at once.
(Enter guard with a large newspaper.)*
Not the paper, you fool, the PIPER.
- Guard Where I comes from, your lordship, this is called a piper.
- Chancellor Look, can you hear that noise?
- Guard Bootiful ain't it, sir. I just love the sound of them pipes.
- Chancellor No it is not beautiful. I want you to go out there and shoot the piper. I want that music to be scotched.
- Guard But it is Scotch, sir.
- Chancellor Just do it!
- Guard Very well, sir. *(Stamps to attention and marches off.)
(There is a gunshot, a scream and the bagpipe sound effect winds down and goes off-pitch before stopping.)*
- Chancellor That's better. That row was setting my teeth on edge. I've already had to go to the dentist once this week.
(Sound effect of hooter. Enter the inspector from the ministry of political correctness.)
- Inspector Stop the show! Stop the show!

Chancellor What on earth are you doing, man? We're in the middle of a performance here.

Inspector I'm an inspector from the Ministry of Political Correctness and I'm stopping this performance.

Sir Edward Why on earth would you want to do that?

Inspector You're breaking the law.

Sir Edward Good Lord, in what way?

Inspector Under the new legislation, racist humour is not allowed.

Sir Edward Racist humour?

Inspector The joke about the Scots piper and the murder of the same.

Sir Edward That's not racist. He's Scottish – that doesn't count.

Inspector I'm afraid it does. And if there is any more racist humour in this show it must be cut – NOW!

Chancellor Oh very well, we'll do as you say.

Inspector I do hope so or I will return and close you down. You are only allowed three warnings. Now, good day to you.

Chancellor Good day!

Sir Edward What a silly little man. I don't see why we should listen to a jobsworth like that.

Chancellor Quite! Now where did we get to in the scene? Oh, yes!
I went to the dentist yesterday. He said, 'say ah!'

Sir Edward Why did he say that?

Chancellor Because his dog had died.

Sir Edward How did it die?

Chancellor He accidentally spilled spot remover on it and it disappeared.

Sir Edward Speaking of dying, I fear I must leave soon to return home, my Lord. My wife is not well – I really did not like the look of her when I left this morning.

Chancellor I know how you feel – I never like the look of my wife.

Sir Edward I consider myself lucky – I have the best wife in this country.

Chancellor You really think so?

Sir Edward Yes, the other one's in Australia.

Chancellor They say love makes the world go round, you know.

Sir Edward Yes, so does a punch on the nose.

Chancellor Do you know I first fell for my wife when she was a fair youth?

Sir Edward That sounds romantic.

Chancellor Not really, some-one pulled my ladder away from under her window and I fell off.

Sir Edward Well, my wife started to follow me everywhere after our first date.

Chancellor You lucky man.

Sir Edward I thought so too, until I realised she just wanted back the twenty pounds I borrowed for the meal.

Chancellor Well she still married you didn't she?

Sir Edward Is that a good thing? They say marriage is not just a word – it's a sentence. Anyway, dwelling on the past is not good for you. Nostalgia is not what it used to be, you know.

Chancellor I agree, but I never knew what happiness was until I married – and then it was too late. You don't just gain a wife – you get a nagging mother-in-law into the bargain.

Sir Edward I haven't spoken to my mother-in-law for three years – I don't want to interrupt her. They say love is blind but marriage is certainly an eye-opener.

Chancellor My marriage did not get off to a good start. You see, I invited the vicar to my stag night. He got a little drunk and did not quite sober up in time for the wedding service. The service was a disaster: he baptised the bridesmaids with altar wine, gave the last rites to the best man, exorcised my mother-in-law and married my brother to my wife's great aunt.

Sir Edward Was your wife very upset?

Chancellor Upset? She was beside herself – she didn't stop laughing for a week. You should see the wedding photos.

Sir Edward Wives, eh! Where would we be without them?

Song 2 **Wives** (Tune: The Skye Boat Song)

Verse 1, Sir Edward:

Sometimes they're slender and sometimes they're tall, often they're broad and wide;
Whether they're blond or whether brunette, these rules must be applied:
One day a year, chocolates and flowers, make sure you don't forget;
Even if now your wedding day, causes you great regret.
Trailing round town, just grit your teeth, never complain - it's hard
Watching the wife running up bills on your own credit card.
Try not to snore and don't slurp your tea, never tell porky-pies,
Don't ever stare at the bombshell next door, or you'll get two black eyes.

Verse 2, Chancellor:

Mother-in-law is always correct, even when clearly wrong,
Try to switch off but keep saying, 'yes', it might not last for long..
If in the car with her at the wheel, try not to scream and weep;
Just close your eyes, say a few prayers, with luck you'll fall asleep.
Saturday night, mates at the pub, you're at the village hall;
Just thank your stars, you can't be seen, tangoing at the ball.
Just bite your tongue when the washing machine shrinks your best shorts again,
People will talk of your cowboy-style walk and your falsetto range.

(Exit Chancellor and Sir Edward. Enter Horace and Doris each holding one end of the new intercom system.)

- Horace Hurry up, Doris, we are supposed to be preparing the silver-ware for luncheon.
- Doris Alright, Horace, keep your hair on. This is never going to work, you know. What is it supposed to be anyway?
- Horace Do I have to explain this to you again, Doris?
- Doris Go on, just once more.
- Horace Alright! Watch my lips. I'm tired of running up and down stairs carrying messages from the kitchens to the great hall. This is my new invention – the Horace Caller. It works like this: you take this end down to the kitchen and I stay up here with this end; you speak into the end, here, and I can hear what you need; a bottle of wine, another roast chicken, and so on.
- Doris And you think this will work? I don't.
- Horace Well, let's test it and see. You take your end down to the kitchen and we can talk through it.
- Doris Oh alright, but if we get into trouble it was **your** idea.

Horace Off you go!
(Exit Doris with one end of the tube. Horace blows down the tube and arranges it conveniently for talking. He puts his ear to the tube.)
 Poor Doris! Sometimes it seems as though the lights are on but there's certainly nobody at home.

Doris Hello!

Horace Hello, Doris.

Doris Who's that?

Horace *(Looking at the audience in despair.)* You know who it is, you idiot.
 It's me, Horace.

Doris Oh, you sound a long way away.

Horace Yes, I'm in Australia!

Doris Can you hear me?

Horace Of course I can, I've been talking to you, haven't I?

Doris Horace, I think it works.
(Horace shakes his head in disbelief.)
 Horace, are you still there?

Horace Of course I am, you fool.

Doris Thank goodness, I thought you were dead.

Horace *(Aside)* Sometimes I think that would be the better option.
 Doris, why are you so dim?

Doris I may be dim but at least I'm not big-headed.

Horace You don't need a big head. Your brain is so small.

Doris Bossy boots!

Horace Half-wit!

Doris Show-off!

Horace Imbecile!
(Enter Sir Edward. Horace tries to conceal the pipe.)

Sir Edward A there you are, Horace. You are needed at the portcullis. Do hurry along.

Horace But, Sir Edward....

Sir Edward Right away, if you please.

Horace Yes, sir. *(He looks in dismay at the pipe as he exits with Sir Edward.)*

Doris Oi! Fat face, are you there?
(Enter the queen from the opposite side.)
 Unblock your ears, fatty, I'm calling you.
(The queen looks around in surprise for the source of the voice.)
 Oi you, ugly, are you not talking to me then?

Queen *(Picking up the end of the pipe)* Hello!

Doris Ah, at last, there is life upstairs.

Queen Who is this?

Doris Ha, ha, very funny. That's quite good actually. You sound exactly like her.

Queen Like whom, may I ask?

Doris Yes, that's just the sort of snooty thing the old bag would say:
(Imitating the queen) Like whom, may I ask?
 She's such a pompous old prig! One day some-one will tell her so.

Queen You just did.

Doris I'm going to try now: *I've had enough of your idiosyncrasies. If you do not conform you will lose your head.*

Queen Very good. That sounds just like me.
(Enter Horace with a look of horror on his face. He conceals himself from the queen but is in view of the audience.)

Doris Oh you're such a scream, Horace. This is fun. Do some more impressions of the old witch. You know, that one everyone does in the kitchen: *I cannot afford to spend my time in idle tittle-tattle with the servants. I must go and consult my mirror.* I nearly wet myself last time cook did it.

Queen I think you had better come up, young man. You have wasted enough of my time.

Doris Very good! You should do this for a living.

Queen I already do – now come upstairs at once.

Doris Alright Horace, keep your crown on. I'm coming.

Queen Executioner! Come here at once.
(Horace is beside himself.)

This is intolerable! I'm the butt of my own servants' jokes. Well, I shall get some new servants – and the old ones shall be executed.

Doris *(Entering)* Horace, that was really fun. You sounded just like the silly ... old ... *(He notices the queen with the pipe still in her hand.)* My Lady, we were just testing our Horace Caller. W...w...where is Horace.

Queen Horace is doing a job for me. So I had to do his job *(aggressively)* of helping you with the testing. *(She repeats)* I cannot spend my time making idle tittle-tattle with the servants. I must go and consult my mirror.

Doris *(Head in hands)* Oh my word, I do believe I've goofed!

Queen And as you are such a comedian, you can entertain the rats - *(aggressively)* in the dungeon. And you, Horace. You can come out now.
(He slinks out, shame-faced.) Guards!
(Enter two guards.) Take them away!
(The guards drag them off.)

Horace Thank you very much, Doris. This is another fine mess you've got me into.

Queen *(To audience)* And now, to a more important matter: my vanity! I must see that the feeble huntsman obeys my orders. I **will** see Snow White dead – TONIGHT! *(She laughs an evil cackle.)*

End of Scene