



Deconstructing Fairy Tale Binaries: A Comparative Reading of Grimm's *Snow White* and Gaiman's *Snow, Glass, Apples*

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Abstract. Fairy tales function as cultural narratives that transmit moral values, yet their meanings remain open to reinterpretation through adaptation. While the Brothers Grimm's *Snow White* establishes seemingly fixed distinctions between innocence and evil, Neil Gaiman's *Snow, Glass, Apples* challenges these assumptions by offering an antithetical narrative perspective. This study employs Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction and Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality to examine how the binary oppositions of good/evil and love/lust are constructed and destabilized across three shared narrative fragments: Snow White's relationship with the Queen, her encounter with the dwarves, and her relationship with the Prince. Through a qualitative descriptive method and close comparative reading, the findings reveal three key instabilities. First, the Grimm text hierarchically privileges passivity, submission, and domesticity as markers of goodness, yet contains an internal contradiction wherein agency is demonized when exercised by the Queen. Second, Gaiman's rewriting exposes these contradictions by reinterpreting the Queen's actions as protective statecraft, reframing the dwarves as predatory beings, and unmasking the Prince's romantic devotion as physical obsession. Third, the study demonstrates that these binaries are not stable moral truths but ideologically constructed narratives sustained by selective storytelling. Theoretically, this research advances deconstructive literary criticism by showing how paired narratives function as intertextual doubles that expose suppressed contradictions, proving that fairy-tale meanings are continuously reconstructed through dialogue between texts. This study contributes to critical fairy tale studies by illustrating how postmodern retellings operate as literary criticism, destabilizing inherited hierarchies and inviting readers to reconsider the ideological assumptions embedded within canonical tales.

Keywords: *Deconstruction; intertextuality; binary opposition; Snow White; Snow, Glass, Apple; postmodern retelling*

INTRODUCTION

Snow White is one of the oldest stories in the fairy tale genre. The story was first published in 1812 by Jacob and Wilhem Grimm, also known by Brothers Grimm, in their book *Grimms' Fairy Tales* or originally known as *Children's and Household Tales* (German: *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*). The story follows the classic archetype of a young princess facing evil forces. Since its first emergence, the narrative of Snow White has been adapted to different interpretations of animated and live-action film. In 1937 Walt Disney and RKO Radio Pictures released *Snow White and the seven dwarfs*, an animated musical fantasy film. Walt Disney also released a live-action remake of the animated version in 2025. Similarly Universal pictures released *Snow White & the Huntsman* in 2012. PolyGram Filmed Entertainment and Interscope Communications also released a similar adaptation of the story titled *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* in 1997. In 1994 Neil Gaiman released *Snow, Glass, Apple*, a different short story adaptation of the original Snow White narrative where Snow White is a dangerous vampire who terrorized the kingdom while the

queen is a pretty, wise, and cunning woman who wants to protect the kingdom from Snow White.

The story of Snow White has been treated as a stable text with clear moral messages and fixed character roles. Many readings and adaptations continue to naturalize the Grimm version of *Snow White* as an authoritative moral text, overlooking the processes through which its meanings are stabilized and legitimized. However, Jacques Derrida (1967) argues that literary texts operate through binary oppositions such as good/evil, presence/absence, or innocence/monstrosity, that are hierarchically ordered, privileging one term over the other. These oppositions are not natural or fixed; they are inherently unstable because each term depends on its opposite for meaning. As a result, texts inevitably contain internal contradictions that undermine their claims to coherence, moral certainty, or authoritative truth. From a deconstructive perspective, meaning is never fully present or final but is continually deferred through difference, making textual interpretation an open and unstable process.

Several recent studies have examined deconstruction in literary works, especially in the fairy tale genre. Gilbert & Gubar (2019) argue that the tale establishes a patriarchal binary opposition between the passive, obedient Snow White and the powerful Queen. In their reading, Snow White represents the cultural ideal of feminine innocence and submission, whereas the Queen embodies female autonomy and authority that must ultimately be eliminated. Howell & Zipes (1985) stated that fairy tales are not ideologically neutral narratives but cultural texts that reinforce dominant social values through repeated transmission and adaptation, similarly Tatar (2019) contends that the Grimm fairy tales should be understood as historically situated narratives whose representations of beauty, morality, and female identity continue to be reshaped by changing cultural contexts. Joosen (2004) argues that modern rewritings of *Snow White* frequently function as literary engagements with earlier feminist criticism by questioning patriarchal assumptions embedded within the canonical tale and by giving narrative authority to previously marginalized characters. Rather than simply altering the plot, these retellings transform critical arguments into narrative practice, allowing alternative perspectives to challenge the ideological certainty of the original story. Ayyıldız (2024) argued that Gaiman destabilizes conventional distinctions between good and evil by presenting the Queen as a complex female protagonist whose actions are motivated by protection rather than jealousy. Their study demonstrates that the story complicates traditional moral categories and foregrounds female agency through narrative reversal.

Although previous studies have discussed Derrida's deconstruction in literary works, most of them focus on destabilized meaning or binary oppositions and how hierarchical binary oppositions function as hidden organizing principles in literary texts. They tend to focus on binary oppositions in a single literary work. Existing scholarship emphasizes that literature does not simply reflect reality or convey fixed messages, but actively produces meaning through unstable linguistic and narrative systems. As a result, there are gaps in understanding, there remains limited attention to the deconstructive potential of paired narratives that share the same narrative foundation while presenting radically opposing perspectives. Most studies treat literary texts as self-contained objects of analysis, examining the instability of meaning within a single narrative framework. As a result, insufficient attention has been given to how one text may function as an antithetical counterpart that exposes and amplifies the contradictions already embedded in another text.

This study addresses that gap by examining the Grimm narrative and Gaiman's narrative as a pair of interconnected narratives. By studying how Gaiman's narrative exemplifies postmodern rewriting strategies by doing a rework of Grimm's narrative from

within the existing ideological and cultural tensions. *Snow, Glass, Apple* function not as an alternative version of the original narrative, but rather function as a literary application of deconstructive approach that reveal the instability of binary oppositions like good and evil, and love and lust. The significance of this comparison therefore lies in showing how Gaiman mobilizes these established critical perspectives through narrative reversal, multiple viewpoints, and the reconfiguration of character identities, allowing the latent contradictions of the Grimm tale to become visible. Accordingly, this study investigates how *Snow, Glass, Apples* operates as a postmodern reinterpretation of *Snow White* by applying a deconstructive reading to the relationship between the two texts. Rather than treating Gaiman's work as a mere replacement for the Grimm narrative.

This study adopts Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction as its central analytical framework. Derrida (1967) argues that meaning in language is never fixed or absolute but is produced through difference, deferral, and hierarchical oppositions that are inherently unstable. Within this framework, literary narratives—whether canonical fairy tales or modern retellings—become sites where meaning is constructed and simultaneously undermined. This study also adopts Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, Kristeva argue that every text is constructed through the absorption and transformation of other texts. In this sense, a text does not exist as a closed system but as a space where various cultural, ideological, and literary discourses intersect, Meaning of a text then emerges through the relationship between texts rather than being contained exclusively within a single narrative (Kristeva et al., 1982).

To address this gap, this study formulates the following research questions:

1. How does Neil Gaiman's *Snow, Glass, Apples* expose and destabilize the hierarchical binary oppositions of good/evil and love/lust that structure the Brothers Grimm's *Snow White*?
2. In what ways does the intertextual relationship between the two narratives reveal the ideological construction of character identities (the Queen, Snow White, the Prince, and the dwarves) as narrative conventions rather than stable moral truths?
3. How does the narrative reversal in Gaiman's retelling function as a deconstructive practice that brings suppressed meanings and marginalized perspectives into visibility?

This research is expected to provide significant theoretical and practical contributions to the field of Critical theory studies in understanding the relationship between literary works, especially in the usage of fairy tales and children stories as tools to protect certain meanings and ideology. By focusing on deconstructing *Snow White*, and *Snow, Glass, Apple* this research aims to offer new perspectives regarding the deconstruction theory usage in studying literary works.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative comparative textual analysis, utilizing a close-reading approach informed by deconstruction and intertextuality. The research design is interpretive and critical, aiming to uncover how meaning is constructed, stabilized, and subsequently destabilized through the interplay between two interconnected narratives.

The primary data sources consist of two literary texts:

1. The Brothers Grimm's *Snow White*, as translated and edited by Jack Zipes in *The Original Folk and Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm: The Complete First Edition* (2014). This edition is selected for its scholarly accuracy and fidelity to the original 1812 text.

2. Neil Gaiman's *Snow, Glass, Apples* (1997), published by HarperCollins. This text is chosen as the object of analysis because it explicitly rewrites the Grimm narrative from an oppositional perspective, making it an ideal counterpart for a deconstructive comparison.

The data collection process involved identifying all narrative fragments shared between the two texts. Based on a preliminary reading, three major shared plot points were isolated as units of analysis:

1. The conflict between Snow White and the Queen (including the mirror episodes and the huntsman sequence).
2. Snow White's encounter and residence with the seven dwarves.
3. The romantic resolution involving the Prince.

These fragments were selected because they are structurally central to both narratives and carry the highest concentration of moral and ideological significance.

The analysis was conducted in five systematic stages:

1. Identification of Binary Oppositions: The Grimm text was first read to identify the primary hierarchical binary oppositions operating within it (specifically, good/evil and love/lust). This involved noting which terms were privileged and which were suppressed or marginalized.
2. Close Reading for Internal Contradictions: A deconstructive close reading was applied to the Grimm narrative. Each selected fragment was scrutinized for tensions, ambiguities, or moments where the privileged term depended on the excluded term (e.g., where Snow White's "goodness" relies on passivity, or where the Prince's "love" relies on visual desire).
3. Close Reading of the Counter-Narrative: Gaiman's text was read closely, paying attention to how it reconfigures the same narrative events. This stage focused on shifts in narrative perspective, characterization, and motivation.
4. Intertextual Comparison: The findings from stages 2 and 3 were compared to trace how Gaiman's text absorbs, transforms, and responds to the Grimm narrative. This stage drew on Kristeva's framework to analyze how meanings are transferred and altered across textual boundaries.
5. Synthesis and Deconstructive Conclusion: Finally, the analysis synthesized how Gaiman's retelling functions as an "antithetical counterpart" that exposes the instability of the original's moral hierarchies, demonstrating that meaning is not fixed but produced through textual dialogue.

To ensure interpretive validity, the analysis remained grounded in direct textual evidence through extensive quotation. The dual theoretical framework (deconstruction and intertextuality) provides methodological triangulation, allowing the findings to be corroborated through two distinct but complementary critical lenses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Binary Opposition in Snow White by *Snow, Glass, Apple*

"Snow White and the Queen" to Agency as Villainy: Reevaluating the Queen and the Passive Princess

In Grimm's narrative Snow White is consistently associated with purity, innocence, virtue and beauty. The Queen on the other hand is constructed as her moral opposite that embody jealousy, malice, deceitfulness, and vanity. This can be seen from through this hierarchical arrangement, the narrative privileges Snow White as the representative of goodness while relegating the Queen to the position of evil. Through this opposition, the

narrative encourages readers to identify with Snow White and condemn the Queen as the source of disorder and conflict.

However, a closer examination reveals that the opposition is sustained through a hierarchical distribution of agency. Throughout the story, Snow White rarely initiates actions that influence the narrative. Instead, she functions primarily as an object around which events unfold. Her role is to be admired, envied, pursued, protected, poisoned, and rescued. In contrast, the Queen drives nearly every major narrative event. She consults the mirror, devises plan, disguises herself, travels to the dwarves' cottage, and repeatedly acts upon her desires. The progression of the plot depends far more upon the Queen's actions than upon Snow White's. This contrast reveals a hidden contradiction within the good/evil hierarchy. The narrative privileges Snow White's goodness, yet that goodness is inseparable from passivity. Conversely, the Queen's evil is inseparable from agency and autonomy.

The Queen's obsession with beauty further complicates this hierarchy. On the surface, her desire and constant reassurance through "*Looking-glass upon the wall, Who is fairest of us all?*" (Zipes, 2014, p. 8) is presented as vanity and narcissism. Yet the conflict itself originates from a patriarchal value system that measures women's worth through physical beauty. Ironically, while the narrative condemns the Queen for participating in this system, it simultaneously rewards Snow White for embodying its ideals. As it shown on one of the fragments where the huntsman take pity on Snow White because of her beauty "*And as she was so lovely the huntsman had pity on her, and said: "Away with you then, poor child!"*" (Zipes, 2014, p. 9). Snow White's beauty is celebrated as natural and virtuous, whereas the Queen's concern with beauty is demonized. Thus, the narrative relies upon the same value system that it appears to criticize. From a deconstructive perspective, this contradiction destabilizes the opposition between good and evil. Snow White's privileged position depends upon the very standards that condemn the Queen.

Snow, Glass, Apples exposes this instability by transferring narrative authority from Snow White to the Queen. In Gaiman's retelling, the Queen is no longer a jealous villain motivated by vanity but a ruler attempting to protect her kingdom from a supernatural threat. Gaiman subverts the Queen's vanity by reframing her magic mirror as a tool for state security; she notes that she "covered the mirror in doe-skin" out of a sense of royal duty, stating, "*I covered the mirror in doe-skin, and told him that I would personally take it upon myself to make the forest safe once more. I had to, although she terrified me. I was the queen. A foolish woman would have gone then into the forest and tried to capture the creature; but I had been foolish once and had no wish to be so a second time.*" (Gaiman, 1997, p. 5)

The actions that appear malicious in the Grimm tale are reinterpreted as rational responses to danger. Significantly, Gaiman does not merely reverse the hierarchy by making the Queen good and Snow White evil. Rather, he reveals that the original hierarchy depended entirely upon narrative perspective. The same actions that signify villainy in one narrative become acts of protection in another. The Queen's agency, previously interpreted as evidence of moral corruption, becomes evidence of responsibility and courage. Conversely, Snow White's passivity no longer guarantees innocence. Through this reversal, *Snow, Glass, Apples* demonstrates that the categories of good and evil are not inherent truths but narrative constructions sustained by selective storytelling.

From Protectors to Prey: Destabilizing Innocence in the Dwarves' Domain

The relationship between Snow White and the seven dwarves further reinforces the moral hierarchy that is established in the Grimm's narrative. The dwarves function as protectors who provide refuge for snow white after the Huntsman left her to die in the woods. Their willingness to shelter and care for her confirms her status as an innocent victim who

can't stand up for herself and needed protection. The dwarves also explicitly instruct her to cook, clean, make the beds, wash clothes, and maintain the household while they work in the mines. Through this arrangement, Snow White is constructed as an obedient and innocent young girl whose primary narrative function is associated only domestic labour and caretaking. This is shown by dialogue fragments that shows how Snow White are treated as an innocent victim. *"Then the dwarfs said: 'If you will keep our house for us, and cook, and wash, and make the beds, and sew and knit, and keep everything tidy and clean, you may stay with us, and you shall have everything you want.' With all my heart," said Snow-white.*" (Zipes, 2014, p. 12)

The narrative presents these qualities as evidence of Snow White's goodness. Her willingness to perform household chores reinforces her image as humble, virtuous, and deserving of sympathy. At the same time, the dwarves acted as protectors, repeatedly warning her not to open the door to strangers and specifically cautioning her about the Queen's attempts to harm her. This dependency becomes increasingly significant throughout the narrative. Despite being warned multiple times, Snow White repeatedly falls victim to the Queen's disguises and deceptions. She is tricked by the laces, the poisoned comb, and finally the poisoned apple. Her inability to recognize danger or protect herself reinforces the narrative's construction of her innocence. Yet this innocence is inseparable from passivity and vulnerability. Her role within the story is largely reactive as she is protected and rescued. As presented in the narrative fragment *"When the dwarfs heard what had happened they said 'The old peddler woman was the wicked queen; you must beware of letting anyone in when we are not here!'"* (Zipes, 2014, p. 14)

From a deconstructive perspective, this characterization introduces a contradiction within the privileged category of goodness itself. The qualities that identify Snow White as "good" such as obedience, passivity, dependence, and submissiveness, simultaneously deprive her of agency. Her moral superiority is established through weakness rather than through independent action. The narrative therefore privileges a form of femininity that equates virtue with compliance and helplessness.

Snow, Glass, Apples destabilizes this construction by radically reinterpreting Snow White's relationship with the dwarves. Rather than depicting her as a vulnerable child in need of protection, Neil Gaiman portrays her as an active and threatening presence whose existence endangers others. The figure who required constant protection in the Grimm tale becomes the source of fear from which protection is needed. Consequently, the dwarves' role as benevolent guardians is also redefined as Snow white no longer needed protection. They are now act as the same being that Snow White in Grimm's narrative needed protection from. The queen highlighted this as the narrator, she stated that: *"There were, as I have already stated, people in the forest. They would come out, some of them, for the Spring Fair: a greedy, feral, dangerous people; some were stunted—dwarfs and midgets and hunchbacks."* (Gaiman, 1997, p. 4), *"After some hours a clutch of dwarfs crawled out of the cave-front—ugly, misshapen, hairy little men, the old inhabitants of this country. You saw them seldom now."* (Gaiman, 1997, p. 6)

This reversal exposes the instability of the original characterization. If Snow White can be interpreted either as a helpless victim or as a predatory threat, then her identity is not an inherent truth but a product of narrative framing. More importantly, *Snow, Glass, Apples* reveals that the Grimm narrative's construction of goodness depends upon associating virtue with passivity and dependence of the dwarves. The relationship between Snow White and the dwarves therefore becomes a crucial site where the binary opposition between good and evil begins to collapse, demonstrating that the qualities used to define goodness are open to reinterpretation.

The Necrophilic Gaze: Unmasking the Traces of Lust in Romantic Devotion

The relationship between Snow White and the Prince constitutes the primary foundation of the love/lust binary opposition within the Grimm narrative. the Prince functions as the embodiment of romantic love. His appearance near the end of the story provides the resolution to Snow White's suffering and ultimately restores social and moral order through marriage. This is shown by the narrative fragment *"Oh dear! where am I?" cried she. The King's son answered, full of joy, "You are near me," and, relating all that had happened, he said: "I would rather have you than anything in the world; come with me to my father's castle and you shall be my bride."* (Zipes, 2014, p. 20)

As a result, the relationship is commonly interpreted as the triumph of true love over adversity. The narrative appears to privilege love while excluding lust. The Prince's admiration for Snow White is framed as pure, noble, and destined. Unlike the Queen's desire for beauty and superiority, which is portrayed negatively, the Prince's attraction is represented as morally legitimate and emotionally elevated. Consequently, the opposition between love and lust appears stable: love occupies the privileged position while lust remains absent from the narrative surface.

However, the Prince's attraction to Snow White emerges before any meaningful interaction between them has taken place. In many versions of the Grimm narrative, he encounters Snow White while she lies motionless inside the glass coffin. He does not know her personality, thoughts, experiences, or desires. Instead, his fascination is based entirely upon her appearance. He is captivated by her beauty despite her apparent death and requests possession of the coffin so that he may continue looking at her. As shown in the narrative fragment *"Let me have the coffin, and I will give you whatever you like to ask for it/' But the dwarfs told him that they could not part with it for all the gold in the world. But he said: "I beg you to give it to me, for I cannot live without looking upon Snow-white;"* (Zipes, 2014, p. 20)

The moment of prince's admiration towards Snow White destabilizes the distinction between love and lust. The narrative identifies the Prince's attraction as love, yet the conditions under which that attraction develops suggest a strong element of visual desire and possession. Snow White functions less as an active romantic partner than as an object of admiration. The Prince falls in love with the silent and attractive body of Snow White. Consequently, the supposedly pure category of love already contains traces of what the narrative seeks to exclude: physical desire, fascination with beauty, and possessiveness. The contradiction becomes more apparent when compared to the portrayal of beauty in Grimm's narrative. The Queen is condemned because she is obsessed with beauty and physical appearance, while the prince's attraction is initiated by Snow White's beauty. The narrative therefore applies different moral judgments to similar motivations, exposing the instability of the hierarchy between love and lust.

Snow, Glass, Apples amplifies this contradiction by foregrounding the erotic dimension that remains suppressed in the Grimm narrative. Gaiman's Prince is no longer presented as an idealized romantic hero whose actions are motivated by pure love and affection. Instead, his relationship with Snow White is characterized by obsession, physical longing, and sexual desire. As shown from the narrative fragments *"I imagine his loins, now, as he rode, a knot of frustration at the base of his manhood. I imagine his pale lips pressed so tightly together. Then I imagine his little troupe riding through the forest, finally coming upon the glass-and-crystal cairn of my stepdaughter. So pale. So cold. Naked, beneath the glass, and little more than a girl, and dead. In my fancy, I can almost feel the sudden hardness of his manhood inside his britches, envision the lust that took him then, the*

prayers he muttered beneath his breath in thanks for his good fortune." (Gaiman, 1997, p. 8)

More importantly Gaiman does not introduce lust into a narrative where it previously did not exist. Rather, he exposes the desire already embedded within the Prince's fascination with Snow White. The Prince's attraction in the Grimm tale is made possible by Snow White's physical beauty and apparent passivity; *Snow, Glass, Apples* simply makes this dynamic visible. What the original narrative presents as transcendent love is reinterpreted as desire. the shift in perspective fundamentally alters Snow White's role within the relationship. In *Snow White*, she functions primarily as the object where The Prince chooses her, admires her, and ultimately marries her. In *Snow, Glass, Apples*, however, the relationship becomes significantly more physical and reciprocal, emphasizing bodily desire rather than fairy-tale idealism. As a result, the romantic purity that characterizes the Grimm narrative becomes increasingly difficult to sustain. The interaction between Snow White and the Prince therefore demonstrates that the opposition between love and lust is fundamentally unstable. The category of love is only able to occupy the privileged position because the narrative suppresses the traces of desire that already exist within it.

Rather than presenting two entirely different forms of relationship, the two texts expose different dimensions of the same narrative structure. What appears as true love in one narrative becomes recognizable as desire in another, demonstrating that the boundary between love and lust is neither fixed nor absolute.

Narrative Doubles: Intertextuality and the Collapse of Authoritative Meaning

The findings suggest that Gaiman's narrative reshapes the meanings in the Grimm's original narrative by not just presenting an alternative interpretation, but rather establishing an intertextual relationship which the meanings of both texts are continuously negotiated. A literary text does not exist as an independent entity but is constructed through its relationship with other texts, cultural discourses, and previous systems of meaning. Intertextuality therefore emphasizes that the meaning emerges through textual interaction rather than being contained within a single narrative (Raj, 2015; Zengin, 2016). *Snow White* and *Snow, Glass, Apples* can be understood as interconnected narratives because Gaiman's retelling absorbs, and transforms the narrative structures and ideological assumptions of the Grimm tale.

The intertextual relationship between the two narratives is demonstrated through their shared narrative elements, including the conflict between Snow White and the Queen, Snow White's stay with the seven dwarves, her encounter with the Prince, and the Queen's death at the conclusion of the story. However, these shared narrative fragments are reconstructed through different narrative perspectives, resulting in different systems of meaning. Rather than reproducing the original story, Gaiman's retelling transforms familiar narrative components by shifting narrative authority from Snow White to the Queen and by questioning the moral assumptions attached to each character. This finding supports the argument that retellings function as intertextual transformations in which later texts engage with previous narratives while simultaneously producing new meanings. Bula (2022) explains that Kristeva's concept of intertextuality should not be understood merely as textual influence, but as a process through which texts interact, negotiate, and transform meanings through their relationship with other discourses.

The dialogue between *Snow White* and *Snow, Glass, Apples* becomes particularly significant when examined through Derrida's concept of deconstruction. The findings reveal that Gaiman's narrative exposes the instability of binary oppositions that appear fixed within the Grimm tale. The Queen's villainy, Snow White's innocence, the Prince's romantic

devotion, and the dwarves' protective role are constructed as stable meanings because the original narrative privileges a particular moral perspective while marginalizing alternative interpretations. However, when Gaiman reconstructs these events through the Queen's narration, these established meanings become unstable. The Queen is no longer represented solely as an embodiment of evil, while Snow White's innocence becomes increasingly complicated by her violent and predatory nature. Through this process, *Snow, Glass, Apples* functions as an intertextual rewriting that reveals contradictions already embedded within *Snow White*.

Therefore, *Snow, Glass, Apples* does not replace the Grimm narrative but expands its interpretive possibilities by bringing previously marginalized perspectives into focus. Similar to other literary applications of Kristeva's intertextuality, meaning emerges through the interaction between texts that absorb, transform, and respond to one another (Darussalam, 2024). Consequently, the relationship between *Snow White* and *Snow, Glass, Apples* demonstrates that fairy-tale meanings are not fixed moral structures but dynamic constructions that continue to evolve through intertextual dialogue.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals the relationship between the Brothers Grimm's *Snow White* and Neil Gaiman's *Snow, Glass, Apple* are not a simple narrative change. Gaiman's retelling reveals that the binary oppositions are not self-evident truths, but rather a culturally privileged constructions sustained by narrative convention. *Snow, Glass, Apples* exposes the instability already embedded within the canonical text, allowing suppressed perspectives to emerge and challenge its apparent coherence.

these findings suggest that postmodern fairy-tale retellings do not merely modernize familiar stories but fundamentally transform the way readers engage with them. By questioning moral certainty and destabilizing inherited narrative hierarchies, Gaiman's work reflects a contemporary literary sensibility that is increasingly skeptical of absolute distinctions between innocence and guilt, heroism and monstrosity, or truth and deception. In this sense, the enduring appeal of fairy-tale retellings lies not in retelling the same story differently, but in revealing that the meanings of canonical tales have always been contingent, contested, and open to reinterpretation.

Ultimately, this study argues that *Snow, Glass, Apples* exemplifies how postmodern rewriting functions as a form of literary criticism in its own right. Rather than simply revising *Snow White*, Gaiman invites readers to reconsider the ideological assumptions that have long shaped the fairy tale's authority. Such retellings therefore reaffirm that canonical narratives remain culturally significant not because they preserve fixed meanings, but because they continue to generate new interpretations that reflect changing historical, cultural, and ethical perspectives.

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