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The Wilson Post

Fairy tales are designed to tell us a story, often with a lesson to be learned at the end, but “Snow White and the Huntsman” is a slight deviation from the original tale and delivers excellent settings and interesting visuals, but the problem with fairy tales are the one-dimensional characters.

In this telling, Snow White, played well by Kristen Stewart, is a princess who is locked for years in the tower by her evil stepmother, Queen Ravenna (Charlize Theron). When Snow White escapes, the witch-like Queen finds out from the magic mirror “on the wall” that only Snow White can prevent her from obtaining immortality.

Enter “The Huntsman” played by Chris Hemsworth, who stumbles around drunkenly, but is capable in a fight. He’s enlisted to track Snow White through the incredible Dark Forest to bring her back to be killed by Ravenna.

Director Rupert Sanders handles the film’s major settings with outstanding flair, bringing a gloomy, haunting forest to life, and its counterpart, a beautiful and visually enchanting, er, Enchanted Forest.

Snow White and the Huntsman struggle through the Dark Forest where nothing seems to be alive, but a dangerous cloud of dust causes hallucinations that obviously are what gives the characters’ their fear of the forest.

On the other hand, the pair meets eight dwarves and is brought into the enchanted forest, filled with interesting creatures where everything is bright and full of life. At the heart is a strange deer-like creature with impressive antlers that we’re expected to know is really important.

Stewart, widely known as “Bella” in the “Twilight” films, is given the “challenge” of portraying a

wholly good character in Snow White, and actually brings some charisma and bravery to the role.

Ravenna is the opposite, wholly vain and evil, and any hint of her complexity is quickly glossed over through a very brief flashback. She gets to yell and be angry for much of the film, spouting the same lines repetitively, but looks great in the process.

By that I mean, her constant changing from young and fair to old and ragged, as well as transforming into a flock of crows and shape shifting to tempt Snow White. All transitions were very cool and helped to depict the Queen's inner evil or, rather, ugliness.

Hemsworth gives a valiant effort as the Huntsman, who is at first a widower and drunkard, but very capable navigating the dark forest and defending himself. He quickly develops a protector role with Snow White that keeps him from killing her. Huntsman is the most complex character.

Ravenna enlists the Huntsman's services by promising to bring back his dead wife, but he soon finds a resemblance of his wife within Snow White. We never truly know what happened to his wife, although it's implied the Huntsman's own action or inaction lead to her demise.

Of course, at the heart of the tale is the concept of inner beauty versus vanity and a respect for others. The Queen is the obvious embodiment of vanity and can be stretched to resemble a current society that looks to others to tell us how we must look.

The magic mirror, which takes on a liquid-metal, ghostly form when speaking to Ravenna, is a pretty easy symbol for television, commercials, etc. The Queen is obsessed with having the mirror tell her she is most fair, and when he does not, she goes into a tailspin.

On the other hand, Snow White is said to be most fair, but it's implied her real beauty is within. She has a respect for others and a caring attitude, as well as a respect for nature. Even the Huntsman depicts courage and gallantry while being a muddy-drunkard.

Although, of course, all of these actors are chiseled or finely shaped to be the very symbols someone like Ravenna looks to emulate or surpass in beauty, and who we all see on our own “magic mirrors.”

The true lesson is to find the good in others and yourself from within and not to obsess over what the magic mirror says you should look like or who you should be. How well the film sends that message is debatable, or whether it even wants to, regardless, I couldn’t help but notice.

The classic elements from the fairy tale are there, the poisoned apple, the death-like sleep, but they’re dressed up with a medieval power struggle and an impressive battle at the end.

"Snow White and the Huntsman” was a fun outing that left a little more to be desired, but is a good take on the classic tale, whose best-known version was collected by the Brothers Grimm in 1812 and made iconic by the Disney classic in 1937.

This “Snow White” isn’t as suitable for kids as the Disney version.

‘Snow White and the Huntsman’ is playing in all local theaters and is rated PG-13 with a runtime of 127 minutes.

Check back this weekend for a review of the sci-fi blockbuster "Prometheus."

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