"Fairest of them all" takes on an expansive meaning in "Snow White," Disney's new live-action remake of the 1937 animated classic. (Disney)

by Eric Clayton

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"Fairest of them all" takes on an expansive meaning in the new musical film "Snow White," Disney's latest live-action remake, which reimagines the 1937 animated classic "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." But in this telling, the story is less concerned with the titular character's marital prospects than it is with painting a vision of abundance — and putting on full display the kinds of manipulative behavior that entraps us in a mindset of scarcity.

We get a good sense of what the kingdom was like before the Evil Queen (Gal Gadot) stole the throne. "We lead with open hearts, and we live with open doors with love to protect and provide," the citizens sing in the delightful opening song, "Good Things Grow." The king and queen are beloved and their daughter, Snow White (Rachel Zegler), is on her way to becoming a leader who is fearless, fair and true.

"We always keep in mind that what's mine is always yours; may goodness be our one true guide," the villagers continue. This line, delivered in song, underscores the real conflict of the film: Abundance is possible, if we keep our priorities straight.

But just a few scenes after that upbeat opener celebrating generosity, kindness, hard work and mutual flourishing, we find Snow White locked away in the castle, her mother deceased, her father gone and her evil stepmother at the helm.

To underscore how desperate the citizenry has become, we meet not-a-prince Jonathan (Andrew Burnap), who is both a thief and the eventual love interest. He's stealing potatoes from the queen's supply because there is no longer enough food to go around.

How far the kingdom has fallen in so short a time. How foreign the days when the king and queen would work hand-in-hand with the villagers. This new ruler is far more concerned with her own power than with any notion of common good.

There's a line in Gadot's "All Is Fair" that sums up not only the Queen's strategy but the lie necessary for a scarcity mindset to flourish: "If you wanna rise, someone's gotta fall." Division is the strategy.

And divided is exactly what the kingdom has become. The Queen has enlisted former bakers, farmers and metal workers into her army to maintain a vast separation between herself and the villagers; she wants to protect her own interests at the expense of others'. This arbitrary fragmenting of an otherwise peaceful and prosperous place breeds fear and anxiety, and from those dark wells the Queen draws her power.

The Evil Queen is indeed beautiful — fair, yes — but it's the utter lack of fairness that sustains her reign. What once was a colorful, limitless kingdom now appears cold and desolate.

"If you wanna rise, someone's gotta fall," the Evil Queen (Gal Gadot) sings. (Disney)

Meanwhile, the enchanted forest to which Snow White flees stands in stark contrast. And who lives in that forest serves to prove the point.

There is, in fact, no mention of dwarfs in the film, an editorial choice not to perpetuate demeaning stereotypes of the dwarfism community. There are seven magical creatures who appear as short men and live in a cottage in that enchanted forest. These characters — Doc, Grumpy, Sleepy and so on — are rendered fully in CGI.

Much has been written about that filmmaking decision. I, for one, really loved the finished product: The rendering of these characters as magical, rather than simply seven guys living in a cottage in the woods, adds to the expansive wonder of Snow White's story. These characters underline the mystery and possibility of the forest itself, a land that serves as a foil to the kingdom.

There's a scene in the forest where the dwarfs and a band of friendly thieves are bickering over who gets what, and why. Snow White steps in to point out that the Queen wants them to argue over scraps. But really, they have all they need — if they share. If they work together. If they have faith in one another.

The choice is clear: We can be enchanted by the unknown and turn to curiosity and wonder, or we can close ourselves off and hoard only that which we can grasp. The former allows for ever-expanding relationships, a widening of the circle, new frontiers and possibilities; the latter necessitates mistrust of others, a lowering of horizons and the shuttering of borders.

Snow White (Rachel Zegler) finds an antidote to the kingdom's scarcity in the mystery and possibility of the forest. (Disney)

Will we choose abundance — and the possibility that comes with it? Or, will we choose scarcity, and forever shrink our potential?

The big showdown between Snow White and the Evil Queen is not waged with pickaxes and bolts of lightning, the tools of the 1937 film. Rather, Snow White defeats the Queen because she reminds the people what shared abundance once looked like. She calls them by their names and reminds them of who they were to the community before they were soldiers, pointing to what was — and what might be again. That's enough to break the proverbial spell.

"Snow White" is not a religious film, but it does reflect a divine economy, for ours is a God of abundance, in whose kingdom there is always enough to go around. We would all do well to journey into our own enchanted forest, to encounter those creatures of light and wonder that raise our hearts and our minds to chase after what previously appeared impossible.

Where in our lives do we hoard riches and empty honors? Where are we given the opportunity to share for the good of all?

The Queen saw a place of beauty and prosperity and sought to divide and destroy it. She succeeded insofar as people forgot what it was to rely on one another, to share, to build a common dream. She was thwarted when those same people remembered they belonged to one another — and lived that way.