

Midwinter — invincible, immaculate. The Count and his wife go riding, he on a grey mare and she on a black one, she wrapped in the glittering pelts of black foxes; and she wore high, black, shining boots with scarlet heels, and spurs. Fresh snow fell on snow already fallen; when it ceased, the whole world was white.

*“I wish I had a girl as white as snow,”* says the Count. They ride on.

They come to a hole in the snow; this hole is filled with blood. He says: *“I wish I had a girl as red as blood.”*

So they ride on again; here is a raven, perched on a bare bough. *“I wish I had a girl as black as that bird’s feathers.”*

As soon as he completed her description, there she stood, beside the road, white skin, red mouth, black hair and stark naked; she was the child of his desire and the Countess hated her.

Does the Snow Child join the Count and Countess?

NO

Sadly due to the freezing conditions, the snow child dies ...

YES

The Count lifted her up and sat her in front of him on his saddle but the Countess had only one thought: how shall I be rid of her?

The Countess dropped her glove in the snow and told the girl to get down to look for it;

Does the Snow Child fetch the glove?

YES

Sadly due to the freezing conditions, the snow child dies ...

NO

She meant to gallop off and leave her there but the Count said: “I’ll buy you new gloves.” At that, the furs sprang off the Countess’s shoulders and twined round the naked girl.

Then the Countess threw her diamond brooch through the ice of a frozen pond: “Dive in and fetch it for me,” she said;

Does the Snow Child fetch the diamond?

YES

NO

she thought the girl would drown. But the Count said: “Is she a fish to swim in such cold weather?” Then her boots leapt off the Countess’s feet and on to the girl’s legs.

Now the Countess was bare as a bone and the girl furred and booted; the Count felt sorry for his wife. They came to a bush of roses, all in flower. “Pick me one,” said the Countess to the girl.

Does the Snow Child pick a rose?

NO

YES

“I can’t deny you that,” said the Count.

So the girl picks a rose; pricks her finger on the thorn; bleeds; screams; falls.

Then the girl began to melt. Soon there was nothing left of her but a feather a bird might have dropped; a blood stain, like the trace of a fox’s kill on the snow; and the rose she had pulled off the bush.

Now the Countess was bare as a bone and the girl furred, she was left in the cold. To the girls surprise a handsome and kind stranger came by and rescued her from the cold. She was eternally grateful to this stranger, so she gave him the diamond the countess left, The stranger loved her and they lived a long happy future together.

Now the Countess was bare as a bone and the girl furred and booted, she was left in the cold so she walked and walked until she came across a small cottage. To the girls surprise their lived a handsome and kind stranger he offered her warmth from the cold. She was eternally grateful to this stranger, she loved him and they lived a long happy future together.