

Dopey

By Carole Gauntlett

I was four years old when I went to my first movie, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. It was no surprise to anyone when I asked for a Dopey Doll for Christmas. It was not a soft and pliable doll but made of pressed tin, the two pieces front and back tabbed together at the sides. I loved his grinning face and slept with him every night.

My friend Jean loved the games she and I played with Dopey. She'd asked a few times if she could borrow him to show him to her brother and sister but I'd always had a reason to say, "Sorry." One day I said "yes" because I wanted her to know how much I liked her. I went to bed that night feeling empty and regretful but I fell asleep.

I awoke in the middle of the night. It was a mistake! I never should have loaned it to her. I've got to get it back. I climbed out of bed and looked out the window at the moon shining on the snow. As quietly as I could, I dressed in my snowsuit and boots, crept to the front of the house and out the door. I ran the two blocks to Jean's house feeling safe only when I'd reached and climbed her front steps.

I rang the doorbell five or six times before Mrs. Roman answered in her robe. "I need to have my doll back, Mrs. Roman. I let Jean borrow it but I can't sleep without it." But Mrs. Roman just shook her head and shut the door, so I stumbled back home in tears, without my doll.

The whole world was angry at me and no one understood. My father made me tell Jean that she could keep the doll. She moved away not long after that.