

Review of 'Frozen' online, 'The Daily Telegraph'

Frozen, their 53rd [animated feature](#), is just squeezably lovely: another example, alongside [Tangled](#) and [The Princess and the Frog](#), of the kind of nostalgic yet forward-thinking storytelling that has become the studio's hallmark since John Lasseter's arrival from Pixar in the mid-2000s.

Frozen is based very loosely on the Hans Christian Andersen story The Snow Queen, which has been rewritten to focus on two royal sisters and given a punchy new title that was surely coined with Tangled and perhaps also the hit Broadway musical Wicked in mind.

The heroines are Elsa and Anna, heir and spare to the throne of Arendelle, a kingdom of towering mountains and frowning fjords. Elsa, the elder of the two, is a closeted sorceress who can summon snow and ice at will, and who is forced to flee the castle when her powers are revealed.

She is voiced by Idina Menzel, Wicked's original wicked witch, and gets her own big musical number called Let It Go, which is bursting with the same this-is-me sass as that show's signature tune, Defying Gravity. "Here I stand in the light of day / The cold never bothered me anyway," the last line runs: a beautiful shrug of self-acceptance. And when Menzel sings a shrug, it has an intensity that could make your ears and heart pop.

It falls to Anna, voiced by Kristen Bell, to gallop into the wilderness and retrieve her sister from frosty seclusion. The landscape she crosses has been drawn with such shivery beauty that you will swear you can see your breath: snow whirls around in bitter flurries and collects in plump drifts; frost blooms on iron like moss on bark. Anna is joined on her journey by a woodsman, a reindeer and a talking snowman called Olaf, who provide the expected comic relief — a song in which Olaf innocently longs for warmer weather is mischievously funny — but the sisters' relationship remains the film's core.

Is that quietly revolutionary, or boldly feminist, or just a well-told story being true to itself? Elsa and Anna are Disney princesses through and through, with dishy suitors and glamorous gowns, but in Frozen that's only part of the picture. Someday your prince may come, but you can do great things without one. Better snow, after all, than slush.