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Russia Censors Disney's First Openly Gay Character From 'Onward'

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"Onward," a fantasy-adventure that hits the big screens in Russia on March 5, introduces a cyclops police officer named Specter as the studios' first-self identified lesbian character. **Pixar Animation Studios**

Russian distributors appear to have censored Disney and Pixar's first LGBT character from their animated film "Onward," the Kinopoisk.ru movie website reported Wednesday.

"Onward," a fantasy-adventure that hits the big screens in Russia on March 5, introduces a cyclops police officer named Specter as the studios' first-self identified lesbian character. Officer Specter appears in one scene, where she casually mentions having a girlfriend.

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Viewers who watched "Onward" dubbed in Russian told Kinopoisk that the word "girlfriend" had been changed to the more neutral "partner" and avoids mentioning Specter's gender.

"Presumably, Disney's Russia branch tried to avoid unnecessary problems with the

anticipated project's release," the website wrote.

A Disney spokesperson in Russia declined to comment on Kinopoisk's queries.

This is at least the third known censorship of a gay scene from a foreign film in Russia since the country passed a controversial 2013 law banning "homosexual propaganda" to minors.

Last year, Russian distributors cut gay sex and kissing scenes from the Elton John biopic "Rocketman." Similarly, Russia's version of Marvel's "Avengers: Endgame" altered a gay character's description of a date to the less romantic "dinner."

Non-LGBT scenes have also faced tweaks before hitting Russian cinemas.

Sergei, a Russian villain in the 2019 animated film "The Secret Life of Pets 2," became a Frenchman named Serge in the film's Russian version.

Last year's superhero film "Hellboy" replaced the titular character's mention of Stalin with Hitler.

Russia has also canceled screenings of other movies, including "The Death of Stalin" and "Child 44," for their portrayal of sensitive subjects in the Soviet past.

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