

The Story of Rumpelstiltskin (abridged)

In a land, far from here, there lived an old miller and his young daughter.

One day the king and his men stopped by to collect taxes.

“I have little money, your majesty,” he stuttered, afraid. “But my daughter can spin straw into gold,” the old miller said without thinking.

“Really?” the king questioned. “Bring her to my palace tomorrow and I will put her to the test.”

When she arrived, the king took her to a room filled with yellow straw, a spindle and wheel.

“Spin this straw into gold before sunrise. If you fail, you and your father will be sorry” the king stated.

The girl turned to the heaps of straw before her and, having no idea how to spin straw into gold, began to cry.

Suddenly, the girl heard the door creak open slowly. At first, she only saw a large nose. Then suddenly, in danced a strange little man, humming a funny tune.

“Gooooood evening, he said. “Why are you crying?”

“I – I have been ordered to spin this straw into gold by sunrise!” she sobbed. “A – and I don’t know how.”

“Hmm...” He kicked at the straw. “I know how to spin straw into gold...” “What will you give me if I spin this straw for you?” he asked slyly.

“Oh! I will give you my necklace! Take it! Take it!” she replied.

The odd little man took the necklace, grabbed a handful of straw, and sat down at the spinning wheel. *Swoosh, swoosh, swoooooosh* – went the wheel. Soon the room was entirely filled with gorgeous gold thread.

Then, humming his funny tune, the odd little man pranced out of the room, swinging the girl’s necklace from side to side.

When the king returned, he was amazed. So he took the beautiful girl into a larger room filled with yellow straw.

“If you can spin this into gold, I will have you as my queen,” the king said.

The girl looked around the room, shocked at the sight of more than twice the yellow straw than there had been in the previous room. Without time to cry, she heard the door creak open, and the little man appeared.

“What will you give me if I spin this straw into gold?” the man asked, without greeting

the girl.

“I have nothing left to give you,” she cried.

“Hmm...” the funny little man pondered this for a while. He walked back and forth across the room, kicking bits of straw in his way. “I know!” “If I spin this straw into gold, promise me your first born child when you are queen.”

Without thinking, the girl so promised and room filled with gold.

The king and the miller’s daughter were married immediately. Later that year, the new queen had a beautiful baby boy.

But one day while she was rocking her baby to sleep, she was shocked to hear the door creak open followed by a large familiar nose peering behind.

The little man pranced into the room and said, “Now give me what you promised, my queen.”

The queen sobbed terribly and, because the little man felt sorry for her, he offered, with an odd grin: “I will give you three days. If you can figure out what my name is by the end of the third day, I will let you keep your child,.”

The queen collected names from the servants in the castle. She sent out messengers to scour the kingdom for more names. Her list grew and grew.

When the little man came again, the queen recited more names: “Skinnyribs? Muttonchop? Or – Or! Perhaps it is Spindleshanks?”

But no matter how many names she gave him, the little man replied, “No, that is not my name.” Finally, a messenger returned with news. He found a strange little man dancing and prancing around a large fire in the forbidden woods. Her servant began to sing a song that had a very familiar tune. “And though she's queen - How I will glean, her only child as I'd foreseen. For she will never ever claim, that Rumpelstiltskin is my name!”

The queen recognized the tune! Moments later the little man bounced into her room.

“Well, my queen. What is my name?” he asked with a sly grin on his face.

“Hmm...” the queen pondered convincingly, walking back and forth across her room.

“You said it wasn’t Bill or Will... Could it be Phil?” she asked.

“No. That is not my name,” he replied, tapping his foot impatiently.

“Hmm... Could it be, by chance, Rumpelstiltskin?”

“Impossible! No fair! No fair!” the little man screeched angrily, stamping his foot hard on the ground.

He scurried around the queen’s room in a fit of rage. He smashed into walls; he thumped his foot; and he bumped his head. And then, so blind with anger, the strange little man jumped right out of the queen’s window. He was never ever ever seen again. The End.