

The Brothers

Grimm

Rumpelstiltskin



Once Upon a Time

There was a miller who was very poor but had a beautiful daughter.



One day he happened to be talking to the king and, to puff himself up, he said, “My daughter can spin straw into gold.”



The king said to the miller, “That sounds fascinating! If your daughter is as clever as you say, bring her to the palace tomorrow and we’ll see what she can do.”



When the girl was brought to him he took her into a room full of straw, gave her a spinning wheel and said, “Off you go then! I’m sure you’ll have spun all this straw into gold by tomorrow morning. But if you haven’t, you must die.”



He locked her in the room and left her there alone. The poor girl sat there, and for the life of her she didn't know what to do. She hadn't the first idea how to spin straw into gold. She was so terrified she began to cry.



All at once the door opened and in stepped a little man.
“Good evening,” he said. “Why are you crying so?”

“Oh,” she said, “I’m supposed to spin straw into gold and I don’t know how.”



“What will you give me if I spin it for you?”



“My
necklace,”
said the girl.



The little man took the necklace, sat down at the wheel and whirr, whirr, whirr, three turns and the reel was full. Then he put on another and whirr, whirr, whirr, three turns and the second reel was full.



All night he worked and in the morning all the straw was spun and all the reels were full of gold.

The king came first thing in the morning and when he saw the reels of gold he was delighted.




His heart swelled with greed. He took the miller's daughter to a large room filled with twice as much straw than before and told her to spin this too into gold if she valued her life.



She didn't know what to do and she was crying, when the door opened and the little man appeared. He said, "What will you give me if I spin this straw into gold for you?"



A cartoon illustration of a hand holding a glowing ring. The hand is rendered in a simple, stylized manner with black outlines and a light skin tone. The ring is a simple gold band with a large, brilliant-cut diamond. The ring is surrounded by numerous bright, multi-pointed starburst effects, suggesting it is magical or highly valuable. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly a wall or a floor, with a window visible in the upper right corner. The overall style is reminiscent of a children's book illustration.

“The ring from
my finger,”
said the girl.

The little man took the ring, sat down at the wheel and by morning he had spun all the straw into glittering gold.



The king was full of joy at the sight; but still he didn't have enough gold.



He took the girl to a still larger room filled with three times as much straw as before and said, "You must spin this into gold tonight. If you succeed, you shall be my wife." He said to himself, She may only be a miller's daughter, but I couldn't find a richer wife in the whole world.



When the girl was alone, the little man came in for the third time and said, “What will you give me if I spin in the straw into gold for you this time?”

“I have nothing left to give,” said the girl.



“Then promise me, if you should ever become queen, to give me your first child.”

Who knows what life will bring? Thought the girl. She had no choice but to promise the little man what he wanted, and for that he spun the straw into gold.



When the king came in the morning and found all as he wished, he married her and the miller's pretty daughter became a queen.



A year later, she brought a beautiful baby into the world. She had forgotten all about the little man.



But suddenly he came into her room and said, “Now give me what you promised.” The queen was horror-struck. She offered him all the riches in the kingdom if he would let her keep the child.

But the little man said, “A living soul is more precious to me than all the treasures in the world.”



The queen wept so bitterly that the little man
took pity on her ...



“I will give you three days’ grace. If, in that time, you can find out my name, you may keep the child.”



The queen tossed and turned all night, thinking of every name she had ever heard of and she sent a message across the country to ask what other names there might be.



When the little man came next day, she began with Caspar, Melchoir and Balthazar and reeled off every name she knew ...



... but to every
one the little man
said, "That is not
my name."



On the second day she sent the messenger back out to ask for names.



When the little man returned she tried all the unusual ones on the little man. “Is your name Sparerib, or Sheepshank, or Laceleg?”

But he always answered no.



On the third day the messenger told her, “As I walked at the edge of the forest, where the fox and the hare bid each other good night, I came to the foot of a mountain. There I saw a little hut and outside the hut a fire was blazing.



A funny little man was hopping around the fire,
singing,

Today I brew, tomorrow bake,
And after that the child I'll take.

I'm the winner of the game,
Rumpelstiltskin is my name."



The queen was so glad to hear that!



Soon the little man arrived. He said, "Now, Your Majesty, what is my name?"

"Is it Tom?"

"No."

"Is it Dick?"

"No."

"Is it Harry?"

"No."

"Could it be ... Rumpelstiltskin?"





“The devil told you that,” the little man screamed. “The devil told you that!”



He was so angry that he stamped his right foot so deep into the ground that his whole leg went in. Then in his rage he pulled his left foot so hard that he tore himself in two.

So the queen kept her baby and loved it all the more because she had so nearly lost it.





THINK

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