



RUMPELSTILTSKIN

CAST

NARRATOR	<i>All-Knowing Voice</i>
MILLER	<i>Poor Miller</i>
GIRL	<i>Miller's Daughter</i>
KING	<i>Ruler of the Kingdom</i>
RAVEN	<i>Pet of the Queen</i>
RUMPELSTILTSKIN	<i>Little Man, Big Name</i>

NARRATOR: Once upon a time, there was a miller who was very poor.

MILLER: So I'm a miller, huh? What's that? I mean, what do I do for a living?

NARRATOR: You mill! It means to grind things.

MILLER: So what do I mill?

NARRATOR: Grain...corn...whatever.

MILLER: All right. I'm a miller. But I'm poor? I don't like that!

NARRATOR: Well, you *do* have a beautiful daughter.

MILLER: So what? I don't have any money!

NARRATOR: *(sigh)* Let's just continue. Now it happened that this *poor* miller, who had a beautiful daughter, happened to see the king of the realm one day.

MILLER: Oh great. Here comes the king. He's got loads of money, and I'm a penniless miller—whatever that is!

KING: Is that you, miller?

MILLER: Apparently so. How are you, your majesty?

KING: I am excellent! I have just received a new shipment of rubies from the Far East.

MILLER: Hmmmm.

KING: How are you?

MILLER: Fine. Fine.

KING: Life must be horrible for you *poor* people.

MILLER: Actually, it's quite wonderful! I'm deliriously happy! *(crazy laughter)*

KING: Why? What could you possibly have to be happy about?

MILLER: I *do* have a beautiful daughter.

KING: So? How does that increase your happiness?

MILLER: Well, uh...she is a special girl. She can...

KING: Yes?

MILLER: Why she can spin straw into gold!

KING: What? You can't be serious!

MILLER: I am. I just figured it out this morning. I came home, and there she was at the spinning wheel, spinning straw into gold!

NARRATOR: This news troubled the king. If the miller's daughter could crank precious gold out of worthless straw, then this meant the miller would soon be wealthier than the king.

KING: This sounds like a great skill! Why don't you bring here around to the castle tomorrow?

MILLER: Why, your majesty?

KING: I want to see this miracle for myself.

MILLER: Well, she might be busy...

KING: No one is too busy to meet with the king! Now make it happen! Or else!

NARRATOR: Since the miller could not argue with the king, he agreed to bring his beautiful daughter to court the next day.

GIRL: Father, why do you look so sad?

MILLER: I made a dumb promise today, daughter. I said that you could spin straw into gold!

GIRL: Spin straw into gold? I can't even cook! *(pause)* Oh well. There's no harm in a little lie.

MILLER: Well...the person I told was the king, and he wants you to come to his castle tomorrow and spin some straw into gold.

GIRL: *(shocked)* Father! I won't! I can't!

MILLER: You'll have to! I just pray he's merciful on you when he finds out that you've lied to him.

GIRL: Me? *You're* the one who told the lie in the first place!

MILLER: Details. Details.

NARRATOR: The next day the miller and his daughter went to the king's castle.

KING: All right. Let's see it. Spin some straw into gold.

MILLER: Well, your majesty. She's very shy. She can't do it right here out in the open—with everyone watching.

GIRL: *(under her breath)* I can't do it anywhere.

KING: Fine then. I'll lock her in our nice private dungeon. And then she can do her spinning down there!

GIRL: *(in shock)* Father!

KING: And if she hasn't spun straw into gold by morning, both of you will lose your lives!

MILLER: (*crying out*) Have mercy!

KING: All right! All right! I will only kill the girl!

MILLER: Fair enough! So long, dear! Good luck!

GIRL: Father! I can't believe this!

NARRATOR: So the princess was placed in the dungeon with a spinning wheel and a crate full of straw.

GIRL: This is impossible! Tomorrow I'm going to die—unless some strange, unexpected thing happens...

NARRATOR: Just then there was a knock at the dungeon door. (*knocking sound*)

GIRL: Huh? Who could that be?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: (*muffled*) Hellooo? Hellooo? May I come in?

GIRL: (*confused*) Sure, I guess.

NARRATOR: The dungeon door, which had been locked, swung open, and a strange and unexpected visitor entered. He was a little man with a funny hat and funny shoes.

GIRL: Oh my! Who are you?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Ah! Ah! Ah! Nice try. You cannot know my name. If you knew my name, my magic would leave me!

GIRL: Then you're magical!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Of course! Apart from magical creatures, who else wears funny hats and funny shoes?

GIRL: (*thinking*) Ummm. Old people?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: I will agree to use my magical powers to help you.

GIRL: You'll help me escape from the dungeon?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: No, I'll spin all this straw into gold for you.

GIRL: Why wouldn't you just help me escape from the dungeon?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Listen! Do you want my help or not?

GIRL: Fine. Fine. What must I do in return?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: You must give me something.

GIRL: I have nothing. I'm the daughter of a poor miller—a miller who can't keep his big mouth shut.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: What's that around your neck?

GIRL: It's an old necklace my mother gave to me.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Sold! I'll take it!

GIRL: All right.

NARRATOR: The girl handed the little man her necklace.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Now sit back and watch the master at work!

NARRATOR: The little man seated himself at the spinning wheel and *whirr whirr whirr* spun all the straw into gold before the girl's very eyes.

GIRL: Who are you, strange little man?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: My name is—Oh! I see your trick! You can never know my name!

GIRL: I thank you for your help.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: And I thank you for the necklace. It quite complements my pointed hat. Now I must be off.

NARRATOR: The little man disappeared as quickly as he had come. In the morning the king came to the dungeon in person. He was shocked to see that all the straw had been spun into gold.

KING: This is amazing! I can't believe it!

GIRL: Yep. It's true. Can I go now?

KING: Of course not! If you've done this, you can spin *even* more straw into gold. I'll fill this dungeon will even more straw for you to spin tonight.

GIRL: But I can't—

KING: You will—or I will take your life!

NARRATOR: That night the miller's daughter found herself in the same position she had been in the night before.

GIRL: I can't believe this! Now I really am in trouble. There's no chance the same strange and unexpected thing could happen twice in a row.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Yoo-hoo! Yoo-hoo!
(*knocking sound*)

NARRATOR: The little man appeared through the dungeon door again.

GIRL: You're back! Are you going to help me escape this time?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: No! Don't you know how these stories work? I'm going to help you spin straw into gold again!

GIRL: That's not very smart! The king will just keep making me do this night after night!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Do you want my help again or not? Try finding someone else who can spin straw into gold—and at this late hour.

GIRL: Yes, but I have nothing else to give you. Unless you'd take this old ring my mother left to me.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: I will and I shall. Give it to me.

NARRATOR: Once again the little man seated himself at the spinning wheel and *whirr whirr whirr* spun all the straw into gold before the girl's very eyes.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: All this spinning wears me out, but at least I have this nice, shiny ring to show for it! It perfectly complements my pointed shoes! Now I must go before the king comes.

GIRL: (*slyly*) Why rush off so quickly?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Ha! Nice try! If he figured out that it was *me* doing all this, he would lock me in the dungeon instead! Farewell!

NARRATOR: The next morning, the king arrived and was even more astonished at what the girl had apparently accomplished.

KING: Amazing! Tonight I will pack this room with straw, and then I will have even more gold than any other king in the world.

GIRL: You know, king. I didn't actually do this.

KING: You didn't? Then who did?

GIRL: Well, a strange and unexpected little man came here...and uh...

KING: A strange little man? And what was his name?

GIRL: He can't tell me his name.

KING: Convenient. I'm sorry, my girl. I must have more gold, and you're going to be the one who spins it for me!

NARRATOR: That night the girl found herself in the same old situation—a room full of straw and no way to spin it.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: (*singing a song to himself*) Hello! Hello!

NARRATOR: Just as usual, the little man appeared.

GIRL: (*crying*) It's no use! I have to spin all this straw into gold, and I know you'll do it

for me, but I have absolutely nothing else I can give you!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: No more shiny trinkets?

GIRL: None.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Hmm. Well, I can't spin straw into gold without something. This isn't charity, you know!

GIRL: I have this old handkerchief.

NARRATOR: The girl pulled a wadded handkerchief from her pocket.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Yuck. Keep that! (*pause*) I have an idea. I will help you tonight, but you must make me a promise. If you ever happen to become queen—you must give me your firstborn child.

GIRL: What? What are you going to do with a baby?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: That's my business!

GIRL: I'm not giving you my baby!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Please! It's so hard for us strange little men to make friends! I could raise him to be my friend! Besides what are the odds that you'll ever become queen?

GIRL: True. That would be quite strange and unexpected.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: So you'll agree?

GIRL: I have no other choice.

NARRATOR: The little man danced for joy and once again seated himself at the spinning wheel. *Whirr whirr whirr* he spun all the straw into gold before the girl's very eyes.

GIRL: Oh thank you! Thank you! (*slyly*) You know, you've done so much for me, and I don't even know your name. I would think we would be on a first-name basis by now. What should I call you?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Well, my name is— Ahhh! Wait a minute! This is a trick! Nice try, sweetie! There's no way you're getting my name out of me!

GIRL: Why? What's in a name?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: What's in name? What's in a name? Everything's in a name. If you knew my name, it would undo all my power—all my work!

GIRL: That makes no sense.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: I know. It's strange and unexpected. Let's just say that I prefer to remain anonymous.

GIRL: Fine, Mr. Anonymous. Thank you for this.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Farewell!

NARRATOR: The next morning the king found the room once again filled with gold. He had already decided that if the girl spun straw into gold this third time, he was going to marry her. After all, he wanted to keep a talent like that in the family.

KING: My girl! This is amazing! Because of this third great deed, I am going to make you my queen. I know it's strange—

GIRL: And unexpected!

KING: Will you be my queen?

GIRL: What alternative do I have? If I say "no," I'll be locked in this dungeon forever.

KING: I'll take that as a "yes."

NARRATOR: So the miller's daughter became the queen of all the land, and she did at last find happiness. Unfortunately, for the king, once they were married, the girl no longer continued to spin straw into gold. But he had fallen madly in love, so this was no problem.

Over time, the new queen forgot all about the little man who had somehow become the author of all her happiness. That is until the day that the king and queen were blessed with a newborn baby prince.

GIRL: Look at my darling baby boy!

KING: Yes! He is the greatest sight I have ever seen!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Me, too!

GIRL: Ah!

NARRATOR: There was a popping sound (*popping sound*), and a little man appeared in their midst.

GIRL: Hmm. Why does this little man look familiar?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Remember me? Remember what you promised me? I'm here to collect!

GIRL: You can't be serious. I'm not giving you my baby. That's creepy—even for a fairy tale.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: You promised! You promised! If you break your promise, I will curse you all! (*evil laughter*)

KING: Who is this little man?

GIRL: Oh, I almost forgot. Allow me to introduce my husband, the king.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: (*politely*) Oh. Where are my manners? Pleased to meet you. My name is—Ahhh! I see what you're trying to do! You'll never get my name from me!

GIRL: And you'll never get my baby!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Well, fine. We'll play a little game. A guessing game. If you can guess my name, I won't place a curse on this entire kingdom.

GIRL: Guess your name? Is that it?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Yes that's it! Good luck! I have the strangest name known to man!

GIRL: Reginald?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: No.

GIRL: Millhouse?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: No!

GIRL: Throckmorton?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: I will be back in three days, and if you can't tell me my name, you will be cursed—forever! (*evil laughter*)

NARRATOR: Once the little man was gone, the queen called for her tame raven, her pet that her husband had given her as a wedding present.

RAVEN: Awk!

GIRL: Raven, I must find out the name of the strange little man who was just here. Can you help me?

RAVEN: Awk! I will try, your majesty! Awk!

GIRL: Hurry, my pet. The entire kingdom is at stake!

NARRATOR: The raven flew all throughout the kingdom, searching for the little man, and came at last to a deep forest. He rested upon a tree branch to catch his breath, and when he did, he heard a far-off voice. The little man appeared, dancing through the forest.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Lah-dee-dee. Lah-dee-dee. (*chanting*) Foolish girl, you think you can guess my name? Only a fool would agree to play my game. And you will lose it all the same! For it's a word no tongue can tame! Rumpelstiltskin is my name!

RAVEN: Awk. Rumpelstiltskin! Thank you!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Get out of here, you stupid bird!

NARRATOR: The bird flew back to the queen and reported what he had heard.

Three days later when the little man appeared before the king and queen, he was sure that he had won. Who in a million, trillion years would ever guess the name Rumpelstiltskin?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Hello, chumps! Ready to guess my name?

GIRL: Of course.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: You can have as many guesses as you like, but you will *never*, ever guess my name. For it is a name that is—

GIRL: (*interrupting*) Rumpelstiltskin!

NARRATOR: The little man couldn't believe it. He was so flabbergasted and gasterflabbed that they had guessed his name.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: (*gasping for breath*) How—strange—and—unexpected!

NARRATOR: The little man ranted and raved all about the throne room, pulling his hair and stomping his pointed feet.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: No! No! No, it can't be!

NARRATOR: He ranted so hard that he turned red, then blue, then purple. Then at last he grew so angry that he evaporated into a little puff of smoke (*poof*) and was never heard from again.

Now, what lesson can be learned from this story?

MILLER: Ummm...Don't tell lies about your daughter?

KING: (*grumbling*) Don't marry a woman for her spinning abilities!

GIRL: Don't promise someone your first-born child!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Don't let your temper cause you to explode!

RAVEN: Awk. Don't name your children dumb names like Rumpelstiltskin!

NARRATOR: Very good. Now how should it all end?

ALL: And they lived happily ever after.

PLAY INFORMATION

Play Length: Around 15 minutes

Grade Level: 6th-12th

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