

Rumpelstiltskin

Play Adaptation

**Joy
Prince**

**Father
Rumpelstiltskin**

King

**Narrator
Servant**

Area A of the stage is downstage left (DL). It is just an open space. Area B is upstage right (UR). A chair and a makeshift spinning wheel are the only props.

NARRATOR: You guessed it: Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a Father who had a beautiful daughter. She had long flowing hair, sparkling eyes and was a joy to behold. That's why he named her Joy. Get it, because she was a joy to behold.

Joy comes skipping across the stage and stops off to one side.

NARRATOR: Now, the father was so proud of his daughter that, one day, he went to see the king.

Father and King enter as if walking through a garden. They stop in the center of Area A.

FATHER: Your highness, I am a humble miller, but please listen to what I have to say.

KING: I am a busy man. Quickly, tell me why you bother me so.

FATHER: It is my daughter. Her name is Joy and she is a beauty beyond that of the sun or the sky.

KING: I am surrounded by beautiful women. Is there nothing more she can do?

Father thinks for a minute.

FATHER: Well, she can spin gold out of ordinary straw.

KING: Gold out of straw! You must be kidding. It's not possible.

FATHER: Oh, but it is possible. I assure you your majesty. My Joy can spin gold out of ordinary straw.

KING: I must meet her. Bring your daughter to the palace tomorrow at dawn.

Father exits. The King exits in the opposite direction.

*The Narrator brings out a sign: **THE NEXT MORNING.***

NARRATOR: Joy was not very happy with what her father told the king.

Father and Joy enter.

JOY: Father, how could you say such a thing?

FATHER: Trust me, Joy. Trust me.

JOY: But Father, I am frightened.

FATHER: It will be all right my daughter. I promise.

JOY: How can it be all right? You know I can't even spin wool into cloth, let alone straw into gold.

FATHER: Don't worry, my child, you will not even go near a spinning wheel. The king will get one look at you, see how beautiful you are and forget all about the straw. He will be so taken with your beauty that he will want to marry you.

The king enters. Joy and Father bow then rise.

KING: So this is the one.

FATHER: Your Highness, permit me to introduce my lovely daughter, Joy.

Joy curtsies. The king takes her arm.

KING: Buster.

His servant enters and bows.

SERVANT: Yes, sire.

KING: Take this girl to the tower and make sure she has plenty of straw.

JOY: Father!

FATHER: (whisper) It will be all right. Trust me.

Servant takes Joy by the arm and leads her to Area B away. The King exits with Father.

SERVANT: All right, girly, his Majesty, the King, wants all this straw spun to gold.

JOY: But...

SERVANT: By morning!

Servant exits. Joy puts her head in her lap and begins to cry.

JOY: How can I spin all this straw into gold when I can hardly spin at all.

Rumpelstiltskin pops in the doorway and startles Joy.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Don't cry, little one.

JOY: Who are you?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Who I am is not important. It's what I can do that's important.

JOY: Why? What can you do?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: I can help you.

JOY: The only way you can help is if you know how to spin straw into gold and I believe that is impossible.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: It is not only possible. It is my specialty.

JOY: If you can do it, I will give you my necklace.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Done.

Joy hands Rumpelstiltskin her necklace. He bites it. He looks pleased as he puts it in his pocket. He sits down and spins. (Count to ten silently) Rumpelstiltskin jumps up.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: All finished!

JOY: I don't know what to say. Thank you so, so much.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Glad to be of service.

Rumpelstiltskin leaves. Joy curls up on the floor.

JOY: I am so tired.

Joy sleeps. After a while, the King enters.

KING: This is wonderful!

Joy sits up.

KING: You truly are a joy!

JOY: Thank you.

KING: Come with me.

Joy gets up and goes with the king. They circle the stage and come back to area B.

KING: Let's see you do it again, my dear.

JOY: You highness, I am so very tired. Please...

KING: I will be back in the morning. Don't fail me.

The King exits. Joy sits in the chair, puts her head in her lap and begins to cry.

JOY: This is impossible. There is so much straw.

Rumpelstiltskin appears again.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: What will you give me if I help you again?

Joy is startled again.

JOY: You've got to stop scaring me like that.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Sorry. So, what will you give me?

JOY: My ruby ring. I will give you my ruby ring.

Rumpelstiltskin pantomimes that he is spinning. Joy curls up and goes to sleep.

Narrator appears. Rumpelstiltskin exits and the King enters.

NARRATOR: The King was very pleased with the gold he thought Joy had spun. And, for the first time he noticed just how beautiful Joy was.

As Narrator speaks, the King wakes Joy. He leads her around then back to Area B.

NARRATOR: The King took Joy to yet *another* room. This time he told her that if she spun the gold he would marry her. But there was a catch. The king also told her that if she failed him she would have to die! The King locked Joy in the little room and went again. And, you guessed it. Joy started to cry and Rumpelstiltskin appeared again.

JOY: I have nothing left to give you. You already have my ring and my necklace.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: I will think of something. (Pause) Let me see. (Pause) I know. After you marry the king I want your firstborn child.

JOY: That is a terrible thing to ask. How can I promise you something like that?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Either make the promise or I won't spin the gold.

JOY: I guess I have no choice.

The Narrator comes running onto the stage.

NARRATOR: (yelling) Wait! Wait! Waaaiittt!

JOY and RUMPELSTILTSKIN: What?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: We're kind of in the middle of something here.

The Narrator pulls Joy aside.

NARRATOR: This is a bad idea.

JOY: I have no choice. If I fail, the King will not marry me and I will face death.

NARRATOR: One, why would you want to marry such an evil, greedy man? I mean, come on. He'd kill you for a little gold. Is this the kind of man you'd want to spend the rest of your life with?

JOY: You make a very good point.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Um, excuse me. Time is money.

NARRATOR: Easy sport. Be with you in a minute.

JOY: But if I fail, he'll kill me.

NARRATOR: Did I mention, I am an excellent lawyer. Trust me. It'll be fine.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Well?

JOY: I've made a decision.

NARRATOR: (whisper) Call him Rumpelstiltskin for fun.

JOY: I've made a decision, Rumpelstiltskin.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: (Angry) That is not how it goes! You're ruining the fairy tale.

JOY: Look little man! I will not promise you, or anyone else, my first born child. And I will not marry any man who will kill me if I don't spin some stupid straw into gold! King or no king.

NARRATOR: (smiles) You go girl!

JOY: (calling to off stage) Oh, king.

The King appears with Father. He sees the Narrator and Rumpelstiltskin.

KING: Is there a problem?

FATHER: I am sure there is no problem here, your Highness. Joy, we were just discussing your pending marriage.

JOY: Oh, there's a problem all right! (she approaches the King) I don't care who you are or what you rule over, you can't demand more gold and threaten to kill me if I don't produce.

FATHER: But Joy, he will marry you if you do.

The Father pulls Joy aside.

FATHER: I don't know how you did it before, but just do it again and we'll be set.

The Narrator steps forward and hands the King some papers that are in his pocket.

KING: Who are you and what is this?

NARRATOR: I'm her attorney. This is a subpoena. Joy is suing you for half of the gold plus damages.

Rumpelstiltskin pulls out a fairytale book.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN: This is not how the story goes. See. (He thrusts the book under the Narrator's nose) No refusal, no attorneys. You're ruining my big death scene.

NARRATOR: Sorry, Rump. This is a different world. King's can't just go around killing people anymore. Come on Joy.

JOY: See you in court, your Highness. Grab some gold Father and let's go home.

They all exit leaving the king looking bewildered.

KING: When did the world turn so crazy?

The king shakes his head and exits.