Rumpelstiltskin

In order to make himself appear more important, a [miller](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miller) lies to the king, telling him that his daughter can [spin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinning_%28textiles%29) straw into gold (Some versions make the miller's daughter [blonde](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blonde) and describe the "straw-into-gold" claim as a careless boast the miller makes about the way his daughter's straw-like blonde hair takes on a gold-like luster when sunshine strikes it). The king calls for the girl, shuts her in a tower room filled with straw and a [spinning wheel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinning_wheel), and demands that she spin the straw into gold by morning or he will [cut off her head](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decapitation)(other versions have the king threatening to lock her up in a dungeon forever). She has given up all hope until an [imp](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imp)-like creature appears in the room and spins the straw into gold for her in return for her necklace (since he only comes to people seeking a deal/trade). When the king takes the girl, on the next morning, to a larger room filled with straw to repeat the feat, the imp spins in return for the girl's ring. On the [third](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rule_of_three_%28writing%29) day, when the girl has been taken to an even larger room with straw and told by the king that he will marry her if she can fill this room with gold or kill her if she cannot, the girl has nothing left with which to pay the strange creature. He extracts from her a promise that her firstborn child will be given to him, and spins the room full of gold a final time.

The king keeps his promise to marry the miller's daughter. But when their first child is born, the imp returns to claim his payment: "Now give me what you promised." The now-queen offers him all the wealth she has if she may keep the child. The imp has no interest in her riches, but finally consents to give up his claim to the child if the queen is able to guess his name within three days. Her many guesses over the first two days fail, but before the final night, she wanders out into the woods searching for the imp and comes across his remote mountain cottage and watches, unseen, as the imp hops about his fire and sings. In his song's lyrics, "tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow, I'll go to the king's house, nobody knows my name, I'm called 'Rumpelstiltskin'", he reveals his name. Some versions have the imp limiting the number of daily guesses to three and hence the total number of guesses allowed to a maximum of nine.

When the imp comes to the queen on the third day and she, after first feigning ignorance, reveals his true name, Rumpelstiltskin, he loses his temper and his bargain. (Versions vary about whether he accuses the devil or witches of having revealed his name to the queen.) In the 1812 edition of the Brothers Grimm tales, Rumpelstiltskin then "ran away angrily, and never came back". The ending was revised in a final 1857 edition to a more gruesome ending wherein Rumpelstiltskin "in his rage drove his right foot so far into the ground that it sank in up to his waist; then in a passion he seized the left foot with both hands and tore himself in two". Other versions have Rumpelstiltskin driving his right foot so far into the ground that he creates a chasm and falls into it, never to be seen again. In the oral version originally collected by the brothers Grimm, Rumpelstiltskin flies out of the window on a cooking ladle.

# Rapunzel

A lonely couple, who want a child, live next to a walled garden belonging to a [witch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witchcraft). The wife, experiencing the cravings associated with the arrival of her long-awaited pregnancy, notices a *[rapunzel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valerianella_locusta%22%20%5Co%20%22Valerianella%20locusta)* plant (or, in most versions[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapunzel%22%20%5Cl%20%22cite_note-8) of the story, [rampion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rampion%22%20%5Co%20%22Rampion)), growing in the garden and longs for it, desperate to the point of death. One night, her husband breaks into the garden to gather some for her; on a second night, as he scales the wall to return home, an evil witch named Dame Gothel catches him and accuses him of [theft](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theft). He begs for mercy, and she agrees to be lenient, on condition that the baby be given to her at birth. Desperate, he agrees. When the baby is born, Dame Gothel takes her to raise as her own and names her Rapunzel after the plant her mother craved. She grows up to be the most beautiful child in the world with long golden hair. When she reaches her twelfth year, Dame Gothel shuts her away in a tower in the middle of the woods, with neither stairs nor a door, and only one room and one window. When she visits her, she stands beneath the tower and calls out:

Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair, so that I may climb the golden stair.

Upon hearing these words, Rapunzel would wrap her long, [fair hair](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair_hair) around a hook beside the window, dropping it down to Dame Gothel, who would then climb up it to Rapunzel's tower room. (A variation on the story also has Dame Gothel imbued with the power of flight and/or levitation and Rapunzel unaware of her hair's length.)

One day, a [prince](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince) rides through the forest and hears Rapunzel singing from the tower. Entranced by her ethereal voice, he searches for her and discovers the tower, but is naturally unable to enter it. He returns often, listening to her beautiful singing, and one day sees Dame Gothel visit, and thus learns how to gain access to Rapunzel. When Dame Gothel leaves, he bids Rapunzel let her hair down. When she does so, he climbs up, makes her acquaintance, and eventually asks her to [marry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage) him. She agrees.

Together they plan a means of escape, wherein he will come each night (thus avoiding the Dame Gothel who visits her by day), and bring Rapunzel a piece of [silk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silk), which she will gradually weave into a [ladder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rope_ladder). Before the plan can come to fruition, however, she foolishly gives the prince away. In the first edition of [*Grimm's Fairy Tales*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grimm%27s_Fairy_Tales), she innocently says that her dress is getting tight around her waist (indicating [pregnancy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pregnancy)); in the second edition, she asks Dame Gothel (in a moment of forgetfulness) why it is easier for her to draw up the prince than her.[[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapunzel#cite_note-facts-9) In anger, she cuts off Rapunzel's hair and casts her out into the wilderness to fend for herself.

When the prince calls that night, Dame Gothel lets the severed hair down to haul him up. To his horror, he finds himself staring at her instead of Rapunzel, who is nowhere to be found. When she tells him in anger that he will never see Rapunzel again, he leaps from the tower in despair and is [blinded](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blindness) by the thorns below. In another version, she pushes him and he falls on the thorns, thus becoming blind.

For months, he wanders through the wastelands of the country and eventually comes to the wilderness where Rapunzel now lives with the twins she has given birth to, a boy and a girl. One day, as she sings, he hears her voice again, and they are reunited. When they fall into each other's arms, her tears immediately restore his sight. He leads her and their children to his kingdom, where they live happily ever after.

In some versions of the story, Rapunzel's hair magically grows back after the prince touches it.

In another version of the story, it ends with the revelation that Dame Gothel had untied Rapunzel's hair after the prince leapt from the tower, and it slipped from her hands and landed far below, leaving her trapped in the tower.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapunzel#cite_note-wbarker-1)