

Rumpelstiltzkin -- History of the Story



In 1812, the Grimm brothers' first volume of the *Grimm's Fairy Tales* was published. It was a simple book of 86 **folktales** in the German language. *Rumpelstiltzkin*, in a very plain version, was one of those 86.

The Grimm brothers published several editions of their collection of folktales. Each time, they made some changes to the stories. The final version of *Rumpelstiltzkin* was published 45 years after the first one. Most of our English versions are from this last one, published in 1857. Look at the History of Mythical Dwarves for more information.

The story of *Rumpelstiltzkin* is well-known in most of Europe, from Italy to Scandinavia to Spain. In all of the versions, its main parts are usually the same.

Mr. Cooper's version comes from the story he remembers hearing as a child in New Zealand, with a few added details.

For additional information:

<http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/rumpelstiltskin/history.html>

For example, the dwarf has been known as Trit-a-Trot in Ireland, Tom Tit Tot in Suffolk (England), Terrytop in Cornwall (England), and Whuppity Stoorie in Scotland. A book published in Amsterdam in 1708, titled *Tour tenebreuse et les jours lumineux, Contes Anglois tirez d'une ancienne chronique composee par Richard surnomme Coeur de Lion, Roy d'Angleterre* presents the dwarf, but his name is Ricdin-Ricdon.

The original German spelling of Rumpelstiltzkin is Rumpelstilzchen. You will also find it spelled Rumpelstiltskin in some English literature books.

By the time the Grimm brothers' second edition of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* was published in 1819, *Rumpelstilzkin* had undergone a major revision. Each following edition included more changes; the most important one being the introduction of the **spinning wheel** as an invention for turning straw into gold. In later versions, the queen discovers the dwarf's name through a messenger whom she herself sends forth to collect strange names, not through her husband's chance meeting with the little man as told in the early version. In fact, the Grimm brothers collected four versions of the story in their research which they combined into the *Rumpelstilzkin* that is best known in English speaking countries today.

Other tales found in literature include similar elements of name guessing, such as in "Titeliture" from Sweden, "How Ijapa the Tortoise Tricked the Hippopotamus" from Nigeria, "Oniroku" from Japan or the opera, "Turandot," which is set in China.

Still other tales from all over the world have similar **characteristics** as the tale of *Rumpelstilzkin*. They are listed below.

Dwarf Holzrührlein Bonneführlein (Germany)
Ferradiddledumday
The Giant, the Princess, and Peerie-Fool
Gilitrut
Gwarwyn-a-throt (Wales)
King Olav, Master Builder of Seljord Church
King Olav, Master Builder of Trondheim Cathedral
Kinkach Martinko (Yugoslavia)
Kruzimugeli (Austria)
The Lazy Wife
The Miller
Mistress Beautiful (Germany)
Nsgendymer
Peerie Fool (Orkney Islands)
Penelop (Wales)
Purzinigele (Austria)
Svein Unafraid
Titty Tod
Tom Tit Tot (England)
Tucker Pfeffercorn
Whuppity Stoorie (Scotland)
Winterkölbl (Hungary)