




Traditional
Tales

Rumpelstiltskin

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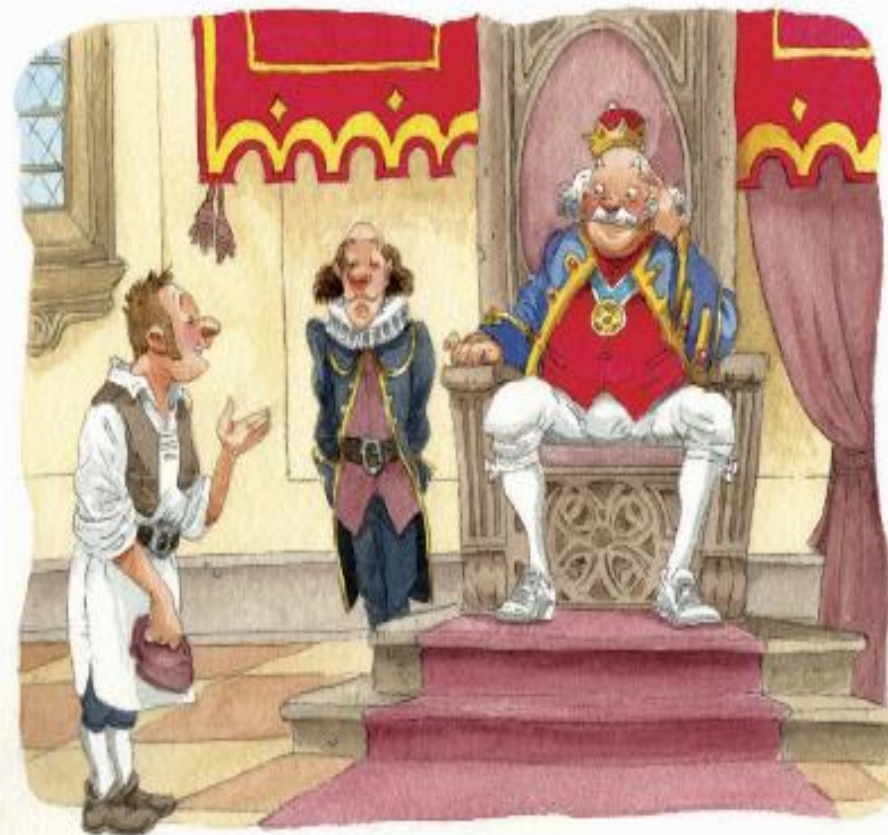
OXFORD

 In the far off times, there lived a poor miller and his daughter, Lily. Lily was kind and clever and good, but the miller was a show-off, who liked to tell tall tales.



Lily was in love with a prince, but was too poor to be his wife. So the miller went to the King and boasted about his daughter.

“She can spin straw into pure gold,” he said.



The King was delighted and summoned Lily to the castle. There, he took her to a turret and showed her a bale of straw.



"Spin it into gold by morning and you may marry my son," he said. Then he locked the door.



But, of course, Lily had no idea what to do, and stamped her foot crossly. At this sound, a goblin appeared.

"Give me your necklace and I will spin the straw into gold," he said.



Lily's necklace had belonged to her mother, so she did not want to give it away. Yet she did want to marry the Prince, so she agreed. The goblin was as good as his word and spun the straw into reels of gold.



The King was pleased, but he was also greedy. He took Lily to another turret with two bales of straw. "Spin it into gold by morning and you may marry my son," he said. Then he locked the door.

Again Lily stamped her foot, and again the goblin appeared.

"Give me your ring and I will spin the straw into gold for you," he said.



Lily gave him the ring and the goblin spun the straw into reels of gold.

The King smiled when he saw the gold, but it made him greedier still.



He took Lily to another turret with three bales of straw.
"Spin it into gold by morning and you may marry my son," he said. Then he locked the door.

Again Lily stamped her foot and again the goblin appeared.

"I have nothing left to give you," she said.
"But I need your help."



So the goblin thought, and replied, "Give me your first child and I will spin the straw into gold."



Lily, who did not much care for babies, agreed and the goblin spun the straw into reels of gold. This time, the King kept his word and Lily married the Prince.

The years passed, and in her happiness, Lily forgot that she did not much care for babies. She and the Prince had a little boy. They called him Tom.



Lily also forgot her promise to the goblin. But the goblin did not forget. On Tom's first birthday, he came to the castle and said, "Give me your baby."



Lily could not bear to be parted from Tom, and offered the goblin gold instead. But the goblin said Tom was the only treasure he wanted.

But, as I have told you, Lily was a clever girl.
“If I can guess your name, will you let me keep Tom?” she said.
“I will give you three days,” said the goblin. “But you will not win. The child will be mine.”

Lily set to work. On the first day she wrote down all the boys' names she had heard of. When the goblin came that evening, she said, "Is your name Adam?"

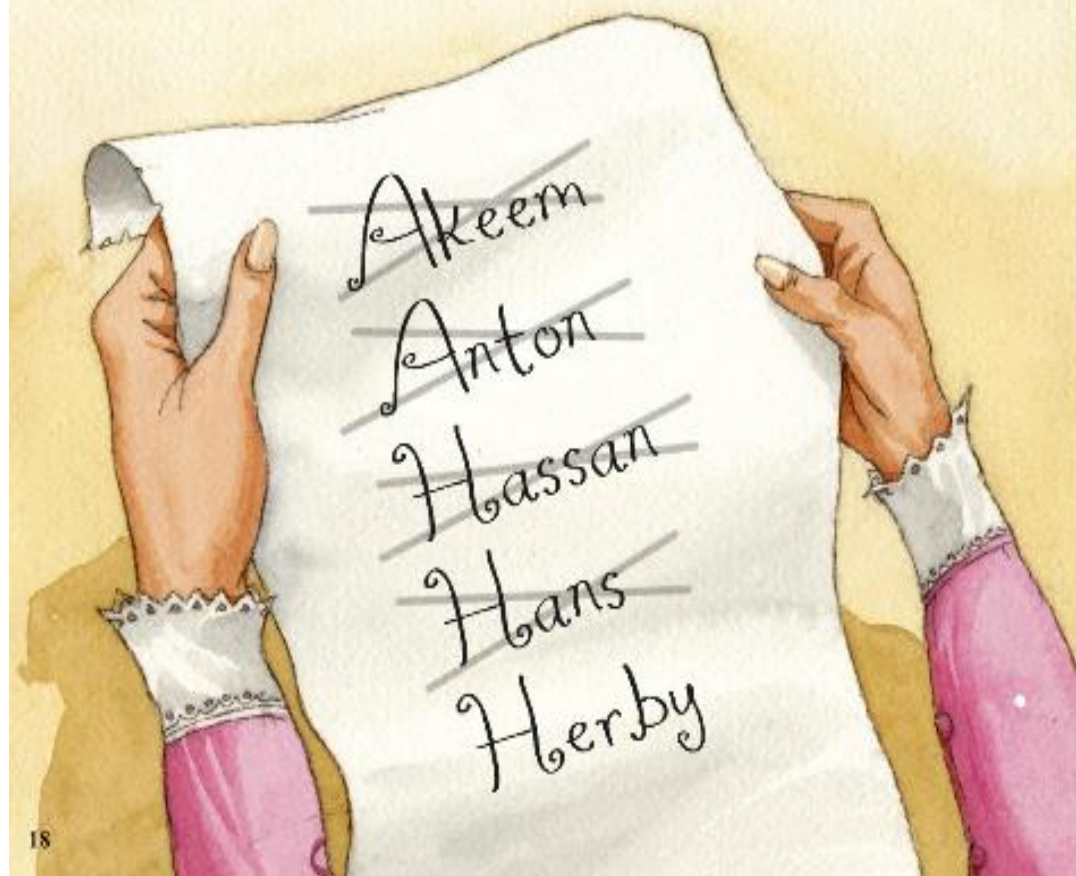
"No," smiled the goblin. "That is not my name."



"Is it Ahmed?" asked Lily.

"No," smiled the goblin. "That is not my name."

Lily tried Akeem and Anton and Hassan and Hans. Each time the goblin said the same thing.
“No, that is not my name.”



On the second day Lily went to the castle library, and wrote down all the boys' names she hadn't heard of.

When the goblin came that evening, she said,
"Is your name Achilles?"
"No," smiled the goblin. "That is not my name."

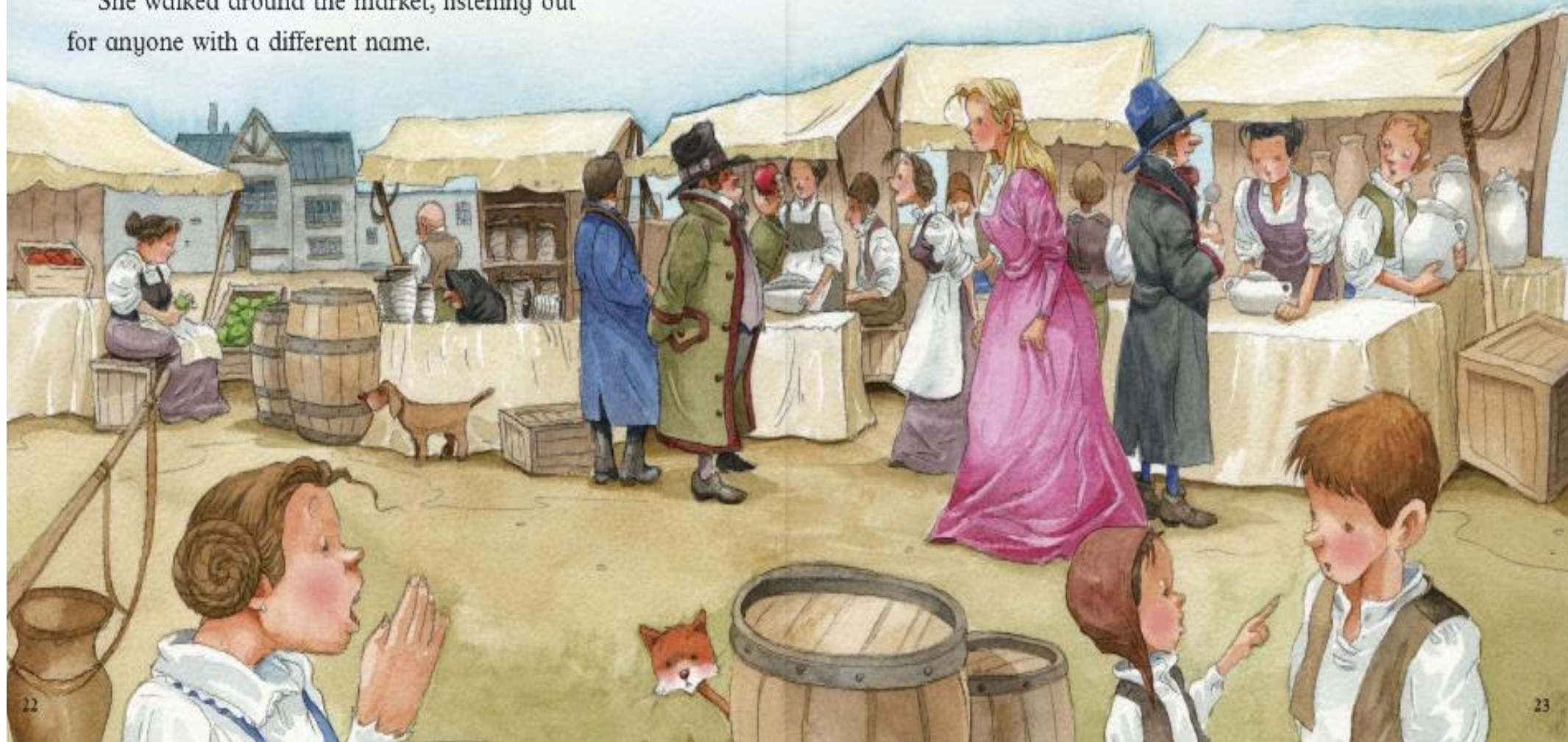
Lily tried Careem and Caspar, and Santos and
Solomon. Each time the goblin said the same thing.
"No, that is not my name."



On the third day Lily had run out of ideas.
So she went for a long walk into town.

She walked around the market, listening out
for anyone with a different name.

The only names she found in the market were ones
she had already tried, like James, Jack and Jonas.



Lily had almost given up hope when she saw a market stall selling reels of thread. A little man was singing to himself as he stacked them in neat piles.

He sang:

*"My name's not John,
My name's not Jim,
My name is Rumpelstiltskin."*

Lily smiled, because she could see that the little man was the very same goblin who wanted to take Tom away.



When the goblin came that evening, she pretended not to know.

"Is your name Gumboot?" she said.

"No," smiled the goblin. "That is not my name."



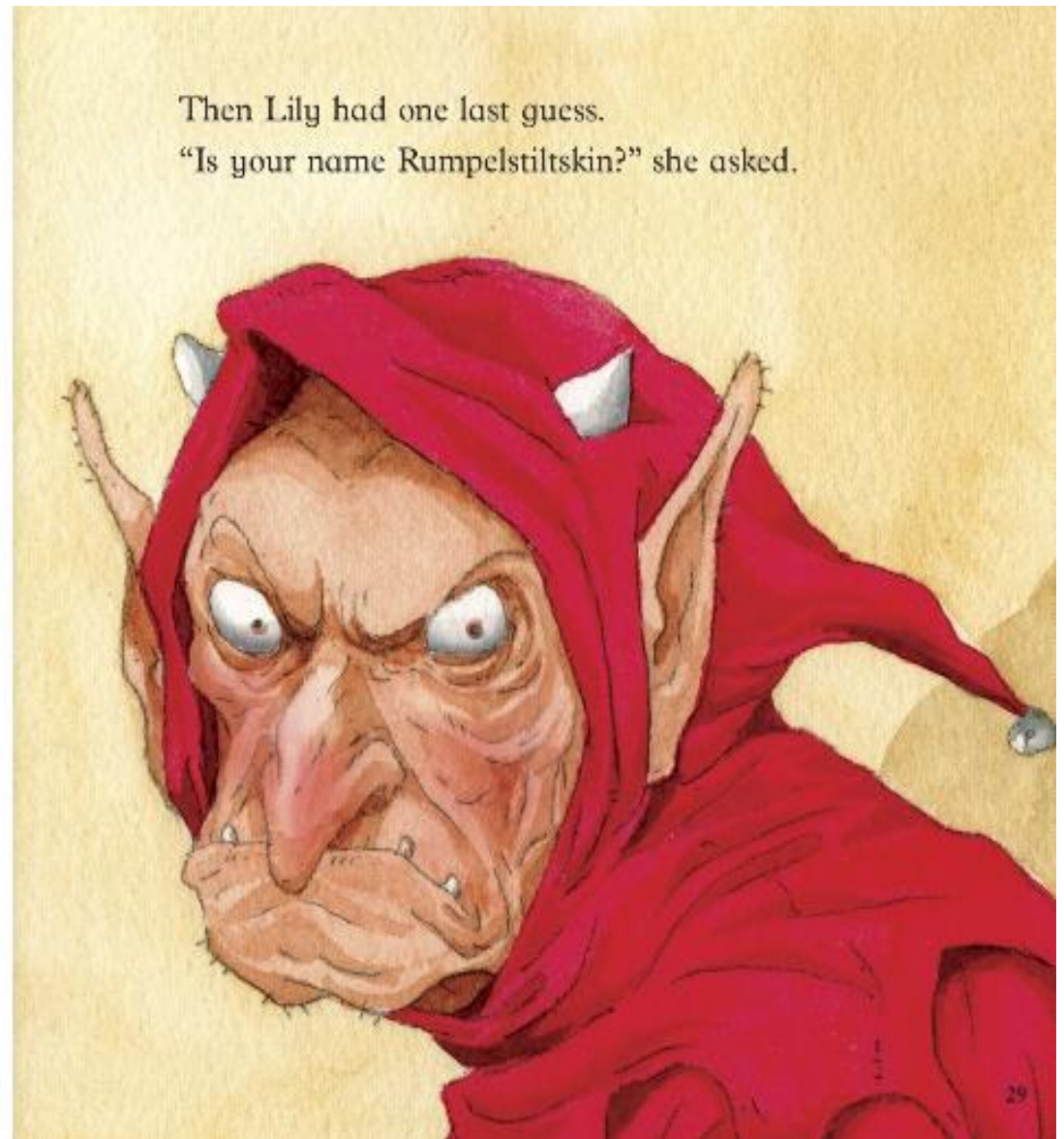
"Is it Marmalade?" asked Lily.

"No," smiled the goblin. "That is not my name."

Lily tried Slurp and Squelch, and Mutton and Tintin. But each time the goblin said the same thing.
“No, that is not my name.”



Then Lily had one last guess.
“Is your name Rumpelstiltskin?” she asked.



The goblin stamped his foot so hard it went through the floor. He pulled with all his might but he was stuck fast.



Lily offered to help him, as long as he vanished forever.

The angry goblin disappeared.
Tom stayed in the castle with Lily and
the Prince, and for all I know, they
are living there still.

