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Dramatic Publishing

Rumpelstiltskin

**Adapted by
Moses Goldberg**

**Muic and lyrics by
Lisa Palas**

Rumpelstiltskin

First performed by Stage One: The Louisville Children's Theatre.

Musical. Adapted by Moses Goldberg. Music and lyrics by Lisa Pallas. Based on the story by the Brothers Grimm. Cast: 3m., 3w. A group of strolling players prepares to perform one of the best-loved fairy tales. After the prologue—which delightfully introduces young audiences to the conventions of the stage—they enact the story of the bragging baker, his patient daughter, and her attempt to spin straw into gold for the greedy queen so she may marry the shy prince. An evil dwarf provides the gold—but at a terrible price of the royal pair's first-born child. Aided by a witty mime, and with some help from the audience, the comic Rumpelstiltskin is thwarted, and a lesson is learned by all. This musical version of the popular fairy tale is interpreted especially for younger children from ages 4 to 6 years old. It is a work of humor and honesty by one of the American master playwrights of participation theatre. Simple set. May be performed in the round. Approximate running time: 55 minutes. Code: RA7.

ISBN-13 978-0-87602-269-6



Rumpelstiltskin



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Rumpelstiltskin

A participation play by
MOSES GOLDBERG

With music and lyrics by
LISA PALAS



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(RUMPELSTILTSKIN)

ISBN: 978-0-87602-269-6

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First Performed at STAGE ONE:
The Louisville Children's Theatre,
in February, 1982, by the following
artists—

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| RUMPELSTILTSKIN (Marcello) | Tom Schreier |
| BAKER (Cosmo) | Christian A. Kauffman |
| DAUGHTER (Patience) | Linda Parsons |
| QUEEN (Alexandra) | Christine Adaire |
| PRINCE (Percy) | Curt L. Tofteland |
| MIME (Soni) | Madelyn Buzzard |

RUMPELSTILTSKIN

By Moses Goldberg

The Prologue

(When the audience arrives, they find a large square laid out with ribbons, with aisles in the four corners. 16' x 16' is a good size. In one corner is the large trunk containing props and costume pieces. In the center are three nesting boxes, which will become the set. 16", 18", and 20" are plenty large enough. The company of actors are seating the kids, and interacting among themselves. They form a diverse group, with strong loyalties, but constant minor conflicts as well. Once the audience is settled, and some rapport has been established, COSMO maneuvers PATIENCE into the center and makes her stand on the box.)

ALL (except PATIENCE): Happy Birthday to you.
Happy Birthday to you.
Happy Birthday, dear Patience.
Happy Birthday to you.

ALEXANDRA (QUEEN): Happy Birthday, Patience. In honor of your birthday, the company has a special treat. We've decided to let you choose which play we'll do today.

PATIENCE (DAUGHTER): I get to choose!

ALEXANDRA: Yes. Pick your favorite one.

PATIENCE: Let's do one that has a lot of magic in it.

MARCELLO (RUMPELSTILTSKIN): A good idea. What about *The Tempest*?

PATIENCE: No! Let's do *Rumplestiltskin*, all right?

COSMO (BAKER): Great! And I'll play Rumpelstiltskin!

PATIENCE: Father, I think you're a little tall for Rumpelstiltskin. Why don't you play the Baker?

COSMO: Hmm. The Baker? Cosmo, the Baker. Okay, and this can be my oven. *(sets up the littlest box on the middle-sized one as an oven, and slides it into one of the corners during the following.)*

PATIENCE: And I can play your daughter. And Alexandra, will you be the Queen?

ALEXANDRA: Queen Alexandra, how perfect.

PATIENCE: Oh, and Percival, would you please be the Prince?

PERCY *(PRINCE)*: Okay.

PATIENCE: And Marcello, you must be Rumpelstiltskin.

MARCELLO: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Don't you think I'm a little too tall for Rumpelstiltskin?

PATIENCE: But, Marcello, the role needs a great actor. And you are a great actor, aren't you?

MARCELLO: Well, since you put it that way. *(all exit but MARCELLO and MIME)*. Well, I certainly can't do it dressed like this. Soni, will you see if there's a hat or something in there that I could wear? Something dwarfy? *(Soni, the MIME, goes to the trunk and digs around. All of her responses are, of course, in sign language, or some form of silent gesturing)*. That might work. *(She hands him a very ugly hat and cloak. He puts it on.)* What do you think? Pretty disgusting! I think it'll be just fine. Let me see if I can do some dwarfy movements, okay? Let me see. Dwarfs are short. . . and they like to scare people. *(scares Soni and laughs. He practices rolling around on the floor for a while and he gets himself knotted up and seems stuck.)* Oh, oh. My back! Soni, I think I'm stuck. Pull, no, no, push! Right there. That's not it, do something! *(She kicks him vigorously and he comes unstuck)*. Thanks a lot.

MIME: *(I'm sad.)*

MARCELLO: Soni, I'm not angry. What's wrong?

MIME: *(You are very ugly.)*

MARCELLO: I am ugly Rumpelstiltskin? Thank you.

MIME: (*Alexandra is the Queen.*)

MARCELLO: Alexandra is the Queen. Yes. That's right.

MIME: (*I am nothing.*)

MARCELLO: And you are . . . nothing. You didn't get a part? (*MIME is very depressed.*) Well, wait a minute. You helped me with my costume. You could help everyone with their props, how's that? (*She shrugs*) What? Isn't that enough? You want a bigger part? Well, you could be all the other things we need in the play.

MIME: (*I have an idea.*)

MARCELLO: You have an idea? (*She becomes a chair, and he sits on her.*) Of course, you could be a throne. . .for the King of the Dwarves! (*a horse*) Oh, or a horse. (*She bucks him off.*) That's great! Would you help me with my props, please? (*they exit together*)

PATIENCE: (*enters with her costume on, as COSMO does likewise*) Oh, hi, Father. Do I look like a Baker's daughter?

COSMO: Oh, you look beautiful, dear. How do I look? How's that apron huh?

PATIENCE: You look nice! Hmm. Maybe that hat should be fluffed up a bit? (*He pulls up his fluffy Baker's hat.*) That's better. (*pause*) You know, Father. I have to play the part of the Baker's daughter, and I'm having a little trouble with it.

COSMO: What's the matter?

PATIENCE: Well, you know in this play the daughter marries the Prince and they have a baby. But I don't know anything about babies.

COSMO: Oh, yeah.

PATIENCE: How do you hold one?

COSMO: I remember how I used to hold you. I used to take you by this foot, and then by this foot, and throw you up in the air. And then I'd catch you and put you under my arm just like that.

PATIENCE: Papa, that's not how you hold a baby! *(To AUDIENCE)* Is it? Can you show me how to hold a baby? *(NOTE: All of the audience participation in the show assumes that the actors sincerely need a solution to the problem, and honestly look the audience members in the eye, and ask for help. The script can only indicate a general pattern of lines, because this must be a highly improvisational moment; but the sequence is always the same: (1) Establish a need for help; (2) Make sure the audience knows what is being asked of them; (3) Give a signal to start (may not be necessary after the first time, in which case skip this step—nothing is worse than falling behind the audience's rate of play); (4) Reward individual and creative children; and (5) Resolve the problem and thank the helpers. Obviously, not all actors—even good ones—can lead these kind of spontaneous moments. But the success of the show requires that at least the actors playing PATIENCE and COSMO have these skills.)* Can all of you show me? Oh, that's good. See Papa. Now what do you do if the baby cries? Oh, yes. You give it a bottle. *(Or whatever)*. That's really good. Say, I've got an idea. If we need your help later on in the play, will all of you help us?

AUDIENCE: Yes. *(Wait for them)*

PATIENCE: Good, thanks.

ALEXANDRA: Places, places for the overture. *(COSMO is still playing with two imaginary babies.)*

COSMO: Cootchie, cootchie, cootchie, coo. . Wooja, wooja, wooja, woo!

ALEXANDRA: Cosmo! The overture.

COSMO: Oops, could somebody hold them? *(gives babies to two of the audience.)*

THE OVERTURE *(The cast plays the overture on an assortment of instruments.)*

Act One *(COSMO, the BAKER enters, proudly)*

COSMO: I've finally done it. It's taken me forty years, but I've finally done it. I have just baked the cookie of cookies—my Macadamia Macaroon. *(The MIME provides it, and all the other props in the show—much as an invisible Chinese Prop Man—as he holds out his*

hand.) Look! I bet you I'm the best baker in the whole kingdom.
I bet you I'm the best baker in the whole world. I'm a genius! (*sings*)

It's not that I like to brag,
That's just not my style.
But just one bite of my devil's food cake.
Would make an angel smile.
My father was a baker before me.
That shouldn't come as a shock.
He taught me every thing I know.
I guess I'm just a chocolate chip off the old block.

I'm a real tough cookie.
You should see me do my stuff.
Those who've seen me bake
Say I really take the cake.
You're not just dealing with some cream puff.
It's as easy as pi-ie,
To rise above the rest.
All I need's an hour
And some sugar, eggs, and flour,
And my batter's not just better,
It's the best.
It's the best.
I'm the best.
I'm the prince of popovers.
The big daddy cheesecake.

PATIENCE: (*enters, running*) Father, Father, oh, Father.

COSMO: Hello, Patience. (*kisses her*)

PATIENCE: Oh, Father, Guess what happened, I've just come from the Royal Fair, and. . .

COSMO: Oh, Patience. You're a mess! Straighten out your apron. And get your hair away from your face, and settle down. There, that's much better. You're such a pretty girl. You remind me a little bit of your dear departed mother.

PATIENCE: Do I really?

COSMO: Of course, you're not as pretty as she was. Oh well, what were you saying, Patience?

PATIENCE: Well, Father, I was down by the Royal Fair, and I stopped by the Bakery booth. And guess what?

COSMO: What?

PATIENCE: I won the baking contest.

COSMO: You did?

PATIENCE: Yes, Father. First Prize!

COSMO: First Prize. Gee, I've never won a prize. What was it for?

PATIENCE: Well, I made the recipe up my very own self. I used some of those macadamia nuts that you have and I called my recipe—Macadamia Macaroons! (*The MIME provides a plate of macaroons with a Blue Ribbon attached.*) Why, what is this?

COSMO: This? Oh, that's just a little dough ball. (*He hides his own macaroon.*)

PATIENCE: Father, I wonder if we could set these Macadamia Macaroons out on the counter; you know with the Blue Ribbon showing, so people would know these were the cookies that won first prize?

COSMO: That's a wonderful idea. . . But it'll never work. Who ever heard of a macadamia macaroon? Nobody's going to buy anything they never heard of.

PATIENCE: But, Father, I thought. . .

COSMO: Patience, have I been a Baker for forty years?

PATIENCE: Yes, Father.

COSMO: I think I know what I'm talking about, don't you?

PATIENCE: Yes, Father.

COSMO: Now take your cookies and put them away. (*she starts off sadly. Suddenly the MIME enters dressed as a COURT HERALD and blowing a fanfare on the kazoo.*) Oh, Patience, I think that's our first customer. Good morning, Sir. Can I interest you in a dozen chocolate doughnuts?

HERALD: (*No. I am the Royal Herald.*)

PATIENCE: Father, it's the Royal Herald.

COSMO: I know that, Patience.

HERALD: (*I bring you a message.*)

PATIENCE: He has a message, Father.

COSMO: Do you have a message for me?

HERALD: (*The Queen*)

COSMO: Hmm. . . the deer.

PATIENCE: (*As always, corrects him gently.*) The Queen.

HERALD: (*Is having a party.*)

COSMO: Aaaaah? Oh, the jumping deer!

HERALD: (*No. Is having a party.*)

PATIENCE: A party!

COSMO: Quiet, Patience. The jumping deer is making noise?

PATIENCE: The Queen is giving a party, and. . .

HERALD: (*Yes. The Queen. . .*)

COSMO: Yes. The deer—I've got that part.

PATIENCE: The Queen. . .

HERALD: (*Is on her way here, right now.*)

COSMO: Is rolling up paper towels?

PATIENCE: The Queen is giving a party, and the Queen is coming here,
now.

HERALD: (*Right*)

COSMO: I think I've got it. The jumping deer is making noise, and rolling up paper towels.

HERALD: *(No. You're crazy).*

COSMO: Well, same to you, fellow! *(HERALD exits)* Well, what kind of message is that? The jumping deer is making noise and rolling up paper towels?

PATIENCE: Father, I don't think. . .

COSMO: That's a waste of taxpayer's money.

PATIENCE: Father, I don't really think that was the message.

COSMO: Wait a minute. That wasn't the message at all. How silly of me. The Queen is giving a party, and she's coming here! That's what it is!

PATIENCE: Father, you're so clever.

COSMO: I know. But why should she give a party here?

PATIENCE: I don't know, Father. Maybe she's coming here for pastries for the party?

COSMO: Wait a minute. She's probably coming here to buy some goodies for the party.

PATIENCE: Yes, Father.

COSMO: Well, I'll get the goodies out. *(checks oven)* Oh, oh.

PATIENCE: What's the matter, Father?

COSMO: Patience, there are no goodies in here.

PATIENCE: Oh, Father, we haven't even baked yet this morning.

COSMO: We haven't?

PATIENCE: No!

COSMO: We don't have anything to show the Queen! I'm ruined.

PATIENCE: Oh, Father!

COSMO: Not a thing in the whole shop. I'm finished!

PATIENCE: Wait. Maybe they would help us? *(To AUDIENCE)* Listen, can all of you close your eyes and think of your favorite goodie in the bakery shop. Now, when I count to three, use your whole bodies and become your favorite goodie. Are you ready? One, two, three. Oh, look there's some! There's a doughnut. *(Or whatever. Both the BAKER and the DAUGHTER run around and reward three or four of the more creative ones. Then the QUEEN's fanfare is heard and she starts her entrance.)*

COSMO: The Queen. Quick, Patience, take those things in the kitchen. *(PATIENCE exits with her plate of macaroons, as the QUEEN enters.)*

QUEEN: Good morning, Baker. *(he bows)* Rise, Baker! *(he does)* Ha, ha, little bakery joke. Rise, Baker. Get it?

COSMO: Ha, ha.

QUEEN: Oh, look at these goodies. *(In some cases, they may have relaxed from being pastries, so she may have to say: "I thought you had some goodies for me to see?")*

COSMO: Would Your Majesry like to place an order? *(MIME brings his notepad)*

QUEEN: Oh, yes. What is this one? *(They circulate, she chooses interesting ones and he names them or asks the child.)*

COSMO: Uh. . . That's a raspberry cream cake.

QUEEN: Lovely. I'll take ten dozen of those, *(etc. etc., for the best three or four ideas)* Oh, my goodness, Baker. I can't decide. I'll take one dozen of every single goodie in your shop.

COSMO: Oh, that's wonderful, Your Majesry. *(At this point COSMO can indicate to the AUDIENCE to stop, or he may continue and let them stay as pastries until the PRINCE enters.)*

QUEEN: There's one problem, however, Baker. All these goodies do look delicious. But I was looking for something very special, something that no one has ever heard of before.

COSMO: Well, you've come to the right place, Your Majesty.

QUEEN: I certainly hope so.

COSMO: I've just developed a new cookie.

QUEEN: You have?

COSMO: It's called the Macadamia Macaroon.

QUEEN: Oh! Sounds scrumptious.

COSMO: Would you like to see it, Your Highness?

QUEEN: Yes. I would.

COSMO: Well, it just so happens I have one right here. *(He digs out his early sample.)*

QUEEN: Why, that looks absolutely disgusting. *(She throws it on the floor and it bounces. The BAKER catches it in dismay.)* Is this your idea of a joke, Baker?

COSMO: No, that is. . .

QUEEN: Well, I don't like jokes, Baker. You don't want to lose your head, do you?

COSMO: No, no. Uh. . .The real Macadamia Macaroons are in the kitchen.

QUEEN: I see. Well, what are we waiting for? After you.

COSMO: Of course, Your Majesty. *(he does not go.)*

QUEEN: Oh, really! *(She stalks out into the kitchen and he follows.)*

PERCY: *(Enters after a short pause)* Mother! You left me out in that hot carriage again. . . Gone. *(Looks around)* Well, I might as well eat some pastries. *(Or, if they have stopped, he can say: "I wonder if there is anything good to eat?" He nibbles on some of the audience)* Oh, that's enough; I'm full! Thanks.

PATIENCE: Oh, I can't believe he would do such a thing. *(She enters in tears.)*

PERCY: What's the matter?

PATIENCE: My Father! You won't believe what he did this time. Do you know that he. . .oh! Your Highness, I didn't see you come in.

PERCY: Why are you crying?

PATIENCE: My father! He took my Macadamia Macaroons and gave them to the queen and said they were his.

PERCY: But that's not fair.

PATIENCE: But he's always doing things like that to me. First he says I'm no good as a baker, then he takes my pastries and gives them to her.

PERCY: My mother does stuff like that to me, too.

PATIENCE: I spend hours cleaning up the shop and he still says it's a mess.

PERCY: My mother never likes the way I look.

PATIENCE: My dad says I look like my mother, then he says I'm not as pretty as she was.

PERCY: My mother's always saying how ordinary I am, then as soon as somebody else is in the room, she starts bragging and saying how special and wonderful I am.

PATIENCE: My father does the same thing to me.

PERCY: Gosh! Your father must be crazy if he doesn't think you're beautiful. . .I do.

PATIENCE: Well, you certainly don't look like you're just ordinary. I think you're vety special.

PERCY: Gee. I wish I had a friend like you around all the time.

PATIENCE: I wish I had a friend like you, too. *(she starts the song.)*
Sometimes I feel lonesome.

PERCY: Sometimes I do, too.
But if you'd be a friend to me,
I'd be a friend to you.