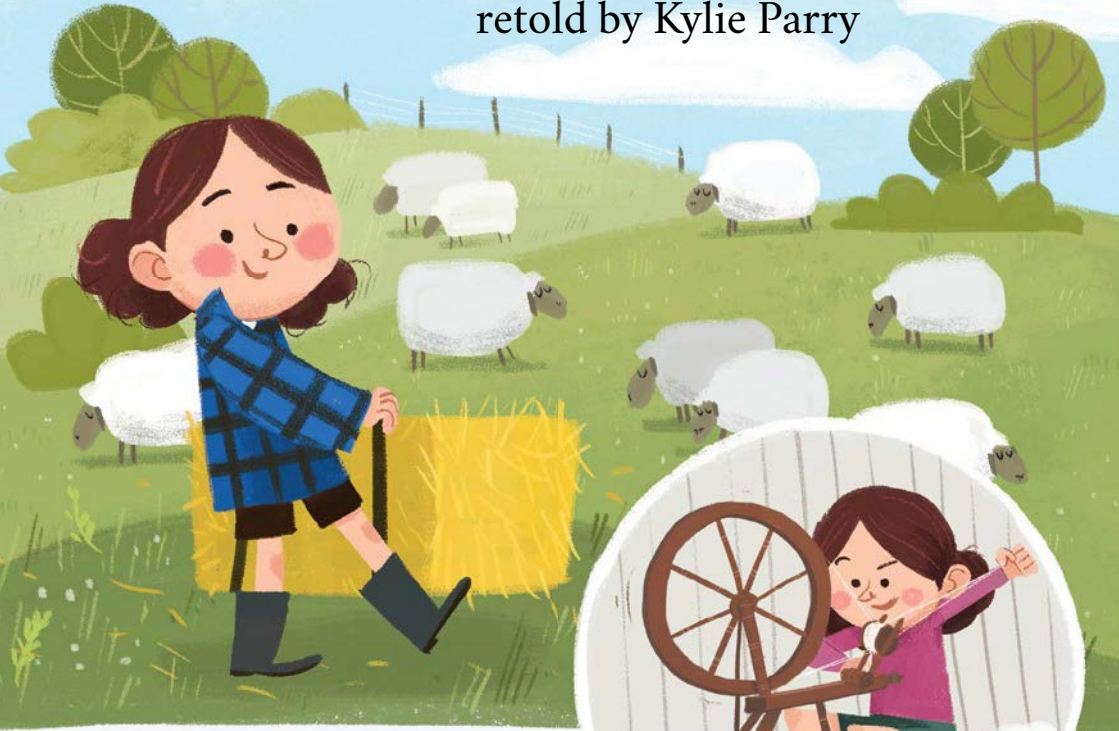


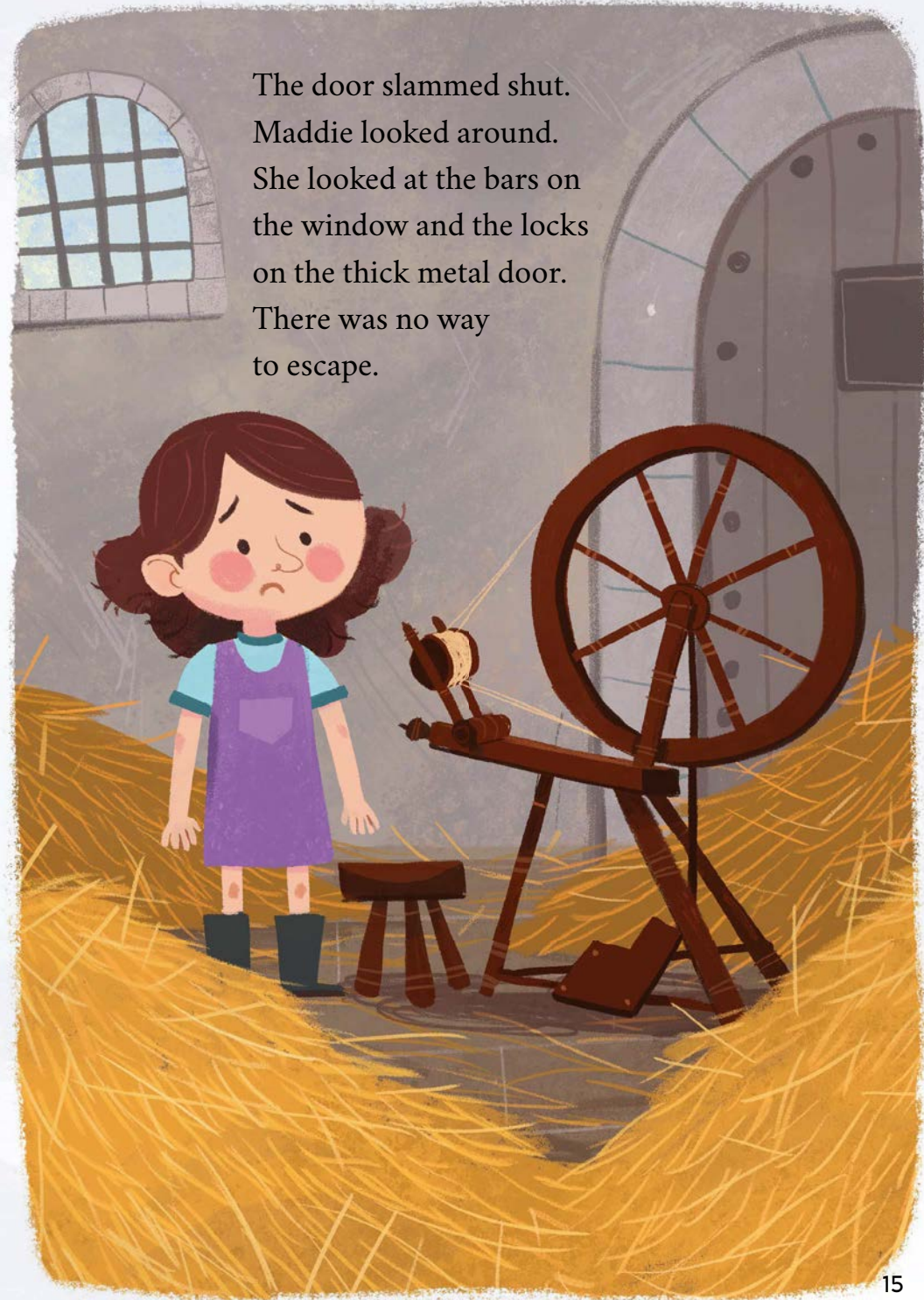
# Rumpelstiltskin

retold by Kylie Parry



Once upon a time, a girl called Maddie lived on a sheep farm with her father.

Every day Maddie helped her father with the sheep, and every evening she sat at her spinning wheel and spun their fleeces into wool. But one day, that spinning wheel got her into big trouble ...



The door slammed shut. Maddie looked around. She looked at the bars on the window and the locks on the thick metal door. There was no way to escape.

“This is all Dad’s fault”, she muttered. It had all started a few weeks before, when Maddie’s father had been talking with some other farmers.



“My daughter is the most beautiful in the land,” boasted one farmer.

“My daughter can sing like a bird,” said another.

“Well, my daughter can ... spin,” said Maddie’s father. The other farmers stared at him. Her dad couldn’t stop himself – he had to exaggerate. “I haven’t finished,” he continued. “My daughter can spin straw into gold!” The other farmers gasped with surprise.

The story spread far and wide, and it wasn’t long before the King heard about Maddie. He sent for her to come to his castle.

“Spin my straw into gold,” he ordered.

“And what if I don’t?” Maddie asked.

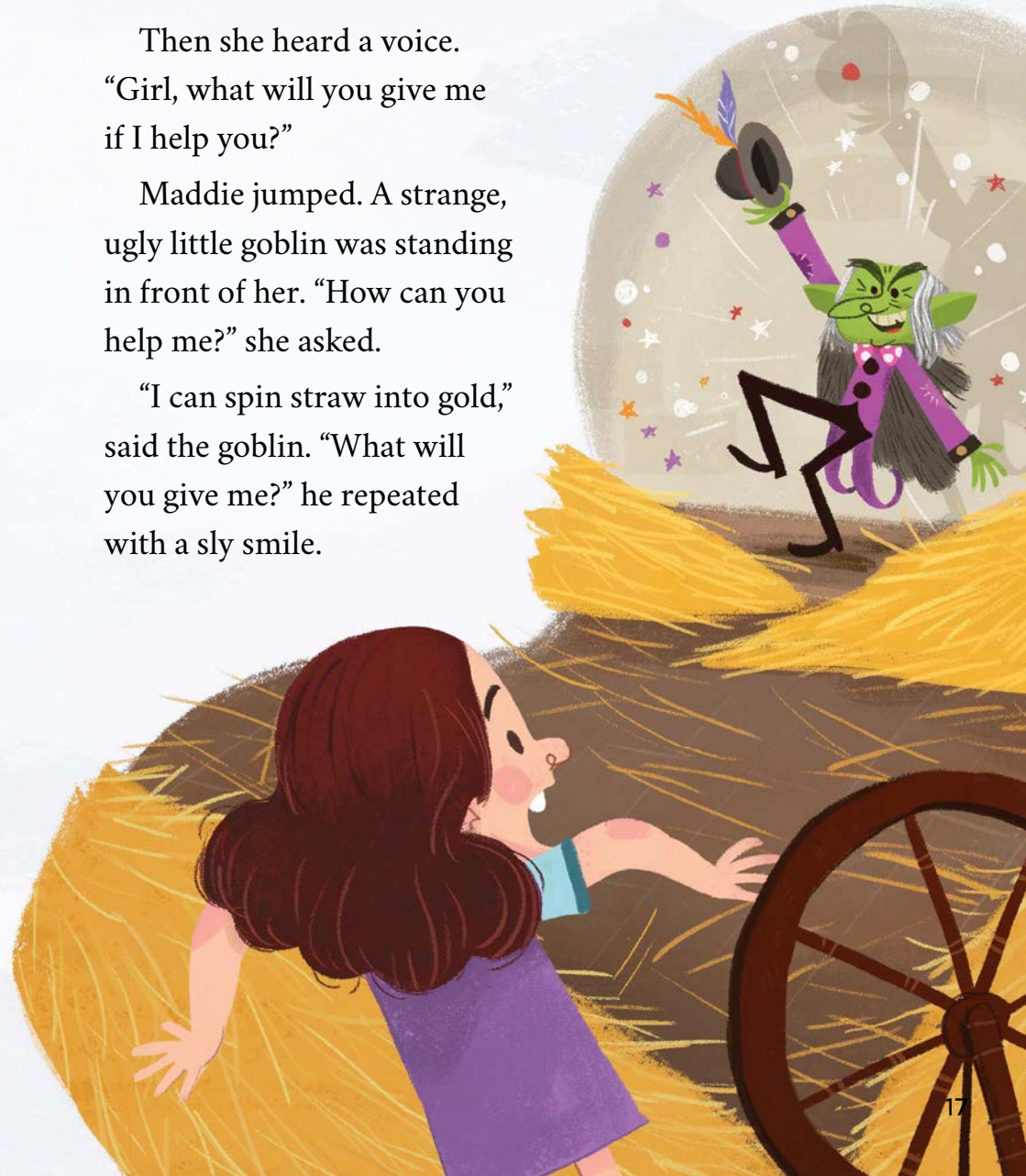


So now, here she was – shut in a room with a spinning wheel and a pile of straw. Maddie looked at the straw. There was no way she could spin it into gold. “What can I do?” she cried.

Then she heard a voice. “Girl, what will you give me if I help you?”

Maddie jumped. A strange, ugly little goblin was standing in front of her. “How can you help me?” she asked.

“I can spin straw into gold,” said the goblin. “What will you give me?” he repeated with a sly smile.



Maddie thought fast. What could she give him? She felt in her pockets. “I have these really cool sunglasses,” she said.

The goblin tried them on. “OK, it’s a deal,” he said.



He sat down at the spinning wheel and picked up a handful of straw. The wheel spun round quicker than the eye could see. In a flash, all the straw had gone – and in its place, there was a pile of shiny gold. The goblin stood up and bowed, then he disappeared.

The next morning, when the King saw the gold, he was very pleased. In fact, he was so pleased that he shut Maddie in a bigger room with more straw.

The next night, the strange goblin returned. “What will you give me this time if I help you?” he asked.

“Oh, no,” thought Maddie. “All I have left is my phone.” But there was no choice. She handed her phone over, and once again, the goblin spun the straw into gold.

The next morning, the King was overjoyed. In fact, he was so overjoyed that he locked Maddie in an even bigger room filled with even more straw.

“Last one,” he said cheerfully.

Again, the goblin appeared. “What will you give me this time if I help you?”

“I’ve got nothing left,” said Maddie in despair.

“You can give me a promise,” he said. “Promise me your first-born child, and I will help you,” the goblin said.



“That’s weird,” thought Maddie. She looked at the pile of straw and the bars on the window. She wasn’t planning to get married or have a baby ...

She made up her mind. “Sure,” she said. So once again, the goblin spun the straw into gold. The King was so happy (and rich) that at last he let Maddie go.

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The years passed quickly. Maddie grew up, and much to her surprise, she changed her mind about getting married. Life was good, and Maddie and her husband were very happy. Their happiness was complete when Maddie found out she was going to have a baby. She forgot all about her promise.

But a few days after the baby was born, the goblin suddenly appeared in front of her. "Here I am," he said. "Remember your promise."

Maddie turned pale. "You can't take my baby! What else can I give you?"

"Nothing," replied the goblin. "You promised me your child, and your child I will have."

"Please," cried Maddie. "I'll do anything."

The goblin thought for a moment. "All right," he said with a cunning smile. "If you can guess my name, you can keep your child."

"How much time can I have?" asked Maddie.

"Three days. I will come back three times. If you guess my name, the child is yours."

Maddie tried not to panic. She wrote down every name she knew. None of the names seemed right for such a strange creature, so she searched the internet.

The next night, the goblin appeared. Maddie looked at her list.

"Is your name Creepy McCreepy Face?" Maddie asked.

"No."

"Bandylegs? Cragglehop?" She read all the names on her list.

"No, no, no!" chortled the goblin. "You'll have to try again tomorrow," he said and disappeared.

Maddie was in despair. There had to be a better way to work out the goblin's name. She thought hard. At last, she worked out a plan. The next night, she put her plan into action.

"Is your name ... Slobbydosher?" she asked. The goblin began laughing so hard he didn't notice Maddie drop a GPS tracker into his pocket.

"How about Slugmaster? Bofflehopper?" She tried more names, but the goblin just kept on laughing.

"See you tomorrow night," he said as he disappeared.

Maddie ran to her computer. The GPS tracker was working! She followed the blue dot as it moved across the map. It went along the street, across the park, and stopped beside the river. "So that's where the goblin lives," she thought.



The next morning, Maddie crept down to the river and hid behind a bush. There was the goblin, dancing round a fire and singing.

*Ha, ha, ha, tee, hee, hee,  
Tonight my prize I'll claim.  
She'll never guess.  
How could she know  
That Rumpelstiltskin is my name?*



Maddie smiled. She went back to the farm and waited. The goblin arrived that night, grinning in triumph.

"Could your name be Groocher?" asked Maddie. "Is it Foodlewoodle?"

"You're nowhere near," chortled the goblin.

"OK, then. I think your name might be ... Rumpelstiltskin!"

The goblin stopped grinning. His face turned dark with anger. "How could you know that? You must have cheated!" He stamped his feet in rage. He stamped so hard he made a huge hole in the ground.

"Look out!" called Maddie, but it was too late. The goblin slid into the hole and was gone.

"Oops," said Maddie. "There goes my GPS tracker. Never mind."

And she went back to living happily ever after. As for the goblin – he was never seen again.



illustrations by  
Jez Tuya



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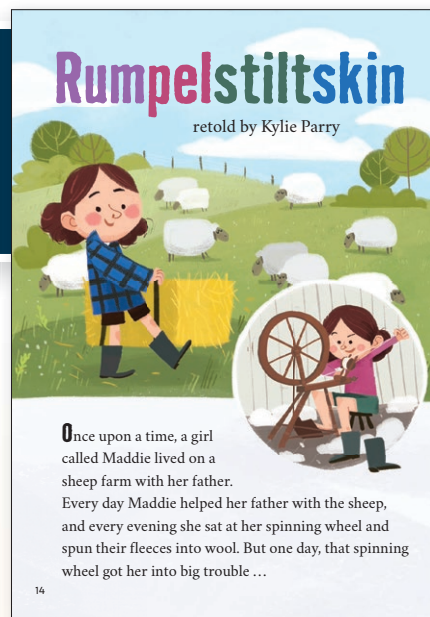
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