



Rumpelstiltskin's Child

Bonnie Ferrante

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What if Rumpelstiltskin had a bum rap? Sure, he tried to take the queen's baby, but a deal is a deal. Besides, he even gave her the opportunity to renege on their agreement. Plus, he never sought revenge, but allowed her to live happily ever after. Maybe there's a whole lot more to his story than people know. The elaborate illustrations are inspired by the illuminated manuscripts of medieval times. The reading level is third grade and up but younger children will enjoy hearing the dramatic, humorous, and touching story. A book for all ages.

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<http://bonnieferrante.ca/>

Rumpelstiltskin's Child Details

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From Reader Review Rumpelstiltskin's Child for online ebook

Vickie Raynor says

Wonderful story line that helped my grandson learn a valuable lesson followed by classic illustrations. The author took me back with a little twist. Great read.

Barbara Ann says

Bonnie Ferrante has taken the traditional fairy tale and presented it in a totally different perspective. In this version, the story begins with several analogies preceded by the words Even though.... The reader learns that appearances can be deceiving. Rumpelstiltskin, who is endearingly called Rumply, does have magic, but his mood is compared to being as unwanted as a bug in soup and lonely as the last button in the sewing box. All the villagers mock his physical traits. Only one thing could make him smile, that is looking at toddlers hugging each other. Everyone was afraid of him, they ran from him and called him Pickle. Rumply refuses to allow them to see his loneliness so he would stomp his foot and make himself disappear. But one day, he spies a little boy in trouble and races to his rescue. The villagers misinterpret his actions and chase after him so this time he vanishes for good.

Readers familiar with the traditional tale know that Rumply's special talent is to turn straw into gold. One day he encounters a young girl who has been imprisoned until she can turn a room filled with straw into gold. Rumply hears her pleas for help and does just that, but he demands her first born son as payment. Rumply does not want retribution; he wants a child to love. When the girl is able to guess his name within three days, she wins his challenge and he loses his chance at a family. After much time has elapsed, Rumply says he is "as lonely as the last tomato on a vine" so he reluctantly returns to his village. He is pleasantly surprised when he gets there. What has happened there to alter the situation and how will it change Rumply's life forever?

The author creates the feel of medieval times by using the theme of medieval illuminated manuscripts as a background and characters like bakers, cobblers, and candlestick makers. The bright images and carefully crafted language make the book appealing to children ages seven and up. I would recommend this book be placed on the bookshelves of parents, librarians and teachers. It promotes tolerance, kindness, and a balanced perspective. Another outstanding effort by Bonnie Ferrante.

Merged review:

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Philip J McQuillan says

Rumpelstiltskin's Child is a lovely story that could stand in for the Grimm's fairy tale version of Rumpelstiltskin quite well – in fact it is an improvement in many ways.

This book is meant to be read to children and also be read by children. I think it could benefit from larger font as children are accustomed to reading larger fonts. In the illustrations, Rumpelstiltskin transforms from a clean-shaven freckle faced young man of small stature into someone heavily bearded with no real explanation why and no textual reference. It simply happened in pictures. Some of the captions are not on the same page as the information they refer to; for example, the children hugging comes the page after we hear that the only thing that made Rumpelstiltskin smile was "when toddlers hugged"; perhaps a child won't mind this incongruity, I don't know. Furthermore, the hugging children seem to be consoling each other in grief rather than looking happy about hugging. I would have also liked more emphasis on the idea of children hugging. Repetition, while boring in adult reading material, is essential to a good story for children.

The above points may not distract nor detract from the story at all for children and might simply mean that I am far too old to be reading this story. I would still recommend the story and give it four stars based on it being a nice story with nice illustrations overall (my nitpicking aside) and for the positive messages contained within.

Sybrina Durant says

This book portrays the part of the fairy tale that many may wish had been written a long time ago. It paints the impish little man in a much more positive light than he was characterized in the short story written by the Brothers Grimm. Thankfully, in this new improved version, along with his magical skills, he is possessed of a much more peaceful personality. The Rumpelstiltskin who tore himself apart in a rage at the end of that old tale does not exist in this one.

Rumply, as he is known to the people in his village is a thoughtful and kind soul. Unfortunately, no one but the children are truly aware of this. The adults, in their greed for the gold that Rumpelstiltskin is able to

enrich their lives with through his spinning, treat him callously and are most unkind. With little hope for happiness there, the forsaken man leaves the village, heartbroken.

As in the original fairy tale, he meets a young woman who is doomed to die if she cannot turn a pile of straw into gold before morning. He spins the gold for her, requesting her first born child as payment. After the child is born and withheld from him, rather than stamping his feet and tearing himself apart, events conspire to send him back to the village where he grew up. Back there, his world so drastically changes that it will put a lump in your throat and joy in your heart.

Bonnie's use of bright colours and gold etchings and borders evoke the feel of elaborate fairy tale illustrations from the days of the original story. This is a great little story to read aloud and then to contemplate answers to questions like "How does exclusion change people" and "Why is forgiveness important". I'm all for books with positive messages and this one has plenty.

Jillian Watts says

Rumpelstiltskin's Child is a wonderfully imagined take on a redemption story, featuring a long held Grimm villain as a protagonist. It plays upon the question: what if dear old Rumpel wasn't such a bad guy to start off with? Given that, we see how nature vs. nurture plays a part, and how acknowledgment of a wrong can change even the most hardened of hearts. Evoking a sense of the medieval through both typography and illustrations, Rumpelstiltskin's Child will enthrall readers both new and old alike.
