

The Tale Of Brave Grinelda

by sean m. poole

Once upon a time in the days of old
There lived a poor tailor who- I am told-
Did brag that his daughter
Spun straw into gold!

When news of this feat
Reached the ears of the king
He dispatched some soldiers
With orders to bring the girl
Back to him
So that he might see for himself
If the tailor's offspring
Could really accomplish
This alchemy thing.

And so the poor girl to the castle was brought
And down in the dungeon was
Locked up with naught but
A great heap of straw and
An old spinning wheel
Then told by the king
That greedy old heel
To spin straw into gold
Ere he come back
Else she'd pay for her father's lies
Stretched on the rack!

If this were to happen
To you or to I

It's very likely
We'd sit down and cry.

But the tailor's brave daughter
Did no such thing
As if trapped in an opera
She started to sing.

"Oh my life is in an uproar
This is my darkest hour
Because of father's boasting
I'm locked up in a tower.

The king's a greedy man you see
And he is rather old
He's locked me in this room all night
To spin straw into gold!

The reason I'm so frantic is
My powers are a lie
If I don't change this straw to gold
I'll very likely die!

So now I sit here weeping
I sob and moan and cry!
I really am in trouble
I should be spinning now
I'd sell my soul to Satan
If only I knew how!"

Suddenly in front of her
Before her startled eyes
A silly little man appeared
Wearing a disguise!

“You're in a lot of trouble
That is plain to see
There's no one who can help you now
No one, that is, but me!”

So the girl and the elf they struck up a deal
She agreed to his price
He sat down at the wheel
Before morning's first light
O'er the threshold had crept
The girl woke to find
That the sprite had indeed
Spun gold while she slept!

“Well, well, well,” she said to herself
I really wasn't quite sure that the elf
Could do it... Know what I mean?
Though his cap cloak and shoes
Were all very green.
And everyone knows
That elves who spin straw into gold
Wear green clothes.
Still I didn't think to his word he'd be true
But he was.
Then he left
Without saying a thing
And surely this gold
Will delight the king
Who'll spare me my life
And let freedom ring!”

Of course you know
That wasn't the case
When the king saw that gold
All over the place

He rubbed his chinny-chin-chin
And said "My! My! My!"
Big Dollar signs appeared in his eye
He led young Grinelda

"That's my nom de plume!"

Down a deep dark steep stairway
To an underground room
And while locking the door
Repeated her doom:
"You'll spin straw into gold
Ere I come back
Else you'll pay for your Father's lies
Stretched on the rack."

Brave young Grinelda
Alone in the dark
Considered her future
It seemed awful stark
For the straw here was stacked
From ceiling to floor and
It looked like a whole lot more
Straw than before!
Courageous Grinelda trapped by the king
What else could she do?
She started to sing!

"Help! I need somebody
Help! Not just anybody
Help! You know I need someone
HELP!"

Then POOF!
That green elf he stood there a-grinnin'

After just a few bars of that old song by Lennon.

“You're right! I'm shameless and
It gets better from here
I steal from the best
I've got a good ear!”

“Hey, Mister Songburst!
While you're up there bragging
I'm stuck on this page and
The scene is dragging
So get back over here and act like the elf
Quit standing up there being full of yourself!”

“Yes dear I kinda got carried away
For the next several lines
As the elf I will say”:

“Ah sweet Grinelda! What have we here?
A roomful of straw and you my dear
Standing alone and singing so bold
I'll wager you want all this straw turned to gold?”

“Why how did you guess? You clever green man!
Now spin it! Now spin it as fast as you can!”

“Odds Bodkins my lady!
Forsooth! Take a chill!
When I name my price
I reckon that you will think twice
Ere a bargain we keep
You'll find that my fee
For the job
Is quite steep!
You might think it twisted

Consider it wild
But my services this time
Will cost you a child!"

"You sick little man
Just what do you mean
Give you a child?
That's perverse and obscene!"

"Best not to judge me, Grinelda my dear
Lest I go as I came and sneak out of here
And leave you alone in this dark, straw-filled room
To wait for the king and to ponder your doom!"

Just then to Grinelda the king's words came back
About how he'd stretch her out up on the rack
And that little scene got her thoughts back on track
So she called to the elf

"Yo! Hey you, Jack!
OK! It's a deal!
Hey come on back!
You want a child and I want to live
It seems such a very fair price I can
Give you for saving my life
If you know what I mean
For a roomful of gold I should be made Queen!"

And with those few words
Her first-born was sold
And the elf started spinning
The straw into gold!
Well you know what happened
How when the King saw the
Roomful of gold which

Once had been straw
He fell on his knees and
He begged, "Pretty please!"
For Grinelda to marry him
That very same day and
That little wench, she said
"Yes! Right Away!"

A year or so later
On a night warm and mild
Grinelda sat, feeding and
Rocking her child.
While to the infant
A song she did sing
The sound of her voice
To her chambers did bring
The little green man
All gnarly and bent
With singular purpose
And wicked intent...

"Ah Grinelda, my Queen
It really is you!
Your time to pay up
Is long since past due and
I've come to collect
All that which you did
Promise to me
In my hour of need.
Oh yes, you promised!
You know that you did!
So c'mon hurry up
Give me the kid!"

"You warped little munchkin

I've dreaded this day
When you would return
And I'd have to pay
But I've thought it over
Now I must say "Nay!"
Your cruel little game
I just will not play!"

"Oh, Grinelda my pet
You will play the game
We'll keep it simple
You just guess my name
And if you're able
With you the child stays
Those are my rules
I'll return in three days."

Then brave Grinelda
Really got busy
Collecting strange names
Put her all in a tizzy!

There's Shagrat and Wormwood and
Salvador Dali.
Just listen to this one
Bhutros- Bhutros Gali!
I've collected so many
Some vulgar, some cute
Why I found a fool
Who calls himself Newt!

So on the third day
The pre-arranged time

The little green man
Whose only real crime
Was helping a damsel
In her hour of need
Said, "Come, come Grinelda
Do not let greed spoil
Our friendship or interfere
With our game
Its time for you now
To start guessing my name!"

Then little Grinelda
Wrinkled her brow
"Oh all right then
Is your name
Deng Zheng Zhing Pao?"

"No no that's not it
My sweet girly-girl
Come on! Guess again!
Give it a whirl!"

Grinelda was cool, collected and calm
She wanted just the right moment to
Unload her bomb. So she said,
"It's a cinch that your name isn't Tom
Or Murgratroyd, Griswold or Absalom
Or Shazbat, or Bazbo or even just Pete!"

"Oh Grinelda, Grinelda
You're such a cheat!
Still you've used up your guesses
Far more than just three
So be a good girl
Give the baby to me!"

“Oh please good Sir Elf
Give to me just one more guess
To try to make you answer yes
To the question I ask
Regarding your name
If I get it wrong
It's all the same.
So please, sir, please sir
Answer “Yes”
Give to me just one more guess!”

“Alright, already
Grinelda my dear
Your pleas have not fallen
Into a deaf ear
I will say yes
You may guess
I'll give you but one
That's all you deserve
Though it beats me exactly
What point it will serve!”

“Is your name Rumpelstiltskin
You little green perv?
I know that it is
Don't bother to lie
I learned it last night
From my most trusted spy
The time of your banishment
Quickly draws nigh!
So leave now and hurry!
You simply must split
I'm sick of your game
And I'm sick of your

Shoes!
They're so green!
They're the ugliest green shoes
That I've ever seen!
And look at that cloak!
And that hideous hat!
Take them and go
Get out of here!
Skat!!!”

Rumplestiltskin just vanished!
Hell, wouldn't you?
With a foe like Grinelda
What else could he do?
He wanted a child
All he got was a shrew
That's the end of this tale
And I swear 'tis all true.

