

## The Steps Above

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Adapted by the short story: Rumpelstiltskin

The night was a cold and dark and I hated being left behind at school alone. It's the third time this week, and with all the jokes, I don't know if I can go much further. "God, can't anything go right?" Right at that moment, the smell of rain entered my nostrils. "This can't not be happening; I have to find shelter quick before it rains cats and dogs." With school being locked and all, there is nothing but the abandoned house up on the hill that I can seek refuge.

"I'm not going up there if it's the last place on Earth." Right then, the lightning and thunder lit up the sky and shook the air. My legs jolted, and in a fury I ran up the hill, to the abandoned creepy house I hesitantly went.

The lightning got more and more intense as I ran up the hill. Finally, as I got to the front porch and to the door, the sky opened up like a waterfall. "Whew, made it in the nick of time." The rain poured down hard and made it hard to see around. The wind blew up against the house, moving the shutters open and closed. I finally reach for the doorknob to the front door and just as I start to turn it, the door opens.

Walking into the house, I carefully step so as to not make a sound to disturb anyone or anything. I come up to an old piano with an old flashlight on top; "well, let's get some light in here huh Zach." I shake it to check for batteries and surprisingly it still has some power. I turn it on, and onward I go to explore farther. I come into one room and, as I shine the candle around, I notice it's a room filled with books on bookcases. "A library," I exclaim. The echo in the room bounces off the walls and I see no one has been

here in a while. There's Dust and cobwebs everywhere. Some one should really take care of this place. As I look upon the bookcases, I reach out and grab a book. The bookcase turns around, and pushes me into a different room.

I don't know what's going on; I shout out for help but no one responds. All there is a long staircase leading nowhere but up. I take a deep breath and proceed up the narrow stairs. As I take my first step, a loud voice commands, "Don't step on the tenth step!" Looking up in fear, I try to turn around and bang on the case from where I came, but it will not budge. The only way out is up and I have to get out of this house if it's the last thing I do.

With a determined look as I gather my last remaining courage, I grasp the flashlight firmly and proceed up the dreaded staircase. With each step I take, the voice gets louder and angrier as it commands me to not step on the tenth step. I know I must find a way and that way has to be up. I shout out in response to the voice, "I have to get out of here, there is no other way but up."

Finally I get to the ninth step, I look down at the final and tenth step. I come up with a plan that could possibly be a loophole. I decide to jump over the tenth step. With a smile on my face, I proceed with my new plan. I jump over towards the door at the top of the stairs.

Just then, as I am facing the door, thunder erupts and shakes the whole house. I start to grab onto something but to my surprise, everything disappears. There are no

walls, no door, nothing. Turning around to head back but nothing is there. It's a dark vortex something. I reach out and wave my arms to see if I can grab hold of something. The nothingness surrounds me and I'm left all alone.

Squatting down and starting to cry, I hear singing in the distance. It's very faint, but the more I focus, the more clearer it gets. I shout out for help and say, "that I'm sorry for stepping on the tenth step for what's it worth." But the voice continues to sing. As I focus on the singing; I start to make out what the words to the song.

"Into the house you went, up the stairs you go,  
You'll soon reap what you have sewn.  
If your heart is pure and light,  
Then your path will be given this plight.  
The only thing I require, is that your soul must stay,  
For the dark lord inside must be paid.  
Call out to him now and strike a bargain,  
For when you do, you'll enter the garden.  
And away you go, back to world you knew..

So what will it be my dear..  
Do we have a deal to cast away your fear?  
Say my name three times this night.  
For Rumpelstiltskin will have, what is his by right."

The song kept on going over and over like a broken record. Finally, I shout out the name the voice required. "Rumpelstiltskin, Rumpelstiltskin, Rumpelstiltskin!" Right at that moment, I see solid ground beneath my feet. The walls appear around me and the doorway opened with a bright light shining through. Stepping through, I see a roaring fireplace and two chairs facing it with a big table and all my favorite foods prepared. There was chicken and ham, mashed potatoes and gravy and not to leave out the cobbler

cherry.

I start to head to the delicious table of fixings but before I get there, the voice again erupts and commands me to come closer. Looking over by the fire, I see a figure sitting in one of the chairs. As I approach, he motions for me to sit in the other chair. Not looking away, I finally get a clear view of the creature before me. His skin had scales, like a crocodile. I try to speak but no words come forth.

“What’s the matter? Cat got your tongue.” The creature quipped. “If you ever want to hear your voice again. You’ll sign this contract and give me what I require.”

I look around and suddenly remember all the times in my life that people have forced me to do or go against my will. Tears start to swell up in my eyes, but before they poured down; I got a strong boost of strength and determination. I would not be bullied to do anything that I didn’t want to do anymore. Looking at the contract, I knew what I had to do. Whatever it said, I knew it couldn’t be good. So I signed the paper and the creature laughed in joy.

“You signed it, you signed it, tis has been done.  
Rumpel now owns you to the setting sun.  
Go grab some food and have what your heart desires,  
For at first light, we start out and leave this shire.”

At that moment, I notice my voice hasn’t returned, so I point to the paper that I signed moments before. Rumpelstiltskin looks and with a sudden shock of terror, he jumps up and curses. “No, No, it can’t be!” he said. At that very moment, the fires in the fireplace swirl out and circle Rumpelstiltskin. They take hold of him and drag

him from where he came. The contract falls onto the ground and before it burns, reveals the name signed on the dotted line.

For the flame was surely to take me if I had put my own, deep down I finally found what I needed most. The courage to be and stand up for myself, to be my own person. With that being said, the sunlight soon shown brightly into the room. This house was but a memory gone. I walked back down the stairs and out the front door. As I stepped off the porch, the house let out a crumble and fell to the ground.

With my fears behind me, I walked down the hill towards my school. I wasn't afraid to face the bullies, and when I walked right past one of them called out. But what they saw in my eyes made them run in fear. For what Rumpelstiltskin left inside, a new person within that did not want to hide.

The End...