

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA





Once upon a time, there lived a handsome Prince in a magnificent kingdom. He used to live in a huge castle and often wondered when he would get married to a real Princess. He travelled almost all parts of the world, but nowhere could he find a true Princess.

The Prince met several princesses, but none of them were real princesses. He longed for a true Princess with whom he could share his joys and sorrows and his castle with. The Prince explored the entire kingdom and met almost all the fair maidens claiming to be princesses, but none of them was a real Princess. Disappointed and dejected, the Prince returned to his castle.



During lunch when his parents, the King and the Queen enquired if he could find a true princess for himself. The Prince replied, "It is impossible to find a real Princess in the midst of all the maidens that I've met". Hearing this, the King patted his son's back and said, Don't worry, son! Be patient, soon you shall find what you desire". Saying so, the King went to his chamber and so did the Prince.

That evening, it started raining cats and dogs followed by a thunderstorm. Thunder clapped and lightning flashed on the gloomy sky filled with dark clouds. As the rain clattered down on the roofs of the castle, it seemed as though hundreds of horses were charging towards the battlefield.

Just then, there was a loud knock at the huge door of the castle. The King wore his royal robe and headed towards the castle door. As he opened the door, there stood a shabbily dressed young lady right in front of him who was shivering out of cold as she was completely drenched in the rain.



In no time, the Queen handed a nightgown to the young lady and told her, 'Go and change your wet dress, while I prepare your chamber'. Saying so, she asked the servants to prepare the bed with heavy covers, bedsheets, thick mattresses and quilts.

Before laying down the twenty mattresses on the bed, the Queen placed a single garden green pea on the bed frame. She then asked the servants to pile the mattresses on top of the pea, separating each layer with a soft and warm quilt. Once they were done, they informed the Queen, who in turn told her new guest, 'Your chamber is ready, young lady!'

When the young lady went to her chamber, she was surprised to see the bed that was high off the ground. Nonetheless, the Princess climbed the bed with the help of a ladder, tucked on the covers and blew out the lamp of the room. All night, she tossed on the bed from one side to the other.





The next morning at the breakfast table, the Queen turned to the young lady and asked, 'Dear Princess, did you have a good night's sleep?' The young lady replied, 'Oh, not so well! Although I'm grateful to you for allowing me to put up for the night, there seemed to be something very hard underneath my mattress. It was so uncomfortable that I couldn't sleep a wink last night!'

Oh, my goodness! Is that so?' replied the Queen. Saying so, she turned to the Prince and pointed towards the young lady and said, 'I think we have found a real Princess for you. No one other than a true Princess could have been sensitive enough to feel a single garden pea through my thick mattresses and best quilts. You must marry her soon!'

The Prince was ecstatic and filled with happiness. He turned to the Princess and asked, 'Dear Princess, will you marry me and offer me the honour of calling you my wife?' The Princess blushed and said she would marry him only if her one condition was fulfilled.

The Prince was quick to reply, 'Anything you say!' The Princess requested him to promise that from that day onwards, a garden pea should be used in the castle only for eating purposes and not for sleeping upon't

Hearing this, he looked back at the Princess, chortled and said, 'I promise, my dear Princess'. The Princess jumped out of her seat and accepted the marriage proposal right away. Soon, they got married and lived happily ever after.

