

1 The Princess and the Pea

Once upon a time, there was a prince who wanted to marry a princess. He travelled all over the world to find one. But, he failed.

Then, one fateful evening, a terrible storm blew into the city. There was thunder and lightning, and the rain seemed to fall down in buckets. Suddenly, a loud knocking was heard, and the guard went to see who was seeking to enter the city on such a terrible night. On opening the gate, the guard was surprised to find a young woman standing in the pouring rain!

The guard took her straight to see the old king. The old king was shocked by the young woman's appearance. The rain and wind from the storm had made her look terrible! And yet she said that she was a real princess.

The old queen invited her to stay. Then,

she laid a pea on the bottom. After that, she took twenty soft mattresses and laid them on the pea. The princess had to sleep on top of this pile of mattresses all night.

In the morning, she was asked how she slept. "Oh, very badly!" she said. "I scarcely closed my eyes all night. Heaven only knows what was in the bed, but I was lying on something hard, and couldn't get to sleep."

Now they knew that she was a real princess, because she had felt the pea right through the twenty soft mattresses. Nobody but a real princess could be as sensitive as that. So the prince married her. And the pea was put in the museum, where it may still be seen, if no one has stolen it. (275 words)