

Once Upon a Pea

Once upon a time far off indeed
A prince rode home upon his steed.
He'd been away to find a wife
But came back home to the single life.

"Princesses I have seen a-plenty,
Some were forty, some were twenty.
Princesses pretty, princesses bold,
Princesses kind, princesses cold.

Princesses funny, princesses sad,
Princesses good, princesses bad,
Princesses flighty, princesses bored -
But were they real or just a fraud?"



"Real she must be," declared the Queen.
"No fake princess has ever been
Let into our family, not a one.
Look some more till the search is done!"

That day a storm raged loud and long
With lightning bright and thunder strong.
Night fell. A knock came at the pane -
A plea for shelter from the rain.

"Down to the kitchen!" roared the King,
Seeing a wet and ragged thing.
"But I'm a princess!" she retorted.
"A princess real," she reported.



The Queen, she planned to check that out.
She had a plot to banish doubt.
She put a pea on the best guest bed,
Then piled on mattresses and said,

"Pea of destiny, pea of delight,
We need your help, we seek insight.
Is this princess the real deal?
Will she sleep or will she feel
Your bumpy presence in her bed,
Making her toss and turn instead?
For a real princess has skin so soft
She'll feel that pea although aloft."



The real princess is also known as **The princess and the pea** or **The princess on the pea**

Read the full story here: <https://archive.org/details/fairytalesofhans00ande>

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Next day the Queen asked of her guest,
 "How did you sleep? That bed's the best."
 The girl replied, to the Queen's delight,
 "I had no sleep at all last night.
 I tossed and turned in that bumpy bed –
 But I was warm and had been fed,
 So really I should be more grateful.
 I feel my visit is quite fateful."



The Prince, who heard this, smiled a smile,
 And asked if she'd like to walk a while
 Among his roses white and red
 And - not long after - they were wed.

The pea, with destiny fulfilled,
 The museum took, where it was billed
 As "*Pea of Destiny, Pea of Delight.*
This pea helped us. It gave insight.

*Our princess is the real deal:
 Through twenty mattresses she could feel
 Its bumpy presence in her bed.
 Now she and the prince are happily wed."*

They put the sign for all to see
 Beside that somewhat flattened pea.
 It's on show yet, if I'm not mistaken,
 As long as it has not been taken!

