



STORY: THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA, A FAIRLY FRACTURED TALE

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Long, long ago, in the kingdom far away, there lived a smart and handsome prince. More than anything, he wanted a wife. But not any ordinary wife – he wanted a bonafide, certified princess – a princess with sparkling crowns and floor length gowns.

The prince traveled the countryside on a quest for the perfect princess but no one fit the bill. After months of searching, he finally returned home beat and bummed out.

The very next day there was a knockety knock at the door. Cecille the maid answered the door and announced, “Princess Penelope is here.”

The queen and the prince rushed to the door. There, standing in the doorway, was a bedraggled beauty. It had been thundering and raining and she was soaked from head to toe. She had no crown and wore a tattered and torn gown.

“Good heavens,” exclaimed the queen. “What happened to you?”

Princess Penelope said, “I was riding my horse when it began to storm. I lost my way through the forest. I need a place to stay.”

The prince was overcome by her beauty and answered, “Of course you can stay here.”

But the queen pulled him aside and said, “How do you know she is really a princess? We’ll have to test her. If she is a truly a princess, she will be so sensitive that she will not be able to sleep if a tiny object is placed under her bed.”

That night the queen called Cecille the maid and said,
“Place a single pea under twenty feather beds.”

But Cecille had her i-pod in her ears and instead
Placed a jumping flea under twenty feather beds.

The flea bit but the princess snored on.

The next morning, the queen asked “How did you sleep?”

Penelope said with a smile, “I didn’t make a peep.”

The queen insisted Penelope stay another day.

That night the queen called Cecille the maid and said,
“Place a safety pin under twenty feather beds.”

But Cecille had her i-pod in her ears and instead
Placed a violin under twenty feather beds.

The flea bit and the violin played but the princess snored on.

The next morning, the queen asked “How did you sleep?”
Penelope said with a smile, “I didn’t make a peep.”
The queen insisted Penelope stay another day.

That night the queen called Cecille the maid and said,
“Place a tiny stone under twenty feather beds.”
But Cecille had her i-pod in her ears and instead
Placed a cordless phone under twenty feather beds.

The flea bit, the violin played, and the phone rang but the princess snored on.

The next morning, the queen asked “How did you sleep?”
Penelope said with a smile, “I didn’t make a peep.”
The queen insisted Penelope stay another day.

That night the queen called Cecille the maid and said,
“Place a grain of sand under twenty feather beds.”
But Cecille had her i-pod in her ears and instead
Placed a marching band under twenty feather beds.

The flea bit, the violin played, the phone rang, and the band boomed but the princess snored on.

The next morning, the queen asked “How did you sleep?”
Penelope said with a smile, “I didn’t make a peep.”
The queen insisted Penelope stay another day.

That night the queen called Cecille the maid and said,
“Place a piece of lint under twenty feather beds.”
But Cecille had her i-pod in her ears and instead
Placed an after-dinner mint under twenty feather beds.

The flea bit, the violin played, the phone rang, and the band boomed, and the mint just laid there but the princess... woke up!

“How can I sleep with this awful lump under my bed?” She reached under the beds and pulled out the after-dinner mint. Along with it came the flea, the violin, the phone, and the marching band. She popped the mint in her mouth. “MMMM,” she said, “This is delicious.”

The queen found out that Penelope had passed the test and was really a princess. Of course, Penelope and the prince were married. The queen told Penelope that she was a “breath of fresh air.” As for Cecille the maid, she downloaded some new tunes and is still listening to her i-pod.