



The Princess and the Hidden Pea

Helen

Princess
and
Hidden Pea



Princess Eva lived in a kingdom of silk and soft pillows, known throughout the land for her gentle heart and incredibly delicate nature. She believed that even the smallest discomfort could tell a grand story about one's true character and heritage.



One dark and stormy evening, thunder shook the castle walls and rain lashed against the windows like tiny silver hammers. A sudden, persistent knocking echoed through the Great Hall, surprising the King and Queen during their quiet dinner.



Standing at the gate was a young woman drenched from head to toe, her golden hair clinging to her pale cheeks and water streaming from her cloak. Despite her bedraggled appearance, she looked the King in the eye and claimed she was a true princess named Eva.



The old Queen was skeptical but remained silent, deciding instead to prepare a secret test in the guest chambers to find the truth. She went into the bedroom and placed a single, small green pea at the very bottom of the bed frame where Eva would sleep.



Upon that tiny pea, the servants piled twenty thick mattresses and twenty soft eiderdown quilts until the bed reached toward the high ceiling. It looked like a colorful mountain of fabric, swaying gently in the soft glow of the candlelight.



Eva had to use a tall wooden ladder just to reach the top of her towering bed for the night. She settled into the soft layers, feeling small against the vastness of the room, hoping for a peaceful rest after her long journey through the storm.



A Royal Vigil

Throughout the night, Eva could not find a moment of peace, tossing and turning against an invisible hardness that seemed to pierce through the fluff. She felt as though she were lying upon a jagged rock that kept her wide awake until the first light of dawn.



At breakfast the next morning, the Queen leaned in with a knowing glint in her eye and kindly asked Eva how she had slept. The King watched closely, waiting to see if their mysterious guest was truly as royal as she claimed to be.



Eva admitted she had hardly closed her eyes, complaining that something small and hard had bruised her delicate skin all through the night. The Queen smiled, knowing that only a true princess could be sensitive enough to feel a tiny pea through forty layers of bedding.



With her royal status proven beyond a doubt, Eva was welcomed into the palace with great joy and a grand celebration. The famous pea was placed inside a golden glass case in the royal museum, where it remains to this day as a testament to her incredible story.