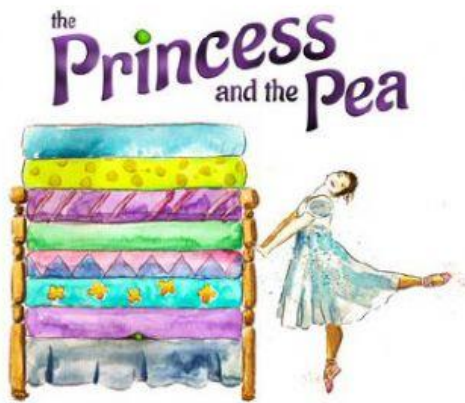




by
Hans Christian Andersen
(1835)

ONCE upon a time there was a prince who wanted to a princess; but she would have to be a princess. He all over the world to find one, but nowhere could he get what he wanted. There were princesses enough, but it was difficult to find out whether they were real ones. There was always something about them that was not as it should be. So he came home again and was, for he have liked very much to have a real princess.

One evening a terriblecame on; there was thunder and lightning, and the poured down in torrents. Suddenly a knocking was heard at the city gate, and the old went to open it.

It was a princess standing out there in of the gate. But, good gracious! what a sight the rain and the had made her look. The water ran down from her and clothes; it ran down into the toes of her and out again at the heels. And yet she said that she was a real princess.

“Well, we’ll soon find that out,” thought the old But she said nothing, went into the bedroom, took all the bedding off the bedstead, and laid a on the bottom; then she took mattresses and laid them on the, and then twenty eider-down beds on top of the mattresses.

On this the princess had to lie all night. In the morning she was asked she had slept.

“Oh, very badly!” said she. “I have scarcely closed my all night. Heaven only knows what was in the bed, but I was lying on something, so that I am black and all over my It’s horrible!”

Now they knew that she was a real princess because she had felt the pea right through the twenty mattresses and the twenty eider-down beds.

Nobody but a real princess could be as as that.

So the prince took her for his, for now he knew that he had a real princess; and the pea was put in the, where it may still be seen, if no one has stolen it.

There, that is a true story.