

JESTER AND MINSTREL

SIDE 1

MINSTREL

This is the story of "The Princess and the Pea."

JESTER

Or rather the true story.

MINSTREL

Which we happen to know for the very good reason that we were there.

JESTER

It takes place in a small kingdom ruled over by a talkative Queen...

MINSTREL

And a mute King. Twelve girls came to the castle hoping to wed the Prince, each one a true princess. But for one reason or another, each one was found to be unsuitable by the Queen.

JESTER AND MINSTREL

SIDE 2

(MINSTREL Plays a quick trumpet announcement and begins to speak. The trumpet sound continues and the minstrel rushes to keep pretending and not be caught using a fake trumpet and a track).

MINSTREL

Good people, honored guests, ladies, lords, and assorted peasants—
welcome to the royal castle!

JESTER

We're delighted you're here. Mostly because the Queen said that we
would be fired if we didn't fill the seats.

MINSTREL

We invite you to join us on a tale of love...

JESTER

A tale of romance!

MINSTREL

A tale as old as time

JESTER

Careful, that's copyrighted by Disney

MINSTREL

Our illustrious tale of...

BOTH

Once upon a mattress!!

MINSTREL

Before our tale begins, Her Majesty has asked us to share a few royal decrees.

JESTER

Yes, Please silence all cell phones and other noise-making devices.

MINSTREL

Anything that rings—

JESTER

Dings—

MINSTREL

Buzzes—

JESTER

Or Beeps!

MINSTREL

It's quite distracting

JESTER

And for heaven's sake, we are in the medieval era. Don't break the "immersion"

MINSTREL

And now, good people, settle in and make yourselves comfortable.

JESTER

And wish us luck...we're gonna need it.

MINSTREL

As we present to you

BOTH

Once Upon a Mattress!

KING, JESTER AND MINSTREL

MINSTREL

What's wrong, Your Majesty?

KING

(Worried.)

JESTER

You're worried?

KING

(Yes.)

MINSTREL

About what?

KING

(Lady.)

JESTER

Some lady. Which lady?

KING

(Two syllables.)

MINSTREL

Two syllables

KING

(First syllable)

JESTER

First syllable

KING

(Bird.)

MINSTREL

Bird — Some kind of bird!

KING

(Yes.)

JESTER

(rattling off the list quickly)

Auk, bluebird, catbird, dove, eagle, finch, grouse, hawk, ibis, jay, kiwi,
lark...

KING claps his hands

MINSTREL

Lark! Lady Larken!

KING

(Yes. He mimes "small word.")

JESTER

And..

KING

(Knight.)

MINSTREL

A knight?

KING

(Yes. He holds his hair out from his head.)

JESTER, MINSTREL

Sir Harry!

KING

(Yes.)

JESTER

Why are you worried about them?

KING
(Boxing.)

MINSTREL
They've had a fight.

KING
(Bird is running away - fingers running like legs.)

JESTER
Does anyone else know?

KING
(Sir Harry.)

MINSTREL
Of course! But does anyone else know besides Harry?

KING
(No - and you must keep the secret.)

JESTER
Don't worry. We can keep a secret, but can you?

KING
(Me? I can't even talk! Locks his lips and swallows the key.)

WIZARD

WIZARD

You have now reached the seventh plateau, and here is your final question.

it is divided into three parts and concerns a famous man often referred to as the "Knight of the Red Cross."

One: What is his name?

Two: What beast did he slay?

And three: What was the middle name of the daughter-in-law of the best friend of the blacksmith who forged the sword that killed the beast? Ten Seconds.

DAUNTLESS, QUEEN, FRED, HARRY

QUEEN

You swam the moat?

WINNIFRED

Does she ever say anything else except, "You swam the moat?"

QUEEN

Do you mean to ask me to believe that you're a true princess of the royal Blood and am I to actually understand that you have the nerve and the gall to apply for my sons hand in marriage?

DAUNTLESS

Mama, may I say something?

QUEEN

No!

WINNIFRED

You're the one, I guess.

DAUNTLESS

Sure, I'm Prince Dauntless the Drab.

WINNIFRED

Well, glad to have met you.

She turns to exit.

DAUNTLESS

No, please don't go. I like you. Everybody does.
Well, almost everybody.

WINNIFRED

Dauntless, I'd like to stay here, but I wouldn't want to come between you and your mother. So I guess I'll just face the facts, cut my losses, and head back to the swamps.

DAUNTLESS

Can I marry her, Mama, can I?

QUEEN

Of course not! When you marry, if you marry, you'll marry a real princess.

HARRY

Ah, but she is, Your Majesty.

WINNIFRED

Hiya, Harry!

HARRY

(bowing deeply)
Your Highness.

QUEEN

What?!

HARRY

I have her papers right here!
"Winnifred, Princess of Icolmkill, Guardian of the Midgard Serpent and Warden of the Ragnorok Marsh Lily." The inscription on her family crest reads, "Tu ne cede malis sed contra audentior ito"

QUEEN

What does that mean?

HARRY

(thinking hard)
Uh... roughly it means, "If at first you don't succeed..."

QUEEN

(grabbing the scroll away from HARRY)
Never mind.

DAUNTLESS

You see, she is a princess! At least a test, Mama, for me? Please!

QUEEN

All right, we'll test her.
The Wizard and I will make up a nice fair test just as we always do and I'll
prove to you that this girl cannot possibly be a princess. She'll have her
test and she'll fail just like all the others - fair and square
(She Exits)

WINNIFRED

What kind of test?

DAUNTLESS

It's always a secret.

WINNIFRED

Well, we'll worry about that later. Right now, I'd better get out of these wet
clothes.

DAUNTLESS

May I show you part of the castle on the way to your room?

WINNIFRED

Sure.

DAUNTLESS

You're awfully nice.

WINNIFRED

You're nicer.

DAUNTLESS

And you're good-looking, too.

WINNIFRED

You're better looking.

DAUNTLESS

Well, you're a better swimmer.

LARKEN AND HARRY

LARKEN

I've never been so humiliated in my life! I thought she was a chambermaid!

HARRY

What? Larken, how could you mistake the Princess for a chambermaid?

LARKEN

How could you mistake that chambermaid for a princess?!

HARRY

Just because you made a stupid mistake...

LARKEN

Don't you dare try to blame it on me. She was on her hands and knees scrubbing the floor!

HARRY

She's a real lady wherever she was! That's more than I can say for some people around here.

LARKEN

I hate you!

HARRY

Well, I hate you too!

LARKEN

Get out!

HARRY

Don't worry, I'm going!

LARKEN

Don't bother - I'll go! Far, far away where you'll never find me!

HARRY

Wel, in that case, goodbye!

LARKEN

Goodbye!

HARRY

Goodbye!!

LARKEN

GOODBYE!!

FRED AND LARKIN

WINNIFRED

Larken, what's the matter?

LARKEN

I'm running away, Your Highness.

WINNIFRED

What's this all about?

LARKEN

Horrible Harry.

WINNIFRED

You mean big, nice Harry?

LARKEN

We had a little disagreement.

WINNIFRED

So you decided to run away?

LARKEN

He said some perfectly horrible things to me.

WINNIFRED

Oh, I see. Well... I guess about the only thing you can do is pack up and get out. Unless, of course, you really love him.
Listen, Harry is a wonderful guy, and he really loves you.

LARKEN

Do you really think so, Princess?

WINNIFRED

He told me so himself.