

### **Scene 3 – Testing the Princesses**

***(Still black tabs. Enter Narrators. Spotlight)***

**Narrator 1: (Addresses audience)** Ladies and Gentlemen, boys and girls, you are just in time. In a moment we are going to try and find a princess bride for the Prince. Two princesses have stayed over in the guest rooms and the whole castle are interested to see if one of them has passed using Prince Légume's ***(does air quotes gesture)*** 'pea-under-the-mattress' method.

**Narrator 2:** It's amazing what modern science can do, isn't it?! So far, I have to admit, we haven't had much good fortune, but keep your fingers crossed and, who knows? This might actually be a lucky day for Petit Pois!

***(Narrators retreat backwards. Curtains open. Inside the Castle. Enter the King and Queen, any other courtiers. Courtiers react as the proceedings unfold.)***

**King:** Lords and Ladies we are here today to interview two more princesses who slept in the castle last night. As the Prince wished, we secretly placed a pea under each of their mattresses in the hope that at least one of them would be delicate and sensitive enough to be disturbed by it.

**Queen:** Unfortunately, the Prince has left us to it and gone hunting, which just shows how much interest he's taking in these proceedings(!) For your information, these are the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> princesses that we've tested, and to be honest, I'm beginning to despair. But never let it be said we didn't do our best!

***(Everyone freezes. Narrators step forward, lights dim, spotlights. CUE The Apprentice theme – 'Dance of the Knights' by Prokofiev)***

**Narrator 1: (Music quietens a little, Narrators talk over it, pausing dramatically between sentences. Plenty of dramatic hand and arm movements.)** This is not a game; this is a job interview from hell! From the furthest towns of the world, two princesses have come to Petit Pois.

**Narrator 2:** But we don't care where they've come from. All we're looking for is someone who can pass our simple test and be a fantastic partner for our beloved Prince. They're here to compete for the whole kingdom, and marriage to the most eligible bachelor on the planet, a man famously hard to please!

**Narrator 1:** To succeed they're going to have to prove how brilliant they are.

**Narrators 1 and 2 together:** It's the chance... of a lifetime! ***(Music fades out, lights come up. Everyone unfreezes. Queen steps forward)***

**Queen:** Bring in the first princess. ***(One of the courtiers steps into the wing and brings in a princess by the hand. She is chavy, big hoop earrings, ponytail on top of head, chewing gum, painting nails as she walks)***

**King:** Hello, young lady, and who might you be?

**Princess Chana:** (*Chavvy accent, has difficulty pronouncing 'r'*) I'm Princess Chana, and I'm from a land far, far away. In fact it was such a long journey that as soon as I arrived here I had me supper, then had to go straight to bed for a lie dahn.

**King:** Excellent, excellent! And may I ask you, did you have a good night's sleep... or did anything... disturb you?

**Princess Chana:** To be honest, the room wasn't as good as what I'm used to, but it was alright I suppose, (*King pulls a face*) mind you I didn't get much sleep at all! (*Courtiers all murmur between themselves*). And I need at least 14 hours kip, otherwise I have to use me VERY expensive (*pronounces it just as written*) Eve Saint Lawrence eye cream! 'Ere, if that Prince Woss-is-name wants to marry me, I hope he knows I'm not some low-maintenance bird!

**King:** Erm...I'm sure he will soon find out what sort of (*disdainfully*) *bird* you are! But to get back to the point, you said you didn't get a very good rest?

**Princess Chana:** NO, I DID NOT. In fact I had a bloomin' awful night!

**King:** (*Turns to Queen does a fist pump hidden from the Princess*) Oh REALLY? And was that because you found the bed uncomfortable by any chance? (*Nods encouragingly*).

**Princess Chana:** (*Starts to nod with him then it turns into a shake of the head*) Nah!...Not really. It's because where I come from, we love our spicy food, see? And to be honest, supper here was so (*stretches out word*) blaaaand, it gave me the belly ache! I spent most of the night in the loo! (*Chavy laugh*).(*Mrs Marrowfat makes as if to run up and hit her but Mushy holds her back*)

**King:** (*Whispers with courtiers with back to audience. Turns back and in the style of 'The Apprentice'*) Unfortunately, having consulted with my advisors and also because you've failed the Prince's test spectacularly, it's with regret I have to say (*points at her in 'Apprentice' style. Sound effect and lights*) .... YOU'RE FIRED!.... (*Princess Chana is grabbed by the hand by the lady in waiting again and unceremoniously carted off protesting. She and Mrs Marrowfat square up to each other as she departs*).

**Princess Chana:** 'Ere, me, you, carpark NOOOOW! (*Kerfuffle between them in the wings? Others all look on with concern. Mrs M comes back on dusting her hands Mushy makes sure she's ok*).

**King:** (*turns to Queen*): All things considered, it's probably just as well she didn't pass the test.

**Queen:** Yes, she was an *interesting* young lady, maybe not quite Légume's type though? ...NEXT!

**(Another one of the courtiers brings in another princess by the hand).**

**Princess Wan Doh:** **(Speaking mysteriously – not a Chinese accent!)** Princess Wan Doh at your service, Your Highness! **(Inclines head slightly in respect).**

**King:** **(Lecherously. Raises monocle for a better look)** By Jove! You're a sweet little thing, aren't you?! **(Speaks in stage whisper to her)** I say, when the missus isn't around, what would it take for me to steal a kiss from you?

**Princess Wan Doh:** **(As he leans lecherously in toward her, she leans away from him)** Anaesthetic!

**Queen:** KELVEDON! Don't think I don't know what you're up to! Keep your mind on the business to hand, thank you very much!

**King:** Yes dear, of course, dear, sorry dear! **(Drops monocle. Turns to Princess Wan Doh):** And would I be right in assuming that your ancestry lies in the Far East?

**Princess Wan Doh:** **(Looking off into distance- still being mysterious)** You would, Your Majesty. My family are descendants of the Qing Dynasty, overthrown in the revolution and exiled all these years as we await our return to power.

**King:** Oh dear, I'm sorry to hear that. And whereabouts are you living now?

**Princess Wan Doh:** **(Mysteriously. Drawing patterns in the air with her hands)** For now we live in a place whose name in the old language means 'Land between two streams'

**King:** **(Wide eyed)** Interesting... and what is its modern name?

**Princess Wan Doh:** **(Not so mysteriously, dropping exotic accent says name of local town, pauses for laughter then, talks quickly like an advertisement)** We own a takeaway. Open 5 till 11, Monday to Sunday. Closed Tuesdays, express delivery service within a 3-mile radius and set meals start at £12.50! **(Winks at audience and gives a thumbs up).**

**King:** Err...Righty-ho, well I'm not going to be snobbish about that. In fact I'm mad for barbecue spare ribs and spring rolls, so this could be a bonus! The main thing is, did you sleep well Princess?

**Princess Wan Doh:** **(Still with local accent).** Brilliantly thank you very much!

**King:** **(Whispers to courtiers with back to audience)** Well, after careful consideration, and even though there are no other candidates left, and despite the fact I really fancy chicken in black bean sauce right now **(points at her in**

**'Apprentice' style) ...YOU'RE FIRED! (Courtier comes forward and takes her by the hand. Starts to lead her out by the hand).**

**Princess Wan Doh: (hanging back as she is pulled and talking quite quickly, before she disappears off stage!) I did wake up about 2 o'clock in the morning when something was sticking in my back!**

**King: WAIT! (Courtier drops her hand) Something was sticking in your back? (To Queen, almost crying with relief) Finally! We've found one who's going to pass this bloomin' test! (To Princess Wan Doh) It couldn't have been ... it wouldn't have been... a pea by any chance would it???**

**Princess Wan Doh: As a matter of fact.... (Pause. Courtiers, King and Queen all hold their breath and lean forward. Dramatic chord. CUE Dun dun duunh! She stands poised and looks at them) ... No, it wasn't. (Courtiers all sigh with disappointment). Turned out to be a bit of prawn cracker I'd dropped during a midnight snack!**

**King: YOU'RE DOUBLY FIRED! Get her OUT! (Princess Wan Doh is grabbed by the hand and unceremoniously carted off). Honestly, Sugarsnap. I don't think we will EVER find a princess who passes the Prince's test. I'm absolutely fed up. (To courtiers) All of you, off you go. Guards dismissed! (Drops head, sticks out lip).**

**Queen: Now, now Kelvedon, I'm sure it will all be alright in the end. (Takes him by the hand. Sweetly, looking up into his eyes). After all, it worked out for us didn't it?**

**King: (Looks at her a bit doubtfully) Absolutely dear! (Aside, sadly) Not that I had much choice in the matter!**

**CUE Comedy song about being together - duet for King and Queen,**

**(They exit, Curtains close).**

**(Black tabs, enter Mushy and Mrs Marrowfat. Mushy is carrying a basket with carrots and a peeler or knife in it).**

**Mrs Marrowfat: Well that didn't go too well Mushy, that's another two princesses crossed off the list! Mind you, I know just what it's like to be unlucky in love, matters of the heart have always been a struggle for me. Don't any of you lovely gents out there be fooled by the fact that I'm a 'Mrs'...I'm a single lady now. My poor, dear husband left this world 20 years ago...(blows nose).**

**Mushy: (Looking confused) Left this world?... Was he an astronaut?**

**Mrs Marrowfat: (Snappily) No he was NOT an astronaut. (Blows nose even more noisily) I mean to say...he is departed.**

**Mushy:** Oh I see... *departed (Looking even more confused)* So he was an airline pilot?

**Mrs Marrowfat:** *(Even more snappily)* No he was NOT a bloomin' airline pilot! Let me make it simple for you. He's PUSHING UP THE DAISIES. *(Blows nose even more noisily! This time in Mushy's face!)*

**Mushy:** Ooooooh I've got you now!

**Mrs Marrowfat:** Well, thank goodness for that!

**Mushy:** *(Big smile of understanding)* Why didn't you say he was a gardener?

**Mrs Marrowfat:** HE WAS NOT A...oh never mind. *(Addresses audience)* I just wanted to put it out there that if any of you eligible young men fancy a date with a refined, more mature lady....*(poses coquettishly)* I am available. I might have a wander, Mushy. Do I look all nice and seductive? *(Comes down into audience to sit on a few laps, picks on someone to ask his name, where he's from etc. Shameless flirting. Mushy casts eyes upward like she's seen this all before, sits on a log, or edge of the stage steps? Starts peeling a few carrots).* I do believe you're a bit of a bad lad *(name of victim)*. But don't you worry, all us proper ladies, enjoy a bit of rough now and again. Do you like my accent *(name of victim)*? Posh isn't it? I come from a very exotic place where life is just a constant round of wild parties, late night drinking and dancing, and such naughtiness that you couldn't imagine! *(Pause)* Have you ever been to (name of local town)...? Mind you *(name of victim)* I'm not completely sure we're going to be right for each other. I do like the simple things in life... but I'm not sure I want to *date* one! *(Big smile, shaking head?)* Only joking!...*(Drops smile)* I'm positive I don't want to date one! But as you're such a cutie, I'm prepared to overlook it.

**Mushy:** Mrs Marrowfat, I've just had a look at me watch.

**Mrs Marrowfat:** And?

**Mushy:** I've realised I can't tell the time! *(Pauses, looks confused. Points to wrist)* And actually... I don't have a watch!

**Mrs Marrowfat:** *(Tutting and rolling eyes)* Oh my life, you are a silly thing, Mushy! She's right though, we can't spend all day here with you, *(name of audience victim)* no matter how much of that smooth talk you use on me! Come along, Mushy, you've made a good start on those carrots but there's a ton of potatoes to peel before lunch service at the castle. *(Mushy joins her in the auditorium. Exit Mushy and Mrs Marrowfat through side door, Mrs Marrowfat waving to victim as she goes).*

#### **Scene 4 – The Prince Goes Hunting**

***CUE Hunting Music - before curtains open*** (In the forest. Prince Légume enters with a hunting bow followed by Mangetout carrying a bag of arrows)

**Légume:** (*stage whisper*) Steady now, Mangetout, if we're really quiet I might be able to get a nice fat pigeon for Mrs Marrowfat to put in a pie! Look, it's up in that tree.

**Mangetout:** (*Like the butler from Downton Abbey, very measured and unexcitable*) So it is Sire, would your highness like an arrow for his bow?

**Légume:** (*Reaching behind him without taking his eyes off the tree*) Yes, yes, quickly now.

**Mangetout:** Would Sire prefer the spruce, cedar or ash-wood arrow?

**Légume:** I don't care what they're made from, Mangetout. Just give me any old arrow!

**Mangetout:** Certainly, Sire. Would Your Highness prefer the one fletched with chicken feathers or with turkey feathers?

**Légume:** I don't know... the turkey feather one, just give it to me. (*Beckons with hand without taking eye off pigeon*).

**Mangetout:** As Your Highness wishes... (*Pause for effect*) And should it be the steel arrowhead or the brass one?

**Légume:** (*Irritably, through partly gritted teeth*) I don't care if it's made from gold and silver with peacock feathers on the end and a point made from a unicorn's horn! Just give me an arrow!

**Mangetout:** (*Unruffled searches inside the quiver and chooses a gold and silver arrow with a peacock feather and a point made from a unicorn horn. Flourishes it for the audience?*) (*Smugly*) Just as you say, Your Highness. (*Bows to him with a small flourish and hands him the arrow*)

**Légume:** Finally! (*Grabs arrow, takes aim and shoots off stage. CUE Pigeon being shot. There is a squawk and a thump then a human cry*).

**Princess Blossom** (*off stage*). Ouch! Who did that? (*Enters staggering slightly, clutching her head, accompanied by Sweetpea, who has a pigeon with an arrow through it in her hand*).

**Légume:** Are you OK?

**Blossom:** I was, until someone shot a pigeon out of a tree and it hit me on the head.

**Légume:** I'm afraid that was me, but who are you and what are you doing in the forest?

**Sweetpea: (*Aggressively*)** If you must know she is Princess Blossom. And I am her handmaid, Lady Sweetpea, Her Highness was painting a picture of a bird in a tree. (*looks at pigeon in her hand, nonchalantly throws pigeon over shoulder into wings*).

**Blossom:** And we were minding our own business which is more than can be said for you!

**Légume: (*To self*).** Ah, an artist. And a princess! (*Addressing Blossom, pulls himself up tall*). My name is Prince Légume, I was out hunting with my servant here, I can only apologise for being so careless. How are you feeling?

**Sweetpea: (*Aggressively, maybe taking a couple of steps towards him. He backs off a bit, taken by surprise*)** How is she feeling? Like she's been hit on the head by a bird I should think. But at least she's not a *bird-brain* like you are!

**Légume:** Well really!

**Blossom (*Swaying a little and holding hand to temple*):** Actually I'm not feeling too good, I think I might need to have a rest.

**Légume (*Taking her by the arm*):** Mangetout, please escort the Princess and her handmaid to my carriage and take them to the castle, show the Princess to the guest room, give her a good strong cup of tea and make sure she is not disturbed. Princess, I'll come to make sure you are feeling better as soon as I can. (*Mangetout starts to escort her off. Sweetpea thumbs her nose at the Prince, who looks suitably worried, and then she follows. Légume calls Mangetout back. Stage whisper*) And Mangetout, be sure to put a single pea under the mattress of the guest room bed.

**Mangetout:** Certainly Sire, (*goes to walk off then turns back. Pompously as ever*) would Your Highness prefer a garden pea, a frozen pea or... ?

**Légume: (*Interrupting him at 'frozen pea'. Angrily*)** Just get on with it!

**Mangetout: (*Bows slightly. Determined to finish his sentence*)...**a tinned pea? (*Short pause*) Of course, Sire. (*Escorts Blossom off stage*)

**Légume (*To self*):** Could this be it? Has my luck finally changed? Not only is she a princess, but she's beautiful, AND artistic, and I'll bet she's intelligent too, (especially when she hasn't been recently banged on the head!) Oh I really hope that she's the one for me, then all my troubles will be over, and the kingdom of Petit Pois will be saved!

**(Solo for the Prince. Opportunity for Prince to get audience clapping along).**

**Légume:** I must go to her and make sure she's ok.

*(Légume exits)*

SAMPLE SCRIPT