

The Last Page

My name is Colin Fredericks, and I wrote this while thinking about the Childlike Empress and the Never-Ending Story. I made the background and did the layout on my Macintosh. The font is Dakota Handwriting, with the titles in Harrington.

I found the little girl pictures on iStockArt.com, and she was drawn by KOSON.

Thank you for reading my game! I hope you enjoy it and play it with lots of people.



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The Princess Game



*This is a game about a little girl.
The only little girl in the whole wide world.
The only person there is, really.*

This is a game about her dreams and her imagination, about make-believe and magic, and the world of stories. But mostly it's about the girl.

You play different parts of her — her love, her fear, her curiosity, and more. Together with her Imagination, you go out to see what there is in the world, and invent some of it yourself.

Parts to Play

You'll need at least four people to play this game, but not more than seven. The first four people decide who gets to be...

- * Love
- * Curiosity
- * Fear
- * Imagination

Love makes the girl want to help and talk to other people. Love is what makes her create the world and the people in it.

Curiosity makes her want to investigate. The little girl wants to know everything and meet everyone.

Fear makes her want to run away. When she's scared, she has to find a different way to do things. The person who plays Fear has a tough job, because we don't always want to be afraid, but sometimes it happens.

Imagination has the biggest job: making the world. The person who gets to be Imagination tells everyone else what the rest of the world looks like, what the people in it are doing, and how they act. Imagination has to be very descriptive without using too many words, and sometimes has to say mean things – because sometimes scary things happen to the girl. But in the end, she won't be afraid forever, so it'll be ok.

The Second Character

I: Along comes a Gigantic Snail! It's huge and slimy and gross! It has big feelers and it's looking right at the girl, saying, "What are you doin' here?"

F (spends a penny): "AHHHHHHHHH!"

L (spends a penny): Maybe he's not so bad? Maybe he's so strong he doesn't even need his shell?

F (spends a penny): No, he's ferocious and horrible and I d-d-don't want to be here!

(No one else spends a penny. Fear wins.)

F: She swims swims swims away as fast as she can! She goes into a little hole in the sand nearby to hide until the Giant Snail can't find her.

The Third Character

I: Eventually, inside the hole, she sees two lights floating around. They turn out to be the eyes of a huge Hermit Crab, hiding in the hole. He stares at the girl silently, moving his big pinchers back and forth.

F (spends a penny): Oh no... it's worse than the snail...

L (spends a penny): But he's hiding too. "Hey, Mister Crab. Why are you hiding?"

I: "It's Miss Crab, and I'm hiding because I'm about to change my shell."

C (spends a penny): "Why?"

I: "I'm getting older and bigger, and I'm going to need a new shell because this one's getting smaller. Oh, if only I knew where one was..."

L (spends a penny): "I know! I know! Miss Crab, I can show you where there's a really big shell, but there's a catch..."

A Taste of a Game

Starting the Game:

Imagination: I bet there's a place where you can swim forever, with mermaids and seahorses. It has castles made from snail shells -

Curiosity: And look at them with their pretty spirals! I wonder who lives in there?

Love: It's a lot of people, who need more homes! I could help them find another shell.

Fear: But the shells are SO BIG. A snail that big could eat me right up...

The First Character:

I: Along comes the Queen of the Mermen! She's green all over, with weird squiggles on her arms and legs, and bubbles come up when she talks. She says, "Oh, if only..."

C (spends a penny): "If only what?"

I: "If only we had a shell for our people, so they could have somewhere to live!"

L (spends a penny): "I can find one for you!"

F (spends a penny): But should I? She's a little creepy...

C (spends a penny): Yeah, what's with those squiggles?

(No one else spends a penny. Curiosity wins.)

C: "Hey, what are those squiggles?" I asked, and she said I'm not cool enough to know! So now I'm going to the Snail Trails to get a really big shell to show her how cool I am. The Snail Trails are underwater, on a huge rock, with hundreds of 'em everywhere!

If there are more people who want to play, they can pick one of these to be:

- * The Companion
- * The Toy
- * Responsibility

The Companion is the girl's BEST FRIEND EVER. It could be her kid brother or sister, a cat or a dog, a teddy bear, or even some kind of magic fairy. The companion gives the girl advice and helps her when things are hard.

The Toy is magical and powerful and wonderful, and everyone wants to play with it. Sometimes the girl gets bored with the Toy, though. If you have someone who wants to play, but can't stay for the whole game, they can be the Toy.

Responsibility is what makes the girl help even the people she doesn't want to love. It's yucky and sometimes it's no fun, but I'll tell you a secret: it's what makes little girls into big girls.

Once you know who's playing what, you can turn the page.

Now We Can Start

Now that everyone has a part to play, we can start the game.

We talk in a special way when we play this game. Every time Love, Curiosity, or Fear talks, they pretend they're the little girl talking to herself, because she does that a lot. The Companion and the Toy can talk for themselves, though sometimes the Toy can't talk. Responsibility talks like the girl's mother, telling her what she has to do even if she doesn't like it. Imagination talks like someone reading a book to the girl, one of the big kind with pretty stories but without many pictures.

The girl's Imagination starts by describing a place. It can be any kind of place, anywhere at all. Since this is a fantasy kind of game, it might help to have a fantasy kind of place, like a castle or an enchanted forest or the middle of the night sky.

Everyone listens carefully, because when they hear something that fits their part, they think out loud about it. Curiosity starts first, then Love, then Fear. If there are other people, they have to wait for right now - they can talk later.

If the Imagination talks about a beautiful green forest with an old cottage near a stream...

... Curiosity might say, "I wonder who lives in that house," or, "I wonder if there's a wood-

SCARY Characters

The Great Dragon	Grandmother Ogre
The Three Trolls	The Spider Queen
The Scorpion Horde	Slug Colony Four
The Fire Breather	The Night People
Lord Elk	The Beast

LOVEABLE Characters

The Phoenix Queen	The Nameless Prince
The Princess of Stars	The Whale King
The Singer of Stones	The Silver Unicorn
Piggy Bear	Green Maia
Lady Ermine	The Butterfly Woman
The Sad Loon	

Here are some places the girl might go:

The Jungle of Danger	The Dark Forest
The Starlit Realm	Fairy Village
Gnome Home	The Lantern Court
The Misty Mountains	The High Seas
Beyond the Stars	The Unicorn Forest

Here are some toys she might carry:

The Robe of Feathers	The Wand of Stars
The Vanishing Cloak	Grandmother's Scarf
A Paper Lantern	A Singing Sword
An Umbrella	A Heart Ring
The Girl's Secret Diary	
The Wicked Witch's Amulet	
The Good Witch's Broom	

People, Places, Things

Characters who are unusual, funny, or interesting bring out Curiosity. If you talk to them long enough, they could become either loveable or scary, but if you ask too many questions they'll stop talking to you.

Characters who are creepy, scary-looking, or who act mean create Fear. If the girl overcomes her fear, some of these are really good people, or are just misunderstood. However, if she stays afraid of them, she has to go away from them.

Characters that are cuddly, beautiful, or sad bring out Love. Characters who love the girl back will help her, but sometimes even people you love turn out to be scary or weird in the end.

Here's a list of Characters you might want to use. It's just their names; you get to make up more about them.

STRANGE Characters

The Storm Crow	Father Time
Grandfather Clock	The Old Mariner
The Schooleroo	The Hopping Flock
The Fisher Boy	The Clock King
The Sporting Lad	The Turtle Queen
Pibbitybop the Gnome King	
The Captain of the Toy Soldiers	

chopper out back," or even, "I wonder whether there are talking fish in that stream." Curiosity makes the first move, you see?

And then Love might say, "Oh, how old and run-down that house is! Let me help them make it better," or, "I have to keep the woodchopper from cutting down the whole forest," or even, "Don't worry little fish! I'll make sure no one catches you!" The little girl wants to do things because of Love.

But then Fear talks, and Fear might say, "But how could I do that when I don't know how to build a house?" or, "But the woodchopper is so big and scary!" or even, "But fish are gross and icky and I'm afraid of them!" Fear talks about what makes things hard for the girl.

Finally, Imagination gets to bring in the first Character. A Character is a person or a creature or even a magic spirit. In this story, it might be an old lady who lives in the cottage, or the big ogre woodchopper, or the king of the fish. What makes Characters special is that they can talk to the girl, even though they're just made-up parts of her imagination. (Did we mention she thinks out loud a lot?) And from that first Character will come the rest of the game, and many more places and Characters, until the story comes to an end.

How does it go from here? Just turn the page...

Talking to People

This game is all about the girl talking to Characters. Every Character, from the first one to the last one, is part of the adventure.

The girl is still very young, and needs help often. Any character could help her, but each of them needs something in return. She'll go from one person to another, asking for help, getting more things to do before she can fix what needs to be fixed. However, eventually, she will find someone who needs just what she has. Maybe it's a hand crossing the street, or a kiss on the cheek, or a little piece of her hair to remember her by. That person will help the girl help the last Character, who helps the one before that, and eventually the original problem will be solved!

The Imagination talks for all the Characters. Usually there's just one or two around at a time. The Imagination tries to use the Character's voice and do things that Character would do.

When the girl talks, the different parts of her can't talk all at once – that would sound silly! Instead, they have to take turns. Everyone will get some pennies, and when you spend a penny, you get a short turn at talking for the girl. (If you don't have pennies, you can use other things, like buttons or toy blocks. We'll tell you how many you get later on.)

Secrets

Here are some secrets for playing this game.

You don't want to spend all your pennies every time. Because you can't win every time, you should save your pennies for the times when you think it's more important.

Here's a Secret for the Imagination: Characters should always have something to do with what happened at the start of the game, even if it's only a little bit.

You can never lose the game – the fun comes from pretending to be the girl, and talking to the different Characters.

The game is all about starting with one sort of Character, and realizing that they're different from how they looked at first. This will happen a lot.

Every Character is an important person. A lot of them are kings and queens, princes and princesses, but even the ones who aren't are very important.

The little girl can't hurt anyone, except with her words. Even if she is very cross, she can only yell at someone or storm off.

I think the little girl might be a little lonely.

Numbers and Stuff

Here's how many pennies everyone gets to use.

At the beginning of each game, give out this many pennies to each person:

- * Give Love, Fear and Curiosity five pennies each.
- * The Companion and Responsibility get two pennies each.
- * The Toy gets 30 pennies.
- * Imagination doesn't need pennies.

At the beginning of each Conversation, give out this many pennies to each person:

- * Love, Fear and Curiosity get three more pennies each.
- * The Companion and Responsibility get one more penny each.
- * The Toy doesn't get any more pennies. When the game starts, the Toy gets 30 pennies, but no more.

Everyone but Imagination spends one penny every time they talk.

Everyone keeps any pennies that they don't spend, until the end of the game.

The first part of the girl that talks is always the part that the Character brings out. Some Characters bring out Love, some bring out Fear, some bring out Curiosity. That part of the girl talks to the Imagination, and they have a conversation, as if they were the girl and the Character.

If a different player wants to have the girl say something, or even just make the girl think hard about something, they pay a penny. Once everyone is done talking, and no one wants to use any more pennies, figure out who spent the most pennies. That person "led the conversation," and gets to describe what the girl does next. If there's a tie, the kind of Character it was is who wins.

If Love led the conversation, the girl gets the Character to help, in exchange for something. Love gets to say what help the girl asks for, but Imagination (speaking for the Character) says what the girl has to do in return.

If Curiosity led the conversation, the girl asked too many questions! The Character is insulted, or tired of talking to her. The girl will find out what needs to be done next (and Curiosity gets to say what that is), but the Character won't help.

If Fear led the conversation, the girl has to run away. She can't talk to this person any more, and has to find a different way to do things. Fear describes the girl running away, and where she runs to. Imagination says who she finds there.

The Companion, Toy, and Responsibility talk in special cases.

The Companion only talks after you find out who led the conversation. If the Companion doesn't like what happened, he or she pays TWO pennies to make things go differently. The Companion might talk to the girl and change her mind, or talk to Characters and convince them to help, or even just refuse to run away, making the girl turn around and stay instead of running in fear. The Companion doesn't get many pennies, but they're very powerful pennies. Remember: TWO pennies.

The Toy doesn't talk, but can give pennies to other people, saying how the Toy helps. The Toy has a BIG stack of pennies in the beginning of the game, but doesn't get any more later on - once people are tired of the Toy, it doesn't work any more.

Responsibility has a special role. When the girl meets someone that she really should help, but she doesn't, Responsibility can spend TWO pennies to step in. Responsibility talks to the rest of the girl and makes her help, even if she doesn't love that person. Like the Companion, Responsibility doesn't get very many pennies, but is very powerful when she speaks. Remember: TWO.

Exploring Her World

The girl often travels from one part of the world to another. The Imagination always decides who the girl runs into, but other parts of her can decide where to go.

The part of the girl who led the conversation can decide where the girl goes - whether it's into a forest, or up a mountain, or across a huge desert. Because the girl is a magical princess, she can go anywhere, even up into the sky.

If the last leader doesn't know where to go next, the Imagination takes over, as the girl wanders across the world of her creation, looking for someone who might help.

No matter where she goes, what matters most is who the girl talks to. The things she wants can only be found from other people.