

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

CAST

NARRATOR

THE EMPEROR

HIVES, The Butler

SNIP and STITCH, The Tailors

VARIOUS COURTIERS/COUNSELORS/SUBJECTS

1 NARRATOR: Once upon a time in a faraway land there lived
2 an emperor who was very vain. All he cared
3 about in the world were his fine clothes, and
4 all he thought about was how to get finer
5 ones.

6 EMPEROR: Now, what's this called again?

7 HIVES: A zoot suit, your majesty.

8 EMPEROR: There, how does it look?

9 HIVES: Very becoming, your majesty.

10 COURTIERS: "Very nice", "Lovely", etc.

11 NARRATOR: He was always the first to take up the latest
12 fashion; he was never satisfied with anything
13 less than the best.

14 HIVES: Your Nehru jacket has arrived, your majesty.

15 EMPEROR: Splendid, help me on with it. Well, what do
16 you think?

17 HIVES: On you it looks good, your majesty.

18 COURTIERS: "Very nice", "Lovely" etc.

19 NARRATOR: The emperor's fame as a lover of fashion
20 spread far and wide, and one day two strangers
21 presented themselves at the palace.

22 HIVES: Messrs. Snip and Stitch, your majesty. Master
23 tailors.

24 SNIP: Snip.

25 STITCH: And Stitch at your service, your majesty.

26 SNIP: We are the finest tailors in the world, your
27 majesty, so, of course, we wanted to serve the
28 one person in all the world who could fully
29 appreciate our talents.

30 EMPEROR: Quite right, quite right.

31 COURTIERS: "Quite right", "Yes, quite right", etc.

32 STITCH: We propose to create for your majesty a suit
33 of clothes such as the world has never seen.
34 A suit of clothes made from a singular fabric
35 that we alone know how to make.

36 SNIP: This cloth is fashioned from diamonds--

37 STITCH: And gold--

38 SNIP: Rubies, pearls--

39 STITCH: And gold--

40 SNIP: Emeralds, amethysts, opals--

41 STITCH: And gold--

42 SNIP: And, of course, gold.

43 STITCH: Of course.

44 EMPEROR: Oh, of course.

45 COURTIERS: "Of course, of course."

46 SNIP: But the most remarkable property of this cloth
47 is that it cannot be seen by fools or people
48 who are unfit for the office they hold.

49 STITCH: Think of the possibilities, your majesty.

50 EMPEROR: Possibilities? Oh, yes. Quite right.

51 COURTIERS: "Quite right, quite right"

52 EMPEROR: I must have this suit. You must make it for
53 me. Money is no object. Instruct the
54 Imperial Treasurer that all the gold and the
55 finest gems from the treasury shall be placed
56 at these tailors' disposal.

57 HIVES: At once, your majesty.

58 NARRATOR: The tailors took over a room in the palace and
59 set to work at once. Now these tailors were
60 not tailors at all, but swindlers who-

61 STITCH: I beg your pardon. Entrepreneurs.

62 NARRATOR: --Who were filling their own pockets with the
63 gold and jewels given to them. Day after day
64 they pretended to weave their remarkable cloth
65 on looms that were, in fact, empty. They
66 measured the emperor for a suit they would
67 never make.

68 SNIP: Inseam: 22

69 STITCH: Inseam: 22

70 SNIP: Waist: 54

71 EMPEROR: Oh, wait, wait. (takes an enormous breath)

72 SNIP: Waist: 54

73 STITCH: Waist: 54

74 NARRATOR: They spent long hours in their workroom
75 cutting and sewing nothing at all. From time
76 to time the emperor would send members of his
77 court to visit the tailors and report on their
78 progress.

79 SNIP: See the quality, my lords? The delicacy of
80 the weave?

81 STITCH: Note the color. I'll wager you've never seen
82 color like that before.

83

83 NARRATOR: The courtiers were shocked to see nothing on
84 the looms and nothing in the hands of the
85 tailors. They did not want to appear fools or
86 unfit for their offices, so ...

87 COURTIERS: Lovely. Exquisite. Striking color. etc.

88 NARRATOR: And when they reported back to the Emperor ...

89 EMPEROR: How are my master tailors getting on?

90 COURTIERS: Lovely. Exquisite. Striking color. etc.

91 NARRATOR: At last the day arrived when the tailors
92 pronounced:

93 SNIP: Your majesty, your suit of clothes is
94 finished.

95 EMPEROR: Excellent! Bring it in, bring it in. Oh,
96 Hives, help me off with this leisure suit.

97 HIVES: Very good, your majesty.

98 NARRATOR: With great ceremony, the tailors carried the
99 imaginary outfit into the emperor's private
100 chambers.

101 STITCH: Here it is, your majesty.

102 NARRATOR: The emperor could see nothing at all, but not
103 wanting to be thought a fool ...

104 EMPEROR: Oh, wonderful! A masterpiece!

105 COURTIERS: "A masterpiece", "Lovely", etc.

106 NARRATOR: The tailors helped the emperor to dress in his
107 new clothes.

108 SNIP: Breeches ... spats ... blouse ... weskit ...

109 STITCH: Don't forget the cummerbund, your majesty.

110 SNIP: And the frock coat.

111 NARRATOR: The emperor dutifully put on each invisible
112 article of clothing they handed him.

113 EMPEROR: How do I look?

114 HIVES: Stunning, your majesty.

115 SNIP: Regal.

116 STITCH: Imperial.

117 COURTIERS: Oh, definitely regal. Very imperial, etc.

118 EMPEROR: Yes, I do, don't I?

119 NARRATOR: A great procession had been planned so the
120 emperor could show off his splendid new
121 clothes to his subjects. People from all over
122 the country lined the streets of the city.

123 The emperor appeared at the head of a long
124 train of attendants and courtiers. The crowd
125 could see no clothing at all on the emperor,
126 but, disinclined to appear fools to their
127 neighbors ...

128 CROWD: (half-hearted cheering: just enough so they
129 can't be accused of not cheering.)

130 NARRATOR: But one young boy, sitting on his father's
131 shoulders to get a better view, called out:

132 BOY: Look, Papa, the emperor has no clothes on!

133 CROWD: (Gasps followed by silence)

134 NARRATOR: The emperor commanded his train to stop. He
135 looked slowly down at himself, and then up at
136 the little boy who had called out those
137 fateful words. And then ...

138 EMPEROR: Guards! Away with that boy!

139 NARRATOR: The emperor had the boy and his entire family
140 arrested and thrown into the dungeon, to be
141 beheaded the next day. The procession then
142 continued, and one by one ...

143 CROWD: (Cheering is much more enthusiastic than
144 before. Continue under lines and then fade
145 out.)

146 NARRATOR: For the rest of the people had learned, you
147 see, the difference between seeing what you
148 saw and saying what you saw. And they, at
149 least, lived happily ever after.

150 EMPEROR: Hmmm. Seems a bit chilly.

151 COURTIERS: Chilly. Yes, your majesty. Very Chilly, etc.
152 (fade out)

END