THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

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CLASSIC TALES OF THE WORLD

The Emperor’s New Clothes

An illustrated edition by Pewitos

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There was an emperor who thought more about his clothes than the affairs of the kingdom. He changed outfits several times a day and always asked, “Isn’t what I am wearing magnificent?”

Two swindlers came to the palace pretending to be weavers. “We make a marvelous cloth,” they said. “It is invisible to anyone who is foolish or unworthy of office.”

The emperor paid them gold and gave them a hall with two looms. The swindlers moved empty shuttles and requested silk and golden thread, which they hid in their chests.

The minister went to inspect the work. He saw nothing, but feared losing his position. “What a fine pattern!” he exclaimed. Then he repeated to the emperor everything the false weavers had invented.

The emperor himself visited the loom. He could not see the cloth either. Because he did not want to seem foolish, he smiled and said, “It is exactly the suit I want for the grand procession.”

On the festival day, the swindlers pretended to cut and sew. They acted as if they dressed the emperor, then fled with the gold. Before the mirror, no one dared tell the truth.

The emperor walked out beneath a great canopy. The courtiers pretended to hold a train that did not exist, and the people applauded for fear of seeming foolish.

Then the braided girl looked closely and said, “But the emperor is not wearing any new suit!” Her voice was clear and meant no harm: she was simply saying what she saw.

The truth passed from person to person until the whole square repeated it. The emperor’s cheeks grew warm: he understood that he had been deceived and that his fear had helped the deception.

He held his head high and finished the short route, but back at the palace he gathered his ministers. “From today on, I want honest advice, even when I dislike it,” he said. And the kingdom learned that truth needs no elegant suit.

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About this edition

The Emperor’s New Clothes

Hans Christian Andersen published this tale in Denmark in 1837. The emperor's parade and a child's honesty make it a satire of vanity and conformity. This is a Pewitos adaptation.

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Two swindlers deceive an entire court until a girl says aloud what everyone can see.

A gentle, lucid satire about honesty, independent thought, and the courage to speak the truth.

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