

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

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Music by Donizetti

CHARACTERS:

Soprano- QUEEN

Baritone- EMPEROR, EMPEROR'S BROTHER(PRIME MINISTER)

Mezzo- NARRATOR, KLEIN (SWINDLER), CHILD

Tenor- AIDE, CALVIN (SWINDLER), PAGE, PEASANT FATHER

Scenes – Throne Room, Weaving Room, Street Scene

(Weaving Room background can be a curtain that pulls over throne room scene;
loom and dressing screen place in front of curtain)

Props – Bag of clothes, throne, loom, dressing screen, giant ruler, butterfly, sign

EXCERPT:

Calvin: You honor us by granting us audience with Your Famousness.

Klein: Pray, honor us even more by allowing us to provide the ultimate in wardrobe design to your most noble personage.

Queen: (curious) What's in the pack?

Emp: (flattered and strutting) Oh, come, come. I never turn down a chance to buy more clothes, but as you know, I insist on only the very best.

Calvin: (singing) IN THE EAST, IN THE WEST, WE'RE THE BEST BY FAR,
YES, WE ARE, YES WE ARE, WE'RE THE BEST BY FAR,
WE'RE THE CREAM OF THE CROP, WE'RE THE TOP,
THE FABULOUS CALVIN AND KLEIN,
THE FABULOUS CALVIN AND KLEIN!

Queen: What's in the pack?

Klein: We have clothed the most famous rulers, the most infamous rock stars, and the most finicky of celebrities.

Emp: Do you have references?

Calvin: Here are our references. (Pulls out long sheet of paper. Waves it around.)

Queen: What's in the pack?

Calvin: (Jerking references away) Ah, the pack, Madam.

Calvin and Klein: (singing and opening pack)
SOFTEST LEATHERS, RARE BIRD FEATHERS,
SOMETHING FOR THE DISCERNING EYE,
THICKEST VELVET, YES, WE SELL IT,
BUT THE COST MAY BE TOO HIGH.
(they act like they are packing up)

Queen: NOT SO FAST, NOT SO FAST

King: MONEY'S NO OBJECT!

Queen: WE HAVE GOLD AND WE HAVE SILVER,
WE HAVE LOTS, WE HAVE LOTS,
WE'LL RAISE THE TAXES, WE'LL RAISE THE TAXES,
TO GET MORE!

C & K: (Looking at each other)

MONEY'S NO OBJECT!

HAVE YOUR WAY THEN, WE WILL STAY THEN,
WE WILL SHOW YOU MORE AND MORE,
IF YOU'LL BUY IT, WE'LL SUPPLY IT,
LET US NOT WASTE YOUR GOOD TASTE,

Queen: SHOW US MORE AND MORE, SHOW US MORE AND MORE

Klein: WE'LL SHOW MORE AND MORE, WE'LL SHOW MORE AND MORE,

King & Calvin: I'M SO LUCKY!

Queen: (from backstage) Oh, dear! It's beginning to rain. Perhaps you'll need to wear a rain cloak over your magnificent new outfit.

Emperor: Nonsense! And spoil the peasants' first glimpse of my regal splendiddness? (losing patience) Where are my new clothes??? I'm waiting!!

March music begins.

Klein: Here they are your majesty. (Struggling with volume and weight. Emperor's eyes, looking from over or from side of screen, show extreme shock) The hose, the tunic, the sash, the cloak, the train... Oh, we musn't let the train touch the ground. The golden threads are much too fragile. (calls out to Page) Oh, Page, oh Page!

(Nose picking, sleeve wiping, idiotic Page enters)

Klein: You there! Do hold up the Emperor's train, so it doesn't touch the ground!

(Page looks around incredulously and makes many false starts and stops to pick up invisible train. Klein keeps barking at him, "Not there, you fool! You're standing on it! Not there, up there!") Queen appears just as Page proudly picks up correct spot of imaginary train.)

Queen: (to audience) Oh, my stars. Even that idiotic Page can see it. I absolutely can't let anyone know I see absolutely nothing.

(Page, grinning, backpedals off stage, still holding train.)

Klein: IS IT NOT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?

(to others) HIS RESERVE MUST BE EXPECTED,

SHOCKING, QUIET INTROSPECTION,
ONE DOES NOT EXPECT PERFECTION!

Emp: (still behind screen; looking, going through dressing motions)

LOVELY, LOVELY, I AM SPEECHLESS, I AM SPEECHLESS

Klein: YES, IT'S LOVELY, IS IT NOT MORE THAN MERE LOVELY?

Queen: BEYOND COMPARE, BEYOND COMPARE, IT IS SO RARE,

Emp: REALLY SPEECHLESS, OH, MOST REGAL, RATHER DARING,

Klein: LOOK, OH, LOOK, THE MARVEL YOU'LL BE WEARING,

Queen: I CANNOT LOOK, I CANNOT BEAR TO LOOK,

Emp: OH, THE MARVEL I'LL BE WEARING, WILL A MARVEL I BE BARING?

Klein: OH, YOUR PEOPLE, THEY WILL SEE YOU,

IN THE SPOTLIGHT, THERE YOU'LL SHINE,

Queen: MY DEAR HUSBAND, IT IS ALL YOU'VE EVER WANTED,

OH, YOUR PEOPLE THEY WILL SEE YOU IN YOUR SPLENDOR,

WHAT A SIGHT THEY'RE SURE TO FIND,

SUCH A SIGHT THEY'RE SURE TO FIND,

I CAN'T BEAR TO LOOK, I CAN'T BEAR TO LOOK,

I CAN'T BEAR TO LOOK, ALL I SEE IS HIS BEHIND!

Emp: ARE MY PEOPLE PREPARED FOR SPLENDOR OF THIS NATURE,
OF THIS KIND?

WILL MY PEOPLE SEE A WONDER? WHAT EXACTLY WILL THEY FIND?

WHAT EXACTLY WILL THEY FIND?

Klein: FOR TODAY, SIR, AS YOU SWAY, SIR,
GLORY, BEAUTY, ARE BOTH COMBINED,
IN THE SPOTLIGHT, YOU WILL SHINE!