



The Emperor's New Clothes

Humility, Honesty

This is a story all the children around the world know.

Being constantly adored is the only thing that brings meaning to the emperor's life. Two crooks who pretend to be weavers take advantage of his weakness. They tailor a breathtaking dress for the emperor. He feels so...



🕒 13 min

😊 3+

In a faraway country beyond the mountains, forests, and wide seas, there lived an emperor who loved himself. His life and himself were the only things he cared about. He loved his clothes most of all. Changing them hundreds of times a day wasn't anything unusual for him. He had wasted all the money from his subjects (which was really meant to be spent on the empire) on buying this most astonishing of wardrobes.

The theatre had long since shut down because the actors couldn't afford new puppets or costumes. The army had been dissolved because the soldiers couldn't afford weapons or training. They had to sell all their horses because there was no money for hay and even the blacksmith had not made anything in a while, because he couldn't afford any iron. The people in the empire had learned to fend for themselves because they expected no help from the emperor.

They lived their own ordinary lives under the castle. They loved to meet at the market in town and this is how they had fun. There was always hustle and **bustle at the market**. Foreigners bringing in a whole array of goods, such as the people had never seen before, caused the most excitement.

Once, two sly fellows came to the town. They disguised themselves as weavers and went straight to the castle to see the emperor. The guards invited them in as honoured guests. Of course, the new fabrics would make the emperor happy! The whole court came together to greet them **with a fanfare**.

"What are you bringing me, weavers? I hope it's something special because I have very high standards," said the emperor.

One of the clever men said: "We will weave you a fabric the likes of which the world **has never seen.**"

The emperor smiled contentedly while the weavers were singing the praises of this extraordinary fabric. They promised him the most beautiful colours in the world, with a pattern that nobody had ever used before. But the best came last: This fabric would be completely invisible to anyone who was stupid or lazy. Someone who wore a dress made from it would instantly be able to tell apart the dumb from the smart and the lazy from the hardworking. The emperor heard as much as he needed to hear. He immediately ordered his servants to give the amazing weavers the best lodgings and the best food and beverages.

Next morning, the weavers were taken to the workshop so they could start right away. They asked for rolls of the finest silk, and thread made of pure gold. A loud rumble from **the weaving loom** came from the workshop as they got to work. But in reality the looms were empty. The sly men took the silk and the golden thread and hid it. What were they doing with the rest of the time, you ask? Well, they'd take naps and chat while the looms were weaving just air.

After a few days, it occurred to the emperor to test his best advisor. He sent him to check how much fabric was finished. He couldn't wait to find out whether he was truly suitable for his position - of course, if he were not, he wouldn't see the fabric. The advisor came to the door, **knocked hesitantly**, and waited for one of the weavers to **open the door.**

"Welcome, advisor," said the weaver and invited him in. He pointed to the empty looms. "What do you think? Do you like this fabric?" he asked.

The advisor strained his eyes, then he squinted, but in fact he couldn't see any fabric at all.

'Maybe I am **actually dumb**, if I can't see anything?' he thought. He didn't want to admit it, because the emperor would fire him if he found out.

After some time, he told them: "The fabric? Oh yes, it's splendid. So fine and light."

"And what do you think of this pattern?" inquired the weaver.

"Very original. I have never seen anything **quite like it**," said the advisor.

The weavers went on listing the most exotic colours and whimsical patterns, so that he could describe the fabric to the emperor.

When the advisor went out, he wasn't sure what he should tell the emperor.

"So, my best advisor, have you seen the fabric?" asked the emperor.

"Yes, my lord. It's really beautiful. I have never seen such extraordinary colours. And the print on it... so sublime. You will absolutely love it," said the advisor hesitating.

The emperor was very happy to **hear those words** and couldn't wait for the fabric to be finished.

After some time the emperor decided to test another advisor. So he also sent him to see how the weavers were progressing. They welcomed him warmly and started explaining how their work was advancing. They told him about new pieces of the pattern and about the incredible colours. The second advisor stared at the empty looms, bulging his eyes, trying to focus, going cross-eyed, but he couldn't see anything at all.

"Like what you see?" **asked the weaver.**

"Oh, yes. It is incredibly beautiful. I have really never seen such fabric anywhere in all my life. The colours are unbelievable. And the softness!" the advisor gushed over nothing. In his mind, he was only asking himself what the emperor would do to him if he came back saying he had not seen any fabric. After all, he wasn't brave enough to admit he couldn't see it.

Soon, the whole empire started whispering about this **amazing fabric**. Everyone was curious about the beautiful garment that would be made from

it.

One day, the emperor himself decided that he wanted to see the fabric. He called both his advisors, the servants and the guards and they all went to have a look inside the workshop. When they entered, the two advisors started raving about the fabric, and even though they were pointing at empty weaving looms, they kept admiring it. **The emperor squinted**, focused, gazed, but he couldn't see any fabric at all.

'Am I really that brainless? Am I not **fit to rule**? Oh, as if!' thought the emperor and joined in with the praising of the weavers, the colours and the patterns that he could not see but that the advisors described to him.

"Indeed, I am very happy with this fabric," said the emperor looking at the empty looms. Understandably, the servants and the guards started nodding appreciatively, even though they saw nothing on the looms, either. None of them wanted to lose their job.

"I will wear a garment made from this fabric at the ceremony next week," announced the emperor happily. The people in the room started **clapping and whooping**. They were all looking forward to the emperor's new clothes.

The day before the ceremony in town, the weavers started sewing new clothes for the emperor. They spend all day carefully measuring, cutting and sewing the invisible fabric with very serious and concentrated faces, as if they really were sewing the fantastic material together.

In the morning, the emperor came with his advisors to pick up his new clothes.

"Your lordship, **the clothes are ready**," said the weavers respectfully, and pretended to hand him something. "Do us the honour of trying them on. They are as light as a cobweb, you won't even feel them on your body," said one of the weavers.

The emperor stripped down, and the weavers helped him try his new clothes on. Despite their empty hands, they tried hard to act as if they were

putting on his trousers and his shirt. Finally, they also pretended to put on a cloak and tie a decorative ribbon. The emperor stood naked in front of the mirror, posing, and praising his new clothes.

“They really flatter your figure! And they fit you perfectly! The colours and the print, they really do look amazing,” everyone rushed to praise him.

“Well, then I’m ready to appear in front of my subjects at the opening ceremony for the fair,” said the emperor proudly.

And so, he did what he said. He went confidently naked into the streets full of people, walking as proudly as a peacock.

The crowds collectively **gasp**ed and **shouted**: “Amazing... What spectacular clothes. Don’t they suit him fantastically? What a marvel.”

Nobody dared admit that they couldn’t see any clothes, because nobody wanted to admit that they were stupid.

But then, a little boy from the crowd shouted: “But the emperor is naked! He isn’t wearing any clothes at all!”

And so, little by little, the people started whispering that the emperor wasn’t wearing anything.

And after a while, the whole crowd was shouting only one thing: “**The emperor is naked!**”

The humiliated emperor started thinking: But how could all of these people be stupid?

And then it hit him – these weavers were just ordinary liars who had fooled him completely! **Of course, shame or no shame**, the celebrations were already underway, and he had to walk his majestic walk just the same!