

SIDE 3

ROSCOE Don't you worry about a thing, little boy. My friend and I will help you, won't we, Flo?

FLO But my feet are perishing, Roscoe. . .

ROSCOE You see? She'd be delighted.

FLO Like the firefly said when she flew into the candle flame: I am delighted-to-no end.

Flo and Roscoe help the Boy pick up the boxes and walk through the changing set.

ROSCOE (To Boy.) A court dance, you say? Tonight?

Scene Two

START

The palace is in place. Immediately, MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTER OF WAR, and MISTRESS OF THE WARDROBE enter from USR and cross DSL, conversing.

MINISTER OF STATE He's impossible! (*Begrudgingly.*) Long may he live.

MISTRESS OF THE WARDROBE Long may he live.

MINISTER OF WAR Long m...m...may he live.

M. STATE He will not pay attention! He will not listen! He simply doesn't give a fig for the affairs of state!

M. WAR Not a f...f...f...fig.

WARDROBE He listens to me . . .

M. STATE Ah well, of course he does - you're the Mistress of the Wardrobe. You're the only one the Emperor will listen to. But if you were the Minister of War, like our courageous colleague here . . .

M. WAR N...n...n...not a fig! The Emperor hasn't listened to me since that time fifteen years ago when I told him there was a piece of lint on his vest. He gave me a m...m...m...medal for that.

M. STATE (To WARDROBE.) There - you see?

M. WAR Other Ministers of War have lots of medals. I only have one. For lint-spotting. And I think I've l...l...l...lost it.

WARDROBE Poor dear, I'll talk to the Emperor and he'll get you another. He does anything I say.

M. WAR Could you get me one for bravery this time? I'd be gr ...gr...gr ...grateful.

M. STATE And as for me - the Minister of State! The Emperor pays more attention to his barber!

WARDROBE Well, he is an awfully good barber . . .

M. STATE The Empire is in a state of collapse and you talk to me about barbers? The Emperor doesn't deserve to be Emperor! He's not fit to be Emperor! He's a rotten Emperor! May he reign forever.

WARDROBE May he reign forever.

M. WAR May he reign f...f...f... for a long time.

~~Roscoe, Flo and the Boy enter carrying boxes. The Maestro also enters, trying to bar their way.~~

~~MAESTRO Halt!~~

~~M. STATE Stop!~~

~~M. WAR G...g... go no further!~~

END