

Clothes

April 2026

The Scarlet Suit

*Eighth of April every year
she made her entrance
in the wedding outfit -*

*not the usual fall of bridal white,
but a scarlet designer suit:
a fortune of post-war coupons,
cinched and ruched at the waist,
hugging the hips in close embrace.
His eyes would follow each move,*

*Hayworth and Rogers rolled into one -
a leap back to Hammersmith Palais,
in beat with Rabin's saxophone.*

*It's mine now. I tried it on,
found myself caught off guard
by the hourglass figure*

*posing back from the mirror,
breathing in the civet scent -
still locked in its fibres.*



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In Combination

*When we go out to friends for dinner
We check each other out
We're making sure the colours go well
The combos look ok
Just in case there's any doubt
They go together*

*I don't have a suit or a dinner jacket
I'm not a formal kinda guy
And she doesn't have a cocktail dress
Or an evening gown
I guess that's sorta why
We go together*

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CLOTHES

*Well I know I didn't come with any,
But, when I open cupboards and drawers,
There are so very many.*

*Currently, all selected by me,
For colour, so enhancing,
The wear the Weft, Flattery of shape,
Current Style or not,
And so I find it impossible to discard these old friends,
If they were gone I should be bereft.*

*What do they say,
They speak to me of Holidays,
Special Occasions, and my special is a ,
Dress worn for our daughter's wedding,
It is still really the epitome of Style,
Silk fabric, perfect colour, Dramatic.
And even now some 25 years later my very best.
Old friends are these, just my style,
And I mean to keep them all for a while.*

*Natural fabrics are universally sought,
My Danish friend Lizzie of some 30 years ago,
When we did a teaching exchange ,said she
Would only wear natural fibres ,
And so for preference so do I.*

*Cotton, Wool not the scratchy kind, but Merino,
or expensively Cashmere which should last for years,
Silk for blouses , scarves and dresses
These I shall revere,
It has something to do with cost,
I only ever bought the best (preferably marked down in a sale)
Affordable at the time,
And so my line is they are so wearable, classic styles and comfortable,
So of course turned out to be inexpensive over
A number of Wears and Years*

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The Internal Shopping Buddy

*Clothes, they never seem to fit you well, do they?
There's usually something not right
Your arms are always too short for the sleeves
These labels don't say Small Stocky Chic so
There's no point sporting a James Bond black DJ and cummerbund outfit
Your frame is simply not going to carry that off
Not with those ridiculous short legs
Crowded to the floor by that portly trunk
What were you thinking even trying it on?
The mirrors were practically curling up with embarrassment
It's all about proportions, you see
And yours, well, they're all out of wack
That spurt mum promised... never happened, did it?
That jacket looks so elegant on the mannequin
But even he's sneering at you now
Put it back on the rail before anyone else sees you.
Oh shut up, you've made your point.*

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Carol's Coat

*You didn't see many fern green coats –
that was part of its appeal –
soft leather, down to the buttons,
silk-lined, calf-length, exclusive –
a full two weeks' wages
from the soap-packing holiday job.
It seemed mad to me at the time
to spend so much on one item,
but it paid back a hundredfold.
When you slipped it on you were different –
a languid, soon-to-be-discovered star,
someone worthy of such a coat as this.*

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Castoffs

*That day you wore that thick itchy jumper
The heat in the assembly hall was prickling
All the other children, keeping cool in summer cotton blouses and shirts
I saw the teacher suggest you take it off
But you daresn't because of the old elastic braces
Keeping those awful long shorts up*

*I saw you with your new school uniform
Black flared trousers over platform shoes
You thought you looked the part
Then i saw how they were hitched high over your waist
And the way the loops crumpled together under the well drawn belt
And i knew they had been your brother's, before*

*And those pink corduroys he used to wear with style
The ones you had your mum stitch blue denim flashes
To make 24 inch bell bottoms
You really made them your own
All scuffed and fraying at the ends
And a Deep Purple tie dye t-shirt your sister made
Just too late to be a hippy
But hey man, you're a Prog rocker now*

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"Clothes maketh the man"

*From elephant hats to leopard-skin,
My fashion journey's worn and thin—
At two years old, they called me Jumbo
(My sister, Rabbit—what a combo).*

*Then teenage angst in all-black gloom,
A walking shadow in my room,
Till sixties flair had me in bell-bottoms tight,
Yellow and red—a blinding sight.
My poor friends winced, they'd cross the street,
Afraid my trousers might compete.*

*A white blazer phase: so smart, so keen—
A nurses' disco thought I was a medicine machine.
At work, I tried the three-piece vow,
But mostly just the blue coat now.
A lawyer asked, with puzzled face,
"You wear real cuff-links to this place?"*

*Now retired, jackets line my wall—
Some serious, some having a ball.
And jeans? I swore I'd never dare,
Now they're quite normal, with a gilet flair:
In blue or maroon, the ensemble's done—
No Beau Brummell, but hey, it's fun.*

*My son? He's crisp in shirt and jacket,
No elephant hats for him to pack it.
But somewhere down in Australia's sun,
A designer shares my name—so, well, that's one.*

*So yes, clothes maketh the man, they say—
But elephants and bunnies led the way.*

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Cardinal Sin

*I can't remember the last time somebody dressed me
Was it my mother?
The days before i was embarrassed for her to see me
With all my hairs and graces
I shouldn't really feel embarrassed
But it's such a personal thing, your body, isn't it?
People touching parts that, well, don't normally get touched, shall we say?
They're doing a good job though
Very professional
No complaints - I couldn't have hoped for better
Time's nearly up - just the finishing touches
Then I'll be ready, all trussed up like a..
Like a what? A Christmas turkey? Don't be silly
Ah, the accessories - mustn't forget those
Got to look the part, haven't we?
They'll be waiting out there
I don't think they'll be disappointed
I mean, just look at me.*

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