

**THE FARCE OF MASTER PIERRE PATELIN – Anonymous 1469**  
**Englisbed by RICHARD HOLBROOK 1905**

Dramatis Personae:

Pierre Patelin – clever con and self-taught lawyer

Guillemette – his scheming and greedy wife

Jocceaulme the Draper – an ambitious and gullible fabric merchant

Lambkin the Shepherd – a slow but sly shepherd

Judge – exasperated and stern

SCENE I

(At Lawyer Patelin's dwelling)

PATELIN, GUILLEMETTE

PATELIN: By Saint Mary! Guillemette, for all my pains to pick up something, or bag a little pelf, not a penny can we save. Now, I have seen the time when I had clients.

GUILLEMETTE: Aye, true enough! I was thinking of the tune your lawfolk are warbling. No, you are not thought so able by any manner of means as you used to be. I've seen the day when everybody must have you to win his suit; now you're called everywhere the Briefless Barrister.

PATELIN: [as if he had not heard] Again, I don't say it to brag, but in the circuit where we hold our sessions there's no one abler, except the Mayor.

GUILLEMETTE: [naively] Aye, but he has read the Conjuring-book, and he studied a great while to be a scholar.

PATELIN: Whose case ever lags, if I set hand to it? And yet I never learnt my letters, save a little, but I'll venture to say that I can chant by the book with our priest as well as if I'd been as long in school as Charlemagne in Spain!

GUILLEMETTE: What is that worth to us? Not a rap! We're all but starved; our clothes are downright sieves, and there's no telling where new ones are to come from. Ha! A fig for all you know!

PATELIN: Tush, tush! Upon my conscience, if I care to set my wits at work, I shall find a way to get some finery. Please God, we shall see better days and be up again in no time. Oh, God's deed is done with speed. If it behooves me to stick to business, they'll not be able to find my peer.

GUILLEMETTE: Aye, that they will not! At cheating you're a master hand.

PATELIN: At regular law! By the Lord who made me!

GUILLEMETTE: Upon my word, at gulling, you mean. Oh, I know what I am talking about; for, to tell the truth, though you've neither education nor common sense, you are reckoned about the greatest sly-boots in the whole parish.

PATELIN: Nobody is so good at handling cases.

GUILLEMETTE: Heaven save me! You mean at plucking gulls. They say so anyhow.

PATELIN: So they do of those who sport their silks and satins, and talk of being barristers; but they're not! Enough of this prattle: I'm going to market.

GUILLEMETTE: [astonished] To market?

PATELIN: [mimicking her] Yes, to market, my gentle prize. Now, what if I buy a strip of cloth, or some other trifle for household use? . . . Our clothes are nothing but rags.

GUILLEMETTE: You haven't a copper. What can you do there?

PATELIN: [laying his forefinger on his nose and winking craftily] That's telling! If I fail, my dear, to fetch you cloth enough for both of us, and to spare, then I'm a fibber! [Playfully surveying Guillemette.] What color suits you best? A greenish grey? Or Brussels cloth? Or some other sort? Tell me that.

GUILLEMETTE: Whatever you can get. Borrowers must not be choosers.

PATELIN: [counting on his fingers] For you, two ells and a half, and for me, three, or rather, four. That makes...

GUILLEMETTE: Who the mischief will trust you with this cloth? You are counting your chickens before they're hatched.

PATELIN: What do you care? They'll trust me, beyond a doubt, - and be paid on Doomsday; for it won't be sooner.

GUILLEMETTE: Go along, my lamb; by now somebody else may have it on.

PATELIN: [almost to himself, as he walks slowly away] I will buy either grey or green, and for an undergarment, Guillemette, I want three quarters, or a whole ell of fine dark goods.

GUILLEMETTE: [shaking her head] God help me! So you do. Be off with you! [Calling, as he disappears.] And don't forget your dram, if you can come by it for nothing!

PATELIN: Take care of everything! [Exits]

GUILLEMETTE: [giving vent to her excitement with an exclamation half oath, half sigh] What merchant ... ? [Brightening.] If he only might be stark blind!

## SCENE II

(At the shop of Guillaume Joceaulme, Draper)

PATELIN, THE DRAPER

PATELIN: [peering into the Draper's shop] Not there? ... I have my doubts .... Aye, by Saint Mary, so he is. He's fussing with his goods. [while Patelin is reconnoitering, the Draper emerges and lays several rolls of goods on his counter. Then, on looking up, he spies the Lawyer, who greets him with a beguiling smile.] My worthy sir, God bless you!

DRAPER: And give you joy!

PATELIN: [leaning on the counter] I have been really longing to see you, Guillaume. How is your health? You're feeling tiptop, eh?

DRAPER: Aye, that I am!

PATELIN: [holding out his hand] Here! Your fist! How goes it with you?

DRAPER: Why, first rate, really -- and yours to command. . . . And how are you?

PATELIN: [giving the Draper a friendly clap on his shoulder] By the Apostle Saint Peter, your humble servant is as happy as a lark ... So you're feeling merry, eh?

DRAPER: To be sure. But merchants, you must know, can't always have their way.

PATELIN: How is business? It yields enough, I trust, to keep the pot a-boiling?

DRAPER: Afore Heaven, my good sir, I scarcely know. [imitating the cluck of a driver to his horse] It's always gee up! go along! [sighs]

PATELIN: [in a reminiscence] Ah, he was a knowing man! -- your father was, I mean. God rest his soul! [scanning the Draper with amazement.] When I look at you, I can't believe I'm not looking at him! What a good merchant he was - and clever! ... [waving his hand in such a way as to suggest the almost limitless ability of the elder Joceaulme.] I swear, your face is as like his as a regular painting ... If God ever took pity on any being, may he grant your father his soul's pardon! [takes off his hat and glances piously toward heaven. Tb« Draper follows suit.]

DRAPER:[sanctimoniously] Amen! Through his mercy! And ours, too, when it shall please him! [both replace their hats.]

PATELIN: [with a touch of melancholy] My faith! Many a time and most copiously he foretold me the days that we are come to. Again and again the memory has come back to me. [After a slight pause.] Then, too, he was deemed one of the good . . .

DRAPER:[interrupting Patelin's reminiscences by offering him a seat] Do sit down, sir. It's high time I asked you to [self-reproachful] but it was just like me to forget.

PATELIN: [as if anything concerning his own welfare were of no importance] Tut, tut, man! I'm comfortable .... He used to . . . [Another interruption by the Draper, who, in his zeal to show good manners to a prospective

customer, leans over his counter as far as he can, grasps Patelin by the shoulders, and endeavours to force him to sit down.]

DRAPER: Now, really you must be seated.

PATELIN: [yielding] Gladly. [A short pause, after which Patelin blithely resumes his yarn.] Oh, you shall see what wonders he told me! . . . I'll take my oath! in ears, nose, mouth, eyes, - no child was ever so like his father. [Pointing.] That dimpled chin! Why, it's you to a dot! And if anybody told your mother that you were not your father's son, he'd be hard up for a quarrel. I really cannot imagine however Nature among her works made two so similar faces. Each marked like the other! Why look! If you had both been spat against a wall in the self-same manner and in one array, you would n't differ by a hair. But, sir, good Laurentia, your step-aunt, is she still living?

DRAPER: [mystified] Of course she is.

PATELIN: [rising] How comely she seemed to me, and tall, and straight, and full of graces! ... Od's dear mother! you take after her in figure, as if they had copied her in snow. No family hereabouts, I think, comes up to yours for likenesses. The more I see you, ... Bless my soul! [Pointing to a mirror.] Look at yourself. You're looking at your father! [Clapping Joceaulme on the back with jovial familiarity.] You resemble him closer than a drop of water, I'll be bound! ... What a mettlesome blade he was! the worthy man, -- and entrusted his wares to whoever wished them. Heaven forgive him! He always used to laugh so heartily with me. Would to God the worst man in the world resembled him! There'd be no robbery or stealing, as there is. [Feeling a piece of cloth.] How well made this cloth is! how smooth it is, and soft, and nicely fashioned!

DRAPER: [proudly] I had it made to order from the wool of my own flock.

PATELIN: [overflowing with admiration] You don't say so! What a manager you are! [Jocularly.] It's the pater all over again. Blood will tell! . . . [Awestruck.] You are always, always busy.

DRAPER: [solemnly] Why not? To live, a body must be careful and put up with trials. [He looks at Patelin, who nods assent.]

PATELIN: [handling another piece of goods]

Was this one dyed in the wool? It's as strong as Cordovan leather.

DRAPER: [showing off the weave of his goods] That is good cloth of Rouen make, and well fulled, I promise you.

PATELIN: Now, upon my word, that's caught me; for I had no thought of getting cloth, when I came; by George, I had n't, I'd laid aside some four score crowns for an investment; but twenty or thirty of them will fall to you; I see that plainly, for the colour is so pleasing it gives me an ache. [Sighs, as if feeling a rapture akin to pain.]

DRAPER: [eagerly] Crowns, you say? Now can it be that your borrowers would take an odd sum?

PATELIN: Why, yes, if I chose. It's no odds to me what sort of money's paid. [Picking up the cloth again.] What kind of goods is this? ... Really, the more I see it, the worse I dote. I must have a coat of that, -- to be brief, -- and another for my wife, as well.

DRAPER: Cloth costs like holy oil. You shall have some, if you like. Ten or twenty francs are sunk so quickly!

PATELIN: I don't care: give me my money's worth. [Whispering in the Draper's ear.] I know of another coin or two that nobody ever got a smell of.

DRAPER: Now you're talking! That would be capital!

PATELIN: In a word, I'm hot for this piece, and have some I must.

DRAPER: Well then, first you must make up your mind how much you want. To begin with, though you had n't a brass farthing, the whole pile is at your service.

PATELIN: [gazing rather absent-mindedly at the cloth] I know that well, thank you.

DRAPER: You might like some of this sky-coloured stuff?

PATELIN: First, how much is a single ell to cost? [On saying this, Patel in holds up a penny so that the Draper may get a good look at it.] Here is a penny to seal the bargain in God's name; God's share shall be paid first: that stands to reason, and let us do nothing without calling him to witness. [Piously doffs his hat, strides

solemnly to a box set up in the market-place for receiving God's pennies, drops the coin in, and returns to the Draper.]

DRAPER: Upon my word, you speak like a good man, and I'm glad to hear you. Shall I set the very lowest price?

PATELIN: Yes.

DRAPER: [decisively] It will cost you four and twenty pence an ell.

PATELIN: Go to! Four and twenty pence! Heaven save the mark!

DRAPER: [laying his hand on his heart] By this soul! it cost me every whit of that, and I must lose nothing by the sale.

PATELIN: Excuse me! it's too much.

DRAPER: You'd never believe how cloth has risen! This winter the live-stock all perished in the great frost.

PATELIN: Twenty pence! twenty pence!

DRAPER: And I swear I will have my price. Wait till Saturday and you shall see what it's worth. Wool on the fleece, of which there used to be a plenty, cost me on Saint Maudeleyne's day eight good blanks, -- my oath on it, -- for wool I once got for half as much.

PATELIN: Od's blood! Then I will buy, without further haggling. Come, measure off!

DRAPER: And pray how much must you have?

PATELIN: That is easy to answer. What is the width?

DRAPER: Brussels width.

PATELIN: [as if to himself, and cocking his head without looking at the Draper. On saying 'she' s tall,' he makes a gesture as if he were laying his band on the head of an imaginary Guillemette] For me, three ells, and for her (she's tall), two and a half. In all, six ells ... Why, no it is n't! What a dunce I am!

DRAPER: There wants but half an ell to make the six.

PATELIN: Give me the even six, then. I need a hat as well.

DRAPER: [pointing to the other end of his strip of cloth]

Take hold there. We'll measure. Here they are, and no scrimping. [He measures.] One, ... and two, ... and three, ... and four, ... and five, ... and six!

PATELIN: Saint Peter's paunch! Measured fair and square!

DRAPER: [looking at Patelin, then turning his ell in the other direction. Naively] Shall I measure back again?

PATELIN: [with cheerful disdain] Oh, h-- no! In selling goods there's always a little gain or loss. How much does it all amount to?

DRAPER: Let us see. At four and twenty pence, each, -- for the six ells, nine francs.

PATELIN: [aside] Hm! Here goes! [Cf'o the Draper.] Six crowns?

DRAPER: So help me! Yes.

PATELIN: Now, sir, will you trust me for them? ... until anon, when you come? [The Draper shows symptoms of suspicion.] Nay, 'trust' is not the word, for you shall get your crowns at my door, in gold, or, if you like, in change.

DRAPER: [ungraciously] Oh thunder! that's off my road.

PATELIN: [with playful irony] By my lord Saint Giles, now you're telling gospel truth! Off your road! That's it! You are never ready to drink at my house, but this is the time you shall.

DRAPER: Good Lord! I scarcely do anything but drink! [After a moment's hesitation.] I'll come, but let me tell you it's bad policy to give credit on a first sale.

PATELIN: What if I pay for it, not in silver or copper, but in good yellow coin? [Craftily.] Oho! and you must have a bite of that goose my wife is roasting!

DRAPER: [aside] The man drives me mad. [Aloud.] Go on! Away! I will follow you then, and bring the cloth.

PATELIN: [nimbly seizing the bundle of goods] Nothing of the sort! How will it burden me? Not a whit, beneath my elbow . so.

DRAPER: [trying to recover his property] No, indeed, sir! it would look better for me to bring it.

PATELIN: [tucking the doth into his long gown] I'll be hanged if you go to such pains! See how snug it lies, here, under my elbow. What a jolly hump it will give me! Ah! now it's all right! [With mock hilarity.] We'll have a fling before you leave.

DRAPER: I beg you, hand over my money as soon as I've arrived.

PATELIN: I will that, and by gracious I'll see to it you eat heartily. I'd be sorry to have anything about me to pay with now. [Very archly.] At least you will come and try my wine. When your late father went by my house he used to sing out, 'Hullo, old pal!' or, 'What's the good word?', or, 'How do you do?' But you don't care a straw for poor folk, you rich men !

DRAPER: [flattered but deprecatory] Oh, now, I say! it's we who are poorer...

PATELIN: [laughing incredulously] Whew! Well, good-bye, good-bye! Turn up soon where I told you, and we'll have a good drink, you can count on that.

DRAPER: I'll do so. Go ahead, then, and see that I get gold! [Patelin starts homeward.]

### SCENE III

(In the market-place)

PATELIN: Gold! To think of it! Gold! The devil! I hit the nail on the head that time! [Overcome by a sense of immense absurdity.] No! gold! I'd see him hanged. [Chuckling.] Pshaw! He sold to me not at my price, but at his own; he shall be paid, however, at mine. He must have gold; he shall get it -- in the sweet bye and bye! Would he might run without stopping till he is paid! By Saint John, he'd travel further than from here to Pampeluna! [Enters an alley and disappears.]

### SCENE IV

(At the Draper's shop)

DRAPER: Those crowns he's going to pay me sha'n't get a peep at sun or moon this year, unless they're stolen from me. It takes two to make a bargain. That trickster is a big gull to buy at four and twenty pence an ell cloth not worth twenty!

### SCENE V

(At Patelin's, Guillemette is sitting near the window and facing it, so as to get all the light that enters through its small and somewhat murky panes. On her lap lies a garment which she is patching. Presently the door is softly opened and Patelin looks in. Seeing that Guillemette's back is turned, and that she is unaware of his presence, he steals toward her, grinning as he thinks what a surprise she is about to get. Suddenly, when he is quite close, she hears him and turns round with a start. Then Patelin begins to speak, archly and in a tone of triumph.

PATELIN, GUILLEMETTE

PATELIN: Have I some?

GUILLEMETTE: [startled] Some what?

PATELIN: What ever became of that old gown of yours?

GUILLEMETTE: Much need there is of telling! What will you do with it?

PATELIN: Nothing! nothing! Have I some? ... I told you so! Is this the cloth? [ He whips the roll of goods from under his gown and flaunts it in the face of the astounded Guillemette.]

GUILLEMETTE: Holy Mother! Now, as I hope to live, whose chest did that come from? [A little frightened.] Heaven! what scrape have we got into now? Dear! dear! and who 's to pay for it ?

PATELIN: Who, you ask? By Saint John, it's paid for. The chap who sold me that is n't crazy, my pet, oh, no! May I be hanged by the neck if he's not well fleeced. The rascally curmudgeon has caught it across the bum.

GUILLEMETTE: But how much is it to cost?

PATELIN: Cost? Nothing! it's paid for. No need of fretting over that.

GUILLEMETTE: Paid for? How? You had n't a farthing.

PATELIN: Oh yes, I had. I had a penny.

GUILLEMETTE: [ironically] Oh, very fine! Fie! You swore to pay, or you gave a note of hand. That is how you came by it ! And when the note falls due they'll come and seize our things and carry off everything we own.

PATELIN: [reassuringly] Upon my word, I gave but a penny for it all.

GUILLEMETTE: Benedicite Maria! A penny? Impossible !

PATELIN: [leaning toward her] You may pluck out this eye, if he got more, or if he gets more, bawl though he may.

GUILLEMETTE: But who is he, anyhow?

PATELIN: A numbskull called Guillaume, whose surname is Joceaulme; since you must know.

GUILLEMETTE: But how came you to get it for a penny? What was your game?

PATELIN: It was for God's-penny; and yet, had I said, 'Let's bind the bargain with a drink,' I'd have kept my penny, Anyhow, 'twas well worked., God and he shall share that penny, if they care to; for it is all they shall get, no matter how they carry on.

GUILLEMETTE: How came he to trust you? he's such a surly customer.

PATELIN: Dash me if I did n't make him out such a noble lord that he almost gave it me. I told him what a jewel his late father was. 'Ah, brother,' says I, 'what good stock you come of! No family hereabouts,' says I, 'compares with yours for virtues,' but drat me! what riff-raff! The most ill-tempered , rabble, I suppose, in all this kingdom. 'Guillaume, my friend.' says I, 'what a likeness you do bear your good father! and in every feature!' God wot how I heaped it on! And meanwhile I interlarded something about woollens. 'And then,' says I, 'heavens! how kind he was about trusting folks with his wares! and so meekly! You're he,' says I, 'his spitten image!' Yet you might have hauled the teeth out of that rascally old porpoise, his late father, or his monkey of a son, before they'd trust a fellow with as much as that! [snaps his fingers] or even be polite. Anyhow, I made such an ado and talked so much that he trusted me with six ells.

GUILLEMETTE: Yes, and he'll never get them back.

PATELIN: [derisively] Get them back? He'll get the devil back!

GUILLEMETTE: [suggesting by mimicry the action in the fable of the Fox and the Crow] I call to mind the fable of the Crow that had perched on a cross, some ten or twelve yards high. In his beak he was holding a cheese. A Fox strolled along that way and spied the cheese. Thought he to himself, 'Now, how am I going to get it?' Then he stood beneath the Crow. 'Ah,' says he, 'how handsome you are! and your song is so full of melody!' The Crow, like a fool, hearing such praises of his voice, opened his beak to sing. Down dropped the cheese, and in a trice Master Renard had it tight between his teeth and off he went! That, I'll wager, is what happened to this cloth. You wheedled him out of it, just as Renard got the cheese.

PATELIN: He is coming to eat some goose, -- on a wild goose chase, I mean. Now here's our game. Of course he will be braying to get money on the spot; so I've hatched out a nice arrangement. I'll simply lie on my bed, and play sick; then, when he comes, you will say, 'Oh, do speak low!' Then you must groan and pull a long face. 'Alas!' (you'll say) 'he he fell sick these two months past,' -- or say six weeks, -- and if he cries, 'That's all flim-flam, for he has just been at my shop,' you must say, 'Alas! this is no time to romp!' Then let me pipe him a little tune, for music is all he shall get.

GUILLEMETTE: Trust me to play the game, -- but if you slip up again, you may smart for it: I bet you'll catch it a good bit worse than the other time.

PATELIN: Hush now! I know what I'm about. We must both do as I say.

GUILLEMETTE: For goodness sake remember that Saturday they put you in the stocks! You know how every one jeered at you for your trickery.

PATELIN: Do stop your chatter: he'll be here before we know it. That cloth must stay with us [hiding it under the mattress]. Now I'm going to bed.

GUILLEMETTE: [laughing at his burlesque preparations] Go ahead!

PATELIN: [under the bedclothes] No laughing, now!

GUILLEMETTE: [as she draws the bed curtains together] Well, rather not! I'll shed hot tears.

PATELIN: We must stand fast, now. No flinching, or he'll see what's up.

SCENE VI (At the Draper's shop)

DRAPER: I must have a parting drink. Why no, I won't! for, by Saint Mat., I shall have some wine with Master Pierre Patelin, and a bit of his goose. And there I'm to receive some funds. I'm in for some plum, there, at the very least, and at no expense! There is no use in staying here; for I can make no further sales. [Leaves his shop; knocks on Patelin's door.] Hello! Master Pierre!

SCENE VII (At Patelin's)

THE DRAPER, GUILLEMETTE, PATELIN

GUILLEMETTE: [opening the door a chink and laying her finger on her lips] Oh, sir, if you have anything to say, for mercy's sake speak lower!

DRAPER: God keep you, mis'ess!

GUILLEMETTE: Oh, not so loud!

DRAPER: [astonished and puzzled] Huh? What is the matter?

GUILLEMETTE: [feigning amazement] Bless my soul!

DRAPER: Where is he?

GUILLEMETTE: Alas I Where should he be?

DRAPER: The... Who?

GUILLEMETTE: Ah, sir, how unkind! Where is he? May God in his mercy know! He has lain on the very same spot, poor martyr, without budging, for eleven weeks.

DRAPER: [staring open-mouthed] Who's this?

GUILLEMETTE: [whispering in the Draper's ear] Excuse me: I dare not raise my voice. I believe he is resting. He is a little drowsy. Alas! he's so done up, poor man!

DRAPER: [in amazement] Who?

GUILLEMETTE: Master Pierre.

DRAPER: [indignantly] Whew! And didn't he come to purchase six ells of cloth right now?

GUILLEMETTE: Who? He?

DRAPER: He came from my shop not half a quarter of an hour ago. Hurry! I am wasting time. Come! No more fooling! My money!

GUILLEMETTE: Oh, no joking! This is no time for jokes.

DRAPER: [waving his arms] Here! My money! Are you crazy? I want nine francs.

GUILLEMETTE: Oh Guillaume! It's no time for gammon, nor for making light of us. Go along and trifle with your simpletons, if you're out for a lark.

DRAPER: [angrily] I'll have nine francs, or I'll be damned!

GUILLEMETTE: [trying to keep from laughing, while she wipes away imaginary tears] Oh dear! sir, not everybody is so fond of laughter and clap-trap as you are.

DRAPER: [beseechingly] I say; please, no kidding; do fetch me Master Pierre.

GUILLEMETTE: Bad luck to you! What? Today?

DRAPER: [gesticulating angrily] Is n't this place, here, where I am, in the house of Master Pierre Patelin?

GUILLEMETTE: Yes! And may they stick you into bedlam! [crossing herself] -- but not me! Sh!

DRAPER: The devil and all! [Waxing sarcastic.] Have I no right to ask?

GUILLEMETTE: [crossing herself again, as if the devil might really appear; then laying her fingers on her lips and glancing mysteriously toward Patelin's hiding-place] God bless my soul! Sh! Lower, if you wish him to stay asleep!

DRAPER: [very satirical] Lower? How 'lower'? Shall I whisper it down in your ear? at the bottom of the well? or of the cellar?

GUILLEMETTE: My goodness! What a babbler you are! Anyhow, that is always the way with you.

DRAPER: [in petulant protestation] Damn it all! Now, let me tell you, if you expect me to whisper .... [Angrily.] Say now! As for such wrangling, I 'm not used to it. [Bearing on each word.] The truth is that Master Pierre took six ells of cloth to-day.

GUILLEMETTE: [shrilly] Huh? Oh, come! To-day? Well, I never! Look here, now! Took what? . . . Hang me, if it is n't the sober truth! He is in such a plight, poor man, that he has n't left his bed for eleven weeks -- I believe you are making sport of us. Now, is there any reason in it? Law now! you clear out of my house! [Wringing ber bands.] Oh dear! oh dear!

DRAPER: You were telling me to speak so low! Holy Mother! you are shrieking!

GUILLEMETTE: [almost in a whisper] Upon my soul, it is you who are making all the noise!

DRAPER: Look here! I must be off. Hand over . . .

GUILLEMETTE: Forgetting herself and letting her voice rise to a high key] Sh! Speak low, will you!

DRAPER: But it's you who'll rouse him! Great guns! You talk ten times louder than I do! [Emphatically.] I want you to let me go.

GUILLEMETTE: Eh? What is this? Are you cracked? or have you been drinking? In heaven's name!

DRAPER: Drinking? My word! There's a pretty question!

GUILLEMETTE: Oh dear! Speak lower!

DRAPER: [meekly] I ask payment for six ells of cloth, lady, -- for pity's sake.

GUILLEMETTE: It's all in your eye! And who did you give it to?

DRAPER: To himself.

GUILLEMETTE: Fine trim he's in for buying cloth! Alas! he can't budge [begins to sob; the Draper thinks hard.] He's in no need of clothes; never more will he be drest in any garment but a white one, nor leave the spot where he is lying, unless he goes feet first.

DRAPER: This must have happened since sunrise, then; for I 'm sure I talked with him.

GUILLEMETTE [stopping her ears] Your voice is so shrill! Be quiet, for pity's sake!

DRAPER: [in a perfect tantrum] It's you, upon my oath! It's you! Oh, damn it! Od's blood! this is torment. If some one paid me, I would go my way. Afore Heaven! whenever I have trusted, this is what I've always got for it.

## SCENE VIII

PATELIN, GUILLEMETTE, THE DRAPER

Patel in [as if he had just awakened] Guillemette! A little rosewater! Prop me up! Tuck me in behind! Pah! No one's listening. The ewer! A drink! Rub the soles of my feet!

DRAPER: I hear him there.

GUILLEMETTE You do.

PATELIN: [in a nightcap; peers out between the curtains and shouts to Guillemette] Ha, wretch! come here! Who told you to open those windows? Come, cover me! Drive these black men away! Marmara, carimari, carimara! Away with them! away!

GUILLEMETTE [to Patelin] What's this? How you behave! Are you beside yourself?

PATELIN: [slowly getting out of bed and pointing, as he does so, toward the rafters. To the Draper] Thou canst not see what I perceive. There is a black monk, flying. Catch him! Give him a stole! [Approaching the Draper, who retreats backward, he spits like a cat, turning his fingers into claws and striking as if he were going to scratch the Draper's eyes out.] The cat! the cat! [Pointing, and seeming to follow the flight of the imaginary monk.] Up, up, he goes!

GUILLEMETTE: Oh what is this? Ain't you ashamed! La! this turmoil has upset him.

PATELIN: [returns to bed and falls back on his pillow, exhausted. To Guillemette, who is bending over him] Those physicians have killed me with these hotchpotches they have made me drink. And yet, to believe them, it's as simple as moulding wax.

GUILLEMETTE: [to the Draper] Oh! Have a look at him, sir: he's such a sufferer.

DRAPER: You don't mean to say he's fallen sick since just now, when he came from market?

GUILLEMETTE: From market?

DRAPER: Aye. By Saint John, I think he was there. [To Patelin.] I want my money for the cloth I lent you, Master Pierre.

PATELIN: [pretending to take the Draper for a physician] Ho, Doctor John! harder than stone: I have . . . two small lumps, black, round as balls. Shall I take another clyster?

DRAPER: Huh? How do I know? What business is it of mine? It's nine francs I want, or six crowns.

PATELIN: These three black little pointed things, -- I believe you call 'em 'pills.' They have spoilt my jaws. For heaven's sake, Doctor John, no more of them! Pah! there is nothing so bitter! They've made me let go of everything.

DRAPER: They have not! by my father's soul ! You have n't let go of my nine francs.

GUILLEMETTE: [half aside] Hang them! these folks who are always meddling. [‘Shooing’ the indignant but helpless Draper.] Away with you, by all the devils! -- as God has nothing to do with it.

DRAPER: By the Lord who made me, I will have my cloth before I finish, or my nine francs!

PATELIN: [to the Draper, still pretending to take him for 'Doctor 'John ' ] And my water, does it show, perchance, that I am dying? [To Guillemette.] Alas, although he stays, let me not die!

GUILLEMETTE: [to the Draper] Begone! Is n't it wicked to be splitting his ears with your din?

DRAPER: [throwing up both hands] May heaven rue the day it runs foul of him! [To Patelin.] Six ells of cloth! Come, now! upon your honour, is it fair for me to lose them?

PATELIN: Had you only been able to thin my ... Doctor John; it's so hard when it comes out at my ...that I don't know how I keep on living.

DRAPER:[shaking his fist] I want nine francs in full, I say, or by Saint Peter...

GUILLEMETTE: Dear me! how you plague the man! How can you be so boisterous? You see clearly that he takes you for a physician. Alas! the poor Christian has had ill luck enough. Eleven weeks without a break he's been lying there, poor soul! [Clasps her hands and looks like the most dismal hypocrite; Patelin rolls over, with a groan.]

DRAPER:[half to himself] Od's blood! I can't imagine how this mishap could have befallen him; for he came this very day and we struck a bargain, -- at least, it seemed to happen so, if I 'm not mistaken.

GUILLEMETTE: My good sir, there's something amiss with your memory. Really, I think you had better go and rest a little; for lots of folks might gossip that you come in here on my account. Go away! The physicians will be on hand presently, and I would n't have anyone suspect some impropriety: I'm not that sort.

DRAPER: Oh, curse it all! So this is the fix I 'm in. [Mopping his brow.] I'll be bound! I was still thinking... You have no goose on the fire?

GUILLEMETTE: Hark what he asks! Why, sir, that's no food for sick folks. Eat your own geese, and don't come here to play your monkey tricks. I must say, you make yourself very much at home.

DRAPER: Please don't take it amiss, for I verily believed . . . [To himself.] Still ... by the sacrament ... Pshaw! now I am going to find out! [Walks away slowly, muttering as he goes.] I know full well that I ought to have six ells, all in one piece; but that woman has clean upset my wits. He took them; no doubt of it! [After reflection.] Nay, he did not. The devil! it will not tally! I saw him in Death's clutch -- or at least he's shamming death. [Ponders again.] Aye, by'r Lady, he did! There is no doubt of it; he took them and stowed them away beneath his elbow! [After more reflection.] No, he did not! It may be I am dreaming; yet, whether I be asleep or awake, it is not like me to give my goods to any man, however friendly he may be with me. I would not have trusted any one. [Angrily.] Od's bod! he took them! and by the death ... [Reflecting.] Nay, I have it! He did not! ... Yet what am I coming to? [Emphatically.] He has them! [After a slight pause he waves his arms desperately and bursts out.] May a pox take both his body and his soul if I know who has got the best or the worst of it, they or myself! I 'm all at sea. [Exit]

## SCENE IX

PATELIN, GUILLEMETTE

PATELIN: [still in bed; low to Guillemette] Is he gone?

GUILLEMETTE: [at the door] Be still! I'm listening. He is humming some little tune or other under his breath. By the way he mutters, one might suppose he was losing his mind.

PATELIN: Have n't I lain here long enough? [After a pause.] He dropped in so punctually!

GUILLEMETTE: [still listening] Maybe he will return. [Patelin starts to rise.] Nay! Heaven forbid! Lie still a while. It would be all up with us if he found you out of bed.

PATELIN: He met his match, the distrustful skinflint! Served him right!

GUILLEMETTE: [leaving her post] Of all the rank hucksters that ever were baited he is the gem! Oh, this is what he gets for ungodly stinginess. [She titters loudly.]

PATELIN: For heaven's sake, stop laughing! If he came back he might play the mischief, and, let me tell you, we have n't seen the last of him.

GUILLEMETTE: I declare! Let anybody who can, keep from laughing; I can't help it! [Laughs uproariously!]

#### SCENE X

(At the Draper's shop)

DRAPER: By the holy light that shines! For all the babblers, that freshwater barrister shall see me again.

Pooh! That income some of his cousins or his aunts were going to furnish him! A likely yarn! Now, by Saint Peter, he has my cloth, the false swindler! I gave it him right here. [Starts for Patelin's in a fury.]

#### SCENE XI (At Patelin's)

PATELIN, GUILLEMETTE

GUILLEMETTE: When I think of the face he made as he looked at you .. [Laughs.] He dunned so fiercely! [Laughs again.]

PATELIN: Quit your cackling! God ... [crosses himself] ... bless my soul, if some one should overhear. you we might as well decamp: he's such a crusty customer.

#### SCENE XII (Mostly in the market-place)

DRAPER: [with bitter scorn] Ha! a boozing pettifogger! [Sneering.] Aquack who knows but three lessons and three psalms! [Ironically.] The rest of us are brainless clowns, forsooth! By' gad, no one was ever fitter to be hanged! He has my cloth, or I'll be damned, and he has tricked me with this game! [Rapping angrily at Patelin's door.] Ho, there! mis'ess : where are you hiding]

#### SCENE XIII (At Patelin's)

THE DRAPER, GUILLEMETTE, PATELIN

GUILLEMETTE: My word! he's heard me! [Looking through the keyhole.] He seems to be going mad.

PATELIN: [in bed; draws the curtains together] I'll make believe I'm delirious. Let him in.

GUILLEMETTE: [opening the door and trying to look serious] How you yell!

DRAPER: [entering noisily] Ah ha! you are laughing, eh? Here! My money!

GUILLEMETTE: My stars! What do you think I've got to laugh about? There is n't an unhappier creature under the sun. He is passing away. Never did you hear such a storming, nor frenzy. His mind is still astray; he raves, he sings, and then he babbles and mutters in so many languages! He will not live half an hour. Upon my soul, I laugh and weep in the same breath.

DRAPER: I know nothing about your laughter or your weeping. To cut it short, I must be paid!

GUILLEMETTE: For what? Are you daft? Are you beginning to rant again?

DRAPER: [haughtily] I am not wont to be thus spoken to when I am selling my cloth. Would you have me believe the moon is made of green cheese?

PATELIN: [standing on his bed, with his head between the curtains] Now then! the Queen of the Gitterns!

Quick! Fetch her here! I know well she has given birth to four and twenty gitternkins by the abbot of Ivernaux: I must stand godfather for him.

GUILLEMETTE: Alas! Think about God the Father, my dear, not about gitterns or gitternkins.

DRAPER: [aside] Ha! What a pair of humbugs! [Exploding.] Quick now! Plank down hard cash for the cloth you got of me.

GUILLEMETTE: La! If you made one mistake, are n't you satisfied?

DRAPER: [appealingly] Do you know how it is, dear friend? So help me God! I'm not aware of a mistake . . . [Indignantly.] Come now! Shell out, or be hanged! [Whining.] How do I wrong you if I come here to ask for what is mine? For by Saint Peter . . .

GUILLEMETTE: Alas! How you rack the man! [Inspired.] I see by your looks that you are not sound. [Scanning him closely.] As sure as I am a sinner, if I had help I'd tie you fast, for you've gone stark mad.

DRAPER: [desperately] Oh dear, oh dear! I am beside myself at not getting my money.

GUILLEMETTE: Oh what witless talk! Cross yourself! Benedicite! [Insisting.] Make the sign of the cross!

DRAPER: Damn me if ever I trust anybody with. .. [he begins to speak brokenly, hearing noises from the bed, where Patelin is about to have a fresh frenzy] . . . cloth . . . this . . . year . . . Godamercy! What an invalid!

PATELIN: [leaping down from his bed and striding about, performing, meanwhile, various antics which the Draper observes with amazement] Mere de diou, la coronade, -- par fye, y m'en

voul anar. - Or renague biou, outre mar. Ventre de diou! zendict gigone, -- castuy carible et res ne done. -- Ne carillaine, fuy ta none, -- que de l'argent il ne me sone! If it's ducats, mum is the word. [To the Draper.] Have you understood, fair coz?

GUILLEMETTE: [to the Draper] He once had an uncle near Limoges, a brother of his aunt-in-law, That, I take it, is why he jabbers in the gibberish of Limousin.

DRAPER: Out on you! He stole away with my cloth under his arm-pit.

PATELIN: [taking Guil/emette by the hand and starting to lead her away in princely fashion]

Venez ens, douce damiselle. [Pointing to the Draper.] Toadspawn! what's it after? [Haughtily commanding the Draper to draw back.] Avaunt, scullion, avaunt! [While the Draper stares, Patelin strides across the room, snatches up an old gown of Guillemette's, and in very short order gets himself up as a priest; he then addresses his bewildered visitor in exclamative or questioning tones.] Hither! Hasten! Devil, come en chelle vielle monkery. Heh! fault il que ly prestre rie, quant il deust canter se messe?

GUILLEMETTE: Alas! alas! it will soon be time to give him the extreme unction.

DRAPER: But how does he happen actually to speak the Picard tongue? Whence comes this foolishness?

GUILLEMETTE: His mother was raised in Picardy; so he speaks Picard now.

PATELIN: [going toward the Draper] Whence comest thou, merry reveler? Wacarme!

lievve godeman. Henriey, Henriey, conselapen. [Takes the Draper's hands and goes dancing about the room, singing.] Grile, grile, scohehonden,-- zilop, zilop, en mon que bonden, -- Disticien unen desen versen,-- mat groet festal ou truit den hersen. [As he gives the astounded Draper a final twirl, Patelin trips himself, falls, and lies on his back with only enough strength left to gasp, but in this posture he soon gets breath to continue his linguistic antics.] Yuste vuille pour le frimas! [Kneels as if at a confessional.] Faictes venir sire Thomas -- tantost qui me confessera!

DRAPER: What is this? He will keep on all day talking foreign languages. If he would only give me a security, or my money, I would go.

GUILLEMETTE: Bless my soul! . . . Oh, dear me! You are so outlandish. What will you have? How you can be so stubborn passes my understanding.

PATELIN: [to the Draper] Or cha, Renouart au Tine! -- Be dei, que ma couille est pelouse! [The Draper, determined to get his money by hook or by crook, takes hold of Patelin's gown and gives it a pull.] Les playes dieu! qu' esse qui s'attaque -- a men coul? Esse une vaque? -- une mousque? ou ung escarbot? [The Draper retreats, Patelin crouches behind a chair, with only his head visible.] Be dea! j'e le mau saint Garbot! -- Suis je des foyreux de Baieux?

DRAPER: How can he stand the strain of so much talking? [Witnessing fresh antics.] Ho! he is losing his wits! But how does he come to speak Norman?

GUILLEMETTE: His schoolmaster was a Norman; so in his last hour the memory of it comes back to him. [Further capers by Patelin.] He is giving up the ghost!

DRAPER: [in dismay] Thunderation! This is the worst raving that ever I ran foul of. [To Guillemette.] I never should have thought he was not this day at market!

GUILLEMETTE: [astonished] You thought so?

DRAPER: Yes, hanged if I did n't; but I see that is n't what happened, at all.

PATELIN: [listening, as if he heard some noise in the street] Sont il ung asne que j'os braire? [Sputtering, as if another frenzy were coming on.] Ha oul dandaoul en ravezeie-- Orfha en euf. [Behind a chair Patelin changes his costume so as to resemble an old hag. Meanwhile Guillemette and the Draper, clinging to each other, await the next occurrence with a horror in one case shammed, in the other real. Hearing a weird sound from behind the chair, Guillemette cries out, with clasped hands.]

GUILLEMETTE: God help you!

PATELIN: [picks up a broom, and with the handle makes cabalistic figures on the floor, draws a circle round the Draper; then sits astride his broom and goes prancing off like a witch, continuing his mutterings] Huis oz bezou drone nos badou - Digaut an tan en hol madou - Maz rehet crux dan holcon - So ol oz merveil il grant nacon - Aluzen archet epysy - Har cals amour ha coureisy,

DRAPER: Alas! Blest Heaven! Harken to it. He is sinking. How he gurgles! [To Guillemette.] But what is he sputtering about? How he mutters! Od's body kin! he mumbles so I cannot catch a word of it. This is not Christian, or any other tongue, apparently.

GUILLEMETTE: It's Breton. His grandmother on his father's side came from Brittany. [Patelin shows signs of exhaustion.] He is dying! This shows that he needs his last sacraments.

PATELIN: [still astride the broom; to the Draper] He par Gigon, tu te mens. -Vualx te deu, couille de Lorraine! [Starts to explain the cabalistic figures to the Draper, who retreats in alarm. Patelin pursues him, whacking the floor and furniture with his broom. Finally, as the Draper, breathless, takes refuge behind a chair. Patelin addresses him in Latin.] Et bona dies sit vobis, -- magister amantissime, -- pater reverendissime, - - quomodo brulis? que nova? -- Parisius non sunt ova! - Quid petit ille mercator? - Dicat sibi quod trufator, - ille qui in lecto jacet, - vult ei dare, si placet, - de oca ad comedendum. [Falls on the floor, The Draper, who has regained some of his courage, helps Guillemette to put Patelin to bed, bolstering him up with pillows. Patelin continues to mutter.]

GUILLEMETTE: Upon my word, he will die a-talking! How he froths! [To the Draper.] Do you not mark how he is steaming? [Casting her eyes aloft.] Now his human part is going to its heavenly home. [Hiding her face in her hands.] Now I shall be left alone, poor and forlorn.

DRAPER: [aside] It were well for me to go away before he breathes his last. [To Guillemette.] I fear he might be loth, at his decease, to tell you any secrets in my presence, though he would in privacy. Pardon; for I take my oath I thought he had got my cloth. Good bye, ma'am; may God forgive me!

GUILLEMETTE: [showing him out] Heaven bless you - and his poor mournful wife!

SCENE XIV (In the street)

DRAPER: By all the saints! I'm flummuxed worse than ever. [After a short pause.] The Devil, in his stead, took my cloth to tempt me! Benedicite! [Crosses himself.] May he leave me in peace! And since the case so stands, I give the cloth in God's name to whosoever took it. [Reenters his shop.]

SCENE XV (At Patelin's)

PATELIN, GUILLEMETTE

PATELIN: [jumping out of bed and waving his hand after the departing Draper] Go along with you! [To Guillemette] How do you like me for a teacher? [Peeping into the street.] Crackbrained Neddie is making for home. [Taps his head significantly.] Heavens! he has plenty of rooms to let! ... At night, when he's in bed, he is likely to see spooks.

GUILLEMETTE: How he was bamboozled! And did n't I do my part well?

PATELIN: Od's bodykin! You're an angel! We've got cloth enough, I think, to have some clothes! [With this, Patelin pulls the stolen cloth from the bed, where it has lain hidden, wraps one end round his body and flings

the whole strip so that it lies unfolded when it reaches Guillemette's feet. She grasps her end and whirls so that she and Patel in are close together when the curtain falls.]

SCENE XVI (At the Draper's shop)

THE DRAPER Later, TIBALT LAMBKIN, a Shepherd

DRAPER: That's the way! Everybody stuffs me with lies. Everybody carries off my goods, and takes what he can get. Of all unlucky men I am the king. The very shepherds cheat me; but mine, whom I have always treated kindly, shall be sorry for flouting me! By the blessed Virgin, he shall smart for it !

SHEPHERD: [appearing unexpectedly from the left of the market-place; on being seen by his master, he removes his cap and bows; then begins to speak with the thick dull drawl of a born yokel] God give you a good day, sweet master, and a good evening!

DRAPER: Oho! So it's thou, foul churl. A good fellow thou art; aye, good for the gallows!

SHEPHERD: [resting his crook on the ground and stopping, about five feet from the Draper]

I ax your pardon, master, but some one or other in striped hosen, which were right disorderly, and he had a rod in his hand, yet no lash on it, said to me, says he . . yet I remember not at all well what it may be, to tell the truth. He spoke to me of you, master, and of some summons or other. As for me, holy mother! much I know what it's all about. He muddled me a-talking about ewes and court in the afternoon. And he raised a great hullabaloo for you, master .

DRAPER: [shaking his fist in the face of Lambkin, who cowers against the wall] If I do not have thee hauled forthwith before the judge, may I be drowned and blasted! Never shalt thou kill one beast, by my oath, but thou remember it! Anyhow, thou shalt pay me for the six ells . . . I mean for slaughtering my sheep, and the havoc thou hast wrought me these ten years past.

SHEPHERD: Don't believe the slanderers, my good master; for, upon my soul ...

DRAPER: And by Gog's bones, before Saturday thou shalt give me back my six ells of wool .. I mean what was taken from my sheep.

SHEPHERD: What wool? Ah! master, I believe you are angry over some other thing. By Saint Lupus! master, I fear to speak when I look at you.

DRAPER: Leave me in peace! Out of my sight! --if thou art wise. And thou hadst better be on hand.

SHEPHERD: Master, let us agree. For God's sake, don't go to law about it.

DRAPER: [waving him qff] Begone! Thy business is in a pretty, pass! [Yelling and shaking his fist in Lambkin's face.] Begone! I say. I'll make no agreement, nor settle anything, save as the judge shall do. [He drives, the Shepherd out.] Yah! Unless I 'm wary, every one will be swindling me from now on!

SHEPHERD: God be wi' you, sir, and give you joy! [Crossing the market-place; to himself.] So I must defend myself. [Knocks at Patelin's door.] Is anyone within?

SCENE XVII

PATELIN, GUILLEMETTE Later, THE SHEPHERD

PATELIN: Hang me, if he is n't coming back!

GUILLEMETTE: Nay, he is not; mercy on me! that would be the very worst.

SHEPHERD: [as Patelin comes out] God be with you! God bless you!

PATELIN: God keep thee! What wilt thou, my good fellow?

SHEPHERD: They will fine me for default unless I appear for trial. And, if you like, you will come, sweet master, and defend me; for I know nothing. And I will pay you well, even though I be ill clad.

PATELIN: Come hither, now. Speak up! Which art thou? - plaintiff? or defendant?

SHEPHERD: I have business with a dealer -- do you understand, sweet master? -- whose ewes I have for a great while led to pasture and watched for him. Now, sir, upon my word, I saw he paid me scantily. . . Shall I tell everything?

PATELIN: To be sure! A client should hide nothing from his counsel.

SHEPHERD: It is true, sir, beyond denial, that I basted 'em on the skull for him, so that time and again they went into a swoon and fell dead; no matter how strong and sound they were. And then, lest he should lay it to me, I gave him to understand that they died of the scab. 'Ho!' quoth he, 'take the 'scabby one away from the others; off with her! ' 'Right willingly! ' quoth I; [leering] but that was' done otherwise; for, by Saint John! I ate them, knowing well what they wanted. Well, sir, this went on so long, and I slaughtered so many, that. he found it out. And when he saw he was being- deceived, -- God help me! -- he set somebody to spy; for they hear them bleat very loud, you understand, when it's going on. So I have been caught red-handed; I can never deny it. Now I beseech you -- for my part I have money enough -- that we two steal a march on him. I know well he has the law on his side, but you will find some loophole, if you try, so as to give him the worst of it.

PATELIN: By your faith, shall you be glad? [Winsomely.] What will you give me if I upset the plaintiff's case, and you are acquitted?

SHEPHERD: I will pay you not in copper, but in fine gold crowns.

PATELIN: Then your case shall be a good one. And were it twice as bad, so much the better! and the sooner I shall do for him! As I am going to apply my wisdom, how you shall hear me spout, when he has set forth his suit! Come hither! By the holy precious blood! Art thou crafty enough to understand a trick? What is thy name?

SHEPHERD: By Saint Maurus! it is Tibalt Lambkin.

PATELIN: [jocularly] Lambkin, hast thou filched many a sucking lamb from thy master?

SHEPHERD: My word! it is quite likely I have eaten above thirty in three years.

PATELIN: Ten yearly to pay for dice and candles. [Aside.] I believe I shall let him have it fair! [Aloud.] Dost think he can find anyone forthwith to prove his facts? That is what the case hinges on.

SHEPHERD: Prove, sir? Blessed Mary! By all the saints in Paradise! instead of one he'll have a dozen witnesses against me!

PATELIN: That's a bad feature in thy case. [Slight pause.] Here is what I had in mind. I'll feign to know naught of thee, that I never laid eyes on thee before.

SHEPHERD: [in dismay] Lord, no! not that!

PATELIN: No, then I won't. But here is what you must do. If you talk, they will trap you every time, and in such cases confessions are most prejudicial, and so harmful that it's the devil and all. Here is the trick! As soon as they call on you for trial, answer nothing but ba-a-a [mimicking a sheep's bleat], whatever they say to you. And if they happen to curse you, saying, 'Ha, stinking fool! a pox on thee, villain! Art thou flouting the court?' go ba-a. 'Oh! I'll say, ' he is half-witted; he thinks he is talking to his sheep!' But even if they split their heads with roaring, not another word! Beware!

SHEPHERD: I take it to heart, and truly I will be wary, and I will do it properly, I promise and affirm.

PATELIN: Now heed! No flinching! And whatever I say or do, give me no other answer.

SHEPHERD: I? By my sacrament! call me a fool outright if I utter to-day another word, to you or to any one, whatsoever they say to me, but only ba-a, as you have taught me.

PATELIN: By Saint John! There is the prank to outwit your adversary! [In a tone between wheedling and threat.] But when it is done, pay me a right good fee.

SHEPHERD: Master, if I do not pay as agreed, never trust me. But I pray, look carefully to my business.

PATELIN: By 'r Lady of Boulogne, the Judge must be holding court; for he always is on hand by six o'clock, or thereabouts. Now come along with me, but we will not take the same road.

SHEPHERD: Quite so! [shrewdly] they must n't see that you're my lawyer.

PATELIN: [threateningly] By 'r Lady! Mind your eye, if you don't pay generously!

SHEPHERD: Why! as agreed, sir; do not doubt it. [Sets out.]

PATELIN: [alone] Oh, well, half a loaf is better than no loaf at all. I shall hook a minnow, anyhow; and if he is lucky, he will give me a crown or so for my pains. [Follows the Shepherd into the market-place.]

SCENE XVIII (In the market-place)

(Enter Judge, followed by a clerk, a score of archers, bailiffs, and loiterers, who range themselves to the right and left of the market-cross, so as to leave an open space before the Judge's seat. The Judge sits down and surveys the crowd)

THE JUDGE, PATELIN, THE SHEPHERD, then THE DRAPER

PATELIN: [removes his hat; to the Judge] God bless you, sir, and grant you your heart's desire!

JUDGE: Welcome, sir! But cover yourself. There! Take a seat.

PATELIN: [hiding in the crowd, to avoid being seen by the Draper, whose breathless approach brings to him the sudden realization that the Shepherd's adversary is the very person whom he has himself beguiled] Oh, I am all right, sir, if you please; there's more room here.

JUDGE: [brusquely] If there is business, have done with it, in order that the court may adjourn.

DRAPER: [arrives much flurried, just as the Judge has spoken] My lawyer is coming, your Worship. He is finishing a little work that he was at, and it would be kind of you to wait for him.

JUDGE: [testily] Come, come! I have business elsewhere. If the offending party is here, set forth your case at once. Are you not the plaintiff?

DRAPER: I am.

JUDGE: [casting his eyes about] Where is the defendant? Is he present in person?

DRAPER: [pointing at the Shepherd] Yes, there he is, keeping mum; but God knows he has something to think about.

JUDGE: [to the Draper] Since you are both here, make known your suit.

DRAPER: This, then, is what I am bringing an action against him for. Your Worship, the truth is that for the love of God, and out of charity, I reared him in his childhood; and when I saw that he was strong enough to work in the fields, to cut it short, I made him my shepherd and set him to watching my flock; but as true as you are sitting there, your Worship, he has wrought such havoc among my ewes and wethers that, no mistaking, he ...

JUDGE: [officially] Now listen! Was n't he in your hire?

PATELIN: [breaking in, ostensibly to show that the Judge has made a good point] Aye, that's it! For had he kept him for pure sport, without hire ...

DRAPER: [recognising Patelin, who hides his face behind his hand] The devil get me! If it's not you, and no mistake!

JUDGE: [to Patelin] How is this? You are holding your hand up. Have you a toothache, Master Pierre?

PATELIN: [wincing] Yes, my teeth are raising such a row that I never felt worse pains. I dare n't lift my head. [Waving one hand.] For God's sake, make him proceed!

JUDGE: [to the Draper] Go on. Finish your charge. Come! Conclude promptly.

DRAPER: [aside, and staring at Patelin] By the holy rood, 't is he and no other! [To Patelin.] It was you I sold six ells of cloth to, Master Pierre!

JUDGE: [to Patelin] What is he saying about cloth?

PATELIN: [to the Judge] He's rambling. He means to come to the point, but he can't find his way to it, for he lacks the training.

DRAPER: [half choked with indignation] Hang me if anybody else took my cloth, by the bloody throat!

PATELIN: [to the Judge] How the wretched man lugs his inventions in to make out a case! The pig-headed fellow means, of course, that his shepherd had sold the wool that went into the cloth that made my garment, by saying that he is robbing him, and that he stole the wool of his sheep.

DRAPER: [to Patelin] Damn me, if you have n't it!

JUDGE: [to the Draper] In the devil's name, be still! You are twaddling. Can you not return to the subject, without delaying the court by such drivel?

PATELIN: [with one hand still on his jaw] My teeth ache so; yet I must laugh! [Looking toward the Draper.] He's already in such haste that he does n't know where he left off. We must set him right again.

JUDGE: [to the Draper] Come! Let's stick to those sheep! What happened?

DRAPER: [is about to return to his sheep, when Patelin, by stepping in front of him, diverts his attention; whereupon he shakes his fist at Patelin and at the same time appeals to the Judge] He took six ells, worth nine francs!

JUDGE: [bawling] Are we greenhorns? or tomfools? Where do you think you are?

PATELIN: [to the Judge] Od's blood! He takes us for ganders, I suppose! Oh, he looks so very good! but let me advise that his opponent be examined a bit.

JUDGE: [regaining his composure] Very true! He is familiar with the man; he must needs know him. [To the Shepherd.] Step forward. Speak.

SHEPHERD: [shambling forward and looking very dull] Ba-a!

JUDGE: Hoity-toity! Here's a mess! What is this ba-a? Am I a goat? Speak to me!

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

JUDGE: A murrain on you! Ha! Are you flouting us?

PATELIN: [to the Judge] Believe me, he is crazy, or stupid, or he fancies he's among his sheep.

DRAPER: [wildly to Patelin] Damn me if you are not the very man that took it,-- my cloth! I mean. [to the Judge.] oh, you can't imagine, sir, by what deceit ...

JUDGE: [threatening] Hold your tongue! Are you an idiot? Leave that matter alone, and let's come to the point!

DRAPER: True, your Worship; but the circumstance concerns me; yet on my faith I'll not utter another word about it. Another time it may be different. I shall have to swallow it whole. Well, as I was saying, I gave six ells [the Judge starts up] ... I mean, my sheep ... pray, sir, forgive me ... this nice master [Pierre] ... my shepherd, when he ought to have been in the fields ... [Shaking his fist at Patelin and appealing frantically to the Judge]. He told me I should have six crowns in gold, as soon as I came.. . [as the Judge threatens] ... I mean, three years ago my shepherd gave me his word that he would watch over my flock loyally and do me no damage to it, nor any villainy, and then ... [seeing Patelin] now he denies me outright both cloth and money. [To Patelin]. Oh, Master Pierre, truly ... [Catches a warning frown from the Judge.] That scoundrel robbed me of the wool of my sheep; and healthy though they were, he killed them, and made them die by pounding out their brains . . . [Again Patelin distracts his attention.] When he had tucked my cloth under his arm-pit he hurried off, saying I should go and get six gold crowns at his house,

JUDGE: There is neither rime nor reason in all your railing. What does it mean? Now you interlard one thing, now another. In short, fore God, I can make neither head nor tail of it. [To Patelin.] He muddles something about cloth and prattles next of sheep, helter skelter. What can he be driving at?

PATELIN: Now, I undertake that he is keeping back the poor shepherd's wage.

DRAPER: [to Patelin] By heaven, you might hold your tongue! My cloth ... as true as gospel . . . I know where my shoe pinches better than you or anyone. Od's bones, you have it!

JUDGE: [to the Draper] What has he?

DRAPER: Nothing, sir. [Again bursts out.] Upon my oath, he is the greatest swindler . . . [The Judge threatens.] Oh, I 'II be silent about it, if I can, and not speak of it again, whatever happens.

JUDGE: No! But remember! Now finish speedily.

PATELIN: [to the Judge] This shepherd cannot answer the charge without counsel; yet he is afraid, or knows not how to ask for it. If you were willing to order me to take his case, I would.

JUDGE: [ironically] His case? You'd get cold comfort out of that, I should imagine. It's hardly worth while.

PATELIN: But, honestly, I don't care to make anything out of it; let it be done for charity! [Turning toward the Shepherd.] Now I'm going to find out from the poor lad what he will tell me, and whether, perchance, he may afford me matter for his defence. He would have a hard time getting out of it, if nobody came to his rescue.

[To the Shepherd.] Come hither, my friend. [With an utterly vacant expression the Shepherd slouches forward a step or two, with his crook in one hand, and his cap in the other.] If anyone could find... dost thou understand?

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

PATELIN: [feigning astonishment] Ba-a? The devil! What ba-a? Zounds! Art thou crazy? Tell me thy business.

SHEPHERD: Ba-a-a!

PATELIN: How ba-a? Dost thou hear thy ewes a-bleating? Mind, it is to thine interest.

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

PATELIN: [entreating] Now speak! Say yes, and no. [Whispering.] Well done! Keep it up!

SHEPHERD: [softly] Ba-a!

PATELIN: Louder, or it may cost thee dear.

SHEPHERD: [very loud] Ba-a-a!

PATELIN: [as, with a despairing gesture, he appeals to the Judge] The maddest man is he who drives such a born fool into court! Oh, sir! send him back to his ewes: he is a fool by nature.

DRAPER: [to Patelin] A fool, you say? Saint Saviour of Asturia! he has more sense than you!

PATELIN: [to the Judge] Send him away to watch over his flocks, never to return. Cursed be whoever cites such a lack brains into court!

DRAPER: [to the Judge] And he is to be sent away before I can be heard?

PATELIN: [to the Draper] So help me! Yes; since he's out of his mind. Why not?

DRAPER: [to the Judge] Oh now, sir; at least allow me first to have my say. What I have to say is no trumpery, nor scoffing.

JUDGE: Vexation is all that comes of having dolts on trial, either male or female. Listen! To cut the matter short, the court will adjourn.

DRAPER:[wistfully] Shall they go away without ever having to appear again?

JUDGE: [gathering up his robe] Well, now what ...

PATELIN: [to the Judge] Appear again! You never saw a madder man, neither in his acts nor in his answers. [Pointing to the Draper.] And he is not a whit better. Both are brainless fools. I'll be blessed! between them they have n't a pennyweight of brains!

DRAPER: [shaking his fist at Patelin] You carried it off by lying, -- that cloth, I mean,--and without paying for it, Master Pierre. Fore God, that was the work of no upright man.

PATELIN: [to the crowd] Saint Pintle of Rome! If he is n't mad already, he is going mad.

DRAPER: [to Patelin] I know you by your speech, and by your dress. I am not mad: I am sound enough to know who does right by me. [T'o the Judge.] I will tell you the whole matter, my lord; upon my word I will!

PATELIN: [to the Judge] Oh, sir! Bid him be still! [To the Draper.] Ain't you ashamed to wrangle so with this poor shepherd over three or four measly sheep not worth two buttons! [To the crowd.] He makes more ado...

DRAPER: [storming and shaking his fists] What sheep? [With an expression of weariness and indignation he gives a couple of turns to an imaginary crank.] A hurdy-gurdy! Always the same old tune! [Shaking his finger in Patelin's face.] It's to yourself I am talking, -- to you! and by all that's holy you shall give it back to me!

JUDGE: Look you! I am lucky! [To the crowd.] He will never stop bawling!

DRAPER: [to the Judge] I ask him...

PATELIN: [to the Judge] Make him be still! [To the Draper.] Oh goodness! Give that song a rest! Suppose he has lammed six or seven, or a dozen, and eaten them. Hell's bells! That is hard on you! You've earned more than that while he's been keeping them.

DRAPER: [to the Judge] Mark, sir! Mark! When I talk to him of cloth, he answers with his shepherd fooleries! [To Patelin.] Six ells of cloth that you put under your arm-pit and walked off with - where are they? Do you mean to give them back to me?

PATELIN: [to the Judge] Oh, sir! Would you have him hanged for six or seven sheep? At least, sir, take time to catch your breath. Don't be so harsh to a forlorn shepherd, who's as naked as my nail.

DRAPER: A pretty way to change the subject! It was the devil made me sell cloth to such a customer! [To the Judge.] Oh now, your Worship, I ask him ...

JUDGE: [to the Draper] I acquit him of your charge and forbid you to proceed. A great honour it is to have a lunatic in court! [to the Shepherd.] Away to your beasts!

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

JUDGE: [to the Draper] You show well what you are, sir, by 's death!

DRAPER: Oh, my lord, upon my soul, I wish...

PATELIN: [to the bystanders] Could he stop?

DRAPER: [turning upon Patelin] And my business is with you! You cheated me and carried off my cloth by stealth and with your smooth talk .

PATELIN: [to the Judge] I cross my heart! Why, do you hear him, sir?

DRAPER: [to Patelin] God help me, you're the most arrant trickster . . . [T the Judge.] Your Worship, whatever they may say...

JUDGE: You are a pair of idiots, both of you! It's naught but wrangling. [He rises.] Yah! It is about time to be leaving. [To the Shepherd.] Get thee gone, my friend, and never return, whatever bailiff serves a warrant on thee. The court acquits thee. Dost thou comprehend?

PATELIN: [to the Shepherd] Say 'I thank you, sir.'

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

JUDGE: [to the Shepherd] I mean it. Never mind! Begone! [Half to himself.] It is just as well.

DRAPER: Is it fair that he should go away like this?

JUDGE: [with a snort of disgust] Huh! I have business elsewhere. [Both to Patelin and to the Draper.] You are by all odds too fond of jibes. You shall keep me no longer: I am going. [To Patelin.] Will you come and sup with me, Master Pierre?

PATELIN: [puts his hand over his mouth and winces, as if his teeth were still aching] I cannot.

[Exit Judge, followed by the throng of archers, bailiffs, loiterers, etc.]

SCENE XIX (Still in the market-place)

THE DRAPER, PATELIN, THE SHEPHERD

DRAPER: [to Patelin] A downright robber! that's what you are! Say! Am I going to be paid?

PATELIN: For what? Is your mind wandering? Why, who do you think I am? By my heel! I was wondering who you took me for.

DRAPER: Pah!

PATELIN: My dear sir, wait a bit. I'll tell you right now who you think you take me for. Maybe it's for Brainless? [With one hand Patelin removes his hat; with the other he points to his bald spot.] Look!

[Depreciatingly.] Nay, nay! He isn't bald, as I am, on top of his pate.

DRAPER: You mean to take me for a blockhead, eh? 'T is you, as sure as I 'm alive, - you yourself. Your voice proves it, and I know it's so.

PATELIN: What! Me myself? Nay; truly it is n't. Try another guess. Mightn't it be Jean de Noyon? He's shaped like me.

DRAPER: Ugh! He has no such boozy, sodden face. Didn't I leave you sick in bed a short while since?

PATELIN: Ho! There you have it! Sick? And with what malady? Own up to being a jackanapes, - as clearly enough you are!

DRAPER: It's you; by Saint Peter's bones! You! and nobody else! I know it for a fact.

PATELIN: Now, don't you believe anything of the sort! For it's not me, at all. I never took an ell, nor even half an ell, from you. It's likely I would do such a thing!

DRAPER: [looking blank] Hm! I'm going to have a look at your house, to see whether you are there. There's no use in our worrying our heads about it any longer here, if I find you there.

PATELIN: By 'r Lady! Now you have it! That is the way to find out.

[Exit Draper.]

SCENE XX

(Near the front of the market-p/ace)

PATELIN, THE SHEPHERD

PATELIN: Say, Lambkin!

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

PATELIN: [beckoning] Come hither. Come. Was thy business well done? [The Shepherd does not move; Patelin starts to approach him]

SHEPHERD: [edging off] Ba-a!

PATELIN: [stops, apprehensive lest Lambkin may take to flight] The plaintiff's gone, now. Cease thy ba-a: it's no longer needed. [Winsomely.] Didn't I trounce him? Didn't I counsel thee just right?

SHEPHERD: Ba-a-a!

PATELIN: [drawing a step or two closer] Come, come! Nobody will overhear you. Speak right out. You needn't fear.

SHEPHERD: [looking for an outlet] Ba-a!

PATELIN: [firmly] It is time for me to be going. Pay me!

SHEPHERD: [just audibly] Ba-a!

PATELIN: [patting the Shepherd, and in a beguiling tone] To say truth, you did your part prettily, and your behavior was first rate. What left him in the lurch was the way you kept from laughing.

SHEPHERD: [bleating a little louder] Ba-a-a!

PATELIN: Why ba-a? It's not needed any longer. [Holds out his hand.] Come! Pay me well and nicely.

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

PATELIN: Why ba-a? Talk sensibly, and pay me; then I will go my way.

SHEPHERD: [still louder] Ba-a-a!

PATELIN: Let me tell you something. Can you guess what I am going to say? Please pay me without further railing. I've had enough of your ba-a. [Holding out his hand.] Pay me, quick!

SHEPHERD: [backs up, with a prolonged bleat] Ba-a-a-a!

PATELIN: [reproachfully] Is this mockery? Is this the most you intend to do? [Growing fiercely eager.] Upon my oath, you shall pay me, unless you can fly! [Cornering the Shepherd.] Do you understand? Here! My fee!

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

PATELIN: This is a jest! [With a shade of pathos] What! Is this all I am to get?

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

PATELIN: [half in jest, but persuasively] You are rhyming; but this is prose. Hm! Is there any green in my eye? Are you aware whom you are trying to take in? Babble to me no longer with your ba-a! and pay me my fee.

SHEPHERD: [growing restless] Ba-a-a!

PATELIN: [keeping him cornered] Is that the only cash I am to get? With whom do you fancy you are playing? [Regretfully.] And I was to take such pride in you! Now let me be proud of you.

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

PATELIN: Are you feeding me on goose? [Fiercely.] By Gog's arms! Have I lived to see myself jeered at by an oaf, a sheep in clothing, a filthy churl!

SHEPHERD: Ba-a!

PATELIN: [in gentle reproach] Is this the only word I am to hear? If you are merely fooling, say so, and spare me further argument. [A slight pause.] Come to my house for supper, Lambkin.

SHEPHERD: [glances at Patelin cunningly; then gives a loud bleat] Ba-a-a!

PATELIN: [half to himself] By Saint John, you are right! The goslings take the geese to pasture. [To himself] I thought myself the master of all deceivers, here and elsewhere; of the old stagers, too, and of such as pay their debts on Doomsday; but a mere shepherd leaves me behind! [to the Shepherd, who is trying to make good his escape.] By Saint James! If I could find a bailiff, I'd have you nabbed!

SHEPHERD: [dodging about, while Patelin endeavors to head him off] Ba-a! Ba-a-a!

PATELIN: [trying to get hold of the Shepherd] Hm! Ba-a! Hang me if I don't go after a good bailiff! Bad luck to him if he doesn't put you into jail! .

SHEPHERD: [fleeing] If he finds me, I'll forgive him! [FINIS]