

King John and the Abbot
By James Baldwin

As the abbot was riding up the lane which led up to his grand house, he met his shepherd going up to the fields. "Welcome Home, good master!" cried the shepherd. "What news do you bring us from great King John?" "Sad news, sad news," said the abbot; and then he told him all that had happened. "Cheer up, cheer up, good master," said the shepherd. "Have you never yet heard that a fool may teach a wise

Once there was a king of England whose name was John. He was a harsh and cruel king and did not care what happened to his people as long as he could have his own way. Through this story you will see how even a poor shepherd being wise can appease the wrath and foolishness of the King.

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man wit? I think I can help you out of your trouble." "You help me!" cried the Abbot. "How? how?" "Well," answered the shepherd, "you know that everybody says that I look just like you, and that I have sometimes been mistaken for you. So, lend me your servants and our horse and your gown, and I will go up to London and see the king. If nothing else can be done, I can at least die in your place." "My good shepherd," said the abbot, "you are very, very kind; and I have a mind to let you try your plan. But if the worst comes to the worst, you shall not die for me. I will die for myself." So the shepherd got ready to go at once. He dressed himself with great care. Over his shepherd's coat he threw the abbot's long gown, and he borrowed the abbot's cap and golden staff. When all was ready, no one in the world would have thought that he was not

Narrator: As the Abbot was riding up the lane which led to his grand house, he met his shepherd going to the fields.

Shepherd: Welcome home good master! What news do you bring us from great King John?

Abbot: Sad news, sad news.

Shepherd: Cheer up, cheer up good master, have you never heard that a fool may teach a wise man wit? I think I can help you out of your trouble.

Abbot: You help me! How?

the great man himself. Then he mounted his horse, and with a great train of servants set out for London. Of course the King did not know him. "Welcome, Sir Abbot!" he said. "It is a good thing that you have come back. But prompt as you are, if you fail to answer my three questions, you shall lose your head." "I am ready to answer them, O King!" said the shepherd. "Indeed, indeed!" said the King, and he laughed to himself.

Shepherd: Well you know that everybody says that I look just like you, and that I have sometimes been mistaken for you. So lend me your servants and your horse and your gown, and I will go up to London and see the king. If nothing else can be done, I can at least die in your place.

Abbot: My good shepherd, you are very, very kind; and I have a mind to let you try your plan. But if the worst comes to worst, you shall not die for me. I will die for myself.

Narrator: So the shepherd dressed himself with great care. Over his shepherd's coat he threw the Abbot's long gown, and he borrowed the Abbot's cap and golden staff. When all was done, no one in the world would have thought that he was not the great man... himself. He mounted his horse, and set out for London. Of course, the king did not know him.

