

Trader Joe: *(Trader Joe meets the ladies outside the door, center front stage.) Shhh!*
You're so noisy, you could wake the dead. *(ladies laughing under their breath)*

Mrs. Cobbler: Just so it ain't 'em it wakes.

Trader Joe: No chance of that! He's cold as a kipper by now! *(all laughing loudly, then softens)* We couldn't have met in a better place to do our nasty deeds. Come inside.

Laundress: Were a fine lot, ain't we?

Trader Joe: Come, come. Let's see what you got off the old miser. *Charwoman opens her bundle which is rather full. The pawn broker seems surprised to see so much. He looks at Charwoman, strangely. It contains mostly knickknacks, etc..*

Charwoman: Don't look at me so strange. I've a right to take care of me self!
He always did!

Mrs. Cobbler: True indeed. Him more than most men!

Laundress: Indeed! He should have had someone to look after him when he was struck with death, instead of lying gasping his last there, alone by himself.

Mrs. Cobbler: It's the truest word that was ever spoke! It's a judgment on him!

Charwoman: I wish his was a little heavier judgment and it would have been if I could have laid me hands on anything else, believe you me! Now, look it all over good, Joe and let me know the value of it. I'm not ashamed! *(She grabs his tie...)* I ain't no fool. Me times worth more than this. Come across with the rest!

Trader Joe: All right! All right! I always was to kind to the ladies! It's the ruin of me, but if you ask for another tuppence, I might repent of being kind and knock of half a crown.

Laundress: Now, look at my bundle, Joe! *Trader Joe begins to go through her things.*

Trader Joe: What do you call these? Bed linens?

Laundress: Bed linens they are.

Trader Joe: You don't mean to say you took 'em right off his bed with him lying there...dead!

Laundress: Yes, I do...and why not! *(all agree)*

Trader Joe: You were born to make a fortune and I'm willing to wager you'll do it, too. *(all laugh)*

Laundress: Now, *(pulling out a shirt)* you may look through this shirt till your eyes ache, but you won't find a hole in it, nor a threadbare place. It's the best he had and a fine one, too.

Charwoman: They'd wasted it, if not for her.

Trader Joe: What do you mean "wasted it"?

Charwoman: Putting it on him, a dead man, to be buried in. Can you believe it?

Laundress: Somebody was fool enough to do it...but, I took it off him again. If my calico shirt ain't good enough to go six foot under, it ain't good enough for anything. *(ladies leave Ms. Cobbler and Trader Joe...head for the door) (Ladies are outside waiting for Ms. Cobbler...counting money and laughing, silently)*

Mrs. Cobbler: Its quite becoming to the body. Besides, he can't look any uglier than he did in this one! *(all laugh, Ms. Cobbler goes out with the ladies, shuts the door) Well, thanks Joe. (meets the ladies at center stage)*

Charwoman: "For in that sleep of death..."

Laundress: "What dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil..."

Mrs. Cobbler: "Must give us pause!"

Charwoman: *(pause, then burst into laughter)* Tis Shakespeare, right!