

SAMPLE
TRANSLATION

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THE SIMPLETON
POLICEMAN AND
CEFIZELJ

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Fran Milčinski: The Simpleton Policeman And Cefizelj

There is a village situated somewhat to the other side, and Simpleton it is called. They are enterprising, the people of Simpleton; in the year when two cows were considered a pair, they fell out with common sense, and it was the people of Simpleton who won, rather than common sense: this is what they are like.

In Simpleton they had a municipal hand: on workdays he would tend to the cattle and his idleness, and on Sundays and holidays he would put a cap on his head, one with a red hem, take a halberd or spear in his hand, and he became Policeman, the fear of all bandits. It was this Policeman that the horrible looter Cefizelj heard about, the one who was said to have smothered seven people as well as three women. So Cefizelj had an itch to go check the Policeman and it happened to be on the Sunday when the annual patron saint feast and killing are held in Simpleton, so there he went, placing himself right in Policeman's face.

Says Policeman: "Well, Cefizelj, now you're mine! Off with you in the slammer! We have a tailor, executioner we call him, and you will be fitted for your neckband." Not saying a single word, Cefizelj followed Policeman. So they walked past the Baker.

"Ah," said Cefizelj with a sigh, "until I am able to swallow, could I have just a single corn bun: only in Simpleton, they say, can one get such tasty ones."

"Quite so!" agreed Policeman. "We have greasy manure; our flour from our corn is as if it was larded."

And since Baker was a municipal man, Policeman would not want to lessen his profits, so he let Cefizelj enter the bakery and stood in front of the entrance with his halberd or spear to wait for him. He waited and waited, but there was none of him – Cefizelj – the devil had been gone through the back door without saying goodbye. Was Policeman angry – blimey – so angry he was that he spat; but Cefizelj was gone and gone he was and that could not be helped at all.

A week passed and then two, and it was the third Sunday when Cefizelj again had an itch to go to Simpleton, so there he went, placing himself right in Policeman's face.

"Well," says Policeman, "so you're mine! Now there's no more escaping me!" and he grabbed his sleeve.

Cefizelj asked forgiveness: "I am a foreigner," he said, "a countryman, so the last time I went astray returning from the Baker, and I failed to find you. Blimey, did I feel bad about it!" and off he went with Policeman like a lamb following its mother.

So they walked past the Baker and Cefizelj realised he was hungry, so he asked nicely and Policeman let him enter the Bakery, thinking, "You are cunning, and I am even more so: there is no escaping me this time!" and so he stood waiting at the back door. And he waited and waited, but there was none of him, because this time Cefizelj took his leave at the front door; and Policeman was terribly angry, so that he narrowly avoided saying a curse.

Three weeks passed and here was Cefizelj, in Simpleton again and right in Policeman's face.

"Well," says Policeman, "so you're mine! Now I'll show you what it means to flee from Policeman of Simpleton!" and he grabbed his sleeve.

Cefizelj asked forgiveness: "You were not waiting at the door," he said, "so I looked for you; until this day I have been looking for you, until this very hour," so he went with Policeman and he did not resist at all.

So they came past the Baker and again, Cefizelj thought of going inside to buy a corn bun, and he asked touchingly like never before. And so said Policeman: "You wily old fox, you want to flee me again – through that door, right? The door where I am not. By Jove, you will not! Give me a penny and I myself am going to buy a bun, whereas you wait for me here!"

So Policeman went and purchased and returned, and as he wanted to give the bun to Cefizelj, there was no more of him. And so angry was Policeman that he stuck his tongue out at Cefizelj, and it was as well that Cefizelj failed to see it; because Cefizelj was a horrendous bandit, the one who was said to have smothered seven people as well as three women.