

THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD

(EXPANDED CAST VERSION)

Written by Michele L. Vacca

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THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD PRODUCTION NOTES:

CHARACTERS: *Indicates Gender Flexible

Robin Hood

Little John

Will Scarlet

Friar Tuck

Sir Guy of Gisborne, the Sheriff of Nottingham

Oswald, the Unready, the Sheriff's aptly named assistant

Lady Marian Fitzwater, daughter of Sir Richard of The Lea

Midge the Miller

Nell Stately, Innkeeper at the Sign of The Blue Bell

Alfred, the Saxon

Alfrieda, his wife – Alison, Alice, *Albert(a), Alyssa, *Alvin(a),
*Alwyn, and little Alfie Jr, their children

OTHER MEMBERS OF ROBIN'S BAND:

*Alan(a)-a-Dale

*Daisy and/ or Davy of Doncaster (written as 2 roles but can be combined)

Brave Beverly

Clever Cordelia

*Gil (either Gilbert or Gilda) Whitehand

*Georgie Greene

VILLAGERS, TRADESPEOPLE, FEAST AND FAIRE ATTENDEES:

*Penny (or Peter) the Trinket Peddler

Rowena, an outspoken elderly woman who doesn't hear well

*Edward (or Edwina), an impoverished farmer, Rowena's friend

Lucy, Ethel and Kate, employed by Nell at the Blue Bell

Sheriff Deputies:

*Barney (or Bertie or Bobbie) Bardolph

*Randie (or Ralph) Randolph

*Fergie Ferguson

Lady Gwendolyn of Glendower, the Sheriff's wife

Gwyneth, her loyal maidservant

The script is designed to offer maximum flexibility to the casting director; a number of roles are gender flexible – (suggestions are marked above with (*)) and combining the smaller roles (by assigning lines to a lesser number of people) in Robin's band is also easily done. Alfred's children are optional; their lines can simply be assigned to Alfred and Alfrieda. The number of Sheriff Deputies or Blue Bell serving maids can be changed (either to fewer or to more or even to none at all) without any harm to the rhythm of the play. Doubling (an actor playing more than one role) is also

more than possible with the smaller roles. Adding additional (non-solo line speaking) actors to any of the group scenes is always an option for those who want an even larger cast on stage.

TIME AND LOCATIONS:

- Act I Nottinghamshire, England in April in the year 1194 AD.
Scene 1 – A meadow in Sherwood Forest by the Great North Road.
Scene 2 – The nearby village of Edwinstowe.
Scene 3 – The following day, in the heart of Sherwood Forest.
- Act II The town of Nottingham, the following day, a fairground in front of the Castle.

SETTINGS: – can be elaborate or simple, depending upon budget and physical capabilities of a particular performing space. All the locations in the script are exteriors. Suggested, moveable scenery can work just as well as large drops and platforms.

COSTUMES: – also can be of any general medieval style, with color and texture being more “super playable” than literal realism. Marian, as a lady of the aristocracy, and the heroine, should have some attractive ensembles. According to legend, fun-loving Robin and his band were very fond of disguises: hence the frequent use of disguise as a ploy in the script.

THE ARCHERY TOURNAMENT & THE SWORD FIGHT IN ACT II:

Like the famous Ascot race scene in *MY FAIR LADY*, (and similar in style to the treatment of action sequences in classic Greek drama) the entire archery contest action is designed so that it can happen off stage. In a proscenium style production the final round of the contest can be brought on stage, if desired, and staged safely with the use of a “false” target. This is a device, which creates the illusion of accurate arrow shots, even if the actors have no real archery ability at all. This device can be built by a professional magic shop or by a special effects company. We can offer suggestions as to how this may be accomplished. It works quite well, but may be too expensive for some budgets. How simple or elaborate the swordplay between Robin and the Sheriff may be depends upon the skills of the actors, and of course, the amount of stage space available. Much of this sequence, too, could happen off stage. Obviously, the duration of the sequence is totally a matter of the director’s choice.

GENERAL: The use of music and sound effects, live or taped, greatly enhances the production of this play.

THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD

By Michele L. Vacca

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ACT I

(A HORN SOUNDS AND MUSIC PLAYS. IT IS A SPRING DAY IN SHERWOOD FOREST IN THE YEAR 1194. A YOUNG MAN ENTERS, WHISTLING CHEERFULLY. HE STOPS, BREATHES DEEPLY, AND SPEAKS, APPARENTLY TO HIMSELF.)

ROBIN: (FOR HE IS THE MAN.) Ah, to be in England, now that April is here! Right, my friends?

ALL: (HIS COMPANIONS POP OUT FROM BEHIND THE TREES TO AGREE.) Aye, Aye!

ROBIN: By the mighty oaks of Sherwood, I would rather roam free in the boundless forest, than be King of all England!

ALL: Aye, Aye! This is the life for us!

ROBIN: Besides, we HAVE a fine King, our noble Richard the Lionheart!

ALL: Hear, hear! King Richard the Lionheart!

ROBIN: May he return safe from the Crusade!

ALL: Aye, Aye!

ROBIN: And may he return SOON!

ALL: Aye, Aye! Soon!

ROBIN: Before his evil brother, Prince John, steals his kingdom!

ALL: Aye!

ROBIN: And before the greedy Sheriff of Nottingham ruins us all!

ALL: Aye!

ROBIN: King Richard the Lionheart!

ALL: King Richard the Lionheart!

ROBIN: Come, my friends, 'tis too fine a day to idle about. Let us seek an adventure or two or three.

ALL: Aye, aye. Adventure!

ROBIN: We'll seek out some wrongs to right, and a good deed to do.

ALL: Aye, Aye!

JOHN: What have ye in mind, Rob?
ROBIN: Nothing particular, Little John. But I suspect that one thing or another will chance our way.
BEVERLY: Oh, yes. One thing –
CORDELIA: Or another –
GEORGIE: – Is certain to chance our way
WILL: It always does.
ROBIN: Right you are, Will Scarlet.
ALL: Aye, aye!
ROBIN: We'll just follow this Great North Road, until we see –
(HE GAZES INTENTLY DOWN THE ROAD.)
ALAN: (TO ROBIN.) Do you see anyone?
GIL: Perhaps not yet –
DAVY AND DAISY: But sooner or later –
TUCK: Hark! Robin!
ROBIN: Aye, Friar Tuck?
TUCK: Someone on the path!
BEVERLY AND CORDELIA: Far or near?
ALAN AND GIL AND GEORGIE: They're almost here!
DAVY AND DAISY: Look! Just beyond the clearing!
ROBIN: Aha! The adventure begins!
ALL: Aye, aye!
ROBIN: Hide ye, my friends. I'll scope the wind to see which way it blow; what have we here? A friend or foe . . . ?

(THEY HIDE BEHIND THE TREES AGAIN. ALFRED THE SAXON, A POOR YEOMAN ENTERS WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN – ALL MOAN PITIFULLY.)

ALFRED: Woe is me. Oh, woe is me!
ALFRIEDA: (SIGHING.) I know, my dear, I know . . .
ROBIN: Not a very happy fellow.
ALFRED: Woe is me!! Ohhh, woe is me!!!
CHILDREN: (LOUDLY ECHOING HIM.) Oh, woe is we!!!!
ROBIN: A MOST unhappy fellow.
ALL: (SYMPATHETICALLY.) Aye, aye!
ROBIN: (TO ALFRED.) What ho, good sir!
ALFRED: What ho, yourself, sirrah.
ALFRIEDA: Hmph. "What ho," indeed.
ROBIN: A fine day to be in England, sir!
ALFRED: Well, not such a fine day to be in NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.
ROBIN: Say you so?
ALFRED: Are you going to rob us?

ROBIN: Why – no.
 ALFRED: Go ahead. Rob us. I don't care. We have nothing. The greedy Sheriff of Nottingham has already taken all we had.

ROBIN: Has he, indeed?
 ALL: (SOUNDS OF SYMPATHY.) Awwwwww!
 ALFRIEDA: (WHO SEES ONLY ROBIN.) What was that?
 ROBIN: 'Tis naught.
 ALFRED: (SEES ROBIN'S COMPANIONS.) Who are THESE?
 ROBIN: No need to fear. They are with me.
 ALFRED: I should guard my tongue. Are you Sheriff's men?
 ROBIN: Nay, nay. Not likely.
 ALL: Nay, nay.
 ROBIN: The Sheriff is not welcome in this part of Sherwood.
 ALFRED: The Sheriff is not welcome anywhere.
 ALFRIEDA: Yet he comes anyway.
 ROBIN: Not HERE.
 ALL: Nay, nay!
 ALFRED: Yesterday he came to our village of Thoresby –
 ALFRIEDA: – to collect the taxes.
 ROBIN: Aye, aye. April IS the usual time.
 ALL: (EXPRESS OPINIONS OF TAXES AND TAX TIME.)
 ALFRIEDA: Aye, April is the USUAL time, but in OUR village –
 ALFRED: – it's not the ONLY time!
 ROBIN: By the Greenwood, sir, what mean you?
 ALFRIEDA: The Sheriff visits Thoresby EVERY month.
 ROBIN: To collect taxes?!
 ALFRED: To collect anything he can.
 ALISON: In October he took our early harvest.
 ALICE: In November he took the late harvest.
 ALBERTA: In December he took our front door
 ALYSSA: In January he took the firewood.
 ALVINA: In February he took our favorite soup pot –
 ALWYN: with the soup still in it!
 ALFRED: In March he took the roof from our cottage –
 ALFRIEDA: – and yesterday he took my children's only two toys!
 LITTLE ALFIE: And he took my bankie, too!
 ROBIN & ALL: (SOUNDS OF INDIGNATION AND OUTRAGE.)
 ALFRED: All this in good King Richard's name.
 ROBIN: It's an outrage!
 ALL: Aye, aye!!
 ALFRED: We survived the winter only by means of mysterious gifts that appeared on our doorstep over the night.

ROBIN: Gifts?

ALFRIEDA: Aye, sometimes food, or firewood or warm clothes.

ROBIN: I see.

ALFRED: And once a pair of boots!

ALL: Ahhh!

ROBIN: And your neighbors?

ALFRIEDA: They, too, found gifts.

ALL: Ahhhh!

ALFRED: (AS THOUGH CONFIDING A SECRET.) I believe these gifts all came from Robin Hood!

ROBIN: (PRETENDING GREAT SHOCK.) Robin Hood!! The notorious robber and outlaw!?

ALFRIEDA: Outlaw, forsooth!

ALFRED: Only because the Sheriff says so, and if you ask me, it's the Sheriff who's the robber!

ALFRIEDA: Robin Hood is a loyal friend of the poor!

ALFRED: He's our ONLY friend while good King Richard is away on Crusade – !

ROBIN: (LAUGHING.) Enough, fellow, enough, I say!

ALFRED: I praise Robin Hood, sir!

ALFRIEDA: And we won't listen to anything against him –

ALFRED: – not from you, nor from these shifty rogues!

ROBIN: I see.

ALFRED: WHAT do you see?

ROBIN: You are indeed true friends to Robin Hood.

ALL: Aye, aye!

ALFRED: And I'll bludgeon any one of you who is not also his friend.

ALFRIEDA: I, too!

CHILDREN: (REACTIONS.)

ROBIN: Peace, I beg you. We are ALL good friends of Robin Hood.

ALL: Aye, aye!

ROBIN: I am probably Robin Hood's BEST friend.

ALFRED: Truly? Can ye take us to him? Or point the way?

ALL: Aye, aye!

ALFRIEDA: Oh, this is wonderful!

ALFRED: I want to beg Robin to help us.

ROBIN: What is your name?

ALFRED: Alfred the Saxon. My wife, Alfrieda – our children, Alison, Alice, Alberta, Alyssa, Alvina, Alwyn, and little Alfie.

ALL: (THEY RECOGNIZE THE NAMES.) Ahhh!

ALFRED: You know us?
 ROBIN: Aye, sir, we do. And so does Robin Hood.
 ALFRED: Where IS Robin Hood?
 ROBIN: Here before you.
 ALFRED: What?
 ROBIN: I am Robin Hood!
 ALFRED: Robin Hood? The champion of the poor?
 ROBIN: Nay, sir, the champion of ALL who are treated unfairly!
 ALL: Aye, aye!
 ROBIN: And these “shifty rogues” are my loyal companions.
 ALFRED AND FAMILY: (GRAB ROBIN’S HAND AND SHAKE IT ENTHUSIASTICALLY.) Robin Hood! It’s an honor, sir!
 ROBIN: I thank you.
 ALFRED AND FAMILY: (TO THE OTHERS, SHAKING THEIR HANDS, TOO.) How do ye do! It’s an honor!
 ROBIN: Now Alfrieda and Alfred, if you follow this path into the vale, you enter a wooded glen, where you will find a mighty oak big enough to hide ten tall men. Await us there, and we’ll dine together when the sun goes down. Then we’ll decide how to help you.
 ALFRED: Oh, Robin, how can we repay you?
 ROBIN: No need for payment, Alfred.
 ALL: Nay, nay.
 ROBIN: Hold, Alfred. Might ye know where the Sheriff plans to rob and pillage TODAY?
 ALFRIEDA: Today he robs Edwinstowe.
 ROBIN: Aha! Edwinstowe!
 ALL: Ahhh!
 WILL: That’s not far from here, Rob.
 ROBIN: Right you are, Will. Excuse us, Family of Alfred the Saxon, but urgent business calls us away.
 ALL: To Edwinstowe!
 ALFRED AND FAMILY: Take care, Robin.
 ROBIN: Oh, we always take care. We may not always be WISE, but we are careful. Farewell, we’ll meet anon!
 ALL: Aye, aye!
 TUCK: Well, well. Adventure beckons.
 WILL: It waves a flag!
 JOHN: Two flags and a banner!
 ROBIN: Well said, Little John.
 ALAN: Two flags and two banners!
 GILBERT AND GEORGIE: Three flags and three banners!
 BEVERLY AND CORDELIA: Three flags and five banners!

DAISY AND DAVY: Ten flags and twelve banners!
 ROBIN: And well said, ALL of you! Now – By the holly and the ivy, we have some wrongs to make right.
 WILL: And some collecting of our OWN to do.
 TUCK: It's been so long since we've seen our beloved friend, the Sheriff of Nottingham.
 ROBIN: Most unmannerly of us.
 JOHN: I, for one, have missed his company.
 WILL: Oh, I, too, Little John.
 ALAN: I long to see his arrogant face.
 ALL: You do?
 BEVERLY: How could we neglect him so terribly?
 CORDELIA: I hope he's not dreadfully offended.
 GIL: I feel so horribly guilty!
 DAISY AND DAVY: And we are unspeakably mortified!
 GEORGIE: (WITH A "SOB".) And I feel so atrociously ashamed!
 ALAN: So do we all.
 TUCK: (PIOUSLY.) Then we must make amends.
 ALL: Aye, aye!
 ROBIN: All of you come with me. The rest will surround the village, but stay hidden. Be ready to answer, should I sound the horn!
 ALL: Aye, aye!
 ROBIN: Put on your disguises! To Edwinstowe, my friends!
 ALL: Aye, aye! To Edwinstowe!

(THEY GO OFF. MUSIC PLAYS, AND THE SCENE SHIFTS TO EDWINSTOWE, A SMALL VILLAGE IN THE HEART OF SHERWOOD FOREST. AS LIGHTS COME UP, MISTRESS NELL ENTERS FROM HER INN, THE SIGN OF THE BLUE BELL. AS EDWARD – WHO CARRIES A BASKET OF HAY – AND ROWENA ENTER SHE GREETS THEM.)

NELL: Greetings, Rowena! Good day, Edward!
 EDWARD: Good day, Mistress Nell. (PUTS DOWN BASKET.)
 ROWENA: (TO EDWARD.) What? What did she say?
 EDWARD: (VERY LOUDLY.) She said – good day! (HE SITS.)
 ROWENA: Oh. (TO NELL.) Yes, it's very good hay. (TO EDWARD AS SHE SITS ALSO.) And you don't have to shout. I can hear you perfectly well..
 EDWARD: (TO HIMSELF.) Hmph! That'll be the day.
 ROWENA: What? What did you say?

EDWARD: (VERY LOUDLY.) Yes! It's very good hay!
ROWENA: Now, didn't I just say so? Can't you hear me?
EDWARD: I hear you just fine – you just can't hear me.
ROWENA: What? What did you say?
EDWARD: (SIGHS, THEN SPEAKS LOUDLY.) It's a nice day!
NELL: (CALLING OUT.) Yoo-hoo, Kate! Lucy! Ethel!
KATE, LUCY AND ETHEL: (WHO ARE SERVING MAIDS EMPLOYED BY NELL, EMERGE SLEEPILY FROM THE INN.) Yes, Mistress Nell?
KATE: Morning already?
ETHEL: Oh, I hardly slept a wink.
LUCY: What time is it?
NELL: It's time to work!
KATE, LUCY AND ETHEL: (GROAN.)
NELL: Kate, you can do the sweeping. Ethel, you fetch the water. And, Lucy, you wash the mugs and tankards.
KATE, LUCY AND ETHEL: (GROAN.)

(DURING THIS DIALOGUE ROBIN, WILL, TUCK, JOHN AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BAND DRIFT INTO TOWN ONE BY ONE. THEY HAVE ALL ASSUMED SOME SORT OF DISGUISE. AS THEY ENTER THEY GLANCE FURTIVELY ABOUT, GATHER TOGETHER, THEN SPREAD APART AGAIN. THEY PRETEND TO BE STRANGERS, SO THEY CAN ALL SCOPE THE TOWN INCOGNITO.)

ROBIN: (TO TUCK.) Greetings, Father.
TUCK: Greetings, my son.
ALAN: (TO ROBIN.) Good day to plow the field.
ROBIN: (TO ALAN.) A little early, I'd say.
WILL: (TO JOHN.) Oh, pardon me, sir.
JOHN: Oh, do pardon me, sir.
GEORGIE AND GIL: (TO EACH OTHER.) Oh, do pardon me.
ROBIN: (TO WILL.) Nice day.
WILL: Very nice day.
DAISY AND DAVY: (TO EACH OTHER.) Good morning, stranger.
JOHN: Some pennies for the poor, Father.
TUCK: Bless you, my son.

(WHILE THIS IS GOING ON MIDGE CAUTIOUSLY ENTERS, SHE IS ALSO "DISGUISED." SHE CROSSES TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BAND.)

MIDGE: Psssst!

(THE MEMBERS OF THE BAND GATHER NEAR HER, ALL PRETENDING TO LOOK ELSEWHERE.)

ROBIN: What is it?

MIDGE: All is well. We are ready.

ROBIN: Good work. Wait for the outcry.

MIDGE: We will. (SHE GOES OFF.)

NELL: (WHO HAS OBSERVED ALL OF THIS.) ROBIN!

ALL: (TO NELL.) SHHHHH!

ROBIN: Hark! Can this be the famous Blue Bell Inn?

NELL: You know it is.

ROBIN: What ho! 'Tis Mistress Nell!

ALL: What ho, Nell!

NELL: (HIGHLY AMUSED.) What ho, yourselves! What brings you to Edwinstowe, Robin?

KATE: Tis Robin!

ETHEL: Robin?

LUCY: (WAVING.) Yoo-hoo! Robin!

ROWENA: (LOOKING UP INTO THE SKY.) A robin?

ROBIN: Shhh! Call us not by name!

NELL: Nay, we won't. (AMUSED.) Why these disguises?

ROWENA: (TO EDWARD.) I don't see any robins.

ALL: (TO NELL AND ROWENA.) Shhh!

ROBIN: Well, good Nell, have ye a jug of good spring cider?

NELL: (PLAYS ALONG.) I do, IF ye have means to PAY for it.

ROBIN: Here is a coin. And its brothers. That should do.

KATE, LUCY AND ETHEL: (AS THE COINS APPEAR.) Ahhhh!

NELL: Ah! Sit ye down, good sirs. Or stand on your heads, or do whatever ye like. Save knock down the building. I have use for it.

WILL: We'll care for the place as though it were our very own.

KATE: A likely tale.

ETHEL: We've heard THAT before.

LUCY: A hundred times at least.

NELL: (TO THEM.) Aye, I know. (TO ROBIN.) But you're welcome all the same.

JOHN: We thank ye, Nell.

TUCK: Bless you, Nell.

NELL: What's going on?

ROBIN: The Sheriff comes here today.

NELL, KATE, LUCY, ETHEL, AND EDWARD: The Sheriff!!!

ROWENA: (WHO DIDN'T QUITE UNDERSTAND.) What?

ALL: Shhh!

JOHN: To collect taxes.

NELL: AGAIN!

ALL: Shhh!

ROBIN: But we have a plan.

NELL: Somehow I thought you did.

ROBIN: As you see, we're disguised. I am a peddler.

WILL: I'm a beggar.

JOHN: I'm a farmer.

TUCK: And I am a poor traveling friar.

NELL: (TO FRIAR.) Very clever.

ROBIN: All the others are disguised, too. Nell, you must help us.

NELL: What's the plan?

ROBIN: Simply this: we must warn the people that the Sheriff is coming. When he arrives, they hide, and we take their places.

NELL: And then?

WILL: The people are safe.

NELL: And their property?

ROBIN: As fast as the Sheriff takes, we shall take BACK again.

NELL: Ah!

WILL: You'll see, Nell.

JOHN: It always works.

TUCK: WE have justice on our side.

ROBIN: Well said, Friar Tuck.!

ROWENA: (TO EDWARD.) A duck? Where? I don't see any duck.

NELL: (TO ROBIN.) Well, it seems to me –

JOHN: Hark!

WILL: A cloud of dust!

TUCK: Upon the horizon!

ROBIN: Aha!

WILL: Uh-oh!

JOHN: Is it – ?

ROBIN: Who else?

TUCK: The Sheriff!

ROWENA: (TRYING TO HEAR WHAT'S GOING ON.) What?

ALL: (TO ROWENA.) THE SHERIFF!!!

ROWENA: Oh, no! Not him!

NELL: Alas, we must warn the people!

ROBIN: (TO THEM ALL.) Quickly! Spread the word. Tell them to hide in caves, in hollow trees, anywhere they can!

(A FANFARE PLAYS ANNOUNCING THE ARRIVAL OF THE SHERIFF; THE STAGE BECOMES A SCENE OF GREAT COMMOTION. THE VILLAGERS AND MEMBERS OF ROBINS BAND RACE BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE STAGE, WARNING THE REST OF THE TOWN AND THE AUDIENCE, TOO, THAT THE SHERIFF IS COMING! WHILE THIS IS GOING ON, THE MUSIC GROWS LOUDER AND LOUDER.)

ALL: Oh no! It's the Sheriff!
Hide the cow! And the plow!
Save the beans! And the greens!
Hide your log! Save the dog!
Hide your shovel! In your hovel!
Hide the bread! Save your head!
Hide the chickens and the ducks and the geese and the dishes!

ROBIN: HIDE EVERYTHING!
ALL: Oh, no! It's the Sheriff!

(THE FANFARE CONCLUDES WITH A FLOURISH. THE SHERIFF ARRIVES, ACCOMPANIED BY OSWALD THE UNREADY, AND HIS DEPUTIES.)

----- END OF E-MAIL SEGMENT -----

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