ROBIN HOOD - THE MUSICAL

Book By TIM KELLY
Music By ARNE CHRISTIANSEN
Lyrics By OLE KITTLERSON

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ROBIN HOOD - The Musical was first produced by The Magnificent Moorpark Melodrama and Vaudeville Co., Moorpark, California. Produced by Linda and Harvey Bredemann, directed by Terry Miles.

King Richard .................... Terry Miles
Little John ......................... Joe Vlaclav
Kasper ............................ Chris Cartwright
Sheriff’s Wife ..................... Karen Martin
Maid Marian ....................... Angela Hickman
Prince John ....................... Jeff Wallach
Sheriff ............................ Gerald Vandiver
Friar Tuck ......................... Damian Gravino
Lady Merle ........................ Sandra Bunday
Robin Hood ....................... James Harlow
Salome ............................ Jackie Hendrickson
Will Scarlet ....................... Randy Harold
Soldier #1/Old Man ................ Bob Weaver
Annabel .......................... Robin Dearborn

Choreography by Janelle Franco, musical direction by Rick Pratt.
ROBIN HOOD
THE MUSICAL

Book by TIM KELLY
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CAST OF CHARACTERS
(In Order Of Appearance)

# of lines

BETH .......................................... member of Robin Hood's merry band 28
MOTHER MEG .......................... another 39
LITTLE JOHN ............................. another 23
OLD WIDOW ................................ victim of Sheriff 15
*WILL SCARLET ......................... another of Robin's band 14
ROBIN HOOD ............................ outlaw of Sherwood Forest 76
FRIAR TUCK ................................ another follower, a monk 55
**SOLDIER # 1 ....................... in the service of the Sheriff 6
SHERIFF .................................... of Nottingham 83
LADY MERLE ......................... in league with evil Prince John 138
ANNABEL .................................. servant to Maid Marian 44
MAID MARIAN ........................... ward of King Richard 68
SOLDIER #2 (KASPAR) ............ also in the service of the Sheriff 16
SHERIFF'S WIFE ...................... a clumsy social climber 62
SALOME ................................... her silly daughter 42
STRANGER/KING ..................... journeying through Nottingham 17
OPTIONAL EXTRAS ................. additional members of Robin's band; people at the fair, soldiers. As/if desired.

*Can also play a SOLDIER (ACT ONE, Scene Two).

**Can also play STRANGER (King Richard).

SYNOPSIS

PLACE: The county of Nottingham, England.
TIME: During the reign of King Richard the Lion-Hearted.

ACT ONE
Scene One: Sherwood Forest.
Scene Two: The fair.
ROBIN HOOD
THE MUSICAL

ACT ONE

Scene One

SETTING: Sherwood Forest -- which is basically the open stage with some scenic touches to suggest "woods" -- hanging foliage, a tree stump. A painted forest backdrop if it can be managed.

AT RISE: ENTIRE COMPANY is ONSTAGE -- like characters from a storybook. The lighting is "shadowy," dreamlike.

COMPANY sings directly to audience. MUSIC: "Hi, Ho, Robin Hood."

ALL: (Sing.)
Hi, ho, Robin Hood! He is a hero brave and bold.
Hi, ho, Robin Hood! Hear his tale, it will now unfold.

Hi, ho, Robin Hood! Dauntless, adventuresome and strong.
Hi, ho, Robin Hood! With his bow righted ev'ry wrong.

ROBIN HOOD: (Sings.)
Come gather 'round we'll spin you a yarn
A tale that is frequently told of Robin Hood and his merry men
And of King Richard's England of old, of old,
And of King Richard's England of old.

You'll meet the members of my loyal band
They're a staunch and rollicking crew.
You'll meet Will Scarlet, Jolly Friar Tuck
And, of course, there's Little John, too.

You'll meet the sheriff, he's from Nottingham
A corrupt and villainous wag.
The sheriff's daughter hasn't got a brain
And his wife's a chattering nag.

Two maidens also enter the plot
And both are quite lovely to view.
But Lady Merle is ruthless and cruel
And Maid Marian faithful and true, so true,
And Maid Marian faithful and true.
ALL: (Sing.)
Hi, ho, Robin Hood! Virtue and honor he will save.
Hi, ho, Robin Hood! He'll defeat ev'ry treach'rous knave.

Hi, ho, Robin Hood! He is an outlaw stout of heart.
Hi, ho, Robin Hood! His adventure's about to start!

BETH: (One of Robin Hood's followers, about 15, steps down to the audience and addresses it. She holds a basket with apples.) If you're looking for Robin Hood you've come to the right place. (Gestures to woods.) Sherwood Forest, in the county of Nottingham. If you're poor, if you're hungry, if you're a victim of the wicked sheriff and his cruel ways -- this is the place for you. No questions asked. (MOTHER MEG, a kindly woman, ENTERS, moves toward BETH.)

MOTHER MEG: There you are, Beth, with your idle ways. Where are those apples for my baking?

BETH: (Holds up basket.) Here they be. Small, though. Too early in the season. (MOTHER MEG takes the basket and checks the apples.)

MOTHER MEG: Hmmmm. Not enough for more than one pie.

BETH: If I know you, Mother Meg, that pie will be for Robin.

MOTHER MEG: More than likely he'll take one small bite and give the rest to the first hungry wretch who stumbles into Sherwood Forest.

BETH: A bite of pie is better than digging for roots.

MOTHER MEG: Tastes better, too.

LITTLE JOHN'S VOICE: (From OFFSTAGE LEFT.) You've nothing to fear. You've a friend in Robin Hood.

OLD WIDOW'S VOICE: (From OFFSTAGE LEFT.) Everything I had. Gone. What will I do? Where will I go? What will become of me?

BETH: (Looking OFFSTAGE.) It's Little John.

MOTHER MEG: Who's that with him? (LITTLE JOHN ENTERS. With him is OLD WIDOW. She has a tattered shawl over her head and is distraught.)

LITTLE JOHN: (To MOTHER MEG.) Where's Robin?

MOTHER MEG: Hunting, of course. If we're going to eat, someone has to hunt. And who's better than Robin?

OLD WIDOW: I am so weary.

BETH: Let the woman rest, Little John. (LITTLE JOHN guides OLD WIDOW to the stump. She sits.)

LITTLE JOHN: One of the finest chairs in Sherwood Forest.

BETH: If you prefer hard to soft. (WILL SCARLET, another of Robin's band, ENTERS RIGHT. He carries a long staff.)
WILL SCARLET: I've good news for Robin.
OLD WIDOW: I wish I had some.
BETH: What's your news, Will?
WILL SCARLET: There's a rich caravan headed this way. It makes for Nottingham Castle.
LITTLE JOHN: Rich, you say? That is good news. (SOUND OF HUNTING HORN from OFFSTAGE RIGHT. ALL tense.)
MOTHER MEG: Is that the caravan?
WILL SCARLET: Of course not. That's Robin.
OTHERS: (Not OLD WIDOW.) Robin Hood! (ALL look RIGHT. ROBIN HOOD ENTERS. Young, strong, goodlooking. He's clever and nearly always smiling. We like him at once. He carries a bow and over one shoulder is a quiver of arrows. In his other hand he holds several dead birds strung together. He holds up the birds.)
ROBIN HOOD: Good hunting, Mother Meg. These will fill up your cooking pot.
MOTHER MEG: (Takes birds.) So plump they are.
LITTLE JOHN: I bet you didn't waste an arrow, Robin.
ROBIN HOOD: Not a one.
WILL SCARLET: There's not a man in England who can beat you when it comes to bow and arrow. (OLD WIDOW sobs. ROBIN notices.)
ROBIN HOOD: Hi, ho, what's this?
LITTLE JOHN: Another bit of the sheriff's work.
MOTHER MEG: Poor creature has no place to live.
LITTLE JOHN: I found her wandering in the forest.
ROBIN HOOD: No need to explain. Taxes.
OLD WIDOW: Yes, sir.
ROBIN HOOD: And there's no need to call me sir. Robin does me nicely.
OLD WIDOW: The sheriff said he had the right to triple a widow's taxes. He said Prince John gave him the right.
MOTHER MEG: Prince John. I spit when I hear his name. (She spits.)
BETH: If only King Richard would return from the Crusades. He'd set things right soon enough.
ROBIN HOOD: (To OLD WIDOW.) It's an old story. The sheriff raises the taxes and, then, seizes the land for himself.
WILL SCARLET: As long as he supports Prince John, the sheriff has no one to fear.
ROBIN HOOD: (To OLD WIDOW.) You'll stay with us. You'll have a roof over your head to keep out the rain, good companions, and you won't go hungry.
MOTHER MEG: (Holds up the birds.) I’ll see to that.
OLD WIDOW: Bless you, Robin. (SOUND of FRIAR TUCK singing, from OFFSTAGE LEFT.)
FRIAR TUCK’S VOICE: "I’ve a bag for meal, and a bag for malt,
And a bag for barley corn;
A bag for bread, and a bag for beef,
And a bag for my little small horn."
(While we hear the singing, ROBIN motions "to hide." They EXIT RIGHT. ROBIN ducks behind the stump, or somewhere where he can’t be seen by FRIAR TUCK. Pause. Still singing, FRIAR TUCK ENTERS LEFT. He wears a monk’s robe, sandals. He has a small horn swinging at his side and walks with a staff. He has a HUGE POT BELLY. He stops CENTER and looks up into the sky.)
FRIAR TUCK: (Thinking aloud.) Why is it that the sun is always hot and never cool? (He wipes sweat from his forehead. ROBIN steps into view, stringing an arrow to his bow.)
ROBIN HOOD: You’re a philosopher, my overstuffed friend.
(Alarmed, FRIAR TUCK holds his staff at the ready.)
FRIAR TUCK: Be warned! If your purpose be robbery, it’s useless. I have taken the vow of poverty. And if your purpose is not robbery, why have you strung your arrow?
ROBIN HOOD: You’ve a quick mind. I could use a fellow like you. (To OFFSTAGE RIGHT where the others are obviously listening.) I’ll test his mettle.
FRIAR TUCK: (Nervous.) Who are you talking to?
ROBIN HOOD: The woods are full of spirits. Watch out or they’ll get you! (He jumps beside FRIAR TUCK, who is startled.) Auuugh!
FRIAR TUCK: Oh! Oh! Oh! You’re a crazy person. That’s what you are.
ROBIN HOOD: Crazy, am I? (Points to audience.) You see that swift-running stream?
FRIAR TUCK: (Squints.) Aye.
ROBIN HOOD: I would cross it, but I have no wish to get wet.
FRIAR TUCK: That’s that to me?
ROBIN HOOD: You, of the round belly, will carry me.
FRIAR TUCK: Eh? (Outraged.) I am no man’s donkey! My staff will teach you some manners, you arrogant pup! You will carry me! (He takes a swing at ROBIN, who jumps aside.)
ROBIN HOOD: Missed! (FRIAR TUCK swings again and ROBIN, again, jumps aside.) Missed again!
FRIAR TUCK: I’ll teach you to make sport of me! (More swinging, more jumping aside on ROBIN’S part. LAUGHTER from the
OFFSTAGE ONLOOKERS, who are greatly enjoying ROBIN'S encounter with the feisty monk. They come INTO VIEW.)

ROBIN HOOD: Quick, Will Scarlet, your staff! Take my bow! (Huffing and puffing, FRIAR TUCK continues to swing out at the nimble bandit chief. WILL hands ROBIN his staff and ROBIN hands him his bow -- this is done quickly. Staff in hand, ROBIN faces the monk.) Now, we shall see who carries whom over that stream. (In way of answer, FRIAR TUCK slams at ROBIN'S staff. They battle, locking staff against staff, swinging, jumping aside, etc. Actually, FRIAR TUCK is an expert with the wooden weapon and ROBIN has to work hard to keep up. ONLOOKERS CHEER them on.)

ONLOOKERS: Strike low!
Faster, Robin.
Look sharp, Friar.
Strike high!
Jump aside!
He’s getting the better of you, Robin!
(Through all this there is much LAUGHTER; OTHERS are convinced, sooner or later, ROBIN will win out. When -- FRIAR TUCK jabs the staff between ROBIN'S ankles and trips him. ROBIN backpedals and falls to the ground with a thud. A look of complete amazement on his face. Stunned SILENCE -- then LAUGHTER. FRIAR TUCK lifts the staff over ROBIN'S head.)

FRIAR TUCK: Puppy, if you so much as burp I'll crack your skull like a melon.

ROBIN HOOD: Nay, nay, good Friar. I know when I’m beaten. (Jovial.) I may have no match with the bow and arrow, but you need take second place to no man with that staff. (WILL and LITTLE JOHN move toward FRIAR TUCK.)

LITTLE JOHN: Say the word, Robin, and we'll pitch him in the stream.

FRIAR TUCK: What men are these?
ROBIN HOOD: (Stands, brushes away the dirt.) These are my men, Friar.

FRIAR TUCK: And who are you?
MOTHER MEG: Ignorant man.
FRIAR TUCK: Eh? What's that?
BETH: The man you fought is Robin Hood.
FRIAR TUCK: (Recognizes the name.) Robin Hood? The bandit! Bless me. I might have been killed.

MOTHER MEG: What is your name, monk?
FRIAR TUCK: Friar Tuck.
BETH: Where is your monastery?
FRIAR TUCK: I have none. I come and go as I please.
ROBIN HOOD: In that case, why not stay here with us in the greenwood? We have need of a priest.
OLD WIDOW: It would be a comfort.
BETH: Little John and I wish to marry.
LITTLE JOHN: Being outlaws we dare not venture to church in town.
MOTHER MEG: *Holds up the birds.* I promise you this, Friar Tuck, you'll never go hungry.
BETH: Mother Meg is the finest cook in these parts.
FRIAR TUCK: I am partial to a good table. *(Guardedly.)* What's for supper?
MOTHER MEG: Wild rabbit pie and fresh baked bread and --
BETH: Apple pie
FRIAR TUCK: *(Rubbing his pot belly and smacking his lips.)* Wild rabbit pie. Hmmmm. Fresh baked bread. Hmmmmmm.
OTHERS: *(Imitating him, rubbing their midsections.)* Hmmmmmmmm.
FRIAR TUCK: Apple pie. *(Quickly.)* I accept your offer. I am now one of you. *(OTHERS CHEER and crowd around the monk, congratulating him.)*
OTHERS: Welcome to Sherwood Forest, Friar Tuck. You'll like it here.
This could be your lucky day.
You're a good man with a staff!
*(The joviality is abruptly cut short by the blast of a TRUMPETING HORN.)*
BETH: Listen! *(ALL freeze, listen. Pause. Again, the SOUND OF THE HORN.)*
WILL SCARLET: It's the caravan! *(ROBIN, fast, becomes a general in charge of his troops.)*
ROBIN HOOD: Scatter. Wait for my signal. Little John, hurry off and let me know what you see.
LITTLE JOHN: Yes, Robin. *(LITTLE JOHN runs out, LEFT.)*
FRIAR TUCK: Bless me. What have I gotten myself into?
ROBIN HOOD: A life of merry adventure and good deeds, good friar.
MOTHER MEG: Hurry, Beth.
BETH: Never fear. *(MOTHER MEG EXITS RIGHT, followed by OLD WIDOW, BETH, WILL.)*
ROBIN HOOD: *(Musing.)* No caravan would venture into Sherwood Forest without a heavy escort. A heavy escort means a person of great importance. I wonder who it is?
FRIAR TUCK: Escort? You mean -- soldiers?
ROBIN HOOD: What else?
FRIAR TUCK: Perhaps I need more time to consider your kind invitation. You see, I prefer the quiet life. Meditation, contemplation. (LITTLE JOHN runs back IN.)
LITTLE JOHN: Robin! They’re almost here! It’s the Sheriff himself!
FRIAR TUCK: sheriff of Nottingham?
ROBIN HOOD: He hasn’t the courage.
LITTLE JOHN: I tell you it’s the Sheriff.
FRIAR TUCK: We’ll end up in the castle dungeon!
ROBIN HOOD: Away. We’ll prepare our “welcome.” (ROBIN and LITTLE JOHN disappear into the forest. FRIAR TUCK, now uneasy, doesn’t realize he’s alone. He looks LEFT and RIGHT.)
FRIAR TUCK: Uh, er -- where are you? What about me? (VOICES approaching the clearing, from OFFSTAGE LEFT.)
SHERIFF’S VOICE: I do think, M’lady, it would have been wiser to take the long way around.
LADY MERLE’S VOICE: Nonsense.
SHERIFF’S VOICE: It’s not too late.
FRIAR TUCK: (Scared.) Oh! Oh! (He scurries OUT, RIGHT. First in is SOLDIER #1. He carries a sword, ready for any ambush. He moves swiftly to DOWN RIGHT, stands guard. Next in is the SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM. He’s a coward, but tries hard not to show it. He doesn’t like the forest and is always looking here and there half-expecting a bandit to pop out from the greenery. He is talking over his shoulder to LADY MERLE, who is yet to appear. SOLDIERS wear face helmets or head cover.)
SHERIFF: Besides, the long way around to the castle is more scenic. Here there are swamps and bogs and mires. Nasty stuff. (To SOLDIER #1, nervously.) Keep a sharp eye.
SOLDIER #1: Yes, sir. (LADY MERLE ENTERS -- a strikingly theatrical woman dressed regally in black, a sparkling necklace at her throat. She’s haughty, fearless, domineering. [NOTE: Think of the evil queen in "Snow White."] The SHERIFF is no match for her, and he knows it.)
LADY MERLE: You don’t fool me, Sheriff.
SHERIFF: (Innocently.) What do you mean, Your Ladyship?
LADY MERLE: You’re terrified of this bandit they call Robin Hood.
SHERIFF: (Terrified.) Shhhhhhh. Shhhhh, M’lady. He might overhear. He’s everywhere in Sherwood Forest.
LADY MERLE: I am under the protection of Prince John. I make no concessions to outlaws. The shortest route to Nottingham Castle is through this forest.
SHERIFF: Yes, yes, Lady Merle. Only --
LADY MERLE: Only what?!  
SHERIFF: (Shaking, completely intimidated.) I forget.  
LADY MERLE: Annabel! (ANNABEL, a teenage girl, hurries in.)  
ANNABEL: M'lad?  
LADY MERLE: I told you to stay close. Where is your mistress?  
Where is Maid Marian?  
ANNABEL: She stopped to pick some flowers.  
LADY MERLE: Has the child gone simple?  
ANNABEL: I'll fetch her at once, M'lady.  
MAID MARIAN: (ENTERING.) There's no need. I'm here. (Holds up a handful of wildflowers.) Aren't they pretty? (MAID MARIAN is about the same age as ANNABEL. She's pretty and appealing. Quite intelligent.)  
LADY MERLE: We have no time for dallying. (SOLDIER #2, sword in hand, ENTERS after MARIAN.)  
SOLDIER #2: No sign of mischief, Sheriff.  
LADY MERLE: The other men?  
SOLDIER #2: They're spread out several paces back, M'lady.  
SHERIFF: I think we should wait until our rear guard catches up. Can't be too careful, hee, hee, hee.  
LADY MERLE: Coward!  
SHERIFF: No, no, M'lady. You misjudge me. It's not cowardice.  
(Trying to think up an excuse.) It's, uh, uh, uh -- military strategy. Yes, that's it. Military strategy. Let's away to the castle. My wife and my daughter are anxious to meet you.  
LADY MERLE: Lead on. (SHERIFF, OTHERS, start to move RIGHT. SOUND OF HUNTING HORN. SHERIFF and SOLDIERS freeze.)  
ANNABEL: What is it? What's wrong?  
SHERIFF: (Shaking.) I'm not sure. (Another BLAST FROM THE HUNTING HORN.) I'm sure! (SHERIFF draws his sword, looks about in a panic.)  
MAID MARIAN: Is it an attack?  
LADY MERLE: (Emphatic.) No one would dare. (Suddenly, a MIGHTY YELL from ROBIN'S BAND goes up from LEFT and RIGHT, OFFSTAGE. WILL jumps in and engages SOLDIER #1 in swordplay. LITTLE JOHN jumps in and engages SOLDIER #2 in swordplay. The cowardly SHERIFF slashes out at "invisible" opponents -- pretending to look fierce.)  
SHERIFF: Who, uh, what, uh, where? Take that, rogue. And that!  
ANNABEL: (To MARIAN.) M'lady, what'll we do?  
MAID MARIAN: (Worried.) The soldiers will protect us. (As SOLDIERS and ROBIN'S MEN fight, LADY MERLE stands like a rock, utterly
without fear. The SOLDIERS are not doing so well. WILL gets the
tip of his blade against the throat of SOLDIER #1.)
WILL SCARLET: Drop your sword -- or perish. (SOLDIER #1 drops
his sword to the ground. Holds up his hands in surrender.)
LITTLE JOHN: (Whacks the sword from the hand of SOLDIER #2.)
Aha! (SOLDIER #2 holds up his hands in surrender. ANNABEL
and MARIAN cling to one another for protection.)
SHERIFF: (Seeing the defeat.) Oh! Oh! (He darts behind the tree
stump or some shrubbery and hides.)
LADY MERLE: (To WILL and LITTLE JOHN.) You'll hang for this. I am
the Lady Merle, cousin to Prince John. (Indicates MARIAN.) This
is Maid Marian, ward to King Richard. What you have done is
treason! (ENTRANCE OF ROBIN HOOD: If he could swing in
on a rope [tree vine], it would prove most effective. If not, he
can appear from the greenery, or from STAGE RIGHT.)
ROBIN HOOD: No, M'lady. There is no treason here. Only loyalty
to King Richard. Prince John is the traitor. He was to guard and
protect England while Richard fought in the Crusades. But he
has done nothing but plunder it.
ANNABEL: (Fearfully.) There are other soldiers. They'll arrest you.
(MOTHER MEG, BETH ENTER LEFT.)
MOTHER MEG: I'm afraid not, dearie. (To ROBIN.) The Sheriff's
men are being tied to the trees.
ROBIN HOOD: Good work.
LADY MERLE: Enough of this foolery. Sheriff, seize him! (Everyone
looks about, wondering where the SHERIFF has got to.)
MAID MARIAN: Where is he?
ANNABEL: Gone.
ROBIN HOOD: But not far enough. (He points to the SHERIFF, who
is on his hands and knees, attempting to crawl OFF unseen.
ROBIN marches to him and pulls him up by his hair.)
SHERIFF: Ow! Oh! Ouch! Easy, please, easy. Ow! (ROBIN shoves
him CENTER.)
ROBIN HOOD: Here is the man who steals from poor widows. Here
is the man who taxes the townspeople to near starvation. Here
is -- the Sheriff of Nottingham. (ROBIN gives him a swift boot
to the backside and the SHERIFF goes sprawling.)
SHERIFF: OoooOOooOOh. (LITTLE JOHN, ROBIN, MOTHER MEG and
WILL laugh. The SHERIFF is furious.)
LADY MERLE: Get up, you monkey. You're making a spectacle of
yourself. Have you no shame?
SHERIFF: You'll pay for this, you bandit. I make it a vow.
ROBIN HOOD: Your money, Sheriff.
SHERIFF: I never carry finances on my person.
MOTHER MEG: A sheriff loyal to Prince John and no money? Who ever heard of such a thing?
ROBIN HOOD: Shake it out of him.
SHERIFF: What? You wouldn't (ROBIN gestures to WILL and LITTLE JOHN. They put their swords in their belts and cross to the SHERIFF. MOTHER MEG picks up the sword belonging to SOLDIER #2 and guards him. BETH picks up sword of SOLDIER #1 and guards him.)
LITTLE JOHN: He'll have plenty on him.
WILL SCARLET: Enough to pay back taxes for the Old Widow.
MOTHER MEG: Shake hard. (They grab the SHERIFF, tip him upside down and SHAKE!) 
SHERIFF: Owl No! Stop! Stop, I say! Stop! (ROBIN, BETH, MOTHER MEG laugh. LITTLE JOHN and WILL stop shaking the SHERIFF and drop him to the ground. He hits with a THUD.) Oh! (LITTLE JOHN and WILL look on the ground.)
LITTLE JOHN: Not one coin, Robin.
WILL SCARLET: Was he telling the truth? (SHERIFF stands, tries to muster as much dignity as possible under the circumstances.)
SHERIFF: The Sheriff of Nottingham does not lie.
ROBIN HOOD: Hal Search him. (LITTLE JOHN and WILL start to search him. To their utter shame, the SHERIFF is ticklish!)
SHERIFF: Please, please. My dignity. Not in front of the ladies.
ROBIN HOOD: As you like. (Points OFFSTAGE RIGHT.) Search him yonder. And his men.
BETH: (Jabs SOLDIER #1 with the tip of sword.) Move.
MOTHER MEG: (Shoves SOLDIER #2.) And you. (SOLDIER #1 EXITS RIGHT. BETH is behind him. Next EXIT the SHERIFF, LITTLE JOHN and SOLDIER #2, then WILL. This leaves ONSTAGE: ROBIN, LADY MERLE, ANNABEL, MOTHER MEG, MARIAN.)
ROBIN HOOD: And now, M'lady, I'll take that necklace. (Without a moment's hesitation, LADY MERLE removes the necklace and tosses it to him.)
LADY MERLE: I admire your audacity. As a man you are not without merit. As a traitor you are contemptible.
ROBIN HOOD: I am no traitor. Nor is any man who swears loyalty to the true king, Richard.
LADY MERLE: Richard is being held for ransom. In Austria. If you are a true Englishman, Prince John is your king. Or, soon will be.
ROBIN HOOD: Never! I once slayed a deer belonging to Prince John. To feed a hungry village. Because of it, he branded me
bandit and outlaw. (ROBIN sees MARIAN staring at him.)
M'lady, you will be searched.
LADY MERLE: The necklace is all I have that is of any worth. Thief.
ROBIN HOOD: I am no ordinary thief, M'lady.
MOTHER MEG: Robin only steals from the rich in order to help the poor.
LADY MERLE: Nonsense, woman. He steals from the rich because
the poor have nothing worth taking.
ROBIN HOOD: Since you see me as a common thief, I shall be one. Mother Meg?
MOTHER MEG: Yes, Robin?
ROBIN HOOD: Escort our guest to that nearby clearing and search her.
MOTHER MEG: If she's hiding any silver or gold, I'll find it. (Curtsies
in a mocking fashion, gestures LEFT.) M'lady.
LADY MERLE: (Icy.) You have made an enemy of me, Robin Hood.
You will live to regret it.
MOTHER MEG: Hi, ho. (Head high, LADY MERLE EXITS LEFT.
MOTHER MEG follows.)
MAID MARIAN: (After LADY MERLE and MOTHER MEG are OUT.)
Robert -- that is your name?
ROBIN HOOD: (Curious.) It was. In time past.
ANNABEL: Do you know this outlaw? (MARIAN steps toward
ROBIN.)
MAID MARIAN: I stayed at Castle Nottingham, long ago, when I
was but a girl. There was a boy named Robert who came to
the castle with his father. The father was a splendid archer and
supplied fowl and game for the tables.
ROBIN HOOD: (Remembers.) You -- Little Marian?
MAID MARIAN: Yes! You -- Little Robert?
ANNABEL: Fate does play tricks.
ROBIN HOOD: We meet again. No longer children. Your Robert an
outlaw and my Maid Marian a great lady.
MAID MARIAN: We are both victims of Prince John. (Pause.) I am to
marry him.
ROBIN HOOD: What?!
ANNABEL: Lady Merle is convinced the people will accept Prince
John as their ruler once he is married to King Richard's ward.
ROBIN HOOD: What an evil schemer! What a clever woman she is.
(As they converse, the people of Sherwood Forest, not including
MOTHER MEG, wander in -- fascinated by the arrival of such
an illustrious "guest" as the ward of King Richard.)
MAID MARIAN: Alas, I swore to King Richard that I would obey
Lady Merle in all things. He trusted her.
ROBIN HOOD: Such a vow is easily broken. He didn’t know of her
true nature.
MAID MARIAN: A vow is a vow. Besides, Robert, what else can I
do?
ROBIN HOOD: (Joyful.) Stay here with my merry band. What else?
OTHERS: Yes!
Stay!
You’ll like it here!
ROBIN HOOD: You won’t regret it, Marian. I promise you that.
(ROBIN sings; OTHERS, too. Eventually, caught up in the spirit
of the rousing song, MARIAN and ANNABEL join in. MUSIC:
"We Lead A Merry Life.")
ROBIN HOOD: (Sings.)
Won’t you come and join our carefree band?
We’re the finest outlaws living in the land.
In our Greenwood forest grand we lead a merry life.
A leafy ceiling is so appealing
I have the feeling you’ll like it here.
So, come and join our carefree band
For we lead a merry life.
LITTLE JOHN & WILL SCARLET: (Sing.)
Oh, the legend’s true, you can be sure
That we rob the rich and give it to the poor.
In our woodland glade secure, we lead a merry life.
A life of quality and frivolity, only jollity’s welcome here.
ALL: (Sing, except MARIAN and ANNABEL.)
So, come and join our carefree band
For we lead a merry life.
BETH & FRIAR TUCK: (Sing.)
Oh, we dine on porridge piping hot
And the mutton stew is simmered in the pot
Try our jam with apricot. We lead a merry life.
The goose is roasted, the biscuits toasted
Although we’ve boasted, each day is prime.
ALL: (Sing, except MARIAN and ANNABEL.)
So, come and join our carefree band
For we lead a merry life.
MARIAN & ANNABEL: (Sing.)
Oh, it all sounds quite magnificent
You present a most convincing argument
But, alas, we can’t consent to lead a merry life.
(Sing, except MARIAN, ANNABEL, ROBIN.) It's advantageous!
MARIAN & ANNABEL: (Sing.) It's too outrageous!
ROBIN HOOD: (Sings.) Come be courageous, you'll like it here.

(Sing, except MARIAN and ANNABEL.)
So, come and join our carefree band
For we lead a merry life.
So, come join us in our bandit lair
To each bonny lass our loyalty we swear.

ROBIN HOOD: (Sings.) Join us in adventure rare.

(Sing, except MARIAN and ANNABEL.) And lead a merry life.

ROBIN HOOD: (Sing.)
A fine location with no taxation
So, in summation you'll like it here.

(Sing, except MARIAN and ANNABEL.)
So, come and join our carefree band.

FOLLOWERS: (Sing.) MARIAN & ANNABEL: (Sing.)
For (we) lead a merry life! For (you) lead a merry life!

MAID MARIAN: It's a lovely thought, Robert, but it cannot be. (LADY MERLE returns, MOTHER MEG behind her.)

MOTHER MEG: She spoke the truth, Robin. The necklace was all.

LADY MERLE: A necklace worth a king's ransom.

ROBIN HOOD: But you wouldn't spend it for Richard's ransom.
That, I'll warrant. (To MARIAN.) You won't change your mind?

MAID MARIAN: No, Robert. I am bound by my word to the king.

LADY MERLE: Robert? You know this traitor?

SHERIFF'S VOICE: (From OFFSTAGE RIGHT.) Out of my way, thieves.
Step aside! (All look OFFSTAGE RIGHT. All except LADY MERLE) laugh. Long pause and then -- SHERIFF ENTERS. He is wearing a suit of long underwear [red, if possible], and trying to look as "proper" as he can -- which is not easy.

SHERIFF: They found my money bag, Lady Merle.

LADY MERLE: Idiot.

ROBIN HOOD: (Courtly bow to MARIAN.) Maid Marian, you and your companions are free to go. No harm will come to you. (MARIAN extends her hand and ROBIN kisses it. SHERIFF is astonished.)

MAID MARIAN: We thank you, Robert.

ROBIN HOOD: (Announces.) Safe passage through Sherwood Forest! I'll lead the way. (ROBIN EXITS RIGHT, followed by MAID MARIAN and ANNABEL and then, ROBIN'S BAND.)

SHERIFF: Did you see that, Lady Merle? Maid Marian offered her hand. What can it mean?

LADY MERLE: To me a great deal. To you, nothing.
SHERIFF: I don’t understand.
LADY MERLE: Understand this. I want the head of Robin Hood on a pike.
SHERIFF: Easier said than done. In this forest, he’s always safe.
LADY MERLE: He must leave the forest.
SHERIFF: He’ll never do it.
LADY MERLE: You will announce a county fair.
SHERIFF: A county fair?
LADY MERLE: Everyone loves a fair, and Robin Hood will turn up.
SHERIFF: I doubt it.
LADY MERLE: You forget one thing.
SHERIFF: Oh?
LADY MERLE: Is he not reputed to be the finest archer in the county of Nottingham?
SHERIFF: In all of England, some say.
LADY MERLE: In that case, his vanity will lead him by the nose. I know how to deal with such men as Robin Hood.
SHERIFF: I wish I knew what you are talking about.
LADY MERLE: This day he’s as good as in my trap. (Head high, she moves RIGHT. SHERIFF starts to follow. LADY MERLE stops, turns, looks at the long underwear.) Sheriff.
SHERIFF: M’lady?
LADY MERLE: (Snarls.) You look ridiculous. (She EXITS. SHERIFF pouts, offended by her remark. Now, with his head high, he moves to follow her. Clumsily, he trips over his own feet.)
SHERIFF: Oops. (MUSIC: "Scene Change Music.")

END OF SCENE ONE

ACT ONE

Scene Two

SETTING: County Fair.

The view is a variation on Sherwood Forest.

AT RISE: CAST MEMBERS ENTER from LEFT and RIGHT and place four stools in position, two on each side of the tree stump. If some colorful pennants can be lowered from overhead -- great. A decorative pole, perhaps with a shield nailed to its center, is placed DOWNSTAGE RIGHT and DOWNSTAGE LEFT.

This "setting the scene" is done in full view of the audience, so there is little delay between this scene and the play’s opening
sequence. However, ACTOR/STAGEHAND(S) stays "in character." Once he places a stool or pole, ACTOR EXITS.

Some lively MUSIC is played as background. MUSIC: "Fair Music."

SHERIFF’S WIFE, a silly woman who fancies herself a great lady, ENTERS from DOWN RIGHT. She is talking aloud to herself as she consults a long sheet of paper. MUSIC FADES.

SHERIFF’S WIFE: Ooooooooh. So much to do. Busy, busy, busy. (To audience.) It’s not easy to be a grrrrrrrrrrreat lady. A grrrrrrrrrrreat lady has so many social obligations. A grrrrrrrrrrreat lady never has time to rest. Being wife to the Sheriff of Nottingham is a grrrrrrrrrrreat responsibility. (Consults her list.) Let’s see, we’ll have an apple dunking contest, a Morris dance, a greased pig frolic, a hot cider booth, a joust and, oh, yes -- the archery contest. Busy, busy, busy.

SALOME’S VOICE: (From OFFSTAGE LEFT.) Yoo-hoo, Mamal Mama! Yoo-hoo.

SHERIFF’S WIFE: (Looks LEFT.) I’m over here, Salome, precious.

SALOME’S VOICE: Where?

SHERIFF’S WIFE: (Looks where she’s standing.) Here.

SALOME’S VOICE: Here I come, ready or not! (SALOME ENTERS, laughing. Good heavens! -- What an odd-looking girl. She’s 14 or 15, with pigtails that stick out from the sides of her head like short tree branches. Her nose is red, her cheeks are dotted with enormous freckles and she has a high-pitched laugh that sounds like a horse neighing. Her dress comes to just below her knees -- which reveals a pair of candy-striped stockings. The dress, incidentally, would look better on a medieval circus clown. She crosses to her mother, babbling nonstop.)

SALOME: A county fair. I just love a county fair. I’m so happy Papa thought of this wonderful idea. Lots to see, lots to eat. Yumyummyum.

SHERIFF’S WIFE: (Patiently.) Salome, dear.

SALOME: Yes, Mama?

SHERIFF’S WIFE: With any luck some noblemen will attend the fair.


SHERIFF’S WIFE: It’s time you were thinking of marriage.

SALOME: Whose marriage?

SHERIFF’S WIFE: Concentrate. (SALOME thinks and thinks -- finally the bulb lights.)

SALOME: Oh, you mean me.
SHERIFF’S WIFE: Naturally, I mean you. Be on your best behavior. Try not to talk too much and whatever you do -- try not to laugh. Promise?

SALOME: You mean I shouldn’t do this -- (She laughs -- and, of course, it’s that unforgettable horse neigh. WIFE is shaken.)

SHERIFF’S WIFE: (Motherly.) Don’t do that anymore, precious.

SALOME: Whatever you say, Mama. (Curtsies.) Mama knows best. (Small horse laugh.)

LADY MERLE’S VOICE: (From OFFSTAGE RIGHT.) Sheriffl Sheriff of Nottingham!

SALOME: It’s Lady Merle. (Fast, WIFE grabs SALOME by the wrist and yanks her CENTER.)

SHERIFF’S WIFE: Listen carefully, Salome. You must win Lady Merle’s favor. She’s a grrrrrrreat lady. She’s powerful at the court of Prince John. She knows all the best people. If anyone can arrange a good marriage for you -- it’s Lady Merle.

SALOME: She doesn’t like me.

SHERIFF’S WIFE: What does that matter? You must charm her.

SALOME: You make her sound like a snake.

SHERIFF’S WIFE: Hush. She might hear you. (LADY MERLE ENTERS, RIGHT. Strides to WIFE. She has no use for either WIFE or DAUGHTER.)

LADY MERLE: Where is your husband, woman? (Immediately, WIFE goes into an elaborate curtsy.)

SHERIFF’S WIFE: Your High Personship.

LADY MERLE: (To audience.) Another bumpkin to contend with. The countryside is infested with them.

SHERIFF’S WIFE: (Stands.) You know my daughter, of course. I call her "Salome The Precious." Isn’t she lovely? So sweet, so graceful. (Uncontrollably, SALOME “laughs,” curtsies. Both WIFE and LADY MERLE recoil at the sound. SALOME’S curtsy is so awkward, she lands on her backside.) Have you noticed -- she’s of marriageable age.

LADY MERLE: With that laugh the only thing she should marry is a hyena. (SALOME gets up -- but it’s a struggle.)


LADY MERLE: One needs a sense of humor in Nottingham.

SHERIFF’S WIFE: Someday, some lucky man will have Salome for a wife.

LADY MERLE: Lucky if he has weak eyes and poor hearing.

SALOME: (To WIFE, pouting.) I told you she didn’t like me.
SHERIFF’S WIFE: (Snaps.) Be quiet, Salome. (Cheerfully.) Not only is
Salome beautiful --
LADY MERLE: (Insultingly.) Beautiful for Nottingham, perhaps.
SHERIFF’S WIFE: Beautiful -- and skillful, too.
LADY MERLE: (Doubts it.) Skillful, you say?
SHERIFF’S WIFE: Yes, skillful. (Indicates.) She makes her own clothes.
LADY MERLE: (Eyeing the awful dress.) She shouldn’t. (SHERIFF
ENTERS LEFT.)
SHERIFF: All is in readiness, M’lady.
LADY MERLE: It had better be.
SHERIFF: I hope this works.
LADY MERLE: I know what I’m doing. (COMPANY moves into scene
from LEFT and RIGHT. Some are selling things -- ribbons, toys,
apples. NOTE: SOLDIER #1 will now play the role of
STRANGER ["King Richard"]). The STRANGER wears a long robe
with a hood that partially conceals his face. WILL SCARLET can
double as a SOLDIER. The actor portraying WILL now wears a
helmet or some headgear that covers his face [Or, an EXTRA
can be introduced to portray SOLDIER]. ROBIN, too, is included
in the scene. He also wears a hooded robe -- the hood up to
hide his face. He has his bow and some arrows concealed
under his robe.)
SALOME: A county fair! It’s so exciting I could laugh myself into
tomorrow.
WIFE & LADY MERLE: Don’t. (COMPANY sings. MUSIC: "Come To
The Fair."
ALL: (Sing.)
Come to the fair, come to the fair.
Come from the village and come from the square.
Let no one be slighted, you all are invited.
So, come, come to the fair.
BETH: (Sings.)
Banners and ribbons and colored flags,
Plenty of vittles to eat.
Jugglers and tumblers and acrobats,
Each competition a treat.
ANNABEL: (Sings.)
Archery contests and tug-of-war,
Many a prize will be won.
Jousting and races and three-legged races.
Let ev’ryone join in the fun.
ALL: (Sing.)
Come to the fair, come to the fair,
Come from the village and come from the square.
Let no one be slighted, you all are invited.
So, come, come to the fair.

LADY MERLE: (Sings.)
Sausage with onions and kidney pie, oranges piled up in carts.
Peppermint candy and gingerbread, toffee and raspberry tarts.

SHERIFF'S WIFE: (Sings.)
Butterscotch pudding and custard cake,
Maybe a (pigeon/peasant) souffle.

LADY MERLE: (Sings.)
Three country bumpkins as brainless as pumpkins.
We're putting them on display.

ALL: (Sing.)
Come to the fair, come to the fair.
Come from the village and come from the square.
Let no one be slighted, you all are invited.
So, come, come to the fair.

MAID MARIAN: (Sings.)
Singing and dancing and puppeteers,
Poets and minstrels with rhymes.
Punches' and Judys' and marionettes, (mar'oonettes)
Actors and mummers and mimes.

SALOME: (Sings.)
I think I'll open a "kissing booth." Business, I know, will be big.
Men will be willing, "one kiss for a shilling!"

LADY MERLE: (Sings.)
They'd much rather kiss a pig.

ALL: (Sing.)
Come to the fair, come to the fair,
Come from the village and come from the square.
Let no one be slighted, you all are invited.
So, come, come to the fair.

SHERIFF: (Sings.)
Buckets and buckets of lemonade, sturdy brown October ale.
Tankards and tankards of bracing stout,
Hot apple cider for sale.

ALL PRINCIPALS: (Sing.)
Ev'ryone join in the merry throng. You won't be dissatisfied.
Join in the bounty, each hamlet and county
From town and from countryside.

ALL: (Sing.)
Come to the fair, come to the fair,
Come from the village and come from the square.
Let no one be slighted, you all are invited.
So come, come to the fair.
Come to the fair, come to the fair.
Come from the village and come from the square.
(Tag.)
Sing "Derry-down-derry" each Michael and Mary.
Sing "Hey-nonny-nonny" each Jenny and Johnny.
And come, come to the fair!
COMPANY mills about, some leaving the stage only to return.
Buying, selling. Checking and sampling the wares. SOLDIERS stand at attention.)

SHERIFF'S WIFE: Come along, Salome. You must prepare for the grand entrance. You could do with a dash of "parfum." (To LADY MERLE.) That's French.

LADY MERLE: (Touch of sarcasm.) Imagine.

SHERIFF'S WIFE: (Trying her best to appear "worldly.") They do say that when one is of marriageable age, a touch of "parfum" is catatonic. We depart, but we shall return.

LADY MERLE: I have no doubt. (SALOME slouches.)

SHERIFF'S WIFE: Salome. Don't slouch. Posture, posture. (WIFE EXITS LEFT, SALOME straightens up, trails after her mother. Looking back at LADY MERLE she, uncontrollably, gives a little "laugh." SHERIFF and LADY MERLE wince. When WIFE and SALOME are OUT -- )

LADY MERLE: Sheriff, I congratulate you. You have the wife and daughter you deserve.

SHERIFF: Thank you, Lady Merle. How kind of you to say so.
(Frowns. Was LADY MERLE being rude? NOTE: MARIAN and ANNABEL will LEAVE the STAGE.)

LADY MERLE: You have the golden arrow?

SHERIFF: And a cushion for it to rest upon. I had to pay the goldsmith a high price to speed the work. (Looks about.) Beware. Half the people at this fair are traitors. I recognize most of them from Sherwood Forest.

LADY MERLE: Never mind about them, you fool. They're small fish in the net. It's the shark we're after.

SHERIFF: Shark? I thought we were after Robin Hood. (LADY MERLE can stand no more.)

LADY MERLE: You've missed your true calling. You should be a jester. (Head high, she EXITS LEFT.)

SHERIFF: Jester? A jester is a buffoon! M'lady, have I said something wrong? M'lady? M'lady? (He hurries after her and OUT.
MOTHER MEG moves DOWNSTAGE. She holds a tray with taffy apples.)

MOTHER MEG: I've sweet taffy apples. Who'll buy, who'll buy?

(STRANGER steps to her.)

STRANGER: What is the price?

MOTHER MEG: One thin copper. Worth twice the price and then some.

STRANGER: One thin copper? It might as well be a gold piece. I have neither. (Overhearing this, OLD WIDOW moves to STRANGER.)

OLD WIDOW: Once money was plentiful and we lived in happiness. No more, no more.

STRANGER: What ails the woman?

MOTHER MEG: Pay her no mind, sir. She's been driven half-mad by the Sheriff of Nottingham and his hateful ways.

STRANGER: How so?

OLD WIDOW: Tripled my taxes, seized my cottage.

MOTHER MEG: It's life here in Nottingham. All over England, I warrant. Ever since King Richard left and Prince John took his place.

OLD WIDOW: If it weren't for Robin Hood, we'd all be at death's door. (SOLDIER #2 moves toward them.)

STRANGER: Bad as that, eh?

OLD WIDOW: If anyone dares praise King Richard or criticize Prince John or the Sheriff of Nottingham --

MOTHER MEG: (Sees SOLDIER approaching.) Careful. We mustn't be overheard. It would mean the dungeon. (Quickly MOTHER MEG, STRANGER, OLD WIDOW move off into the crowd. SOLDIER #2 EXITS RIGHT. MUSIC: "Sheriff's Fanfare." SALOME runs back IN, announces.)

SALOME: Make way! Make way! Make way for the Sheriff of Nottingham, my father, and his wife, my mother. (Low rumble of boos.) And our honored guest -- Lady Merle of Cornwall! (Louder rumble of boos.) And Maid Marian! (A cheer goes up. SALOME gives the horse laugh. NOTE: At this point, the MOB is positioned DOWN RIGHT and DOWN LEFT, facing the stools -- which represent the "reviewing stand." Again, the MUSICAL FANFARE. SHERIFF and WIFE, side by side, hand on hand, ENTER and parade to the stools. Behind them, haughty as ever, is LADY MERLE. Behind her walks MAID MARIAN and behind MARIAN, ANNABEL. WIFE stands in front of the far RIGHT stool, LADY MERLE next, SHERIFF and, then, MARIAN. ANNABEL and SALOME stand to one side.)
SHERIFF: Attention, attention. (Loudly, after clearing his throat.) My friends, my loyal citizens of Nottingham -- (Another low rumble of boos.) I should like to dedicate this fair to His Honor Prince John --

MOB: Boo! Boo! Boo!

SHERIFF'S WIFE: Anyone would think they didn't like Prince John.

LADY MERLE: We can deal with them later. Treacherous dogs. (To SHERIFF) Sit down, you oaf. I'll handle this.

SHERIFF: Buthutbutbut --

LADY MERLE: (Commands.) Sit down! (As one, WIFE, SHERIFF and MARIAN sit. LADY MERLE forces herself to smile. Steps forward and opens her arms as to embrace the hostile crowd. Her words are honey-coated.) Citizens of Nottingham, it's true we live in troubled times. Life is not easy and that is why the Sheriff has generously declared a holiday. A fair for one and all. To enjoy and to cherish. On this day, let us put aside differences and animosities. We are all English men and women. Instead of growling at one another, let us show courtesy and goodwill. (LADY MERLE is so skillful with her words that she almost sways the crowd.)

FRIAR TUCK: (Reluctant.) I'm all in favor of courtesy and goodwill.

BETH: For one day, anyway.

LADY MERLE: Let that day be this day. (LADY MERLE applauds. SHERIFF, WIFE, MARIAN, ANNABEL, SALOME follow. Then, some of the CROWD.) Splendid. Sheriff, I think we might begin the games.

SHERIFF: The what?

LADY MERLE: The games! Archery. (Through her teeth.) Have you forgotten, already?

SHERIFF: Yes, yes. The games. The contest. (LADY MERLE sits. SHERIFF steps forward, addresses the crowd.) The first game is the game of bow and arrow. Archery. Fetch the target.

SALOME: Let me! Let me! (She runs OUT, LEFT.)

SHERIFF'S WIFE: (To LADY MERLE.) Salome is very athletic. Or, as they say in French -- vichyssoise. (Translation: potato soup.)

SHERIFF: Hear me! Representing my high office will be the finest Bowman in the county. One of my own men -- Kaspar of Lincolnshire! (Scattered applause, some booping, as SOLDIER #2 ENTERS from RIGHT. He carries a bow and some arrows. Vainly, holding up the bow and arrows for show, he parades about.)

BETH: Kaspar's good, but no man is as good as our Robin.

OTHERS: Shhhhhhh.
SOLDIER #2: Three cheers for His Worship, the Sheriff of Nottingham.
    Hip, hip -- (Nothing in response.)
    Hip, hip -- (Again, nothing.)
    Hip, hip -- (CROWD gives a loud raspberry. SALOME runs back in. She holds a "target" -- with bull's-eye rings painted on. Holds it up for display.)

SALOME: Here's the target, Papa.

LADY MERLE: Idiot child.

SHERIFF: Who will challenge Kaspar of Lincolnshire and win the title of champion? (Silence.) Is there no one? My, my. Dear, dear me. If no one will accept the challenge, Kaspar of Lincolnshire will win by default.

MOB: No! No!

SHERIFF'S WIFE: (To LADY MERLE, a stab at what she thinks is sophisticated conversation.) They do say "default" is all the rage in Paris. (LADY MERLE stands, pushes SHERIFF aside.)

LADY MERLE: (Aside, to SHERIFF.) That's no way to bait the trap. (Pouting, SHERIFF returns to his stool. To MOB.) Your good Sheriff has forgotten to mention the prize.

MOB: Prize? Prize? How much?

MOTHER MEG: What is the prize?

LADY MERLE: (To SALOME.) The prize, girl, and be quick.

SALOME: Yes, yes. The prize! Be quick. (She leaps OFF with target.)

LADY MERLE: Prince John, himself, has declared no man in England is the match for Kaspar of Lincolnshire. Still, there is always the possibility a rival will appear one day. That is -- if such a brave man exists.

KASPAR (SOLDIER #2): Ha!

LADY MERLE: Is every man in Nottingham afraid of Kaspar?

SHERIFF'S WIFE: They are nothing but a flock of mice ... (NOTE: She pronounces it "meese."). . . M'lady. Oh, if I were a man, I would take up the challenge. It's a grrrrrrrreat opportunity. Oft have I said, if women ruled the world -- (SHERIFF can tolerate no more. He reaches behind the stool, finds an apple -- shoves it in his talkative WIFE'S mouth. Laughter from ONLOOKERS. SALOME runs back in. This time instead of the target, she holds a pillow and on the pillow -- a golden arrow.)

SALOME: Here's the prize! (LADY MERLE motions her close.)

LADY MERLE: The prize. (ALL strain for a better look. LADY MERLE holds up the arrow.) A golden arrow.

ONLOOKERS: (Ad libbing; impressed, amazed.) Arrow!
A golden arrow!
Worth a fortune!
Did you ever see the like?
Oooooooh.
How beautiful!
Look at it shine.
It catches the sun.
See it glow!

LADY MERLE: This is no ordinary prize. For with this golden arrow comes wealth and fame. Such a chance may never come again. (COMPANY sings. MUSIC: "Golden Arrow.")

ALL: (Sing.) Golden, golden arrow. See it glisten in the sunlight all aflame.
Symbol, symbol of victory and of honor, wealth and of fame.
Aim your longbow to the skies.
The golden, golden arrow will be your gleaming, gilded prize.

Golden, golden arrow. See it glitter in the sunlight all ablaze.
Symbol, symbol of fortune, of distinction, skill and of praise.
Aim your longbow to the sun.
The golden, golden arrow will be the treasure to be won.

Golden, golden arrow. See it sparkle in the sunlight all agleam.
Symbol, symbol of glory, the fulfillment of ev'ry dream.
Who will win it? Each man toils.
The winner will be the victor
The winner will be victorious
And to the victor go the spoils.

(ROBIN moves forward, but LITTLE JOHN and FRIAR TUCK step quickly to him.)

LITTLE JOHN: No, Robin. It's a trick.
FRIAR TUCK: Forget the golden arrow.

LADY MERLE: If there is no challenger, Kaspar of Lincolnshire wins the golden arrow. (Again, ROBIN starts to move, but LITTLE JOHN and FRIAR TUCK hold him back.) No challenger? (No reaction.) In that case, step forward, Kaspar. (KASPAR steps forward.) No, wait. (He stops.) I forgot to mention that the golden arrow will be presented by -- (Turns to MARIAN.) Stand up, child. (MARIAN stands. LADY MERLE emphasizes her words carefully.) The ward of King Richard, soon to be the bride of Prince John -- the Maid Marian. (Hubbub of amazement.)

ONLOOKERS: Marry Prince John?
Can it be?
The poor girl.
King Richard's ward?
Maid Marian.

LADY MERLE: Not one among you? (Mention of MAID MARIAN and her grim future is too much for ROBIN. He steps forward, pulling himself free of FRIAR TUCK and LITTLE JOHN.)

ROBIN HOOD: Here, M'lady. I am one. I will be the challenger.
(Appplause, shouts of encouragement. LADY MERLE smiles to herself, exchanges a knowing look with SHERIFF.)

LADY MERLE: Your name? (ROBIN tucks the hood closer to his face, affects a false voice.)

ROBIN HOOD: I am called Chester.

SHERIFF'S WIFE: (Removes apple.) Chester? Oooooo0000000, what a lovely name.

ROBIN HOOD: Chester of Cedric.

LADY MERLE: Well, "Chester of Cedric," prove yourself the better archer and you win the golden arrow. (She puts the arrow back on the pillow, returns to her stool. She sits. MARIAN sits. SALOME hands the pillow and arrow to MARIAN, skips OFF, LEFT. SHERIFF stands.)

SHERIFF: You know the rules. Two out of three. We'll toss the dice to see who goes first.

ROBIN HOOD: No need, Sheriff. I yield to Kaspar of Lincolnshire.

SHERIFF: So be it. Stand forth, for the shooting is about to begin.

(He signals with his hand. Sits. NOTE: See The Archery Contest in Production Notes. The following STAGE business moves briskly, with the ONLOOKERS gawking and reacting. Nice effect is to have a DRUMROLL when the bow is being strung, STOPPING abruptly when the arrow flies. SOLDIER #2 (KASPAR) swiftly strings and fires the arrow OFFSTAGE LEFT. ONLOOKERS gawk LEFT.)

SHERIFF'S WIFE: (Applauding happily.) A wonderful hit. Wonderful! (ROBIN strings his bow, aims. Releases the arrow. ALL gawk.)

ANNABEL: (To MARIAN.) It's close, M'lady. (SALOME runs IN with the target. Two arrows, one atop the other, are protruding from near center.)

LADY MERLE: (To WIFE.) Aren't you afraid your precious daughter might be hit?

SHERIFF'S WIFE: Oh, no, M'lady. Salome is a wonder when it come to dodging things.

LADY MERLE: Pity.

LITTLE JOHN: Whose arrow is closer to the bull's-eye?

SALOME: Dead even.
MOTHER MEG: Try again.
AD LIBS: Again.
   Once more.
   Second time will prove its worth.
   Again, again! (SALOME runs OUT with the target and arrows.
   SHERIFF stands, signals KASPAR. Optional DRUMROLL. KASPAR
   strings his arrow, fires. ALL gawk. Building for tension, ROBIN
   strings his arrow. Aims. Fires.)
BETH: Close again!
FRIAR TUCK: How close? I can't see.
BETH: Here comes the target! (SALOME runs in with the target,
   displays it. The arrows are in the same position.)
SALOME: Same thing. Dead even. (MOB sighs in disappointment.)
LADY MERLE: (To SHERIFF) I'll end this quickly, for it is not our main
   event. (Stands.) One last arrow. He who comes closest to the
   center will be declared champion. Be it an inch, or the fraction
   of an inch. (With a wave of her hand she dismisses SALOME,
   who dashes out with the target.) Careful aim, Kaspar of
   Lincolnshire. Careful aim, "Chester of Cedric." (She sits.
   Optional DRUMROLL. KASPAR flexes his bow, strings his arrow,
   aims and fires! ALL gawk.)
SHERIFF'S WIFE: Bravo!
SHERIFF: Dead center, Lady Merle, Good shot, Kaspar.
   (ONLOOKERS can't help but cheer KASPAR'S skill with the bow.
   KASPAR holds up his bow in triumph. SALOME runs IN with the
   target. KASPAR'S arrow has hit squarely in the middle. Applause
   from CROWD. SALOME runs OUT.)
SHERIFF'S WIFE: Chester will never match that. Poor fellow. But what
   can one expect of these rustics?
LADY MERLE: Do you concede the match, Chester?
ROBIN HOOD: No, M'lady, I do not.
SHERIFF: The ruffian's sure of himself.
OLD WIDOW: (Doesn't realize it's ROBIN.) He'll never do better
   than the last shot. No one could.
LADY MERLE: On with the contest. (The tension, again, builds.
   ROBIN takes his time. He flexes his bow, strings his arrow as
   optional DRUMROLL ECHOES. ROBIN poses -- perfectly still.
   No one moves. It's like a scene from an old book. ROBIN
   inhales, holds -- fires!!! ALL gawk to OFFSTAGE target.)
SHERIFF: (Leaping to his feet.) Merciful heavens! He's split the
   arrow! (CROWD goes wild, cheering, applauding, dancing
   about. SALOME runs IN with the target and, sure enough,
   ROBIN'S arrow has split KASPAR'S arrow in two.)
LADY MERLE: (Stands.) Silence. (The celebration continues.) Silence, I say. (No luck.) Silence! I command it in the name of Prince John! (This time the celebration quiets. ALL turn to LADY MERLE.) Chester of Cedric, you have done well.
FRIAR TUCK: (Can’t control his words.) Well? Is that all you can say? Better than well. He’s done famously!
OTHERS: Shhhhhhh.
FRIAR TUCK: (Contrite.) Sorry.
LADY MERLE: To the victor go the spoils.
SHERIFF’S WIFE: Or, as they say in French -- N’est-ce pas. (Pronounced Nehs pah. Translation: “Is it not so?”)
LADY MERLE: Maid Marian, do your duty. (In regal fashion, not knowing Chester is ROBIN, MARIAN moves toward him with the golden arrow on its pillow. She stops a few steps in front of him.)
MAID MARIAN: You are the champion, Chester of Cedric. Kneel and accept your reward. (MUSIC: “Presentation/Chase Music.” ROBIN kneels on one knee. LADY MERLE steps behind him. As ROBIN reaches for the golden arrow, she pulls back his hood. Startled.) Robert!
LADY MERLE: Here’s our Robin Hood! Seize him, Sheriff!
SHERIFF: Who, me? (To SOLDIER #1.) Seize him!
MAID MARIAN: Run, Robert! Escape! (Pandemonium breaks out. ROBIN leaps from the STAGE, golden arrow in his grip. He runs up the auditorium AISLE, SOLDIER #1 in pursuit, sword drawn. FRIAR TUCK and LITTLE JOHN fight to restrain KASPAR and SOLDIER from joining in the chase. BETH, MOTHER MEG, some OTHERS also run up the AISLE. LADY MERLE hurries to the edge of the STAGE.)
LADY MERLE: (Raging after the SHERIFF:) Don’t let him escape, you fool!
SHERIFF: (Parroting, to anyone he can find.) Don’t let him escape, you fool! (Cowers.)
SHERIFF’S WIFE: (Alarmed, jumps up from her stool.) Robin Hood the bandit! The outlaw! I might have been killed! (She promptly faints. SALOME is loving all the hysteria, laughs. When the pandemonium is at its peak -- )

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT ONE

End of Script Sample
PRODUCTION NOTES

ON STAGE, ACT ONE, Scene One: (Sherwood Forest) Tree stump, scenic touches to suggest "woods" -- foliage, shrubbery.
ACT ONE, Scene Two: (Nottingham Fair) See Hand and Personal Props.
ACT TWO, Scene One: (Room) Large wooden chest or trunk, stools (4).
ACT TWO, Scene Two: (Sherwood Forest) Same as ACT ONE, Scene One.

HAND AND PERSONAL PROPS

ACT ONE, Scene One: SHERWOOD FOREST: Basket with apples (BETH); shawl (WIDOW); long wooden staff (WILL, FRIAR TUCK); bow, quiver of arrows, birds strung together (ROBIN HOOD); small horn, monk’s robe, sandals (FRIAR TUCK); sword, (SOLDIER #1, SOLDIER #2, ROBIN, WILL, LITTLE JOHN, SHERIFF); face helmet or head covering (SOLDIER #1, SOLDIER #2); long underwear [red, if possible](SHERIFF); sparkling necklace (LADY MERLE); wildflowers (MARIAN).

ACT ONE, Scene 2: NOTTINGHAM FAIR: Wooden stools (4), fair pennants, decorated poles with optional shields (2) (ACTOR-STAGEHANDS); long sheet of paper (WIFE); helmet or head covering (WILL as SOLDIER); robe, hood, bow, arrows (ROBIN); robe and hood (STRANGER); tray with taffy apples (MOTHER MEG); various articles for sale: ribbons, trinkets (CITIZENS); bow and arrows (SOLDIER #2/KASPAR); apple placed behind Sheriff’s stool, pillow with golden arrow, archery target with two arrows one atop the other. Again, with a bull’s-eye arrow split in two by another arrow (SALOME).

ACT TWO, Scene One: ROOM: Very long ugly dress, needle (SALOME); needlework and needle (ANNABEL), white apron, chef’s cap, cart, tablecloth, long coil of rope (FRIAR TUCK); dagger (LADY MERLE), lighted candles (WIFE).

ACT TWO, Scene Two: SHERWOOD FOREST: Hand rope (MARIAN); BOW AND ARROW (SOLDIER #2), pitchfork, staffs, sticks (ROBIN’S FOLLOWERS); baggage (SALOME); cloak and hood, large red cross painted or stuck on tunic (STRANGER).
SOUND EFFECTS.

Hunting horn, background music for the Nottingham Fair, fanfare. Alarm (gong), birds. Military drums (optional).

COSTUMES

We're dealing with the clothing of "Merrie Old England." To be factual the time period is approximately 1200 A.D. The "tunic" is the basic item. The men wear belts for their swords.

It helps if the folks of Sherwood Forest can wear green, although Robin might have a "red" hood.

Imagination is the keynote. Whatever would work for "A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT," "IVANHOE" or much of Shakespeare, will work for ROBIN HOOD.

For additional costuming hints, refer to "Costuming for Children's Theatre," offered through Pioneer Drama Service.

ABOUT DOUBLING ROLES

SOLDIER #1 can double in the role of STRANGER/KING RICHARD. Naturally, as the "monarch," the actor affects a personality quite different from the soldier. Or, if director wishes, an additional actor can be utilized to portray the King.

SOLDIER #2 is the bowman KASPAR. But again, if director wishes, KASPAR can be a separate character.

WILL SCARLET can double as a soldier in ACT ONE, Scene Two.
THE NOTTINGHAM FAIR

Plenty of opportunity here for additional and colorful stage "business." A dance, for example. The introduction of a strolling minstrel, a juggler, a puppeteer. Before the archery contest there could be another contest of some sort: wrestling, hand wrestling, weight lifting. Use your imagination.

THE ARCHERY CONTEST

The arrows are shot into the stage wings, of course. However, an illusion of "shooting" is easy enough. Simply have KASPAR and ROBIN "angle" their bodies so the audience doesn't have a clear view and doesn't see that no arrow is actually being used with the bow. The drumroll, reaction of the crowd will aid in the illusion -- even the positioning of some of the onlookers. However, do try to use actual arrows. With a bit of practice, it will become easy. If the distance the arrow must travel across the stage is "too far," have ROBIN and KASPAR stand close to STAGE LEFT, thus the arrow will travel only a short distance to OFFSTAGE.
We hope you’ve enjoyed this script sample.

We encourage you to read the entire script before making your final decision.

You may order a paper preview copy or gain instant access to the complete script online through our E-view program. We invite you to learn more and create an account at www.pioneerdrama.com/E-view.

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