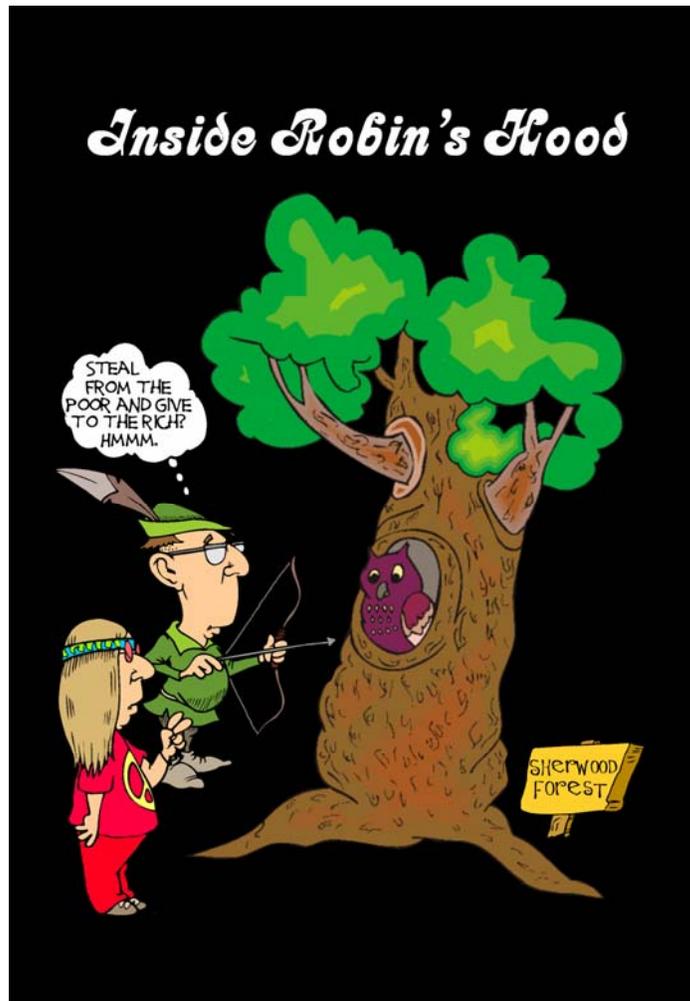


Inside Robin's Hood



Murray J. Rivette

A wacky adaptation of the classic legend

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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Inside Robin's Hood

FARCE. The laughs are legendary in this wildly wacky version of the Robin Hood tale in which Robin Hood and his Merry Men don't steal from the rich to give to the poor. They steal from the poor and give to the rich in order to gain political favor! The Merry Men capture Maid Marian and her lady-in-waiting, Mathilda, on their way to Nottingham for Maid Marion's wedding to Prince John. The Merry Men then rob Mathilda and give her money to Maid Marian. Taken with Robin Hood, Lady Marian disguises herself as a hideous hag so Prince John won't want to marry her. Prince John is horrified when he sees Maid Marian's buck teeth and hairy mole, but the Sheriff of Nottingham agrees to marry her so he can get his hands on her fortune. Donning a fake beard and hooded sweatshirt, Robin disguises himself as Hoody Allen and travels to Nottingham to free Maid Marian from the Sheriff's clutches.

Performance Time: Approximately 45-60 minutes.



Robin Hood statue in Nottingham, England (left).
Illustration of the Sheriff of Nottingham by Louis John Rhead, 1912.

ABOUT THE STORY

Robin Hood (Robyn Hode) is a medieval folk hero who is described in the earliest existing ballads as a common yeoman who lives in Sherwood Forest with his Merry Men, a band of outlaws. The earliest Robin Hood ballads include “Robin Hood and the Monk” (c. 1450), “A Gest of Robyn Hode” (c. 1475), and “Robin Hood and the Potter” (c. 1503). The phrase “merry man” was originally a term used to describe the follower of an outlaw, knight, or leader. Little John is just one of three Merry Men who were given a name, the other two being William Scarlock, and Much the Miller’s Son. In the 15th century, Nottingham was known for exporting religious sculptures and had a population of about 3,000. Today, Nottingham has population of more than 300,000. In the 14th century, Nottingham had a sheriff who was in charge of capturing outlaws, preventing hunters from poaching the King’s deer, and securing trade routes through Sherwood Forest. Once a royal hunting forest, Sherwood Forest is now a nature reserve where the annual Robin Hood Festival is held.

Characters

(7 M, 2 F, 1 flexible)

ROBIN HOOD: Leader of a band of thieves in Sherwood Forest who rob from the poor and give to the rich to gain favor from the rich; wears green clothing; male.

MAID MARIAN: Betrothed to Prince John but falls in love with Robin when she is captured by his band of thieves; female.

MATHILDA: Maid Marian's lady-in-waiting who falls in love with Mulch when she is captured by Robin's band of thieves; female.

BIG LITTLE JOHN: A really big, tall guy who joins Robin's band of thieves but is really King Richard in disguise; wears a fake beard and carries a large quarterstaff; male.

FRIAR TUCK: One of Robin's men who can't understand why they are robbing from the poor and not robbing from the rich; wears a fat suit; male.

WILL SCARLET: A hippie thief in Robin's band; talks like a hippie surfer and wears red hippie clothing including a red vest; male.

MULCH: A miller who is a member of Robin's band of thieves; falls in love with Mathilda; male.

PRINCE JOHN: Betrothed to Maid Marian but changes his mind when he sees her hairy mole and buck teeth; male.

SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM: Agrees to marry Maid Marian so Prince John can get his hands on her fortune; wears a uniform; male.

DEPUTY FIFE: Sheriff's number-one deputy who tends to exaggerate and likes to collect butterflies; always sniffing; wears a uniform; flexible.

Setting

Sherwood Forest.

Sets

Sherwood Forest. Forest glen with a strip of blue plastic running USC. At DSC, there is a big log across the blue strip as if it is a bridge across a stream.

Throne room. A room with a throne in it.

Robin's camp. There are small shrubs and trees. There is a log large enough to sit on and a campfire.

Another part of Sherwood Forest. There are two trees and a campfire.

Nottingham jousting grounds. There is a small bench at SR and a large chair CS.

Synopsis of Scenes

Scene 1: Sherwood Forest.

Scene 2: Throne room.

Scene 3: Robin's camp, another part of the forest.

Scene 4: Sherwood Forest.

Scene 5: Robin's camp, later that day.

Scene 6: Throne room.

Scene 7: Robin's camp.

Scene 8: Nottingham jousting grounds.

Props

Quarterstaff, for Will	Tunic with a lion logo on the chest, for Little John
Larger quarterstaff, for Little John	7 Plates
Fake beard, for Little John	Fake buck teeth, for Marian
7 Plastic swords	Sticky patch that resembles a mole with hair sticking out of it, for Marian
2 Bows	Hooded sweatshirt, for Robin
2 Quivers with arrows	Fake beard, for Robin
Jug of "wine"	Red vest with an assortment of rings and watches in plastic sandwich bags pinned inside it, for Will
Rope to tie hands	4 Rings in two plastic sandwich bags, for Robin, Marian, Mulch, and Mathilda
Small money pouch filled with coins	
Large burlap sack with something large in it to represent a deer	
2 Veils	
Handkerchief, for Mathilda	
Small sack	
Crown	

***"Where did you ever get the idea
that stealing from the poor
to give to the rich
is the right thing to do?"***

—Friar Tuck

Scene 1

(AT RISE: *Sherwood Forest. Forest glen with a strip of blue plastic running UCS. At DCS, there is a big log across the blue strip as if it is a bridge across a stream. Robin and Friar enter SR and cross to the bridge. Robin is carrying a bow and arrows in a quiver. Will has a quarterstaff, and Friar Tuck has a jug of "wine." All except Friar carry swords.*)

FRIAR: I have tried to tell you over and over again, Robin, that the way you are doing things here in Sherwood is wrong, absolutely wrong.

ROBIN: Friar, it's getting to be a very sore point with me with you contradicting everything I say and do.

WILL: But Friar Tuck is right, Robin, you are, like, not helping the people of Sherwood Forest by stealing from them, man.

FRIAR: Right. *(To Robin.)* Where did you ever get the idea that stealing from the poor to give to the rich is the right thing to do?

ROBIN: Well, it just makes more sense to me. By stealing from the poor and giving to the rich, we can get a lot more favors. Who else is better suited to hand out favors than the rich?

WILL: That's true, Robin. They can give you lots of favors, but it's the poor who need the help, not the rich. They have almost everything already, man.

FRIAR: Thank you, Will. You see, Robin, the poor go hungry and suffer, and the rich hasten their suffering because they have all the money.

ROBIN: They do?

WILL: Yes, Robin, they do. Like all our good friends have families, man: Mulch, the miller; Miller, the mulcher; Minnie, the moocher; Mickey, the Mouse; and Miracle Max. Their children are hungry all the time, and you still insist that we steal from them and, like, leave them with nothing to give to Prince John's tax collectors.

FRIAR: *(To Robin.)* And that's just wrong!

ROBIN: Hmm. Perhaps, you are right. Let me think about it some more, and I'll make my mind up when I get that gut feeling that what I am doing is right or wrong. But while I'm pondering what you say, let us continue on to London Town. *(Starts to cross to the bridge. Little John enters SL, carrying a big quarterstaff. He steps up on the bridge about one step before Robin. He has on a fake beard. To Little John.)* Excuse me, old chap, but I was about to cross the stream on this bridge.

LITTLE JOHN: I can see that plain as day, and if you will look very closely, you will see that I was already *on* the bridge before *you* stepped foot on it.

ROBIN: I don't see where that really counts in this matter. My friends and I are going to London Town, and we intend to use this bridge.

LITTLE JOHN: I have no problem with what you say; however, since I was on the bridge first, I shall be the one to cross first.

(Little John stands toe to toe with Robin on the bridge.)

ROBIN: Well, I don't think so. And I have two friends with me who can back me up if necessary.

LITTLE JOHN: Oh, you need backup, do you? You appear to be in fairly decent shape—even with those ridiculous clothes—and yet you need help to get your way. I guess it's not easy being green.

ROBIN: Excuse me, but I need no help. I am perfectly capable of taking care of myself and the business at hand.

LITTLE JOHN: Frankly, good sir, you seem a bit puny to make such a boast.

ROBIN: You know, my good fellow, you are beginning to irk me, and if there is one thing I really detest, it is being irked!

LITTLE JOHN: Too bad, little toad. What do you plan on doing about it?

ROBIN: I shall thrash you within an inch of your life! I shall not kill you, out of the goodness of my heart, but you will know that you have been bested in battle when I am through with you!

LITTLE JOHN: Well, then lay on, Macduff, and let's see what you're made of!

ROBIN: Would you be so kind as to wait one moment while I borrow my friend's quarterstaff?

LITTLE JOHN: Not at all. You go right ahead. You can borrow *two* quarterstaves if you like, but they won't do you any good.

ROBIN: We'll just see about that. (*Crosses to Will.*) Will, would you mind letting me borrow your staff so I can show this ruffian some manners?

WILL: Like, I will, man, but let me just say that I really don't think it's a very good idea.

FRIAR: I agree with Will, Robin. This is one very big person...like [Andre, the Giant!] [*Or insert the name of another large person.*]

ROBIN: Oh, pish and tush. Haven't you ever heard that the bigger they are, the harder they fall?

WILL: Yes, but you ain't no David, and he *is* a Goliath! (*Hands Robin his staff. Robin puts down his bow and quiver of arrows.*) Here goes nothing! Good luck, man!

FRIAR: (*To Robin.*) I still say it's a bad idea!

ROBIN: Nonsense, Friar. You are here with me, and so I have the church on my side.

FRIAR: Robin, if you don't know how to handle that quarterstaff, the church can't help you!

WILL: Like, my thoughts exactly, man!

(*Robin does some stretches, knee bends, squats, etc.*)

ROBIN: There! All warmed up. (*To Little John.*) I believe I'm ready now, good sir.

(Robin crosses to the bridge where Little John has been patiently waiting.)

LITTLE JOHN: Oh, good. I was afraid that you might have forgotten me entirely.

ROBIN: Ridiculous! You are much too large to be forgotten!
(Steps up onto the bridge and crosses to Little John.) Prepare to defend yourself!

(Robin takes a fighting stance. Little John takes a defensive posture.)

LITTLE JOHN: Whatever.

(Robin takes a huge swing over Little John's head and misses completely as Little John ducks.)

ROBIN: Ooooof!

LITTLE JOHN: Nice swing. *(Hits Robin on the butt and knocks him off the bridge.)* But not quite nice enough!

FRIAR: *(Laughing.)* Well done, Robin!

WILL: *(To Robin, laughing.)* But, like, it really was a nice swing, man!

(Robin is sitting in the "stream.")

ROBIN: *(Sputtering as if he swallowed water.)* I've fallen and I can't get up! Will someone please give me a hand? *(Reaches out with one arm. The others applaud him.)* Not that kind of hand! Help me out of this raging torrent before I drown!

FRIAR: Robin, it's only a little brook, for heaven's sake. You can't drown.

WILL: *(To Robin.)* I think you'll live to see another day, man.

ROBIN: But I can't swim!

[END OF FREEVIEW]