

**ROBIN HOOD'S
SHERWOOD
SHENANIGANS**

A Short History - in Verse

by

D. JONES

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15 Inglis Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3HU

ROBIN HOOD'S SHERWOOD SHENANIGANS

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ROBIN HOOD'S SHERWOOD SHENANIGANS

This traditional story of Robin Hood is dealt with in a lighthearted, humorous fashion. The play is aimed at children between the ages of eight to eleven and it has been written in verse to make it easier for young children to learn their lines. No character has an excessive number of verses to learn, and many of the lines are very predictable.

The size of the cast is flexible because the number of outlaws, soldiers, animals, monks, courtiers and trees is not specified in the script. These groups of characters also offer the opportunity for the inclusion of music and dance.

The overall effect is of a versatile play, suitable for use in any primary school.

Without the musical content this play should last for about thirty five minutes.

*This play was first performed in 1987 by the children of Rathvilly School,
Northfield, Birmingham.*

THE CAST

Robin
Marian
Sheriff
Sir Guy
Little John
Friar Tuck
Will Scarlett
Alan-a-Dale
King
Bear
Hangman 1
Hangman 2
Recorder Player
Hambush
Jester
Town Cryer

Trees (10)

Animals (8)
Soldiers (8)
Villagers (12)
Townfolk (12)
Monks (5)
Tax Collectors (4)
Outlaws (6)
Dancers - Country (8)
Dancers - Stately (8)

(Numbers in brackets are only suggestions and are thus variable).

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ACT I SCENE 1 *SHERWOOD FOREST.*

(Empty stage - enter ALAN A' DALE.)

Alan: We're here tonight to tell a tale
 Of outlaws in the wood,
 Of Friar Tuck and Little John
 And hero - Robin Hood!

 Our little tale may make you smile,
 Or sigh - or even weep,
 But one thing that you'll never do
 And that's fall fast asleep!

(Loud clash of cymbals - enter TREES and dance. Freeze into position. Enter ANIMALS: birds, rabbits, deer, squirrels; suitable instrumental music for them to dance, if required)

 Enjoy this beauty while you can
 For it won't last for long.
 Sir Guy is hunting deer today *(gasp!)*
 Although he knows it's wrong.

(Exeunt all animals bar one deer. Enter SIR GUY and HENCHMEN from one side and ROBIN HOOD from the other)

Sir Guy: There he goes! Get him men!
(They chase deer until it falls exhausted)
 Now there will be a feast of venison for supper. Take it back to my
 castle.

Robin: You evil Knight. I saw that act.
 You killed King Richard's Deer.
 I'll go and tell the sheriff now.
 He'll lock you up I fear.

Sir Guy: Our noble king is far away -
Not here - you silly fool.
And if he's not home very soon,
Prince John will start to rule.

But you are all alone my friend
Whilst I have my men here,
And if I ask them properly (*takes out money*) -
They'll say *YOU* killed the deer.

So run away now little man
And hide in this great wood.
For very soon more men will come
To hunt for Robin Hood.

(They throw him away and chase him off. TREES exeunt to music as before).

(Four MONKS - faces covered - cross the stage).

ACT I SCENE 2 SHERWOOD FOREST.

(A few trees to represent forest already on before lights come up).

*(ROBIN enters. Walks round to one verse of "Among the leaves so green O".
Enter FRIAR TUCK).*

Robin: *(sings) Friar Tuck*

Tuck: *Robin Hood*

Robin: *Will you join?*

Tuck: *Yes I'll join*

Robin: *Well done - fat tum*

Tuck: *Come and meet the rest*

Both: *(plus TREES) Among the leaves so green O*

CHORUS *With a hey down down ... etc.*

(Link arms, walk around - Enter LITTLE JOHN)

Robin: *Little John*
John: *Robin Hood*
Robin: *Be my friend*
John: *To the end*
Robin: *That's great - my mate*
John & Tuck: *Come and meet the rest*
All: *(plus TREES) Among the leaves so green O*

CHORUS With a hey down down ... etc.
(Link arms, walk around - Enter MARIAN)

Robin: *Marian*
Marian: *Robin Hood*
Robin: *I love you*
Marian: *Love you too*
Robin: *You'll be Queen Bee*
John, Tuck & Marian: *Come and meet the rest*
All: *(plus TREES) Among the leaves so green O*

CHORUS With a hey down down ... etc.
(Link arms, walk around - Enter MERRIE MEN)

Robin: *Merrie Men*
Men: *Robin Hood*
Robin: *What d'you say?*
Men: *Sounds O.K.*
Robin: *Lots of fun, but no pay*
All: *Now you've met the rest.*
All: *(plus TREES) Among the leaves so green O.*

CHORUS With a hey down down ... etc.
(All off except TREES. Enter MONKS who walk across)

ACT I SCENE 3 SHERWOOD FOREST.

(Trees on plus one festooned with packets of bacon and ham)

Enter 4 TAX COLLECTORS carrying full purses.

1st Man: We're on our way to Nottingham
 We've got the sheriff's loot.

2nd Man: We've taxed the local peasants
 It really was a hoot!

3rd Man: *(inspecting new tree)*
 Hold fast there, lads,
 What's this I see?
 Don't be in such a rush.
 Bacon and ham are hanging here -
 That means it's an AMBUSH!

(OUTLAWS enter and surround TAX MEN)

Little John: I'm Little John and I have come
 To help you with your load,
 So hand it over - give it me -
 You evil little toad!

(JOHN snatches purse - OUTLAWS take purses from TAX MEN)

Robin: I'll send you back to see your boss
 And tell him what I've done.
 King Richard would not like your tax
 And we don't think it's fun.

 Be on your way and make it quick
 Before I change my mind
 And string you up from yonder tree
 'Cos I'm not feeling kind.

(TAX MEN exeunt to jeers etc.)

A good day's work, my Merrie Men,
I think we've got the knack.
The Sheriff's men collect the cash
And then we give it back!

(Exeunt OUTLAWS laughing - MONKS cross stage).

End of Act I

ACT II *SCENE 1*

*(Scene opens with a country dance - Eight couples.
Other VILLAGERS stand around stage and clap in time to music.
Enter ROBIN and MERRIE MEN)*

Marian: News travels fast when it is good,
 And you know why we're here.
 We've come to give your money back,
 So everybody cheer!
 (All cheer)

Little John: Alan a'Dale give us an ode
 To make us laugh a bit
 Come fill us with the joys of life
 And charm us with your wit.

Alan: I wish I was a tiny mouse
 With whiskers tail and squeak.
 I'd climb up all your petticoats
 And make you ladies shriek.

 I wish I was a handsome lad
 You girls would like a kiss.
 I'd lead you such a song and dance
 Oh! Wouldn't it be bliss?

I wish I was a caterpillar
With legs along my tum.
I'd climb up all the twigs and leaves
And slide down on my

Robin: (*cuts him off*) Enough, Alan, we don't have time
For yet another ode
So gather round my merry men
It's time to hit the road.

(*MERRIE MEN give bags of money to MARIAN and she distributes it*)

Tuck: We're going now - God bless you all
And keep you from all sin
The Sheriff should not bother you
He knows he just can't win.

(*MERRIE MEN go off amid cheers. SHERIFF'S MEN rush on and herd villagers to back of stage*).

Sheriff: Curses men, we've missed the gang
But I bet they'll be back,
So let's go now and hide ourselves
Along this forest track.

Sir Guy: We'll send a note to Robin's band
To tell him of our raid;
He's sure to come and help these folk
And bring his own *BAND AID!*

(*SIR GUY looks at his soldiers*)
That was a joke, men!

(*All laugh in a forced manner - SIR GUY takes a bow. SHERIFF grabs a villager, gives him a note and villager runs off after OUTLAWS. Enter MONKS and walk across stage to jeers from SOLDIERS*).

ACT II *SCENE 2*

(Enter the HAMBUSH and several trees. Sheriff's men hide behind them. Enter TUCK, JOHN, MARIAN)

John: *(Sings - tunelessly)*
Robin Hood, Robin Hood,
Riding through the Glen,
Robin Hood, Robin Hood,
With his band of men -
Loved by England's sons -
Feared by King John B.....

(TUCK puts his hand over JOHN'S mouth and MARIAN puts her hands over her ears).

Tuck: Our apologies to you dear folk, *(addressing audience)*
Who remember that from the telly,
But he sounds just like a wailing cat,
Or a cow with an aching b.....
(MARIAN interrupts)

John: We've had a note from these here folk,
It said "Help - don't be late"
So Robin said to his brave band
"Go and investigate".

Marian: *(pointing to HAMBUSH)*
Oh no, not that old gag again!
Stand fast there lads don't push.
And look around you carefully,
This is another AMBUSH!

*(SOLDIERS rush on shouting and capture all three
They drag them off. One SOLDIER remains).*

Soldier: Sheriff: three - Outlaws: nil
That is the half-time score.
And if they give us half a chance
We'll bag a couple more. *(Exit)*

ACT II *SCENE 3*

(Market day scene - Stalls, Villagers' song - possibility of music for dance.

Amongst them are one outlaw - WILL SCARLETT - and the MONKS)

Stall-holder: *(to WILL SCARLETT)*

Good morning Will, why are you here
On Northfield's market day?
The Sheriff's men have caught your chums
And taken them away.

To Nottingham they have been dragged,
To go before the Beak.
He likes to hang the Sheriff's foes -
He does it twice a week.

Will: Oh goodness me, this awful news
Has shocked me to the core,
Now I must go to Robin Hood,
So keep me here no more.

I must tell him what I have heard
So now I'll have to flee *(addressing audience)*
I'll be a while, so raise the lights
And have a cup of tea.

(WILL runs out - lights come up - Rest of CAST go off to music - slow tempo).

End of Act II

ACT III *SCENE 1*

(Enter TOWNSFOLK and MONKS. They are entertained by the JESTER, a man with a DANCING BEAR [Music for BEAR provided by recorder], TUMBLERS, etc.)

Man: *(Shouts)* Here they come! *(SOLDIERS march on and force a way through crowd. They drag on PRISONERS. Following them is HANGMAN in hood. He stands near edge of stage).*

Sir Guy: *(Steps forward and unrolls scroll)*
This is a list of all your crimes,
And sentence has been passed
So look around at this fair day,
Because it is your last!

(Recorder music and BEAR dances as a distraction. ROBIN HOOD creeps up behind HANGMAN and drags him off stage. A few seconds later another HANGMAN takes his place).

Sir Guy: Move that beast and clear the way
We have some work to do.
Bring those villains here to me.
Stand back and let them through.

(PRISONERS are fetched forward - BEAR runs towards guards and they run off. HANGMAN puts a knife to SHERIFF'S throat. Everyone freezes).

Hangman: Run my friends back to the woods
As quickly as you can,
And if his guards make one false move
I'll decapitate this man!

(OUTLAWS run out, followed by BEAR and RECORDER PLAYER. HANGMAN pushes SHERIFF into crowd and makes his escape).

Sheriff: *(Shouts)* After them!
A reward for their capture!

(All run off leaving SHERIFF alone. He comes to centre stage).

Sheriff: They've made me look a proper fool
On Northfield's market day,
But I will have such sweet revenge
And then I'll make them pay.

*(BEAR creeps on behind him. Audience shouts - "Behind you!"
As he turns, the BEAR moves so that he is still behind him.
Crowd shouts again and same thing happens. On third
attempt he comes face to face with the BEAR and screams.
He runs off followed by BEAR).*

ACT III SCENE 2

*(Fanfare - comb and toilet paper).
Enter TOWN CRYER with proclamation: -*

Cryer: Hear ye! Hear ye! The Sheriff's words
To all you common folk.
He's lost his prisoners and his tax
And he can't see the joke.

If Robin Hood is not caught soon,
Before this day is done
The Sheriff's men will burn Northfield -
That's how he gets his fun.

But if you see my Master's point
And give him Robin Hood
He'll give you all a purse of gold
Because he's kind and good.

1st Villager: Oh dear! Oh dear! What can we do
For Robin and his men?

2nd Villager: For if they're caught and put to death
T'will be for us the end.

3rd Villager: We must agree between us all
To utter not a clue
Where'ere they're gone we will not say.
To Robin we'll stay true.

(Exit MESSENGER - MONKS cross stage - stop in middle).

Monk: We must go now to Sherwood's Glades
To find this wanted man.
If anyone can aid our cause
I'm sure the outlaw can.

(Exeunt ALL).

ACT III *SCENE 3*

*(The forest - OUTLAWS sitting around talking -
in come MONKS. OUTLAWS stand).*

Robin: You men of God are very brave
To come into our lair
Where are you from? What do you want?
Answer if you dare!

Monk: Come over here and stand by me
And look at this large ring.
It's famous over all this land
I am.....

Robin:My Lord the King!
*(falls to his knee - MONK throws back cowl - another MONK
takes out crown from his robes and puts it on KING'S head.
Other OUTLAWS fall on to one knee and bow heads).*

King: I've come to you to ask for help
To stop the Sheriff's game,
He's much too cruel to rule this land
And claim it's in my name.

So go with me to Nottingham
To guard my noble head.
The Sheriff's going to rue the day
That he wished I was dead.

Tuck: I'll go with you, I've had enough
Of cooking on a fire.
This lot just think I'm a chip monk -
Or should that be a fryer?
(*Waving frying pan*)

John: I'll help you too, with your just fight
To get the Sheriff out,
And when I get my hands on him
I'll make him scream and shout!

Robin: We're with you Sire, so let's away
And get this business done.
We'll have you on the throne again
Although it won't be fun.

Marian: Come on then lads, get on your feet
And let's go into town
Sir Guy will choke on his roast duck
When he sees Richard's crown.

(*Exeunt ALL*).

End of Act III

ACT IV *SCENE 1*

*(Enter SHERIFF, SIR GUY and PEOPLE of the COURT.
Stately dance - tune of Greensleeves)*

Sheriff: Well, Sir Guy, the time has come
 To hunt for Robin Hood.
 If you don't find him for me soon
 My temper won't be good.

Sir Guy: I'll find him sire. I promise you
 You'll see him very soon.

Robin: I'm here! I'm here! So clear a way -
 Now then girls don't swoon!

(LADIES of the COURT gasp and run up asking for his autograph).

Sheriff: You're very brave to show up here
 And make these ladies gasp
 But now I'll make you rue the day
 You fell into my grasp.

(Enter MONKS with cowls once more covering faces)

King: Hold your temper good Sir Knight
 And look around your hall
 His men have got their weapons
 And they're trained upon you all.

*(Enter OUTLAWS carrying bows and arrows -
NOT drawn and pointing to the stage)*

Sheriff: I see you're right O man of God
 I'm in a tricky spot
 But why have you joined with this scum
 To make my evening hot?

King: Me join them? You've got that wrong
 I led them here tonight.

So grovel low upon your knees
Unless you want to fight.
(King throws off cowl, puts on crown and draws sword).

Sir Guy: I'm sorry Lord. It wasn't me
Who did those awful deeds.
The Sheriff made me do it all
So on my knee I pleads.

King: You are a little pleader Guy.
Get up now if you dare
For I know how to deal with you
Let loose the dancing bear!

*(BEAR bounds on and chases Guy and Sheriff off to cries of "No!
Keep it away!").*

King: Come now men the deed is done.
I have my kingdom back
And you shall have a free pardon
Now they have had the sack.

(Looks puzzled and adds, non poetically) That doesn't scan!

(Cheers.

ROBIN kneels in front of KING who knights him with sword)

Arise Sir Robin! *(More cheers; merry dance).*

Alan: *(To audience)* Our tale is told. The hero won
I think we guessed he might.
And now it's time to send you home
Good Luck, God Bless, Goodnight!

*(Straight into Finale - Replay of selected songs
after all cast has taken bow).*

CURTAIN