

# **Robin Hood & His Merry Men**

**A pantomime by**

**Robin Bailes  
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**Spotlight Publications**

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# **Robin Hood & His Merry Men**

CAST (in order of appearance)

**Prince John**, baddy #1  
**Sheriff of Nottingham**, baddy #2  
**Jim (Gymkhana Thatch)**, a young girl  
**Daisy**, a cow  
**Guard Craig**  
**Guard David**  
**Ellen A-Dale**, minstrel  
**Jim's Mum & Dad**  
**Will Scarlett**, a Merry Man  
**Little John**, a Merry Man  
**Friar Tuck**, a Merry Man  
**Robin Hood**, hero and Principal Boy  
**Jemima Gusset**, dame  
**Maid Marian**, Principal Girl

**Chorus of Servants, Townspeople & Merry Men**

Place - in and around Nottingham

Time - mediaeval England

## **SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

### **A C T 1**

Scene 1 - A village in Sherwood Forest

Scene 2 - In the forest

Scene 3 - Robin's camp

Scene 4 - In the forest

Scene 5 - Robin's camp

Scene 6 - Front of tabs

Scene 7 - Robin's camp

### **A C T 2**

Scene 1 - Marian's cell

Scene 2 - In the forest

Scene 3 - Robin's camp

Scene 4 - The castle gates

Scene 5 - Nottingham Castle

Scene 6 - Front of tabs

Scene 7 - The castle

## **MUSICAL NUMBERS**

### **ACT 1**

1. "Hey, Hey, We're the Peasants" - words by Bailes & Hales (based on "Hey Hey, We're the Monkees" by the Monkees) (Chorus)
2. "Taxman" (George Harrison) (Sheriff)
3. "You're The One That I Want" (Grease) (Robin & Marian)
4. "Go West" - words by Bailes & Hales (Village People) (Ensemble)

### **ACT 2**

5. "Rescue Me" (Marian)
6. "Baby, It's Cold Outside" (Frank Loesser) (Nurse & Sheriff)
7. "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun" (Cyndi Lauper) (Will & Merry Men)
8. "Let Me Incarcerate You" - words by Bailes & Hales (based on "Let Me Entertain You" by Robbie Williams) (Prince John)
9. "Sherwood Forest" - words by Bailes & Hales ("YMCA" by Village People) (Ensemble)

N.B. This list of songs is only the author's recommendation. All songs are at the discretion of the Musical Director.

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## **A NOTE ON THE PRINCIPALS**

**Prince John.** The evil ruler of England, John is more of a comic bad guy than the Sheriff. Singing part.

**The Sheriff** is the real bad guy of the play, outrageous and evil and cruel to the peasants. Also a singing part.

**Jim (Gymkhana Thatch)** is a girl who disguises herself as a boy to join the Merry Men so she can rescue her parents. She is the audience's link to the action and is brave, though a little nervous.

**The Guards Craig & David.** Typical inept comic duo.

**Ellen A-Dale** is a minstrel who turns up to explain the plot and offer advice to those in trouble. She speaks exclusively in rhyme, which seems to be infectious as she passes the habit on to everyone else in the scene.

**Will Scarlett.** One of the principal Merry Men. Will is a typical camp pantomime good guy, he is flamboyant (dressing only in red), sarcastic and rather self centred, but is probably a lot smarter than the rest of the Merry Men, which is actually not that difficult.

**Little John** is the stupid one of the Merry Men, and need not necessarily be particularly tall or short.

**Friar Tuck** is a little more down to earth than the other two Merry Men but still has his own eccentricities.

**Robin Hood.** Traditional principal boy and should be suitably brave and good but the part also has comic moments. Robin Hood is a singing part with opportunities for thigh slapping.

**Nurse Jemime Gusset.** Typical pantomime dame, Nurse Gusset is constantly on the look out for a man, any man, but preferably the Sheriff of Nottingham. A singing part.

**Maid Marian.** Robin Hood's childhood sweetheart, she is occasionally bad tempered or just plain rude, and is quite capable of taking care of herself. It is a singing part.

## Act 1 - Robin's Wood. The Evil Opening

### PROLOGUE

*Prince John's throne room. Prince John seated C on throne looking bored, perhaps playing with a yo-yo. Sheriff enters R, preceded by a servant*

**Servant** *(announcing)* The Sheriff of Nottingham!

**Sheriff** Ah Prince John. How are you today, Your Majesty?

**Prince** I'm bored.

**Sheriff** Again?

**Prince** Yes, there's simply nothing to do here in my castle. I've inspected the dungeons, counted my money, sharpened the spikes on the portcullis, re-filled the moat with piranhas. What else is there to do?

**Sheriff** Why not throw stones at some peasants? That always cheers you up.

**Prince** We did that yesterday. *(He points to pile of stones in corner)*

**Sheriff** How about burning one of the peasant villages?

**Prince** It was raining last night and you know as well as I do, that a damp village doesn't burn, well, not properly anyway. Remember last time? Besides the smell of smoke is a devil to get out of my robes.

**Sheriff** Well I'm sure we could do something with this lot; very shifty bunch. I bet they're guilty of something. Look at that young man there. He just oozes guilt.

**Prince** Yes, what a pathetic bunch. What do you think you're looking at?! You horrible lot, I can't stand poor people. How dare you boo me? Any more of this insolence and I'll throw you all into my dungeons.

**Sheriff** With only bread and water.

**Prince** And no TV.

**Sheriff** For the rest of your lives.

**Prince** Nasty little creatures.

**Sheriff** Don't let them upset you. If you don't mind my saying so, Your Highness, you seem rather downcast.

**Prince** It's true. I can't deny it.

**Sheriff** Allow me to cheer you up.

*Sheriff kicks passing servant who is exiting L*

**Prince** It's very kind of you but it's no good. I gave him a good kicking earlier and I'm still depressed.

**Sheriff** What's wrong?

**Prince** I've been thinking about the future of the throne, for alas, I have no heir.

**Sheriff** I'm getting a bit thin on top myself.

**Prince** No heir to take over when I retire to a home for elderly dictators. I want someone to still be here to crush the peasants, grind the noses of the poor and oppress the innocent.

**Sheriff** What are you going to do?

**Prince** I plan to marry my niece Maid Marian to a suitably evil candidate.

**Sheriff** Maid Marian!?! The most beautiful wench in all the land?!

**Prince** The very same. I was thinking of marrying her to you.

**Sheriff** Me?! I'd be delighted. -Er, you do know that she doesn't like me very much?

**Prince** That's all right. She doesn't like me either. Whining little kid. Some problem she has with my stealing the throne while my brother King Richard is away at the crusades. Come, let us drink to your engagement. Servant! Bring wine!

*Servant enters L, carrying wine bottle and two glasses*

**Prince** What year is the wine?

**Servant** 1197.

**Prince** Was that a good year?

**Servant** Well I had fun. *(He pours wine)*

**Prince** To you and Marian. Whether she likes it or not.

**Sheriff** Thank you.

*They drink and the servant is kicked by Prince John as he exits L, with bottle*

**Prince** You know that does cheer me up.

**Sheriff** Since you're in a such a good mood now, Your Majesty, perhaps you'd take a look at this week's tax returns.

**Prince** Oooh yes, goodie! *(He looks at scroll, disappointed)* They're a bit low this week.

**Sheriff** Yes, Sire, it's all down to that scoundrel Robin Hood and his band of Merry Men.

**Prince** I thought I told you not to say that name!

**Sheriff** What, Robin Hood?

**Prince** You said it again! If it wasn't bad enough him robbing from the rich and giving to the poor all the time, now he's even robbing my tax collectors! You're supposed to be the Sheriff of Nottingham. That title implies that you should be bringing some sort of law and order to these parts, and if you don't start, then you won't be marrying Maid Marian any time soon. I want that Robin Hood behind bars!

**Servant** *(having returned)* But Sire, the royal pub is already fully staffed.

**Prince** In that case have him thrown in prison for the next hundred years. That'll teach him! I want him to pay for all the humiliation he's caused me. I've been a laughing stock because I can't catch him. People point at me in the street and mock. So of course I have them jailed, but it's still hurtful. Well enough is enough! I will stand for no more embarrassment. I want that man caught today!

**Sheriff** We'll never catch him, Sire, all those green clothes in the forest. It's just too cunning. He can camouflage himself any where in Sherwood: in front of a tree, behind a tree, in a tree, in front of a bush, in a bush.

**Prince** Enough of this nonsense!! Bring me the severed head of Robin Hood - dead or alive! Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha! Oooh, and if you pass the baker's could you get me a crusty loaf and one of those little cakes that I like, you know, the ones with the pink icing and the cherry on top. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha! Ooooh and don't forget to collect some taxes! Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha! *(Maniacal laughter to blackout as Sheriff exits R)*

## ACT 1

### Scene 1

*A village in Sherwood Forest. Peasants enter singing*

#### Song 1

Here we come, walkin' through the wood.  
This is Sherwood Forest, home of Robin Hood.

Hey hey, we're the peasants,  
And people say our smiles are a sham.  
It's due to all of the taxes  
From the Sheriff of Nottingham.

We give him all our cash, with good intent.  
We've had to sell our first born, just to pay the rent.

Hey hey, we're the peasants,  
And people say that we are oppressed.  
But we're too busy singing  
For us to get distressed.

It's a feudal system,

Governed by archaic laws,  
Pre-industrial living,  
But we love it, despite its flaws.

Any time, or anywhere, just look over your shoulder,  
We'll be dancing there!

Hey hey, we're the peasants,  
We sing and we dance and we bound.  
It's our way to stay cheerful,  
Since Prince John was crowned.

*(Dance break)*

Hey hey, we're the peasants,  
And we're not messing around.  
Our future's looking bleaker,  
A hero must be found.

We're just tryin' to be happy,  
And hope that we're not being vague.  
We're the unwashed masses,  
And we're suffering from the plague.

Hey hey, we're the peasants!!

*Song finishes, Jim takes centre stage. Peasants mill about in the background*

**Jim** Hello boys and girls! My name is Gymkhana, Gymkhana Thatch. But my friends call me Jim, I hope you'll all be my friends. This is my village and I live here with my parents, that's them over there (*parents wave*). We're so poor that when my mum makes toad in the hole, she makes it with real toad! When she makes ratatouille she makes it with real rat! And you don't even want to know what goes into her Shepherd's Pie! The reason we're so poor is that Prince John keeps raising the taxes and then my parents have to give all their money to that horrible Sheriff of Nottingham whenever he comes to the village.

*Daisy the cow enters L*

Oh, and this is our cow Daisy. She's called Daisy because she just loves to eat flowers. The problem is, she keeps trying to eat my father's prize sunflower.

*Daisy goes over to sunflower, which is set downstage R, and makes to eat*

No Daisy! Oh, she's such a handful! Will you help me stop her from eating the flower?

*Audience shouts "Yes!"*

What? I can't hear you at all. You'll have to shout much louder than that. Will you help me?

*Audience shouts "YES!"*

That's a bit better, but I'm sure you can be a bit louder than that if you try really hard. Will you help me?

*Audience shouts "YEEEEES!"*

Oh thank you! Right, whenever you see Daisy try to eat the flower can you shout out "Daisy don't!" Will you do that for me?

*Audience shouts "Yes!"*

Great. Shall we give it a try?

*Daisy wanders over to flower. Audience shouts "Daisy don't!!" Daisy recoils in shock*

Well done boys and girls, that was.....

*Sheriff enters R, and the peasants scatter in direction of L wing*

**Sheriff** Stop! Stay where you are! Don't move!

**Chorus** Oh no! It's the Sheriff of Nottingham!

*Jim gets audience booing*

**Sheriff** Shut up, you horrible lot! I have come to collect your taxes!

**Chorus** Oh no! (*General consternation*)

**Jim's Dad** But we only paid you yesterday.

**Jim** Dad, don't argue!

**Sheriff** That was Monday's tax. Today is Tuesday. Which means?

**Chorus** (*hesitantly*) No tax?

**Sheriff** Wrong answer! And also rather cheeky. The answer I was looking for was Tuesday's Tax. You'll all be fined for that little slip up as well! Especially you. (*He points at random chorus member*) No particular reason, I just don't like the look of you.

**Jim's Mum** But if you take all our money we'll starve to death!

**Sheriff** There's no law against starving. Just tax evasion.

**Jim's Dad** We appeal to you.

**Sheriff** You don't, you know.

**Jim's Mum** But we don't have any money left.

**Sheriff** Oh dear, what do you have left?

**Jim's Dad** Just this cow.

**Sheriff** For the last time peasant, cows are no longer negotiable currency. Unless, of course, it is a dancing cow. Is it?

**Jim's Dad** Errmmm, not that we're aware of. Wife?

**Jim's Mum** No, she's got two left feet.

**Sheriff** Silence fools! (*To guards*) Craig, David! Take these simpletons away!!

*Guard's enter R, and take Mr and Mrs Thatch away to some fiend-*

*ish dungeon type thing*

**Jim** No, don't take my parents!

**Sheriff** Too late, my little friend. Let this be a lesson to the rest of you. You cannot evade my taxes!

*Jim leads audience in booing*

**Peasant #1** But all we have left are the clothes we stand in, the light we see by and that pile of junk over there. (*He indicates junk, possibly labelled "bric-a-brac" to help the audience*)

**Sheriff** Ahh, which leads me to my new flax, wax and bric-a-brac tax.

**Peasant #2** That's so unfair. You tax everything!

**Sheriff** That's because I'm the taxman.....

## Song 2

**Jim** You'll never get away with this!

**Sheriff** Won't I? And who, pray, will stop me? You and your cow?

**Jim** Why shouldn't we?

**Sheriff** (*building to hilarious conclusion*) Because, you....and your cow .....are.....udderly ridiculous!

*Raucous laughter from guards and/or other pro-Sheriff persons*

**Guard Craig** (*entering*) Sheriff! Sheriff!

**Sheriff** What is it Craig? Fill me in.

**Guard Craig** Robin Hood has robbed some of our tax gatherers on the other side of the forest!

**Sheriff** Robin Hood! Quick, call me a horse!

**Guard Craig** (*shrugging*) You're a horse.

**Sheriff** (*pause*) Never mind. I'll get one for myself. Come on!

*Sheriff and guards exit R*

**Jim** How dare he treat me like that?! I might be poor but I'm just as good as he is! It's not my parents' fault that they can't pay their taxes, it's not fair! Well I'm going to teach him a lesson and set my parents free. I don't know how but I'll find a way. Come on, Daisy, we'll show him!

*Jim exits L*

## **Robin Hood & His Merry Men**

A refreshing new take on the old legend, with Robin and his (very) camp followers, the Merry Men. It has two villains in the evil Prince John and the even eviller Sheriff of Nottingham, and an outrageous dame, Jemima Gusset. Add the authors' original lyrics to some well known songs (including two by Village People), and you have an hilarious mix of fun, music and adventure that is guaranteed to please. Plus, lots of cross-dressing!

### **Plot Summary**

Jim, a young girl, is desperate to join up with Robin Hood and become a Merry Man. Meanwhile the evil Sheriff is up to no good, raising taxes and imprisoning Jim's parents. He kidnaps Robin's sweetheart Maid Marian and determines to marry her. All of which sets up the glorious finale when the Merry Men conceive a cunning rescue plan.

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