

HOOD, OF SHERWOOD

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

By Robert Mauro

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HOOD, OF SHERWOOD

By Robert Mauro

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(SEVEN MEN, ONE WOMAN, EXTRAS)

ROBIN A silly bandit of Sherwood Forest. (127
lines)

ALLEN A DALE A folk singer. (28 lines)

FRIAR TUCK A man of the cloth. (17 lines)

LITTLE JOHN A gruff tough guy. (12 lines)

1ST LOOK OUT A voice from offstage. (5 lines)

RICH MAN A world banker. (27 lines)

MAID MARIAN A friend of Prince John. (38 lines)

2ND LOOK OUT Another voice from offstage. (4 lines)

PRINCE JOHN An evil prince from England. (24 lines)

SHERIFF Sheriff of Nottingham. (9 lines)

MERRY MEN/GUARDS Extras as desired. May be females
dressed as males.

PLACE

A clearing in Sherwood Forest.

TIME

Long ago.

STAGING

The dancing, singing, and chases are great opportunities to be as wild and wacky as possible. Don't be afraid to work in your own funny bits. For example, the full moon can rise on cue. It can hang from a string and simply be hoisted into position when needed. You might even let PRINCE JOHN follow its erratic rise with his finger. Toy bows and suction cup arrows should be used for safety and for their humorous effect. And there's no reason some of the MERRY MEN and GUARDS can't be women dressed as men. Play it for laughs and have a very, merry time!

SOUND EFFECTS

LOOK OUTS shout from offstage.

LIGHTING EFFECTS

Lights dim out at the end of SCENE 1. In SCENE 2, they dim to give the feeling of a moonlit night.

PROPERTIES

Tree (upstage left)

Tree (downstage right)

Bush (upstage right)

Bush (downstage left)

Brought on:

Broad swords, bows and arrows (Guards)

Guitar, pencil, paper (Allen a Dale)

Rope, blindfold, gag, long bows, arrows (Merry Men)

Bow and arrow (Robin)

Long staff (Little John)

Two bags of gold (Rich Man)

Handcuffs (Sheriff)

Disguise or “Groucho” nose glasses (Maid Marian)

COSTUMES

Rich Man, Prince John, Maid Marian in royal attire. Sheriff in leather top, gray leotards, big key ring with large keys. Robin and Merry Men in green leotards and loose tops, some caps. Friar Tuck in brown habit tied with rope at waist. Guards in gray leotards and metal breast plates. See CONSTRUCTION IDEAS.

CONSTRUCTION IDEAS

The “metal” breast plates can be made by cutting oaktag or cardboard into appropriate-sized heart or triangle shapes, two for each Guard. The cardboard can then be covered with aluminum foil and tied at each shoulder and between the legs with white shoelaces. The broad swords can be made from wooden stripping with a short cross piece for the hand guard. The “blade” should be painted silver while the handle and hand guard are painted black. If the “Groucho glasses” cannot be purchased, they can be easily made by gluing cotton for eyebrows on the top of an old pair of sunglasses from which the lenses have been removed. The nose can be made from pink construction paper with more cotton glued to it for a mustache. The bushes can be constructed out of cardboard cut into large semi-circles and covered with crumpled green crepe paper and/or artificial ivy. Support the bushes by constructing two triangles for each bush out of wooden stripping. The bush can now be set up against the triangles and secured with tape. For the trees, if you can’t use two artificial Christmas trees, make your own trees out of cardboard flats and cover the trunk with brown crepe paper or simply paint the trunk brown. Green shredded crepe can be used for leafy treetops. The trees can then be suspended from the ceiling with “invisible” high-test fishing line and anchored to the floor with brown masking tape.

SETTING:

Forest on painted backdrop. Upstage artificial trees and bushes. A tree downstage right; a bush downstage left.

AT RISE:

ROBIN and his Merry Men are hidden behind trees and bushes.

ROBIN: *(Peeking out from behind a tree upstage.)* All clear! *(He comes out to center stage and his men follow him.)* So . . . you all ready, men?

ALL: Aye, Robin!

ROBIN: *(To ALLEN A DALE.)* Ready, Allen A Dale.

ALLEN A DALE: *(Strumming his guitar.)* Ready, Robin.

ROBIN: Then hit it, lads! *(All sing the following. ROBIN reacts with surprise when, during the song, they call him a klutz.)*

O THERE'S A ROBIN IN THE GLEN

("O There's a Tavern in the Town")

O there's a Robin in the glen,
In the glen.
And we're his many merry men,
Merry men.
And we rob the rich
And we give it to the poor -
For that's the way we live,
Dear friend,
In the glen!

Well, we rob the rich
With glee you see,
And give it to the poor -
Tax free!
We always hear their every plea -
Occasionally we serve them tea!
And when the rich complain, we laugh -
Then send them off without their cash;

We do it all with great panache -
For we're just men!

But then there's Robin - oy, dear friend,
In the glen,
Who leads us just and merry men,
Merry men!
And he's such a klutz -
Oy vey, no if's or but's -
That we're still poor but merry men,
In the glen.

ROBIN: Good singin', lads. (*ROBIN scratches his head.*) Me thinks.
Now remember: we rob from the poor and give to the rich.

ALL: He forgot already!

FRIAR TUCK: (*Putting his arm on ROBIN'S shoulder.*) I believe it's
the other way around, Robin, me son.

ROBIN: It is, Friar Tuck?

ALL: Yes!

ROBIN: (*Raising his arm for emphasis.*) Then remember, lads: we
rob from the rich and give to the poor!

ALLEN A DALE: One question, Robin.

ROBIN: What is it, Allen A Dale?

ALLEN A DALE: How do you define "poor"?

ROBIN: Er . . .

ALLEN A DALE: This selective robbery business can be quite
confusing.

LITTLE JOHN: I say we rob any bloke what's dressed better than
we!

ALL: Aye!

ALLEN A DALE: Ah, but looks can be deceiving, Little John. And
how do we define "better"?

FRIAR TUCK: True. And who'd ever guess by appearances Robin
Hood was a clever bandit?

ROBIN: I am, Friar Tuck?

FRIAR TUCK: Well, Robin, that's what the poor think.

ALL: Hooray for the poor!

ROBIN: Right.

ALLEN A DALE: Ah, but once again, how do we define, “poor”?

LITTLE JOHN: (*Pointing to ALLEN A DALE.*) I told you not to hire these college blokes, Robin. Me thinks they ask too many questions.

ROBIN: Aye. But they do have so many answers.

LITTLE JOHN: Like what?

ROBIN: Wasn't it Allen A Dale who answered your question, Little John?

LITTLE JOHN: What question?

ROBIN: Why is the sky blue and the forest green.

LITTLE JOHN: Oh, yeah. Right. He did.

ALL: So why is the sky blue and the forest green, Little John?

LITTLE JOHN: (*Scratching his head.*) Er . . . I forgot.

1ST LOOK OUT: (*From offstage.*) Hi ho there, Robin!

ROBIN: Aye, Look Out?

1ST LOOK OUT: Someone comes over hill and dale!

ROBIN: All right! Here we go, lads! Now remember what I taught you . . . we rob the poor -

ALL: No, the rich! The rich!

ROBIN: Ah, right! The rich, the rich. And I'll do all the talking.

ALL: (*Ironic.*) Oh, terrific.

ROBIN: Hide, lads!

They all hide as RICH MAN carrying bags of gold enters. Each bag is clearly marked, “Gold.” Robin and his merry men jump out and surround RICH MAN.

ROBIN: Halt! Hand over your valuables, rich man!

RICH MAN: Rich man? Valuables? What valuables?

ROBIN: Er . . .

ALL: Those bags of gold!

ROBIN: Ah, right! Hand over those bags of gold, or suffer the consequences!

RICH MAN: These? These are mere bags of potatoes.

ALL: Potatoes?

RICH MAN: Potatoes.

ROBIN: But we thought -

RICH MAN: Yes, yes, I know. You all thought it was gold. It's a common mistake. It's the bags.

FRIAR TUCK: He's fibbing, Robin.

ROBIN: Shush, Tuck. I'll do the talking here. We'll take the potatoes!

RICH MAN: But I'll starve.

ROBIN: How foolish! You're rich and it's a well-known fact that only the poor have the right to starve.

RICH MAN: But that's ridiculous.

ALLEN A DALE: (*Singing.*) That's life. That's what the people say -

RICH MAN: (*To ALLEN A DALE.*) Are you a college man, sir?

ALLEN A DALE: Rather, Allen A Dale. Oxford. Class of '79. Folk Singing and Light Verse.

RICH MAN: (*RICH MAN and ALLEN A DALE do a silly secret college society hand shake.*) Oxford. Class of '78. International Finance and World Banking.

ALLEN A DALE: It's a small world.

RICH MAN: And quite flat, if you ask me.

ROBIN: Hey! Don't forget! This is a robbery. Not a class reunion. (*To RICH MAN.*) So hand over your potatoes, sir!

RICH MAN: But I'll starve.

ROBIN: I'm sorry, but that's the law of the forest.

RICH MAN: And a very harsh law, me thinks. No?

ROBIN: Well . . . okay, look we aren't all bad. So . . . we'll only take one bag. Okay?

RICH MAN: Well . . . must you?

ALL: Yes! It's our business!

ROBIN: I'll decide this, lads.

ALL: (*Ironic.*) Oh, great.

ROBIN: We'll take one bag. So hand it over please, or . . . or . . .

ALL: Suffer the consequences!

ROBIN: Right! The bag please.

RICH MAN: Oh, I can't. (*The Merry Men get violent.*)

ROBIN: Please. I hate violence.

RICH MAN: Sorry. But I just can't.

ROBIN: Then I'll take it! (*ROBIN takes a bag and it's so heavy, he*

falls immediately to his knees. ROBIN tries to lift the bag.) Wait a second, these are awfully heavy potatoes -

ALL: It must be gold!

ROBIN: Nah.

ALL: Yes! Yes!

ROBIN: *(Looks in bag and stands up.)* Blimey! You're right, lads! It's gold! *(ROBIN takes other bag from RICH MAN and ROBIN quickly falls to his knees.)* Whoops. If my hunch is correct, lads, this also is a bag of potatoes - I mean gold! *(ROBIN looks in bag.)* Aye! It glitters! And all that glitters is -

ALL: Gold!

RICH MAN: No, no. That's not the way it goes. All that glitters is not gold!

ROBIN: Ah, but this is. So once more we rob the poor!

ALL: The rich! The rich!

ROBIN: Exactly! We rob the rich!

RICH MAN: Excuse me. Is this true, Mr. Hood, that you rob only the rich and give to the poor?

ROBIN: *(Scratching his head as he asks Merry Men.)* Er . . . isn't it the other way around, lads?

ALL: No, no, no!

ROBIN: *(To RICH MAN.)* Then it's true.

RICH MAN: How considerate and just of you.

ROBIN: Aye. We are just and considerate merry men. So?

RICH MAN: Well, that gold is my life savings.

ROBIN: Great! Should be a fortune here then.

RICH MAN: Yes. But there's one problem.

ROBIN: *(Surprised.)* No!

RICH MAN: Oh, yes. You see now that you have my fortune, I am, alas, poor.

ROBIN: No!

RICH MAN: Yes. Absolutely penniless.

ROBIN: You don't say.

ALL: Careful, Robin.

RICH MAN: But I am. Why, I'm utterly bankrupt.

ROBIN: So? What are you getting at?

RICH MAN: Well, if you give to the poor, wouldn't it naturally follow

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that I should be a prime recipient of your generosity? Being poor, I mean.

ROBIN: You're right.

ALL: Robin!

ROBIN: Quiet, lads. This fellow has a point.

RICH MAN: Thanks, Mr. Hood. So wouldn't it naturally follow that I should be given the fortune that you just robbed - I being now quite poor, I mean.

ROBIN: (*Thinking.*) I'm afraid he's right, lads. You told me yourselves: we rob from the rich and give to the poor.

ALL: Oh, no!

ROBIN: No?!

ALL: Yes - but -

ROBIN: No buts about it, lads! You told me yourselves: we give to the rich - no, we rob from the poor - er -

RICH MAN: I believe it's you rob from the rich - which incidentally I definitely am not - and you so generously give to the poor. And . . . well, that's me. Wow, I'm penniless!

ROBIN: In that case, you should have these. (*Hands RICH MAN the two bags of gold.*)

ALL: Robin! No!

ROBIN: Quiet, lads. We are after all JUST men.

RICH MAN: I agree! Well, I'll be on my way. (*Tips his hat.*)

Nice doing business with you all. (*RICH MAN tries not to laugh.*)

ROBIN: Yes. Have a nice day.

RICH MAN: (*Holding up bags for all to see.*) I will. I will.

RICH MAN exits and bursts into loud laughter.

ROBIN: See how jolly it makes these poor folk?

ALL: Oh, Robin!

ROBIN: Once again I helped the needy.

ALLEN A DALE: I'm only a college graduate, but I'd say we blew it, Robin.

ROBIN: Ah. Aye. But this is what life is like in the forest. Some have and some have not.

LITTLE JOHN: (*Raising his long staff.*) Let me at him! Let me at

him!

ROBIN: *(Doing some judo positions.)* Ah, Little John, you want to tussle again? Haaa-ya!

LITTLE JOHN: *(Being held back by Merry Men.)* No! No! I want to - - *(LITTLE JOHN'S mouth is covered by FRIAR TUCK'S hand.)*

FRIAR TUCK: He says he wants to keep you on your toes, Robin, me son.

1ST LOOK OUT: *(From offstage.)* Hi ho! Someone comes yonder!

ROBIN: Rich or poor, Look Out?

1ST LOOK OUT: It's a woman!

ALLEN A DALE: *(Singing.)* Woman.

ROBIN: Oh - a woman? What's a woman?

ALL: Oh, brother!

ROBIN: But I have no brother, lads.

ALLEN A DALE: Robin, you've been in the glen too long. You see a woman is what I write my troubadour songs about.

ROBIN: Then I must be a woman!

ALL: Oh, brother.

ALLEN A DALE: No, no, Robin.

ROBIN: But you write troubadour songs about me all the time.

ALLEN A DALE: Yes. True. But I also write them about the birds, the bees, the trees, and babbling brooks - and the women. And you're the opposite of a woman.

ROBIN: Ah - ha! You mean she's rich since I'm poor.

ALL: He's a nut! A nut!

ALLEN A DALE: Robin, me thinks you've been around these merry men too long.

ROBIN: True. I never get to go anywhere alone.

1ST LOOK OUT: *(From offstage.)* Hi ho! Hide! She comes!

ROBIN: Hide, lads!

They all run around, bumping into each other as they race each other for best hiding places. After they're all hidden, MAID MARIAN skips along onto stage, stops and picks something up center stage.

MAID MARIAN: Oh, look. A gold coin. And lucky side up, too! Yes. I am a fair and lucky Maid Marian. I'm also beautiful, well-dressed, and rich!

ROBIN: (*Jumping out in front of MAID MARIAN.*) Ah-ha! Rich, sir!

MAID MARIAN: Sir? I'm a woman, bumpkin!

ALLEN A DALE: Robin, the proper form of address when speaking to a woman is madam, not sir.

ROBIN: Ah, then hand over your valuables, madam!

MAID MARIAN: (*Hands ROBIN the gold coin.*) Here. So much for lucky coins.

ROBIN: This is it?

MAID MARIAN: That's it. Rich men never give us women any money, except to shop for food and such.

ROBIN: (*To Merry Men.*) She's rich, but penniless. Me thinks women are really quite confusing. So, now what do we do, lads?

ALL: We ransom her!

ROBIN: Ah, right. Good idea. We ransom you. Ransom? What's ransom?

ALL: (*Ad-lib.*) I don't believe it. He's a nut. Oh, brother. No wonder we're still poor!

MAID MARIAN: Is this country bumpkin for real?

ALL: I'm afraid so.

MAID MARIAN: Boy, what a dumbbell.

ROBIN: (*Clicks his heels, bows, doffing his hat.*) It's my middle name. So, dear sir - I mean madam - we're holding you for ransom. And until we - er . . . we . . . (*Whispering to Merry Men.*) Until we what, men?

ALL: Receive her weight in gold! Her full weight in gold!

ROBIN: Right! (*Looking MAID MARIAN over.*) So, how much do you weigh, madam?

MAID MARIAN: (*Shocked.*) I beg your pardon.

ROBIN: Oh, nothing personal. Just business. So what do you weigh? Two hundred? Two-fifty?

MAID MARIAN: WHAT?!

ROBIN: Three hundred?

MAID MARIAN: Well, I never! I'm but ninety-eight pounds, sir! And that's in my bare feet.

ROBIN: (*Looking at her feet.*) Ah, but you're wearing your shoes.

So you could be three hundred. Maybe three-fifty.

MAID MARIAN: He's a nut! You're a nut, sir. I'm ninety-nine pounds - and that's tops!

ROBIN: All right. So . . . what's the bottom weigh?

MAID MARIAN: None of your business.

ROBIN: Well, what's ninety-nine pounds of gold in dollars and cents, Allen A Dale?

ALLEN A DALE: (*Holds up an abacus and flips beads.*) Er . . . ninety-nine times sixteen ounces, times the latest price of gold on the world market - less my commission. (*Mumbles.*) A mere twenty-five percent. I'd say . . . \$38,016.

ROBIN: Blimey! Me thinks, I like women. But don't they come any heavier than you, madam? You are quite skinny.

MAID MARIAN: It's my diet and of course I jog. So what's next? Tying me up? Blindfolding?

ROBIN: Aye! Excellent idea. Rope, please. (*They tie ROBIN'S feet and hands.*) Blindfold! (*They blindfold ROBIN.*) Right. Now . . . er . . .

ALL: Take her away!

ROBIN: Right. (*Several Merry Men take MAID MARIAN behind a tree and leave her there. ROBIN, his legs tied, hops.*) Have you taken her away, lads?

ALL: Yes!

MAID MARIAN: (*Looking out from behind tree.*) Boy, is he a nut.

ALL: We know. We know.

ROBIN: Well, what do we do now, men?

ALL: Hop! (*ROBIN hops.*)

ROBIN: Besides that, I mean.

FRIAR TUCK: I believe now we write a ransom note. Can anyone write? (*Pause as all hum or whistle nonchalantly.*)

ALLEN A DALE: I can write. But, alas, only light verse.

LITTLE JOHN: (*Gruff.*) We can't write a bloomin' ransom note in poetry.

ROBIN: Little John's right. So what do we do now?

MAID MARIAN: (*Still peeking out from behind tree.*) Look. I'll write this note. I went to college.

ALLEN A DALE: No!

MAID MARIAN: Yes. Oxford. Class of '79. English Lit and Modern Medieval History.

ALLEN A DALE: But I thought they didn't allow women to go to college.

MAID MARIAN: I wore a disguise. *(She puts on Groucho nose glasses with fuzzy eyebrows and mustache.)* See?

ALLEN A DALE: Quite effective.

MAID MARIAN: *(Still wearing disguise.)* Yes. So anyone have a pencil and paper?

ALLEN A DALE: I do. Here. *(He hands them to her as she comes out from behind tree. ROBIN is still hopping.)* Thanks.

ROBIN: *(Exhausted.)* Can I stop hopping?

ALL: No! *(He hops.)*

MAID MARIAN: Now, what should I write?

ROBIN: Wait! I can't see a thing! I'm blind!

ALL: It's only the blindfold.

ROBIN: Oh. Phew, that was close.

MAID MARIAN: So what should I write? What about the ransom note? I'd like to go home, you know.

ROBIN: Right! Therefore, I shall dictate this note. Wait! I forgot. Did you remember the gag?

ALL: *(Ad-lib.)* Ah, yes! The gag. Good idea! Get the gag! Bring on the gag! *(They do and gag ROBIN.)* There! That's better.

ROBIN: *(Mumbling.)* Lala fatata dateta ta.

FRIAR TUCK: Robin says to let me, Friar Tuck, translate as Robin dictates.

ALL: *(Ironic.)* Oh, wonderful.

MAID MARIAN: *(Tapping her foot on ground as she taps paper with pencil.)* So what should I write already?

ROBIN: *(Mumbling.)* Daplaa aahh gaga googoo dadah.

FRIAR TUCK: Robin says, "Dear **PRINCE JOHN:** Please enclose ninety-nine pounds gold - twenty-four karat - for safe return of the fair Maid Marian."

ROBIN: Blaablaa googoo rabaa booboo.

FRIAR TUCK: Robin says, "P.S. No checks please. Signed yours truly, Robin Hood."

ROBIN: Blaa haahaa hoohe hoo yaya.

FRIAR TUCK: "P.P.S. We rob from the poor."

ALL: The rich! The rich!

ROBIN: (*Mumbling.*) Sharooob! Weewaa wababaa saa daadaa!

FRIAR TUCK: He says, "Sorry! We rob from the rich and give to the poor."

ROBIN: (*Mumbling.*) Saa aa baa awawa.

FRIAR TUCK: Robin adds, "Send it via first-class arrow." (*FRIAR TUCK claps.*) Bring on Robin's long bow and arrow! (*They're brought on.*)

ROBIN: (*Mumbling.*) Naanaa waa I shaa shoe taa?

FRIAR TUCK: Robin says, "Now, how will I shoot?"

LITTLE JOHN: I'd say untie 'em. Ya! That's it.

MAID MARIAN: Excellent idea. Untie him!

FRIAR TUCK: Madam, I believe we give the orders here.

MAID MARIAN: Oh, yeah. Sorry. I forgot. I'm the kidnappee, you're the kidnapppers. Well, here's your note. Now, can he shoot straight and far?

LITTLE JOHN: Well, not so straight.

ALL: And not so far! (*ROBIN'S untied and ungagged.*)

ROBIN: I can split an arrow at a hundred paces!

ALL: Aye. As a result we have but twenty unsplit arrows left!

MAID MARIAN: Oh. So he can't shoot so straight and not so far.

ROBIN: I can shoot straight and far enough!

MAID MARIAN: Ah, but my castle is seven leagues away.

ROBIN: 'Tis a bit far. Is it straight?

MAID MARIAN: Not so straight, but quite far.

ROBIN: (*Merry Men tie note to end of arrow. ROBIN fumbles with bow and arrow. Finally, he aims it and everyone ducks. ROBIN aims stage right.*) No problem! I shall hit my mark dead center.

MAID MARIAN: (*Pointing stage left.*) Sir, the castle is that-a-way.

ROBIN: (*Turns and aims as everyone ducks again.*) Ah! Of course. Not so straight.

MAID MARIAN: But quite far.

ROBIN: Aye. (*He fires and there's a loud "Oooohhh!" from offstage.*) I lose more Look Out's that way. But don't worry, fair Maid Marian. Someday your prince will come!

ALL sing the following song, doing a sort of forest square dance as ALLEN A DALE plays his guitar.

HE'LL BE COMING ROUND THE FOREST

(She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain.)

He'll be coming round the forest
With some gold, with some gold.
He'll be coming round the forest
With some gold, with some gold.

He'll be coming round the forest -
And, lads, not as a tourist!
No! He's coming round the forest
With some gold, with some gold.

Oh, no longer will we be just
Merry men, merry men.
Oh, no longer will we be just
Merry men, merry men.
And in this, me God, you can trust
As we're rolling in the gold dust
We'll be just such very, very,
Merry men, Merry men.

For he's coming round the forest
With some gold, with some gold.
Yes! He's coming round the forest
With some gold, with some gold.
And, lads, not as a tourist!
No! He's coming round the forest
With some gold, with some gold!

LIGHTS OUT. END OF SCENE 1.

SCENE 2

TIME:

A week later.

AT RISE:

Everyone is bored. ROBIN, LITTLE JOHN, FRIAR TUCK, MAID MARIAN, ALLEN A DALE, and Merry Men pace and bump into each other center stage.

MAID MARIAN: *(Without her disguise.)* I'm fed up with this waiting, this ransom business! Why, I've been waiting a week now and still my prince hasn't come.

ROBIN: It's the mails.

ALL: *(Pointing to ROBIN.)* Or his arrow.

ALLEN A DALE: Shall I sing you all one of my latest ballads?

ALL: No! Not another one! Anything but that!

ALLEN A DALE: Well, then, how about a poem?

ALL: No thanks! That's even worse! No poetry!

ALLEN A DALE: You're all a bunch of animals! No culture! All you know is robbery and ransom.

ALL: It's a living.

HOOD, OF SHERWOOD

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