



ROBIN HOOD & THE BABES IN THE WOOD

By

Garry Bailey

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A Pantomime

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Robin Hood.

Maid Marion.

The Merry Men

Little John.

Will Scarlett.

Friar Tuck.

Allan A-Dale.

Simple Simon – A Herald.

The Sheriff of Nottingham.

Sir Rupert – A wise and good councillor.

'Orrible Horace – A Robber.

Awful Herbert – Another Robber.

Nurse Nellie Nightshade.

The Enchantress of Sherwood.

Bobby – A Babe.

Betty – Another Babe.

King Richard the Lionheart.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene I ... Nottingham Market Square

Scene II ... A Corridor in Nottingham Castle

Scene III ... The Babes Nursery

Scene IV ... Robin Hood's encampment

Scene V ... Deeper into Sherwood Forest

Act II

Scene I ... Nottingham Market Square

Scene II ... On the Way to Sherwood Forest

Scene III ... The Grand Hall at Nottingham Castle

Scene IV... On the Way

Scene V ... The finale

ACT ONE SCENE ONE
Nottingham Market Square.

(The tabs open on a full stage set, Nottingham Castle dominates the skyline, it is market day in the city, and although the people of Nottingham are oppressed, they are happy and cheerful.)

Song (Company)

(During the song, Maid Marion joins them and at the end of the number it is she who is seen giving out bread and alms to the poor. At the end of the song.)

Marion *(giving some bread to a pauper)* Here you go Meg.
Meg Oh bless you Lady Marion.
Marion *(to another pauper)* Here's a groat for you to buy some flour from the Miller, Bodkin.
Bodkin Oh thank you milady. You're a much better egg than that uncle of yours.
Marion Shush Bodkin. If he gets to hear it'll be the worse for you. You'll lose your head.
Bodkin Oh and that'd never do Lady Marion.
Marion No it wouldn't
Bodkin If I lost my head, I'd have nowhere to put me hat.
Marion *(laughing)* No you wouldn't. *(She stops another woman)* Oh hello Goody Tumbleweed, how are you?
Goody Pregnant again.
Marion Oh dear? How many children will that be?
Goody Twenty-six or Twenty-seven.
Marion Twenty-six **OR** Twenty-seven?
Goody Well, it could be twins. Could be Twenty-eight if it be triplets.
Marion Here, Goody you'd better have all these scraps that I've managed to pilfer from the castle kitchens.
Goody Oh thank you Lady Marion. Twenty-nine if it be quads, or even...
Marion Yes I get the picture Goody.

(From off stage there comes a roar from the Sheriff of Nottingham.)

Sheriff (*Off*) Which peasant has stolen the scraps from the kitchen table?
Marion Oh that's my uncle! *(To Goody)* You'd better go Goody.
Goody Think I'd better.

(The Sheriff enters dressed elaborately a purse of gold hanging off his belt and flanked by two guards.)

Sheriff Get out of my way riff raff! You scum, cower and snivel properly when I appear.

(The chorus bow and tug forelocks.)

Marion Hello Uncle.
Sheriff Ah Marion my dear, here you are, what are you doing out here amongst the great unwashed?
Marion I felt like some fresh air uncle, cooped up in that castle all day I was beginning to feel like Rapunzle. Anymore of sitting doing needlepoint, I shall 'let down my hair'.
Sheriff Why don't you let your hair down with me my dear?

Marion *(shocked)* Uncle!
Sheriff Well, why not, I'm young *(pause)* ish, virile, rich and I fancy you something rotten. Marry me!

(A blind beggar enters with a large stick)

Marion You forget yourself sir.
Sheriff No Uncle?
Marion You are not my real uncle sir. My real uncle is King Richard.
Sheriff *(aside)* Yes, and I need you as my wife before I can lay a legitimate claim to the throne! *(Changing his attitude)* Oh course my dear, I meant no harm, it's just the peasants make my blood boil. Look at them, scum the lot of them. *(Indicating the audience)* And that lot out there.
Marion But Uncle they're so poor.
Sheriff They're so miserable, they're always whinging and moaning. Well I'll give them something to moan about before I'm finished. Unless this month's taxes are forthcoming, then I shall hang each and every one of them from the battlements of Nottingham Castle.

(The Blind Beggar crosses the stage and stumbles into the Sheriff.)

Beggar Oh, oh!
Sheriff Get off me.
Beggar I beg your honour's pardon. Please forgive me.
Sheriff Guards!
Beggar Please your honour, I'm only a poor blind beggar, travelling the highways and byways on the way to Lincolnshire.
Sheriff Take him to the gallows and hang him.
Marion No please Uncle, he meant no harm.
Beggar I only stopped in Nottingham because I heard that here lived a great man of honour and dignity.
Sheriff You heard right beggar man. *(To guards)* All right, let him go. *(To Beggar)* Just make sure you're out of the city gates by nightfall; Nottingham can't afford to keep slovenly beggars. *(With glee)* Nottingham is busy swelling my coffers.
Beggar *(to Marion)* Why thank you milady, for I can tell from the sweet tone of your voice that you are indeed a fine lady of quality.
Sheriff On your way you beggarly knave.
Beggar Yes your honour, you're a fine man, your honour. You must be Lord Loxley himself.
Sheriff Who?
Beggar Lord Loxley, for he was the man with honour and dignity that I was talking about.
Sheriff *(enraged)* Loxley! Loxley!
Marion Oh uncle! *(To beggar)* Sir, I suggest that you leave Nottingham now.

(The beggar leaves quickly.)

Sheriff Blast the fellow, *(To Guards)* if you see him again make sure he has a date with the headsman. *(To Marion.)* I don't know why you go around being so kind to everyone and being such a goody, goody. Well Marion, my dear, I've got some news.
Marion News?
Sheriff Yes and I'm sure that it'll bring out this kindly spirit in you. We're having more guests at Nottingham Castle.

Marion Really?
Sheriff More relatives of yours and the Kings. A couple of pewling brats.
Marion Not Betty and Bobby?
Sheriff Yes.
Marion They're my cousins, they're lovely children, you'll really like them...well, you might.
Sheriff I wouldn't bet on it.
Marion No, nor would I.
Sheriff So you and that stupid Nurse of yours will have the honour of looking after the brats.
Marion Oh we'll have to get the nursery ready. I'm not too sure that bars at the windows are ideal for children.
Sheriff A mere safety precaution.
Marion The manacles on the walls?
Sheriff Health and safety laws, you can't be too careful these days.
Marion Well maybe. I shall have to fine Nurse Nellie, we must get everything ready.

(Maid Marion exits looking for Nurse Nellie)

Sheriff That's it you go and find the old crone.
Nurse *(off)* I heard that!
Sheriff I on the other hand must consult a higher authority. I thought Marion was the only person standing between me and the crown of England, with these two children appearing on the scene, then I'm not too sure. They could cause me a problem.

(He exits following Marion. From off stage we hear Nurse Nellie.)

Nurse *(Off)* Did somebody call? *(She enters riding on a bicycle, dressed as a district nurse. She goes whizzing straight across the stage and leaves the other side, we here an SFX of a crash, and Nurse Nellie Nightshade re-enters looking a little rough around the edges with a bicycle tyre around her neck.)* Oh, oh. Those breaks aren't half sharp. *(She notices the audience)* Oh hello my dears. Well it is nice to see you all. You all look so well, how do I look? Who said fat? Well I must admit I have put a little weight on this Christmas, you see we had this turkey, eighty-five pound it was, can you imagine it, eighty-five pounds, it was huge, oh it was so big I couldn't get it into the oven. I could have killed it. Now I suppose you want to know who I am, well I'm Nurse Nellie Nightshade, try saying that with your teeth out misses. I came to Nottingham with my Lady Marion, I've nursed her since she was a nipper, and now she's all grown up I've took to becoming an administering angel.
Chorus1 Angel of death more like.

Nurse Belt up. Yes I look after this lot very well, dose them up daily and nightly. Broken bones, scurf, rabies, knocked knees, yellow belly, yellow fever, scarlet fever, arachnophobia, agoraphobia, ergophobia, hydrophobia, bad backs, sore backs, ladder backs and sticklebacks, small pox, chicken pox, top of the pox, fallen arches, flat feet, flat heads, headaches, neck aches, pains in the necks pains in the ar-tichokes, coughs and wheezes spread diseases catch them in your handkerchief. Yes but the secret to healthy living is a healthy lifestyle, plenty of exercise, day and night. *(She looks at one woman)* Well like us all love, not enough night time exercises. Yes twice a day regular as

clockwork is how you want it. *(To the woman)* What? You'd like it twice a day as regular as clockwork! Wouldn't we all. Exercise I mean.

Song (Nurse & Company)

Nurse *(Gasping for breath.)* Oh I need artificial recreation.

Chorus 2 You mean respiration.

Nurse You do it your way and I'll do it mine. *(She looks around)* Are we alone? Well what I am about to tell you is top secret, just between you and me, so that all one hundred and fifty of us. Well, I know, *(She looks around once more.)* I know, who Robin Hood's Secret Spy in the Castle is. Shush! *(She beckons them forward.)* Now promise you won't tell anyone? *(Audience: Yes.)* Oh I'm not sure; I think you all need to take the oath of secrecy. All raise your right hands and repeat after me. *(The audience follow)* I, *(I.)* Your name. *(Their name)* Do solemnly swear *(repeat)* Flippin' heck *(repeat)* Not to reveal, divulge, snitch, grass and otherwise let the cat out of the bag nor phone the *(Local paper)* and announce it in the gossip columns. *(She waits)* Well go on. *(They try)* That'll do. Who is Robin Hood's Secret Spy. *(Who is Robin Hood's Secret spy.)* Right you ready for this? *(Audience: Yes.)* Are you sure? *(Audience: Yes)* You'll never believe it, it's...

(Marion re-enters)

Marion Nurse Nellie!

Nurse Don't tell everyone?

Marion I'm glad I've found you, listen my cousins Betty and Bobby are coming to stay.

Nurse Oh that'll be nice dear.

Marion The only think is that I fear for their safety. I'm not sure what the Sheriff will do to them, when he finds out that their claim to the throne is stronger than mine.

Nurse *(To Audience)* Ooh it's just like Coronation Street isn't it.

Marion Can you get a message to Robin Hood for me.

Nurse *(laughing nervously)* Whatever makes you think that I could get a message to Robin Hood?

Marion Well you are his secret spy.

Nurse Shush! How do you know that?

Marion Well it's only a secret that you, Robin Hood and half the English-speaking world know about.

Nurse I don't know.

Marion Nellie, it's a matter of life and death.

Nurse Then why didn't you say so! You can trust me I'm your woman.

Marion Are you sure?

Nurse Do you mind.

(The Blind Beggar re-appears.)

Beggar Alms for the poor. Alms for the poor.

Nurse Oh look Eli Dingle's *(or other well known TV scruff bag)* walked in.

Beggar Alms for the poor.

Marion He's the blind beggar *(Marion crosses and fetches him downstage)* who nearly lost his life today.

Nurse Aww bless.

Beggar Is that you milady?

Marion What are you doing back here?

Beggar I'm sorry milady, but I can't find my way out of here, being blind has its problems you know. There is someone with you?

Marion This is Nurse Nellie Nightshade.

Nurse 'ow do.
 Marion She's my old, old nurse.
 Nurse Here, not so much of the old!
 Beggar Ahh she has a beautiful voice, she must be a beautiful lady.
 Nurse Sauce pot!
 Beggar If only I could see your beauty. I daresay I am in the company of the two most beautiful women in the world.
 Nurse Well one of them!
 Marion Nurse Nellie will take you to the city gates; she has an important message to deliver.
 Nurse Do I?
 Marion Yes. (She whispers) To Robin Hood.
 Nurse Oh yes of course to Robin Hood.
 Beggar Robin Hood! Why his fame is noted throughout the land, outlaw and villain so your Sheriff would have it.
 Marion He is no villain; he is gentle and kind brave and heroic, doer of great deeds. He steals from the rich and gives to the poor.

(The blind beggar removes his cloak and hat to a fanfare to reveal our hero dressed in his Lincoln green. It's Robin Hood.)

Robin I'm glad you said that Marion.
 Marion Robin!
 Nurse Oh Robin Hood.
 Robin Hello Nursie.
 Marion Robin.
 Nurse You took a risk coming into the market square.
 Marion You certainly did, especially bumping into the Sheriff like that.
 Robin Marion I had to, it's tax-collecting day tomorrow and that wicked varlet will be wanting his dues and the Sheriff had a nice fat purse of gold hanging off his belt. I've robbed from the rich, and giving it to the poor so they can give it back to the rich. *(He turns to the chorus)* Here you are good people of Nottingham, a purse of gold that I robbed off the Sheriff.
 Chorus Hooray!
 Robin It was last month's taxes, but it'll do fine to pay this months.
 Chorus Hooray!
 Robin Gather round everyone and grab a groat!
 Nurse Opportunity would be a fine thing!

(The Chorus gather round Robin and he gives them the money.)

Marion Oh isn't he just dreamy.
 Nurse *(to Audience)* Hello, she's off again, she's only got to clap eyes on those green tights and that's it. Of course if you haven't got it by now they're in love. Marion and Robin. Oh walking on air, birds singing, cupid firing his arrows the works. Doesn't it make you sick!

(Robin comes back to Marion and Nurse.)

Marion Oh Robin it is good to hear the people of Nottingham laugh again.
 Robin Well Marion, everything I do, I do it for you.
 Nurse Sounds familiar.
 Marion *(looking into his eyes)* Oh Robin
 Robin *(looking into her eyes)* Oh Marion

Nurse Oh good grief! Look, can we get back to the plot; otherwise we'll be here all night!
Robin Of course. Nurse you were going to give me a message.

(A Bell begins to toll.)

Marion Yes, this is important, my cousins Betty and Bobby are coming to stay with me at Nottingham Castle.
Nurse Do you know, I said that without moving my lips!
Robin That'll be company for you.
Marion You don't understand their claim to the throne is greater than mine and with Uncle Richard away, who knows what the Sheriff will get up to. I fear for their safety.
Robin Well don't you worry Marion, the merry men and I will look out for them.

(Four nuns come walking across the back of the stage.)

Marion Oh you promise
Robin You've only to look into my eyes and you will see.
Nurse Oh for goodness sake! Now listen Robin, (she sees the Nuns) Oh look four sisters of virtue, I've often thought about joining them.
Robin Sisters of Virtue, too late for you Nursie.
Nurse Do you mind I am very chaste.
Robin All over Nottinghamshire.
Nurse Super hero or not, I'll bat your ear 'ole for you, if you carry on. Anyway I was going to say how can you and the merry men look out for the babes, they'll be here in Nottingham and you'll be in Sherwood Forest.
Robin Don't you worry we're never very far away, are we lads?

(The four nuns whip off their costumes to reveal the Merry Men, Will Scarlett, Allan A-Dale, Friar Tuck and Little John.)

Merry Men No!
Marion Goodness me.
Robin Yes the merry men, Will Scarlett, Allan A-Dale, Friar Tuck and Little John.
Nurse Well you want to stop doing that.
Robin Doing what?
Nurse Going around dressed as nuns, people will talk and besides it's a very dirty habit.
Robin We knew that was coming.
Little John *(To Nurse)* You're a fine one to talk about men wandering around in women's clothing.
Nurse I don't know what you mean young woman.
Robin Marion.
Marion Yes Robin?
Robin When are the children arriving at Nottingham?
Marion Why today, they're due at any moment I think.
Robin Then we haven't got a moment to lose, we'll high tail it back to Sherwood Forest and I'm sure that our secret spy will keep us informed. *(To Nurse)* Won't she?
Nurse Oh yes. I'm sure I, I mean I'm sure that she or he, will.
Robin Just remember whatever danger you're in, Robin Hood and The Merry Men will be at hand.

Song (Robin & The Merry Men.)

