

# *ROBIN HOOD*

A PANTOMIME

BY

STEPHEN DUCKHAM

c 2012



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NODA LTD  
 15 The Metro Centre  
 Peterborough PE2 7UH  
 Telephone: 01733 374790  
 Fax: 01733 237286  
 Email: [info@noda.org.uk](mailto:info@noda.org.uk)  
[www.noda.org.uk](http://www.noda.org.uk)

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CHARACTERS

|                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| ROBIN HOOD             |                         |
| MAID MARION            |                         |
| AUNT EFFIE             | Marion's Aunt           |
| SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM  |                         |
| FLOGGEM )              |                         |
| WHIPPEM )              | Sheriff's Henchmen      |
| NELL NIGHTSHADE        | An old Witch            |
| WILL SCARLET           | Medieval Camp Balladeer |
| LITTLE JOHN )          |                         |
| FRIAR TUCK )           | Robin's Men             |
| ALAN A DALE )          |                         |
| MUCH )                 |                         |
| TOBY )                 |                         |
| KING RICHARD THE FIRST |                         |

## CHORUS

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

## ACT ONE

|         |                    |
|---------|--------------------|
| SCENE 1 | NOTTINGHAM TOWN    |
| SCENE 2 | BEHIND THE CASTLE  |
| SCENE 3 | THE BAQUETING HALL |
| SCENE 4 | BEHIND THE CASTLE  |
| SCENE 5 | THE DUNGEONS       |
| SCENE 6 | BEHIND THE CASTLE  |
| SCENE 7 | SHERWOOD FOREST    |

## ACT TWO

|         |                                   |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| SCENE 1 | NOTTINGHAM TOWN                   |
| SCENE 2 | ON THE WAY TO SHERWOOD            |
| SCENE 3 | A HAY CART*                       |
| SCENE 4 | SHERWOOD FOREST                   |
| SCENE 5 | ON THE WAY HOME                   |
| SCENE 6 | THE GREAT HALL AT LOCKSLEY CASTLE |

\*Alternative SCENE 3        A BARN  
 (See notes at the end of the script)

## PRODUCTION NOTES

### SCENERY

#### ACT ONE

##### SCENE 1 NOTTINGHAM TOWN

A full stage set with medieval buildings R & L including a pub and a house with a practical door. The backcloth shows other parts of town with Nottingham Castle in the distance.

##### SCENES 2,4 and 6 BEHIND THE CASTLE

Front cloth depicting the walls of the castle and countryside in the distance.

##### SCENE 3 THE BANQUETING HALL

A half stage cloth depicting a lavish hall in the castle. A large long table with a trick revolving top is centre with chairs at either end and one up stage

##### SCENE 5 THE DUNGEONS

A three quarter set depicting a dingy dungeon scene with a wall piece to one side that can revolve. This is where Will is chained up. On the other side of the stage is a wall that can be broken through. If it is difficult to manage the revolving wall another way to effect the scene with Will disappearing is to have a cloth or canvas piece with a slit in the middle and painted to look like a wall. Will can then fall through the wall when the scone is pulled and re-appear the same way. Also, the breaking down of the other wall can be done off stage with a few stone blocks being thrown on stage before Robin and the Men enter.

##### SCENE 7 SHERWOOD FOREST

A full set showing Robin's hide-out deep in the forest. Trees on either side and a fire with a cooking pot hanging over it.

#### ACT TWO

##### SCENE 1 NOTTINGHAM GOOSE FAIR

Same as Act 1 Scene 1 with bunting and stalls added for the fair.

##### SCENE 2&5 ON THE WAY TO SHERWOOD /ON THE WAY HOME

Front cloth. Also required in the scene are a log or rustic bench, a bush large enough to hide behind in a crouched position and a sign post that can be swivelled. These are only needed in Scene 2.

##### SCENE 3 A cut out of the back of a hay wagon with a screen up stage of it. (Please see end of the script for an alternative scene.)

##### SCENE 4 SHERWOOD FOREST

Repeat Act 1 Scene 7

## SCENE 6 THE GREAT HALL AT LOCKSLEY CASTLE

Walk down. This scene can be as impressive as possible with heraldic banners showing various Coats of Arms etc.

### CHARACTERS

Robin can be played by either a man or woman, but must always have that strong determined character. The Sheriff is the villain of the piece who always leaves himself open to ridicule. Floggem and Whippem are the knockabout comedy characters who, although at first in the employ of the Sheriff, should always have the audience on their side. Whippem usually has the upper hand with Floggem getting most of the knocks! Marian in a spirited Principal Girl . please don't play her too demure or wet. Nell Nightshade is an old crone . warts and all! She has a cackle-like laugh and dreadful halitosis. Will Scarlet starts off as a balladeer before becoming one of Robin's men. He is rather fey with a cheeky side, but not an over the top camp character. And finally Aunt Effie, the comical Dame and should always be played by a man. A large character in every sense of the word and always played for laughs.

The company can be as large as you like with as much individuality as possible. Robin's Band of Men can be part of the Male Chorus.

The placing of musical numbers and who sings them is suggested in the script, but it is up to the director to decide what to use. A word of advice: Pantomime audiences . particularly the younger members . like the story to keep moving, so don't make the musical sequences too long, especially ballads.

I hope you enjoy doing this version of Robin Hood and have a great success with your production.

Stephen Duckham

### AUTHOR'S NOTE

I was asked to write this version of *Robin Hood* as an alternative to my earlier pantomime, *Babes in the Wood*. Both scripts have a number of similarities in the dialogue and characters and give a company the option of using junior actors for the *Babes* or telling the story with an all adult cast. In both scripts the use of a junior chorus is optional.

There is an original song for the Sheriff and Nell in Act Two which can be used if required. Please see the end of the script for information.

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15 The Metro Centre  
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PE2 7UH

ACT ONESCENE 1 NOTTINGHAM TOWN

*[An Inn is to one side of the stage and a house to the other. The back cloth depicts a Nottingham medieval street with the castle in the distance. The scene opens in darkness. After the musical introduction a light appears down right and into it walks WILL SCARLET, a rather fey medieval balladeer. He is strumming a lute and singing.]*

WILL Hey ho in a voice that's mellow,  
This is the story of a very brave fellow!

*[He speaks.]*

Hello. I'm Will Scarlet and this is England 1190. The time of King Richard the First . Richard the Lion Heart. At this moment he is away in the Holy Land fighting a lot of rough men at the Crusades. His beloved country has been left under the rule of his brother, Prince John. And what a nasty piece of work he is! Instead of looking after the interests of his subjects, John has increased the taxes and driven people into poverty. (Sound familiar?) A number of the nobility have joined in allegiance with Prince John, including the corrupt Sheriff of Nottingham.

*[A light comes up on the SHERIFF down left.]*

Anyone who does not pay homage to the prince . or pay his taxes . is declared an outlaw with a price on his head.

*[The SHERIFF produces a dagger and laughs.]* Oh boo, hiss! *[To the audience.]* You can do the same if you like. *[Audience boo and the SHERIFF makes a face as the light fades on him.]* Very good! You're my type of people! But one man alone is determined to right the wrongs perpetrated by the ruling classes. A big, brave, handsome fellow by the name of Robin Hood.

*[A light comes up on ROBIN HOOD centre stage. HE slaps a thigh.]*

Nice costume. Very retro! So this is his tale. And I know it very well and sing about it all over the country. I'm a sort of medieval Robbie Williams! *[Or a topical famous pop singer. The audience should react to this.]* Well please yourselves! Anyway my story starts in the town of Nottingham where Robin and his band of Merry Men are looking after *all* the needs of the townsfolk. *[Reaction from audience.]* Oh behave yourselves!

*[WILL exits. Lights come up on main scene. CHORUS enter and greet ROBIN. THEY join him in the opening number.]*

OPENING NUMBER

*[The song ends and MUCH crosses to ROBIN.]*

MUCH Robin, the Sheriff's men are coming. Be careful you don't get caught.

ROBIN No fear of that! *[To the GIRLS in the CHORUS.]* Ladies, may I borrow a few things from you?

GIRLS Of course Robin. *[THEY give him a cloak, and old hat and a basket of vegetables so HE has the disguise of an old woman. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEN are heard off.]*

- F & W            Make way, make way.
- [THEY enter and cross through the crowd, ending C. WHIPPEM gives the impression of being the boss. FLOGGEM is continuously saying and doing the wrong thing which usually ends up with him being hit.]*
- FLOGGEM        Clear a way there.
- WHIPPEM        Come on you lot, shift!
- FLOGGEM        Messers. Floggem and Whippem here.
- WHIPPEM        Heƿ Floggemō õ õ õ
- FLOGGEM        õ õ õ and heƿ Whippet!
- WHIPPEM        Whippem!
- FLOGGEM        And we are the Sheriffƿ henchmen.
- WHIPPEM        lƿn his right hand man.
- FLOGGEM        And lƿn his left one!
- WHIPPEM        No, no. Youƿe a right one.
- L/JOHN          You can say that again! *[ALL laugh.]*
- WHIPPEM        All right, all right. Thatƿ enough from you peasants. *[HE starts to make an announcement.]* Hear ye all. Draw near and give full attention for here comes his most malicious mountainship .
- FLOGGEM        His awesome awfulness .
- WHIPPEM        His noble nastiness .
- FLOGGEM        His deep down, dirty double-crossing, disgusting, dastardlyō õ õ *[WHIPPEM hits him and he falls. ALL laugh.]*
- WHIPPEM        Get up! *[FLOGGEM stands and they announce:]*
- BOTH            His *warship*, Sir Silas Skinflint, the Sheriff of Nottingham.
- [ALL boo as the SHERIFF enters.]*
- SHERIFF        Greetings you pathetic populace. lƿn sure you all know why lƿn here and what today is. *[ALL moan.]* Yes thatƿ right; youƿe got it in one. Its tax-collecting time!
- MUCH            But youƿe taken taxes twice this year. Youƿe nearly as bad as . *[Name of Chancellor of the Exchequer.]*
- SHERIFF        True . but lƿn much better looking! *[HE licks a finger and brushes his eyebrows.]*

- WOMAN It's just not fair.
- SHERIFF I know, I know. But life isn't fair, is it? You see with our dear King Richard away at the Crusades his brother, Prince John, has to keep the country going. And what with the cost of living, inflation, the upkeep of two or three castles, the chateau in the South of France *[COMPANY react to this.]* Oh dear I mean . . . times *is* hard, dear people times *is* hard!
- ALAN Yes, and they'll be even harder for us.
- F/TUCK But my lord Sheriff these families are all very poor with hungry mouths to feed.
- SHERIFF Well in that case, my good Friar, perhaps you should ask for a little divine intervention!
- F/TUCK I hardly think . . .
- [ALL moan.]*
- SHERIFF Oh do stop all this whinging and empty your pockets. *[Boos from the CHORUS. They encourage the audience to boo, also. The SHERIFF comes to the edge of the stage and addresses the audience.]* And you can shut up as well, or I'll double the tax on a new . . . *[HE names the latest children's electronic game. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM push the CROWD back.]* But to show I'm not the heartless meany you all think I am, I've devised a little sporting entertainment for you all. Men, read the announcement.
- WHIPPEM Oh yez, oh yez.
- FLOGGEM Oh no! Oh no!
- WHIPPEM What's the matter?
- FLOGGEM I've lost the scroll!
- WHIPPEM Oh you idiot. You must have dropped it. *[THEY run around looking for the scroll, which is tucked into the back of FLOGGEM'S breeches.]*
- ALL It's behind you!
- WHIPPEM Oh come on, we're not falling for that old gag!
- SHERIFF You pair of bungling buffoons! *[HE pulls out the scroll.]*
- FLOGGEM Ooooh! That really hurt! *[The SHERIFF hits him and he falls. SHERIFF gives the scroll to WHIPPEM. ROBIN moves down in the crowd.]*
- SHERIFF Here, read it out.
- WHIPPEM Oh yez, oh yez. In keeping with your noble Sheriff's kind and considerate nature . . . *[CROWD reacts.]* . . . he will be holding a grand archery contest to celebrate the Nottingham Goose fair this Saturday. The winner of the contest will receive a prize of 100 crowns. *[Big reaction.]*

- ROBIN *[Dressed as an old woman.]* And where's the prize money coming from? Our taxes?
- SHERIFF What are you talking about, old woman?
- ROBIN You'd just take the money you collect and give it back to us as the prize!
- [ALL react in agreement.]*
- SHERIFF Listen you lot, it's not me who takes other people's money. That honour goes that unscrupulous outlaw Robin Hood. He has perpetrated a reign of terror in this district. It's not safe to be out after dark. The men of Nottingham are forced to sleep with their battle-axes by their sides.
- FLOGGEM Well it's their own fault. They shouldn't have married them!
- [WHIPPEM hits him.]*
- SHERIFF And just remember there is a price on his head, so anyone found consorting with him will hang from the gibbet next to him when he is caught!
- ROBIN You'd never catch Robin Hood. He's always one step ahead of you.
- SHERIFF He may be a master of disguise, but he won't be able to get one over me. I can spot him a mile off. And when I do this is what will happen ò ò ò *[HE mimes a noose around his neck, his head to one side and tongue hanging out.]* Ha ha ha! *[HE turns to leave and bumps into FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM.]* Come on you nauseating numbskulls! *[SHERIFF, FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM exit.]*
- ROBIN *[Taking off disguise.]* I think the Sheriff needs to visit Specsavers if he thinks he can spot me a mile off. *[ALL laugh.]*
- WOMAN So where have you been these past few days.
- ROBIN *[To FRIAR TUCK.]* Shall we tell her Tuck?
- F/TUCK Why not my son?
- ROBIN Well our good friend Friar Tuck heard a rumour that the Bishop of Nottingham has been making collections after the Sunday service that somehow end up in his vaults instead of being distributed amongst the poor. So when he made his annual visit to London yesterday, laden down with moneybags, my gallant band of men and I decided to lighten his load! *[HE takes out money bags from pouch on his belt and throws them to the CROWD.]* Here my friends. Now you've no need to worry about buying food or paying taxes!
- 3<sup>rd</sup> WOMAN Oh Robin, how can we ever repay you?
- ROBIN No need.
- L/JOHN Now Robin, I really think it's time you were heading back to Sherwood.

ROBIN All in good time John. I was hoping to see the fair Maid Marion. *[MARION enters up stage unseen by ROBIN. SHE "Shh's" the CROWD.]* I don't suppose any of you have seen her today?

ALAN And what would such a high born lady be doing with the likes of you?

ROBIN Well, Alan, she has shown some interest

F/TUCK But she is the Sheriff's ward my son and you know what would happen if he found her walking and talking to an outlaw

ROBIN Outlaw indeed! Why, everyone knows he stole my lands and title after my father was killed fighting alongside King Richard in the Holy Land.

ALAN That's all very well, but how does Marion feel about you?

MUCH Does she think you are brave?

ROBIN Yes.

L/JOHN And bold?

ROBIN Yes.

F/TUCK And fearless?

ROBIN Yes.

WOMAN And trustworthy?

ROBIN Yes.

TOBY And handsome?

ROBIN Yes.

MARION And just a little bit conceited?

ROBIN Yes! No! *[HE turns and sees MARION.]* Marion! *[ALL laugh.]* How long have you been there?

MARION Long enough my brave, fearless, handsome outlaw.

ROBIN Oh Marion, it is good to see you.

MARION But Robin, you shouldn't come into town in broad daylight, you know how dangerous it is.

ROBIN How can I stay away if it means not seeing you?

MARION And how did you know I would be here at this precise moment?

ROBIN One of the good people of Nottingham may have mentioned it!

MARION Oh really?

- ROBIN My trusted friends are always looking out for me.
- L/JOHN Of course we are, Robin.
- MEN You can always count on us. Etc.
- ROBIN I've also been hatching a plan not only to get the taxes back for these good people, but also to win that archery contest on Saturday.
- MARION But Robin, I heard the Sheriff telling his henchmen that he has rigged the match so that he will win.
- ROBIN Has he indeed? Well, I'd just have to make sure his plans come to nought. With your help my friends . and yours Marion, we will put an end to all this tyranny and injustice. *[ALL cheer.]*

SONG . ROBIN, MARION & CHORUS

*[At the end of the number ALL exit. There is a shriek of laughter from the Inn and a voice is heard off.]*

- EFFIE Oooh you are a terrible man! You shouldn't make promises you can't keep! *[The door of the Inn opens and AUNT EFFIE the Dame is standing with her back to the audience.]* I bet your wife doesn't know what you're up to!
- [SHE turns and sees the audience.]* Oh hello. Have you come here specially to welcome me to Nottingham? Oh how nice. Well let me introduce myself. I'm Mistress Euphemia Ermengarde Ernestina Egglestone. But that's a bit of a mouthful so I'm known to my friends as Aunt Effie. And as you have turned out to greet me so nicely I'm going to make you all my special friends. Would you like that? *[Reaction.]* Well don't get too excited! I said would you like that? *[Reaction.]* That's better. And as special friends when I see you I'd shout out 'How are you' and you shout back 'Never so well, HEffie'. Will you do that? OK let's have a go. *[Business with audience.]* That's wonderful. Now I suppose you're wondering what I'm doing here. Well listen up 'cause this is the plot! I've travelled all the way from Lincoln to visit my only niece Marion Fitzwalter. I have some very exciting news for her. I've been looking for her everywhere. Up one street and down another. It's quite worn me out. Then I met this kind farmer who took me in there . *[Points to Inn.]* . for a sit down. He said I needed a tonic to fortify my follicles and bolsterer my buō ō *[SHE goes to adjust her bust then starts some exercises.]* ō ō er, constitution! I get palpitations you know! In fact I think I'm getting one now so I better have another tonic. *[SHE takes a bottle out of her cleavage, knocks the top of and downs it in one. Sound effect of "glugging" noise. SHE then staggers L & R and finally back C. A sound effect accompanies this.]* Oh that's better. And the journey from Lincoln was terrible. I decided to do my bit for the environment and reduce my carbon footprint. So instead of travelling by coach I travelled by ass. That was a big mistake. I saw lots of people in coaches and they looked very comfortable . well it wasn't comfortable on my aō .*[SHE claps her hand to her mouth.]* Anyway, from now on I'm going to travel on foot! A bit of exercise will do me good and help me retain my youthful figure! *[SHE moves around the stage showing off her figure which should start some reaction from the audience.]* What?? We girls have to keep ourselves looking our best, don't we? You never know when the man of your dreams is going to pop into your life. *[SHE starts to exit as the SHERIFF*

*enters and they bump into each other.] Oh girls look . it's . [SHE says the name of a current pop or film star.]*

- SHERIFF Out of my way, you old hag!
- EFFIE *[Fluttering her eyes at him.]* Oh you do have a way with words!
- SHERIFF Remove yourself from my presence, you fossilised old relic!
- EFFIE Here, who are you calling old?
- SHERIFF Do you know who I am?
- EFFIE No, but if you have a lie down I'm sure you'll remember.
- SHERIFF Who are you?
- EFFIE I am Mistress Euphemia Ermengarde Ernestina Egglestone, BBC, ITV, TSB, AA and RAC! And spinster of this parish! But you can call me Effie!
- SHERIFF Well I am Sir Silas Skinflint, the Sheriff of Nottingham.
- EFFIE The Sheriff? Well what a co-in-ci-dence! I've been looking for you.
- SHERIFF *[Suspiciously.]* You have? Why?
- EFFIE Are you or are you not protector to my niece Marion Fitzwalter?
- SHERIFF That is correct. Her late father had the estate next to mine and asked me to look after her until she marries. She has stayed with me at the castle since he passed away.
- EFFIE Well I have some news for her that I'm sure will be welcomed.
- SHERIFF And what is that?
- EFFIE All her father's affairs have now been settled and she is to inherit everything.
- SHERIFF *[Wide-eyed.]* Really? *[Casually.]* And erō about how much is his estate worth?
- EFFIE Well if you add up the house and surrounding lands, the tenant farmers, the wine producing vineyard, his personal fortune and his ICA with the - *[Local name]* - Building Society, I would say around twenty five thousand groats!
- SHERIFF *[Reeling.]* Twenty five thouō ..
- EFFIE *[Finishing his line.]* Groats! Yes. Whoever Marion marries is going to be a very lucky man - on all accounts!
- SHERIFF *[Aside.]* Ooooh, just think, all that money. I must find a way of getting my hands on that. I better keep in this old hag's good books! *[HE feigns sadness.]* Oh dear old Bertram, he was a good friend and neighbour. I shall miss him so.

EFFIE            There, there dear. Don't upset yourself. Just come to Effie. She'll comfort you. *[SHE grabs his head and pushes it into her ample bosom.]* I know how it is, but just remember you've got me to turn to whenever you're feeling down. *[HE comes up for air and SHE pulls him back.]* After all, if I can't give succour to someone like you at a time like this, who can?

SHERIFF        *[Pulling away.]* Madam please! I need assistance, not asphyxiation!

EFFIE            Oh I'm sorry, I was forgetting myself. Please forgive me your majesticals, but it has been so long since I've had a big, strong man to look after!

DUET . EFFIE & SHERIFF

*[At the end of the number - ]*

EFFIE            Now I must find Marion and tell her the good news.

SHERIFF        Why don't you save it until later? I'll hold a banquet tonight in your honour and you can announce it then as a big surprise.

EFFIE            Oooh, a banquet in my honour? The most a man ever did for me was a Kentucky Fried Chicken and a can of Red Bull! I'll see you later.

*[EFFIE exits blowing a kiss to the SHERIFF. HE shudders then looks around. Seeing HE is alone HE calls.]*

SHERIFF        Nell. Nell Nightshade where are you? I know you're around here somewhere. You're always lurking in the shadows.

NELL            *[Off.]* Not lurking. Never lurking!

SHERIFF        Come here. I want to talk to you.

*[NELL enters. SHE is a cross between a witch and an old crone. Slightly wild in appearance and able to make mischief at any time. Around her neck she wears a necklace of bones which she often rubs her fingers over. It is a source of her power.]*

NELL            Hello, my dear. What do you want with old Nell? Something underhand no doubt. *[Fingering the necklace of bones.]* Or so the bones of my ancestors tell me. *[SHE laughs in his face and obviously has a problem with halitosis as the SHERIFF grimaces and covers his mouth and nose.]*

SHERIFF        Ooh, your breath could strip paint. *[Pointing to the bone necklace.]* You still wear that disgusting old thing round your neck?

NELL            It's the source of my power. Without it I wouldn't be able to help you with your nefarious deeds.

SHERIFF        Hush. *[HE looks around to make sure no one is listening.]* I've just heard that my ward, Marion, has inherited her father's estate worth a lot of money.

NELL            And you want to get your hands on it.

SHERIFF        How did you guess?

- NELL I know you too well. How did you learn this interesting piece of news?
- SHERIFF From Marion's aunt. I've persuaded her to keep it as a surprise at a banquet tonight. That will give me time to figure out what to do.
- NELL They didn't call you slippery Silas for nothing at school. *[SHE laughs again in his face.]*
- SHERIFF Ooooh! *[HE turns away, wafting the air with his hand.]* I need to make Marion see that I would be a good catch for a husband. Then after we've married perhaps an accident and then the fortune will be mine!
- NELL *[Fingering HER necklace.]* I'm sure I could come up with something . for the usual fee, of course.
- SHERIFF Of course. But just remember that I granted you your freedom after the death of old Locksley.
- NELL Yes. That old goody-goody banished me for witchcraft. But I soon showed him. I put a curse on him and his family. Now he's dead fighting alongside that other goody-goody King Richard, I'm waiting to get revenge on his son. *[SHE gets excited at the prospect of revenge on ROBIN.]*
- SHERIFF Robin Hood! Another thorn in my side. But first things first. Once I have the inheritance then we can turn our attention to that audacious outlaw.
- NELL Very well, Silas.
- SHERIFF It's My Lord Sheriff when we're in public.
- NELL Anything you say my dear.
- SHERIFF Meet me behind the castle in two hours. And make sure no one sees you. *[HE looks one way and SHE looks another. THEY then turn to look at each other. NELL cackles in his face. HE reels.]* Have you never heard of Listerine?
- NELL Are they a new pop group? *[SHE laughs again and HE exits quickly.]* So another dastardly deed the Sheriff wants doing. Right up my street! Since he became Sheriff I've made sure Silas finds my assistance invaluable. And in time we'll both put an end to Robin Hood and become the most powerful people in these parts. *[SHE cackles with laughter and exits left. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM enter with a trick tax collecting box.]*
- WHIPPEM Now we've got to collect the taxes for the Sheriff. Go and knock on that door over there.
- FLOGGEM Right. *[HE knocks on a door and crosses back to WHIPPEM.]*
- WHIPPEM What are you doing?
- FLOGGEM I knocked on the door like you said.
- WHIPPEM But you're supposed to collect the tax. Now do it properly. *[FLOGGEM crosses to the door, knocks and a WOMAN opens it.]*

- WOMAN Yes?
- FLOGGEM I've come for the tax.
- WOMAN Here you are. *[SHE hands him a box of tacks.]*
- FLOGGEM Thank you very much. *[WOMAN shuts the door. FLOGGEM crosses back to WHIPPEN.]* That was easy.
- WHIPPEN What have you got there?
- FLOGGEM The tax!
- WHIPPEN Oooh! You're the next thing to an idiot!
- FLOGGEM In that case I'd move! *[HE takes a step away. WHIPPEN hits him and he falls.]*
- WHIPPEN How did I end up with you as a partner?
- FLOGGEM *[Getting up.]* I answered the ad in the newspaper!
- WHIPPEN I'd show you how it's done. *[HE goes around the stage banging on doors and calling.]* Come on you lot, it's tax collecting time. *[Groans all round as TOWNSPEOPLE enter.]* Anyone who does not pay up will spend a delightful few weeks as a guest of the Sheriff in the master dungeon with rack and ensuite thumbscrew facilities! Come on, come on. Line up there and hand over your dosh! *[During the following, ROBIN enters wearing a cloak. HE crawls under the tax box and makes a hole in the bottom with his knife.]*
- MUCH This is an outrage.
- F/TUCK These good people are all going to starve to death. *[General moans.]*
- WHIPPEN *[To TOBY.]* Come on, pay up.
- TOBY This is my life savings. *[HE gives a bag of money to WHIPPEN who throws it to FLOGGEM. FLOGGEM puts it in the box and it falls out of the bottom. ROBIN passes it to one of the CROWD and it gets passed back to TOBY. This is repeated with each bag.]*
- WHIPPEN Next.
- L/JOHN It's all I'd put by for a rainy day.
- WHIPPEN Well look at it this way . with global warming you won't be needing it! *[Grabs money.]* Next. *[More groans as the taxes are collected.]* Come on, come on. Cough up! *[After the final bag has been collected and returned.]* And that's the lot. *[HE crosses back to FLOGGEM who slams the lid down.]* Now that wasn't too painful, was it?
- [The SHERIFF enters.]*
- SHERIFF Has all the money been collected?

- FLOGGEM Yes, your *warship*.
- WHIPPEM All present and accounted for, your battleship!
- SHERIFF Excellent. Now I shall be able to get the new [*Latest pop group album title.*] er, I mean Prince John will be eternally grateful for your contribution to the treasury.
- FLOGGEM Not to mention the manager of . [*Name of local bank.*]
- SHERIFF Now let me see how much there is. [*HE opens the box and peers in smiling.*] Just look at that. It's empty. [*HE does a double take.*] EMPTY!! Ahgg! Where's all the money?
- [FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM look inside the box.]*
- WHIPPEM But it was there.
- FLOGGEM We collected it ourselves.
- F/TUCK They did indeed my lord. I witnessed it myself.
- SHERIFF Collected it *for* yourselves you mean. Did you put it in the box or in your own pockets? [*HE searches them.*]
- FLOGGEM Oh don't. You're tickling me! [*HE giggles.*]
- WHIPPEM But your honour, we did collect it. From everyone.
- SHERIFF Then there is only one explanation. I've been robbed! And there is only one person audacious enough to do such a thing in broad daylight. The outlaw Robin Hood. He must be around here somewhere. [*HE draws his sword.*] Search everywhere until he is found.
- ROBIN [*Still with his disguise on.*] I think I saw someone running down that street.
- SHERIFF Quick men, after him. He must not escape this time. [*ALL THREE run for the exit and get trapped. The SHERIFF pulls FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM back and runs off. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM fall over each other then run off. ALL laugh.*]
- ROBIN [*Taking off his disguise.*] Well, the Sheriff seems to have a few more problems to keep him busy.
- L/JOHN All thanks to you, Robin. [*ALL agree.*]

#### COMPANY NUMBER

*[This can be a new number or part Reprise of the opening song. At the end of the number the lights fade and the scene changes to.....]*

SCENE 2      BEHIND THE CASTLE

*[A front cloth depicting the walls of the castle. NELL enters left.]*

- NELL            I've consulted my spirits. Checked the alignment of the stars and called on all the mystic powers and black arts . *[SHE rubs her fingers over the necklace.]* . of my ancestors to help me. And I've got it! I know how to help Silas achieve his aims. Oh I'm good. I should be writing the horoscopes for . *[SHE names the local paper then throws HER head back and cackles just as the SHERIFF enters. HE gets another blast of HER bad breath.]*
- SHERIFF        Oooh! It's like living next to the sewage works! *[HE moves away.]* Well? What have you come up with?
- NELL            A plan. A wonderful plan.
- SHERIFF        What is it?
- NELL            You'd never guess. Never in a million years.
- SHERIFF        I don't want to guess. I want you to tell me.
- NELL            *[Giggling.]* It's brilliant.
- SHERIFF        *[Shouting.]* Tell me!!!
- NELL            *[Finger to mouth.]* Shhhh! You don't want everyone to hear.
- SHERIFF        *[Whispering.]* What's the plan?
- NELL            *[SHE takes out a small bottle.]* Add some of this to the aunt's drink at the banquet tonight. It will knock her out before she has time to relate the news. Get her taken to the old dungeon. Then you have your chance with Marion.
- SHERIFF        But what happens if she turns me down?
- NELL            Tell her that her father has left her penniless. She's bound to want to continue living in the style she is accustomed to.
- SHERIFF        And if she still refuses?
- NELL            *[Taking out another bottle.]* This is a potion to awaken the romantic feelings in someone.
- SHERIFF        I think you had better be there to administer the content of these bottles.
- NELL            Oh with pleasure. It's been a long time since I was invited to a banquet.
- SHERIFF        Not as a guest, you imbecile. You can be a serving wench.
- NELL            That will cost you extra for my services.
- SHERIFF        *[Irritated.]* Very well. *[An afterthought.]* But you have forgotten one thing. What happens when the aunt comes round in the morning and tells her the truth?

NELL She won't be able to.

SHERIFF Why not?

NELL Because I shall conjure up my ghostly ancestors who haunt the dungeons and scare the woman to death. *[SHE lets out a great cackle of laughter. The SHERIFF "shushes" her.]*

SHERIFF Will it work?

NELL Of course. Have I ever failed you?

SHERIFF *[Pulling back. Mulling over the idea.]* That's not bad. Not bad at all. *[HE begins to smile to himself.]* Will there be ghosties?

NELL *[With relish.]* Gargantuan ghosties.

SHERIFF Will there be ghoulies?

NELL *[Very straight.]* No dear!

SHERIFF I must say this is one of your more inventive ideas!

NELL I'll go and wake up the spirits and ghosts who have been lingering in limbo for centuries. They can have a spectres ball tonight and scare the life out of the poor old woman! *[HE starts to laugh and so does SHE. HE gets it in the face again as SHE exits.]*

SHERIFF I really must get the blacksmith to extract those mouldy teeth of hers. *[HE laughs evilly and exits. From the other side of the stage FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM enter out of breath.]*

WHIPPEM Oh it's no good. You've let Robin Hood escape again.

FLOGGEM What do you mean 'let him escape'? You were chasing him too.

WHIPPEM Yes but if you hadn't stopped to buy that lottery ticket we'd have caught him.

FLOGGEM Well I didn't want to miss out on a chance of winning. It's a double rollover. Then I could tell the Sheriff what to do with his rotten job.

WHIPPEM I suppose you've got a point. But if you did win millions, what would you do about the begging letters?

FLOGGEM I'd keep sending them.

WHIPPEM If you don't like your job why don't you get another one?

FLOGGEM Oh I had a different job once. I was a gravedigger.

WHIPPEM Really?

FLOGGEM Yes, but it was a bit of a dead end job!

WHIPPEM Ooooh!

- FLOGGEM    *ere, I thought of applying for a job I saw advertised in the [Name of local newspaper.] It was for [Name of local butcher.]*
- WHIPPEM    Oh?
- FLOGGEM    Yes, they wanted a *shopassistant!* *[HE falls about laughing as the SHERIFF enters.] A shopassistant! [Still laughing, HE clings to the SHERIFF who just stands there. Bit by bit FLOGGEM realises, stops laughing and moves away.]*
- SHERIFF    So this is what you do all day long is it? No wonder that blackguard Robin Hood can roam around free, robbing me of every last gold piece while you two sit around doing nothing.
- WHIPPEM    Oh we don't always sit around.
- FLOGGEM    Sometimes we lie down! *[WHIPPEM hits him.]*
- SHERIFF    Silence! You puny pair of pipsqueaks! *[HE has been spitting the words out at them. THEY wipe their faces.]*
- WHIPPEM    Well, that saves us washing again this week.
- SHERIFF    Now listen. I have a job for you. I'm giving a banquet tonight and I want you to be in attendance.
- WHIPPEM    Oh you shouldn't . really!
- SHERIFF    *[Through gritted teeth.]* Not for you . fool! At some point during the evening Marion's aunt will become unwell and I want you to take her to the old dungeon to recover.
- WHIPPEM    The old dungeon? But isn't it supposed to be .
- BOTH        *[Big swallow.]* – haunted?
- SHERIFF    Precisely!
- FLOGGEM    What if we get scared to death?
- SHERIFF    Oh don't be ridiculous. Two big strapping lads like you can't be afraid of a superstitious tale
- FLOGGEM    Do you wanna bet?
- SHERIFF    Oh tosh.
- WHIPPEM    Well in that case why don't *you* go down there?
- SHERIFF    *[Scared.]* Me? Are you mad? *[With authority.]* Er, I mean I've got more important things to do around the castle. Affairs of state you know.
- FLOGGEM    You don't think you're the teensiest, weensiest bit scared that a ghost might pop out?

SHERIFF Of course not.

WHIPPEM No, of course not. You're the Sheriff and nothing could possibly frighten you.

SHERIFF Quite right. *[EFFIE enters behind the SHERIFF.]*

EFFIE Hello there!

SHERIFF *[Scared.]* Ahhh! *[HE falls into the arms of FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM.]*

EFFIE You see . I always have the same effect on men. *[To the audience.]* How are you? *[They respond.]*

SHERIFF *[Standing.]* Ah dear lady. I didn't see you there.

WHIPPEM You can't really miss her in that outfit!

EFFIE You ought to try carrots. They're good for the eyes.

FLOGGEM I tried carrots once, but they didn't work.

EFFIE Oh?

FLOGGEM No. I nearly poked my eye out!

WHIPPEM Oh do shut up!

SHERIFF Right now you two, you have your orders. Get to it.

FLOGGEM Right boss. *[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM exit.]*

SHERIFF And I must be going too.

EFFIE Oh really. I thought you could take me on a conducted tour of the town.

SHERIFF I can't think of anything more entertaining . but I will eventually! Anyway I have a lot of arrangements to make for the banquet.

EFFIE Ohh, the banquet . yes. I'll wear my sexiest gown. It's called 'The cowhand'

SHERIFF Why 'The cowhand'

EFFIE *[Demonstrating.]* Because it rounds 'em up and moves 'em out!  
*[The SHERIFF exits quickly.]*

Oh he is a fine figure of a man. But I think there's something a bit shady about him, don't you boys and girls? *[Reaction.]* I'll have to keep my eye on him!  
*[ROBIN and MARION enter.]*

MARION Auntie?

EFFIE *[Turning. Delighted at seeing her niece.]* Marion. There you are. *[They embrace.]* I've been looking all over Nottingham for you.

MARION You didn't tell me you were coming to visit.

EFFIE I wanted to surprise my favourite niece. *[Sees ROBIN.]* What are you doing with this strange man?

MARION There's nothing strange about Robin.

EFFIE You're not standing where I'm standing.

MARION This is Robin Hood.

EFFIE Oh really? Pleased to meet you Robin Hood? The outlaw? Oh well all be murdered in our beds! Help! Police! *[SHE runs around the stage shouting.]* Call out the army! Send for the Marines!

MARION Auntie, there's nothing to worry about. Robin wouldn't harm anyone. He's a good and kind friend to everyone in Nottingham.

EFFIE *[Coming round.]* Oh well, if you're sure. *[SHE curtseys.]* Pleased to meet you.

ROBIN *[With a bow and kisses her hand.]* The pleasure is mine dear lady. *[EFFIE looks up and swoons.]*

EFFIE Oh, love come over all unnecessary. I think I need another tonic! *[SHE takes out a bottle from her cleavage and downs it.]*

MARION What brings you here?

EFFIE *[Glancing at ROBIN.]* It's a private family matter ..

MARION Robin and I have no secrets, Auntie.

EFFIE Well it doesn't matter now anyway as I'm going to surprise you at the banquet tonight.

MARION Banquet?

EFFIE Yes. That sexy old Sheriff is throwing one at me . I mean for me . as a welcome to Nottingham.

ROBIN That's very generous of him. If he's spending money like that he must be after something.

EFFIE Well I can tell you young man . if he plays his cards right he might get it!

MARION Auntie, you mustn't trust the Sheriff. He's done some terrible things to people.

EFFIE What man hasn't? Anyway I'd better get myself ready for this banquet. It should be quite a night.

ROBIN *[To EFFIE.]* Until later. *[EFFIE holds her hand out seductively. ROBIN shakes it.]*

EFFIE *[To the audience.]* Oh, he could twang my bow anytime! *[SHE exits.]*

ROBIN Marion I should be getting back.

MARION Oh Robin, I hate these few stolen moments we have together.

ROBIN Don't worry. One day things will be different. I promise you.

DUET . ROBIN AND MARION

*[At the end of the number the lights fade and the scene changes to ....*

SCENE 3 THE BANQUETING HALL

*[A long table dominates the scene. This needs to have part of the table top on a pivot with a banquet laid out and secured down. Other practical items are brought during the scene. The SHERIFF enters.]*

SHERIFF Is everything ready? *[Seeing the empty table.]* Where is everyone? What's going on? *[HE goes behind it and suddenly NELL pops up.]*

NELL Hello dear.

SHERIFF Why isn't the table prepared?

NELL Don't fret dear. I've got everything under control. Just stand back and watch. *[The SHERIFF moves to one side as NELL starts to recite while fingering the bone necklace.]*  
Ancestors awake from your sleep this night  
And create an astronomical delight.

*[Lighting effect as the table top pivots over to reveal one full of food.]* There you are. A banquet fit for a king. *[SHE laughs exhaling over the food.]*

SHERIFF Don't breath on it. You'd give us all food poisoning! And where are those two numskulls who should be in attendance?

NELL They've gone to escort your guests of honour.

SHERIFF Nothing must go wrong tonight. You have the potions?

NELL *[Tapping a pocket in her skirt.]* Safe and sound. And to add to the evening I've arranged some music from a local balladeer. *[SHE calls off.]* Over here.

*[WILL enters and bows.]*

WILL It is an honour to play for you Lordship.

SHERIFF Make sure it's soft and romantic. None of this modern rubbish like - *[Name of current pop group.]*

WILL Whatever you Lordship commands. *[HE waits at the far end of the table.]*

FANFARE

*[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM rush on to announce the arrival of the guests.]*

FLOGGEM The honourable Mistress Euphemia Ermengarde Ernestina Egglestone.

WHIPPEM And the Lady Marion.

*[EFFIE enters dressed outrageously followed by MARION. During this NELL exits and returns with whatever practical food and drink is required.]*

EFFIE *[To audience.]* How are you? *[Audience response.]* Hello Sheriff.

SHERIFF *[Staring at what she is wearing.]* Good evening.

EFFIE I see you are admiring my new frock. I make all my own clothes. I call this my double-decker bus dress. Plenty of room on top! *[SHE shakes her bosom.]* Ting ting!! *[Looking at the table.]* Oh look at this sumptuous feast. It's better than the all-day breakfast at Morrison's! *[Or nearest Supermarket.]*

SHERIFF Please take a seat. *[HE indicates a place at the end of the table. EFFIE moves to it. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM move to sit down.]* What are you doing?

FLOGGEM You said take a seat.

SHERIFF Not you, you blithering buffoons. Wait outside until I call you.

*[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM exit – FLOGGEM going to take a drum stick as HE goes but the SHERIFF hits him.]* And Lady Marion here . next to me. *[Marion sits at the other end of the table and the SHERIFF next to her.]*

Isn't this cosy?

EFFIE *[Shouting from the other end.]* Pardon?

SHERIFF *[Calling to EFFIE.]* Please start. Don't stand on ceremony.

EFFIE Oh right. I'm famished. *[SHE starts to tuck in to the food. Note: during the following dialogue the Sound effect of the EFFIE eating is heard – very loudly – which puts the SHERIFF off his attempt to talk to MARION.]*

SHERIFF I hope this is to your liking my dear.

MARION It looks delightful.

SHERIFF A little wine perhaps.

MARION *[Not hearing correctly because of the noise.]* Yes I'm ready to dine.

SHERIFF No, no. Wine. Some wine?

MARION Oh thank you.

*[The SHERIFF indicated to NELL to pour the wine.]*

SHERIFF And tell me what have you been doing today?

MARION Oh nothing much. I went for a walk through the market. I was looking at the new hats. *[More noise.]*

SHERIFF *[Not hearing.]* Looking for a few cats?

MARION Hats!

SHERIFF Excuse me a moment. *[HE crosses to NELL and picks up a goblet.]* Put the potion in the old girls drink so I can get her out of here. The noise is worse than being at . *[Name of local night club.]*

NELL *[Taking bottle out.]* Here it is, dear. *[SHE pours some liquid in the goblet unseen by the others.]*

SHERIFF *[Offering it to EFFIE.]* A little liquid refreshment to wash down the meal?

EFFIE Thank you, but I never touch alcohol . *[SHERIFF mutters his annoyance.]* . unless it's gin, whisky, vodka, brandy or a bottle of cider.

SHERIFF This is our finest wine.

EFFIE That'd do! *[Grabs the goblet and slurps it down.]* Pleasant little vintage if a trifle cheeky!

SHERIFF More?

EFFIE Just a tiny triple.

SHERIFF With pleasure. *[To NELL.]* Wench!

NELL Here, who are you callingō . *[SHE gets a nudge from the SHERIFF who indicates SHE should refill the goblet – which SHE does.]*

EFFIE *[Getting a little drunk.]* How are you Marion, over there in . *[She says a nearby town.]*

MARION Fine auntie.

EFFIE *[To WILL.]* Are you going to stay stood standing there all night, or are you going to pluck that thing?

WILL What is madam's pleasure?

EFFIE Call me later and I'd tell you.

SHERIFF Yes, a little music, knave, to compliment the ambience of the evening.

EFFIE Do you know any . *[Latest pop artist/group.]* I feel like a dance. *[WILL starts to play.]* Come on Sheriff let's tear up the floor.

DANCE MUSIC

*[The music is sedate. EFFIE drags the SHERIFF to the front of the stage and starts to dance very energetically.]*

- SHERIFF Really madam, I hardly thinkõ õ õ ..
- EFFIE Come on you old kill joy. Shake it about a bit!
- [The SHERIFF attempts to dance with EFFIE. When HE can HE whispers to NELL.]*
- SHERIFF Put the other potion in Marion's goblet.
- NELL *[Starting to dance.]* I fancy a dance myself.
- SHERIFF *[Hissing at HER.]* Just do it. *[HE continues dancing to distract everyone as NELL puts the potion in another goblet.]*
- EFFIE *[Grabbing her goblet and drinking.]* And one for the road. *[SHE starts to stagger about.]* Ohh I think I'm losing the beat. What's happening to the walls? They're moving!
- SHERIFF *[Calling.]* Floggem, Whippem. Get in here.
- [FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM enter as the EFFIE collapses into the SHERIFF'S arms.]*
- MARION *[Standing.]* Are you alright auntie?
- SHERIFF I think she's slightly over done it. Take her to her quarters. *[Knowingly to FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM.]* The one we spoke about earlier. *[HE passes the EFFIE over to FLOGGEM.]*
- FLOGGEM Right boss. *[HE passes the EFFIE over to WHIPPEM who starts to collapse under the weight.]*
- EFFIE *[Slurring.]* But I've got a surpriseõ ..
- SHERIFF You'd have a bigger one later!
- MARION I think I should go with her.
- SHERIFF Nonsense. My men will take good care of her. She'd be a different person in the morning. *[HE laughs at NELL who cackles back. FLOGGEM picks up the EFFIE'S feet and WHIPPEM has her by the arms.]*
- EFFIE *[Looking up at WHIPPEM.]* Oh look it's . *[Film star name. THEY carry her out.]*
- SHERIFF *[Going back to MARION.]* Now where were we?
- MARION I am worried about auntie.
- SHERIFF She's just a little tipsy. Don't let it ruin the evening. *[To WILL.]* You there. A song. *[Picking up the goblet for MARION.]* And some more wine.
- WILL *[Taking the goblet.]* Thank you. Don't mind if I do . I am a little dry.
- SHERIFF Not for you, you imbecile.

- MARION But Sheriff, there's plenty more wine. Let the poor minstrel have a drink.
- WILL You're very kind mistress. *[HE drinks.]* And now a song for you.
- [There is a strange rumbling sound and a twang and WILL starts to behave very differently. HE sings a song but gets very amorous with the SHERIFF.]*
- SONG . WILL
- SHERIFF What are you doing? Get off me. Etc. Guards. Men where are you?
- [The song ends with WILL almost in the arms of the SHERIFF. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM run in.]*
- FLOGGEM Yes boss.
- SHERIFF Take this idiot away and chain him up.
- WHIPPEM The same place as the aunt?
- SHERIFF *[Laughing as MARION looks up.]* Ha ha, of course not. To the dungeons with him.
- FLOGGEM But that's where she is! .. *[SHERIFF stamps on his foot.]* Ooow! *[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM bundle WILL out. The SHERIFF then crosses to NELL.]*
- SHERIFF Some more of the potion . quick.
- NELL That's all I have.
- SHERIFF What? Can't you get some more?
- NELL I'd have to mix some and it will take hours.
- MARION Is anything wrong, my lord?
- SHERIFF *[Hurrying back to her.]* No, no. Just a little problem with the domestic.
- MARION Are you feeling well my lord?
- SHERIFF Of course. Especially with you here. Ah Marion, you grow more lovely each day.
- MARION Thank you, sir.
- SHERIFF Ever since your poor father passed on and you became my ward, I've grown very fond of you.
- MARION *[Grimacing.]* Really?
- SHERIFF You know I'd do anything for you. Oh this old heart of mine is beating passionately for you! *[HE clutches his right chest.]* Can't you hear it?
- NELL *[Moving his hand to the left.]* Maybe she could if it was beating on the other side!

SHERIFF Eh? Oh yes. I get so flustered when you are near. Oh Marion, can you find it in your soul to make an old man happy?

MARION Who?

SHERIFF Who?? Me of course!

MARION Oh!

NELL *[Whispering to him.]* Get on one knee.

SHERIFF *[Kneeling.]* Marion, would you do me the honour of becomingō .. *[HE doesn't get to finish as MARION lets out a little scream.]* What's the matter?

MARION *[Crossing away from him.]* I can't so overcome by the moment.

SHERIFF *[Knee-walking towards her.]* Your answer - could it beō .

MARION No! *[Then trying to placate him.]* Not tonight. I shall have to think. I can't feeling faint. I must go to my room. Goodnight. *[SHE crosses again with the SHERIFF trying to follow.]*

SHERIFF Marion! *[HE stands. To NELL.]* This is all your fault. I should throw you into the dungeons with the aunt.

MARION *[To herself.]* The dungeons? Oh no. I must find Robin. *[SHE exits.]*

SHERIFF Marion.

NELL Don't worry dear. She'll come round. Trust good old Nell. *[SHE cackles in his face and he reels under her breath falling head first into a large cream pie. The lights blackout and the scene changes to.....]*

#### SCENE 4 BEHIND THE CASTLE

*[Same as scene 2. ROBIN is pacing about waiting for MARION. SHE enters.]*

MARION Oh Robin, thank goodness you're here.

ROBIN Whatever is the matter?

MARION The Sheriff has imprisoned auntie in the dungeons.

ROBIN Whatever for?

MARION I don't know, but I just overheard him telling this weird serving girl. I think auntie may be in danger.

ROBIN Don't worry. My men and I will make sure no harm comes to her.

MARION Oh thank you Robin. But there's something else. The Sheriff has just asked me to marry him!

ROBIN Marry him? What did you say?

MARION Nothing. I managed to get away, but I'm sure he'll try and find me.

ROBIN You'll have to go back or else he will start to suspect something. Stall him as long as you can.

MARION I'll try.

ROBIN *[Calling quietly.]* Men. Quickly - over here.  
*[LITTLE JOHN, FRIAR TUCK, ALAN, MUCH and TOBY enter.]*  
We have a job men. We need to get into the old dungeon in the castle.

F/TUCK But Robin, we're usually trying to get out of places like that.

ROBIN The Sheriff has put Marion's aunt in there.

L/JOHN What has she done?

MARION Nothing I know of. But remember Robin, she said she had a surprise for me.

ROBIN Maybe it's something the Sheriff didn't want you to know.

MUCH And you think he's bundled her off there to keep her quiet?

ROBIN Perhaps. But whatever it is he'll be using it to his advantage.

MARION Oh Robin, I'm very worried.

L/JOHN Don't you fret miss. We'll see no harm comes to her.

ROBIN John, you remember that old dried up well on the other side of the castle?

L/JOHN Yes.

ROBIN It runs alongside the dungeons. Do you think we could get down there and break through the walls?

L/JOHN I don't see why not. The cement must be pretty old and weathered.

TOBY It's worth a try.

F/TUCK I say, what fun.

ROBIN I think clambering down an old well might be a bit too much for you Friar. *[HE taps the FRIAR'S stomach.]* You better keep watch for any guards on night patrol.

F/TUCK What would I tell them?

ROBIN *[Thinking.]* That you're on an all-night vigil for the lost souls of the outlaws!  
*[The others laugh.]* And Marion, you really ought to get back.

MARION I know. I'll do my best to keep the Sheriff away from that part of the castle.  
Robin, do be careful.

ROBIN I will. Don't worry. Now go . . . quickly. *[MARION exits.]* Right men. We have work to do.

ALAN The courageous band of outlaws strikes again.

L/JOHN Proud to wear the colours of Lincoln Green.

NUMBER . ROBIN AND MEN

*[At the end of the number the lights fade and the scene changes to.....*

SCENE 5 THE DUNGEONS

*[The scene is a stone-walled area with various secret passages. Part of a wall to one side needs to give way later in the scene. WILL is against one wall, chained by the wrists. This is a revolving wall operated by a scone to one side. EFFIE is asleep on a stone bench. On another wall, also chained up, is a skeleton. The scene opens with NELL down left in a single light. SHE chants.]*

NELL  
Something nasty is coming here  
To disturb a peaceful night.  
So come you apparitions all  
And give the old woman a fright.  
Come ghost and ghoul and demon fiend,  
Invade this dismal room.  
Come spook and spectre from the grave  
And bring about her doom.  
*[SHE gives another of HER awful cackles and exits as the lights come up on the scene.]*

GHOST DANCE

*[A UV sequence. Various spectres and ghosts enter and dance around. THEY exit as the music finishes and a dim light comes up on the dungeon.]*

WILL *[Singing mournfully.]* Please release me, let me go . . .

*[The EFFIE comes round.]*

EFFIE *[Groggily to audience.]* How are you? *[Response.]* Oh what happened? Where am I?

WILL Hello.

EFFIE It's . . . *[Name of pop singer.]*

- WILL I'm Will Scarlet, your friendly neighbourhood balladeer! *[HE starts to sing again.]*
- EFFIE Stop making that row. My head's spinning like a Zanussi 2000. *[Or another make of washing machine.]* What are we doing here? The last thing I remember was having a sip of wine.
- WILL Sip? You were knocking it back so fast it never touched the sides!
- EFFIE Oh it's a lie! I'm usually T T.
- WILL Yes. Totally trashed!
- EFFIE Well what brings you here?
- WILL I was singing this lovely romantic ballad and the next thing the Sheriff had me whisked away down here. No phone number or anything!
- EFFIE It's very eerie. However are we going to get out?
- WILL *[Indicating skeleton.]* Well if he's anything to go by, never!
- EFFIE Oh! *[SHE backs away from the skeleton and leans on the sconce by WILL. This causes the piece of wall, on which WILL is chained, to revolve.]* Well at least we're not on our own. *[SHE turns to see WILL gone.]* Where's he gone? *[Audience reaction.]* He what? But he can't have; it's a solid wall. Oh I don't like this. I think this place is spooky, don't you. I'm going to look around. Can you watch out for me and let me know if anything appears? *[Audience reaction.]* Oh thank you.
- MUSIC #1's behind you sequence
- [A SPOOK enters and comes down behind EFFIE. There follows the 'it's behind you' sequence that ends with the SPOOK chasing EFFIE who runs away and grabs the sconce. The SPOOK revolves on the wall as WILL comes back.]*
- Oh you finally decided to come back, did you?
- WILL I don't know what happened. Everything went blank.
- EFFIE A bit like your head!
- WILL What's been going on here?
- EFFIE A big frightening spook chased me around the place. I hope it doesn't come back. *[There is a tapping sound like stone on stone.]* Oh no! I spook too soon.
- [Suddenly a wall gives way and ROBIN and the GANG are seen.]*
- WILL *[Screaming.]* Ahhh! It's a lot of green men!
- EFFIE No it's not. It's Robin Hood. Have you come to rescue us?
- ROBIN *[Entering.]* At your service madam. I heard you were in a spot of bother.

EFFIE Too right we are. Can we get out that way?

ROBIN It's a bit of a climb, but I think you'd be able to manage it.

EFFIE Oh yes. I'm quite athletic you know. I've often had to climb down the ivy from a young man's bedroom. But that's another story!

ALAN Robin, we ought to get going

*[They all start out.]*

WILL What about me?

EFFIE Oh we better take Cliff Richard along with us.

ROBIN Little John, can you manage those chains?

L/JOHN No problem, Robin. *[With a strong pull HE breaks the chains holding WILL.]*

WILL Oh I say . how strong you are.

SHERIFF *[Off.]* What's all the noise in there?

MUCH Quick. The Sheriff.

*[They all exit through the wall as the SHERIFF, FLOGGEM and WHIPPEN enter.]*

SHERIFF The prisoners. They've escaped. After them. *[HE hangs onto the scone, the wall revolves and the SPOOK is seen. The SHERIFF screams and faints into the arms of FLOGGEM and WHIPPEN. The lights black out and the scene changes to.....]*

### SCENE 6 BEHIND THE CASTLE

*[Same as scene 2. ROBIN, THE MEN, WILL and EFFIE all come running on.]*

EFFIE *[Shouting to audience.]* How are you?

ROBIN Is everyone alright?

L/JOHN I think so.

EFFIE I'm not sure. When I was clambering up the walls of that old well I felt something wet and slippery around my legs.

L/JOHN *[Producing a large pair of bloomers.]* I think it was these!

EFFIE *[Snatching them off him.]* How did you get those?

L/JOHN The elastic must have given way in the scramble. They fell on my head!

EFFIE I'd thank you to find something else to wear on a cold night.

WILL I think I've damaged my instrument!

ALAN What?

WILL *[Bringing out his lute.]* It got a nasty knock and I think I've broken my G string!

EFFIE Good lord.

F/TUCK We really shouldn't hang around here Robin.

MUCH The Sheriff and his men will be after us.

L/JOHN I've slowed them down by putting a large stone over the top of the well.

EFFIE Well done! *[To the others.]* Well done . get it? *[No response.]* Please yourselves!

ROBIN But Much is right. We ought to be moving.

*[MARION runs on.]*

MARION Robin, is everything alright? *[Sees EFFIE.]* Auntie. You're safe.

EFFIE Yes dear. My knights in shining armour . or rather Lincoln Green came to rescue me.

MARION Thanks goodness. I think the Sheriff drugged your drink. But why?

EFFIE To stop me telling you what I know, I shouldn't wonder.

MARION What's that.

EFFIE My dear, your late father's estate has been settled and you are the sole beneficiary. You're a very wealthy girl.

ROBIN No wonder the Sheriff proposed. Trying to get his hands on your fortune no doubt.

EFFIE Proposed to you? But I thought he was making eyes at me! That dirty two-timer!

ROBIN Wait a minute. We can play the Sheriff at his own game. Marion. Where does he think you are now?

MARION In my room. I said I had a headache and needed to rest after all the excitement.

ROBIN Then you better go there and keep your door locked until morning. Be at the archery contest and watch out for me. I'll be there in disguise.

F/TUCK Is that a good idea, my son? The Sheriff will have his men watching out for you.

ROBIN I intend to win that prize of 100 crowns.

MARION What about auntie?

ROBIN Aunt Effie, you will come with us back to Sherwood and spend the night.

EFFIE *[Dramatically.]* Spend the night? With all you rough men? Sleeping under the stars. Wondering what on earth will happen to a poor defenceless girl like me? *[With a smile at LITTLE JOHN.]* Can't wait!

ROBIN Tomorrow you will return to Nottingham and say you were kidnapped by outlaws but managed to escape. That way the Sheriff won't know you are in league with us.

EFFIE Oh how exciting. It's like being in Midsomer Murders!

MARION I'll see you in the morning.

EFFIE Good night dear. Sleep tight.

ROBIN And don't worry. Everything will be alright. *[MARION exits.]* Right is everyone ready?

WILL *[Who has been hovering to one side.]* Er, excuse me!

MUCH Oh Robin. What are we going to do about this one?

TOBY We've forgotten about him.

WILL *[Piqued.]* Evidently!

ROBIN He'll have to come with us.

L/JOHN But Robin, he's not exactly cut out for the kind of life we live.

WILL How do you know?

ALAN Could you live rough?

WILL Yes.

MUCH Could you defend yourself in an attack?

WILL Yes.

F/TUCK Could you live on bread and water if food is scarce?

WILL Yes.

L/JOHN In a battle could you kill a man?

WILL *[Thinks and then shrugs with a smile.]* Eventually!

ROBIN Come on, we must move. Are the horses ready?

MUCH Tied up where we left them.

EFFIE Wait a minute. I can't ride a horse! The nearest I've ever been to anything on four legs is my next door neighbour's pussy.

L/JOHN Don't worry. You can ride with me on Big Ben.

EFFIE Will he mind?

L/JOHN Big Ben is my horse. And I'll hold on to you so you won't fall off.

EFFIE *[Fluttering her eyes at him.]* What are we waiting for?

ROBIN Then let's get back to the others and our loved ones. To Sherwood men.

*[Strobe effect as they all assemble centre stage and give the impression of riding horses. EFFIE exits without being noticed. The cloth flies out to reveal.....]*

#### SCENE 7 SHERWOOD FOREST

*[A full set with trees and a fire with a pot. The CHORUS is on waiting to welcome the returning band of men. ROBIN and his MEN walk into the scene. CHORUS greet the MEN.]*

ALL Hello Robin etc.

ROBIN Everyone, we have two new members of our illustrious outfit. *[Indicates WILL.]* This is Will Scarlet, a balladeer of Nottingham whose last appearance caused such a sensation it got him locked in the castle dungeon!

WILL It was the wine. I was drugged!! My voice will never be the same.

ROBIN Anyway, welcome to our palatial home in Sherwood Forest. And our other guest is none other than the fair Maid Marian's aunt. Mistress Effie.

F/TUCK Where's she got to?

MUCH Are you sure you didn't lose her on the way Little John?

L/JOHN She was rocking about a bit as we rode here, but she certainly arrived with us.

ALAN Here she comes.

*[EFFIE enters bandy-legged.]*

EFFIE *[To audience.]* How are you? Oh I'll never be the same again. Look at me. *[Pointing down.]* You could drive a number 9 bus through there!

F/TUCK You'll soon get used to riding a horse.

- L/JOHN        And remember you've got the return journey to town in the morning.
- EFFIE         Oh no! I'd never do it. I better start walking now! *[SHE starts off.]*
- ROBIN         No need for that. There are other ways to travel.
- MUCH         Yes, we can throw her in the back of the hay cart.
- EFFIE         *[Rounding on him.]* My good man, if I'm going to be thrown in the hay I would like a little more notice!
- ROBIN         Come on everyone, after the excitement of the day I'm sure we could all do with a good meal. *[ALL agree.]* And while we're eating how about a song from our newest recruit?
- F/TUCK        Yes, something lively to keep our spirits up.
- EFFIE         Talking of spirits! *[SHE pulls out a bottle and drinks.]*
- WILL         Well I usually compose my songs as events happen, but I don't think that what we have been through makes for a merry tune.
- L/JOHN        There must be something you can sing about.
- WILL         Well, what about all of you?
- MUCH         But you don't know us.
- WILL         No, but I observe and make a song out of all that I see and hear. For instance you all have a similar colour of clothing.
- ROBIN         I suppose we do.
- WILL         And you are all dressed pretty much alike.
- ALAN         I suppose we are. Very serviceable wear made for us by our good ladies.
- ROBIN         Pretty good, don't you think.
- WILL         *[Looking them up and down.]* Mmmmm

#### FINALE ACT ONE

*[This number should be a big celebratory song fronted by WILL but with everyone joining in. The whole sequence can be anything the Director and Choreographer come up with. Big finish as the curtain falls on Act One.]*

## ACT TWO

SCENE 1 NOTTINGHAM GOOSE FAIR

*[The scene is the same as Act 1 Scene 1 with the addition of bunting and stalls selling all kinds of things at the fair. The CHORUS is on with MARION. All the MEN are in ROBIN'S band. They wear disguises consisting of cloaks which they will take off later.]*

CHORUS NUMBER (With MARION)

*[At the end of the number MARION and the CHORUS move to the stalls looking at what is on sale. The SHERIFF enters and starts to cross to MARION, but is stopped by NELL who moves out of the crowd.]*

- NELL Silas, you big sexy beast!
- SHERIFF I've told you not to call me that in public.
- NELL Nobody is looking at us. They're all with Marion. She's very popular with the populace. *[With a knowing look at him.]* Unlike some. *[SHE cackles in his face with the usual results.]*
- SHERIFF I don't know what you are talking about.
- NELL May be you should begin ingratiating yourself with the common folk. Then she may look favourably in your direction. *[SHE gives him a dig in the ribs.]*
- SHERIFF Power is very attractive to a young girl. Marion will see this in time and realise where her future lies.
- NELL While you see where her fortune lies.
- SHERIFF Keep your voice down.
- NELL Maybe I should mix another love potion . stronger this time. For the usual fee of course.
- SHERIFF No not after last night's fiasco. Marion will soon come round. The road to true love is well travelled.
- NELL But in your case there're a few potholes! *[SHE cackles again.]*
- SHERIFF Get out of here. You smell like a farmyard!
- NELL Bye, bye, Silas. *[HE scowls at her.]* I mean my lord Sheriff. *[SHE exits, cackling. The SHERIFF crosses to MARION.]*
- SHERIFF Marion, my dear, I hope your headache is better?
- MARION Yes thank you my lord, much better. *[With mock concern.]* Have you seen my aunt this morning? I can't seem to find her anywhere.
- SHERIFF *[Nonchalantly.]* Oh I'm sure she'll turn up sometime. She did rather overdo the wine last night.

- MARION It is a worry. *[With mock suspicion.]* Your two men took her to her room, didn't they?
- SHERIFF Er, I believe so.
- MARION But there was no reply when I knocked her door this morning.
- SHERIFF Out could I shouldn't wonder! *[Irritated.]* Why should I be bothered about the drunken old bat. Er, I mean today I have a lot of important things to attend to. The archery contest will be starting shortly. I was hoping my dear, that I may carry your kerchief as a token of your support?
- MARION *[Flustered.]* Oh my lord, would that be fair?
- SHERIFF Fair? Fair? What's fair got to do with it?
- MARION So many friends of mine are taking part, they might feel like taking sides.
- SHERIFF Friends? What friends?
- MARION Well there's John over there. *[SHE waves to JOHN.]* And Alan. *[SHE waves.]* And Much *[SHE waves.]* And Tuck. *[SHE waves. FRIAR TUCK makes a sign of the cross.]*
- SHERIFF Tuck? What a ridiculous name. But they are just peasants. Like sure to win. Like the best bowman in these parts.
- MARION Really my lord? Are you so confident?
- SHERIFF Of course. And after like you won, perhaps you and I could share a celebratory supper together. I have a special proposition to put to you. *[HE takes her hand and kisses it. SHE shudders.]*
- MARION I o o I o o
- SHERIFF Now I won't take no for an answer.
- EFFIE *[Off.]* Coo-ee! Sheriff. Where are you?
- MARION Auntie!
- SHERIFF Oh no! What does that weather beaten old buzzard want now?
- [EFFIE enters.]*
- EFFIE *[To audience.]* How are you? *[Response.]* Marion dear. *[With a big wink at MARION.]* How are you?
- MARION Like very well thank you. And how are you?
- EFFIE Oh what a night I had. I was kidnapped from my bed.
- MARION What?

EFFIE *[To SHERIFF.]* That guest suite you put me in was not the most comfortable. Lots of strange things in it and the bed was as hard as rocks.

SHERIFF Really? I've not had too many complaints in the past.

EFFIE And on top of that I had to put up with that caterwauling from your balladeer. *[WILL steps forward to protest but is pulled back by LITTLE JOHN.]* It was worse than radio one.

SHERIFF You say you were kidnapped? Who by?

EFFIE How should I know? Some big drunken louts who burst into my room and carried me off to the woods. It was like being at a *[Local team name.]* football match!

SHERIFF You mean someone infiltrated my castle? I shall have it investigated at once. But how did you escape?

EFFIE I used my feminine wiles and gave them the slip. They may have infiltrated your castle, but they weren't going to infiltrate me! *[MARION and EFFIE are enjoying the tale.]* An uncouth band of brigands. *[MEN react.]*

SHERIFF Brigands?

MARION What an excitement you had, Auntie. But I'm so glad you're safe.

EFFIE Well I can think of more exciting things to do. *[Making up to the SHERIFF.]* Like continuing our little tete-a-tete we started last night.

MARION If you'd excuse me, I'd leave you two alone. *[SHE starts to move away.]*

SHERIFF But Marion –

EFFIE That's right you run along and join your friends. I'd stay here with old slippery Silas! *[MARION moves into the CROWD.]*

SHERIFF *[Calling.]* Marion – *[To EFFIE.]* Good day, madam.

EFFIE Madam? *[Catching hold of his arm.]* But Silas, why so formal? Yesterday you called me your little Effie Weffie and squeezed me under the portcullis.

SHERIFF *[Disentangling himself from her.]* That was yesterday!

EFFIE But can't we carry on from where we left off last night?

SHERIFF No madam, we cannot carry on anywhere. I have more important things to attend to.

EFFIE Well I hope one of those important things is finding out who broke into my room. I thought those two idiots of yours were standing guard.

*[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEN enter.]*

SHERIFF There they are. Excuse me a moment. *[HE crosses to them. EFFIE moves to the disguised LITTLE JOHN and flirts with him.]* The old bird remembers little of last night except that she was kidnapped!

WHIPPEM Who by?

SHERIFF There are no prizes for guessing the answer.

FLOGGEM But if I guess right can I have a prize? *[WHIPPEM hits him.]*

WHIPPEM *[Looking around.]* You mean Robin Hood?

SHERIFF Exactly.

FLOGGEM That's who I was going to say.

*[The SHERIFF hits him then gets an idea.]*

SHERIFF Wait a minute. I'd say he's the one who kidnapped the old girl. It will turn her and everyone against him. Get out of here while I break the news to . *[HE says some awful female TV soap character.]* . over there. *[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM exit. The SHERIFF starts to moan.]* Oh no! Tell me it's not true!

EFFIE *[Crossing back to him.]* What? What's happened?

SHERIFF Oh it's too terrible. How could he have done such a thing?

EFFIE What? Who?

SHERIFF *[With mock anguish.]* I can't. I can't say it.

EFFIE *[Grabbing him and shaking him.]* Say it! Say it!

SHERIFF Madam please! You'd crease the clobber.

EFFIE I'd crease something else if you don't tell me.

SHERIFF Robin Hood. I've just found out it was Robin Hood who kidnapped you.

*[Smiles from the MEN as EFFIE gives them a big wink and then turns tragic.]*

EFFIE Robin Hood?? No! It can't be. I mean he wouldn't. I've heard he's a kind, considerate man. He wouldn't hurt a fly.

SHERIFF Ha! That's what he wants you to think. If you hadn't escaped he would have been demanding a ransom.

EFFIE And of course you would've paid it.

SHERIFF What? Out of the question. I'm not made of money.

EFFIE Oh what a shock! *[SHE starts to stagger about.]* I think I'm going to have one of my turns! *[MARION moves down to her.]*

MARION Auntie, whatever's the matter?

EFFIE I've just learned that my kidnapper was none other than Robbie Williams

SHERIFF Robin Hood!

MARION But that's impossible. Robin would never do anything so cruel.

EFFIE *[To the SHERIFF.]* You must go after him and arrest him.

SHERIFF Me? Are you mad? Besides I've got an archery contest to win . . . er . . . I mean organise. *[HE exits. ALL relax and laugh. ROBIN comes out of the crowd followed by WILL.]*

ROBIN What a superb performance!

EFFIE I was rather convincing, wasn't I? Do you think the RSC might be interested in me?

WILL More like the RAC!

ROBIN Marion, I think you should both come to Sherwood Forest with me. If the Sheriff finds out what you know, your lives could be in danger. After the contest my men and I will have to make a rapid exit. *[To WILL.]* Will.

WILL Yes Robin?

ROBIN You escort Marion and her Aunt and join us later. You remember the way?

WILL I think so.

EFFIE But why not now?

ROBIN Because I have an archery contest to win.

MARION Robin, you're not going to compete against the Sheriff?

ROBIN Indeed I am. And I shall win. Marion, I would deem it an honour if I could carry your kerchief as a token of your support.

MARION *[Giving it to him.]* Of course Robin.

EFFIE *[Making up to ROBIN.]* You can carry mine too, if you like. I've got it up my knicker leg somewhere. *[SHE starts to look for it.]*

ROBIN Er . . . perhaps another time.

FANFARE

*[WILL, MARION and EFFIE exit as the CHORUS move down stage.]*

MARION Quick Robin, hide yourself.

ROBIN I have a disguise over there. I'll be back to claim my prize. *[HE exits as FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM enter carrying a target. The SHERIFF follows them on carrying a bow and quiver of arrows.]*

- SHERIFF And now good people, as promised, in celebration of the annual Goose Fair festivities . a grand archery contest. All those wishing to take part step forward. *[JOHN, ALAN and MUCH step DS.]* Here I have the bow and quiver of arrows. *[Aside to FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM.]* I have altered the flight feathers so these arrows won't fly straight. Then when it's my turn this one . *[HE shows an arrow concealed in his coat.]* . will hit the bulls-eye.
- FLOGGEM Isn't that cheating?
- SHERIFF Yes . and this is beating! *[HE hits FLOGGEM.]* Now take the target over there. *[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM exit L with the target.]* Now dear populace, who is first?
- MUCH Me my lord.
- SHERIFF Here you are my good man. *[HE gives MUCH the bow and an arrow.]* The firing line is over there. *[HE points off R. MUCH exits. ALL look off R. There is a "Whoosh!" sound and ALL look off L.]* Oh dear, bad luck. *[MUCH re-enters as do FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM with the target. The arrow is in the outer ring.]* Next. *[ALAN takes the bow and exits. Same business.]* Just missed. Better luck next time. Next. *[JOHN takes the bow and exits. Same business.]*
- FLOGGEM *[Off.]* Owwwwwww! *[This time when they bring the target on the arrow is sticking in FLOGGEM'S rear.]*
- SHERIFF Tut, tut! What a pity. Now it's my turn I think. *[Murmurs from the CROWD.]* I must say I'm a little nervous shooting against such splendid bowmen. *[HE takes the bow and exits R pulling the arrow from his coat. Same business. SHERIFF re-enters. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM carry on the target with the arrow in the bull.]* I won! I won! *[HE takes out the bag of prize money.]*
- F/TUCK Not so fast my lord. A fellow brother from a distant order is staying with us for a while and would like to take part. *[ROBIN enters from upstage disguised as a friar with a hooded cloak.]*
- SHERIFF Oh very well, but I don't see how he can beat me. *[ROBIN takes an arrow from the quiver and moves to exit DR. Just before the exit HE swaps the arrow for one that ALAN has. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM exit DL. Same business. Gasps from the CROWD.]*
- F/TUCK Well, would you look at that? *[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM bring the target back on with ROBIN'S arrow splitting the SHERIFF'S in two.]*
- SHERIFF I don't believe it. You there, come here. *[ROBIN enters.]* Who taught you to shoot like that?
- ROBIN The same person who taught Robin Hood. *[HE throws off his disguise and draws his sword.]* And now my lord Sheriff, I'd take my prize money. *[ROBIN takes the moneybag from the SHERIFF as the CROWD cheers. MEN throw off their disguises and draw swords.]* Back to Sherwood men.
- SHERIFF *[Aghast.]* What?
- ROBIN Farewell Sheriff and thank you for an excellent days sport. *[ROBIN and MEN exit UL. ALL cheer.]*

SHERIFF Quick, after them. They mustn't get away. I want my prize money back.

*[SHERIFF, FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM bump into each other in a bungled exit. The lights fade and the scene changes to.....]*

## SCENE 2 ON THE WAY TO SHERWOOD

*[Front cloth. There is a bush, tree stump large enough for two people to sit on and a sign stage centre. The sign reads 'Sherwood Forest' pointing left and 'Nottingham' pointing right. NELL is discovered down left.]*

NELL I've helped Silas try to get his hands on Marion's inheritance, now I want him to help me. I want my revenge on the Locksley family . and that means putting an end to Robin Hood and his do goodways. *[Fingering the necklace.]* With the help of my powerful ancestors I'm near to finding out where his hide-out is. It's somewhere in Sherwood Forest and I'm going to point the Sheriff in that direction. *[SHE crosses near to the sign.]* Very soon that no-good outlaw and his band will be rotting in the deepest dungeon of Nottingham Castle. But someone is coming. I'd better get out of sight. *[SHE exits L as MARION and WILL enter R.]*

MARION Robin said there are some horses hidden at the edge of the forest. We can ride to his hideout.

WILL Where's your aunt? I thought she was following us.

MARION She was.

EFFIE *[Off.]* Yoo-hoo! Wait for me. *[SHE enters with bottles of 'tonic' sticking out from her apron. SHE calls to the audience.]* How are you? I just had to pick up another tonic. I can't go anywhere without it.

MARION Come along. We must get away before the Sheriff catches up with us.

EFFIE Where are all the men?

WILL They've gone another way to cause a diversion.

EFFIE Ohhh, it's just like a James Bond movie! Have we got a car waiting that turns into a plane?

WILL No, just a plain old horse.

EFFIE Oh dear. Another ride that won't do my various veins any good!!

SHERIFF *[Off.]* This way, I'm sure they went this way.

MARION The Sheriff!

WILL Quick, let's hide. *[HE points to the audience.]*

- EFFIE *[To the audience.] You'd help us hide from the Sheriff, would you? [Reaction. MARION and WILL go into the audience and hide SR of audience side. EFFIE hides behind the bush. SHERIFF, FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM enter R and cross to stage left.]*
- SHERIFF They must have come this way.
- WHIPPEM But I'm sure I saw them leaving town by the main road.
- SHERIFF That's what he wants you to think. I know Robin Hood has his devious ways.
- FLOGGEM We've been Robin Hood-winked!
- SHERIFF Oh do shut up. Hood has crossed me once . you know what will happen if he crosses me again?
- WHIPPEM Yes, you'd be double crossed!
- FLOGGEM Where are we? I've never been down this way before.
- SHERIFF There's a sign over there. *[EFFIE turns the sign to point the opposite way. SHERIFF, FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM cross to it.]* That can't be right. We've just come that way.
- FLOGGEM But that's what it says: %Sherwood Forest+
- SHERIFF Yes, thank you. I can read!
- WHIPPEM Look, there are some people over there. Let's ask them. *[ALL THREE cross off the stage to the SL side of the audience and ad lib. asking where Robin is. EFFIE turns the sign turns back. Unseen by the others MARION and WILL run off stage L. After some time the SHERIFF looks up at the sign.]*
- SHERIFF I'm going to check that sign again. *[As HE crosses back up onto the stage EFFIE changes the sign again.]* It's definitely this way. *[HE points off R.]* Go and have a look. See if you can see anything.
- WHIPPEM OK boss.
- [FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM exit R.]*
- SHERIFF I'd let those two numbskulls do all the running about while I have a rest. *[HE sits on the tree stump. NELL enters left. SHE crosses towards him.]*
- NELL Taking it easy, Silas?
- SHERIFF *[Jumping.]* Ahh! Why do you persist on creeping up on people?
- NELL Oh you know me dear, I slip in and out of the shadows. *[SHE laughs in his face.]*
- SHERIFF Oh good grief, it's a pity you don't slip into a dentist and have something done to those mouldy molars.
- NELL *[Sitting beside him.]* So what are you doing here on the outskirts of town?

- SHERIFF My men are just checking directions. We are going to find Robin Hood and put an end to his nefarious ways once and for all.
- [EFFIE slowly rises behind the bush to listen. SHE is between NELL and the SHERIFF and looks from one to the other reacting to what she hears.]*
- NELL I think I may be able to help you there.
- SHERIFF You mean like you helped me at the banquet? Doping that old bag of an aunt so she made a play for me. *[EFFIE reacts.]* The image of her trying to dance with me will give me nightmares for the rest of my life.
- NELL This is different. I have been working on something that will bring Robin Hood under my control. *[SHE fingers the necklace.]* I've discovered a spell in the history books of my ancestors that can't fail.
- SHERIFF Well it better not or the only spell you will be doing is a very long one in the dungeons.
- NELL Silas, don't be such a pessimist. Have faith in your old Nell! *[SHE laughs in his face again and he falls off the stump.]*
- SHERIFF The only person I have faith in . . . is me!
- DUET - SHERIFF and NELL *[Please see end of script for available song]*
- [During the number the EFFIE tries to escape but always has to dash back into hiding. Just before the end of the number SHE manages to exit. After the number FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM enter right.]*
- WHIPPEM We've seen another sign down the road that points to Sherwood Forest.
- SHERIFF Right. Come on Nell, I have some horses nearby. *[To FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM.]* You two follow on behind.
- [SHERIFF and NELL exit right. NOTE: If more time is needed for the change to scene 3 FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM cross to one side of the stage in a single light while the scene is changed.]*
- FLOGGEM How can we do that?
- WHIPPEM The only other way. Walk!
- FLOGGEM Oh I'm worn out with all this dashing about.
- WHIPPEM So am I. You know Floggem, I don't think I'm cut out for this sort of life.
- FLOGGEM Me neither. Working for the Sheriff is no fun.
- WHIPPEM And look at the wages!
- FLOGGEM What wages?
- WHIPPEM Well erō ò ò ò

- FLOGGEM Do you mean to say you get paid?
- WHIPPEM Only because I'm older than you are. Besides, he says he can't afford a lot because Robin Hood keeps stealing his money.
- FLOGGEM Robin Hood. That's who we should be working for. Everybody likes him.
- WHIPPEM You're right. Let's chuck this job in and go and join his band.
- FLOGGEM Ooooh! I've always wanted to be in a band. Can I play the drums? We could be the next *[name of popular band.]*
- WHIPPEM Not that kind of a band you idiot.
- FLOGGEM Oh, sorry. But how are we going to find him?
- WHIPPEM I've been thinking about that. My old gran used to live in Sherwood Forest. She had a horse and cart and I bet you the horse still knows the way to its old home.
- FLOGGEM You mean you're going to trust an old nag to find Robin's hideout?
- WHIPPEM Got any better ideas?
- FLOGGEM *[Thinking.]* Well we could. Then again there's. Or we might try. *[HE looks at WHIPPEM.]* OK where's the nag?
- WHIPPEM Right here.

*[The scene changes to ..... NOTE: If it is not possible to do a film sequence, please see an alternative scene 3 at the end of the script.]*

### SCENE 3 A HAY WAGON

*[Centre stage is the back of a hay wagon. It has an area big enough for someone to hide in with a seat and finally a cut-out of the back of a horse's head. Up stage of this is a screen to show a film chase. The EFFIE is hidden in the wagon. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM move into the scene.]*

- WHIPPEM What about that then?
- FLOGGEM Doesn't look very comfortable.
- WHIPPEM What do you expect? When it was new it was the Roll-Royce of wagons.
- FLOGGEM Now it's more like a. *[Name of a down market car brand.]*
- WHIPPEM Oh shut up and get on. *[THEY get onto the seat with their backs to the audience. WHIPPEM picks up the reins.]* Come on Black Beauty. Take us to your old home.

*[There is the sound effect of a horse neighing and the film sequence starts. This should be a speeded up film depicting local roads and areas. During the film the EFFIE keeps popping up at the back of the wagon, being knocked*

*from side to side. End of sequence the lights black out and the scene changes to.....*

SCENE 4      SHERWOOD FOREST

*[The same scene as the end of Act One. There is an open fire up stage with a tripod. A big bowl is hanging from it. There are various plates of food and some mugs for drinking. ALL except EFFIE are on as the scene opens enjoying a friendly fight with sticks between LITTLE JOHN and the other MEN. LITTLE JOHN beats them and then MARION has a go and defeats him – with a little help from ROBIN. EVERYONE cheers.]*

NUMBER . ROBIN, MARION AND MEN (or REPRISE of song Act 1 Scene 4)

*[The number is stopped by a wailing off stage. EFFIE enters with straw sticking out of everywhere.]*

- EFFIE      *[Weakly.]* How are you?
- MARION    Aunt Effie!
- WILL      *[Suspiciously.]* And what haystack have you been rolling in?
- EFFIE      I should be so lucky! Oh the things a girl has to do to help a friend.
- ROBIN      What happened?
- EFFIE      I was nearly caught by the Sheriff so I hid in this old hay cart. The next thing I was being driven up hill and down dale until it collided with a large haystack. I was thrown out and luckily recognised the area from last night.
- MARION    Thank goodness you are alright?
- EFFIE      *[Putting herself straight and pulling hay out.]* Oh I've got bruises in places I never knew existed! Look at this. My backbone's gone to the front and my coccyx will never be the same again.
- WILL      How awful.
- EFFIE      I'm numb all down one side.
- WILL      Oh I know what you mean. I get that. It's the damp. Goes through me like wildfire! I'm a martyr to pain!
- EFFIE      How we suffer.
- L/JOHN    Will you two listen to yourselves? It's like being on the set of Casualty!
- ROBIN      Well at least you're here. Are you sure you weren't followed?
- EFFIE      I don't think so but you must be on your guard. I overheard a conversation between the Sheriff and an old witch of a woman.

ROBIN That will be Nell Nightshade. She's always hated my family since my father banished her for practicing witchcraft.

EFFIE She said she knew of a way to find your hideout.

MARION Robin, we could all be in danger.

F/TUCK *[Looking off.]* Robin, look over there. Aren't they the Sheriff's two bungling henchmen?

ROBIN Why so they are. Take cover everyone. *[ALL hide behind trees and bushes. EFFIE and WILL exit. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM enter.]*

WHIPPEM *[Looking around.]* Do you think we're there yet?

FLOGGEM No . we're here.

WHIPPEM Yes, but as we're here . do you think we're there?

FLOGGEM How can we be here and there?

WHIPPEM Oh what's the use of talking to you? *[HE calls out.]* Hello?

ROBIN *[Off. Like an echo.]* Hello!

FLOGGEM *[Shaking.]* Did you hear that?

WHIPPEM Was it an echo?

ROBIN *[Off.]* Was it an echo?

WHIPPEM That's what I said. *[HE looks at FLOGGEM.]* Don't repeat everything I say.

ROBIN *[Off.]* Don't repeat everything I say.

WHIPPEM You said that without moving your lips.

FLOGGEM I didn't say anything.  
*[EVERYONE starts to creep on.]*

WHIPPEM Well if you didn't õ õ

BOTH õ õ who did?

ROBIN Greetings!

FLOGGEM *[Leaping into WHIPPEM'S arms.]* Ahhhhhh!

ROBIN And what brings you two so deep into the forest . and without your master?

WHIPPEM *[Putting FLOGGEM down.]* W-well sir, Mr Hood. You see õ õ

FLOGGEM We . er õ õ want to join your band.

- WHIPPEM Yes. He wants to play the drums! Erõ õ I meanõ õ weæ left the Sheriff because heæ mean and nastyõ õ
- FLOGGEM õ õ and doesn't pay any wages!
- WHIPPEM And everyone likes you because youæ kindõ õ õ
- FLOGGEM õ õ õ and you do pay wages!
- WHIPPEM Yes. No! *[HE hits FLOGGEM.]*
- ROBIN Well this is an interesting turn of events.
- F/TUCK Be careful Robin, this may be a trap.
- ROBIN What do you think we should do? *[To the audience.]* Shall we let them join us? *[Audience reaction. Ad lib.]* Very well, if my friends think youæ turned over a new leaf, then youæ welcome here in Sherwood. Friar Tuck, give them something to eat and drink. *[FRIAR TUCK takes them up stage to the fire.]*
- MARION Look Robin, someone else approaches.
- ALAN It looks like an old man who has lost his way.
- L/JOHN You don't think it's the Sheriff?
- ROBIN I don't think so, but be on your guard. *[ALL MEN draw swords. A STRANGER enters. HE wears a cloak with a hood. Around his waist is a belt on which hangs a cloth bag. ALL surround him.]* Greetings good sir. How may we be of help?
- STRANGER I õ õ lõ õ *[HE faints.]*
- MARION Robin, quick . he is ill.
- ROBIN Bring some water here. *[FRIAR TUCK brings a cup of water.]*
- STRANGER *[Reviving, but still weak.]* Thank you. I have been walking these past five days and seem to have lost my way. Where am I?
- ROBIN You are in Sherwood Forest near the town of Nottingham.
- STRANGER Nottingham? Then I am near my journeys' end. But who must I thank for this welcome hospitality.
- ROBIN Just a humble servant of the King's.
- STRANGER You are too modest sir. But surely I may know your name?
- MARION This is Robin of Locksley.
- STRANGER Robin of Locksley . otherwise known as Robin Hood I believe?
- L/JOHN *[Suspicious.]* You are surrounded sir so please don't try anything.

- STRANGER Believe me sir, I have no intentions of trying anything. On my travels I've heard many stories of how you have been helping the poor.
- ROBIN All highly exaggerated I assure you.
- STRANGER That's as maybe, but I am already grateful for the kindness you have shown me.
- ROBIN Well sir, you are welcome to remain with us until you are fit and well enough to continue your journey.
- F/TUCK *[Bringing a plate of food.]* And you are just in time for our special entertainment. Little John, is everything ready?
- L/JOHN Indeed it is. Ladies and gentlemen . fellow outlaws. *[ALL laugh.]* To welcome our new found friends, those stars of stage, screen and operating theatre will now perform a terpsichorean act of astounding versatility! Friends, I give you . and are there any takers? . Effie and Will. *[This introduction can be changed to introduce whatever characters or number EFFIE and WILL perform. THEY enter to great applause.]*
- EFFIE Thank you. We would now like to do for you a little number entitled: ~~She left~~ her electric blanket on and now she's the toast of the town!  
  
SONG . EFFIE & WILL  
  
*[This can be anything the director wishes to put in. EFFIE can use MEN in the number or the whole company could join in. SHE must always act as the 'star' of the song. WILL always having to come second, however hard he tries. At the end there is great applause. Suddenly NELL appears and they all cower away from her.]*
- NELL Enjoy this merriment while you can Robin Hood. Your days of freedom are over.
- WILL *[Looking HER over.]* Who is this, Robin? *[Name of famous fashion expert.]* ...would not approve!
- ROBIN Nell Nightshade. I wondered how long it would be before our paths crossed again. *[To the others.]* My father banished her for performing evil witchcraft.
- L/JOHN I'd give her witchcraft. *[HE advances on NELL who makes a pass that knocks his staff out of his hand.]* How did that happen?
- NELL *[Showing the necklace.]* The power of my ancestors is always with me. Beware big man, or next time it will be your head that will be knocked off. *[SHE throws her head back and cackles. ALL reel back at the smell of her breath.]* This way Silas. I told you I knew where the hideout was. *[The SHERIFF bursts on with his sword drawn. NELL moves close to MARION.]*
- SHERIFF At last Robin Hood. *[To FLOGGEM and WHIPPEN.]* Good work men. You managed to track him down as well. Quick, now arrest him.
- FLOGGEM Sorry, we can't do that.

SHERIFF      What do you mean?

WHIPPEM     We've gone over to the other side.

SHERIFF     *[Half whispered.]* You mean you're batting for the other team?

FLOGGEM     Yes.

WHIPPEM     *[Horried.]* No!

FLOGGEM     We've just joined his band of hairy men.

WHIPPEM     Merry men.

FLOGGEM     That too.

ROBIN        So you see, my lord Sheriff, I think I have the advantage.

SHERIFF     Not so fast outlaw. *[HE points to MARION.]* Nell. *[NELL grabs MARION.]* One more step and you know what will happen.

MARION      Robin.

EFFIE        Touch one hair of her head and you'll have me to reckon with!

SHERIFF     Oh shut up you shovel mouthed, docklands drab!!

EFFIE        Oh I love it when he talks dirty.

ROBIN        What's the matter Sheriff? Hiding behind a female. Are you too scared to fight me man to man? *[Slaps thigh.]*

SHERIFF     Scared? I'll show you who's scared. Draw your sword Robin Hood and let it be a fight to the death.

### FIGHT

*[ROBIN almost wins then is knocked down by the SHERIFF who holds his sword to ROBIN'S throat.]* Surrender in the name of Prince John.

STRANGER    *[Drawing a sword and holding it to the SHERIFF.]* No Sheriff, you surrender in the name of King Richard! *[HE takes off his cloak and hood to reveal himself as KING RICHARD THE FIRST.]*

ALL         The King! *[ALL kneel.]*

NELL        The King? Leave him to me. *[For a moment SHE releases MARION. WILL sees his chance and pulls the necklace from her neck.]* Ahhhh! Give it back you brat!

WILL        Oh shut up! *[HE hits her on the head with his lute. SHE passes out.]*

ROBIN       Well done Will.

WILL        *[Worried.]* Do you think I've killed her?

- RICHARD Arise my good people. *[ALL rise except the SHERIFF.]*
- ROBIN *[To LITTLE JOHN.]* John, I think we have a secure cage just right for a powerless witch!
- L/JOHN We have indeed, Robin. *[HE grabs hold of NELL.]* By your leave, Sire.
- [RICHARD nods in ascent and NELL is dragged away protesting – HER breath making LITTLE JOHN grimace and the OTHERS laugh.]*
- RICHARD I have seen and heard enough to know what has been happening whilst I was away at the Crusades. My brother, the usurper Prince John, has had all powers stripped away from him, so now I shall begin to right the wrongs and eradicate the villainy that he and his followers have wrought on this great land.
- SHERIFF But Sire, it's not me who is the villain. It's him, the outlaw Robin Hood.
- MARION Your Majesty that is not true. Everything Robin has done has been to help your poor but loyal subjects.
- RICHARD My dear Lady Marion, I know you speak the truth for since my return I have heard all about the good deeds of Master Robin Hood.
- SHERIFF Good deeds! Bah!
- RICHARD I have also heard about the high taxes and torture you have inflicted on the people of Nottingham.
- SHERIFF Oh mercy Sire. I was only doing it for the good of the crown.
- RICHARD You were doing it for your own good. There is only one punishment for the likes of you. *[HE draws back his sword.]*
- EFFIE *[Stepping forward.]* Oh your mighty magesticals, may I speak?
- RICHARD What is it my good woman?
- EFFIE Well, it is true he has been a bad boy and done all those naughty things. And he did try to get his dirty hands on my niece's inheritance. He really does deserve a good slap of the wrist. But perhaps it's because he hasn't had the love and attention that we all need. Perhaps if someone were to take him in hand and teach him how to be good, kind and considerate
- RICHARD Mmm, you may be right. Perhaps we should put him into a medieval delinquent rehabilitation programme. See if some good can come out of this cesspool of evil. But who shall take charge of him?
- EFFIE Well Dickie dear, one of my many professions is that of a state registered psychiatrist. I have been certified more than once.
- SHERIFF Why does that not surprise me?
- RICHARD Well Sheriff, there hangs your fate.

FLOGGEM Yes, what's it to be? The sword ð ð ð ð

WHIPPEM ð ð ð ð or the broad. *[The SHERIFF looks from RICHARD to EFFIE who flutters her eyes at him, then back to RICHARD. HE then bares his chest ready to have the sword plunged in.]*

RICHARD Oh take him away! *[FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM haul him up and EFFIE grabs him and drags him off stage. LITTLE JOHN returns.]* As for you Robin Hood, I pardon you and all your men and hereby restore all your lands and possessions. *[ALL cheer.]* One more thing. Kneel. *[ROBIN kneels.]* I knight you Sir Robin of Locksley, Earl of Huntingdon. *[HE knights ROBIN. More cheers. ROBIN stands.]*

ROBIN Thank you Sire. May I have leave to ask you a favour?

RICHARD You may.

ROBIN It is to ask for the fair Maid Marion's hand in marriage and your blessing.

RICHARD I give it with all my heart.

*[ALL cheer. ROBIN and MARION embrace.]*

REPRISE . (Part of ROBIN'S first song.)  
*[At the end of the number the lights fade and the scene changes to.....]*

#### SCENE 5 ON THE WAY HOME

*[Front cloth. EFFIE and SHERIFF enter L.]*

EFFIE Here we are Silas dear . officially betrothed. Aren't you happy?

SHERIFF Delirious!

EFFIE There, you see . I knew you'd get used to it once the shock had worn off. But one thing I must insist on is that we don't do our courting around the walls of the castle. It's so draughty. The other night when we were out there the wind was whistling round me ramparts and blowing up me buttress. *[SHE puts her bust straight.]* A girl could catch her death.

SHERIFF *[Aside.]* One could hope!

EFFIE Now I've thought of a splendiferous way for you to make amends for all the naughty things you did to Robin and Marion. I've written a little song for you and me to sing at their wedding.

SHERIFF Me . sing for Robin Hood? You've got to be joking.

EFFIE It's not difficult. I'll help you. My voice has been strained you know.

SHERIFF It's a pity the rest of you hasn't!

*[THEY ad lib. into .....*

SONG SHEET

*[At the end of the number THEY exit as the lights fade and the scene changes to.....*

SCENE 6 THE GREAT HALL AT LOCKSLEY CASTLE

*[Great banners line the scene and the back cloth depicts grand medieval Hall. There is a dance in progress. At the end of it the calls are taken in the following order.]*

CHORUS  
ROBIN & MEN  
LITTLE JOHN & FRIAR TUCK  
KING RICHARD  
WILL SCARLET  
NELL  
FLOGGEM & WHIPPEM  
SHERIFF  
EFFIE

EFFIE Three cheers for Sir Robin and Lady Marion.

*[ALL cheer as ROBIN and MARION enter and take their bow.]*

RICHARD The throne of England is safe once more  
And my people all are free.

SHERIFF I've been reformed and changed my ways  
So it's an end to tyranny. (Shame!)

WHIPPEM We've settled down to a quiet life

FLOGGEM With no more strange adventures.

NELL My powers are gone, but one good thing  
Next week I get new dentures.

*[SHE laughs and all reel back.]*

DAME *[Referring to the SHERIFF.]*  
I've made an honest man of him  
And together we'll grow old.  
A devoted couple just so long  
*[Sharp.]* As he does what he's told!

ROBIN All I hoped for has come true,

MARION No more an outlaw in the wood.

WILL And that is how my story ends,  
The tale of brave, bold, *gorgeous* Robin Hood.

FINAL CHORUS

CURTAIN

ALTERNATIVE SCENE 3  
IF A FILM SEQUENCE IS NOT POSSIBLE

SCENE 3     A SMALL BARN

*[The scene is an inset with a pantomime horse centre. A cut out of an old cart is also visible. There is also an old bucket by the cart and a small stool. FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM walk into the scene.]*

WHIPPEM     Here she is. Hello old girl.

FLOGGEM     Old girl is right! She doesn't look as though she can make it out of this barn, let alone to Sherwood Forest!

*[The horse reacts to this.]*

WHIPPEM     *[Covering the horse's ears.]* Don't talk like that. You'd hurt her feelings!

FLOGGEM     She doesn't understand what I'm saying. *[The horse kicks him with a hind leg.]* Owww!

WHIPPEM     See. I told you. *[To the horse.]* Come on old girl, we're going for a ride.

*[The horse shakes its head.]*

FLOGGEM     Come on you pile of bones, we haven't got all day. *[He gets another kick.]* Owww!

WHIPPEM     She's very sensitive. Try coaxing her with that bucket of oats.

*[FLOGGEM picks up the bucket and holds it to the horse's head.]*

FLOGGEM     Here you are. Nice horsey! *[The horse eats. FLOGGEM turns to put the bucket down and gets another kick.]* Owww.

WHIPPEM     We really need your help.

*[The back of the horse sits on the stool with the front sitting on the 'lap' of the back.]*

FLOGGEM     See. She's just a clapped out old nag. *[He gets another kick.]* I've had enough of this. *[HE gets hold of the reins and pulls but the horse stays.]* Try pushing from behind. *[WHIPPEM moves behind the horse and tries to push her up. The horse breaks wind. (Sound effect) FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM react. The horse 'laughs' and stands.]* Any more of this and I'm calling the knackers yard! *[The horse's legs tremble (sound effect.)]* Ah, not so stubborn now, are you? *[HE gets another kick and the horse starts to chase them. This is a comic sequence during which EFFIE creeps on get caught up in the chase – unseen by the men – and hides in the cart. The sequence ends with FLOGGEM and WHIPPEM on the floor centre with the horse sitting on them. The light black out and the scene changes to -*

The following song was written for the original production of Robin Hood. It may be used in the place suggested if required. The piano/vocal music is available from NODA.

GET WHAT YOU CAN (Duet . Sheriff and Nell)

- SHERIFF: When I was a little lad  
 Sitting on daddy's knee.  
 Instead of telling me fairy stories  
 Of adventures and heroes' glories,  
 This is what daddy said to me.
- Get what you can while you can get it  
 That is the golden rule.  
 Get what you can . never forget it  
 Don't ever play the fool.  
 If it means a bit of skulduggery,  
 Mixed in with a little light thuggery,  
 You'll feel so much better when it's done.  
 So get what you can while you can get it  
 And when you've got it . you'll know you've won!
- NELL: Get what you can while you can get it.  
 Tell yourself every day.  
 Get what you can . and you can bet it  
 Pays off in every way.
- SHERIFF: Do some quick creative accounting,
- NELL: to  
 See your money mountain keep mounting you  
 Need to hit the heights and never flop.
- SHERIFF: So get what you can while you can get it  
 And when you've got it .
- NELL: you'll reach the top.
- SHERIFF: The job of taxing is taxing  
 So by way of relaxing  
 I count piles of cash in a row.
- NELL: For help with his double dealing,  
 And conning and stealing  
 My fee helps my pension to grow!
- SHERIFF: Get what you can while you can get it,  
 Comfort and wealth combined.
- NELL: Get what you can . we could duet it!
- SHERIFF: You must have lost your mind!
- NELL: Treat me nice and I might get Hood for you.
- SHERIFF: Do it soon if you know what's good for you.

NELL: I'd show you which witch can beat the rest!

BOTH: Just get what you can while you can get it,  
And when love got it .

NELL: I'd be the best .

SHERIFF: I'd be the best.

BOTH: We'd be the best.

NELL: *[Spoken.]* Take me home, Silas.

SHERIFF: *[Spoken.]* Not on your Nellie . Nell!