

ROBIN. Oh Merry Men, Merry Men! My heart is full of grief! It weighs heavy upon my soul. You gaze on one whose brightest light has been snuffed by the dark blanket of gloom. There is nothing left for me but sorrow and despair! *(To WILL.)* Play the jack. *(Back to lamenting.)* Stands before you a man who suffers from the anguish of unrequited love! There are no means to describe my agony, Merry Men, except to say...I have the boo-boos.

MEN *(to AUDIENCE, in unison, they gasp)*. OH NO! NOT THE BOO-BOOS! *(They resume playing cards.)*

ROBIN. Yes, I know you're shocked! I realize great characters of literature rarely get the boo-boos, but, I have them today. My one and only love, Lady Marian, is lost to me forever! How can I go on?

LITTLE *(to ALLAN as he places a pewter mug on the "table"—his back)*. Hey, hey, hey! Use your coaster! *(ALLAN obliges.)*

ROBIN. Soon the woman of my dreams will wed that incomparable bad guy, the Sheriff of Nottingham. And from that very moment on, Merry Men... *(Front.)* LIFE WILL HAVE NO MEANING! Once she marries him, he and the Prince will conspire to control all the land. Oh, what to do! What to do!

* TOWN'S GUY. Well, first you could explain to the good folk who the Sheriff and the Prince are.

ROBIN *(stares at him a moment)*. Well yes, I suppose I could. *(To AUDIENCE.)* Gentle folk, our beloved England was once ruled by a great sovereign, King Richard the Lion Hearted.

MEN *(to AUDIENCE, in unison)*. LONG LIVE THE KING!

* OR TOWN'S GAL

ROBIN. Our courageous king left us to fight in the crusades. In his absence, we have been ruled by his rotten, sinister and not at all nice brother, THE EVIL PRINCE JOHN.

MEN *(to AUDIENCE, quickly in unison)*. BOO, HISS! BOO, HISS!

ROBIN. You see, Prince John wants to be crowned king. Since King Richard has been gone for more than two years, law decrees that Prince John may take the crown if he is elected by another member of the royal family.

TUCK. But, Robin, the only other royal is the fair Lady Marian. She loathes the Prince severely and would never dream of letting him become king. *(To AUDIENCE.)* She wishes him only skin rashes.

MEN. Eew!

ROBIN. True, Friar, but acting as ruler, law decrees that THE EVIL PRINCE JOHN...

MEN *(to AUDIENCE, quickly in unison)*. BOO, HISS! BOO, HISS!

ROBIN. ...may give dear Marian's hand in marriage to a suitor of his choice. His choice is the Sheriff of Nottingham. And as we all know, the Sheriff of Nottingham is...well, he's...he's a worm! The man's a worm! A slimy, slithering little worm. You just want to squash him flat with your foot and then scrape him off your shoe. Anyway, once the Sheriff marries Marian, he will instantly become royalty. Thus giving the Sheriff the power to allow Prince John to be king! And what a grim day for all it will be! The Prince's greed knows no limits. Why, the Prince isn't even king yet and already he's raised taxes sky high!

MEN *(to AUDIENCE, in unison)*. NO!

ROBIN. Closed schools and orphanages!

MEN (to AUDIENCE, in unison). NO!

ROBIN. And most despicable of all... (Dramatic pause.)

...he's stopped the sale of Girl Scout cookies.

MEN (to AUDIENCE, in unison). OH NO! NOT THAT!

TUCK. Even Chocolate Thin Mints, my son?

ROBIN. Yes, Friar, even those.

TUCK. Merciful heaven, help us!

TOWN'S GUY. I'll say! I mean, I can see banishing the Lemon Cremes because, well hey, let's face it, who buys them anyway? But no more Thin Mints! Why, I would indeed rebel against that!

ROBIN (stares at him a moment). Excuse me, but... who are you?

TOWN'S GUY. Me? I'm the Town's Guy.

ROBIN (stares at him a moment). I see. And what exactly is it that you do?

TOWN'S GUY. Well, I... hang around the town, hence the name, Town's Guy. This isn't rocket science here. (Gives ROBIN a friendly little punch in the arm.)

ROBIN. Oh. How productive. Then may I ask, what are you doing here? If you haven't noticed, this is the forest.

TOWN'S GUY. Well, yes, I know. I just thought I'd hang around here and help you tell the story.

ROBIN. That's quite nice, but to be honest with you, we don't need your help. Please leave.

TOWN'S GUY (insulted). Well, fine! I was going to set up the scene when you first met Lady Marian, but hey, you don't need me! Introduce your own flashback!

MEN (to AUDIENCE, in unison). FLASHBACK?!

TUCK. Oh, Robin, please. You know how much the Merry Men do love a good flashback.

MEN (to ROBIN, chanting in unison). FLASHBACK! FLASHBACK! FLASHBACK!

ROBIN (to MERRY MEN). You know, that's really getting on my nerves. (To TOWN'S GUY.) Oh, very well. If you must do a flashback get on with it.

TOWN'S GUY. All right, I'll do it. But as soon as this flashback flashbacks forward again...I'm outta here. (Calls out to the technical director.) Mr. Technical Director, good day to you, sir. (Waves to him.) Some flashback atmosphere, if you please.*

MEN (lights dim as they exit). FLASHBACK! FLASHBACK! FLASHBACK!

ROBIN (in the dark). STOP THAT!

TOWN'S GUY. You see, good folk, Robin Hood robbed from the rich and gave to the poor. (During this we see ROBIN robbing a MAN of his bag of money. The MAN runs off L.) Now, we all know it's wrong to steal. But it was Prince John who had stolen the good people of England's money first! The money Robin Hood and his men would take from the rich countrymen would buy food and clothes for starving families. (ROBIN gives the money to a WOMAN carrying a BABY. He hands her the pouch, gives the BABY a "coochie-coo" under the chin.) That was the only way the poor people could survive. (The WOMAN thanks him with a curtsy and exits R. ROBIN exits L.) And even though I think Robin is one outlaw with an attitude problem, he is the champion of those less fortunate. On this day I take you to now,

*To suit the gender of the technical director, this may be changed to "Miss," "Ms." or "Mrs." Technical Director. You may make the appropriate adjustment throughout the rest of the play as well.

→ Robin came upon one of the richest and most powerful men in the Country.