

Robin Hood

Read the scenes and then answer the questions.

ACT I

Scene 1

(ROBIN is walking across the plains of England wearing common clothing as a disguise.)

MUSICAL NUMBER – IT'S BEEN SO LONG

ROBIN:

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I WALKED THIS LAND
I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN THE WAY
I'VE SPENT SO LONG TREADING FOREIGN LAND
BUT NOW I'M RETURNING THIS DAY

AND I'LL NEVER FORGET ALL THE FRIENDS THAT I HAVE LOST
AND I'LL NEVER FORGET ALL THE FRIENDS I LEFT BEHIND

I WONDER IF THEY'LL REMEMBER ME
FOR THEY ALWAYS WERE ON MY MIND

(instrumental)

AND I WONDER IF SHE WILL RECALL THE VOW WE SPOKE
AND I WONDER IF SHE WOULD STILL LET ME TAKE HER HAND

FOR FIVE LONG YEARS WILL CHANGE MANY THINGS
I KNOW THIS FOR I HAVE BECOME A WOUNDED MAN

END OF MUSICAL NUMBER – IT'S BEEN SO LONG

(MUCH, the miller's son rushes in)

ROBIN:

Hold, young lad, where are you off to in such a hurry!

MUCH:

(frantic) Sir, I would think it's quite obvious that I'm running for my life, so please either assist me or stand aside!

ROBIN:

I would know why you are in such haste to trample across my family's land.

MUCH:

Your family's land? Don't you know that Prince John has claimed this estate as his own? Who are you anyway?

ROBIN:

I am Robin of Locksley and this land belonged to my father and my father's father before that. No one may lay a rightful claim on this property but me!

MUCH:

Robin of Locksley? Is that really you? I've not seen you since I was a little child, and they said that you died in battle. Why are you wearing the clothes of a vagabond?

ROBIN:

Traveling alone, I found it wise to dress this way so that I would not attract attention. I can assure you that I *am* Robin of Locksley and when I see the Sheriff, he will have to answer for taking my land and property!

MUCH:

You're welcome to try, but I should warn you now that the Sheriff has grown in power and has many powerful noble friends - I'm not so sure that your claim on the land will hold. But this is hardly the time for a debate - if you don't let me flee, then we may both be hanged for killing the king's deer!

ROBIN:

Killing a deer on my family's land is no cause for hanging. Hold fast. If the Sheriff wishes to hang you, he will have to overcome me first.

MUCH:

Well, if it's all the same to you, I think I'd prefer to run.

ROBIN:

I'm afraid it may be too late for that. Hold steady.

(The SHERIFF and two GUARDS enter the scene with swords drawn)

SHERIFF:

Men, there he is, seize him!

(The GUARDS take MUCH by the arms. MUCH begins to struggle.)

ROBIN:

Hold fast, my friend. *(MUCH stops struggling)*. Excuse me, sir. May I ask who you are and why you have trespassed on my land and proceeded to harass an honored guest?

SHERIFF:

(Severely) Bold stranger, you are treading a dangerous line. You had best stand aside unless you want to be hanged along side this poacher as his accomplice.

ROBIN:

Accomplice? Indeed. How do you know that I am not a bounty hunter, and that I have not taken this man into custody and await my reward?

SHERIFF:

I warn you, stranger, not to play games with me. We are taking him away to be hanged and if you don't wish to be strung up beside him, then I suggest you stand aside, immediately!

ROBIN:

What is the charge against this man?

SHERIFF:

As I said, his crime is poaching. He was caught on this land killing one of the king's deer. Now I warn you, if you ask another question, I'll answer you with the cutting edge of my sword!

ROBIN:

But how could he be poaching the king's deer when the deer belongs to me?

SHERIFF:

I'm warning you stranger!

ROBIN:

If he killed a deer on this land then the deer belongs to the owner of this estate, and I Robin of Locksley do not hold charge against this man.

SHERIFF:

Robin of Locksley?! That imbecile was killed on King Richard's damned fool crusade. *(He examines ROBIN more closely)*. Yes, though you do resemble him somewhat, I imagine that the real Robin of Locksley is somewhere in Israel severed in half by a scimitar. But impostor or no, you will never live to reclaim your family's land.

(The SHERIFF lunges at ROBIN with his sword. ROBIN draws his sword with lightning speed and parries.)

ROBIN:

Oh, a feisty one, I see.

SHERIFF:

For that I shall cut out your tongue.

ROBIN:

No, I'm afraid I shall be needing my tongue to curse your name several more times.

(ROBIN and the SHERIFF fence for a while at great speed. While the two blades are engaged the SHERIFF envelops ROBIN's blade and disarms him, suddenly pulling out a dagger and slicing it towards ROBIN's head. ROBIN ducks narrowly avoiding the slicing dagger.)

ROBIN:

Ah ah ah, now we're playing dirty, are we?

SHERIFF:

For that I shall cut out your eyes.

ROBIN:

First you were going to cut out my tongue and now my eyes? Not very original, are we?

SHERIFF:

Guards, fall in! Kill this impostor!

(The GUARDS rush towards ROBIN from behind while the SHERIFF is still to his front)

ROBIN:

Three on one? Now we're really not playing fair.

(The SHERIFF rushes ROBIN from the front while the two GUARDS rush from behind. At the last moment, ROBIN grabs both of the SHERIFF's wrists and takes him to the ground, rolling under the feet of the advancing GUARDS, causing them to topple over. The GUARDS lay stunned for a moment, while ROBIN and the SHERIFF get up and struggle over the SHERIFF's sword and dagger, while ROBIN still clutches the SHERIFF's wrists.)

ROBIN:

I could use some help here!

(MUCH picks up a fallen tree branch and swings it at the SHERIFF's hand containing the sword hitting both the SHERIFF's and ROBIN's hands).

ROBIN and SHERIFF:
(simultaneously) OW!!!

(They both shake their injured hands vigorously while still clutching the hand with the dagger).

MUCH:

Robin, here!

(MUCH throws the sword, handle-first, towards ROBIN. ROBIN releases the SHERIFF's dagger hand, with which the SHERIFF immediately slices towards ROBIN. ROBIN ducks and catches the sword. ROBIN retreats a few steps. The GUARDS rush towards ROBIN while the SHERIFF goes to retrieve ROBIN's sword from the ground. Both GUARDS slice vertically towards ROBIN and he parries them both simultaneously and pushes towards one while kicking the other to the ground. The GUARDS get back to their feet and begin to head towards ROBIN, while MUCH approaches the SHERIFF from behind and grabs his dagger, holding it to the SHERIFF's neck).

MUCH:

Don't move! Tell your guards to stand down!

SHERIFF:

Do what he says – stand down!

(The two GUARDS throw down their swords)

ROBIN:

Very good, now if you will both be so kind as to throw down your other weapons.

(The GUARDS throw down their daggers.)

SHERIFF:

I'm warning you. Locksley, you'll pay for this with your head!

ROBIN:

Strong words from a man whose neck is in danger from a dagger in the hand of a miller. Now if you don't mind, get off my land! Hyah, hyah!! *(Says ROBIN as he slaps the two GUARDS from behind with the flat of his sword. MUCH releases the SHERIFF and they all hurry offstage.)*

MUCH:

Master Locksley, I owe you my gratitude and my life.

ROBIN:

Think nothing of it. Besides, you saved my life, as well.

MUCH:

That is true, but you would not have been in such danger if you had not been defending me from the Sheriff and his men.

ROBIN:

So, then we are bound to each other.

(MUCH grabs ROBIN's hand)

MUCH:

Agreed! I'll watch your back, Locksley, and you'll watch mine! Oh, it's so wonderful to finally see someone stand up to the Sheriff and his men! Your name shall surely reach the far ends of the land for what happened here today.

ROBIN:

(Apprehensively) Indeed . . . I fear you are right.

MUCH:

Fear not! What you've done will make you the hero of every oppressed man, woman, and child in all of England!

ROBIN:

Yes, but I fear I've set dreadful things in motion. I've just returned from battle on foreign soil. I didn't expect to be welcomed home with war from my own countrymen. Furthermore, both of us are now outlaws to be hunted by every soldier and bounty hunter in the land.

MUCH:

That is true. I've survived thus far because I have not drawn too much attention to myself.

ROBIN:

Indeed, we must agree to remain silent about what has happened here today. If news of today's deeds travel far and wide, then I am as good as dead and will be no hero to anyone.

MUCH:

Agreed. Now come, let us meet with the good Friar Tuck and share some wine and make merry. He lives near here in a cottage in Sherwood Forest.

ROBIN:

Sounds jolly, but I've never met a friar that indulged in wine and merry-making.

MUCH:

(Putting his arm around ROBIN and smiling) Well, then apparently you've never met Friar Tuck!

(ROBIN and MUCH exit the stage)

Scene 2

(Outside of FRIAR TUCK's cottage. MUCH knocks on the door while ROBIN lays his sword and dagger on the bench in front of the cottage.)

MUCH:

Good Friar, good Friar! Do bid us enter! We wish to share some wine with you and make merry!

TUCK:

Go away! I am a man of the cloth! I would not sink so low as to make merry with wine! My body is a temple!

MUCH:

Good Friar, you forget your servant Much, the miller's son. I know better than to think that you would not make merry with wine, and if your body is a temple then you must be building an extra wing for a growing congregation.

(FRIAR TUCK sticks his head out the window)

TUCK:

Much, my son! I did not recognize your voice! It is good to see you – you are looking well fed. But who is this common outlaw that I find you with?

MUCH:

Well, Friar, I'm afraid I must tell you that we are both now outlaws. If Robin of Locksley had not shown up when he did, I would be hanging by the neck for poaching the king's deer.

TUCK:

Poaching? Well, no wonder you appear so well fed. But Robin of Locksley, could it possibly be? You look more like a common vagabond, not the trained combatant of which stories have been told.

(TUCK exits the cottage doors with both hands concealed behind his back.)

MUCH:

It is all true and more. He bested the Sheriff and two of his men.

TUCK:

By himself?

MUCH:

Well, I did help a little, but everything they say about him is true. He is indeed a fierce combatant.

TUCK:

Is he? Well, we shall see.

(TUCK abruptly pulls a hidden cudgel from behind his back and slices it horizontally, beating ROBIN in the ribs.)

ROBIN:

Oooh! *(shouts ROBIN in anguish as he topples over on the ground).*

TUCK:

(sarcastically) Fierce combatant, indeed . . . and about to be finished off by an old Friar.

(TUCK lifts his cudgel and brings it down to crush ROBIN's head. ROBIN rolls out of the way at the last moment.)

TUCK:

Oh, so the dirty outlaw knows how to get out of the way once in a while.

(ROBIN grabs a couple of frying pans that are hanging up outside and uses them to block TUCK's quick consecutive blows. ROBIN ducks under TUCK's final horizontal slice and TUCK loses his balance and topples forward. MUCH stands aside watching the whole affair, detached.)

TUCK:

Ah, blazes!

ROBIN:

Much, I could use some help here!

MUCH:

Sorry, Robin, but I think I'd best stay out of this one.

ROBIN:

But this man is crazy!

MUCH:

That he is, but if I don't get some wine now while you're distracting him, he might keep it all to himself.

(TUCK gets back up and swings another slicing blow, which is dodged by ROBIN).

ROBIN:

But I saved your life!

MUCH:

I saved yours, too, and besides I think you can handle a frail old man . . . you'll be fine.

TUCK:

Frail old man? Indeed! After I handle this rotten little schoolboy, you're next, young miller!

MUCH:

Good luck, Robin, I'll drink a toast to you.

TUCK:

Young miller! You'd best stay away from that wine, for your soul's sake!

MUCH:

Don't worry, Friar, I'll see you in confession soon enough.

TUCK:

Miller!

(While TUCK is distracted ROBIN grabs a friar's robe from a hanging line and throws it on TUCK's head. While TUCK's head is covered, ROBIN tries to wrestle the cudgel from his hands but it is eventually thrown aside. TUCK then grabs ROBIN around the waist and they both go rolling across the ground. While they are still struggling ROBIN reaches for the dagger that is left on the bench and holds it to TUCK's neck.)

ROBIN:

Do you yield, you ill-tempered friar?!

TUCK:

(Laughing jovially) Oh good Robin of Locksley, you have proven yourself to be the better man! What a joyous occasion this is that you have returned to England and you wish to make merry and share in my wine!

(ROBIN releases TUCK.)

ROBIN:

I was hoping you would feel that way. But was all of this really necessary?

TUCK:

Oh, Robin, you know an old hermit like me can never be too careful. There are all types of dangerous people lurking about, and it is difficult to tell by appearances.

ROBIN:

(ROBIN looks directly at TUCK) That much is for certain.

TUCK:

Oh, what a joyous new friendship has been made here today. Let us say a prayer towards our newfound friendship.

(ROBIN kneels and TUCK remains standing as he says his prayer)

MUSICAL NUMBER – FRIAR TUCK’S PRAYER

TUCK:

LORD, WE COME BEFORE YOU TODAY
TO THANK YOU FOR BRINGING YOUR CHILD UNTO ME.
PLEASE HELP US TO BE DISCERNERS OF EVIL
AND BEWARE OF THE WOLF IN SHEEP’S CLOTHING
AND LORD, I ASK YOUR FORGIVENESS –
FORGIVENESS FOR SINS I’VE COMMITTED
AND FOR THE SIN I’M ABOUT TO COMMIT
FOR THOU SAYEST VENGEANCE IS THINE
BUT I SAY THAT VENGEANCE IS MINE!

END OF MUSICAL NUMBER – FRIAR TUCK’S PRAYER

segue

(TUCK kicks ROBIN in the head, knocking him down. TUCK then jumps on him again and starts to pummel him with punches. This time MUCH intervenes and tries to pry TUCK away.)

ROBIN:

Get him off me, get him off me!

MUCH:

Friar, friar, that’s enough!

(Lights out)

1. What did you learn about the characters in Scene 1? _____

2. What happened in Scene 2 that was different than Scene 1? _____

3. Do you understand the whole story when you read only 2 scenes? Why or why not?

4. What is your prediction for what will happen in the rest of the play? _____
