Acting Edition

Marian, Or the True Tale of Robin Hood: The Musical

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Acting Edition

Marian, Or the True Tale of Robin Hood: The Musical

Book by
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Music & Lyrics by
Masi Asare

Based upon the play
Marian, Or the True Tale of Robin Hood
by Adam Szymkowicz

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ISBN 978-0-573-71156-5

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MARIAN, OR THE TRUE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD: THE MUSICAL was commissioned by the Educational Theatre Association and presented in a staged reading sponsored by Concord Theatricals at the 2024 International Thespian Festival in Bloomington, Indiana on June 28, 2024. The production was directed by John Simpkins, with music direction by Zachary Orts. The stage manager was Jenny Mears. The cast was as follows:

MARIAN . . . . . Lillian Lake
ALANNA DALE . . . . . Ava Allen
WILL SCARLET . . . . . Lindsey Fetter
LITTLE JOHN . . . . . Stanley Neikamp
MUCH THE MILLER'S SON . . . . . Austin Runion
FRIAR TUCK . . . . . Peter Mayeux
TOMMY OF NO CONSEQUENCE . . . . . Nico Martinez
PRINCE JOHN . . . . . Sean Forman
THE SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM . . . . . Sarin Mainali
LADY SHIRLEY . . . . . Kat Raehpour
ENSEMBLE . . . . . Ariel Huang, Shannon Smith, Ivana Jimenez & Jadyn Daniels

CHARACTERS

THE MERRY MEN

ROBIN/MARIAN – Female, lives a double life as a famous outlaw. Robin Hood has always been Maid Marian in disguise.

ALANNA DALE – Female, a Lady of the Court. Later disguises herself as a man to join the Merry Men.

WILL SCARLET – Female, but pretending to be male in order to be one of the Merry Men.

LITTLE JOHN – Male, a very large member of the Merry Men.

MUCH THE MILLER'S SON – Nonbinary, henceforth Much The Miller's Child.

FRIAR TUCK – Male, a friar and one of the Merry Men.

TOMMY OF NO CONSEQUENCE – Male, can be played by any gender. Wants to be more. (In a smaller cast, can double as a **GUARD**.)

MEMBERS OF THE COURT

PRINCE JOHN – Male, the ruler of England.

THE SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM – Male, Head of Security. (In a smaller cast may double as **FRIAR TUCK**.)

LADY SHIRLEY – Female, a Lady of the Court, doesn't do disguises. (In a smaller cast, can double as a **GUARD**.)

SIR THEO THE PUNCTUAL – Male, can be played by any gender. A knight. (In a smaller cast, can double as a **GUARD**.)

SIR LENNY THE OBSERVANT – Male, can be played by any gender. A knight. (In a smaller cast, can double as a **GUARD**.)

ROYAL SUBJECTS

TANNER – A tanner. (Can be doubled with **THEO** or **LUCY**.)

LUCY – Female, a servant of the prince. (Can be doubled with **SIR LENNY** or a **GUARD**.)

ANNOUNCER – An Announcer. Can be doubled with a **GUARD**.

OTHER ANNOUNCER – An Announcer. Can be doubled with a **GUARD**.

GUARDS (minimum of 6) – Male. In a larger cast, each time **GUARDS 1 & 2** appear, they could be played by different actors.

SETTING

England. Nottingham, Sherwood Forest.

Settings can be very simply implied. Keep it spare, flexible. Maybe this play should be done in a park or in the woods or in a castle.

TIME

During the Third Crusade. The 1190s.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

There is a modern American bent to the play in terms of the themes and concerns of the characters. To that end, the English accents need not be particularly good. Design-wise, it may want to feel old, however, to make the contrast all the clearer.

All parts are race-nonspecific, and all ensemble roles can be played by any gender. Robin Hood/Marian need not be white. When women are playing men, fake moustaches and beards are often fun. Try very hard to have a diverse cast. Almost forty percent of the US is nonwhite. Can at least forty percent of your cast be? It would also be very helpful to have transgender, genderqueer, or nonbinary people involved in the production. Preferably more than one. The designations of female and male above can be used more as a guideline in the casting of this play. It would be great if Much was cast with a transgender, genderqueer, or nonbinary actor but there are other parts that might be cast that way too. (Language about gender is changing fast. Please pretend I'm using the most respectful version that is currently in use.)

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO

Déa Thatcher, Chris Miller, Anna Ebbesen, Sojourner Brown, Kristen Olson, Dan Teixeira, Ruchir Khazanchi, Ashley Blanchet, Dillon Heape, John El Jor, Richard Spitaletta, Devina Sabnis, Thani Brant

Northwestern University Theatre Department students and staff who participated in development sessions: Matheus Barbee, Robbie Matthew, Ethan Cheng, Matthew Millin, Claire Guthrie, Anna Rosenthal, Zoe Maroko, Jason Sekili, Declan Collins, Annabel Forman, Eli Gottsegen, Reva Sangal, Elena García, Selina Liu, Emerson Steady, Michael Peterson, Rick Bertone.

John Simpkins and everyone at Penn State.

Everybody at ITF.

Noelle Rueschman, Themba Pieterse, Hannah Burke, Jordyn Davis, Caro Moore.

Ali Tesluk Case, Ben Keiper, Faith Williams, Zach Orts, Amy Rose Marsh, Garrett Anderson, Rachel Levens, and everyone else at Concord.

Everyone from the pilot production at Music Mountain Theater in Lambertville, NJ

MUSICAL NUMBERS

01. Lady Marian ..... Marian & Ensemble
02. The Archery Contest ..... Alanna, Little John, Shirley, Sheriff, Prince John, Merry Men & Crowd
03. Robbing the Castle ..... Instrumental
04. I Need That Gold ..... Prince John
04a. To the Tower ..... Instrumental
05. Marry That Girl ..... Tanner, Tuck, Little John & Merry Men
05a. My Name is Will ..... Instrumental
05b. Tommy's Consequential Dream 1 ..... Tommy
05c. Crossing Swords and Staves ..... Instrumental
05d. Back to Forest/Making Out ..... Instrumental
06. Such Good Friends ..... Robin & Little John
06a. Such Good Friends Playoff ..... Instrumental
06b. Tommy's Consequential Dream 2 ..... Tommy
07. Fallen Completely for You ..... Alanna & Will
08. Late Last Night ..... Guards
08a. Late Last Night (Later) ..... Instrumental
08b. Tommy's Consequential Dream 3 ..... Tommy
08c. Back in Sherwood ..... Instrumental
09. So Much More ..... Much, Merry Men, Alanna & Will
10. The Life I've Chosen ..... Marian
10a. Into Shirley/Tuck ..... Instrumental
11. A Woman in My Position ..... Shirley, Tuck & Sheriff
11a. Back to the Castle ..... Instrumental
11b. To the Prince's Chamber ..... Instrumental
11c. Prince John's Orders ..... Instrumental
11d. Disarming Marian ..... Instrumental
12. The People Need a Hero ..... Marian & Alanna
12a. The People Need a Heroic Playoff ..... Instrumental
12b. The Forest Moves/Back to the Tower ..... Instrumental
12c. Marian Escapes ..... Instrumental
13. Fly, Pigeon, Fly ..... Prince John
14. Scuffle and Fray ..... Instrumental
14a. Take Over as Robin Hood ..... Instrumental
15. Such Good Friends (Reprise) ..... Marian & Little John
16. Finale ..... Alanna & Company

PROLOGUE

[MUSIC NO. 01 – LADY MARIAN]

(We see **MARIAN**. *She's getting ready to start her day. The* **ENSEMBLE** *is behind her. They step forward and sing.)*

ENSEMBLE.

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD OF THAT MAIDEN SO RARE,
WHOSE PRAISES ALL MEN DO PROCLAIM?
OF NOBLE DEGREE, AND SO GALLANT IS SHE,
LADY MARIAN IS HER NAME!

TALES TOLD OF HER KINDNESS TRAVEL
FROM TOWN TO HILLSIDE.
IT'S RUMORED THAT SHE HELPS THE OUTLAWS RUN FREE,
LADY MARIAN, SOME CONFIDE.

(Ladies **ALANNA** *and* **SHIRLEY** *step out and join* **MARIAN**. *They are in a room in the castle or a garden outside the castle. The* **ENSEMBLE** *watches.)*

ALANNA. Lady Marian, are you a little disheveled?

MARIAN. Who me?

ALANNA. Is that a leaf in your hair? Are you coming from Sherwood?

MARIAN. Why do you always ask me these sorts of questions? What about Lady Shirley?

ALANNA. No, she always looks that way.

SHIRLEY. Indeed. I have a reputation to keep up.

MARIAN. Indeed.

ENSEMBLE.

FOR WIT AND FOR GRACE AND FOR COURAGE APACE,
LADY MARIAN IS UNMATCHED.

BOLD ROBIN HOOD WON HER FAVOR
THAT OUTLAW UPSTART
AS ONLY SHE COULD, OH SHE LOVED ROBIN HOOD,
LADY MARIAN, IN HER HEART.

*(***MARIAN** *begins to get dressed in her Robin Hood disguise.* **ENSEMBLE** *become* **COMMONERS** *and* **MERRY MEN**.*)*

MARIAN.

I NEVER MEANT TO INVENT A HERO,
BUT SOMEHOW THAT'S WHAT I DID.
DRESS UP IN GREEN, TRY TO SPREAD SOME CHEER,
AND JUST LIKE THAT, A SECRET'S GOTTA BE HID.

I NEVER MEANT TO BECOME AN ICON.
JUST TRYING TO DO A LITTLE GOOD.
PUT ON A HAT, LET AN ARROW FLY,
THAT'S HOW I BECAME
ROBIN HOOD

ENSEMBLE SOLO 1.

THE CHILDREN ARE HUNGRY.

ENSEMBLE SOLO 2.

THE BARLEY RUNS LOW.

ENSEMBLE DUO.

CRUEL TAXES HAVE EMPTIED YOUR STORES.

ENSEMBLE SMALL GROUP.

IT'S HOPELESS

ENSEMBLE.

BUT THEN ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MEN
ROB THE RICH AND RETURN WHAT IS YOURS!

*(***MARIAN***, now* **ROBIN HOOD***, arrives at Sherwood.* **LITTLE JOHN** *is there, maybe other* **MERRY MEN***.)*

LITTLE JOHN. Robin, why do you look a little rough? You been at the castle? With Marian.

ROBIN. So many questions Little John.

LITTLE JOHN. I just wonder about her. I just wonder.

ENSEMBLE.

BRAVE MARIAN NEVER WHISPERED
WHERE ROBIN FLED TO.
AND MAYBE SHE WEPT,
BUT HIS SECRET SHE KEPT,
LADY MARIAN, EVER TRUE.

ROBIN.

MARIAN CAN ONLY MARRY.
ROBIN CHASES DREAMS UNCHECKED.
MARIAN IS GRANTED COMPLIMENTS,
BUT ROBIN HOOD COMMANDS RESPECT.

I NEVER MEANT TO BECOME A SECRET.
JUST TRY'NA TO DO A LITTLE GOOD.
HELP OUT THE POOR,
MAKE THE WORLD MORE FREE –
YEAH, THAT'S ME, I AM
ROBIN HOOD!

ENSEMBLE.

MAYBE SHE WEPT,
BUT HIS SECRET SHE KEPT,
LADY MARIAN, FOR HER
ROBIN HOOD.

*(***ROBIN** *with the* **MERRY MEN** – **MUCH**, **WILL**, **TUCK**, **LITTLE JOHN**, **TOMMY** *etc. and* **SHIRLEY**.*)*

ROBIN. All right, Merry Men. Now it's important to wait until at least round ten of the tournament before you raid the castle vaults. Everyone has to be really and truly distracted for it to work.

MERRY MEN. Yes, Robin.

ROBIN. Every town in the surrounding area is depending on the success of this robbery. Children are starving.

MUCH. Not tonight, Robin.

ROBIN. That's what I like to hear. Merry Men look each other over to make sure your disguises will hold. Good good.

LITTLE JOHN. You have to get in your disguise too, don't you Robin.

ROBIN. Right. My disguise.

WILL. You look tired Robin.

ROBIN. I'm okay.

SHIRLEY. Are you?

ROBIN. I have to be okay, don't I? The fight must go on!

MERRY MEN. The fight! The fight!

[MUSIC NO. 02 – THE ARCHERY CONTEST]

One
The Castle Grounds

(Transition into Archery. **ENSEMBLE** *cheers! Sounds of arrows thunking.)*

(Stage right, a row of **ARCHERS** *facing the audience.* **ALANNA DALE**, *then* **ROBIN** *wearing an old man's beard, then* **SHERIFF**. *More* **ARCHERS** *are possible. It's probably best if the arrows are invisible/imaginary instead of having the archers shoot arrows into the audience. Behind the* **ARCHERS**, **MERRY MEN** *in disguise, watching, and maybe a couple of the* **SHERIFF'S MEN**. *Stage left, perhaps on a platform,* **PRINCE JOHN**, *seated.* **SHERIFF'S MEN** *guarding him.* **LADY SHIRLEY** *seated nearby.)*

(First trumpet fanfare.)

ANNOUNCER. Hear ye! Hear ye! Let's get ready for round nine of the royal archery tournament! Archers to your marks!

(Everyone is cheering on the **ARCHERS** *who are concentrating.)*

CROWD.

OH, HOW EXCITING,
ALL THE ARCHERS ARE FIGHTING
FOR A SPOT IN THE FINAL,
SO MUCH TALENT ON DISPLAY!
WHO'S GONNA WIN IT?
IT'S A THRILL EV'RY MINUTE

(All three or more **ARCHERS** *pull back in unison.)*

CROWD.

AT THE ARCHERY CONTEST
IN NOTTINGHAM TODAY!

(The sounds of arrows going in. **ALANNA DALE** *steps forward.)*

ALANNA. *(To audience.)*

HI, MY NAME'S ALANNA, I CAN WIN THIS THING.
PEOPLE LAUGH AT ME, I DON'T CARE
I FOCUS ON THE TARGET, KEEP ON FOCUSING
LET THEM STARE.

I JUST DON'T LIKE NEEDLEPOINT AND PROMENADES
LIKE A LADY-IN-WAITING SHOULD.
BUT GIVE ME A BOW AND I CAN BEAT THE ODDS
LIKE ROBIN HOOD.
IF I COULD BE LIKE ROBIN HOOD...

SURE AS MY NAME'S ALANNA DALE,
WHEN I WIN,
I'LL HEAD TO SHERWOOD TRAIL
AND MY REAL LIFE WILL BEGIN!

(All unfreeze. **LITTLE JOHN** *sidles up to* **ROBIN**, *who is disguised as an old man.)*

LITTLE JOHN. Robin!

ROBIN. Don't say my name, Little John. I'm in disguise.

LITTLE JOHN. Sorry. Sorry. So, all is a go. For the heist I mean. Of the contents of Prince John's vaults in Nottingham Castle.

ROBIN. Got it. Let's be a little more discreet, okay? And don't stand next to me. You kind of stand out. Because of your size.

LITTLE JOHN. Okay, I'm going to go back over and work some more on the heisting.

(Sings with gusto.)

THIS IS WHAT
WE LOVE TO DO,
WE ROB THE RICH THEN
ROB SOME MORE!
IT'S VERY FUN
FOR MERRY MEN
TO ROB THE RICH
AND GIVE TO THE POOR!

(Second trumpet fanfare.)

*(***LITTLE JOHN** *moves away.)*

ANNOUNCER. And on to round ten! Who will it be? The Sheriff? Lady Alanna? The Mysterious Old Man who is a particularly good archer? And where is Robin Hood? Too afraid to show his face?

CROWD.

OH, HOW IMPRESSIVE,
BUT NOW WHO COULD POSSESS A
VERY CLEAR SHOT AT VICTORY
IF ROBIN ISN'T HERE?
INNING BY INNING,
COMPETITION IS THINNING
AT THE ARCHERY CONTEST
IN NOTTINGHAM THIS YEAR!

*(***SHIRLEY** *comes to* **ROBIN***'s other side.)*

SHIRLEY.

MARIAN.

ROBIN. Shirley. I'm in disguise.

SHIRLEY. Right.

I'LL START AGAIN.
OLD MAN!

SHIRLEY.

PRINCE JOHN IS LOOKING ROUND FOR
LADY MARIAN,
AND YOU KNOW
HOW HE GETS, LIKE, HE'S SO
AUTHORITARIAN,
KINDA SUSPICIOUS,
WITH THAT LOOK IN HIS EYE,
KINDA MALICIOUS,
YEAH, HE'S A CREEPY GUY,
OH-OH-OH!

OH!
OH-OH-OH!

I TRIED DISTRACTING HIM, YEAH,
I PUT ON A SHOW
AND I SAID
"BUT SURELY YES," BUT HE SAID,
"SURELY NO,"
THEN, "STOP IT, SHIRLEY"
AS IF I WAS A BORE,
IT WASN'T SHIRLEY
WHO HE WAS LOOKING FOR...

ROBIN. Very well.

*(***ROBIN** *shoots three arrows quickly, then exits.)*

*(***ROBIN** *transforms quickly into* **LADY MARIAN** *as* **SHIRLEY** *blocks her from view or offstage as* **ALANNA** *sings.)*

ALANNA.

ANOTHER ROUND AND SOMEHOW I'M STILL HERE,
I'M SHOOTING WELL,
MY HOPES ARE HIGH.
PULL BACK, RELEASE,

I FLOAT THE ARROW CLEAR
TO THE SKY...

ANNOUNCER. The Sheriff's been shooting real well today. Think he'll take it all the way?

OTHER ANNOUNCER. Too soon to say, Barnaby. He was out with archer finger for a fortnight but now he's back and he is not wavering.

ANNOUNCER. He sure isn't.

(At the archery line, **SHIRLEY** *approaches the* **SHERIFF**.*)*

SHIRLEY. *(Flirty.)* Good shootin', Sheriff.

SHERIFF. I know.

SHIRLEY. You have a bauble for little Shirley?

SHERIFF. Of course. But I'm of a mind not to give it to you at all. I see you lavishing attention on the other archers.

SHIRLEY. What? That old man? It was a pity lavish. You're so jealous. *(She says this like it's a good thing.)* But you have no right to be. There's no ring on this finger. This Shirley is a free agent.

SHERIFF. As long as you're not a double agent.

SHIRLEY. *(Because this is what she is. But he doesn't know that, right?)* Hahaha! Can you imagine?

SHERIFF. Don't flirt with old men in front of me. Not unless you want me to jail him.

SHIRLEY. Oooh.

SHERIFF. Or hang him.

SHIRLEY. Ahhh.

SHERIFF. I'm a very powerful man.

SHIRLEY. With a powerful body. Now where's my bauble?

(The **SHERIFF** *gives her a ring. She squeals and puts it on. She runs off admiring it.)*

SHERIFF. And stay away from that friar!

(The **SHERIFF** *resumes shooting. The other* **ARCHERS** *have been shooting.)*

(If **SHERIFF** *and* **TUCK** *are not played by the same actor: Behind him, we see* **SHIRLEY** *run into the arms of* **FRIAR TUCK**, *recognizable because he's in a brown robe. They run off together hand in hand.)*

(Transformed, **MARIAN** *goes and sits beside* **PRINCE JOHN**.*)*

PRINCE JOHN. Marian, it's been so dreadfully boring. Where have you been hiding?

MARIAN. I had a woman issue, my liege.

PRINCE JOHN. *(Upset.)* Okay. Okay. That's enough. I didn't ask for details.

MARIAN. His Highness wants details?

PRINCE JOHN. No details!

MARIAN. Why does his Highness not shoot?

PRINCE JOHN. As the king chosen by God himself, I would win. Of course if my brother – Let's not talk about him. "Crusades?" I said, "That's a wonderful idea. I'll stay here and be king, but you have fun on your crusading." And once Richard is dead, I'll be a proper king.

MARIAN. Oh but you are already a proper king.

PRINCE JOHN. A proper king should have a queen.

*(***PRINCE JOHN** *leers. Third trumpet fanfare, sound signaling next part.)*

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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