

# ROBIN HOOD

*Series One, Episode Six*

## **The Tax Man Cometh**

*written by Richard Kurti and Bev Doyle*

*directed by Richard Standeven*

**This is not an official copy. This was typed up by a fan of the show strictly for personal enjoyment.**

### CAST

Robin Hood	Jonas Armstrong
Marian	Lucy Griffiths
Guy of Gisborne	Richard Armitage
Sheriff of Nottingham	Keith Allen
Little John	Gordon Kennedy
Much	Sam Troughton
Allan A Dale	Joe Armstrong
Will Scarlett	Harry Lloyd
Djaq	Anjali Jay
Edward	Michael Elwyn
Abbess	Nikki Amuka-Bird
Flaxton	Tom Beard
Cedric	Ryan Winsley
Guard	Matt Devere
Butcher	Alan Stocks
Soldier	Zoltán Hetényi

### Scene One

#### **Nottingham Castle. Sheriff's quarters.**

*The Sheriff is seated across the table from Flaxton and his son, Cedric.*

SHERIFF

If you're not good, I warn you, he will kill you.

FLAXTON

We're good. The best you'll ever meet.

SHERIFF

Arrogant, too. I like it. *Drops a purse on the table.* The rest when Hood is in my vault.

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### Scene Two

#### **Nottingham Town. The butcher's shop.**

*Flies buzz as the butcher cleaves spoiled meat. He grabs a rag, dips it in a bowl of red liquid, and dabs the meat, dyeing it red again. Two guards approach the shop carrying a sack between them.*

GUARD 1

Morning.

BUTCHER

Morning. *Wipes his hands on his apron.*

*The guards set the sack down by the butcher.*

Ah, let's have a look. *Pulls out a chunk of meat with a large green patch on it. That'll scrub up nice. Drops it back in the sack. Good. Goes to his purse nearby, pours out a few coins and hands them to the guard.*

GUARD 1

Thank you.

BUTCHER

OK. Bye now.

*The guards leave and the butcher moves the sack out of his way. He is about to resume his work when Robin drops down from the ceiling.*

ROBIN

Who'd have thought? An artist masquerading as a butcher.

*Much jumps down to a table, then the floor, and picks up the cleaver before the butcher can.*

BUTCHER

What do you want?

*Robin dips his fingers into the bowl and smells them.*

ROBIN

What is this? Beet root?

BUTCHER

It's perfectly good meat. Never hurt anyone.

ROBIN

*Picks up a piece of meat. Then you eat it.*

BUTCHER

*Scoffs.* It's not cooked.

*Robin shoves the meat into the butcher's face.*

ROBIN  
Eat! Eat it!

*The butcher resists, and Robin relents.*

You sell this. People save for a month, they give everything they have for a piece of meat for their children, and you give them this? The rancid leftovers from the castle kitchen?

BUTCHER  
They're my economy cuts.

MUCH  
You'll get another kind of cut in a minute.

ROBIN  
Your economy cuts nearly poisoned half of Locksley village.

*The butcher scoffs and Robin sees two more guards approaching outside the window.*

GUARD 2  
*Muffled, from outside:* You've got enough for yourself now.

ROBIN  
*Pointing at the butcher with the meat still in his hand:* Not a word.

*Robin throws the meat down on the table and goes into the storeroom, Much following, as the butcher wipes his hands down his apron. The guards enter the shop.*

GUARD 2  
Morning.

BUTCHER  
Morning.

GUARD 2  
We've come for the Sheriff's order.

BUTCHER  
*Lazily:* Yeah, yeah. *Bends down behind his table.* It's all here.

*As the guard bends down for the sack, the butcher confides in him.*

*Whispers:* Outlaws in the storeroom.

GUARD 2  
*Looks up at the butcher, then at his companion and points.*  
*Whispers:* Storeroom.

*The two step to the storeroom and a side of beef knocks one aside. Robin pushes the other one out of his way and runs out.*

Stop him! Quickly!

***Nottingham Town.***

*Much follows Robin out with a hogshead in his hands. They race through the town around corners and between buildings, with the guards in pursuit.*

***The sewer dump.***

*Robin runs to the town wall where there once was a small gate, but finds it walled off.*

MUCH  
Master!

*Robin looks all around for another escape route, then peers into the sewer dump and climbs up on its edge.*

The sewer? No!

*A basket of rubbish is emptied through a hole in the castle wall above the dump.*

ROBIN  
*Mischievously:* Oh, yes!

*Robin jumps into the sewer dump with a yell. Much reluctantly follows with his hogshead and jumps just in time to avoid being grabbed by the guards.*

***Outside Nottingham.***

*Much slides down, yelling all the way, then lands on his face beside Robin on a large rubbish heap outside the town walls. Much sits up, disgruntled, as Robin blows debris from his lips.*

MUCH  
*Very sarcastically, kicking rubbish from his feet:* Oh, lovely. Like a pig in slops.

ROBIN  
Well, then, you should be happy.

MUCH  
What?

ROBIN  
That's what it means. "A pig in slops," it means you're happy.

MUCH  
*Disgruntled:* Well, I've never understood that. Why would





## Scene Five

### ***Knighton Hall. Exterior.***

*Marian is outside her house visualising a fight in her head and making slight hand gestures when Edward comes round the corner, Gisborne close behind.*

EDWARD

Marian!

*Marian straightens up as Gisborne comes into view. Gisborne stops, looks her up and down and smiles slightly.*

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### ***Main room.***

*Marian is sitting up straight in a chair. Gisborne is standing before her.*

GISBORNE

Forgive me, I do not have as much time as I planned.  
*Holds out a small bag to her.* I have a gift for you.

MARIAN

*Takes the bag.* Sir Guy, you bring too many gifts.

GISBORNE

My mother used to say... if you have wronged somebody, or if they're upset, do not be proud, offer them friendship. If they reject you, offer a second time and a third until they accept.

*Marian pulls a trinket from the bag.*

And that is what I intend to do with you.

MARIAN

Please. *Holds the bag out to Gisborne.* I do not need gifts.

GISBORNE

*Reluctantly takes the bag back.* No. You need a husband.

*Marian stares at him, biting her tongue.*

*Glances behind him.* This world is not safe for a woman alone.

*Marian continues to stare and says nothing.*

*Softly:* Outlaws.

MARIAN

I can protect myself.

GISBORNE

*Scoffs.* Even pilgrims. There's an abbess at Nottingham

half dead. I must tend to her.

MARIAN

*Waits a moment, sees her opportunity, and stands.* Then I would not delay you. *Smiles slightly.*

GISBORNE

Good day.

*Gisborne takes one step towards the door, then changes his mind and quickly goes back to Marian and puts the bag in her hand.*

I will keep giving.

*Marian looks down at the bag as Gisborne leaves.*

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## Scene Eight

### *Sherwood Forest. Outlaws' camp.*

*Robin squats at the feet of Flaxton. Cedric is tied to a large tree nearby.*

FLAXTON

If I tell you, how do I know you're not just going to kill us anyway?

ROBIN

You don't.

FLAXTON

That's not much of a deal.

ROBIN

Well, in the real world, things don't always add up.  
*Stands.*

FLAXTON

*Sarcastically:* Very original.

ROBIN

But true. *Steps away from Flaxton, then looks back at him.*

FLAXTON

*Waits a moment before relenting.* The tax money for the whole of the north... is being held in Nottingham Castle.

*Will stands, staring. Allan frowns and steps forward. Much looks at Robin.*

ROBIN

*Squats in front of Flaxton again.* All of it?

FLAXTON

The Sheriff has the trust of the Prince.

*Cedric is uneasy.*

He has been annual collector for the last three years.

WILL

That's true. My father used to have to make extra strong boxes this time of year.

FLAXTON

In case you have any ideas, Prince John sends a unit of his army to protect the shipment.

ROBIN

And yet he does not protect you?

FLAXTON

*Scoffs.* I don't move the money. I merely count it. Check it out as it leaves Nottingham, check it in as it arrives in London.

*Robin stands and walks away a few steps, thinking.*

ROBIN

Good. *Looks back at Flaxton with a glint in his eyes.*

MUCH

*With disapproval:* Master...

*Robin grins slightly.*

No, surely...

ALLAN

Robin, the castle's as tight as leeches' lips.

DJAQ

You're scared.

ALLAN

Well, yeah! Look, I've dangled from a rope there. Not funny.

WILL

*With determination:* I want that money. I want that money before it gets to London. You think taxes pay for themselves? People sweat for them, give their lives for them. And when they save up enough, they can't even afford a decent piece of meat.

ROBIN

My friend here lost his mother.

FLAXTON

It's not my fault.

ALLAN

You're part of the system.

LITTLE JOHN

*Puts hand on Flaxton's shoulder.* Taxes we do not like.

ROBIN

It's one of our bugbears. *Squats at Flaxton's feet.*

WILL

We'd give that money back to the people it was stolen from.

ROBIN

Where in the castle?



*Gisborne smiles slightly and briefly, then folds his arms.*

ABBESS

I have no intentions of being a parasite in your castle, my lord, pious or otherwise. I shall be leaving forthwith.

SHERIFF

Good. I wish you a safe onward journey. *Goes to door.*

ABBESS

I've sent one of your messengers to Rufford. Assuming the outlaws you are so clearly incapable of controlling allow him to get through, a retinue will arrive to escort me home directly. I've given instructions for funds to be brought. You will be paid for your... *with contempt:* hospitality.

SHERIFF

Oh. Er, monies raised here go directly to support the King and his army.

ABBESS

Funds raised by the Church go to the glorification of God, not war.

SHERIFF

Ah, just as I thought. It's meant to be a holy war, but it's paid for out of my taxes, not yours, huh? Mother. *Turns to leave.*

ABBESS

I had heard Nottingham under your stewardship was a godless place.

*The Sheriff turns back.*

I had no idea how godless.

SHERIFF

Yes I know, I should have been struck down by now. I hope you're still here for dinner. No charge.

*The Sheriff leaves. Gisborne raises his eyebrows at the Abbess before following. The Abbess sits at the table.*

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## Scene Ten

### *Interior corridor near the chapel.*

*The Abbess walks to a guard at a door.*

ABBESS

This is your chapel?

GUARD

I'm sorry, my lady. The chapel is out of bounds.

*The Abbess, flustered, goes to see the Sheriff.*

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### *Sheriff's quarters.*

*The Sheriff sits at the table, a long feather quill in hand.*

SHERIFF

We do not know for sure it was Hood.

GISBORNE

The Abbess was very clear. Does it matter? We just blame him anyway. *With pleasure:* Robin Hood, pilgrim robber?

SHERIFF

*While writing:* No. I want Hood to be comfortable... confident... *looks at Gisborne...* bold.

GISBORNE

*Knowingly:* Do you have a scheme?

*The Sheriff smiles at him as the doors open and the Abbess enters.*

ABBESS

Sir, you may be comfortable with godlessness. I am not.

SHERIFF

*While writing:* I am comfortable with godlessness. In fact, I would hate to be... *thinks over each syllable:* god-less-ness-less. *Smiles.* Yeah.

*Gisborne smirks.*

ABBESS

I am denied access to your chapel, and so I am denied access to my god. Whether you accept it or not, He is your god, too.

SHERIFF

Currently, my god has another use for the chapel.

ABBESS

There can be only one use for a chapel.





### Scene Thirteen

#### ***The approach to Nottingham Town.***

*Marian canters to the bridge and then slows the horse to a walk, looking down at all the peasants staring up at her. She does a double take at a familiar face: Robin with a loose-weave piece of cloth draped over him like a cloak. He stands and jerks his head towards the gate. Marian stops and glances at the two guards at the gate, then back at Robin, who motions his head again. Marian takes the hint, dismounts, takes out her purse and reaches in for some coins. She hands them out to the peasants, who quickly overwhelm her and start pulling at her clothes.*

PEASANTS

*Clamouring:* Money! Please, my lady! Please! My children are starving!

MARIAN

Help! Somebody help me! Somebody help me, please!

*The two guards come running.*

GUARDS

Break it up! Break it up! Break it up! Break it up!

*Robin, Little John, Much and Allan run through the unmanned gate as the guards get the situation under control.*

Don't have anything to do with them, your ladyship. You don't belong with that sort.

*Marian nods, trying to look meek and sorry, glancing down to see Robin gone, and gets back on her horse as the guard looks down at the vacant spot by the bridge.*

#### ***Nottingham Castle. Courtyard.***

*The guard returns with an escort of four guards for Flaxton.*

GUARD

Your escort, sir.

#### ***Nottingham Town. Marketplace.***

*Robin and Much, hidden behind a cluttered railing, look through the gate at Flaxton and Will.*

#### ***Nottingham Castle. Courtyard.***

*Meanwhile, the Sheriff looks down into the courtyard from his window and sees Flaxton going up the side steps.*

SHERIFF

Ah, the tax man cometh. *Takes a bite of an apple.*

#### ***Nottingham Town. Marketplace.***

*Robin and Much look back at Marian walking her horse into*

*the marketplace with an inquisitive look on her face. Robin walks over to her.*

ROBIN

That was impressive. Thank you.

MARIAN

Seeing as you owe me one, can we talk?

MUCH

No!

*Robin looks back at him in disbelief.*

*Pleading impatiently:* Master, our mission!

ROBIN

*Holds up one finger to Marian:* One minute.

*Exasperated, Much turns to Little John, who says nothing.*

#### ***A lane south of the marketplace.***

*Marian turns into the lane with Robin following.*

MARIAN

What mission?

ROBIN

You'll find out soon enough. *Sets his bow down on its point and leans back on the wall.* Do you have a problem?

MARIAN

*Acidly:* More than I can say in one minute.

*Robin waits silently, ready to listen, and Marian pours out all her current frustrations.*

This life... this pretence is driving me mad. Gisborne sniffs around me like a little spaniel. My father would have me marry him for fear of anyone guessing we are not wholly in league with the Sheriff. As for the Nightwatchman, it is not enough for me and it is too much for my father. What I want, who I am... does not count. *Pauses, sighs.* I am sick of it all. I am leaving home.

ROBIN

To go... where?

MARIAN

*Shakes head.* I do not know.

ROBIN

*Chuckles.* That is unwise.

MARIAN

*Her anger rising:* I am sick of people, [*raises a hand at Robin*] and it is always men, telling me what is wise and what is not.

ROBIN

*Flustered:* Then tell me what it is you want.

MARIAN

Help! I want somebody for once to think about how they can help me. Help me to do what I want to do, what I think is wise.

*Much comes round the corner.*

MUCH

*Whispers:* Master!

ROBIN

*Sighs.* I have to go.

MARIAN

*Scoffs:* Of course you do. I have to go, too.

MUCH

*Pulls his hood off and steps towards them. Whispers:* Master!

ROBIN

We will continue this conversation. I'd like to help.

*Marian thinks over her options as Robin walks down the lane, turning Much around.*

MARIAN

*A bit arrogantly and spitefully:* No need.

*Robin stops and turns towards her.*

I've made my decision.

*Robin looks glumly at Marian a moment, then glances at Much, nods subtly to him, and leaves as Marian stares after him, bitter that he's putting his mission above her.*

† †

## Scene Fourteen

### **Nottingham Castle. Sheriff's quarters.**

*The Sheriff is sitting at the table, Marian is standing to the side. The doors open and Gisborne enters.*

SHERIFF

Ah, Gisborne. Marian wants to petition our visiting Mother Superior.

GISBORNE

What for?

*Marian looks at Gisborne.*

SHERIFF

To borrow a pound. What do you think? To become a nun.

GISBORNE

Oh. *Sneering at Marian.* Really? A nun?

MARIAN

*Tensely:* My father is displeased with me. In the abbey I could learn obedience.

GISBORNE

*Quietly:* But surely there are other ways.

SHERIFF

Go and knock on her ladyship's door. She's in the chapel. Tell the guards I sent you.

*Marian nods and leaves. Gisborne is in a state of disbelief.*

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### **Chapel.**

*The door opens and Marian steps in. The Abbess is kneeling at the altar, appearing to pray. Marian steps towards her.*

MARIAN

Mother?

*The Abbess turns her head towards Marian.*

Forgive this intrusion. I have a request to make of you.

ABBESS

Speak quickly, child.

MARIAN

It is a difficult matter—

ABBESS

*Interrupting:* Quickly or not at all.

MARIAN

Very well. I should like to be a novice in your order.

ABBESS

Come to my abbey in a month. I will consider you then.  
*Turns back to the altar.*

MARIAN

With respect, you are here today. Consider me now.

ABBESS

*Stands.* You are bold. Do you know who I am?

MARIAN

I— Forgive me, I am bold. That is why I do not belong here. It is stifling.

ABBESS

*Walking to the front bench and sitting down:* You think the abbey is a place to be bold?

MARIAN

*Joining her on the bench:* I think it is a place to breathe. I should like to be clear. I would stay for a year at most, and I can fund my keep.

ABBESS

Forgive me, something about you... You are an unlikely novice.

MARIAN

You are an unlikely abbess.

ABBESS

*Chuckles.* You are spirited. *Leans into Marian, her voice purposeful:* I could use someone like you.

MARIAN

I have no intention of being used.

*They stare at one another.*

† †

### Scene Fifteen

#### ***Nottingham Castle. The door to the sewer dump.***

*Will waits, hiding behind a barrel. The kitchen worker goes to the door, pulls it open and starts to dump his basket, but Little John pulls him through from the other side.*

#### ***Nottingham Town. The sewer dump.***

*Little John pulls the man into the chute and Much and Allan look down in it after him. Little John motions for Robin to go in the door and Robin pulls himself up.*

#### ***Nottingham Castle. The door to the sewer dump.***

ROBIN

*Whispers:* Will!

*Will comes forward, handing the halberd to Flaxton behind him. Will pulls Robin out of the opening, then pulls through the bow, quiver and scimitar. Flaxton watches. Will pulls Much out and Much grimaces, wiping his hands on his clothes as Robin buckles on his sword belt.*

MUCH

I hate this.

† †





## Scene Nineteen

### Nottingham Castle. Inside the vault.

*Will carves a piece of wood, explaining his plan as he does.*

WILL

We weren't allowed to fit the locks on these. They had to be the best. *Blows on the wood.* As good as the castle locks.

ALLAN

What does that mean?

*Will tries his wooden key in the padlock, from which the front has been removed to reveal the inner workings, on the chest. It gets caught near the top and he pulls it out again.*

WILL

It means they might well be made by the same locksmith.

*Will chips away another sliver from the key with his awl.*

MUCH

*Anxiously leaning over Will's shoulder:* Look, I don't suppose there's any point telling you to hurry up?

WILL

*Without looking up:* Nope.

MUCH

Right. *Looks anxiously at the door.*

*Will presses the awl against the edge to shave off a small piece, blows on the key, and tries it in the padlock again. It works. Will looks up at Robin, then holds up his key. Robin nods. Will stands and turns to the door. Robin grabs his bow, Little John his staff; Much draws his sword. All stand ready to charge. Will fits the key into the slot on the door, pulls it up and the lock clicks. He looks back at Robin, who nods. Will pushes open the door and steps aside as Allan charges and punches out the guard using his sword like a staff in the small space. They all run upstairs.*

### West exterior corridor. Rain.

*A door opens and Robin creeps out, holding his bow in one hand and his scimitar in the other, followed by Will with a stolen sword and the others. They sneak along the corridor towards the side steps, weapons at the ready, watching for guards. Then the Sheriff, crossing the courtyard on his way to "gloat," sees them and points to them.*

SHERIFF

Guards!

### Courtyard.

*Robin drops his bow, jumps down onto the side steps and slices*

*at a guard, who tumbles down the steps. Will and Much run to the corner of the corridor and take on two more, as Little John uses his staff to help him jump up and kick a third in the face before taking on a fourth, blocking several times with his staff before punching him. Meanwhile, the Sheriff picks up the sword of the fallen guard and charges up the side steps to engage Robin himself, sword point first. Robin forcefully knocks blades with the Sheriff and brings his scimitar round in a circle for another blow. The Sheriff falls into the wall of the steps, dodging the blade, then has to slide down a bit to avoid another blow, which hits the wall. Robin turns and tries again, and the Sheriff holds up his sword to block. Will jumps up on the smooth, slanted top of the wall beside the steps, slides down, deftly lands on his feet and engages a guard as Robin blocks the Sheriff's sword, grabbing his arm at the same time and kicking the Sheriff down the steps into two other guards at the bottom. Allan and Much each fight a guard upstairs as Will continues his battle. Robin engages the two on the steps as the Sheriff gets out of the way. Robin dispatches the two, then as the cackling Sheriff charges on him, he spins around behind him and catches the Sheriff by the neck, turning the cackles into grunts.*

ROBIN

Cluster ball!

*The gang immediately drop their opponents and gather around Robin, Little John with Robin's bow. When the gang are in position, Robin yells out to the guards.*

Stop! Stop! Stop!

*The guards gather around them but do not engage as the gang brandish their weapons at them.*

No-one has to die here today.

*Robin edges towards the portcullis, the gang moving with him.*

*to the Sheriff:* I think you know how this goes. How much did you pay him?

SHERIFF

He was surprisingly cheap. Did you really think he was a tax inspector?

ROBIN

Was it enough to sacrifice his boy's life?

SHERIFF

You can kill him if you like. Nobody will miss him, least of all me.

MUCH

You are revolting.

SHERIFF

Yes, I am godless, aren't I?

*Unbeknownst to Robin, Gisborne is standing in the main gate with his sword raised, accompanied by four of his men and the gate's sentry.*

GISBORNE

Let's finish this, Hood. Forget the Sheriff, forget the soldiers. Just you and me.

*Will has his sword pointed at Gisborne.*

ROBIN

Sorry, Gisborne. Trial by combat's not big and it's not clever.

GISBORNE

So you are a coward.

ROBIN

*Chuckles.* I am no coward! I just do not trust you. Or them. Now, step aside.

GISBORNE

Only a coward would steal from pilgrims.

ROBIN

*Shakes his head, honestly confused.* What pilgrims?

GISBORNE

Defenceless women! Women in holy orders! Who's showing their breeding now, eh?

ROBIN

Step aside.

*Gisborne doesn't move.*

Now!

*Gisborne motions to his men and they all step into the courtyard. Robin steps back into the gateway.*

*to gang:* Do you know about this?

ALLAN

Pilgrims? I haven't touched any pilgrims.

ROBIN

John?

LITTLE JOHN

No.

*Robin pulls the Sheriff outside the gate.*

GISBORNE

The Abbess of Rufford is still alive, no thanks to you.

ROBIN

Never heard of her. But he dies unless your drop the portcullis. *Looks up to be sure he's clear of the drop.* Now!

*Gisborne motions to the guards again and the portcullis is lowered. The Sheriff gasps for breath as Robin presses his scimitar to his throat.*

*to the Sheriff:* A tax man that isn't a tax man? Pilgrims no-one's ever heard of? I think we've both been had.

*Robin chuckles gleefully in delight as he lets the Sheriff go and the gang all run out through the town. The Sheriff sinks against the portcullis in relief, then stands, irate.*

SHERIFF

Get after them!

*The Sheriff stops and stares at the castle, Robin's words having sunk in. Thunder sounds. He grabs the bars, looks up at the chapel, and whimpers.*

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*The Sheriff runs up the steps into the castle, followed by two guards.*

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**Chapel.**

*The sentry opens the door and the Sheriff runs into the chapel to find the confessional curtains open and planks from broken strongboxes strewn on the floor. He picks up Cedric's discarded halberd and throws it against the wall.*

SHERIFF

No! *Steps over the debris and throws aside a curtain to check behind it. No! Sees the nun's habit and wimple on the altar, picks them up and throws them one at a time at the sentry.* Mother... Superior!

*He sees the broken window across the room and makes his way towards it. He looks down at the ground and notices the rope which trails down from the window to the cobblestones below. The Sheriff is utterly dismayed. He turns around and sits on the sill as Gisborne comes in. He sees the Sheriff's distressed face, then turns to see the broken chests on*







## Scene Twenty-Two

### *Sherwood Forest.*

*Cedric runs through the trees. Robin and Much follow off to the side and run to get ahead of him. They stop by a tree and watch him pass.*

*Cedric runs to meet a trap driven by Flaxton. The "Abbess," without her costume, sits beside him in a green dress. Robin and Much peer through the trees at them. Flaxton stops the trap.*

FLAXTON

Whoa! Whoa! Welcome back, lad. Whoa!

CEDRIC

Tell me we are in business.

ABBESS

*Sadly shakes her head.* No.

CEDRIC

*Disappointed:* Oh.

ABBESS

Not unless we want to be.

*Cedric smiles.*

We will never have to be in business again. *Smiles.*

FLAXTON

Come on, boy. Come and sit next to your retirement.

*Cedric steps forward, then stops as a striped arrow hits the trap in front of him.*

*Ducking:* Whoa!

*The Abbess screams and ducks. Two more arrows, one each from Allan and Robin, sink into the wood. Robin, with the gang behind him, strides quickly to the trap. Allan nocks another arrow.*

ROBIN

No retirements just yet.

ABBESS

Is this him?

FLAXTON

*Surprised:* You should be dead!

ROBIN

Many times over.

FLAXTON

How did you escape?

ROBIN

*With restrained anger:* Oh, a wriggle... *roughly pushes Cedric out of the way...* and a pop of the shoulders.

FLAXTON

*to Cedric:* I told you, always check the tail.

ABBESS

Listen, we've not taken from you. We were never after you.

ALLAN

*Bitterly:* No, we were just the bait!

CEDRIC

Get over it!

*Will backslaps Cedric.*

WILL

You get over it! You might as well have been tax collectors. You do exactly the same thing.

ABBESS

You can talk. You live on the wrong side of the law just like us.

ROBIN

*Leans in to her:* That's because the law has itself become criminal. England is rotting from the top down.

ABBESS

Then why stay? We were going to Holland to set ourselves up as nobles. Why not join us? We'd make a wonderful combination.

*Robin leans on the cart and raises his eyebrows briefly, listening.*

There are many more fools like the Sheriff of Nottingham in this world. It is our duty to cheat them.

FLAXTON

*Leaning in:* They're greedy. That's why they are so easy to trick.

ABBESS

Join us. *Shifts to put her face in his, leaning in for a kiss. Softly:* With our strategies and your remarkable talents...

*The Abbess gives Robin a long kiss as Will and Much look on curiously.*





## Scene Twenty-Four

### *A herder's pasture.*

*Much and Robin approach the herder.*

ROBIN

Good morning! I have a proposition for you.

*Much gets a purse out of his shoulder bag.*

The next time you have meat to take to Nottingham, you take it to the village of Locksley.

† † † † † † † † † † † † † † † †

### *A different herder's pasture.*

You take it to the village of Wadlow.

† † † † † † † † † † † † † † † †

### *Another herder's pasture.*

You take it to the village of Clun.

*Robin hands the herder the purse.*

† † † † † † † † † † † † † † † †

### *Yet another herder's pasture.*

*Robin and Much approach a fourth herder.*

MUCH

Now what are you trying to do? Feed the world?

ROBIN

Don't give me ideas. *to the herder:* Good morning! A proposition for you. The next time you have meat for the market, you take it to the village of Nettlestone.

*Much looks around and reaches into his bag.*

Now, I am paying you over the odds. I am paying you in advance for this year... *takes the purse from Much...* and the next. *Hands the purse to the herder.* Do you know who I am? I am Robin Hood. *Winks.* Don't let me down.

† † † † † † † † † † † † † † † †

**.END OF EPISODE SIX.**