

ROBIN HOOD

Series One, Episode Eleven

Dead Man Walking

written by Simon Ashford

directed by Graeme Harper

**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
Alice Little	Juliet Seal
Little Little John	Clem Tibber
Luke	Steven Elder
Sheriff's sergeant	Gary Bleasdale

Scene One

Locksley.

Gisborne's men put an old man in a paddy wagon.

GUARD

Get in there! Get in!

Other guards rough up more peasant man, pushing one's head into a post, throwing one over a table. Another is thrown down in front of Gisborne on his horse.

GISBORNE

You owe two shillings.

MAN

Mercy, my lord.

GISBORNE

You've had a week to find it, now pay up! If he has no money, take goods to the value.

MAN

Mercy! Mercy!

GISBORNE

If he has nothing of value, take him. This is the King's annual duty to finance his crusade against the heathen.

Little John appears in the brush outside the village and watches what's happening.

You can't pay, you go to prison. Sheriff's decree. No exceptions, no tolerance. Next cottage.

Gisborne turns his horse as the guards rough up the man and Robin joins Little John.

ROBIN

Gisborne's men. Now we know why Luke couldn't make the weapons drop.

Robin shakes his head, watching as Gisborne's men continue to kick at the man on the ground.

If the King knew what was being done in his name...

Meanwhile, Luke and Little Little John are at Luke's workbench and Alice approaches the fence between them, watching the activity in the village.

LITTLE JOHN

Quietly, with great concern: Alice.

ALICE

John, come here a moment.

Little Little John comes up to her.

Act normal. We don't know anything.

Gisborne arrives.

GISBORNE

Ah, the cooper. He owes three shillings.

LUKE

Puts down his tool. Take what you want. I have no money left to give you.

GISBORNE

Goods to the value.

The guards push Luke aside.

GUARD 1

Move! And you!

The guard pushes Little Little John. Little John watches helplessly. Little Little John looks around nervously and sees a guard getting to close to the hidden weapons.

ALICE

to Luke: We could hardly pay the tithe rent as it was, and now another tax.

LUKE

It's stupid to go on like this, Alice. I'm fond of you and the boy. As man and wife we could cover the taxes.

Little Little John grabs a guard.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

No! Get away from there! Leave us alone!

Another guard grabs Little Little John.

GUARD 2

Come here, you rat.

ALICE

John!

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

Leave us alone! Get off! No!

Gisborne dismounts and walks over. Luke tries to intervene.

LUKE
Stepping in front of Gisborne. Here, here, sir, our... *Gathers some off the workbench...* our tools. That must be worth a few coins. Take them.

A guard holds up two recurve bows.

GUARD 1
My lord, weapons.

GISBORNE
Well, well, well.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN
Stop it! Get away from...

GISBORNE
Saracen design.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN
Get off!

GISBORNE
Now... *advances on Luke with arms folded...* where does a Locksley cooper learn this type of work? There's only one Englishman I know that uses a bow like this. *Grabs Luke's chin.* Collaborate with outlaws and you will be punished like an outlaw. Take him away.

Gisborne pushes Luke towards his men.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN
No! Papa!

The guard pulls Little Little John out to Gisborne.

ALICE
No, John!

Gisborne grabs Little Little John by the hair. Little John is fuming, barely able to keep himself from running out to help. Robin can't believe his eyes, either. Luke is dragged to the paddy wagon.

LUKE
Sir, please! I beg you don't hurt the boy. My apprentice. He's innocent.

GISBORNE
The runt? Oh, we must make an example of him. Take the boy, too.

Little John starts to charge but Robin holds him back.

ALICE
Leave him alone! Take your hands off my son!

ROBIN
John! John! There are too many.

LUKE
He's innocent!

A peasant woman holds Alice back as Little Little John is taken to the wagon.

ALICE
No! Sarah... John!

LITTLE JOHN
He's my son!

ROBIN
And we will help him... but not this way.

ALICE
John!

Little John storms into the forest as Robin continues to watch. Robin notices he's gone and follows. Gisborne rides off quickly for the castle.

ALICE
Little John!

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN
Mother! Help us!

The wagon starts to roll away.

Mother!

Alice runs after the wagon.

Mother, help!

ALICE
Falling to her knees at the edge of the village: Little John!

OPENING CREDITS

Sherwood Forest. Near Locksley.

Little John storms through the trees. Robin catches him up and tries to step in front of him.

ROBIN
John, stop. We need the others. The coach is too well-guarded.

Scene Two

Nottingham Town. Main gate.

A guard stops a man leading two horses into town.

GUARD 1

Halt!

The guard quickly checks and sees that things appear to be in order.

You may pass.

The man leads his two horses inside standing between their heads, but there are four extra feet. Allan and Will are bent over between the two horses and behind the man. Once inside, they leave the horseman. A soldier leads a woman by the arm and pushes past Allan.

SOLDIER

Out of the way, scum!

ALLAN

Yeah, all right.

Allan and Will raise their hoods and draw their cloaks around them and head into town as a guard calls out to the townsfolk.

GUARD 2

Taxes! Taxes! Last day for the King's levy. Come on, now.

GUARD 3

Taxes!

GUARD 2

Taxes!

GUARD 3

We're here to collect taxes!

Guards are collecting taxes indiscriminately. They approach a table outside the Trip to Jerusalem Inn as Allan and Will warily look on, frowning.

You three, you paid your ale tax?

MAN 1

You what? Ale taxes?

GUARD 2

Take them away.

Two guards drag the man from the bench.

MAN 1

Hey! What you doing? I haven't done anything!

The guard goes over to another table where there is a backgammon-like game board set up.

GUARD 3

Gambling now?

MAN 2

You must be kidding.

GUARD 2

Bet... you haven't got a licence, eh? *Upsets the game board.*
You lose! Take him away.

The guards start to rough up the resisting men. Will charges, but Allan holds him back.

ALLAN

We can't help everyone. We got to find my mate's wife and we got deliveries to make.

The guards drag off the tavern men as Allan and Will continue.

Elsewhere in the town, a lady is begging, holding her young son by the hand.

WOMAN

to a passer-by: Spare some coins, sir?

ALLAN

Seeing the lady: Ah, there she is. Her husband died two nights ago. The Sheriff's men beat him up.

Allan steps up behind the woman and swiftly slides a purse into her hand as he passes.

It's a gift from Robin Hood.

As she is about to examine its contents, the three guards come round the corner and approach her.

GUARD 3

She looks like a vagrant to me, and her brat.

Allan stops and looks back at the woman as the guard grabs the purse.

Where'd you steal this from then, eh? Take her away.

WOMAN

Please, no. It's all we have!

Scene Four

Sherwood Forest. Outlaws' camp.

Robin is formulating a plan to rescue Little John.

ROBIN

We need to use our heads. This is not just about John.
Luke the cooper was trying to help us, and the boy.
We have a responsibility to them, too.

DJAQ

I did not know John had a family.

MUCH

Neither did he until recently.

WILL

As soon as the Sheriff realises he's one of us, he'll be
hanged.

ROBIN

But that's the thing. The Sheriff won't necessarily know.

WILL

What, these— *Pulls on his tag's string.*

ROBIN

Interrupting: Without these... *holds up Little John's tags...*
he's just another outlaw.

WILL

He has never been just another outlaw. *Pulls the tag out
from under his shirt to hold it up.* You think the Sheriff
cares if he wears one of these or not?

ALLAN

He's right. They'll hang him anyway.

ROBIN

Turns his head and sighs, realising they could be right. Which
is why we need a really good plan.

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Scene Five

Nottingham Castle. Dungeons.

*A hot poker is being pointed at Luke, who is
hanging from his bound hands. The Sheriff holds his cheek
against the cold stone of a pillar.*

SHERIFF

Most unfortunate. A craftsman like you wasting your
skills on outlaws. I've always admired artisans.

*Little Little John, crouched in the corner, peeks out from behind
his arms, terrified.*

Make me Saracen war bows like Robin Hood's, and all
this will stop. I might even allow you a little more
time to pay your taxes.

*Luke miserably shakes his head. The Sheriff mimics the head
shaking and tuts.*

Such talent... all going to waste. *Gestures to the jailer.* Con-
tinue. If he doesn't speak, well... start with the boy.

*Little Little John buries his head in his arm, petrified as Luke
screams.*

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Scene Seven

Nottingham Town.

Much is running through the streets, away from two guards.

MUCH

And you know where you can stick your pipe, too!

GUARD

Come here, you toe rag.

Much leads them through a narrow passage off the marketplace and they are tripped up by a string suddenly lifted up out of the dirt in front of their feet. They tumble to the ground and Robin and Allan bend down to knock them out.

ROBIN

to Much and Djaq: You know where to meet with the horses?

MUCH

Nods. Round the back of the Trip to Jerusalem Inn.

ROBIN

When we rescue them, we'll need to leave here fast, so don't be late.

ALLAN

How 'bout this then? *Stands up with the guard's helmet on his head.*

ROBIN

Your mother wouldn't recognise you. *Chuckles.* Come on. Let's get on with it. *Bends down to undress the guard.* Will, consider yourself under arrest.

Will puts up the hood on his cloak.

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Scene Eight

Nottingham Castle. The Great Hall.

Marian scolds Gisborne for supporting the Sheriff's festival. The Sheriff stands near the table behind them.

MARIAN

You cannot seriously countenance such cruelty.

GISBORNE

Softly admonishing: Marian...

MARIAN

It is not punishment, it is barbaric!

SHERIFF

Steps up to Marian with his goblet. Delicious, is it not, hm? There is an air of poetry about it, the poetry of pain. *Pokes Gisborne's shoulder and chuckles.*

Marian turns her head away from the Sheriff and stands with her head held high.

Oh, our peasant's advocate seems rather upset with me, Gisborne. Shh. Drip, drip, drip. I can hear her heart bleed from here.

Marian is seething inside, but holds her temper in check. The Sheriff grabs her chin and turns her head to face him.

Fear humbles even the most rebellious spirit, my dear. Robin Hood himself will come to fear me one day, in time. Don't [*taps Marian's nose with his finger*] doubt it.

The Sheriff goes over to the table which is loaded with sacks of coins. Gisborne follows, as does Marian, keeping a discreet distance behind.

GISBORNE

My lord, do not forget the wagon with the King's duty leaves for London tomorrow.

SHERIFF

That is your responsibility, Gisborne. Just make sure it's secure. Take the whole garrison if needs be. *Picks up a handful of coins and lets it trickle back down as he speaks.* I would hate to be in your shoes if all this fell into outlaws' hands. Especially after all the trouble we went to collecting it.

GISBORNE

Is the castle guard sufficient for you entertainments?

SHERIFF

No, take all you need. I presume you are going to accom-

ROBIN

In a peasant's accent: There's a prisoner for t' dungeons.

SERGEANT

Well, you're too late. It's full. Put him over there with that lot.

Robin and Allan look over at the trees where prisoners are chained round the tree. The sergeant bends down and looks up into Will's hooded face, glancing at Allan and Robin.

This one seems familiar.

ROBIN

He's a known troublemaker.

Allan pushes Will over to the tree.

SERGEANT

Chain him up with the others. *to Robin:* Yeah, they'll all get what's coming to them... tomorrow.

Will looks worriedly at Robin as two guards chain him up. Allan looks at Robin, who makes a frustrated "I don't know!" face.

WILL

Quietly to Allan: Now how do we get in?

Allan watches Robin, who is thinking quickly.

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North exterior corridor.

Marian heads for the door, lock pick in hand, and checks down the other corridor for guards. She opens the door and the sergeant silently comes up behind her.

SERGEANT

Boo! My lady.

Marian tries to hide her shock and stammers an excuse.

MARIAN

The prisoners. I heard there were families down there, children. Do they have enough food and water?

SERGEANT

This is not some soft inn for their pleasure, my lady.

MARIAN

That is no reason to ill treat them. *A bit excitedly:* Actually, I thought I might be able to see the wild man. I'm rather intrigued.

SERGEANT

Pretends to think a quick moment. No. Can't let you in. Sorry.

The sergeant goes through the door and closes it behind him. Marian taps the pick in her palm, thinking, then hears Gisborne coming.

GISBORNE

Walking towards Marian, talking to a guard: I want every entrance covered.

Marian quickly slides the pick into the candle stand by the door.

Taps Marian's arm. Marian?

MARIAN

Quickly turns around. Stammering: Guy. I was just looking for my portmanteau. I-I don't know whether they... took it from the horse already or... where—

GISBORNE

Interrupting: I will have it brought to your room.

Marian forces a smile.

I'm glad you decided to stay. I didn't like to think of you all alone at Knighton Hall with your father away.

MARIAN

Smiles. May I pass?

Gisborne steps aside. Marian leaves towards the main doors to go back to her chamber. Gisborne leans over the side of the corridor and sees Allan and Robin below, Robin leaning against a low branch and Allan standing beside him.

GISBORNE

Oi! You! Got a job for you.

Allan steps around the tree to face Gisborne.

Not you... shirker. *Points at Robin.* Have the Lady Marian's portmanteau taken from her horse in the stables and follow me with it to her chamber.

ROBIN

Lazily: Yes, my lord.

GISBORNE

Quickly!

Robin walks off towards the stables as Allan resumes his place.

Oi.

Scene Twelve

Nottingham Castle. Marian's chamber.

Gisborne and Robin, disguised as a guard and carrying Marian's luggage, make their way to Marian's chamber. Gisborne knocks on the door. Marian is tying a small scroll and doesn't look up.

MARIAN

Come in!

Gisborne and Robin enter.

GISBORNE

Marian, your things. *to Robin:* Over there. *Points to Marian's table.*

Robin carries in Marian's portmanteau past the bed, avoiding Gisborne's eye as he enters. He loudly drops the bags at Marian's feet.

Careful, you clumsy oaf!

Marian looks up at the noise and gasps as she realises who it is. Robin lowers his head, with a "be careful and downplay it" look.

Marian?

Robin mouths a shh!

MARIAN

Leans back to look around Robin at Guy, but cannot quite suppress her delight. I am quite well. *to Robin:* Could you put them over there, by the bed?

Robin winks and complies. Marian rolls her eyes at his impudence and tries to hide her smile from Gisborne. Robin dumps her bags next to Gisborne and starts to pass him towards the door.

GISBORNE

Wait.

Marian looks up, hoping Robin has not been discovered. Robin stands haughtily behind Gisborne's shoulder where she can see him.

to Marian: Perhaps there is something else I can do for you?

MARIAN

Shaking her head: Nothing. Thank you.

Gisborne, barely looking at Robin, jerks his head towards the door, meaning for Robin to leave. Robin bows to Marian,

who must hide another smile, then turns and leaves just as Gisborne is about to do the same, but Gisborne turns back.

GISBORNE

Marian, erm, for some time now—

MARIAN

Interrupting: I thought I would rest before dinner.

GISBORNE

Hear me out, please.

Robin, now minus his helmet, peeks out from behind the jamb. Marian sees him and smiles. Gisborne notices her seemingly strange behaviour.

Is there something the matter?

MARIAN

No, I am a little out of sorts, that is all.

Robin ducks behind the jamb as Gisborne turns to the door, then decides to try again.

GISBORNE

Since we came to our understanding, you have been constantly in my thoughts. *Approaching her:* Without you, I no longer feel... quite whole.

Robin peeks out again, frowning with a jealous look.

MARIAN

Please, Sir Guy, I would rather not talk about this now.

GISBORNE

Don't send me away.

He reaches out a hand to Marian, who reluctantly takes it and stands to face him.

We should be spending more time together, so that we can understand each other better. I want to know you.

MARIAN

I am sorry. I cannot.

GISBORNE

Marian.

Gisborne reaches around Marian's waist in an effort to pull her into an embrace.

Be with me.

Scene Eighteen

Nottingham Castle. Courtyard.

Will is still sitting under the tree with the other prisoners. Allan is pacing around them.

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The dungeon door.

Robin works the lock pick free from the candle stand.

ROBIN

Looking up: Thank you, Marian. *Kisses the pick.*

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Courtyard.

Allan circles the tree as Robin comes down the side steps to Will, who stands. Neither looks at the other.

WILL

Facetiously whispers: So, you're going to leave me here locked up all night?

ROBIN

Looks at Will. Playfully but honestly: Yes.

WILL

You're meant to say, "No, we're here to free you." Stuff like that.

ROBIN

Don't worry. There's a good reason for it. *Hands the pick to Will.* Now, take this lock pick. A friend of mine told me where to find it. Tomorrow morning, during this Festival of Pain

Will slides the pick up his sleeve.

you will help John and these other prisoners escape. Do you think these men are with us?

WILL

They've got nothing else to lose.

Both are silent as they watch a squad come down the side steps.

ROBIN

I'll get word to Much and Djaq. I'll come back tonight.

GUARD

Right, scum.

Allan shrugs at Will and pushes him back down.

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Scene Nineteen

Nottingham Castle. Dungeons.

Little Little John and Alice are sitting by Luke.

ALICE

to Little Little John: You are not to speak to him again.

LUKE

Who is he, Alice?

Little John edges closer.

ALICE

No-one. A dead man.

Little John is devastated.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

But he's here now, with us.

ALICE

Bitterly: First and last time.

LITTLE JOHN

Alice, please...

ALICE

Do not speak to me. You gave up that right long ago.

LUKE

This man... is he who I think he is?

ALICE

The burns have given you a fever. *Feels Luke's forehead.*

Little Little John goes over to Little John.

John, stay away from there.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

I'm sorry. I can't be your friend any more.

LITTLE JOHN

I know.

Little Little John reaches out to his father and Alice comes over and slaps the back of his hand.

ALICE

I said stay away from him!

LUKE

Alice, it's not the boy's fault.

ALICE

to Little Little John: He is not your friend. He's not anybody, you understand? to Luke: Aren't we in enough trouble?

LUKE

And he's in the same situation. We all need each other now.

Little Little John slaps at Alice, who is staring at her husband.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

Frustratedly: Mother...

LUKE

Alice... Alice, perhaps the boy should know.

Alice turns to stare at her husband again, who lifts his brows in encouragement. She looks down at her son and rubs his cheek.

ALICE

John... this man...

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

What is it?

Alice starts to cry.

LITTLE JOHN

John... I am your father.

Little Little John's eyes widen.

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Scene Twenty

Nottingham Town. Behind the Trip to Jerusalem Inn.

Much paces impatiently, waiting for Robin.

DJAQ

Stop worrying.

MUCH

I'm not worried. *Glances at the street, then walks to her side.*
I'm not worried at all. I'm just...

Robin, in a soldier's uniform, enters unseen by them as Djaq slaps Much's shoulder.

DJAQ

All will be fine.

ROBIN

In a disguised voice: Oi!

Much and Djaq freeze.

What do you think you're doing?

MUCH

Er, nothing. *Slaps his horse gently.* Just, er... my horse. It's lame and, er...

Djaq puts her hand on the hilt of her sword.

I just wanted to rest him here.

Much steps back from the horse and he and Djaq draw their swords and turn around, ready to attack. Robin steps back.

ROBIN

Normally: All right, all right! Takes off his helmet. It's me!

MUCH

Exasperatedly: Don't do that! Where have you been?!

DJAQ

Where is Little John?

ROBIN

There's been a change of plan. *Folds his arms round his helmet.*

MUCH

Change of plan?

ROBIN

I found the distraction we needed.

MUCH
We're still rescuing Little John?

ROBIN
Of course we are! *Pauses. Unconfidently, getting weaker as the list grows:* And Luke the bowmaker... and the boy and... Alice Little... and all the other prisoners. Oh... and the tax money?

MUCH
Not a big change, then...

Robin shrugs.

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Scene Twenty-One *Nottingham Castle. Dungeons.*

ALICE
to Little John: You let me believe you were dead.

LITTLE JOHN
I was outlawed. If I'd stayed—

ALICE
Interrupting: You might have seen your son born, and provided for your family. Where were you those winters your baby son was sick with hunger? Or the first summer he had to work alongside me in the field so we could earn enough to buy a loaf of bread? Where were you [*points to her son's leg*] when the Sheriff's guard did that to his leg?

Little John stares, not knowing what else to say.

to Little Little John: When you were younger, before they told me your father was dead, I used to tell you he would come home to us one day, because I wanted to believe it myself.

Little John backs away.

And then every time you heard a horse pass through the village, you'd run out to see who it was, just in case. The Sheriff's mounted guard... *pulls Little Little John's head into her...* would not stop for a peasant boy standing in the road.

LITTLE JOHN
Steps forward. Listen, you would have been outlawed, too. It was better just to... to die.

ALICE
We could have started again somewhere else. A new name. I would have followed you anywhere, John.

A tear falls from Little John's eye.

Not that it matters. We're all outlaws here, and tomorrow we shall suffer for it.

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Scene Twenty-Two

*Nottingham Castle. North exterior corridor
(redressed). Night.*

Robin and Allan sneak through the corridor.

ALLAN

Why do we want the sacks of grain?

ROBIN

So Gisborne can take them to London.

They walk down the corridor and Robin turns left.

ALLAN

No, Robin. Stores are down near the kitchens, this way.

ROBIN

Shakes head. First things first. We secure the revenue money. Come on.

† † † † † † † † † † † † † † † †

Scene Twenty-Three

Nottingham Castle. Dungeons.

Alice is still giving Little John a piece of her mind.

ALICE

...while you... rob and murder, and do what you do.

LUKE

Alice, leave him.

LITTLE JOHN

I have never killed, except to defend myself. I robbed, to survive, but now I-I rob to help others.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

Impressed, stepping towards Little John: What? Like Robin Hood?

LITTLE JOHN

Yes. I am one of Robin Hood's men.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

But you don't wear a tag. Luke told me that all of Robin's men wear tags.

LITTLE JOHN

Sighs. I-I lost them.

ALICE

And you expect us to believe you.

LITTLE JOHN

Earnestly: It's the truth, Alice.

Alice pushes Little Little John to Luke.

ALICE

One lie was enough, John. Perhaps it's better for us all if you just stay dead. In fact, I wish you were dead. Then we won't hear your lies.

Little John dejectedly rests his head against the bars.

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Scene Twenty-Four

Nottingham Castle. Storeroom.

Two soldiers are in the room with a table heaped with money sacks. Robin and Allan enter, talking.

ROBIN

The back parry originates in Fiorentina. You've got to master that one first, Niall. *to guards:* We've come to relieve you lot.

GUARD

You're early.

ALLAN

Hey, cheer up, lads. Get the night off.

GUARD

What are you on about?

As one guard reaches for his sword, Robin and Allan punch them out and laugh at their antics. Allan walks over to the table.

ALLAN

Oh-ho! Look what I found. *Picks up two recurve bows next to the money sacks.*

ROBIN

Come on. *Picks up a sack of money.* Let's get to work.

He and Allan fill their arms with sacks.

Grab these.

ALLAN

Lovely money.

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Scene Twenty-Five

Nottingham Castle. The Great Hall. The next morning.

The Sheriff sits on a chair on a dais under the balcony, facing a line of peasants in front of the fireplace. In front of them stands a covered table. The nobles sit in rows on the other side of the hall, facing the peasants. To the Sheriff's right is an empty chair and Marian sits on his left. At the far end of the room is a covered contraption and in front of it, a bed of hot coals. The Sheriff addresses them.

SHERIFF

Good morning, everybody, and welcome to my Festival of Pain. I want to talk to you about community taxes. Taxes are a fact.

Will, his hands shackled behind him, fishes the pick out from his sleeve and finds the keyhole with his finger.

The cost of living in a free country. Now, if you do not pay your taxes then you sacrifice that freedom and must be punished accordingly.

Little John is still in the pillory. Little Little John and Alice sit near him, and Luke on the other side of Alice. The Sheriff walks past the prisoners, whose heads are bowed in submission, talking and carrying a clove-riddled orange.

I am sick and tired of your sob stories. Can't pay, too old, too sick.

Marian watches, scowling slightly. The Sheriff pulls Little Little John up by his hair as his father winces, unable to do anything.

Is this going to help our beloved King in Acre, hm?

The Sheriff puts him down and grabs the back of Little John's hair, chuckling evilly.

A clue.

The Sheriff shakes Little John's head by his hair as Little John stares out defiantly.

Noooo. Those who understand this...

The Sheriff rubs his palm on Luke's shirt, smelling the orange as Luke winces.

... they will survive. *Steps towards the contraption.* For those who defy me, well... *Walks forward, pulling a rope which lifts the cover off the contraption. Points back at it with his finger...* the chair of delight.

Scene Twenty-Seven
Nottingham Castle. The Great Hall.

SHERIFF

These prisoners do not pay their way. *Points at Luke, Alice and her son.* They help those that seek to undermine my authority. *Putting his head in an iron spiked ring suspended from the ceiling:* Therefore, they must all be punished. *Makes a strained face as he squeezes the ring in, then lets it go and giggles.* Now...

The Sheriff clicks his fingers and a guard hurries over.

... do you think that they're the only ones to suffer? Do you?

He and the guard remove the cover from the table to reveal it loaded with torture instruments. The nobles and prisoners gasp again.

No, no, no. No, because they do not pay their dues, we,

The Sheriff and the guard fold the cloth lengthwise.

the good citizens, well, we have to pay more, hm?

The guard walks forwards to fold the cloth again and takes it from the Sheriff.

And how on earth are we supposed to support our King's glorious crusade? *to guard taking the cover:* Thank you. *Going back to his chair:* If they were to pay their taxes, then we in the community would pay less. So you see, what I'm actually trying to do... is lower taxes, hm?

The Sheriff sits. Will glances at the Sheriff out of the corner of his eye and passes the pick to the man beside him.

Ha! Hm. Well, I'm feeling strangely moral. *Chuckles.*

MARIAN

I'm feeling quite unwell. *Starts to stand.* I think I might—

SHERIFF

Interrupting and handing her the orange, but not looking at her: Yes, probably the peasants, the stench. Here. Sniff this if it gets too much.

Marian reluctantly sits and sniffs at the orange.

So, let's bring the prisoners out and start with a little burning, hm?

Marian looks up and catches Alice's gaze as two guards take Luke.

Now, you people seem to think that Robin Hood and his men, they're worthy of your support and your encouragement. Well, we'll see.

The guards leave Luke bending over the hot coals and return for Little Little John.

SERGEANT

Luke, the cooper of Locksley.

SHERIFF

Outlaw collaborator.

One guard picks up Little Little John as the other stands behind Alice.

ALICE

No!

The other guard grabs Alice and she puts her hand on Little John's.

I do forgive you.

Alice is dragged to the hot coals and thrown down beside her son at the edge of the coals.

SERGEANT

Alice of Locksley and her son, John.

Marian pleadingly looks at the Sheriff.

SHERIFF

Outlaw sympathisers.

LUKE

Please, they had nothing to do with this. It is my doing.

A guard kicks Luke and it is all he can do to keep from falling onto the coals.

SHERIFF

Oh, gallantry. You see, Marian, it's not dead. Well, not yet. *Chuckles.*

Marian stares miserably at the Sheriff, who stands and walks to Luke as the nobles exchange glances, the peasants undo their locks and Little John cries.

Such a gallant intervention, hm? I wonder...

The Sheriff has one hand each on Luke and Little Little John, pushing them towards the coals. He looks up at Marian.

I wonder how I could reward that, hm?

Marian frowns bleakly. The Sheriff picks up Little Little John by the hair.

Oh, I wonder. Shall we have him crawl in the coals first, hm?

Little John tries desperately to get loose.

So gallant in the heat of the moment. Oh, so gallant.

Luke is struggling to get free and the Sheriff lets Little Little John go. Alice grabs her son.

Shall the bowmaker go first or the apprentice? *Tuts.* Decisions, decisions.

The Sheriff walks past Little John, who is still straining at the pillory.

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Scene Twenty-Eight

Nottingham Town. Outside the castle gate.

Two outriders lead the coach out the gate and through the town, followed by two footsoldiers and Gisborne on his horse.

Main gate.

Much peeks over Djaq's hunched back behind one side of the open gate.

DRIVER

Get along there!

As soon as the coach and Gisborne pass through, Much speaks a quiet word to Djaq. She runs to the other door, then they shut the gate and bar it.

GISBORNE

Why are they closing the gates? Stop!

As Much and Djaq run away, Gisborne dismounts, opens the coach door and checks inside. One untied bag is full of coins.

to a soldier: Give me your knife.

Gisborne cuts open another sack and grain spills out. He stabs another sack in frustration.

Stabbing a sack on each syllable: Ro-bin Hood! We've been tricked! Open the gates!

Gisborne rams the gates with his shoulder, but of course they don't budge.

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Scene Twenty-Nine

Nottingham Castle. The Great Hall.

Little Little John and Alice are being held over the coals. Alice screams.

SHERIFF

See, bowmaker of Locksley, you cross me and your family suffer.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

No! No!

SHERIFF

So, who's first?

Little Little John struggles.

Wait, the boy! Oh, brave.

Little Little John and Alice are pushed farther forward.

Burn him! Burn him!

Luke struggles.

LITTLE JOHN

Stands and roars: No!!!

Little John strains at his pillory.

SHERIFF

Stop him.

SERGEANT

Take him!

GUARD

He'll never get out of that.

SERGEANT

Take him down!

The pillory splits behind Little John's head. He breaks free and faces the Sheriff.

Take him!

LITTLE JOHN

Roars: You are a dead man! Charges at the Sheriff.

SHERIFF

Stop him, you fools!

Two guards grab Little John as Robin enters the hall from the upper doorway, reaching into a sack.

ROBIN

Charity starts at home, Vaizey!

Robin throws out a handful of coins as Allan appears beside him with another sack.

SHERIFF

Not in my home! Kill him!

Marian smiles as the coins rain down in front of her. Robin and Allan laugh as they throw more coins.

SERGEANT

Stop it! Follow your orders!

Marian raises an arm to deflect them from her head. The guards abandon their duty and eagerly scramble to collect the coins as the peasants creep past them.

I am in command!

Will steps forward and punches the sergeant squarely in the jaw as Little John head-butts one guard, then throws an elbow back into the head of the another. Will slides across the floor to unlock Alice's cuffs. The Sheriff kicks at the guards scrambling to collect the coins.

SHERIFF

Get off my money! That's my money!

Little John grabs the Sheriff and drags him back to the coals as Robin and Allan keep throwing coins.

ALLAN

There you go!

Marian stands, looks up and smiles at Robin as Little John is pulled off the Sheriff by his guards.

ROBIN

John!

Robin unties a rope, which is the tail of the one from which the spiked iron ring is suspended, from the railing. He climbs up on the balustrade. John! Duck!

Little John falls to the ground and Robin swings down on the rope and takes out the two guards.

LITTLE JOHN

Stands. Alice, go.

The Sheriff kicks Little John in the buttocks. Little John falls down and the Sheriff grabs him round the neck.

Alice walks to the the trap. Little John slowly steps forwards as Luke leads the horse on with Alice walking beside him and Little Little John sitting on a crate facing out the back. Robin comes up behind Little John.

ROBIN

I, er... I thought you might like this back. *Holds up a tag.*

LITTLE JOHN

Takes the tag. There's only one. Where's the other?

Robin smiles, glancing at the cart, and joins the rest of the gang waiting. Little Little John holds up the second tag and proudly calls back to Little John.

LITTLE LITTLE JOHN

I shall never forget! My father is a comrade of Robin Hood!

Little John smiles sadly, nodding approval.

Sighs. Quietly: Goodbye, my son.

The trap turns the corner out of sight. Little John turns back to the gang, wiping his nose with his sleeve. He sees them watching.

Him... I am proud to know. You... I'm stuck with. *Puts the tag over his head.*

WILL

Oi, John.

Will tosses Little John a short, thick, burnt stick. Little John catches it with both hands.

I made you a new staff.

The others laugh.

LITTLE JOHN

Sarcastically: Thanks.

Little John tosses the stick over his head behind him and starts down the trail to camp. The gang catch him up and clap him on the back. Little John turns to Robin, following last. Robin turns to look down the road and smiles.

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.END OF EPISODE ELEVEN.