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lasses, landlords, beggars, peddlers, and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here you will find a hundred dull, sober, jogging places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here you will find a hundred dull, sober, jogging places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here and there, singing as they go. Here and there, singing places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here you will find a hundred dull, sober, jogging places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here you will find a hundred dull, sober, jogging places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here you will find a hundred dull, sober, jogging places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here you will find a hundred dull, sober, jogging places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here you will find a hundred dull, sober, jogging places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here you will find a hundred dull, sober, jogging places, all tricked out with flowers and what not, till no one would know there and there, singing as they go. Here and there, singing and there and there, singing and there and there, so the flowers and there and there and there and there are the flowers and there and there are the flowers and the flowers are the flowers and the flowers are the flow
      ght hand man, the famous Little John. How Robin Hood Came to Be an Outlaw IN MERRY ENGLAND in the time of old, when good King Henry the Second ruled that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor were there ever lived that could speed a gray goose shaft with such skill and cunning as his, nor we can be a considered as a constant of the could be a constant of the constant of the constant of the could be a constant of the constan
   with him through the greenwood shades. Right merrily they dwelled within the depths of Sherwood Forest, suffering upon the King's venison, washed down with draughts of ale of October brewing. Not only Robin himself but all the band were outlaws and dwelled apart from other men, yet they were beloved by the country people round about, for no one ever one to the law. When Robin for help in time of need and went away again with an empty fist. And now I will tell how it came about that Robin Hood fell afoul of the law. When Robin, "will I go too, for fain would I draw a string for the bright eyes of a butt of ale to whosoever should shoot the best shaft in Nottingham proclaimed a shooting match and offered a prize of a butt of ale to whosoever should shoot the best shaft in Nottingham in the law. When Robin, "will I go too, for fain would I draw a string for the bright eyes of a butt of good October brewing." So up he got and took his good stout yew bow and a score or more of broad clothyard arrows, and started off from Locksley Town through Sherwood Forest to Nottingham is the law. It was at the dawn of day in the law. When hedgerows are green and flowers bedeck the meadows; daisies pied and yellow cuckoo buds and fair primroses all along the briefy hedges; when apple buds blossom and sweet birds sin
 the lark at dawn of day, the throstle cock and cuckoo; when lads and lasses look upon each other with sweet thoughts; when busy housewives spread their linen to bleach upon the bright green grass. Sweet was teyes, for at such times a youth's thoughts are wont to turn pleasantly upon the lass that he loves the best. As thus he walked along with a brisk step and a merry whistle, he came suddenly upon some forest
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    he walked along its paths, and bright the green and rustling leaves, amid which the little birds sang with might and main: and blithely Robin whistled as he trudged along, thinking of Maid Marian and her l
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ers seated beneath a great oak tree. Fifteen there were in all, making themselves merry with feasting and drinking as they sat around a huge pasty, to which each man helped himself, thrusting his hands into he sward beneath that fair, spreading tree. Then one of them, with his mouth full, called out to Robin, "Hulloa, where goest thou, little lad, with thy one-penny bow and thy farthing shafts?" Then Robin grew are has been proclaimed by our good Sheriff of Nottinghamshire; there I will shoot with other stout yeomen, for a prize has been offered of a fine butt of ale." Then one who held a horn of ale in his hand said, "How has been offered of a fine butt of ale." Then one who held a horn of ale in his hand said, "How has been offered of a fine butt of ale."
 e pie, and washing down that which they ate with great horns of ale which they drew all foaming from a barrel that stood nigh. Each man was clad in Lincoln green, and a fine show they made, seated upon t
ry, for no stripling likes to be taunted with his green years. "Now," quoth he, "my bow and eke mine arrows are as good as shine; and moreover, I go to the shooting match at Nottingham Town, which sam
    ten to the lad! Why, boy, thy mother's milk is yet scarce dry upon thy lips, and yet thou pratest of standing up with good stout men at Nottingham butts, thou who art scarce able to draw one string of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 a two-stone bow." "I'll hold the best of you twenty marks," quoth bold Robin, "that I hit the clout at threescore rods, by the good help of Our Lady fair." At this all laughed aloud, and one said, "Well boasted, tho
   air infant, well boasted! And well thou knowest that no target is nigh to make good thy wager." And another cried, "He will be taking ale with his milk next." At this Robin grew right m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ad. "Hark ye," said he, "yonder, at the glade's end, I see a herd of deer, even more than threescore rods distant. I'll hold you twenty marks that, by leave of Our Lady, I cause the best hart among them to die."
   done!" cried he who had spoken first. "And here are twenty marks. I wager that thou causest no beast to die, with or without the aid of Our Lady." Then Robin took his good yew bow
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 in his hand, and placing the tip at his instep, he strung it right deftly; then he nocked a broad clothyard arrow and, raising the bow, drew the gray goose feather to his ear; the next moment the bowstring ran
  the arrow sped down the glade as a sparrowhawk skims in a northern wind. High leaped the noblest hart of all the herd, only to fall dead, reddening the green path with his heart's b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 lood. "Ha!" cried Robin, "how likest thou that shot, good fellow? I wot the wager were mine, an it were three hundred pounds." Then all the foresters were filled with rage, and he who had spoken the first and h
    est the wager was more angry than all. "Nay," cried he, "the wager is none of thine, and get thee gone, straightway, or, by all the saints of heaven, I'll baste thy sides until thou wil
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 t ne'er be able to walk again." "Knowest thou not," said another, "that thou hast killed the King's deer, and, by the laws of our gracious lord and sovereign King Harry, thine ears should be shaven close to thy
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 th a grim face; then, turning on his heel, strode away from them down the forest glade. But his heart was bitterly angry, for his blood was hot and youthful and prone to boil. Now, well would it have been for he draughts of ale that he had been quaffing. So, of a sudden, without any warning, he sprang to his feet, and seized upon his bow and fitted it to a shaft. "Ay," cried he, "and I'll hurry thee anon." And he sent see. As it was, the arrow whistled within three inches of his head. Then he turned around and quickly drew his own bow, and sent an arrow back in return. "Ye said I was no archer," cried he aloud, "but say seer, the gray goose shaft wet with his; heart's blood. Then, before the others could gather their wits about them, Robin Hood was gone into the depths of the greenwood. Some started after him, but not witle
         'Catch him!" cried a third. "Nay," said a fourth, "let him e'en go because of his tender years." Never a word said Robin Hood, but he looked at the for
   who had first spoken had he left Robin Hood alone; but his anger was hot, both because the youth had gotten the better of him and because of the deep
                        after Robin. It was well for Robin Hood that that same forester's head was spinning with ale, or else he would never have taken another st
 ow again!" The shaft flew straight; the archer fell forward with a cry, and lay on his face upon the ground, his arrows rattling about him from out of his qui
      h heart, for each feared to suffer the death of his fellow; so presently they all came and lifted the dead man up and bore him away to Nottingham Town. M
, "thou hast found me an archer that will make thy wife to wring! I would that thou hadst ne'er said one word to me, or that I had never passed thy way, or e'
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         n Hood ran through the greenwood. Gone was all the joy and brightness from everything, for his heart was sick within him, and it was borne in upon his soul that he had slain a man. "Alas!"
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               en that my right forefinger had been stricken off ere that this had happened! In haste I smote, but grieve I sore at leisure!" And then, even in his trouble, he remembered the old saw that "What is done is done e lads and lasses of sweet Locksley Town; for he was outlawed, not only because he had killed a man, but also because he had poached upon the King's deer, and two hundred pounds were set upon his head.
 nd the egg cracked cannot be cured." And so he came to dwell in the greenwood that was to be his home for many a year to come, never again to see the happy days with th
    reward for whoever would bring him to the court of the King. Now the Sheriff of Nottingham swore that he himself would bring this knave Robin Hood to justice,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          or two reasons: first, because he wanted the two hundred pounds, and next, because the forester that Robin Hood had killed was of kin to him. But Robin Hood lay hidden in Sherwood Forest for one year, and in the
      e there gathered around him many others like himself, cast out from other folk for this cause and for that. Some had shot deer in hungry wintertime, when they c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      Id get no other food, and had been seen in the act by the foresters, but had escaped, thus saving their ears; some had been turned out of their inheritance, that their farms might be added to the King's lands in Sherwo
  I Forest; some had been despoiled by a great baron or a rich abbot or a powerful esquire--all, for one cause or another, had come to Sherwood to escape wrong and oppres
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              , in all that year, fivescore or more good stout yeomen gathered about Robin Hood, and chose him to be their leader and chief. Then they vowed that even as they themselves had been despoiled they would des
     eir oppressors, whether baron, abbot, knight, or squire, and that from each they would take that which had been wrung from the poor by unjust taxes, or land rents, or in wrong
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ful fines. But to the poor folk they would give a helping hand in need and trouble, and would return to them that which had been unjustly taken from them. Besides this, they swore never to harm a child nor to wrong a wo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              they came to praise Robin and his merry men, and to tell many tales of him and of his doings in Sherwood Forest, for they felt him to be one of themselves. Up rose Robin Hood one merry morn when all the birds were sin
     e she maid, wife, or widow; so that, after a while, when the people began to find that no harm was meant to them, but that money or food came in time of want to many a poor fam
         ely among the leaves, and up rose all his merry men, each fellow washing his head and hands in the cold brown brook that leaped laughing from stone to stone. Then said Robiń,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         or fourteen days have we seen no sport, so now I will go abroad to seek adventures for hwith. But tarry ye, my merry men all, here in the greenwood; only see that ye mind well my call. Three blasts upon the bugle horn I will b
v in my hour of need; then come quickly, for I shall want your aid." So saying, he strode away through the leafy forest glades until he had come to the verge of Sherwood. There he wandered pad, to whom he doffed his cap, and who bowed sedately in return to the fair youth; now he saw a fat monk on a pannier-laden ass; now a gallant knight, with spear and shield and armor that
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        for a long time, through highway and byway, through dingly dell and forest skirts. Now he met a fair buxom lass in a shady lane, and each gave the other a merry word and passed their way; now he saw a fair lady upon an aml
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  flashed brightly in the sunlight; now a page clad in crimson; and now a stout burgher from good Nottingham Town, pacing along with serious footsteps; all these sights he saw, but adventure found he none. At last he took a road her side. Thereupon Robin quickened his pace, as did the stranger likewise, each thinking to cross first. "Now stand thou back," quoth Robin, "and let the better man cross first." "Nay," answered the stranger, "then stand back shin
 y the forest skirts, a bypath that dipped toward a broad, pebbly stream spanned by a narrow bridge made of a log of wood. As he drew nigh this bridge he saw a tall stranger coming from the ot
   wn self, for the better man, I wet, am I." "That will we presently see," quoth Robin, "and meanwhile stand thou where thou art, or else, by the bright brow of Saint AElfrida, I will show thee right g
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ood Nottingham play with a clothyard shaft betwixt thy ribs." "Now," quoth the stranger, "I will tan thy hide till it be as many colors as a beggar's cloak, if thou darest so much as touch a string of that same bow that thou holdest in the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         e d the stranger, "for thou standest there with a good yew bow to shoot at my heart, while I have nought in my hand but a plain blackthorn staff wherewith to meet thee." "Now," quoth Robin, "by the faith of my heart, never have I had a ming, and joyously, too," quoth the stranger; whereupon he leaned sturdily upon his staff to await Robin. Then Robin Hood stepped quickly to the coverside and cut a good staff of ground oak, straight, without new, and six feet in length,
              Thou pratest like an ass," said Robin, "for I could send this shaft clean through thy proud heart before a curtal friar could say grace over a roast goose at Michaelmastide." "And thou pratest like a cow
  oward's name in all my life before. I will lay by my trusty bow and eke my arrows, and if thou darest abide my coming, I will go and cut a cudgel to test thy manhood withal." "Ay, marry, that I came back trimming away the tender stems from it, while the stranger waited for him, leaning upon his staff, and whistling as he gazed round about. Robin observed him furtively as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            will I abide thy co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          med his staff, measuring him from top to toe from out the corner of his eye, and thought that he had never seen a lustier or a stouter man. Tall was Robin, but taller was the stranger by a head and a neck, for he was seven feet in height.
 ad was Robin across the shoulders, but broader was the stranger by twice the breadth of a palm, while he measured at least an ell around the waist. "Nevertheless," said Robin to him 🛭 self, '
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     will baste thy hide right merrily, my good fellow"; then, aloud, "Lo, here is my good staff, lusty and tough. Now wait my coming, an thou darest, and meet me an thou fearest not. Then we will fight until one or the other of us tumble
   o the stream by dint of blows." "Marry, that meeteth my whole heart!" cried the stranger, twirling his staff above his head, betwixt his fingers and thumb, until it whistled again. Never d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             id the Knights of Arthur's Round Tabl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           e meet in a stouter fight than did these two. In a moment Robin stepped quickly upon the bridge where the stranger stood; first he made a feint, and then delivered a blow at the stranger's head that, had it met its mark, would
       ımbled him speedily into the water. But the stranger turned the blow right deftly and in return gave one as stout, which Robin also turned as the stranger had done. So they stood, each in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           g a finger's-breadth back, for one good hour, and many blows were given and received by each in that time, till here and there were sore bones and bumps, yet neither thought of cryling "Enough," nor seemed likely to fall from
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               his place
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ket smoke like a damp straw thatch in the sun. So shrewd was the stroke that the stranger came within a hair's-breadth of falling off the bridge, but he regained himself right quickly and, by a dexterous blow, gave Robin a crack airly that he fell heels over head into the water, as the queen pin falls in a game of bowls. "And where art thou now, my good lad?" shouted the stranger, roaring with laughter. "Oh, in the flood and floating adown with the tide
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            s that made his jac
    off the bridge. Now and then they stopped to rest, and each thought that he never had seen in all his life before such a hand at quarterstaff. At last Robin gave the stranger a blow upon th 👚 e rib
     he crown that caused the blood to flow. Then Robin grew mad with anger and smote with all his might at the other. But the stranger warded the blow and once again thwacked Robin, and
   ried Robin, nor could he forbear laughing himself at his sorry plight. Then, gaining his feet, he waded to the bank, the little fish speeding hither and thither, all frightened at his splashing. "Give me thy hand,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     he, when he had reached the bank. "I must needs own thou art a brave and a sturdy soul and, withal, a good stout stroke with the cudgels. By this and by that, my head nummeth like to a hive of bees on a hot June day." Then he details twick here and Canterbury Town could do the like to me that thou hast done." "And thou," quoth the stranger, laughing, "takest thy cudgeling like a brave heart and a stout yeoman." But now the distant twigs and branches rust it will, "how is this? Truly thou art all wet from head to foot, and that to the very skin." "Why, marry," answered jolly Robin, "yon stout fellow hath tumbled me neck and crop into the water and hath given me a drubbing besi
   ped his horn to his lips and winded a blast that went echoing sweetly down the forest paths. "Ay, marry," quoth he again, "thou art a tall lad, and eke a brave one, for ne'er, I bow, is there a ma
    with the coming of men, and suddenly a score or two of good stout yeomen, all clad in Lincoln green, burst from out the covert, with merry Will Stutely at their head. "Good master," c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ey sprang quickly they found him ready and felt him strike right and left with his stout staff, so that, though he went down with press of numbers, some of them rubbed cracked crowns before he was overcome. "Nay, forb of my band? Three suits of Lincoln green shalt thou have each year, beside forty marks in fee, and share with us whatsoever good shall befall us. Thou shalt eat sweet venison and quaff the stoutest ale, and mine own er surfly, for he was angry at being so tumbled about. "If ye handle yew bow and apple shaft no better than ye do oaken cudgel, I wot ye are not fit to be called yeomen in my country; but if there be any man here that
      "Then shall he not go without a ducking and eke a drubbing himself!" cried Will Stutely. "Have at him, lads!" Then Will and a score of yeomen leaped upon the stranger, but though
       cried Robin, laughing until his sore sides ached again. "He is a right good man and true, and no harm shall befall him. Now hark ye, good youth, wilt thou stay with me and be o`
     d right-hand man shalt thou be, for never did I see such a cudgel player in all my life before. Speak! Wilt thou be one of my good merry men?" "That know I not," guoth the stra
     shoot a better shaft than I, then will I bethink me of joining with you." "Now by my faith," said Robin, "thou art a right saucy varlet, sirrah; yet I will stoop to thee as I never st
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ed to man before. Good Stutely, cut thou a fair white piece of bark four fingers in breadth, and set it fourscore yards distant on yonder oak. Now, stranger, hit that fairly with a gray goose shaft and call thyself an a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               toutest bow among them all, next to Robin's own, and a straight gray goose shaft, well-feathered and smooth, and stepping to the mark--while all the band, sitting or lying upon the greensward, watched to see hithou that if thou canst"; while even the yeomen clapped their hands at so fair a shot. "That is a keen shot indeed," quoth Robin. "Mend it I cannot, but mar it I may, perhaps." Then taking up his own good stou
    er." "Ay, marry, that will I," answered he. "Give me a good stout bow and a fair broad arrow, and if I hit it not, strip me and beat me blue with bowstrings." Then he chose the
   shoot-he drew the arrow to his cheek and loosed the shaft right deftly, sending it so straight down the path that it clove the mark in the very center. "Aha!" cried he, "me wand nocking an arrow with care, he shot with his very greatest skill. Straight flew the arrow, and so true that it lit fairly upon the stranger's shaft and split it into splin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   rs. Then all the yeomen leaped to their feet and shouted for joy that their master had shot so well. "Now by the lusty yew bow of good Saint Withold," cried the stranger, "that is a shot indeed, and never saw
    like in all my life before! Now truly will I be thy man henceforth and for aye. Good Adam Bell[1] was a fair shot, but never shot he so!" [1] Adam Bell, Clym o' the Clo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      h, and William of Cloudesly were three noted north-country bowmen whose names have been celebrated in many ballads of the olden time. "Then have I gained a right good man this day," quoth jolly Robi
 What name goest thou by, good fellow?" "Men call me John Little whence I came," answered the stranger. Then Will Stutely, who loved a good jest, spoke up. "Nay,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ir little stranger," said he, "I like not thy name and fain would I have it otherwise. Little art thou indeed, and small of bone and sinew, therefore shalt thou be christened Little John, and I will be thy godfath
er." Then Robin Hood and all his band laughed aloud until the stranger began to grow angry. "An thou make a jest of me," quoth he to Will Stutely, "thou wilt have it be. So come, my merry men, we will prepare a christening feast for this fair infant." So turning their backs upon the stream, they plunged into the forest once m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e bones and little pay, and that in short season." "Nay, good friend," said Robin Hood, "bottle thine anger, for the name fitteth thee well. Little John shall thou be called henceforth, and Little John shall e, through which they traced their steps till they reached the spot where they dwelled in the depths of the woodland. There had they built huts of bark and branches of trees, and made couches of sw
      ushes spread over with skins of fallow deer. Here stood a great oak tree with branches spreading broadly around, beneath which was a seat of green moss
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      here Robin Hood was wont to sit at feast and at merrymaking with his stout men about him. Here they found the rest of the band, some of whom had come in with a brace of fat does. Then they all
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        le John at his right hand, for he was henceforth to be the second in the band. Then when the feast was done Will Stutely spoke up. "It is now time, I ween, to christen our bonny babe, is it not among all the band, he chose the seven stoutest men of them all. "Now by Saint Dunstan," cried Little John, springing to his feet, "more than one of you shall rue it an you lay finger upon me
 ouilt great fires and after a time roasted the does and broached a barrel of humming ale. Then when the feast was ready they all sat down, but Robin placed L
 merry boys?" And "Aye! Aye!" cried all, laughing till the woods echoed with their mirth. "Then seven sponsors shall we have," quoth Will Stutely, and hunti
      vithout a word they all ran upon him at once, seizing him by his legs and arms and holding him tightly in spite of his struggles, and they bore him forth
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 stood around to see the sport. Then one came forward who had been chosen to play the priest because he had a bald crown, and in his hand he carried a brimming pot of ale. "Now, who
      geth this babe?" asked he right soberly. "That do I," answered Will Stutely. "And what name callest thou him?" "Little John call I him." "Now Little Joh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  the mock priest, "thou hast not lived heretofore, but only got thee along through the world, but henceforth thou wilt live indeed. When thou livedst not thou wast called John Little, but no
     at thou dost live indeed, Little John shalt thou be called, so christen I thee." And at these last words he emptied the pot of ale upon Little John's hea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        nouted with laughter as they saw the good brown ale stream over Little John's beard and trickle from his nose and chin, while his eyes blinked with the smart of it. At first he was of a
 nind to be angry but found he could not, because the other's were so merry; so he, too, laughed with the rest. Then Robin took this sweet, pretty babe, and of merry companions gathered about him, and thus he gained his right-hand man, Little John; and so the prologue ends. And now I will tell how t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        clothed him all anew from top to toe in Lincoln green, and gave him a good stout bow, and so made him a member of the merry band. And thus it was that Robin Hood became outlawed; thus a he Sheriff of Nottingham three times sought to take Robin Hood, and how he failed each time. PART FIRST Telling how the Sheriff of Nottingham swore that he would deal dole to Robing Hood.
 Also, how he made three trials thereat, but missed each time by a good bow's length. Robin Hood and the Tinker NOW IT WAS TOLD BEFORE how tw
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          o hundred pounds were set upon Robin Hood's head, and how the Sheriff of Nottingham swore that he himself would seize Robin, both because he would fain have the two hundred pounds a
    because the slain man was a kinsman of his own. Now the Sheriff did not yet know what a force Robin had about him in Sherwood, but thought th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            at he might serve a warrant for his arrest as he could upon any other man that had broken the laws; therefore he offered fourscore golden angels to anyone who would serve this warrant. But
 nen of Nottingham Town knew more of Robin Hood and his doings than the Sheriff did, and many laughed to think of serving a warrant upon the b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      old outlaw, knowing well t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             hat all they would get for such service would be cracked crowns; so that no one came forward to take the matter in hand. Thus a fortnight passed, in which time none came forward to do the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              one has come to undertake the task." Th
 Sheriff's business. Then said he, "A right good reward have I offered to whosoever would serve my warrant upon Robin Hood, and I marvel that no
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              en one of his men who was near him said, "Good master, thou wottest not the force that Robin Hood has about him and how little he cares for warrant of king or sheriff. Truly, no one likes
 go on this service, for fear of cracked crowns and broken bones." "Then I hold all Nottingham men to be cowards," said the Sheriff. "And let me
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                that dare disobey the warrant of our sovereign lord King Harry, for, by the shrine of Saint Edmund, I will hang him forty cubits high! But if no man in Nottingham dare win fourscore ang
  will send elsewhere, for there should be men of mettle somewhere in this land." Then he called up a messenger in whom he placed great trust, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                d make ready to go to Lincoln Town to see whether he could find anyone there that would do his bidding and win the reward. So that same morning the messenger started forth upon his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   nd bade him saddle his
  and. Bright shone the sun upon the dusty highway that led from Nottingham to Lincoln, stretching away all white over hill and dale. Dusty was
ade of the oak trees that stood around it seemed cool and pleasant, so he alighted from his horse to rest himself for a time, calling for a pot o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                the highway and dusty th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               e throat of the m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 essenger, so that his heart was glad when he saw before him the Sign of the Blue Boar Inn, when somewhat more than half his journey was done. The inn looked fair to his eyes, and the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               f ale to refresh his thirsty
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            throat. There he saw a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   party of right jovial fellows seated beneath the spreading oak that shaded the greensward in fr ont of the door. There was a tinker, two barefoot friars, and a party of six of the King's
      ters all clad in Lincoln green, and all of them were quaffing humming ale and singing merry ballads of the good old times. Loud laud
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             e foresters, as jests were b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       andied about between the s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    nging, and louder laughed the friars, for they were lusty men with beards that curled like
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       e the wool of black rams; but loudest of all laughed the Tinker, and he sang more swe
   han any of the rest. His bag and his hammer hung upon a twig of the oak tree, and near by leaned his good stout cudgel, as thick as his wr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ist and knotted at the end.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       pot of ale for each man." The messenger was glad enough to sit down along with the oth
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     "Come," cried one of the fore
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           hou today?" The messenger
     who were there, for his limbs were weary and the ale was good. "Now what news bearest thou so fast?" quoth one, "and whither ridest
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       it of gossip dearly; besides, the pot of ale warmed his heart; so that, settli
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          self in an easy corner of the inn bench, while the host leaned upon the doorway and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    was a chatty soul and loved a
      stess stood with her hands beneath her apron, he unfolded his budget of news with great comfort. He told all from the very first: how
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          Robin Hood had slain the for
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        the greenwood to escape the law; how that he lived therein, all agains
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    e law, God wot, slaying His Majesty's deer and levying toll on fat abbot, knight, and esqui
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ester, and how he had hidden in
  o that none dare travel even on broad Watling Street or the Fosse Way for tear of him; how that the Sheriff had a mind to serve the King
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           s warrant upon this same rog
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ue, though little would he mind
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        warrant of either king or sheriff, for he was far from being a law- a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ing man. Then he told how none could be found in all Nottingham Town to serve this warra
 for fear of cracked pates and broken bones, and how that he, the messenger, was now upon his way to Lincoln Town to find of what me
I not meet that mad wag Simon of Ely, even at the famous fair at Hertford Town, and beat him in the ring at that place before Sir Rober
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     "Now come I, forsooth, from g
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ood Banbury Town," said the jolly Tinker, "and no one nigh No
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         --nor Sherwood either, an that be the mark-- can hold cudgel with my grip. Why, lads, (
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          t of Leslie and his lady? This s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ame Robin Hood, of whom, I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         wot, I never heard before, is a right merry blade, but gin he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       rong, am not I stronger? And gin he be sly, am not I slyer? Now by the bright eyes of No
  o' the Mill, and by mine own name and that's Wat o' the Crabstaff, and by mine own mother's son, and that's myself, will I, even I, W
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           mind not the seal of our glorious sovereign King Harr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          d the warrant of the good Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, I will so bruise, beat, and bem
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            o' the Crabstaff, meet this sam
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       e sturdy rogue, and gin he
       ate that he shall never move finger or toe again! Hear ye that, bully boys?" "Now art thou the man for my farthing," cried the mes
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            senger. "And back thou goest
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          m Town." "Nay," quoth the Tinker, shaking his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          owly from side to side. "Go I with no man gin it be not with mine own free will." "Nay
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           with me to Nottingha
         aid the messenger, "no man is there in Nottinghamshire could make thee go against thy will, thou brave fellow."
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           brave," said the Tinker. "Ay, ma
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              nessenger, "thou art a brave lad; but our go o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           d Sh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           th offered fourscore angels of bright gold to whosoever shall serve the warrant upo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            let' me but meet this same Rob
       Hood; though little good will it do." "Then I will go with thee, lad. Do but wait till I get my bag and hammer, and my cudgel. Ay,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              n Hood, and let me see whether he will not
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    Ki ng's warrant." So, after having paid their score, the messenger, with the Tinker stridi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             own to find what was a-doing t
   peside his nag, started back to Nottingham again. One bright morning soon after this time. Robin Hood started off to Notti
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      was sweet with daisies, his eyes wandering and his thoughts also. His bugle
     n hung at his hip and his bow and arrows at his back, while in his hand he bore a good stout oaken staff, which he twirled with h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               As thus he walked down a shady lane h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  wat
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            er coming, trolling a merry song as he drew nigh. On his back hung his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              is fingers as he strolled along
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  e sa
   and his hammer, and in his hand he carried a right stout crabstatt full six teet long, and thus sang he: "In peascod time, when ho
RRIES--" "Halloa!" cried Robin again. "BY WOODS AND GROVES FULL FAIR--" "Halloa! Art thou deaf, man? Good friend, say I!"
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               led, And little lads with pipes of corn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          Sit ke
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       sts afield--" "Halloa, good friend!" cried Robin. "I WENT TO GATHER STRAW
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              o horn Gives ear till buck be ki
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                a fair song?" quoth the Tinker, stopping in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    "And who art thou dost so boldly check
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               Halloa, shine own self, whether thou be good friend or no. But let me tell thee, th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  mest thou, my lusty blade?" quoth Robin. "I come from Banbur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                y," answered the Tinker. "Alas"
 stout fellow, gin thou be a good friend it were well for us both; but gin thou be no good friend it were ill for thee." "And whence co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         !" qu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         Robin, "I hear there is sad news this merry morn." "Ha! Is it indeed so?" cried the Tinke
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   priest is greedy for farthings." "Well then," quoth Robin, "list th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ou and I will tell, but bea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            r thys
"Na
             "Prythee tell it speedily, for I am a tinker by trade, as thou seest, and as I am in my trade I am greedy for news, even as a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  bravely, for the news is sad, I wot. Thus it is: I hear that two tinkers are in the stocks for dr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         men. But sad news it is indeed, gin there be two stout fello
unstan," cried the Tinker, "I have a good part of
                           'Now a murrain seize thee and thy news, thou scurvy dog," quoth the Tinker, "for thou speakest but ill of good
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ws in the stocks."
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           'thou hast missed the mark and dost but weep for the wrong sow. The sadness of the
   ws lieth in that there be but two in the stocks, for the others do roam the country at large." "Now by the pewter platter of Saint D
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e for thine ill jest. But gin men be put in the stocks for drinking ale and beer, I trow thou wouldst not
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  a mind to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               baste th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              or I love ale and beer right well. Therefore come straightway with me hard by to the Sign of the Blue Boar
 se thy part." Loud laughed Robin and cried, "Now well taken, Tinker, well taken! Why, thy wits are like beer, and do froth up mos
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          t when they grow sour! B
   d if thou drinkest as thou appearest--and I wot thou wilt not belie thy looks -I will drench thy throat with as good home rewed a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           w by my faith," said the Tinker, "thou art a right good fellow in spite of thy scurvy jests. I love thee, my sweet chuck, and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            s ever was tapped in all
 jin I go not with thee to that same Blue Boar thou mayst call me a heathen." "Tell me thy news, good friend, l prythee," quoth Ro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               as full of news as an egg of meat." "Now I love thee as my brother, my bully blade," said the Tinker, "else I would not
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            bin as they trudged alo
     thee my news; for sly am I, man, and I have in hand a grave undertaking that doth call for all my wits, for I come to seek a bold
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 Robin Hood. Within my pouch I have a warrant, all fairly written out on parchment, forsooth, with a great red seal for to make it lawful. Could I but meet this same Robin knowest Robin Hood thyself, good fellow." "Ay, marry, that I do somewhat," quoth Robin, "and I have seen him this very morn. But, Tinker, men say that he is but a sad, sly th
 ood I would serve it upon his dainty body, and if he minded it not I would beat him till every one of his ribs would cry Amen. But
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               thou livest hereabou
ief. Thou hadst better watch thy warrant, man, or else he may steal it out of thy very pouch." "Let him but try!" cried the Tinken.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ly may he be, but sly am I, too. I w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   an to man!" And he made his heavy cudgel to spin again. "But what manner of man is he, lad? "Much like myself," said Robin, laughing, "and in height and build and age ni
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      old nor so stout as thou art." said Robin, "But men do call him a right deft hand at quarterstaff," "That may be," said the Tinker right sturdily, "but I am more deft than he, f
or did I not overcome Simon of Ély in a fair bout in the ring at Hertford Town? But if thou knowest him, my jolly blade, wilt thou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  and bring me to him? Fourscor
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      hath the Sheriff promised me if I serve the warrant upon the knave's body, and ten of them will I give to thee if thou showest me him." "Ay, that will I," quoth Robin, "but sh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   with me
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ht a
ow me thy warrant, man, until I see whether it be good or no. " "That will I not do, even to mine own brother,"
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ellow's own body." "So be it," quoth Robin. "And thou show it not to me I know not to whom thou wilt show it. But here we are at the Sign of the Blue Boar, so let us in and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                "No
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          man shall see my warrant till I ser
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              t upon
taste his brown October." No sweeter inn could be found in all Nottinghamshire than that of the Blue Boar. None had such love
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ematis and sweet woodbine; none had such good beer and such humming ale; nor, in wintertime, when the north wind howled and snow drifted around the hedges, was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                              tree
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              s standing around, or was so covere dw
there to be found, elsewhere, such a roaring fire as blazed upon the hearth of the Blue Boar. At such times might be found a good
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e blazing hearth, bandying merry jests, while roasted crabs[Small sour apples] bobbed in bowls of ale upon the hearthstone. Well known was the inn to Robin Hood and I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ly c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ompany of yeomen or country folk seate
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 da roun
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           d th
s band, for there had he and such merry companions as Little John or Will Stutely or young David of Doncaster often gathered wh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                Il the forest was filled with snow. As for
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        host, he knew how to keep a still tongue in his head, and to swallow his words before they passed his teeth, for he knew very well which side of his bread was spread wi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           en a
ı butter, for Robin and his band were the best of customers and paid their scores without having them chalked up behind the doo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e thereto and called aloud for two great pots of ale, none would have known from look or speech that the host had ever set eyes upon the outlaw before. "Bide thou here
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                o now, when Robin Hood and the Tinker
   oth Robin to the Tinker, "while I go and see that mine host draweth ale from the right butt, for he hath good October, I know, and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        he went within and whispered to the host to add a measure of Flemish strong waters to the good English ale; which the latter did and brought it to them. "By Our Lady,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                            tha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                t brewed by Withold of Tamworth." So s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        Wat o' the Crabstaff." "Drink, man, drink," cried Robin, only wetting his own lips meanwhile. "Ho, landlord! Bring my friend another pot of the same. And now for a song
 aid the Tinker, after a long draught of the ale, "yon same Withold of Tamworth--a right good Saxon name, too, I would have thee k
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               --breweth the most humming ale that e'e
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               r passed the lip
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            By Our Lady , it doth make my head hum even now! Hey, Dame Hostess, come
  y jolly blade." "Ay, that will I give thee a song, my lovely fellow," quoth the Tinker, "for I never tasted such ale in all my days befo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      en, an thou wouldst hear a song, and thou too, thou bonny lass, for never sing I so well as when bright eyes do look upon me the while." Then he sang an ancient ballad of
    e time of good King Arthur, called "The Marriage of Sir Gawaine," which you may some time read yourself, in stout English of ea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         noble knight and his sacrifice to his king. But long before the Tinker came to the last verse his tongue began to trip and his head to spin, because of the strong waters m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           imes: and a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  s he sang, all listened to tha
 ked with the ale. First his tongue tripped, then it grew thick of sound; then his head wagged from side to side, until at last he fell as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     e never would waken again. Then
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              n Hood laughed aloud and quickly took the warrant from out the Tinker's pouch with his deft fingers. "Sly art thou, Tinker," quoth he, "but not yet, I bow, art thou as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      as though h
sly as that same sly thief Robin Hood." Then he called the host to him and said, "Here, good man, are ten broad shillings for the ent
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   care of thy fair guest there, and when he wakes thou mayst again charge him ten shillings also, and if he hath it not, thou mayst take his bag and hammer, and every support to the same of the hath it not, thou mayst take his bag and hammer, and every support to the hath it not, thou mayst take his bag and hammer, and every support to the hath it not, thou mayst take his bag and hammer, and every support to the hath it not, thou may take his bag and hammer, and every support to the hath it not, thou may take his bag and hammer, and every support to the hath it not.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ertainment thou hast g
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          iven us this day. See that thou takes
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                t go
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     uld." At this the host smiled slyly, as though saying to himself the rustic saw, "Teach a magpie to suck eggs." The Tinker slept until the afternoon drew to a clos
en his coat, in payment. Thus do I punish those that come into the greenwood to deal dole to me. As for thine own self, never knew I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          landlord yet
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              that would not charge twic e an
e and the shadows grew long beside the woodland edge, then he awoke. First he looked up, then he looked dow
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  hen he looked east.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           then he look
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       est, for he was gathering his wits together, like barley straws blown apart by the wind. First he thought of his merry companion, but he was gone. Then he tho
 ght of his stout crabstaff, and that he had within his hand. Then of his warrant, and of the fourscore ange
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ving it upon Robin Hood. He thrust his hand into his pouch, but not a scrap nor a farthing was there. Then he sprang to his feet in a rage. "Ho, landlord!" crie
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             was t o gai
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          the Tinker Worship to soothe him, as a man would pour oil upon angry water. "I saw no knave with Your Worship, for I swear no man would dare call that m m, for few there be about here that pass him by and know him not." "Now, how should I, that ne'er have squealed in your sty, know all the swine therein? W
 he, "whither hath that knave gone that was with me but now?" "What knave meaneth Your Worship?
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             oth th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ord, c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           e landl
an knave so nigh to Sherwood Forest. A right stout yeoman I saw with Your Worship, but I thought th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 our Worship
ho was he, then, an thou knowest him so well?" "Why, yon same is a right stout fellow whom me
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        R obin Hood, which same--" "Now, by'r Lady!" cried the Tinker hastily, and in a deep voice like an angry bull, "thou didst see me come into thine inn, I, a stau
                                                                                                                                                                                                 outs
nch, honest craftsman, and never told me who my company was, well knowing thine own self who he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        a right round piece of a mind to crack thy knave's pate for thee!" Then he took up his cudgel and looked at the landlord as though he would smite him where
he stood. "Nay," cried the host, throwing up his elbow, for he feared the blow, "how knew I that thou knewest him not
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     d truly thankful mayst thou be," quoth the Tinker, "that I be a patient man and so do spare thy bald crown, else wouldst thou ne'er cheat customer again. But as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              oman." So saying, he gathered himself together to depart. "Nay," quoth the landlord, standing in front of him and holding out his arms like a gooseherd driving his fl
for this same knave Robin Hood, I go straightway to seek him, and if I do not score his knave's pate, cut my staff into fagots and call
ock, for money made him bold, "thou goest not till thou hast paid me my score." "But did not he pay thee?" "Not so much as one fa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ings' worth of ale have ye drunk this day. Nay, I say, thou goest not away without paying me, else shall our good Sheriff know of it." "But nought ha
 e I to pay thee with, good fellow," quoth the Tinker. "'Good fellow' not me," said the landlord. "Good fellow am I not when it come
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ngs! Pay me that thou owest me in broad money, or else leave thy coat and bag and hammer; yet, I wot they are not worth ten shillings, and I shall lose there
by. Nay, an thou stirrest, I have a great dog within and I will loose him upon thee. Maken, open thou the door and let forth Brian if
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 w stirs one step." "Nay," quoth the Tinker--for, by roaming the country, he had learned what dogs were--"take thou what thou wilt have, and let me depart in peace.
  nd may a murrain go with thee. But oh, landlord! An I catch yon scurvy varlet, I swear he shall pay full with usury for that he ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 he strode away toward the forest, talking to himself, while the landlord and his worthy dame and Maken stood looking after him, and laughed when he had fairly go
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   the forest to Fosse Way, to see what was to be seen there, for the moon was full and the night gave promise of being bright. In his hand he carried his stout oake
ne. "Robin and I stripped yon ass of his pack main neatly," quoth the landlord. Now it happened about this time that Robin Hood
 staff, and at his side hung his bugle horn. As thus he walked up a forest path, whistling, down another path came the Tinker,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 haking his head like an angry bull; and so, at a sudden bend, they met sharply face to face. Each stood still for a time, and then Robin spoke: "Halloa, my sweet bi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        mself and s
                            merrily, "how likest thou thine ale? Wilt not sing to me another song?" The Tinker said nothing at first but
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                face. "Now," quoth he at last, "I am right glad I have met thee, and if I do not rattle thy bones within thy hide this day, I give thee leave to put thy foot upon my neck
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           g at Robin with a grim
  'With all my heart," cried merry Robin. "Rattle my bones, an thou canst." So saying, he gripped his staff and threw himself upo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             nds and, grasping his staff, came straight at the other. He struck two or three blows, but soon found that he had met his match, for Robin warded and parried all of th
em, and, before the Tinker thought, he gave him a rap upon the ribs in return. At this Robin laughed aloud, and the Tinker grew m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             nd smote again with all his might and main. Again Robin warded two of the strokes, but at the third, his staff broke beneath the mighty blows of the Tinker. "Now, ill betide thee, traitor staff," cried Robin, as it fell
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               e angry than ever
om his hands: "a foul stick art thou to serve me thus in mine hour of need." "Now yield thee," quoth the Tinker, "for thou art my c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ot, I will beat thy pate to a pudding." To this Robin Hood made no answer, but, clapping his horn to his lips, he blew three blasts, loud and clear. "Ay," quoth the Tinker, "blow thou mayest, but go thou must with
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               tive: and if thou o
me to Nottingham Town, for the Sheriff would fain see thee there. Now wilt thou yield thee, or shall I have to break thy pretty head?
                                                                                                                                                                                                             " "Ån I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    " quoth Robin, "but never have I yielded me to man before, and that without wound or mark upon my body. Nor, when I bethink me, will I yield now. Ho, my merry men! Come quickly!" Then from out the forest
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          must drink sour ale.
    ped Little John and six stout yeomen clad in Lincoln green. "How now, good master," cried Little John, "what need hast thou that t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      iker," quoth Robin, "that would fain take me to Nottingham, there to hang upon the gallows tree." "Then shall he himself hang forthwith," cried Little John, and he and the others made at the Tinker, to seize h
                                                                                                                                                                                                          hou dost wind thy horn so loudly?" "There sta
m. "Nay, touch him not," said Robin, "for a right stout man is he. A metal man he is by trade, and a mettled man by nature; moreover, he doth sing a lovely ballad. Say, good fellow, wilt thou join my
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        nerry men all
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               within the sweet shades of Sherwood, where we shoot the dun deer and feed upon venison and sweet oaten cakes, and curds and honey. Wilt thou come with me?" "Ay, marry, will I join with you all," qu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         oth the Tinker, "for I love a merry life, and I love thee, good master, though thou didst thwack my ribs and cheat me into the bargain. Fain am I to own thou art both a stouter and a slyer man than I; so I will obey thee and be thine own true servant."
 Il turned their steps to the forest depths, where the Tinker was to live henceforth. For many a day he sang ballads to the band, until the famous Allan a Dale joined them, before whose sweet voice all others seemed as harsh as a raven's; but of him we will learn hereafter. The Shooting Match at Nottingham Town THEN THE SHERIFF was very wroth because of this failure to take joily Robin, for it came to his ears, as ill news always does, that the people laughed at h
im and made a jest of his thinking to serve a warrant upon such a one as the bold outlaw. And a man hates nothing so much as being made a jest of; so he said: "Our gracious lord and sovereign King himself shall know of this, and how his laws are perverted and despised by this band of rebel outlaws. As for yon traitor Tinker, him will I hang, if I catch him, upon the very highest gallows tree in all Nottinghamshire." Then he bade all his servants and retainers to ma
ke ready to go to London Town, to see and speak with the King. At this there was bustling at the Sheriff's troop of escort. For two days this labor lasted, then, on the third, all was ready for the journey. So forth they started in the smiths of the town were busy making or mending armor for the Sheriff's troop of escort.
                   nt, from Nottingham Town to Fosse Way and thence to Watling Street; and so they journeyed for two days, until they saw at last the show they made riding along the highways with their court, gay with ladies in silks and satins and velves and trappings. In London King Henry and his fair Queen Eleanor held their court, gay with ladies in silks and satins and velves and trappings. In London King Henry and his fair Queen Eleanor held their court, gay with ladies in silks and satins and velves and trappings. In London King Henry and his fair Queen Eleanor held their court, gay with ladies in silks and satins and velves and trappings. In London King Henry and his fair Queen Eleanor held their court, gay with ladies in silks and satins and velves and trappings. In London King Henry and his fair Queen Eleanor held their court, gay with ladies in silks and satins and velves and trappings. In London King Henry and his fair Queen Eleanor held their court, gay with ladies in silks and satins and velves and trapping and the silks an
 and cloth of gold, and also brave knights and gallant courtiers. Thither came the Sheriff and was shown into the King. "Let us hear what may be thy desires." "O good my Lord and Sovereign," spake the Sheriff, "in Sherwood Forest in our two good shire of Nottingham, liveth a bold outlaw whose name is Robin Hood." "In good sooth," said the King what woulds thou have?" said the King what woulds thou have?" said the King what woulds thou have?" said the King what woulds the King what woulds thou have?" said the King what woulds the King what was shown into the King what was shown into the King what woulds the King what woulds the King what was shown into the King what was shown into the King what woulds the King what was shown into the King was shown into the King what was shown into the King what was shown into the King what was shown into the King was shown i
 'his doings have reached even our own royal ears. He is a saucy, rebellious varlet, yet, I am fain to own, a right merry soul withal." "But hearken, O my most gracious Sovereign," said the Sheriff. "I sent a warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right merry soul withal." "But hearken, O my most gracious Sovereign," said the Sheriff. "I sent a warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and soul withal." "But hearken, O my most gracious Sovereign," said the Sheriff. "I sent a warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, but he beat the messenger and stole the warrant to him with thine own royal seal attached, by a right lusty knave, and the warrant to him with the warrant to him was a seal attached, by a right lusty knave, and the warrant lusty knave,
What wouldst thou have me do? Comest thou not to me with a great array of men-at arms and retainers, and yet art thou not two laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou not to me with a great array of men-at arms on breast, in thine own county! What wouldst thou have me do? Art thou not take a single band of lusty knaves without armor on breast, in thine own county! What wouldst thou have me do? Art thou not my laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou not take a single band of lusty knaves without armor on breast, in thine own county! What wouldst thou have me do? Art thou not my laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou not take thine own county! What wouldst thou have me do? Art thou not my laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou not take thine own county! What wouldst thou have me do? Art thou not my laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou not my laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou have me do? Art thou not my laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou have me do? Art thou not my laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou have me do? Art thou not my laws in force in Nottinghamshire? Canst thou have me do? Art tho
n of thine own, but trouble me no further. But look well to it, Master Sheriff, for I will have my laws obeyed by all men within my kingdom, and if thou art no sheriff turned away with a sore and troubled heart, and sadly he rued his fine show of the show of the show of the show of the short if thou art no sheriff for me. So look well to thy self, I say, or ill may befall thee as well as chaff." Then the Sheriff for me. So look well to thy self, I say, or ill may befall thee as well as chaff."
 etainers, for he saw that the King was angry because he had so many men about him and yet could not enforce the laws. So, as they all rode slowly back to Nottingham, the Sheriff was thoughtful and full of care. Not a word did he speak to anyone, and no one of his men spoke to him, but all the time he was busy devising some plan to take Robin Hood. "Aha!" cried he suddenly, smiting his hand upon his thigh "I have it now! Ride on, my merry men all, and let us
get back to Nottingham Town as speedily as we may. And mark well my words: before a fortnight is passed, that evil knave Robin Hood will be safely clapped or not, so the Sheriff, as all rode slowly and sadly back toward Nottingham, took up thought after thought in turn, feeling around the edges of each but fin
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