

Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866)

6 *Robin Hood and the Two Grey Friars*

Bold Robin has robed him in ghostly attire,
And forth he is gone like a holy friar,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And of two grey friars he soon was aware,
Regaling themselves with dainty fare, 5
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

‘Good morrow, good brothers’, said bold Robin Hood,
‘And what make you in the good greenwood,
Singing[,] hey down, ho down, down, derry down!
Now give me, I pray you, wine and food: 10
For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.’

‘Good brother’, they said, ‘we would give you full fain,
But we have no more than enough for twain,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down.’ 15
‘Then give me some money’, said bold Robin Hood,
‘For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.’

‘No money have we, good brother’, said they:
‘Then’, said he, ‘we three for money will pray: 20
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And whatever shall come at the end of our prayer,
We three holy friars will piously share,
All on the leaves so brown.’

‘We will not pray with thee, good Brother, God wot: 25
For truly, good brother, thou pleasest us not,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
Then up they both started from Robin to run,

But down on their knees Robin pulled them each one,
All on the fallen leaves so brown. 30

The grey friars prayed with a doleful face,
But bold Robin prayed with a right merry grace,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And when they had prayed, their portmanteau he took,
And from it a hundred good angels he shook, 35
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

'The saints', said bold Robin, 'have hearkened our prayer,
And here's a good angel apiece for your share:
If more you would have, you must win ere you wear:
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:' 40
Then he blew his good horn with a musical cheer,
And fifty green bowmen came trooping full near,
And away the grey fr[ia]rs they bounded like deer,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

1822

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