

Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866)

1 *Bold Robin Hood*

Oh, bold Robin Hood is a forester good,
As ever drew bow in the merry greenwood:
At his bugle's shrill singing the echoes are ringing,
The wild deer are springing for many a rood:
Its summons we follow, through brake, over hollow, 5
The thrice-blown shrill summons of bold Robin Hood.

And what eye hath e'er seen such a sweet Maiden Queen,
As Marian, the pride of the forester's green?
A sweet garden flower, she blooms in the bower,
Where alone to this hour the wild rose has been: 10
We hail her in duty the queen of all beauty:
We will live, we will die, by our sweet Maiden Queen.

And here's a grey friar, good as heart can desire,
To absolve all our sins as the case may require:
Who with courage so stout, lays his oak-plant about, 15
And puts to the rout all the foes of his choir:
For we are his choristers, we merry foresters,
Chorusing thus with our militant friar.

And Scarlet doth bring his good yew-bough and string,
Prime minister is he of Robin our king: 20
No mark is too narrow for Little John's arrow,
That hits a cock-sparrow a mile on the wing:
Robin and Mariòn, Scarlet, and Little John,
Long with their glory old Sherwood shall ring.

Each a good liver, for well-feathered quiver 25
Doth furnish brawn, venison, and fowl of the river:
But the best game we dish up, it is a fat bishop:
When his angels we fish up, he proves a free giver:
For a prelate so lowly has angels more holy,
And should this world's false angels to sinners deliver. 30

Robin and Mariòn, Scarlet and Little John,
Drink to them one by one, drink as ye sing:
Robin and Mariòn, Scarlet and Little John,
Echo to echo through Sherwood shall fling:
Robin and Mariòn, Scarlet and Little John,
Long with their glory old Sherwood shall ring.

35

1822

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