

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Robin Hood and the Shepherd

Robin Hood and the Shepherd

ALL gentlemen and yeomen good,
Down a down a down a down
I wish you to draw near;
For a story of gallant brave Robin Hood
Vnto you I wil declare.
Down, etc.

As Robin Hood walkt the forrest along,
Some pastime for to spie,
There was he aware of a jolly shepherd,
That on the ground did lie.

`Arise, arise,' cried jolly Robin,
`And now come let me see
What is in thy bag and bottle, I say;
Come tell it unto me.'

`What's that to thee, thou proud fellow?
Tell me as I do stand
What thou hast to do with my bag and bottle?
Let me see thy command.'

`My sword, which hangeth by my side,
Is my command I know;
Come, and let me taste of thy bottle,
Or it may breed thee wo.'

`Tut, the devil a drop, thou proud fellow,
Of my bottle thou shalt see,
Untill thy valour here be tried,
Whether thou wilt fight or flee.'

`What shall we fight for?' cries bold Robin Hood;
`Come tell it soon to me;
Here is twenty pounds in good red gold;
Win it, and take it thee.'

The Shepherd stood all in a maze,
And knew not what to say:
`I have no money, thou proud fellow,
But bag and bottle I'll lay.'

`I am content, thou shepherd-swain,
Fling them down on the ground;
But it will breed thee mickle pain,
To win my twenty pound.'

`Come draw thy sword, thou proud fellow,
Thou stands too long to prate;
This hook of mine shall let thee know
A coward I do hate.'

So they fell to it, full hardy and sore;
It was in a summers day;
From ten till four in the afternoon
The Shepherd held him play.

Robins buckler proved his chief defence,
And saved him many a bang,
For every blow the Shepherd gave
Made Robins sword cry twang.

Many a sturdy blow the Shepherd gave,
And that bold Robin found,
Till the blood ran trickling from his head;
Then he fell to the ground.

`Arise, arise, thou proud fellow,
And thou shalt have fair play,
If thou wilt yield, before thou go,
That I have won the day.'

`A boon, a boon,' cried bold Robin;
`If that a man thou be,
Then let me take my beaugle-horn,
And blow but blasts three.'

`To blow three times three,' the Shepherd said,
`I will not thee deny;
For if thou shouldest blow till to-morrow morn,
I scorn one foot to fly.'

Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,
And he blew with mickle main,
Until he espied Little John
Come tripping over the plain.

`O who is yonder, thou proud fellow,
That comes down yonder hill?'
`Yonder is Little John, bold Robin Hoods man,
Shall fight with thee thy fill.'

`What is the matter?' saies Little John,
`Master, come tell to me.'
`My case is great,' saies Robin Hood,
`For the Shepherd hath conquered me.'

`I am glad of that,' cries Little John,
`Shepherd, turn thou to me;
For a bout with thee I mean to have,
Either come fight or flee.'

`With all my heart, thou proud fellow,
For it never shall be said
That a shepherds hook of thy sturdy look
Will one jot be dismaid.'

So they fell to it, full hardy and sore,
Striving for victory;
`I will know,' saies John, ere we give ore,
Whether thou wilt fight or flye.'

The Shepherd gave John a sturdy blow,
With his hook under the chin;
`Beshrew thy heart,' said Little John,
`Thou basely dost begin.'

`Nay, that's nothing,' said the Shepherd;
`Either yield to me the day,
Or I will bang thee back and sides,
Before thou goest thy way.

`What? dost thou think, thou proud fellow,
That thou canst conquer me?
Nay, thou shalt know, before thou go,
I'll fight before I'll flee.'

With that to thrash Little John like mad
The Shepherd he begun;
`Hold, hold,' cryed bold Robin Hood,
`And I'll yield the wager won.'

`With all my heart,' said Little John,
`To that I will agree;
For he is the flower of shepherd-swains,
The like I never did see.'

Thus have you heard of Robin Hood,
Also of Little John,
How a shepherd-swain did conquer them;

The like did never none.

Child #135

Version from Child

LMP