



## Robyn Hood

Back home in Nottingham, the other girls had made fun of Robyn when she'd spent her nights practising with her yew bow. They'd laughed when she'd said that she wanted to rise up against Prince John. They'd sniggered when she'd said she wanted to lead her own army. They were all wrong.

Over the years, Robyn became an accomplished thief. Even though she could steal anything she wanted, she only stole what she really needed. Bread was her speciality. She soon became known for her dark green hood that she wore over her head and shoulders to conceal herself in a crowd. Eventually, the name Robyn Hood stuck.

She'd often head out hunting in the Prince's forest that surrounded the city. The royal deer were sacred and hunting them was punishable by death. This didn't stop Robyn though, and soon a band of other misfits started to tag along with her hunts. Inevitably she was caught. Instead of sentencing such a young girl to death, the Prince took pity on her and gave her a choice. She could marry the Prince, or live as an outlaw in the forest. The Prince was a hideous and unkind man, and so Robyn's decision was easy. The Prince never forgave the snub and swore revenge on the girl and any who followed her.

Robyn feared for her safety. Luckily, a giant girl named Joan stood by her side. As tall as a bear and just as strong, "Little" Joan was fiercely loyal. Thinking back to the girls who had laughed at her, Robyn now set out recruiting an army of rebels who would fight for her against the Prince. It took many years, but she eventually had a group large enough and loyal enough to start to hit the Prince hard. They started by holding up his waggons and stealing his gold. After taking their cut of the bounty, the rest was given back to the people of Sherwood.

Legend of the hooded maiden and bear-girl stalked through the knights of Nottingham. Not a day went by where their feats weren't exaggerated even further. With Robyn's talent with her bow and Joan's devastating quarterstaff, there wasn't a man in the county who would face them willingly.

Soon, word of the renegades reached the ear of Prince John. All of his attention now focused on reaping vengeance on his foe. His brother, King Richard, was fighting in the Crusades in the east along with most of the army, but he had enough soldiers to lead a siege on Robyn's woodland hideout.

Stars were scattered across the night sky like diamonds on a jeweller's canvas when his men set out. What Prince John didn't know was that one of Robyn's merry maidens was the sister of one of his guards. The night before, a message had been sent to Robyn, and she had fled. She didn't go far. Instead, her band of rebel girls doubled back in the forest until they formed a silent net around Prince John and his men. The first thing they knew about this trap was the sound of a heavy yew bow creaking under the strain of a drawn string.



## PREDICTION

Write the next paragraph in the story. Make sure you use the language and style of the original.

## VIPERS QUESTIONS

- V** As an accomplished thief, what does this say about her skills?
- R** List the ways that the other girls had responded to Robyn wanting to defeat Prince John.
- I** What do we know about Robyn's personality when she continued to hunt deer?
- E** Explain how the stories of Robyn and Joan spread.
- I** How did Prince John feel when he heard about Robyn? What tells you this?