

The Green Mans Morris and Sword Club Boxing Day Mummers Play

CHARACTERS: Sheriff of Lichfield
Dr. George Fox, a Quaker
Dr. Milley, a Physician
Two Vandals
Fool - Nuts in May
Green Man

(Enter Green Man. He carries cardboard replica of Castle Tower which he sets down in a prominent place).

Green Man Dear friends of Lichfield, hear my call.
Please pay attention one and all.
This fiery creature before your eyes,
Is but a neighbour in unusual guise,
And beneath this awesome mask and coat of green,
A kinder and more generous heart has never been.
But now, my friends, to business;
It is my purpose on this winter's (?) day,
To make pronouncement, loud and clear,
That our Lord High Sheriff, God rest his soul,
Will presently ride close by here.
Upon his horse he'll make his way,
As often on the Bower Festive Day.
(on this the Bower Festive Day)
Come in Lord Sheriff.

(Enter Sheriff on horse. Sheriff has large tummy - general fun with horse).

Sheriff The Sheriff of Lichfield here rides by,
Of true and noble birth am I,
A gallant knight, both brave and strong,
I'll give my life if I am wrong.
I will be king of the Bower today,
Who will deny me, say him nay?

(He brandishes sword)

(Enter 2 Vandals. They speak alternate lines, preferably one high voice and one low, one tall and one short).

Vandals Ah, nay. Lord Sheriff vandals are we two,
Who have come to put an end to you.
Thou art a varlet and a schemer,
Who shall be hanged for your demeanours.
Unsheath thy sword and let us fight,
Nothing can save thee from this plight.

Sheriff If I must fight, then fight I will,
 But let me first pray eat my fill.

(Takes out food from spotted handkerchief and hands round to Vandals and Green Man.
General business, Vandals grow impatient).

Vandals Enough of this, there's work to do,
 And you're the one we'll do it to.
 Put up thy sword and make it play,
 'Tis your life blood will spill today.

(They fight. One Vandal is wounded in the arm and falls to his knees. Sheriff turns on
second. First trips Sheriff and Second finishes him. Sheriff utters ghastly groan as he dies.
Horse licks him then cries over his master. The Vandals flee.)

Vandals (Pointing at each other)
 'Twas him that done the deed, twas he
 'Twas him that killed him, I did see
 'Twas him, not me
 'Twas him, not me

(They run off)
(Enter Fool, Nuts in May)

Nuts In comes I, young sporting Sam.
 Don't you think I'm a funny young man?
 There is no Lichfield Dance that has a fool,
 So I'm called Nuts in May to keep the rule.
 I really am quite a sensible lad,
 Though many think that I'm very bad.
 I love the ladies, bless their hearts,
 And my favourite fruit is apple tarts.
 I often walk near the Castle Ring,
 And sometimes have been known to sing.

(Begins to sing and falls over Sheriff's body)

Nuts Tut-tut, I do declare, a man asleep upon the floor.
 Most likely if the guess is right,
 Are of the Green Men, very tight.

(Looks at body)

 But no, methinks the body is a corpse.
 Someone has dead-ed him, oh crikey, corks,
 A doctor, a doctor is there a doctor in the house?

(Enter Dr. Fox in attitude of prayer)

Fox Here come I, a man in black,
With my tall Quakerian hat.
I've come to Lichfield, dreadful city,
To heap upon it all my pity.
Here I stand in shoeless habit,
To cry aloud, as legend has it,
An oath o'er laid with wrath and pity,
Woe to thee, thou bloody city.

Nuts Here, here no swearing please is my command,
This isn't a meeting of the Green Man Band.
Art thou a doctor that can Cure all ills?
For here's a man that needs thy pills.

(Kicks body. Sheriff sits up, pretends to fight, then lies down again).

Fox A skilled physician I am not,
But I can help dead men a lot.
A prayer for his soul I will invent,
And say it o'er him circumvent!

(He kneels by body and begins to pray. Nuts pushes him aside).

Nuts Away, thou man of scriptures, pray,
Allow the corpse to rest this day.
I'll call again to one and all,
Is there a doctor near on call?
A doctor with a medical skill,
To cure this corpse of his dreadful ill.

(Enter Dr. Milley)

Milley Here am I, a tall young man,
Though large of stature, small of wit,
I have come to do my bit. Dr. Milley is my name,
Where is he who calls in vain?

Nuts What can you cure, Doctor?

Milley The ipsis, pipsy, palsy, gout,
Pains within and pains without,
All aches and ills from top to toe,
My fee, a hundred guineas, though.

Nuts A hundred guineas, what a fee,
To ask from such a one as he?
But he's the Sheriff, he's sure to pay,
Come doctor, best start straightaway.

(Usual form. Doctor administers potion).

Milley Take a drink from out my bottle,
Let it run right down your throttle.
(Gulp it down your thrittle throttle)

(Sheriff jumps up)

Milley Alive and well you are I see.
A hundred guineas you owe to me.

Sheriff A hundred guineas I'll not pay,
Come again another day.

Milley Since it is Bower, I'll relent,
And hope the money is well spent.
To the city I bequeath it, and more
To help the Rates and feed the poor.
And ever more the folk will say
It's Milley's Bequest that saved the day.

(All cheer)

Sheriff Thou art a fine fellow Doctor, Sir,
Come, put your hand in mine.
A bond of friendship we will forge,
And seal it with some wine.

Green Man I'll join you friends and make it three,
And let us dance so all may see,
That this bad deed has come to nought,
And only better friendships wrought.

(They dance 3-man jig with Sheriff as No. 3)

Nuts And now bold Vandals, come you forth,
And show what you are really worth.
Our Doctor Fox will call you on,
And cheer us with his melodious song.

(Dr. Fox calls on rapper team. At 'show out' all stand facing presence.)

Fox In the distance I can hear,
Ring O' Bells both loud and clear.
Now dear friends, it's time to go.
We trust you have enjoyed our show.
This is the spot in which you join.
Come, fill my hat with silver coin.

(Fox takes round hat, all exit to tune of Bower Processional)

(Suggest each character is introduced by a few bars of 'his' tune, using Castle Ring for the Green Man).