

“Oo-De-Lally”

Artist’s Introduction by Heather Edwards



There is something catchy about that little ditty at the beginning of *Disney’s* 1973 version of *Robin Hood*. So catchy, in fact, that it’s used for everything from phone ringtones to rambling whistling sessions when there’s nothing else to occupy your mind. I’ll admit I’ve done the latter more than a few times myself. The idea, too, of human characteristics being embodied so perfectly in some of our favorite untamed creatures is wildly entertaining. Who knew that a wily fox could be compassionate, a burly bear could have a sense of humor or that the stately lion could be pouty and suck his thumb? These are the things about the film that captured me as a child and continues to enthrall me as an adult. So the challenge I gave myself in this painting was to bring that to life. Robin, here, is that compassionate, wily fox; Little John, the comedic bear; Prince John is the absurd, self-centered pout, upset at losing his robes, jewels from the rings on his paws and watching his stripped carriage disappear into the distance. On the other hand, Skippy, the young rabbit, is fascinated by his rogue hero and Mother Rabbit is filled with true gratitude for the act of benevolence bestowed upon her son. Alan-A-Dale is strumming his lute above them all and one can’t help but whistle out his cheery tune alongside him. Surrounding Prince John are a handful of his entourage—a newbie to his court, the Elephant, is aghast and repelled by his monarch’s sudden display of childish behavior; and two of his Rhino guards are both exasperated and disgusted by what they have to put up with. “Not again...,” one might think; or, “If I have to put up with this one more time...” Poor Sir Hiss, the snake, is annoyed at being stuck with the brunt of his leader’s antics and angrily plops his muddied hat back upon his head. Conveying all of these subtle expressions was the personal challenge I gave myself and the journey in creating them was an adventurous one! But that wasn’t all... No, once it gets started, it just keeps going. I decided to add a handful of hidden things in there as well. For every main character painted (10), there is a hidden Mickey (10), everything from the simple circular silhouette to smiling impressions of the Mouse to the lifelike rendition of his role in the 1938 *Brave Little Tailor*. Also snuck in there off to the left of the Elephant is the *Sword in the Stone*.

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