

The Enchanted Bookcase

Written by

Alex Schulman

a.reed.schulman@gmail.com
410.963.4023

INT. STORAGE ROOM - DAY

In a very messy storage room sits a faded yet colorfully decorated WOODEN BOOKCASE.

It's painted with the words "The Enchanted Bookcase".

On its sides are TAPESTRIES of brave knights riding griffins, swashbuckling pirates sailing the seas, and children with eyes of wonder, reading books.

A MAN, 30ish, with eyes of indifference, enters the room. He's holding a CARDBOARD BOX.

The room is in bad shape. Boxes, yoga mats, workout equipment, and a plethora of junk splay out everywhere, all in different stages of being packed up.

The man carves out a little spot next to the bookcase and sits down. With a sharpie, he labels the box in his hands "Library Donations".

He begins looking through the books on the shelf, throwing them in the box after skimming through each one. But one book stops him in his tracks:

The Adventures of Robin Hood.

The man reads the cover. He smiles.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - EVENING

Ian, a fidgety eight-year-old boy, holds the same Robin Hood book in his hands.

The storage room from before is now a young boy's bedroom. There's The Enchanted Bookcase, with its murals and lettering--only now, the paint is more vibrant.

Ian's mother, MARIE, sits next to him, unpacking a box of books. A noisemaking terrier, ROOSTER, barks away in the hallway.

Ian stares at the bookcase.

MARIE

(re: bookcase)

It came with the house! Cool right?

By the standards of an eight-year-old boy, the bookcase is COOL, but it's almost TOO MUCH...

IAN

I guess.

MARIE

C'mon, you needed a new bookcase.
With all these books..

Ian nods. Beat. He lifts up the ROBIN HOOD BOOK.

IAN

Wanna read one with me?

MARIE

Sorry hon, I need to catch up on
grading papers.

Marie stands up and kisses him on the forehead. As she leaves the room, Ian sulks. Rooster follows her out.

IAN

I wish *someone* had the time to play
with me..

Ian places his book into the bookcase. The faint glow of a nightlight peeks out from the bottom of the shelf.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - MORNING

Ian pulls the The Adventures of Robin Hood out of his bookcase and out pops-

-A tiny person about four inches tall, wearing a felt green tunic and hunter's cap. It's unmistakably ROBIN HOOD! Ian staggers backwards, dropping a packet of PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS in the process.

IAN

W-who-who are you?

He produces a BOW MADE OF Q-TIPS, and looses a FRILLED TOOTHPICK towards a Transformer on Ian's nightstand. It's almost knocked over.

The tiny person takes a bow, with a flourish.

ROBIN HOOD

Why I'm Robin Hood! You wished for
me to play with you!

IAN

Wow! I did?

ROBIN HOOD

Sure you did, and I was ripped out
from my storybook and into your
world! But the front page got
ripped out too and now I can't go
home!

Ian opens the book and sees, yep, THE FRONT PAGE is torn
right off.

ROBIN HOOD (CONT'D)

That front page is my key to
Sherwood Forest! You see, a great
deal of *magick* is tied to it -If we
can find and return it to its place
at the front of the book- I'll be
able to return home too.

Robin looks up at Ian. He is doing his best to follow along,
but this is still a lot for an eight-year-old to process.

ROBIN HOOD (CONT'D)

You will help me look for it, won't
you?

IAN

Well sure-

Robin smiles and tips his cap.

IAN (CONT'D)

But wait, why are you so small?

ROBIN HOOD

Perhaps if you had a bigger book I
would have come out larger!

They both laugh.

IAN

It's nice to meet you, Robin! I'm-

Marie knocks on the door.

MARIE

(o.s.)

Ian?

IAN

-Going to be late! Gotta go!

Ian hastily puts the book inside his backpack.

ROBIN HOOD
Hey, could you leave one of those
crackers out for me?

Ian obliges his request and leaves the room. Robin Hood quickly chows down on the cracker. With almost a crazed look.

INT. CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

A daydreaming Ian doodles in the margins of a pop-quiz. He gets a nosebleed.

INT. NURSE'S OFFICE - LATER

A bespectacled NURSE holds Ian's nose back, somewhat forcefully. Ian sips on a ginger ale. Unfazed.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - DAY

Ian comes home with bloodied napkins stuffed in his nose. He sits down by the bookcase as Robin Hood emerges.

ROBIN HOOD
(re: bloody nose)
Wow! Did you get in a fight? Give
the old bully what for?

IAN
No, this just happens.

ROBIN HOOD
Oh.

Beat.

ROBIN HOOD (CONT'D)
Do you have any more crackers?

BEGIN MONTAGE:

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

In a hidden alcove near the fridge, Robin introduces Ian to a terrified family of mice. He offers them bits of cracker.

Ian is touched. In the corner of his eye, he spots a mousetrap. He looks to Robin Hood.

INT. HALLWAY - SOON AFTER

Ian, under the guidance of Robin, disassembles a mousetrap.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Robin enthusiastically reads The Adventures of Robin Hood to a sleepy Ian, who soon passes out with the book in his hand.

Robin Hood smiles and goes back into the bookcase.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - MIDNIGHT

Ian sleeps soundly. The nightlight dimly glows by the bookcase.

There, a tiny, SHADOWY FIGURE, slowly emerges.

END MONTAGE.

INT. MOVING SCHOOL BUS - AFTERNOON

Ian doodles a scene of a GREAT WOODLAND BATTLE on a spiral-bound notebook. His bus hits a speed-bump.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - LATER

Ian sits on the floor against his backpack, as Robin Hood shows off his bow skills.

He knocks down a house of cards with a tiny arrow.

IAN

Wow!

ROBIN HOOD

I did the same thing to the Sheriff of Nottingham's reinforced garrison. One brick! And it all came tumbling down!

An astonished Ian gasps.

IAN

Really?

Robin Hood smirks.

ROBIN HOOD

Why don't you show me what you can
do??

With Robin's tiny bow, Ian lets an toothpick loose towards an empty ginger ale. But it whizzes past the can.

He sighs.

ROBIN HOOD (CONT'D)

Worry not, Ian- One won't surpass
the great Robin Hood so quickly.

Ian smiles.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

As Marie finishes eating dinner, Ian leaves some food scraps on the ground for Robin. Rooster, sitting by Marie's chair, growls at the tiny man.

Marie whistles for her dog, though he stubbornly stays put.

Robin Hood hides as Rooster's barking get more intense.

MARIE

(to Rooster)

Come on. Now you don't want dinner?

Marie leaves a bowl of dog chow out on the other side of the room. Begrudgingly, Rooster waddles over.

Robin Hood, now hiding behind the staircase, smirks.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - EVENING

Robin and Ian peruse the bookcase.

ROBIN HOOD

Can you do me a favor, Ian?

IAN

Sure.

ROBIN HOOD

I need you to try to keep all the doors in your home open, say about an inch, so I may slide through.

IAN

Why?

ROBIN HOOD
(feigning embarrassment)
If you must know, I've had quite a
hard time hunting for the front
page while also being hunted by the
hound of the house.

IAN
Hound of the house? You mean
Rooster?

ROBIN HOOD
He may be *Rooster* to you, but to me
he's a far greater threat.

Ian nods.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ian cracks open all of the hallway doors, with stealth in mind.

Through the crack of the door to Marie's room: Her dresser vanity and a wallet splayed out on top of it.

EXT. ROW-HOME - DAY

Ian walks to his house. SUZY, a neighbor kid, pushes a FISHER-PRICE CART filled with sticks along the sidewalk.

She finds a lone stick in front of Ian's house and tosses it into the cart.

IAN
What are you doing?

SUZY
Gathering materials for a fort.
Wanna help?

IAN
Sorry, I can't.

Ian walks past her.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - DAY

Ian enters the room.

IAN
Robin?

No answer. A beat.

Ian finds a tiny note by the bookcase. In block lettering, it reads:

"ON THE HUNT"

A disappointed Ian pulls a newly purchased toy bow from his backpack. He opens the packaging and begins practicing with it.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Ian wakes up to sounds of shuffling by the bookcase.

Then, a small silhouette appears. It's a TINY COWBOY. The shadow adjusts their hat while looking into Ian's bedroom mirror.

Ian rubs his eyes. He sits up.

IAN

Hello?

The cowboy shadow freezes.

IAN (CONT'D)
Robin, is that you?

Ian squints. The shadow quickly disappears under the shelf. He rubs his eyes, and slowly gets out of bed.

He looks all around the bookcase, but there's no trace of Robin Hood -or anyone, for that matter. He sighs.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - MORNING

Ian quietly reads. A haggard Robin Hood emerges from the bookcase. He's pretty dirty, too. Ian jumps up.

IAN
(lighting up)
You're back!

ROBIN HOOD
(startled by Ian)
Y-yes, but with no front page. You
don't have schooling today?

Ian laughs.

IAN
Not on Saturday!
(beat)
Do you wanna see me fire my bow-and-arrow?

ROBIN HOOD
I'm sorry Ian, I'm much too tired
from my journey.

Ian solemnly nods. Robin goes back into the bookcase.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ian leans into Marie's room as to show her his new bow, though Marie is in the middle of dealing with a phone call.

MARIE
(stern, on phone)
No. Why would I authorize a payment
for fifteen visa gift cards? Does
that not seem fraudulent to you?
No, but, my son wouldn't-

Ian waves. Marie smiles, waving back.

MARIE (CONT'D)
(hushed)
Please, I can't wait another day
for this to clear. My credit is
already- Fine, ok. "Escalate."
Thank you.

Ian walks down the stairs.

EXT. ROW-HOME - DAY

On his stoop, Ian practices his bow and arrow on a line of soda cans. He looses an arrow and knocks a can off the top step.

Suzy approaches, impressed.

SUZY
Nice.

She pulls out a nerf gun.

SUZY (CONT'D)
Check this out.

With a flick and a pop, Suzy fires her weapon towards the top step. She knocks over a second can. Then a third.

IAN
(impressed)
Whoa, where'd you learn that?

SUZY
You wouldn't believe me even if I told you.

IAN
Oh.

An older sister, RACHEL (12), standing with arms crossed on the stoop next door, calls out to Suzy.

RACHEL
Hey Suzy!!!

Suzy ignores this and leans in close.

SUZY
Okay I'll tell you. I happen to know a very prominent wild west outlaw.

IAN
What?

RACHEL
(louder)
Suzy!!! Come here!

SUZY
(finally answering)
What??

RACHEL
Mom wants to talk to you.

SUZY
Why?

RACHEL
I don't know but she's pissed. Did you swipe her credit card again?

Suzy ignores her.

SUZY
(continuing story to Ian)
Yeah so he was ripped out straight from the pages of a storybook.
(MORE)

SUZY (CONT'D)
 -But the front page got ripped out
 too and now he's stuck here, in our
 world.

Ian's eyes widen.

IAN
 Wait-

RACHEL
 (loudest yell)
 Suzy!!!

SUZY
 Fine!! I'm coming!
 (casual, to Ian)
 See yah.

Suzy walks to her house next door.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - EVENING

Robin and Ian disassemble another mousetrap.

IAN
 Robin, are you the only one of your
 kind?

ROBIN HOOD
 Of Sherwood forest you mean? Little
 John, Friar Tuck, and the like are
 back home in my storybook world-

IAN
 No I mean-

ROBIN HOOD
 I don't understand, Ian.

Beat.

IAN
 I saw a small man come out from the
 bookcase. In a cowboy hat. And the
 neighbor says she-

ROBIN HOOD
 What a strange dream, Ian! I wear a
 hunter's cap, not a cow's hat!

IAN
 It didn't feel like a dream...
 (beat)
 (MORE)

IAN (CONT'D)
How do you know you're the only one
who can leave your storybook world?
I think the bookcase is *actually*
enchanted-

ROBIN HOOD
(skeptical)
An *enchanted* bookcase?

Ian looks to the bookcase, which is literally emblazoned with those words.

IAN
It must be what's been releasing
more storybook characters-

ROBIN HOOD
(shaking head)
No. Ian-

IAN
But I saw-

ROBIN HOOD
Ian. It's just the one book that's
enchanted.

Ian scrunches his face in perplexity.

INT. IAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

A suspicious Ian keeps one eye open.

He spies ANOTHER SHADOW IN A BIG HAT sneaking out from the bookcase.

It's a TINY MERLIN wielding a staff. A tiny beard too. He adjust his wizard garb in the mirror.

Ian's eyes follow the wizard as he creeps back into the bookcase. A minute goes by. Ian leaps out of bed.

Ian inspects the area all around the bookcase, and again finds nothing. He pulls the bookcase away from the wall. There's a slight crack in the moulding. But nothing else out of the ordinary. Ian scrunches his face.

He pushes the bookcase back into place and a couple of books fall out. He sighs. Ian bends over to puts them back in the shelf and notices a small hole in the backing. He moves more books out of the way.

The hole is a straight shot to the crack in the wall.

Ian pushes the bookcase to the side and goes right to the crack. He pries it open.

ANOTHER HOLE.

Ian gets on all fours and looks deeper into the hole. There, he sees a sprawling set of tunnels; a seemingly endless, never-ending chamber of branching passageways, cobbled together like a MAKESHIFT MINE. It's reinforced with POPSICLE STICKS.

IAN

Hello?

He squints. There's an opening towards the end, with a sliver of moonlight pouring in.

IAN (CONT'D)

Is someone down there?

No answer. Ian pulls his head out and finds a carefully folded PIECE OF PAPER tucked to the side of the hole. He unfurls it, and sees that-

-It's the FRONT PAGE to The Adventures of Robin Hood!

IAN (CONT'D)

The front page!

Ian stands up and runs to the Enchanted Bookcase.

He carefully places the front page inside The Adventures of Robin Hood. He closes one eye, bracing for magical impact.

The book does not lift up in the air, the pages do not begin to flip on their own, and a floating vortex of words does not suck Ian into the storybook world of Sherwood Forest.

Absolutely nothing happens.

Deeply confused, Ian pulls out the front page and flips it over.

It's got a TREASURE TROVE of information written in tiny block letters, almost with the appearance of something etched into an ancient stone tablet.

Ian leans in closer. He sees that it's a collection of credit card numbers and other financial information with corresponding names and addresses. Some are crossed off with the word "INACTIVE" written next to them.

Ian scratches his head. He doesn't quite understand the entire document, but he recognizes his address. He recognizes his mother's name. He knows he's been tricked somehow.

Ian gets angry. He retrieves a flashlight from his nightstand and returns to the hole with more scrutinous eyes.

Near the front of the tunnel, Ian discovers a tiny living space for one. There's a lone cot, a stack of visa gift cards, some scraps of crackers, and most curiously, a doll's wardrobe rack of felt costumes.

There are a little over a dozen outfits neatly hanging up. Among them are outfits and corresponding hats for:

A NATIVE-AMERICAN CHIEFTAN, A COWBOY,

-and ROBIN HOOD.

Ian scowls, tightly gripping the note in his hand.

ROBIN HOOD

(o.s.)

Wow, you found the front page!

A figure surprises Ian. It's Robin Hood, dressed in full WIZARD GARB: beard and all. A moment goes by.

IAN

You're not the real Robin Hood, are you?

ROBIN HOOD

Sure I am.

Robin lowers the fake beard.

ROBIN HOOD (CONT'D)

I'm in disguise, Ian! And if you give me that front page I'll let you in my merry band of misfits!

IAN

I don't think I should.

ROBIN HOOD

(sternly)

Ian. Give me the front page.

Beat. Tears in his eyes, Ian crumples the page and places it on a disassembled mousetrap near the side of the room.

ROBIN HOOD (CONT'D)
Wait, Ian!

Robin backs up into the hole as Ian resets the mousetrap and pushes it towards him. Ian then puts the bookcase back into place, covering everything.

ROBIN HOOD (CONT'D)
Come back!

Eyes to the mousetrap, Robin Hood considers his options. He adjusts his cap with a smirk.

INT. DARK CORRIDOR - DAY

In almost complete darkness, a SMALL SKELETON affixed to a mousetrap gathers dust.

Light begins to pore in. It's a human skeleton in wizard robes, clutching a boulder-sized, crumpled-up piece of paper.

INT. MESSY STORAGE ROOM - DAY

A grown IAN, having pulled the Enchanted Bookcase out towards the middle of the room, looks down at this sight.

Without missing a beat, he pushes the bookcase back in place.

And tosses The Adventures of Robin Hood into the Library Donation box.

THE END.