

## Leper

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/12264609) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/12264609>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Teen And Up Audiences</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">No Archive Warnings Apply</a>
Categories:	<a href="#">F/M</a> , <a href="#">Gen</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Robin Hood (BBC 2006)</a>
Relationships:	<a href="#">Guy of Gisborne/Marian of Knighton</a> , <a href="#">Marian of Knighton/Robin of Locksley</a>
Characters:	<a href="#">Guy of Gisborne</a> , <a href="#">Marian of Knighton</a> , <a href="#">Robin Hood</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Angst</a> , <a href="#">Major Illness</a>
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2017-10-04 Words: 2,805 Chapters: 1/1

# Leper

by [Eugeal](#)

## Summary

Twenty years ago, Guy's father was banished as a leper.  
Now, one of Gisborne's worst fears becomes real.

## Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

When Guy of Gisborne stopped wooing her, at first Marian felt relieved. But when more day passed and the knight didn't come to knock at her door, she became worried.

Gisborne had never made a secret of the fact that he was in love with her, and he had been very persistent in expressing his feelings with expensive gifts and awkward visits at her home.

Now he didn't come at all, and when she met him in the corridors of the castle, the knight avoided her, claiming to be late or to have to perform some mission for the sheriff.

The girl couldn't understand the reason of his change of behavior, and she was worried.

Maybe the sheriff was plotting again, something big this time, and Guy didn't want her to get involved in it?

She expressed this doubt to Robin, and the outlaw disappointed her, bursting into a laugh.

"Maybe Gisborne is less stupid than we thought and he realized that you don't want him.

Probably he decided that bedding some other kitchen girl was easier than hoping to marry a noblewoman like you."

Marian was outraged by Robin mocking words, but then she began to doubt that they could be true, and she felt inexplicably hurt.

She had never wanted Guy, but it didn't feel right that he could grow tired of wooing her so abruptly.

*He claimed to feel love for me. Is love so easy to dismiss?*

Guy closed the door of his room, and locked it. He was alone, now, and he leaned his back on the door, closing his eyes and letting out a shaky sigh.

He felt trapped, with no options for his future.

He had already been in a similar situation, being poor and completely alone, but he had never given up, continuing to fight to escape from his poverty and build a new future, no matter what.

Guy had succeeded, for a while.

But now his life was going to become hell again and he could do nothing to fight back.

Because this time there was no hope.

He bit into the tip of one of the fingers of his right glove, to remove it, and, once again, he stared at his hand, in a fascinated horror.

The white spot was still there, obviously. Even if Guy knew that it couldn't have miraculously disappeared, seeing it made his heart sink again.

A leper.

He was a leper just like his father.

It had begun slowly, with an unusual numbness in his fingers. Sometimes his hand prickled in a strange way, as if stung by needles, but he had paid no attention to it.

It was when he inadvertently touched a hot ember from the fireplace and felt no pain, that he got worried. He had looked at his hand: the skin was burnt and blistered, but he could feel no pain, not even the sensation of the hot coal.

He could feel nothing at all.

For a few days, while his burn was healing, he kept telling to himself that it was just a reaction to that injury: the pain must have been so strong, that his mind refused to feel it. It could happen, he had heard stories of soldiers who had kept fighting even with serious wounds, feeling no pain until the battle ended.

But he was in no battle and the pain never came.

Guy knew what it meant, even too well, but he couldn't accept it.

He had seen his own father pulling a knife out of his hand without even wincing. He had seen his father, his leper father, standing into a tomb, being banished from his home, losing everything.

While the burn healed, his hand never did: instead of the red blisters of the burn, a white spot appeared on his skin, a pale patch of skin, completely numb. And another, on the other hand. He concealed them, wearing his gloves, but the numbness was always there, reminding him that he couldn't escape from his fate.

*I am unclean. It's a punishment for my sins. It's God Himself striking me for everything I've done.*

One day, while he was wandering in the darkest corridors of the castle just to keep moving and to try to forget his anguish for a little while, he passed by the chapel.

Under Vaisey, the little chapel had been almost forgotten by everyone, a holy place in a godless castle, and nobody went there, except maybe for Marian who sometimes prayed for her sick father.

But now the chapel was empty, and Guy fearfully stepped inside, as if he was afraid that the wrath of God could strike him. He knelt in front of the altar to plead for mercy, to beg for a miracle, but he had forgotten how to pray, he couldn't find the words in his soul.

God was already striking him. Slowly, with a curse that was going to eat his body, day after day, when he was still alive.

It was the worse punishment that he could have received and he couldn't accept it, his whole mind rebelled to it, but deep inside he was afraid that he deserved this horrible fate.

Guy hid his face in his gloved hands, and wept.

He was scared, he didn't know what to do. There was *nothing* he could do.

His hopes, his dreams, his ambitions were lying at his feet, shattered, like the fragmented light entering from the stained glass window of the chapel.

Guy had stopped wooing Marian, and he began avoiding her company.

He loved her with all his heart, he had dreamed that she would be his wife in time, but now that dream was dead. How could he court her when he was plagued with a horrible disease? He kept away from her, but he couldn't help looking at her from a distance, when she couldn't see him, hidden in the shadows.

Her supple, harmonious figure was a balm for his soul and a torture at the same time. Seeing her from afar was the only joy that was left to him, and at the same time a stab in his heart because she incarnated all his lost dreams. He could never have her now, but he wanted to secretly watch over her for as long as he could.

At the same time, he grew impatient with the sheriff. He had to obey him, to keep doing his work as usual if he wanted to hide his condition, but Guy suddenly could see Vaisey as the evil, cruel little man who he was.

Now the sheriff didn't represent anymore a way to get power, Guy knew that power couldn't save him and he had stopped pursuing it, so he had lost every reason he could have to perform Vaisey's evil orders. What was the point of doing actions that would only weigh more on his already dark conscience, when he wasn't going to get any advantage from them? He had thought that having power and wealth was necessary to survive, to provide for a wife, for Marian. For her, he was ready to sell his soul to a devil like Vaisey, but now what was the point of it?

He still obeyed him to avoid being discovered as a leper, but his heart wasn't in it.

Guy was always afraid to make a mistake, to betray himself in front of the others, and he could only relax when he went back to the privacy of his lodgings, but there, fear was always waiting for him.

When he was alone, he couldn't distract himself from his fears, he couldn't avoid thinking of the dark future that was expecting him.

He could still see his father standing in an open grave, with all the village gathered around him, and the priest who deemed him unclean and banished him from his home, from his family.

"I have no family," Guy whispered to himself, "It should be easier..."

But it wasn't.

He was alone and he was afraid.

Marian smiled when Robin caressed her cheek, her heart filled with love for him. The outlaw was smiling too, but when she told him that she had no news for him, he looked a bit disappointed.

"I need to know the plans of the sheriff, he's plotting something, I am sure."

"Guy doesn't speak to me anymore. Once it was easy to get informations from him, but now he goes away every time I meet him. I can't understand why."

"It sounds like you are sorry for this," Robin said, jealous.

"I'm just worried, I did nothing to estrange him, but he began shunning me without any apparent reason. Maybe he found out something about me. About us."

Robin looked at her, alarmed.

"If so, you might be in danger. Come to the forest with me."

"I can't leave my father, you know that! But I'll be careful, I promise. I'll find out what's wrong with Guy, and I'll search for another way to get informations from the sheriff."

The girl accompanied these words with a kiss, and then Robin went away.

From his hiding place, in the shadows, Guy looked at them, his heart even more broken than before.

Guy walked back to his rooms, trembling.

So Marian loved Hood.

He felt enraged, betrayed. She had faked her kindness to him, just to give informations to Robin Hood!

For a moment he had been about to unsheathe his sword and run at them, to kill them both. His hand had tightened on the hilt of the sword, and he had stopped: he couldn't feel it, his fingers were numb.

He had let his hand fall, remembering that revenge was useless now: he was a leper, dead to the world if anyone found it out.

Marian could never be his wife, so why should it matter if she loved Hood?

Probably it was even better for everyone.

Guy checked that the door of his room was closed before removing his gloves and staring at his marked hands. He had similar spots on his feet too, and it was only a matter of time before he got some on his face.

That would be the end of him, the moment when he could no longer hide his shame.

Every morning he checked his face in a mirror, carefully, to see if there were noticeable signs of the disease on him. For now he had been spared, but it wouldn't last forever, his days were numbered.

He rubbed his eyes with a sigh: they were dry, burning, and he knew from experience that

this was another sign of the disease.

*I don't want to die alone. Please God, I know that I have no right to ask anything, but I beg You. I've been alone for all my life, don't let me die alone.*

At the Council of Nobles, Marian kept her eyes on Guy.

The knight was standing behind Vaisey's seat, in his usual stance with his arms crossed in front of him, but the girl knew that something was amiss. Guy was there in body, but his mind was miles and miles away, and he was only faking to pay attention to the sheriff's words, Marian was sure of it.

Something was troubling him, and she had to find out what it was. She looked at him, now that she could: Gisborne kept avoiding her, but he had to be present at the council.

He looked pale and thinner than usual and she wondered if he was unwell. She had asked the servants of the kitchen why Sir Guy didn't take his meals in the banquet hall anymore, and the girls had told her that he was eating in his room, alone, and that most of his meals returned to the kitchen almost untouched.

When the council ended, Marian noticed that Guy went away immediately, avoiding the direct light of the torches, and she was quick to follow him.

Guy took the darkest, secondary corridors to get to his lodgings, and Marian wondered why. Hiding in the shadows, she waited for him to open the door and enter his rooms, then she darted forward, following him and closing the door behind her back.

Gisborne turned, startled, and looked at her in horror.

"Marian! What are you doing here?!"

The girl stared at him, surprised by his reaction. It was almost as if he was frightened by her.

"I came to see if I offended you somehow. You are avoiding me, Sir Guy, after all you said in the past."

Guy seemed to struggle for air, then he turned his back to her, to hide his emotion. His heart was pounding, and he couldn't understand why she had followed him.

Her words... They sounded almost as if she cared for him.

But he couldn't allow that. He steeled himself before replying her.

*I am dead. Dead men can't love.*

"I don't see why you should care," he said, coldly. "You shouldn't be here, Hood could be jealous."

Marian froze, wondering if she had heard well.

"I can't imagine why he should." Marian said, trying to sound unconcerned. "I have nothing to do with Hood."

Guy shook his head, letting out a low, sad laugh.

"Don't treat me as a fool, Marian, I've seen you. You were with him. You kissed him."

The girl was about to reply, to find some excuse, but she closed her mouth, ashamed to tell him other lies when the truth was so evident.

"Are you going to arrest me?" She asked, trying to be brave, to hide her fear.

Guy turned to look at her. His eyes were sad and piercing, so very blue, and she had the impression that he could look into her soul. He kept silent for a while, staring at her without uttering a word.

She stared back, wondering why she was feeling so sad all of a sudden. She had despised Guy's actions, she had never welcomed his attentions and now she knew that she should be afraid of his revenge, but all she could feel was a deep sadness, the same sensation that she had felt when Robin left for the Holy Land so many years ago.

*It's like if we are saying goodbye. It's because he has decided to kill me?*

“Go.” Guy whispered.

Marian looked at him, in disbelief.

“What?”

“Go. Run to the forest, be with him. Hopefully Hood will be able to protect you.”

“My father...”

“I’ll have him escorted to Kirklees Abbey, he’ll be safe there, you have my word. Now go.”

Marian made a step forward. She couldn’t believe that Guy was setting her free, that he was allowing her to run away from the castle.

She knew that she had to take the chance and hurry to go before he changed his mind, but she couldn’t. She had to know.

“Why?”

Guy shook his head, and Marian thought that he looked close to tears, but his eyes were dry.

“I can’t have you, now I know. This is the only way to protect you, the only thing I can do for you. I love you, Marian, I always will.”

The girl was moved by his words, by the desperation on his face, and she went closer to hug him, to try to soothe his sorrow and thank him, to tell him that she was in love with Robin, but that she cared for him, to offer him her friendship, if she couldn’t give him her love.

But Guy pulled back with a start, slamming his back against the wall in the haste to avoid her touch.

“No! Stay away from me!” He cried, upset. “Leave! Leave now!”

Marian stared at him, bewildered by his reaction, then her gaze fell on a heap of bandages on the table near the window. Marian looked at those strips of cloth, frowning a little.

“Are you injured, Sir Guy? Why do you need all these bandages?”

“Get out!” Guy roared, unsheathing his sword, “Go away! Go away now!”

Marian froze for a moment, really scared now, then she turned and ran away, without turning back.

Trembling, Guy reached the door and slammed it close, then he dropped the sword to the floor and hid his face in his gloved hands.

She was gone.

She would leave the castle and live her life, free, with the man she loved.

It was the right thing to do, and Guy knew it.

*I will never see her again.*

He wanted to weep, but he couldn’t, it was as if all his tears had dried up, his soul a barren desert. So, he just dropped to the floor and leaned his head against the door, closing his eyes.

*Now I am really alone.*

A leper.

## End Notes

Once I read that the illness can develop the first symptoms even many years after the contagion, so I thought: "What if Guy got it from his father when he was a child?"

I tried to be medically accurate about leprosy. Numbness, discolored spots on the skin, dry eyes are some of the early symptoms of the disease and usually they begin on the colder areas of the body (hands, feet, nose etc).

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!