



Bonus Scene:

Robin stood in front of Much, Jemma’s staff in her hands and raised as though she were going to swing for Much’s head. Much, with a look of intense concentration on her round face, gripped a stick and let Jemma reposition her feet and hands as necessary.

“Steady your weight,” Jemma said quietly. “You want to have a strong base, but you need to be able to move quickly.”

“If I bring this down, you almost want to rise to meet it instead of letting it push you back,” Robin added.

“Stay ahead of it, then.” Much braced, and Robin brought the staff down slowly enough for Much to anticipate the movement and react accordingly.

“Balance.” Jemma adjusted her elbow. “The last thing you want is to be knocked on your arse because then you’ve got to dodge the attack *and* get back on your feet, which is tricky.”

Much smiled wryly. “Is that why Robin shoots them from a distance?”

She giggled. “Probably, but have you seen her when she’s got to use her bow like a staff?”

“It’s a good, solid yew bow.” Robin put a little more pressure against Much’s stick to see what would happen, and grinned brightly when the younger girl stayed strong and balanced. She even pushed back a bit, and Robin’s grin sharpened.

Robin leaned away, slid the staff down her palms to a different grip, and drew back in preparation to jab for somewhere in Much's midriff.

"Now, if you're very quick and confident, then you can swing down and knock it aside." Jemma guided Much's hands and arms into the movement, and used the stick to deflect Robin's attack. It happened slowly, so Much could ease into it.

"That's going to hurt if you get hit with it," Robin said, snapping her arms back as though she were going to try stabbing forward again. "It's going to crack or break your ribs if it connects, and there's no shame in jumping out of the way."

Jemma put her hands on Much's waist and helped her swerve her hips to the side and out of the line of fire from the staff in Robin's hands. "Swerve first, and then try to knock it out of the way. If you can somehow knock it out of her hands, that's great, but usually you won't get someone to part with their weapon."

"Especially men," Robin added. "That's who you'll be against, most likely."

Much froze.

Robin lowered her staff and rested one end of it on the toe of her boot like she frequently did with her bow. She rubbed the side of her nose and softly said, "It's...it's ugly. There's nothing dignified about it because someone is actively trying to hurt you and your focus is on making sure they can't."

She lowered the stick. "And you want to hurt them back."

"Only to give yourself enough time and space to get away," Jemma added gently. "If it comes down to it, whether it's them or you, we'd always rather have you."

"It's a difficult choice to make, Much." Robin reached out and wrapped her fingers around Much's wrist. "We'd rather none of you lot – you, Kitty, and Maggie – have to make it."

The implication sunk in a bit, and Much took a deep breath only to blow it out again. "Right." She readjusted her grip on the stick and raised it once more. "Again?"

"Absolutely," Jemma said. "Remember what I told you about your elbows."

Robin smiled sharply and tightened her fingers around the staff.