

CAST

ROBIN

MARION

FRIAR TUCK

LITTLE JOHN

WILL SCARLET

MUCH

NASIR

GILNAR

THE ABBOT OF THORNTON ABBEY

BAILIFF (GILBERT)

REEVE

MILLER (THOMAS)

MILLER'S WIFE (MARY)

BLACKSMITH

DRIVER

ELENA

VILLAGER

Non-speaking parts / Extras

VILLAGERS (No children)

HAYWARD

HARP-PLAYER

MONKS AT THORNTON ABBEY

1. EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST DAY 1.

Open on a deer. It's standing in a glade, caught in the sunlight. All its senses are alert. It's being hunted.

CUT TO:

REVERSE ANGLE

MUCH presses forward stealthily. His whole face is flushed with excitement and anticipation. He's been tracking this deer for quite a time. He loads an arrow. Slowly, he takes aim.

CUT TO:

RESUME ON DEER

The animal is alarmed. It turns and gallops off.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON MUCH

He's puzzled. He didn't make any noise - so what frightened the deer?

CUT TO:

WIDER ANGLE

MUCH lowers the bow and pursues the deer.

2. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 2.

The sounds of the forest fade and we hear an unpleasant giggling. As the camera pulls back, the image of MUCH, running, is seen to be that of a reflection in a dark pool of water. The camera pulls back further revealing, first, a black-cloaked figure hunched over the pool, then some of the stones that make up a mystic circle, surrounding the pool.

CUT TO:

LONG SHOT

The second angle reveals the whole scene: a stone circle surrounding a pool. A solitary figure looking into the water. But now we are too far away to make out who it is. The wind moans softly.

3. EXT. THE OUTLAWS' CAMP DAY 3.

The OUTLAWS have been sitting round a fire, waiting for MUCH to bring home their lunch. But as we join them, ROBIN springs to his feet.

ROBIN

I'm going to look for him.

MARION looks at him in surprise.

MARION

Why?

ROBIN
He's been gone too long.

CUT TO:

WIDER ANGLE

SCARLET is hungry and impatient. But LITTLE JOHN senses ROBIN'S mood. He gets to his feet.

LITTLE JOHN
I'll come with you.

ROBIN and LITTLE JOHN leave together. WILL SCARLET shakes his head as if to say "What is it this time?"

4. EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST DAY 4.

The deer has stopped again at the top of a hillock. MUCH edges forward. He can get a clear shot, but he's not close enough. There is a clearing between him and the hillock. If he crosses it, he'll be in a better position. But he hesitates.

GULNAR
(Whispered v/o)
Go on!

MUCH starts to sprint across the clearing. He's about half-way across when the ground gives way beneath him. At the same moment, the deer sprints away.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The camera looks up from the bottom of a dark pit. As MUCH crashes through, the sun pours in with a tumult of leaves and branches. We can see this from various angles, the fall repeating itself over and over again in painful slow motion.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The end result leaves MUCH, broken and bloodied, at the bottom of the pit. He is surrounded by wooden spikes, slanting upwards. He lies face down. One spike has stabbed him.

5. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 5.

The image shimmers and disappears - seen again in the dark mirror of the pond. GULNAR laughs.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

GULNAR turns and walks away. Once again we don't have time to see his face. The wind moans.

FADE IN

OPENING TITLES

FADE OUT

6. EXT.

THE OUTLAWS', CAMP

DAY 6.

The weather has changed. It is cloudy, colder. FRIAR TUCK is applying a bandage to a terrible wound in MUCH'S stomach. MARION is bathing the boy's face. NASIR holds a bowl containing a herbal poultice. A little to one side, ROBIN is talking to SCARLET and LITTLE JOHN.

ROBIN

It was a forester's trap.

LITTLE JOHN

For animals or for us?

SCARLET

To them there's no difference.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

Shaking his head, FRIAR TUCK gets up. He goes over to ROBIN, wiping his hands which are stained red.

FRIAR TUCK

I've done what I can, but it's not enough. He needs help.

ROBIN

Will he live?

FRIAR TUCK

He's strong. But it's a deep wound. He can't stay out here.

ROBIN

We have to take him to a village.

LITTLE JOHN

Wickham?

ROBIN

No. It's too far.

SCARLET

There's nowhere. That's where we are. Nowhere.

MARION

(Calling)

Robin!

CUT TO:

CLOSE TWO-SHOT ON MARION & MUCH

ROBIN runs over to them and kneels beside MUCH. MUCH is in a bad way; feverish, his breath rattling.

MARION

He was asking for you.

ROBIN lays a hand on MUCH'S shoulder. MUCH'S eyes open. His voice is a tortured whisper as he tries to warn ROBIN.

MUCH
Robin...

ROBIN
I'm here.

MUCH
A voice. I heard a voice.

ROBIN
Ssssh...

ROBIN looks round at SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN & FRIAR TUCK as MUCH'S eyes close.

ROBIN
We've got to find a village.

7. INT. THE SMITHY AT CROMM CRUAC DAY 7.

Although what follows is separated into its constituent scenes, it would ideally be a single, long tracking shot. Nothing about the village rings quite true. It all looks too much like those medieval illustrations we all know. There are no children. The weather is beautiful. The colours are a little too vivid. It's not quite dirty enough. Everyone is doing what's expected of them...like automated puppets in a fairground machine.

The sequence starts with a close shot of flame (a hint of what's to come) as a BLACK-SMITH pulls a bar of glowing metal out of his furnace and carries it to the anvil where he beats it into shape. Outside in the street, we can hear a rowdy procession of VILLAGERS passing.

8. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 8.

A procession of VILLAGERS - in a festive mood - passes. They are carrying a caricature of a SHREW on their shoulders. Her face is set absolutely stiff - outrage and indignation.

VILLAGERS
A scold! A scold!

The camera follows them, then lets them pass, revealing (behind them) a make-shift court where the BAILIFF, carrying a staff of office, and the REEVE are sitting in judgement on the MILLER. A jury of ten VILLAGERS is in attendance. The court would probably take place beneath a prominent tree. There is a seriousness about the proceedings that is almost self-parodic.

BAILIFF
Name?

MILLER
Thomas the Miller.

BAILIFF
And the charge?

REEVE
That he did defile the common spring.

The VILLAGERS murmur and nod their heads gravely.

BAILIFF
What say you, Thomas the Miller?

MILLER
It's a lie.

REEVE
He was seen by the carpenter, John Merriman.

BAILIFF
And where is John Merriman?

VILLAGER
With the miller's wife!

This wisecrack is greeted by general laughter from the VILLAGERS. The BAILIFF bangs his staff.

BAILIFF
Fined three shillings!

9. EXT. THE FIELDS AROUND CROMM CRUAC DAY 9.

But we barely hear the verdict for the camera is on the move again, sweeping round to pan across the fields where the VILLAGERS are sowing the crop, carrying the seeds in a sort of apron around their necks. VILLAGE WOMEN are moving towards them, carrying lunch.

In the far corner of the field, a stray cow has broken in. A horn rings out, blown by the HAYWARD. At once, some of the VILLAGERS run towards the cow to chase it away. The camera continues to pan across the scene, arriving at...

10. EXT. A POOL OUTSIDE CROMM CRUAC DAY 10.

LONG SHOT

The SCOLD has been loaded into the cucking-stool. She's being ducked - to the great delight of the VILLAGERS.

11. EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST DAY 11.

A stark contrast to all the above. It is drizzling. NASIR & SCARLET are carrying MUCH on a make-shift stretcher. MUCH is in a fevered sleep. LITTLE JOHN is close by him. FRIAR TUCK has been looking at his patient, but now he lingers to wait for ROBIN and MARION who bring up the rear.

FRIAR TUCK
He's getting worse.

MARION
We've got to get him to shelter.

FRIAR TUCK
Yes. But the journey's killing him.

ROBIN
Elsdon. If we can reach Elsdon...

CUT TO:

HIGH ANGLE

The procession continues through the drizzle.

12. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 12.

The camera draws back to reveal that once again, the OUTLAWS are being observed through the magic pool. The sorcerer - GULNAR - is still watching them. We still cannot see his face. He leans forward. He is holding a rod - like a long wand. He touches the water.

GULNAR

Now...

MIX TO:

13. EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST DAY 13.

The shimmering water provides the mix for a cart to appear - suddenly trundling along the hitherto empty road behind the OUTLAWS. The effect is not too obviously supernatural. It could come out of the mist, or over the brow of a slight hill.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The OUTLAWS hear the cart, stop and turn. The DRIVER also reins in and comes to a halt. ROBIN is now at the front, facing him.

DRIVER

Good day.

ROBIN

Good day. Are you riding to Elsdén?

DRIVER

Elsden? I don't think I know any Elsdén. No. I'm on my way home.

The DRIVER gestures to the sacks on his cart.

DRIVER

Carrying salt for curing.

ROBIN

We need help.

DRIVER

In a bad way, is he?

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE FAVOURING ROBIN

ROBIN'S head turns from the DRIVER to MUCH, then back again. How did the DRIVER know so quickly that MUCH was injured? He can see the stretcher, but not the body on it.

ROBIN

He fell into a forester's trap.
He needs warmth and shelter.

LITTLE JOHN steps forward.

LITTLE JOHN

How far is your village from here,
friend?

DRIVER

Not far. Not far. We don't have no
physician or surgeon, mind. But
he'll be well looked after.

ROBIN

What's the village called?

DRIVER

Cromm Cruac.

CUT TO:

B.C.U. ON FRIAR TUCK

The name fills him with instant dread. But he doesn't yet know why. The camera pulls
back to reveal that MARION has noted his reaction.

ROBIN

(Voice-over)

Cromm Cruac?

SCARLET

(Voice-over)

I never heard of it.

CUT TO:

RESUME ON DRIVER

DRIVER

It's a small place. Cut off, like.
But he'll be welcome there. You'll
all be.

CUT TO:

TWO-SHOT ON LITTLE JOHN & ROBIN

ROBIN looks at LITTLE JOHN. LITTLE JOHN nods. The meeting is a coincidence perhaps, but
a fortunate one. But ROBIN can't go in under false pretenses.

ROBIN

(To the DRIVER)

We're outlaws.

DRIVER

It don't matter to me who you are.
Put him in the back. He can lie on
the salt.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

SCARLET & NASIR carry MUCH forward. Helped by LITTLE JOHN, they lift him onto the cart.

MARION

Robin...?

ROBIN walks over to MARION. FRIAR TUCK is lingering, close by.

CUT TO:

THREE-SHOT ON MARION, ROBIN & FRIAR TUCK

FRIAR TUCK

Cromm Cruac.

ROBIN

What's wrong?

FRIAR TUCK

I'm not going there and if you want my advice you won't go there either. I've heard that name. I don't know where. But I don't like it.

ROBIN

What are you talking about?

FRIAR TUCK

I'm not going.

ROBIN

Look, Tuck, I don't have time to argue with you...

MARION

He means it, Robin.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

MUCH has been loaded onto the cart. NASIR, SCARLET & LITTLE JOHN are waiting for ROBIN. The DRIVER is unperturbed.

SCARLET

What now?

CUT TO:

RESUME ON THREE-SHOT

ROBIN

If Much stays out here, he'll die. We don't have any choice.

FRIAR TUCK

Aye, that's just it... We don't.

ROBIN looks back at MUCH, then at FRIAR TUCK. He just hasn't got the time to cope with this sudden turn-about and doesn't even take TUCK that seriously. And in his own way, he probably blames himself for MUCH'S accident. That's why his only thoughts are with the boy.

ROBIN

You can't go back to the camp alone. The wood's full of soldiers. You know that.

MARION

I'll go with him.

Now ROBIN is both puzzled and exasperated. But MARION saw TUCK'S reaction to the name of the village.

ROBIN

What about Much?

MARION

You'll look after Much. We can always join you later.

Another pause. But ROBIN doesn't have time to argue.

ROBIN

All right. If that's what you want.

ROBIN walks away to join the other OUTLAWS.

FRIAR TUCK

Don't go, Robin.

ROBIN pauses, then shakes his head and continues.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBIN rejoins the others.

SCARLET

What's wrong with them?

ROBIN

They're not coming.

SCARLET

Why not?

ROBIN

It doesn't matter. Come on.

The cart trundles forward, ROBIN, NASIR, SCARLET & LITTLE JOHN walking beside it. MARION and FRIAR TUCK are left looking after it.

FRIAR TUCK
Cromm Cruac...

14. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 14.

Later the same day. The VILLAGERS are returning home, some carrying sticks for fires, others holding their agricultural instruments. Again, there's the feeling that this is all an elaborate ritual. The BAILIFF is seen walking towards his house. He goes in, passing from light to shadow.

15. INT. THE BAILIFF'S HOUSE DAY 15.

The BAILIFF'S house is one of the more affluent in the village. It has a bed, a trestle table, a few stools and a wardrobe. Light comes in from an unglazed window. This light will illuminate the BAILIFF but his visitor will remain shrouded in shadow.

GILNAR
(Voice-over)
Gilbert!

The BAILIFF falls to his knees.

BAILIFF
Master...

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

GILNAR moves out of the corner. But we see only his shape, not his identity.

GILNAR
Your visitors are about to arrive,
Gilbert. Have the preparations been
made?

BAILIFF
Yes, master.

GILNAR
Then go to them. Make them feel...
at home.

16. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 16.

The cart draws into the village as the sun begins to set. The VILLAGERS gather round. Friendly, smiling, they are still strangely silent. One exception is the MILLER. He can't believe that strangers have arrived. It is a development (something out of the ordinary) that will influence his decision to leave. The BAILIFF walks out of his house to greet them.

BAILIFF
You are welcome. Welcome to Cromm
Cruac.

ROBIN
Our friend is hurt.

BAILIFF
He will be tended to.

The BAILIFF makes a gesture and four VILLAGERS spring forward to help MUCH down from the cart. The OUTLAWS look around them. They're too concerned with MUCH to be suspicious. And there's nothing specific you could be suspicious about. It's like the opening moments of a nightmare. Slowly, helplessly, they're being drawn into it.

LITTLE JOHN
I'll go with him.

BAILIFF
No!

The word has been spoken a little too harshly. The BAILIFF smiles.

BAILIFF
For our healers to do their work,
they must be left in peace. You
can see him again in the morning.
Tonight, there's a feast. It's not
often we have visitors.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE FAVOURING ROBIN

ROBIN watches MUCH being carried into the village. Now he turns to the BAILIFF. He remembers what TUCK said. And he's aware of a growing sense of unease. So his next words are spoken both to assert himself and to test the BAILIFF'S reaction.

ROBIN
My name is Robin Hood.

BAILIFF
You are welcome, Robin Hood. You
are all welcome. Come! I'll show
you to your lodgings.

CUT TO:

REACTION ON LITTLE JOHN

The BAILIFF has never heard of ROBIN. LITTLE JOHN is startled.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The OUTLAWS follow the BAILIFF into the village. They pass the BAILIFF'S house. GILNAR watches from the window - but we see only his eyes.

17. EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST DAY 17.

A little later in the day. FRIAR TUCK & MARION are walking hurriedly through the forest. For once it is TUCK who sets the pace. He is no longer the jolly, fat friar. He's deadly serious...and something else.

MARION
This isn't the way to the camp.

FRIAR TUCK
We're not going to the camp.

- 12 -

MARION
Where are we going, then?

FRIAR TUCK
To Thornton Abbey.

MARION
Why?

FRIAR TUCK stops and turns to MARION.

CUT TO:

CLOSE TWO-SHOT

FRIAR TUCK
Let me ask you a question. Why did
you leave Robin? Why did you come
with me?

MARION pauses before answering.

MARION
Because I saw something I'd never
seen before. I can see it now.

FRIAR TUCK
What?

MARION
You're afraid.

It's a fact, not an accusation. FRIAR TUCK nods.

FRIAR TUCK
Come on...

CUT TO:

WIDER ANGLE

The two set off again through the wood.

18. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC NIGHT 18.

ESTABLISHING SHOT

Night has fallen on the village. We hear distant music - played on a small harp, a pipe and a bell to mark time. People are singing, but the words are indistinct.

19. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC NIGHT 19.

To the above can be added the babble of a feast, which is being held in a large barn. ROBIN steps out and walks into the centre of the village. He is unhappy - no longer in control. Again, the words of the song are indistinct. The camera follows him as he walks through the village.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON ROBIN

He turns and looks back at the barn. A hand reaches out of the darkness for him and he is pulled back.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The MILLER slams ROBIN against a wall. The MILLER is desperate - terrified.

ROBIN

Who are you?

MILLER

The Miller. Thomas the Miller.

ROBIN

What do you...?

MILLER

Listen to me, Robin Hood. Listen to me! You've got to leave here.

ROBIN

Why?

The MILLER looks around him - afraid of being overheard.

MILLER

You should never have come. Get out of here - now - while you still can.

That's all he has the time and the courage to say. The MILLER lurches back into the darkness and runs out of the village. ROBIN watches him go, then turns back to the barn.

20. INT.

THE BARN AT CROMM CRUAC

NIGHT 20.

ROBIN walks back into the barn.

Long trestle-tables have been laid out. There is food in abundance: a fabulous crop and a whole pig, turning on a spit. All the VILLAGERS are there, laughing, passing the mead, joining in the song which is performed by the HAYWARD & another VILLAGER playing a small harp and pipe. The MILLER'S WIFE keeps time with a small bell. NASIR, LITTLE JOHN & SCARLET are at the top of a table.

The following lyric (?) can be used throughout the banquet scenes. It might have been improvised around local events.

SONG

There was a man. He had a wife,
Her voice as sharp as a shaving-knife.
She scolded him from dusk to dawn
He wished that he had ne'er been born.
But then she went to the cucking-stool
And now she never talks at all.

REFRAIN

Though winter come, the wind be cold,
The fields be bare and empty,
Cromm Cruac's kin sup Sovan night
With milk and corn a-plenty.

ROBIN rejoins the OUTLAWS. LITTLE JOHN is also uneasy and glad to see him. NASIR is suspicious. This is all very foreign to him. But SCARLET has been drinking. He is more at home.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON OUTLAWS

ROBIN
I think we should go.

SCARLET
Go...where?

ROBIN
I want to find Much and leave.

LITTLE JOHN
Aye...I'm with you.

SCARLET
Why should we leave? We're welcome here.

LITTLE JOHN
Too welcome. All this...it's like they were expecting us.

ELENA
(Voice-over)
Will you dance with me?

CUT TO:

B.C.U. ON SCARLET

Shock...disbelief...pleasure. The music and the general babble fade into the distance.

MIX TO:

INSERT

The Brabannon mercenaries bear down on a young woman - a clip from HERNE'S SON (Scene 32).

MIX TO:

REVERSE ANGLE

A young, beautiful girl smiles beguilingly with a touch of coyness.

ELENA
(To SCARLET)
Will you dance with me?

SCARLET
Elena...

ELENA reaches out.

ELENA

Come on!

ROBIN

Will...

But SCARLET doesn't even hear him. He is completely captivated. He moves forward with her to the dance area.

CUT TO:

RESUME ON ROBIN, LITTLE JOHN & NASIR

NASIR

Elena.....?

LITTLE JOHN

It's the name of his wife. His
dead wife.

LITTLE JOHN turns to look at the receding figure of SCARLET. Now all three OUTLAWS are deeply worried.

21. EXT. JUST OUTSIDE CROMM CRUAC NIGHT 21.

The wind is howling. Thunder rumbles in the air. The MILLER runs from the village, then climbs a narrow, winding path that is the only way up a steep embankment. The briars tear at him. The wind stings his eyes. He is desperate.

22. INT. THE BARN AT CROMM CRUAC NIGHT 22.

The village band strikes up again.

23. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE NIGHT 23.

The MILLER reaches the top of the hill. The stone circle is in front of him. He looks around him. There is nobody in sight. He moves forward, propelled by the wind, drawn into the circle itself.

24. INT. THE BARN AT CROMM CRUAC NIGHT 24.

The VILLAGERS dance. The tempo quickens.

25. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE NIGHT 25.

The sorcerer - GILNAR - has appeared as if from nowhere. We still don't see his face.

GILNAR

Did you really think you could get
away?

The MILLER looks about him. DRUIDS have appeared, surrounding him. They edge in towards him. They carry swords. The MILLER prostrates himself before GILNAR.

MILLER

Please...master...don't kill me.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON GILNAR

With a seering crash of thunder, his identity is revealed.

GULNAR

How can I kill you when you're
already dead?

The circle of DRUIDS closes in, their swords raised.

26. INT. A HOUSE IN CROMM CRUAC NIGHT 26.

B.C.U. ON MUCH

MUCH opens his eyes and screams.

MUCH

Robin!

27. INT. THE BARN AT CROMM CRUAC NIGHT 27.

SCARLET & ELENA whirl round and round, faster and faster. ROBIN, LITTLE JOHN & NASIR look on helplessly.

28. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE NIGHT 28.

MILLER'S P.O.V.

The swords flash down. At last the DRUIDS pull back. GULNAR is left standing over the corpse. He laughs.

COMMERCIAL BREAK

29. EXT. THE APPROACH TO THORNTON ABBEY DAY 29.

Dawn. FRIAR TUCK and MARION are making fast progress. But once the abbey comes into sight, FRIAR TUCK falters and stops. Something is evidently wrong.

MARION
Thornton Abbey?

FRIAR TUCK
Thornton Abbey, same as ever. I
never thought I'd see it again.

A long pause. FRIAR TUCK is unwilling to continue towards it.

FRIAR TUCK
I was seventeen years old when I
first came here, Marion. You
wouldn't have recognized me then.
That was before this. (He rubs
his tonsure). Aye - and this. (He
pats his stomach). Eleven years I
spent in there, first as a novice,
then as a cloistered monk. Eleven
years!

MARION
Why have you come back?

FRIAR TUCK
For the library. The abbot used to
say it was the best in England.

MARION is bemused by FRIAR TUCK'S discomfiture.

MARION
So what's the trouble?

FRIAR TUCK
The abbot. That's the trouble. That
was always the trouble.

FRIAR TUCK motions to continue.

FRIAR TUCK
(Gloomily)
You'll see.

30. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRIAC DAY 30.

ESTABLISHING SHOT

Early morning. The VILLAGERS are leaving for the fields.

31. INT. A HOUSE IN CROMM CRIAC DAY 31.

C.U. ON ROBIN

He is lying asleep, wrapped in a blanket. He starts and wakes up.

CUT TO:

ROBIN'S P.O.V.

LITTLE JOHN is lying on the ground having also just woken up.

LITTLE JOHN
Good morrow.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBIN nods briefly.

ROBIN
I...had a nightmare.

LITTLE JOHN
Just the one? I was having nightmares before I even got to sleep.

ROBIN looks about him and sees a crumpled blanket where NASIR had gone to bed.

ROBIN
Where's Nasir?

LITTLE JOHN
He'd gone before I woke up. Do you think...?

ROBIN
Nasir can look after himself. I want to see Much.

32. EXT. JUST OUTSIDE CROM CRUACH DAY 32.

NASIR moves forward, following the path that the MILLER took: the single, winding track that leads up to the stone circle. This sequence and the one that follows has a curious dream-like quality. Although alert, waiting for danger, NASIR is only half-awake.

GULNAR
(Whispered v/o)
Nasir...

NASIR follows the voice.

33. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 33.

NASIR reaches the stone circle and is drawn into it. A figure steps out from behind one of the stones. It is a Saracen ASSASSIN, dressed in black, his face masked. The figure draws two swords.

CUT TO:

REACTION ON NASIR

Again...a nightmare. NASIR doesn't know who the figure is. He doesn't know why they must fight. He just knows that fight they must. He draws his two swords...

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

NASIR and the ASSASSIN fight...a truly deadly contest made more deadly by its night-marish quality. The ASSASSIN is anonymous. There's no reason for the fight. It may be possible in the cutting to give the ASSASSIN a supernatural quality. He's never quite where you expect him to be. And he's very fast - as skilled as NASIR.

But still NASIR wins. Although it seems impossible, NASIR gets the better of him and cuts him down.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The wind blows softly. All is silent. NASIR looks at the body, drawn to it. Who was the ASSASSIN? NASIR kneels down and reaches for the mask.

CUT TO:

CLOSE TWO-SHOT

The mask is torn away. ROBIN'S face is revealed. NASIR reacts with horror...horror that will turn to madness.

GILNAR
(Whispered v/o)

Nasir...

NASIR looks up over his shoulder. GILNAR is standing over him.

34. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 34.

ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN are in the centre of the village. A few VILLAGERS pass along the streets, smiling at them, yet barely aware of them. To the VILLAGERS, everything is as it always is. Nothing's wrong. The REEVE passes, carrying a basket that's overflowing with fruit...much of it out-of-season and therefore quite impossible. ROBIN stops him.

ROBIN
We're looking for our friend.
The one who was hurt.

REEVE
He's there.

The REEVE gestures with his head and then continues on his way. ROBIN turns round.

CUT TO:

ROBIN'S P.O.V.

MUCH crosses the village street carrying a piece of broken agricultural equipment and disappears into the smithy.

CUT TO:

TWO-SHOT ON ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN

They exchange looks, then go after MUCH.

35. INT. THE SMITHY AT CROMM CRUAC DAY 35.

As ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN enter, the BLACKSMITH is clearing out the furnace prior to heating it up again while MUCH - now working as his assistant - dismantles the ploughshare (or whatever) for repairs. The BLACKSMITH sees them first.

BLACKSMITH
Good morning to you.

ROBIN
(Ignoring him)
Much!

MUCH looks up. He recognizes ROBIN, though only as someone from a long distant past. In a way, he's no longer MUCH. He's colder, more adult. An automaton.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN confront MUCH. There's a pause. Faced with the impossible, they don't quite know what to say.

ROBIN
We're leaving, Much.

MUCH nods. He doesn't care whether ROBIN stays or goes.

ROBIN
You're coming with us.

MUCH
I can't.

MUCH gestures at the ploughshare.

MUCH
There's work to be done.

ROBIN
What's happened to you? What
are you doing here?

BLACKSMITH
He's working for me.

LITTLE JOHN turns on the BLACKSMITH.

LITTLE JOHN
(Hostile)
You stay out of this.

CUT TO:

TWO SHOT ON ROBIN & MUCH

ROBIN tries a more gentle approach.

ROBIN
Do you know who I am?

MUCH
Aye. I know who you are.

ROBIN
Who am I, Much?

MUCH
You're outlaws. You both are.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

LITTLE JOHN
What have they done to him?

MUCH
They haven't done nothing to me.
I'm all right.

ROBIN
John...

LITTLE JOHN moves forward and grabs hold of MUCH, pinning his arms. MUCH struggles.

MUCH
Get off me. What are you doing?
Leave me alone...

CUT TO:

CLOSE THREE-SHOT ON ROBIN, MUCH & LITTLE JOHN

ROBIN rips open MUCH'S shirt to reveal his chest and stomach. The wound that we glimpsed earlier has disappeared completely. It's as if it was never there.

CUT TO:

REACTION ON ROBIN

36. INT. THE CLOISTERS AT THORNTON ABBEY DAY 36.

THORNTON ABBEY belongs (I think) to the Cistercian order - sombre, beautiful in an austere way. The monks where white. The ABBOT, an old man, is sitting in the cloisters, reading a book. On first appearance he is stern and unyielding. But this is really no more than a pretense. A MONK leads FRIAR TUCK & MARION to the ABBOT, bows and leaves. The ABBOT looks up from his book.

ABBOT
Has the devil sent an apparition
to haunt me or is it Brother Tuck?

FRIAR TUCK
You look well, father.

ABBOT
I am well. And all the better for
having seen the back of you. What
impertinence brings you here, Bro-
ther Tuck.

FRIAR TUCK squirms. He's a schoolboy in front of a headmaster.

ABBOT

Late for Lauds and asleep through Vespers. For eleven years I put up with you, hoping...praying that you would settle in your vocation. When you became bored and restless, I managed to procure you a handsome commission. Chaplain to the Sherriff of Nottingham. And how did you show your gratitude? The next thing I heard, you'd abandoned your post, gone off to join a band of cut-throats in the forest. And who is this woman?

MARION

I'm one of the cut-throats, father.

MARION'S retort softens the old man visibly.

ABBOT

Are you? Are you indeed?

FRIAR TUCK

Father...

ABBOT

Brother...?

FRIAR TUCK

The library...

ABBOT

So that's what you've come for? The library? I seem to remember the warming house and the kitchen suited your taste more.

FRIAR TUCK wilts under this second attack. But the ABBOT doesn't mean it and seeing the effect of his words, he shuts his book, shaking his head, then gets up.

ABBOT

Oh - come here, Tuck. I'm not going to eat you. You're as hopeless as you ever were.

The ABBOT puts an arm around TUCK.

ABBOT

But I've missed you. We all have. And I dare say you're still doing good in your own way.

The ABBOT smiles at MARION.

ABBOT

Come. Bring this cut-throat. Have something to eat and tell me what you need to know.

37. EXT.

ELENA'S COT - CROMM CRUAC

DAY 37.

ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN approach WILL SCARLET who is digging with a fork in the small vegetable garden outside the cot. ELENA is just inside, spinning.

ROBIN

There he is....

LITTLE JOHN

Aye - if it's still him.

CUT TO:

CLOSER ANGLE

WILL SCARLET has changed in a different way to MUCH. He still knows ROBIN, but the hostile, unreasoning side of his nature has taken over. ROBIN and LITTLE JOHN stop beside the garden.

SCARLET

What do you want?

ROBIN

You know what we want, Will.

SCARLET

I'm not going with you.

ROBIN

Much is in trouble. Nasir's vanished. We need you, Will.

SCARLET

It's not my problem.

LITTLE JOHN

(To ROBIN)

I told you. That's not Will Scarlet.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON SCARLET

SCARLET

That's right. It's not. I'm Scathelock - Will Scathelock. I was Scarlet when I was with you, but that's all over now. Why can't you just accept what's here? We're accepted here. What more do you want?

CUT TO:

RESUME ON THREE-SHOT

ROBIN

Our freedom...

SCARLET

Yeah. The freedom to be cold, to be wet, to be hungry, to be hunted down like animals. Well, I'm finished with it.

SCARLET emphasises the point by stabbing his fork into the ground.

SCARLET

Me and Elena...

ROBIN

That's not Elena, Will.

SCARLET

You get away from here! If you come anywhere near this place, I'll kill you. I swear I will...

SCARLET turns his back on ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN and goes into the cot.

38. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 38.

LONG SHOT

GILNAR stands over the black pool holding a metal bowl filled with a dark red liquid. The DRUIDS surround him. As the camera pans towards him, he holds the bowl up and speaks.

GILNAR

Soon the feast of Sovan will be upon us and Cromm Cruac will rise up to claim his own. Born in blood, only blood can slake his thirst. Soon, now, he will awaken. Soon my revenge will be complete.

The camera has now reached GILNAR. He turns the bowl. The blood pours out.

39. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 39.

ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN have paused on the edge of the village. They are alone. LITTLE JOHN has an apple. He bites it - then spits it out.

ROBIN

Sour?

LITTLE JOHN

No. Too sweet.

He throws the apple in the direction of the village.

LITTLE JOHN

Like everything here.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBIN

It was all wrong...from the very start. The driver - just turning up like that. And he hadn't heard of Elsdon.

LITTLE JOHN

Aye...and they hadn't heard of you, either.

ROBIN

Even the weather...it's impossible. I've seen more food here than I have in all of Nottingham. And they're sowing seeds now, in November.

LITTLE JOHN

There's something else.

ROBIN

What's that?

LITTLE JOHN

It took me a while to see it, but ...there are no children here, Robin. Not one.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON ROBIN

It takes him a moment to recall his own observations. But LITTLE JOHN is right.

ROBIN

I should have listened to Tuck.

LITTLE JOHN

What are we going to do?

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBIN gets up.

ROBIN

See if you can find Nasir. But be careful, John.

LITTLE JOHN

Where are you going?

ROBIN

To see the miller.

40. EXT.

THE MILL AT CROMM CRUAC

DAY 40.

ROBIN approaches the mill.

41. INT. THE MILL AT CROMM CRUAC DAY 41.

The mill is empty and idle, though well-stocked with grain. ROBIN moves forward cautiously. There is a feeling of danger.

ROBIN

Thomas?

He continues further into the mill. A figure appears in the foreground, behind him.

ROBIN

Thomas?

MARY

He's not here.

CUT TO:

REVERSE ANGLE

ROBIN turns to confront MARY, the MILLER'S wife. She is a somewhat razzled strumpet, the village whore. And she's out to get ROBIN.

ROBIN

Where is he?

MARY

Gone.

ROBIN

Who are you?

MARY

Mary. His wife. (She smiles & shrugs). His widow.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

MARY is like a cat on heat - and revolting to ROBIN. There's clearly nothing to be gained by staying, so he makes for the door. But his path brings him close to her.

MARY

I can help you.

ROBIN

How?

CUT TO:

CLOSE TWO-SHOT

MARY'S hands find their way onto ROBIN'S shoulders and chest. Her lips move ever closer to his.

MARY

You should ask about me in the village. I've helped lots of people. If you want to settle

down here, I can help you feel
...at home.

ROBIN is disgusted by her. He pushes her away from him - hard. She falls into a pile of sacks. He doesn't even stop to look at her. He makes his way out.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON MARY

MARY
(Shouting)
You'll never get away from here.
Never!

ROBIN has gone. She laughs to herself, writhing with frustration.

MARY
Never...

42. EXT. THE MILL AT CROMM CRUAC DAY 42.

LITTLE JOHN is waiting for ROBIN as he leaves the mill.

LITTLE JOHN
Robin...I've found Nasir.

ROBIN
Where?

LITTLE JOHN
I'll show you. But you're not
going to like it.

43. EXT. JUST OUTSIDE CROMM CRUAC DAY 43.

NASIR is standing guard just in front of the winding path that leads up to the stone circle. He has been shocked into submission by GULNAR - driven into a temporary madness by his experience. His eyes narrow as he sees ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN approach.

CUT TO:

THREE-SHOT ON ROBIN, LITTLE JOHN & NASIR

ROBIN
Nasir...?

NASIR
(In Arabic)
I am the guardian of the stone
circle. None may pass.

LITTLE JOHN
He was like this when I found him.
He doesn't know us, Robin.

ROBIN takes a step forward. NASIR draws out his swords. Although his words are totally unintelligible, there is no mistaking the menace in his voice.

NASIR

(In Arabic)

You'll die before you take another step.

CUT TO:

NASIR'S P.O.V.

ROBIN'S hand reaches for his sword as if to take up the challenge. But LITTLE JOHN stops him.

LITTLE JOHN

It's no good, Robin. We've lost him.

44. INT.

THE LIBRARY AT THORNTON ABBEY

DAY 44.

MARION, FRIAR TUCK & the ABBOT are in the library. The books would be kept both on shelves and in chests which could also be used (closed) as seats. Two MONKS are at work, copying texts. Other MONKS are in attendance.

ABBOT

Cramm Cruac. Yes...I know the name.

FRIAR TUCK

It was here...in this room, that I heard it.

ABBOT

Yes. You remember when I set you the task of copying Augustine's De Civitate Dei? Another book was being copied at the same time. The Lebor Laigen - the book of the king of Leinster.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The ABBOT nods at a MONK who goes to get the book in question. The camera follows the monk through the candle-lit interior as he finds the book.

ABBOT

(Voice-over)

It's an old Celtic name. Cramm - blood-soaked. Cruac - crooked or hump-backed. Cramm Cruac was a pagan god, a devil, hump-backed and as bloody as they came.

The MONK carries the book to the ABBOT, gives it to him, bows, retires. The ABBOT opens the book.

ABBOT

Almost exactly a hundred years ago, a community of Irish settlers came and founded a village on the far

side of Sherwood. It was a village like no other.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP ON BOOK

The ABBOT has been turning pages. Now he finds what he's looking for - a page partly covered in text but also containing illustrations of village life that coincide exactly with images that we have already seen (ie peasants sowing crops, ELENA at her spinning wheel).

ABBOT

(Voice-over)

Milk and corn a-plenty. That's what the people of Cromm Cruac were given.

CUT TO:

THREE-SHOT ON ABBOT, FRIAR TUCK & MARION

ABBOT

For that was what they called their village. After the devil they worshipped.

CUT TO:

RESUME ON BOOK

The ABBOT turns another page. This contains a large illustration. On the one side, an abundant harvest. On the other, the sacrifice of children.

ABBOT

(Voice-over)

Cromm Cruac demanded the sacrifice of their children. All of them! And that's what they gave him, poor, miserable souls, in return for milk and corn, good weather and fertile stock.

CUT TO:

REACTION ON MARION & FRIAR TUCK

ABBOT

(Voice-over)

But the blood of innocents wasn't enough for Cromm Cruac.

CUT TO:

RESUME ON ABBOT

He turns another page.

ABBOT

On Sovan, the festival that marks
the start of winter, the entire
village was consumed in flames.

CUT TO:

RESUME ON BOOK

An illustration showing the destruction of Cromm Cruac. Villagers fleeing. Some praying. Flames everywhere.

ABBOT

(Voice-over)

Everybody was killed. Nothing was
left. His worshippers destroyed in
the act of worship.

CUT TO:

THREE-SHOT ON ABBOT, MARION & FRIAR TUCK

The ABBOT looks up at MARION & FRIAR TUCK

ABBOT

You tell me your friends have gone
to Cromm Cruac. But there is no such
place. There's been no such place
for a hundred years.

MARION

Father, you say all this took place
on Sovan...the start of winter. When
is that?

The ABBOT slams the book shut. The breeze makes the candles flicker.

ABBOT

Tomorrow.

COMMERCIAL BREAK

44. EXT.

OUTSIDE THORNTON ABBEY

DAY 44.

FRIAR TUCK is chatting with a group of MONKS who have gathered to see this prodigal son. Two horses are being saddled. The ABBOT and MARION are walking towards them.

ABBOT

Tell me about Robin Hood.

MARION

What do you want to know?

ABBOT

What sort of man is he?

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON MARION

MARION

A good man. Not a cut-throat. Not a bandit. He gave up more than any of us when he came into the forest - but he did it...for me. He's what keeps us together; more than just a leader. I can't describe him to you, father. He's everything you don't expect.

ABBOT

You love him.

MARION

Yes. Yes...I do.

CUT TO:

TWO-SHOT ON MARION & THE ABBOT

The ABBOT stops. MARION'S simple sincerity have convinced him of what he must do. He produces a small, silver gourd.

ABBOT

Take this, my child. It contains sanctified water, carried by pilgrims from the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. It is very precious to us.

The ABBOT gives MARION the gourd. She takes it almost unwillingly.

ABBOT

The power of Cromm Cruac is centred in a fountain or pool surrounded by a stone circle. Find the village. Find the pool. Save your friends.

MARION

Father...

ABBOT

Come...

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

FRIAR TUCK is helped onto his horse by a number of struggling monks. MARION and the ABBOT rejoin the group. MARION gets onto her horse unaided. The ABBOT'S manner has changed once again as he addresses the MONKS and TUCK.

ABBOT

There, brothers. There you see the wages of dissipation. (To TUCK) Come and visit us again, Brother Tuck. Satan may have laid claim to your body, but perhaps there's still hope for your soul.

FRIAR TUCK

Thank you, father.

ABBOT

Don't thank me. Just go. Before your example undermines all our faith.

MARION & FRIAR TUCK ride off.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT ON ABBOT

ABBOT

(More quietly)

And my blessings go with you.

The ABBOT is left standing outside the abbey; an old, frail man watching his favourite pupil disappear into the distance.

45. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 45.

The feast of Sovan and the VILLAGERS prepare for their last day on earth with an air of festivity that is truly grisly. WILL SCARLET & ELENA are making their way home. They meet the BAILIFF.

SCARLET

Good day, Gilbert.

BAILIFF

Good Sovan to you, Will. Elena.
(To SCARLET) You were tired when you came here, Will. Now you look refreshed.

SCARLET

I feel a different man.

BAILIFF
(Smiling)

The village agrees with you.

SCARLET clutches ELENA to him.

SCARLET
She agrees with me.

ELENA giggles.

SCARLET
Come on. Home!

The camera follows SCARLET and ELENA as they make their way through the village. Other VILLAGERS, some carrying fruit or flowers, greet them. "Good Sovan...Good Sovan, Will..." They pass the smithy. The camera leaves them and goes in. (A cut).

46. INT. THE SMITHY AT CROMM CRUAC DAY 46.

MUCH and the BLACKSMITH are clearing the place up - as if about to go on holiday. But a brazier, with pokers sticking out of it, is still burning low. MUCH is sweeping. The BLACKSMITH hangs a tool on the wall, then turns to face him.

BLACKSMITH
Much!

MUCH
Aye, William?

BLACKSMITH
I don't want you to leave here now. Not before noon.

MUCH
I ain't be going anywhere, William.

BLACKSMITH
We have a long journey to make, you and I. A painful journey. We should go together.

MUCH
I'm looking forward to it, William.

BLACKSMITH
Good, Much. We'll go together.

47. INT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 47.

ROBIN & LITTLE JOHN are sitting slightly apart, watching the VILLAGERS go about their business.

ROBIN
We can't stay. And we can't leave. Not without the others.

LITTLE JOHN
What do we do, then?

CUT TO:

CLOSE TWO-SHOT

ROBIN

The path that Nasir was guarding.
It has to be the answer. Why else
would he be there?

LITTLE JOHN

He'll kill you sooner than let you
pass.

ROBIN

He can try.

LITTLE JOHN

You'll fight him?

ROBIN

If I have to.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBIN gets up.

ROBIN

Go back to Will. Talk to him again.
But look out for yourself. You can't
hurt him, but there's no saying what
he may do to you.

LITTLE JOHN

I know that.

ROBIN

We're running out of time, John. I
feel it. Something's going to happen.
And it's going to be soon.

48. EXT.

SHERWOOD FOREST

DAY 48.

MARION & FRIAR TUCK, on horseback, reach the point where ROBIN met the cart (Scene 13).
Now that she knows the score - and that ROBIN is in danger - MARION has taken charge.
She reins in her horse.

MARION

This is where they met the cart. The
village can't be far.

FRIAR TUCK

How'll we find it?

MARION

The tracks are still fresh. Come on!

The two set off at a gallop again.

49. EXT. JUST OUTSIDE CROMM CRUAC DAY 49.

ROBIN approaches the path guarded by NASIR, who is holding both his swords. There is one difference. Blazing torches have been set along both sides of the path, marking the way up to the top. ROBIN walks up to NASIR, his own sword out.

ROBIN
Nasir...don't try to stop me.

NASIR
(In Arabic)
My master bids you welcome.

NASIR crosses his swords in front of him, a gesture allowing ROBIN to pass. Looking at him curiously, ROBIN goes past. The camera follows him as he climbs the path and reaches...

50. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 50.

LONG SHOT

GULNAR is waiting for him, alone and unarmed. ROBIN walks into the circle and confronts him. ;

ROBIN
Gulnar!

GULNAR
Robin i'th' Hood! Robin i'th'
Hood!

CUT TO:

CLOSER ANGLE

The camera tracks slowly around the two protagonists.

GULNAR
He murdered my master, the mighty
Owen of Clun. He humiliated me -
he and his men. Long have I
awaited him. Robin i'th' Hood.

ROBIN
What do you want with me, Gulnar?

GULNAR
When the sun reaches the point
mid-way in its celestial journey,
the village of Cromm Cruac will
burn again as it burnt a century
ago. I, Gulnar, have resurrected
it for that purpose. All will die
as they died before. But for some,
death will come as a new exper-
ience.

ROBIN says nothing. For, faced with such a madman, there is nothing to be said. He draws his sword.

CUT TO:

C.U. ON GULNAR

GULNAR
(Mocking)
A fine weapon! But what is mere
tempered steel against the might
of Gulnar?

He makes a brief gesture with one hand.

CUT TO:

REVERSE ANGLE

ROBIN is left holding nothing. The sword has vanished. Then, a steel bolt from nowhere, it hurtles out of the sky towards him, missing him by inches. It is left, quivering in the earth.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

GULNAR
Draw near, Robin i'th' Hood.
Look into the water. For there
you will look upon the face of
death.

51. EXT. ELENA'S COT - CROMM CRUAC DAY 51.

LITTLE JOHN stops outside SCARLET'S house. The area is deserted. He calls out.

LITTLE JOHN
Will! Will Scarlet or Scathelock
or whatever you call yourself.

CUT TO:

TWO-SHOT ON SCARLET & ELENA

A pause. Then SCARLET appears at the door - angry, carrying his sword. ELENA is with him.

SCARLET
(To ELENA)
Wait here...

ELENA
Will, I'm scared.

SCARLET
There's no need to be.

ELENA
You won't leave me, will you Will?

SCARLET
Leave you? I wouldn't leave you.

Not ever.

LITTLE JOHN
(Voice-over)

Will!

SCARLET looks up with a spasm of real hatred. Then he moves forward.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

SCARLET
I told you...

LITTLE JOHN
We've had enough, Will. This whole place is mad and you must be mad yourself if you can't see it.

SCARLET
I'm warning you...

LITTLE JOHN
That's not Elena. Elena died - and you know it. That's a witch or a demon or the Lord knows what.

SCARLET
Leave me alone!

LITTLE JOHN
You're coming with me, Will, whether you like it or not. We're getting out of here. All of us.

SCARLET
No!

The last word is a scream of madness and hatred. At the same moment, SCARLET hurls himself at LITTLE JOHN, chopping and hacking with his sword. LITTLE JOHN is almost taken by surprise. The ferocity of the attack is psychotic. And so they fight, quarterstaff against sword. LITTLE JOHN is at a disadvantage. He can knock SCARLET out, but he can't cripple or kill him. And SCARLET is fighting dirty. Even so, LITTLE JOHN manages to catch him a glancing blow that throws him against the wall.

LITTLE JOHN
You can't do it, lad. You can't kill me.

SCARLET
Just watch me...

And SCARLET launches himself at LITTLE JOHN again.

52. EXT. THE OTHER SIDE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 52.

MARION & FRIAR TUCK ride into the village. It is quiet now. The VILLAGERS are in their houses. They dismount.

FRIAR TUCK
It's the same. Just like in the
illuminations.

MARION
It's a horrible place.

FRIAR TUCK
Marion...

CUT TO:

REVERSE ANGLE

FRIAR TUCK has seen something. MARION turns to look. It is NASIR, still standing in front of the path. MARION starts towards him.

FRIAR TUCK
I don't know...

MARION
You know what to do.

53. EXT. JUST OUTSIDE CROMM CRUAC DAY 53.

MARION & FRIAR TUCK approach NASIR cautiously. Once again, he doesn't recognize them.

NASIR
(In Arabic)
I am the guardian of the stone
circle. None may pass.

MARION
Nasir? Do you know me?

NASIR
(In Arabic)
You'll die before you take another
step.

CUT TO:

CLOSER ANGLE

MARION makes a discreet gesture at FRIAR TUCK. She smiles at NASIR and moves closer to him, spreading her palms to show she is unarmed. Her eyes never leave his.

MARION
You know me, Nasir. Marion...

CUT TO:

CLOSE TWO-SHOT ON MARION & NASIR

NASIR'S eyes are equally fixed on MARION'S.

NASIR
(In Arabic)
I am the guardian of the stone
circle...

MARION

I'm Marion of Sherwood, Nasir.
(In Arabic) I'm your friend.

MARION'S trick is beautifully simple. By addressing NASIR in his own language, she throws him completely. Perhaps her words even go some way to breaking the spell. Either way, he's taken aback - for a tiny moment - long enough for FRIAR TUCK'S staff to come crashing in from the side, striking his head and knocking him out.

CUT TO:

WIDER ANGLE

As NASIR falls, MARION sprints forward and begins to climb the path.

MARION

Stay with him, Tuck!

FRIAR TUCK

Where are you going?

MARION

To find Robin.

54. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 54.

The camera starts with the sun, now high in the sky, then pans down to a medium shot of ROBIN & GULNAR. ROBIN is spell-bound by the sorceror, unable to resist.

GULNAR

Look into the water, Wolf's-head. The time has come. Cromm Cruac has awoken.

Unwillingly, irrevocably, ROBIN is drawn to the pool. He looks in.

CUT TO:

ROBIN'S P.O.V.

There are shapes and colours swirling in the water. A figure can be seen - vague, indistinct. It is CROMM CRUAC, the hump-backed demon of the druids. But we never see quite enough of him to be able to say exactly what he looks like. Glowing red eyes. Ferocious teeth. Claws. Nothing more...

GULNAR

(Voice-over)

Go to him, Robin i'th' Hood.
For you are his.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

Watched by GULNAR, ROBIN stands poised on the edge of the pool, about to dive in.

MARION

(Voice-over)

No!

Both men look towards the voice.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

MARION is standing on the other side of the pool. She is breathless. Her hands tremble. She is holding the gourd over the water.

GILNAR

You...!

MARION empties the gourd into the water...

...and the water erupts. It's like a volcanic crater. It bubbles. Steam hisses out. For a moment, ROBIN & GILNAR disappear in the mist...

...and at the same time, there is a terrible, unearthly howling. This is the dying, defeated cry of CROMM CRUAC itself. It is fantastically loud, ripping through the sky.

55. EXT. ELENA'S COT - CROMM CRUAC DAY 55.

The scream echoes through the air. We rejoin the fight just as LITTLE JOHN stumbles and falls, losing his staff. The action may have saved him from a killing thrust from SCARLET, but now he's unarmed, defenceless. SCARLET draws back his sword for the kill. But, hearing the scream, he stops...

56. INT. THE SMITHY AT CROMM CRUAC DAY 56.

MUCH hears the scream too. He blinks - like someone awakening from a dream - and looks about him.

57. EXT. JUST OUTSIDE CROMM CRUAC DAY 57.

The long scream continues. NASIR recovers from the blow. FRIAR TUCK is standing over him, holding the quarterstaff - ready to knock him out again if necessary. At last the scream stops.

NASIR

Tuck...?

58. EXT. ELENA'S COT - CROMM CRUAC DAY 58.

Smoke is beginning to fill the air. ELENA'S cot is on fire - as is the rest of the village, although we can't see any flames yet.

SCARLET

John! What am I doing? What happened?

LITTLE JOHN

Will...

SCARLET

I was going to kill you!

SCARLET shakes his head to clear his thoughts.

SCARLET

Elena...

LITTLE JOHN has got to his feet, regaining his quarterstaff. SCARLET looks back at the cot.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

There is still a figure standing at the door, wearing ELENA'S clothes. But now it is a ghastly old crone. We only have a moment to take this in. Then the cot really goes up in flames - spontaneous combustion. The old hag screams and disappears inside, swallowed up by the smoke. LITTLE JOHN puts a hand on SCARLET'S shoulder.

LITTLE JOHN

I'm sorry, lad...

SCARLET stares at the cot.

SCARLET

(Vengefully)

Don't be.

Then the two men look at each other as the same thought comes to their minds.

SCARLET

Much...

59. EXT.

THE SMITHY AT CROMM CRUAC

DAY 59.

Still unsure what's happened, but now his normal self, MUCH moves towards the door. Again, smoke from the burning village seeps in, but there are no flames yet. He's about half-way to the door when the BLACKSMITH steps forward, blocking his way.

BLACKSMITH

Much? Where are you going?

MUCH

I don't belong here. Get out of my way.

BLACKSMITH

I told you, Much. You can't leave here. Nobody leaves.

MUCH looks about him for a weapon. At the same moment, the BLACKSMITH grabs a red hot poker from the brazier.

BLACKSMITH

Nobody.

60. EXT.

THE STONE CIRCLE

DAY 60.

The water is still bubbling, but less so now. There is no sign of the demon, CROMM CRUAC. ROBIN runs for his sword.

GILNAR

What have you done? What have you done?

GILNAR recovers from the shock enough to point a skeletal, quivering finger at ROBIN.

GILNAR

Kill him! Kill both of them!

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The DRUIDS have appeared again. Phantoms or humans? It doesn't matter. There are a dozen of them, completely surrounding ROBIN & MARION on the fringes of the circle. Armed and deadly.

61. INT.

THE SMITHY AT CROMM CRUAC

DAY 61.

MUCH has managed to grab a hoe. The BLACKSMITH has the smouldering poker. Now one of the walls has caught fire. The brazier glows red. This is a vicious fight. The BLACKSMITH lashes the poker through the air. Anything it touches catches fire. He is twice the size of MUCH. Strong and very fast. MUCH'S tactic is to push and prod, looking for an opening, using the distance afforded by the hoe.

He waits for the right moment and takes it. The BLACKSMITH lashes at his head. He ducks. An upward swing knocks the poker out of the BLACKSMITH'S hand. MUCH steps back. Then rams the head of the hoe into the BLACKSMITH'S stomach, pushing him back and tripping him backwards so that he falls...

...straight into the burning brazier. The BLACKSMITH screams.

CUT TO:

TWO-SHOT ON LITTLE JOHN & SCARLET

A brief moment of humour in all the mayhem. They're standing in the door. They've been watching the fight but haven't intervened because MUCH was obviously quite able to cope.

LITTLE JOHN

Not bad.

SCARLET

Well...it's different.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

MUCH confronts LITTLE JOHN & SCARLET. We don't see the BLACKSMITH'S corpse. MUCH is a little angry. After all, they haven't helped, and he still doesn't have a clue what's been going on.

MUCH

What's going on here?

LITTLE JOHN

Don't ask, lad.

MUCH

Then let's get out of here.

And he marches out between LITTLE JOHN & SCARLET. They can only look at each other in wonderment. It was MUCH who started it all in the first place...

62. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 62.

MARION runs round the pool towards GULNAR (in the opposite direction that ROBIN took to regain his sword). Before GULNAR can react, she's on him, her dagger drawn. They fight, their hands locked, the dagger hovering in the air between them.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBIN wants to go to her, but two DRUIDS have blocked the way. There is an engagement: two swords against one. A DRUID is killed. But the other DRUIDS are already closing in on him. ROBIN kills the second DRUID.

Then, behind them, two more DRUIDS cry out and fall. NASIR & FRIAR TUCK have arrived. The three OUTLAWS begin to overpower the remaining eight DRUIDS.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

GULNAR'S eyes open in triumph. The dagger is being forced inch by inch towards MARION'S throat. He is stronger than her and he knows it. But she changes her tactics. Summoning up the last reserves of her strength, she pushes him away from her. They are right beside the still bubbling pool. With a gurgling scream, GULNAR teeters on the edge, then plunges backwards into the water which bubbles all around him. He disappears.

63. EXT. THE VILLAGE OF CROMM CRUAC DAY 63.

The village is being consumed by fire...a fire that is both earthly and supernatural. The very air itself is ablaze. Everything is red. An inferno. Smoke billows out of the houses. VILLAGERS run screaming through the streets, some of them on fire themselves. This image is similar to the illustration we saw in the library at Thornton Abbey.

WILL SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN & MUCH make their way through the village, pushing people out of their way as they go, coughing in the smoke and recoiling against the heat. But their way is barred. The BAILIFF, the REEVE, the HAYWARD and the DRIVER who first brought them to this hell have rallied to try to stop them leaving. All four men are armed.

WILL SCARLET takes on the BAILIFF and the REEVE. One sword against two swords. LITTLE JOHN deals with the HAYWARD. Quarterstaff against curving sickle. MUCH fights the DRIVER. Sword against sword.

All this takes place against an inferno of flame. The four men are killed - although it's not an easy fight.

SCARLET
(Shouting)

Where now...?

LITTLE JOHN
(Shouting)

Follow me...

64. EXT. THE STONE CIRCLE DAY 64.

ROBIN, NASIR & FRIAR TUCK deal with the last of the DRUIDS. MARION stands, exhausted, by the edge of the pool.

With the last DRUID dead, there's a pause. The sun shines. No smoke from the village has seeped up to the stone circle. Slowly, ROBIN approaches MARION. He looks at her with real love and admiration.

ROBIN
You're wonderful.

Gratefully, trembling with the shock of it all, MARION falls into his embrace. And the camera pulls back on this tableau to show that the pool has changed. The water is crystal clear. It is beautiful.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

WILL SCARLET, LITTLE JOHN & MUCH appear, racing towards the stone circle. But if they were looking for action, they're too late. It's all over - and SCARLET is a little disappointed. MUCH rejoins NASIR & FRIAR TUCK.

FRIAR TUCK
(Astonished)
Much!

MUCH
(Puzzled)
Aye?

FRIAR TUCK
You're all right!

MUCH
I'm fine. I just wish someone
would tell me what this is all
about.

NASIR
Tuck...

FRIAR TUCK
Yes. I know. (In approximate
Arabic) I am the guardian of the
stone circle.

NASIR smiles and shakes his head.

CUT TO:

TWO-SHOT ON LITTLE JOHN & SCARLET

SCARLET
That's it then, is it? What happens
now?

LITTLE JOHN
Now? We go home.

SCARLET
(Bitterly)
Home! What home?

LITTLE JOHN
Sherwood Forest, lad. It's always
been our home. Always will be,

MUCH
(Voice-over)
Will....John...

CUT TO:

OUTLAWS' P.O.V.

ROBIN & MARION have moved away from the stone circle and are standing on the brow of the hill which overlooks the village. They have an arm round each other.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The camera looks up at ROBIN & MARION. They continue to look down, towards the distant village. The other OUTLAWS come up behind them so that all of them can look down and see what they have seen.

SCARLET
What...?

LITTLE JOHN
But... It's gone!

ROBIN
Gone? It was never really
there.

CUT TO:

HIGH ANGLE

The camera goes high up, looking over the OUTLAWS' shoulders so that they form a line in the foreground, their backs to us. Now we can see what they see. The topography of the village somehow shows that this is where CROMM CRUAC was. Only now there's nothing there. No smoke. No charred remains. Nothing. A pleasant valley filled with wild grass and flowers.

ROBIN
(Voice-over)
Let's go home.

The OUTLAWS turn and walk out of the shot. The camera rests on the valley and on the village that is no longer there.

END OF EPISODE