

***"The Night Of The Hunter"***

Based on a Novel by

DAVIS GRUBB

Screenplay

by

JAMES AGEE

"THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER"

1 FULL SHOT - THE STARLIT SKY

VOICE

And He opened His mouth and  
taught them, saying....

FADE sky to day.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

2 LONG SHOT - HELICOPTER - OHIO RIVER COUNTRY

High over the country, CENTERING the winding river.

VOICE

Beware of false prophets....

3 LOWER LONG SHOT - HELICOPTER - RIVER COUNTRY

We approach a riverside village.

VOICE

...which come to you in sheep's  
clothing...

4 A CLOSER, LOWER HELICOPTER SHOT

We descend low over a deserted house; CHILDREN in yard  
run and hide; we hear "IT" counting "five, ten, fifteen,  
twenty....."

VOICE

...but inwardly they are  
ravening wolves.

FADE OUT TITLE

5 MED. SHOT - "IT"

He finishes his count with a loud "Hundred" and turns,  
then:

"IT"

What's wrong?

(CONTINUED)

5 (CONTINUED)

We PAN as he comes towards a little boy, beside an open cellar door, who gestures towards the open door. "IT" looks down.

"IT"

(a low gasp)

Heyy!

(then he shouts  
to all and to us)

Heyy!

We DOLLY IN fast to, and TILT DOWN into open cellar, into:

6 CLOSE SHOT - A LEG

A skeletal leg in a rotted fume of stocking and a high-heeled shoe. We HOLD a moment, then PULL UP and AWAY over the converging heads of several CHILDREN. A CHILD whimpers softly.

7 HELICOPTER SHOT

The yard and the CHILDREN, same angle and height as the last descending helicopter shot. We PULL BACK and AWAY.

VOICE

Ye shall know them by their  
fruits.

DISSOLVE TO:

8 HIGH LONG SHOT - HELICOPTER

CENTERING the river.

VOICE

A good tree cannot bring forth  
evil fruit....

9 LOWER LONG SHOT (HELICOPTER)

CENTERING on open touring car, as it drives along a river road.

VOICE

Neither can a corrupt tree bring  
forth good fruit.

(CONTINUED)

9 (CONTINUED)

We STOOP LOW towards the car.

VOICE

Wherefore by their fruits, ye shall know them.

FADE TITLE

CUT TO:

10 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

He is the driver of the car. Pleasant river landscapes (PROCESS) flow behind him. He is dressed in dark clothes, a paper collar, a string tie. As he drives he talks to himself.

PREACHER

What's it to be, Lord, another widow? Has it been six? Twelve? ...I disremember.

He nods, smiles, and touches his hat. We see a farm couple in a poor wagon.

PREACHER

You say the word, and I'm on my way.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

11 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER DRIVING

He brakes his car in a small riverside town; then proceeds.

PREACHER

You always send me money to go forth and preach your Word. A widow with a little wad of bills hidden away in the sugar-bowl.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

12 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER DRIVING

He shifts into second gear, climbing a steep little hill.

(CONTINUED)

12 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER

I am tired. Sometimes I wonder  
if you really understand.  
(pause)

Not that you mind the killin's...

The stones of a country graveyard gleam in the last day-  
light.

PREACHER

Yore Book is full of killin's.

He starts fast and noisily down a steep hill.

PREACHER

But there are things you do,  
hate, Lord: perfume-smellin'  
things -- lacy things --  
things with curly hair --

CUT TO:

13 INT. A BURLESQUE HOUSE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - A DANCER

She is hard at work, to music O.S.

14 FULL SHOT - AUDIENCE - CENTERING ON PREACHER, IN AISLE  
SEAT

Among the members of the sad burlesque audience, he is  
in strong contrast: a sour and aggressive expression.  
Music O.S. We MOVE IN fast to a HEAD CLOSE-UP.

15 MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE DANCER

16 INSERT - PREACHER'S LEFT HAND

Labeled H-A-T-E in tattoo across four knuckles, it grips  
and flexes.

17 INSERT - HIS RIGHT HAND

Before we see the lettering he slides it into his pocket.

18 EXTREME CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

His head slants; a cold smile; one eyelid flutters.

19 INSERT - RIGHT HAND AND POCKET

We hear the snapping open of a switch-blade knife and the point of the knife cuts through his clothes.

20 LESS EXTREME CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

He seems to "listen" for something.

PREACHER

No, there are too many of them;  
you can't kill a world.

A hand descends firmly onto his shoulder. He glances up behind him as we -

TILT TO:

21 CLOSE SHOT - A STATE TROOPER

He bends down and speaks quietly next PREACHER'S ear.

TROOPER

You driving an Essex tourin'-  
car with a Moundsville license?

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

22 INT. COURTROOM - CLOSE THREE-SHOT - JUDGE AND CLERK,  
OVER PREACHER

JUDGE

Harry Powell, for the theft of  
that touring car you will spend  
thirty days in the Moundsville  
Penitentiary.

PREACHER

(correcting Clerk)

Preacher Harry Powell.

JUDGE

A car thief! Picked up where  
you were! A Man of God?  
(to Clerk)

Harry Powell.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

23 FULL SHOT - MOUNDVILLE PENITENTIARY - DAY (HELICOPTER)

A grim stone turretted facade; an American flag idles at  
top center.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

## 24 CLOSE DOWNWARD TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL HARPER

They sit in the grass, a sentimental picture. JOHN is nine; PEARL is five. They are working together on PEARL's doll; PEARL is dressing her, while JOHN gets on a difficult shoe.

PEARL  
Stand still, Miss Jenny!

JOHN  
(across her)  
There! What's so hard about that!

He proudly exhibits the shod foot.

They hear the sound of an auto engine O.S. They look O.S. and get up, PEARL dangling the doll.

## 25 LONG SHOT - OVER THE CHILDREN - BEN HARPER'S FORD

A Model-T Ford approaches at maximal speed on uneven dirt road.

PEARL  
(to John, happily)  
Daddy!

The car careens towards us; then swings into the side-yard as we PAN, and stops.

They run towards their father fast; then JOHN looks puzzled and they stop short.

BEN HARPER half-falls out of the far door, his shoulder blood-stained, his eyes wild. A hefty, simple man of thirty. He looks at them, dazed, across the car.

## 26 MED. SHOT - BEN HARPER

BEN  
Where's your Mom?

JOHN  
Out shopping -- you're bleeding,  
Dad -

BEN  
Listen to me John.

(CONTINUED)

26 (CONTINUED)

On this he comes around clear of the car with a revolver in one hand and a bloody roll of banknotes in the other.

27 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He screams. BEN slaps him with the back of the money hand, leaving blood on JOHN'S cheek.

28 CLOSE GROUP SHOT - JOHN, BEN, PEARL

PEARL, and the house, are in BACKGROUND. PEARL just clutches her doll. During BEN'S next lines, JOHN touches his cheek and looks at the blood on his fingers and at the bloody money -- of which we FLASH-CUT an INSERT.

BEN

(rushing)

Listen! This money here!  
We got to hide it before  
they get me! There's close  
to ten thousand dollars.

(his eyes dart  
wildly)

Under a rock in the smokehouse?  
Ah no. Under the bricks in the  
grape arbor? No, they'd dig  
for it.

29 CLOSE SHOT - BEN

BEN

(sudden triumph)

Why sure! That's the place!

He moves forward and OUT and in his place we see two police cars, small in distance, coming fast. We hear sirens.

30 INT. FRONT POLICE CAR - THROUGH WINDSHIELD

...and OVER two STATE TROOPERS. They move at high speed, with sirens. BEN and his CHILDREN, tiny in the distance, dilate.

TROOPER

(driving)

That's him.

(CONTINUED)



30 (CONTINUED)

2ND TROOPER  
 (over his shoulder,  
 as if to us)  
 He prob'ly still has that gun.

31 CLOSE GROUP SHOT - BEN AND CHILDREN

....police cars approaching in BACKGROUND. PEARL hugs her doll. JOHN is dazed. BEN stands, pistol in hand.

BEN  
 Here they come.

JOHN  
 Dad, you're bleeding...

He grabs JOHN's shoulder and stoops as we TIGHTEN IN.

BEN  
 Listen to me son. You got to swear. Swear means promise. First swear you'll take care of little Pearl. Guard her with your life, boy. Then swear you won't never tell where that money's hid. Not even your Mom.

JOHN  
 Yes, Dad.

BEN  
 You understand?

JOHN  
 Not even her?

In b.g. the TROOPERS get out of their cars and fan out cautiously to surround BEN: guns in hand.

BEN  
 You got common sense. She ain't. When you grow up that money'll be yours. Now swear. "I will guard Pearl with my life..."

JOHN  
 (fumbling)  
 I will guard Pearl with my life...

(CONTINUED)

31 (CONTINUED)

BEN  
 ..... "and I won't never tell  
 about the money."

JOHN  
 And I won't never tell about  
 the money.

PEARL  
 You, Pearl. You swear too.

32 CLOSE SHOT - PEARL

PEARL  
 (giggling)  
 Who's them Blue Men yonder?

33 HEAD CLOSEUP - JOHN

JOHN  
 (under breath)  
 Blue men.

34 GROUP SHOT - TROOPERS IN BACKGROUND

A TROOPER  
 Ben Harper!

BEN  
 I'm goin' now children.  
 Goodbye.

BEN backs away from his CHILDREN, raising his hands, gun  
 in one hand. We PULL BACK a little, enlarging the GROUP  
 SHOT and the role of the TROOPERS in it.

TROOPER  
 Drop that gun, Harper. We  
 don't want them kids hurt.

TWO TROOPERS approach BEN from behind.

BEN  
 Just mind what you swore, son.  
Mind, boy!



43 THREE-SHOT - THE CHILDREN AND WILLA HARPER

Carrying a shopping bag, their mother, WILLA, runs up from BACKGROUND between the CHILDREN, looking always to cars o.s.

44 CLOSE SHOT - WILLA

She has a rich body.

45 RESUME THREE-SHOT

PEARL comes to her and she picks up PEARL and the doll; JOHN, laden with his oath, walks quickly into the house. WILLA does a bewildered take, then looks again towards the cars o.s.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

46 INT. COURTROOM - CLOSE THREE-SHOT - JUDGE AND CLERK,  
OVER BEN

JUDGE

Ben Harper, it is the sentence of this Court that for the murder of Ed Smiley and Corey South, you be hanged by the neck until you are dead, and may God have mercy on your soul.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

47 FULL SHOT - THE MOUNDSVILLE PENITENTIARY

Same view as before; but now it is night.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

48 INT. BEN'S CELL - NIGHT - CLOSE DOWN-SHOT - BEN

He lies on his back, chuckling and murmuring indistinctly in his sleep.

BEN

I got you all buffaloed! You ain't never gonna git it outen me; not none o' you!

(CONTINUED)

48 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER'S VOICE O.S.  
(very low)  
Where, Ben? Where? Where?

BEN  
(distinctly)  
And a little child shall lead  
them.

49 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - NEW ANGLE - BEN, THEN PREACHER

BEN lies in profile. From the bunk above, the face of  
PREACHER stretches down into the SHOT, upside down,  
snake-like.

PREACHER  
(softly)  
Come on, boy: tell me.

BEN wakes, sees PREACHER, and hits him so hard in the  
face that he falls from bunk to floor. PREACHER  
collects himself into a squat, nursing his face. BEN  
sits up in bed.

PREACHER  
(with wholesome  
dignity)  
Ben, I'm a Man of God.

BEN  
Tryin' to make me talk about  
it in my sleep!

PREACHER  
No, Ben.

BEN  
What'd I say?  
(he grabs Preacher's  
throat and shakes  
him:)  
What? What? What? What?

PREACHER  
(choking)  
You was quotin' Scripture. You  
said -- you said, "And a little  
child shall lead them."

BEN  
Hm!

(CONTINUED)

49 (CONTINUED)

He lies back, amused. PREACHER sits on the bedside; manner of a parson visiting the sick.

PREACHER

(gravely)

You killed two men, Ben Harper.

BEN

That's right, Preacher. I robbed that bank because I got tired of seein' children roamin' the woodlands without food, children roamin' the highways in this year of Depression; children sleepin' in old abandoned car bodies on junk-heaps; and I promised myself I'd never see the day when my youngins'd want.

PREACHER

With that ten thousand dollars I could build a Tabernacle that'd make the Wheeling Island Tabernacle look like a chicken-house!

BEN

Would you have free candy for the kids, Preacher?

He picks up and wads a sock.

PREACHER

Think of it, Ben! With that cursed, bloodied gold!

BEN

How come you got that stick-knife hid in your bed-blankets, Preacher?

PREACHER

I come not with Peace but with a Sword.

BEN

You, Preacher?

PREACHER gets and pockets the knife.

(CONTINUED)

49 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER

That Sword has served me through  
many an evil time, Ben Harper.

BEN

What religion do you profess,  
Preacher?

PREACHER

The religion the Almighty and  
me worked out betwixt us.

BEN

(contemptuously)  
I'll bet.

PREACHER

Salvation is a last-minute  
business, boy.

BEN

(sock near mouth)  
Keep talkin', Preacher.

PREACHER

If you was to let that money  
serve the Lord's purposes, He  
might feel kindly turned towards  
you.

BEN

Keep talkin', Preacher.

He wads the sock into his mouth and lies back, sardonic.

PREACHER

(his voice fading  
into Dissolve)  
You reckon the Lord wouldn't  
change his mind about you if...

DISSOLVE TO:

50 EXT. PENITENTIARY COURTYARD - NIGHT

DISSOLVE TO:

51 INSERT - PREACHER'S HANDS

They rest on sill of cell window, the lettered fingers  
legible. The right hand is lettered L-O-V-E. The hands  
open, disclosing his open knife. They close over it.

52 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER, AT CELL WINDOW

His eyes lift from his hands, heavenward. Moonlight on his face. He prays, quietly.

PREACHER

LORD:

You sure knowed what you was doin' when you brung me to this very cell at this very time. A man with ten thousand dollars hid somewheres, and a widder in the makin'.

DISSOLVE TO:

53 EXT. PENITENTIARY COURTYARD - NIGHT

Same SHOT as before, but now, prison lights are on; and a man, a prison GUARD, waits close inside door. BART the HANGMAN joins him with a silent salute. BART wears a hard derby. They go through the door.

54 EXT. PENITENTIARY - THE DOOR - (REVERSE)

They walk in silence into MEDIUM, MOVING SHOT, the GUARD talkative, BART reluctant to talk.

The Penitentiary recedes in b.g.

GUARD

Any trouble?

BART

No.

GUARD

He was a cool one, that Harper. Never broke.

BART

He carried on some; kicked.

55 EXT. BART'S HOUSE - MEDIUM SHOT - BART AND GUARD

On porch, by door, is a doll's perambulator. BART and GUARD walk into the SHOT. GUARD stops, BART starts up his front steps.

GUARD

He never told about the money.

(CONTINUED)



55 (CONTINUED)

BART  
(walking up  
steps)

No.

GUARD  
What do you figure he done  
with it?

BART  
(turning, at  
door)  
He took the secret with him  
when I dropped him.

The GUARD leaves the SHOT; BART goes in.

56 INT. BART'S HALLWAY - CLOSE SHOT - BART

He hangs up his coat and hat. Across this his wife speaks o.s.; a lighted door is ajar at rear of hall. A clatter of dishes and pans o.s.

BART'S WIFE (O.S.)  
That you, Bart? Supper's  
waitin'.

BART just nods, and, tiptoeing, walks into a door next the kitchen and snaps on a light and turns on water o.s. His wife comes out of the kitchen and goes in.

57 INT. BART'S BATHROOM - CLOSE TWO-SHOT - BART AND WIFE

He is washing his hands in thick lather. Passing, she pecks his cheek and, as we PAN, looks into the next room. He looks past her, and we see two small CHILDREN asleep in a big brass bed. BART registers, turns again to the basin, and we PAN them back into the original TWO-SHOT.

BART  
(low)  
Mother: sometimes I think it  
might be better if I was to  
quit my job as guard.

His WIFE'S eyes go sharp and quiet.

WIFE  
(low)  
You're always this way when  
there's a hangin'. You never  
have to be there.

(CONTINUED)

57 (CONTINUED)

BART rinses his hands. A sigh; he takes up the towel.

BART

Sometimes I wish I was back  
at the mine.

WIFE

And leave me a widow after  
another blast like the one  
in '24? Not on your life,  
old mister!

He looks at her a moment. She goes out. He looks o.s.  
towards his CHILDREN. He goes into their room on tip-  
toe.

58 MED. SHOT - BART

He approaches his children, across whose bed WE SHOOT  
without yet seeing them. He comes into MED. CLOSE-UP.  
As he leans and we TILT DOWN, he extends his large  
hands.

59 CLOSE DOWNWARD TWO-SHOT - HIS CHILDREN

Two rose-and-gold little GIRLS lie in sleep; BART'S  
hands enter the SHOT and gently rearrange the covers  
so that their mouths and throats are free. We watch,  
for a moment more, the two sleeping faces.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

60 HEAD CLOSE-UP - BART, HOVERING HIS CHILDREN

CHILDREN'S VOICES O.S.

(chanting)

Hing, hang, hung  
See what the Hangman done!

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

61 EXT. RESAP'S LANDING - DAY

We are in Peacock Alley. The tree-shaded dirt street of  
a small, one-street river town; a picturesque, mid-19th-  
century remnant of the old river civilization, which  
general Progress has left behind. Chiefly we see, in  
this order: A schoolhouse (on far side of street);

(CONTINUED)

61 (CONTINUED)

Miz Cunningham's second-hand shop; a Grange House sporting a poster for a Western movie; Spoon's Ice Cream Parlor. At the end of this street, down the river-bank, is a brick wharf and UNCLE BIRDIE'S wharf-boat. In b.g. and in passing, suggestions of sleepy small-town life.

From the HEAD CLOSE-UP of BART the Hangman o.s. chanting, we

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

62 HEAD CLOSE-UP - JOHN HARPER

Chanting VOICES o.s. complete "see what the Hangman done!"

PULL BACK TO:

63 CLOSE PULLING TWO-SHOT - PEARL AND JOHN

They stroll barefoot down the empty dirt sidewalk. They look towards the voices, PEARL friendly, JOHN hostile.

64 MED. SHOT - THE CHILDREN, OVER JOHN AND PEARL

Several, within the door of the Schoolhouse, stick their heads around the edge. They chant at the HARPER CHILDREN. Another, next the door, is drawing something on the wall.

CHILDREN

(chanting)

Hung, hang, hing!

See the Robber swing!

OVER these lines we CUT briefly to -

65 CLOSER SHOT - THE CHILDREN

...chanting, drawing. The ARTIST completes in chalk, a large simple sketch of a man hanging from gallows. As the verse ends we CUT TO:

66 MED. SHOT - THE CHILDREN, OVER JOHN AND PEARL

They look towards OUR CHILDREN; JOHN pays them no attention. The drawing is revealed. JOHN takes PEARL'S hand. The other CHILDREN giggle..

(CONTINUED)

66 (CONTINUED)

CHILDREN  
(chanting)  
Hing, hang, hung!  
Now my song is done!

Between lines one and two JOHN turns away from them into -

67 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL - THROUGH WINDOW

We SHOOT them through the window of MIZ CUNNINGHAM'S second-hand store. The back of a watch is silhouetted large in FOREGROUND; JOHN'S eyes instantly fix on it; in b.g. the SCHOOL-CHILDREN finish their song and vanish, giggling, into the schoolhouse. We hear the ticking of the watch.

68 INSERT - THE WATCH

A watch with a moving sweep-hand, ticking.

69 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

PEARL  
Are you goin' to buy it, John?

No answer. JOHN'S eyes are fixed on the watch. OVER a shop-doorbell we hear:

MIZ CUNNINGHAM'S VOICE O.S.  
Uh-HAWWWW!

They glance towards her.

70 MEDIUM SHOT - MIZ CUNNINGHAM

Fantastically dirty and fantastically dressed, she hustles to them and we PAN her into a THREE-SHOT. She talks like a Tidewater Cockatoo.

MIZ CUNNINGHAM (continuing)  
So your Mommy's keepin' you  
out of school! Poor little  
lambs!

PEARL watches her; JOHN, the watch.

MIZ CUNNINGHAM  
And how is your poor, poor  
mother?

(CONTINUED)

70 (CONTINUED)

JOHN  
She's at Spoon's Ice Cream  
Parlor.

MIZ CUNNINGHAM  
(she snuffles)  
The Lord tends you both these  
days!

JOHN doesn't take his eyes off the watch.

71 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

His eyes are fixed on the watch o.s.

MIZ CUNNINGHAM'S VOICE O.S.  
Didn't they never find out what  
your father done with all that  
money he stole?

Eyes as before till "money," then he looks up towards her.

72 MEDIUM SHOT - MIZ CUNNINGHAM

MIZ CUNNINGHAM  
When they caught him, there  
wasn't so much as a penny of  
it to be seen! Now what do  
you make of that! Eh, boy?

She grins horribly.

73 TWO-SHOT - OVER JOHN AND PEARL

JOHN  
Pearl and me, we have to go.

He walks off fast as we DOLLY BEHIND THEM; he leads  
PEARL, who hugs her doll.

PEARL  
(chanting)  
Hing, hang, hung.

JOHN  
You better not sing that song.

PEARL  
Why?

(CONTINUED)

73 (CONTINUED)

JOHN

'Cause you're too little.

A few paces in silence; now they come to the big window of Spoon's Ice Cream Parlor.

PEARL

Can we get some candy?

WILLA'S face is seen within; serving a customer, she sees them and waves them away.

JOHN

No.

He keeps her strolling. WALT SPOON, comes out, proffering two lollypops.

WALT

Howdy, youngins.

PEARL drags at JOHN'S hand but JOHN, pretending not to see or hear, drags her out of the SHOT, shaking his head. We DOLLY IN on WALT, who looks after them, surprised and touched, then goes inside.

74 INT. SPOON'S PARLOR - GROUP SHOT - WALT, WILLA, ICEY SPOON

We PAN WALT across a little of his Parlor; he plants the lollypops back in a jar on the counter and leaves the SHOT as we TIGHTEN IN on WILLA and ICEY. WILLA slides used dishes into wash-water; ICEY jaws down her back, from first moment of shot.

ICEY

Willa Harper there is certain plain facts of life that adds up just like two plus two makes four and one of them is this: No woman is good enough to raise growin' youngsters alone! The Lord meant that job for two!

WILLA

Icey, I don't want a husband.

75 CLOSE SHOT - ICEY

ICEY  
(fiercely)  
Fiddlesticks!

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

76 FULL SHOT - EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The weekly movie audience is letting out, next door to SPOON'S. Some start cars or wagons, others stroll to SPOON'S.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

77 INT. SPOON'S PARLOR - EVENING - TWO-SHOT - ICEY AND WILLA

We start with a CLOSE SHOT as ICEY'S hands slap together a gooey banana split; TILT UP to TWO-SHOT, favoring ICEY; finish on WILLA, on "it's a man you need," etc.

Murmur of CUSTOMERS o.s.

WALT'S VOICE O.S.  
(calling)  
One solid brown sody, one  
Lovers' Delight.

ICEY  
'Tain't a matter of wantin'  
or not wantin'! You're no  
spring chicken, you're a grown  
woman with two little youngins;  
it's a man you need in the  
house, Willa Harper!

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

78 LONG SHOT - NIGHT - A TRAIN

A short, lighted, toy-like train departs the town along the river-bank, whistling. The whistle TIES OVER the previous DISSOLVE. STAR-LIT SKY.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

79 FRAMING SHOT - EXT. HARPER HOUSE - NIGHT

A square, HEAD-ON SHOT, river water below and vibrant starlight above; featuring a gas-lamp by the road; a tree; and pretty tree-shadows which work across a window.

80 INT. HARPER CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - TWO-SHOT - JOHN, PEARL, SHADOWS

PEARL lies in their bed, her doll snug on her shoulder. JOHN sits on the edge of the bed, in his underwear.

PEARL

Tell me a story, John.

JOHN

Once upon a time there was a rich King...

(he sees the shadows on the wall and gets up and looks at them)

...and he had him a son and a daughter and they all lived in a castle over in Africa. Well, one day this King got taken away by bad men and before he got took off he told his son to kill anyone that tried to steal their gold, and before long these bad men come back and --

PEARL

The Blue Men?

He moves, and as his shadow moves away we see the shadow of PREACHER; motionless. PEARL sits up and points at it. JOHN notices her and sees it. We PAN JOHN to the window. He looks out.

81 FULL SHOT - PREACHER - THROUGH WINDOW, JOHN'S V.P.

He stands motionless.

82 RESUME PREVIOUS SHOT - JOHN AT WINDOW

He turns and we PAN him to bed.

(CONTINUED)



82 (CONTINUED)

JOHN  
 (casually)  
 Just a man.  
 (he climbs into  
 bed and pulls up  
 the covers)  
 Goodnight Pearl, sleep tight;  
 and don't let the bedbugs bite.

PEARL  
 (to doll)  
 'Night Miss Jenny; don't let  
 the bedbugs bite.

As they settle down we hear PREACHER'S singing, sweet and quite o.s.: "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms."

DISSOLVE TO:

83 EXT. RIVER AND TOWN - MORNING - FULL SHOT - (HELICOPTER) -  
 A GINGERBREAD SIDE-WHEELER

She steams around a bend towards a toy-like small town. PREACHER'S song, o.s., ties over. People are waving from shore and boat.

84 FULL PANNING SHOT - THE BOAT, FROM SHORE

We PAN her into frame UNCLE BIRDIE STEPTOE'S toy-like little wharf-boat. As she passes broadside we CUT TO:

85 MEDIUM SHOT - BIRDIE, THEN JOHN

...as boat passes. BIRDIE'S head sticks through a port-hole. He is a wiry old river character. The boat whistles. As BIRDIE speaks we PAN JOHN, and foundered skiff, into TWO-SHOT with BIRDIE.

BIRDIE  
 She don't put in at Cresap's  
 Landing no more, but she  
 still blows as she passes.

Come on in and have a cup of  
 coffee.

JOHN  
 (starting towards  
 him)  
 Ain't nobody stole Dad's skiff.

(CONTINUED)

85 (CONTINUED)

BIRDIE

Ain't nobody goin' to neither,  
long as Uncle Birdie's around.

He vanishes from the porthole. We PAN JOHN from skiff to wharf and Birdie's door.

BIRDIE'S VOICE O.S.

(calling)

First day my jints is limber  
enough I'll haul her up and  
give her a good caulkin'.

86 INT. BIRDIE'S BOAT - TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND BIRDIE

JOHN enters and sits on a box. BIRDIE, in a ramshackle rocking chair, pours coffee. BESS'S photograph on chest near BIRDIE.

BIRDIE

Ain't seen you in a coon's  
age, Johnny.

JOHN

I been mindin' Pearl.

BIRDIE

Pshaw now! Ain't it a caution  
what women'll load onto a  
feller's back when he ain't  
lookin'?

He gives JOHN a cup of coffee.

BIRDIE

'Scuse me, Cap, while I sweeten  
up my coffee.

He fetches a liquor bottle from beneath the rocking chair; about to pour he does a take at BESS'S PHOTOGRAPH.

87 INSERT - THE PHOTOGRAPH

It stands in a cabinet frame: A fine-looking young woman in archaic dress, with sharp, accusing black eyes.

BIRDIE'S VOICE O.S.

Dead and gone these twenty-  
five year and never takes her  
eyes off me.

CUT OVER his line to -

88 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND BIRDIE

He turns the picture away and splashes liquor into his coffee.

BIRDIE

(pouring)

Man o' my years needs a little snort to get his boiler heated of a morning.

They drink. BIRDIE, satisfied, sighs and rocks.

BIRDIE

This mornin' I was talkin' to this stranger up at the boarding-house. He knowed your Dad!

89 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

JOHN looks cautious.

JOHN

Where did he know Dad?

90 CLOSE SHOT - BIRDIE

BIRDIE'S face falls; he takes another drink.

BIRDIE

Well, boy, I'll not hide the truth; it was up at Moundsville Penitentiary.

91 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - NEW ANGLE

JOHN puts his cup down and gets up.

JOHN

I got to go now, Uncle Birdie.

He heads for the door.

BIRDIE

Why shucks boy, you just got here.

He follows JOHN to the door. JOHN runs up the bank, not looking back.

(CONTINUED)

91 (CONTINUED)

JOHN  
(running)  
I told Mom I'd be back to  
Spoon's for Pearl.

92 EXT. STREET - MED. SHOT - JOHN

He runs up the street close to Spoon's and stops dead.

93 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He is horrified by what he sees.

94 INT. SPOON'S ICE CREAM PARLOR

GROUP SHOT through door-glass, from JOHN'S V.P.

PREACHER, WILLA and PEARL surround a little table. WALT stands by, puffing his pipe. ICEY in BACKGROUND, stirs fudge at a little soda-fountain stove. WILLA looks both moved and pleased. PEARL, shyly flirting with PREACHER, all but hides in WILLA'S skirts. PREACHER dandles PEARL'S doll on his knee as he talks. All the grown-ups are avid for his words, which we don't hear through the glass.

95 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

We SHOOT THROUGH the DOOR; he quietly enters.

96 GROUP SHOT

They look casually to JOHN, and continue talking.

ICEY  
(stirring; with  
a meaningful  
glance at Willa)  
God works in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform.

OVER this JOHN ENTERS the SHOT and stands at the fringe of the GROUP, staring at PREACHER'S hands and at the doll.

PREACHER  
I was with Brother Harper almost  
to the end; ...

97 GROUP SHOT - NEW ANGLE - FAVORING JOHN AND PREACHER

PREACHER (continuing)

...and now that I'm no longer  
employed by the Penitentiary  
it is my joy to bring this  
small comfort to his loved  
ones.

98 FLASH-CUT CLOSE-UP - JOHN

On "Penitentiary" he glances quickly at PREACHER'S face;  
then back to his hands.

99 GROUP SHOT - ICEY

ICEY

(sniffing)

It's a mighty good man would  
come out of his way to bring  
a word of cheer to a grieving  
widow!

100 CLOSE SHOT - WALT

WALT

So you ain't with the State  
no more?

101 GROUP SHOT - FAVORING PREACHER AND JOHN

PREACHER

No, Brother; I resigned only  
yesterday. The heart-renderin'  
spectacle of them poor men was  
too much for me.

He becomes aware of JOHN'S staring.

PREACHER

Ah, little lad, you're staring  
at my fingers.

He hands the doll to PEARL. JOHN'S eyes follow the doll.  
PREACHER holds up both hands to JOHN. JOHN looks back  
at his hands.

PREACHER

Shall I tell you the little  
story of Right-Hand-Left-Hand --  
the tale of Good and Evil?

(CONTINUED)

101 (CONTINUED)

JOHN stands still. PEARL, with her doll, crosses to PREACHER and twines about his knee.

102 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He looks on, in dumb alarm.

103 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

PREACHER

H-A-T-E!

(he thrusts up his  
left hand)

It was with this left hand that  
old brother Cain struck the blow  
that laid his brother low!

L-O-V-E!

(he thrusts up  
his right hand)

See these here fingers, dear  
friends! These fingers has  
veins that lead straight to  
the soul of man! The right  
hand, friends! The hand of  
Love!

104 GROUP SHOT - ICEY, WALT, WILLA - OVER PREACHER'S HANDS

They are impressed in their different ways.

PREACHER, O.S.

Now watch and I'll show you  
the Story of Life. The fingers  
of these hands, dear hearts! -  
They're always a-tuggin' and a-  
warrin' one hand agin' t'other.

(he locks his  
fingers and  
writhes them,  
crackling the  
joints)

Look at 'em, dear hearts!

105 MEDIUM SHOT - JOHN - OVER PREACHER'S HANDS

He looks on with unseeing eyes.

(CONTINUED)

105 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER, O.S.  
 Old Left Hand Hate's a-fightin'  
 and it looks like Old Right Hand  
 Love's a goner!

106 GROUP SHOT - WALT, ICEY, WILLA, OVER HANDS

PREACHER, O.S.  
 But wait now! Hot dog! Love's  
 a-winnin! Yessirree!

107 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

PREACHER  
 It's Love that won! Old Left  
 Hand Hate's gone down for the  
 count!

(he crashes both  
 hands onto the  
 table)

108 FULL SHOT - THE WHOLE GROUP

Slight applause from the ADULTS. PREACHER takes PEARL,  
 with her doll, onto his lap.

ICEY  
 I never heard it better told.  
 I wish every soul in this  
 community could git the bene-  
 fit. You jest got to stay for  
 our church pick-nick Sunday!

PEARL offers PREACHER the DOLL to kiss. PREACHER complies.

109 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN'S REACTION

110 RESUME GROUP SHOT

PREACHER  
 (finessing it)  
 I must wend my way down River  
 on the Lord's work.

ICEY  
 You ain't leavin' in no hurry  
 if we can help it!

(CONTINUED)

110 (CONTINUED)

WILLA

John: take that look offen  
your face and act nice.

PREACHER

He don't mean no impudence;  
do you, boy?

(no answer)

Do you, boy? Ah, many's the  
time poor Brother Ben told me  
about these youngins.

JOHN

What did he tell you?

111 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

He does a little take. His eyes twinkle palely.

PREACHER

Why, he told me what fine little  
lambs you and your sister both  
was.

112 GROUP SHOT

JOHN

Is that all?

113 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

Something new enters his eyes; a game has begun between  
them.

PREACHER

Why, no, boy; he told me lots  
and lots of things. Nice things,  
boy.

A tight silence. ICEY pours fudge into a buttered pan.

PREACHER

My, that fudge smells yummy!

114 CLOSE SHOT - ICEY

ICEY

(with horrid  
archness)

It's for the pick-nick. And  
(continued)

(CONTINUED)



114 (CONTINUED)

ICEY (cont'd)  
 you won't get a smidgen of my  
fudge unless you stay for the  
 pick-nick!

Over her line, o.s., hymn-singing begins and now, OVER  
 her "the case rests" smile we bring up the singing and

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

115 EXT. THE RIVER BANK - CHURCH IN BACKGROUND - FULL SHOT -  
 THE SINGING PICKNICKERS

A pleasant, grassy river-bank. Few men in proportion to  
 women and children. We CENTER PREACHER. They are sing-  
 ing "Brighten the Corner;" PREACHER sings conspicuously  
 well. The women watch him and admire him. He gives  
 WILLA the eye as we PAN to CENTER WILLA, who looks wooed  
 and self-conscious. ICEY enters the SHOT and whispers  
 and beckons WILLA and, as the singing continues, they  
 leave the group and start towards a shade tree in MEDIUM  
 GROUND, which we PAN TO CENTER.

116 FULL SHOT - WILLA AND ICEY

They walk; singers in BACKGROUND.

ICEY  
 Don't he have the grandest  
 singin' voice?

WILLA nods. ICEY, looking ahead, is displeased.

117 MEDIUM SHOT - THE TREE, JOHN AND PEARL

They sit on a bench, their backs to us, partly concealed  
 by the tree trunk.

ICEY'S VOICE  
 (sharp)  
 John: Pearl:

They look around. ICEY and WILLA enter the SHOT, their  
 backs to us.

ICEY  
 Run along and play, you two.

(CONTINUED)

117 (CONTINUED)

JOHN

Where?

ICEY

Down by the river. My goodness!

Docile, they leave the shot as WILLA and ICEY approach the bench.

118 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - WILLA AND ICEY

They sit on the bench, their backs to us. The CHILDREN recede towards the river in BACKGROUND. WILLA meekly keeps her head down. Singing continues o.s.

ICEY

That feller's just achin' to settle down with some nice woman and make a home for himself.

WILLA

It's awful soon after Ben's passing.

ICEY

If ever I saw a Sign from Heaven!

WILLA

John don't like him much.

ICEY

Pearl dotes on him.

WILLA

The boy worries me. It's stilly, but it's like there was something still between him and his Dad.

ICEY

What he needs is a dose o' salts!

WILLA

There's something else.

ICEY

What?

WILLA

The money, Icey.

(CONTINUED)

118 (CONTINUED)

ICEY

I declare, you'll let that  
money haunt you to your  
grave, Willa Harper!

WILLA

I would love to be satisfied  
Harry Powell don't think I've  
got that money somewhere.

ICEY

You'll come right out and ask  
that Man of God!

(turning and  
yelling)

Mr. Paow-well!

(to Willa)

Clear that evil mud out of  
your soul!

PREACHER starts towards her. ICEY pivots and we PAN OVER  
her to CHILDREN by river.

ICEY

(yelling)

John: Pearl:...

119 CLOSE SHOT - PEARL AND JOHN

JOHN looks up from pebble-skimming and loosens his tie.

ICEY O.S.

(yelling)

Come along hee-ere and get  
some fuu-udge!

JOHN

(calling)

I don't want no fudge.

His brow is furrowed. He skims another pebble.

ICEY O.S.

(shouting)

You'll do what you're told!

They unwillingly get moving.

120 RESUME TWO-SHOT - ICEY AND WILLA

ICEY

You go set down by the River.

WILLA

(getting up)

Oh, Icey, I'm a sight!

ICEY

Get along with you.

Both women set off, WILLA to River, ICEY towards GROUP. We TRACK after ICEY. PREACHER approaches. ICEY, crossing him, gives him a little shove towards WILLA and a coy -

ICEY

You!!!

We FOLLOW her to the women who are busying themselves with the fudge.

121 CLOSE GROUP SHOT - ICEY AND WOMEN, FAVORING ICEY

...a few men in BACKGROUND, and, beyond them, PREACHER sits down by WILLA at water's edge. JOHN and PEARL approach. As ICEY starts yammering the men, WALT among them, shyly withdraw.

ICEY

That young lady'd better look sharp or some smart sister between here and Captina's a-gonna snap him up right from under her nose!

(they nod and agree, ad lib)

She's not the only fish in the river!

(more agreement.

John and Pearl join Icey. Icey speaks to John)

Now you two stay put!

122 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He looks hard towards WILLA and PREACHER o.s.

ICEY

(o.s., to women)

Shilly-shallying around...

123 LONG SHOT - WILLA AND PREACHER

...from JOHN'S VIEWPOINT in tableau of decorous courtship, framed by heavy domestic bodies.

ICEY (O.S.)

A husband's one piece of store  
goods ye never know till you  
get it home and take the paper  
off.

124 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - WILLA AND PREACHER

They sit by the water; drooling willows; almost in travesty of a romantic scene. WILLA dabbles one hand in the water.

WILLA

(very shy)

Did Ben Harper ever tell you  
what he done with that money  
he stole?

125 HEAD CLOSE-UP - PREACHER

His head goes slantwise and he smiles oddly.

PREACHER

My dear child, don't you know?

126 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He watches intently towards his mother; PEARL holds his hand. ICEY'S voice o.s.

127 GROUP SHOT - WOMEN, JOHN AND PEARL

ICEY

She's moonin' about Ben Harper.  
That wasn't love, it was just  
flap-doodle.

(agreeing nods  
and murmurs)

Have some fudge, lambs.

(she hands some  
down to John and  
Pearl. Pearl  
smears her mouth  
with it; John,  
watching always

(continued)

(CONTINUED)

127 (CONTINUED)

ICEY (cont'd)  
towards his mother,  
takes one nibble  
and throws the  
rest away)

When you're married forty years,  
you know all that don't amount  
to a hill o' beans! I been  
married to my Walt that long,  
and I'll swear in all that time  
I'd just lie there thinking  
about my canning.

In BACKGROUND WALT looks sheepish.

WILLA'S VOICE O.S.  
(calling)  
John! John?

All look towards her.

128 LONG SHOT - OVER GROUP

WILLA is standing, beckoning JOHN.

129 MEDIUM TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

They start towards their mother.

130 GROUP SHOT - ICEY AND WOMEN - NEW ANGLE

ICEY  
A woman's a fool to marry for  
that. It's something for a man.  
The good Lord never meant for a  
decent woman to want that - not  
really want it! It's all just  
a fake and a pipe-dream.

The others agree with her. She puts a piece of fudge in  
her mouth.

131 CLOSE GROUP SHOT - PREACHER, WILLA, CHILDREN

...as JOHN and PEARL (with DOLL) come shyly up. WILLA  
is seated again. She is radiant.

(CONTINUED)

131 (CONTINUED)

WILLA

John, Mr. Powell has got something to tell you.

PREACHER

Well, John, the night before your father died, he told me what he did with that money.

132 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He desperately conceals his reaction; he thinks BEN has betrayed him.

133 RESUME GROUP SHOT

PREACHER

That money's at the bottom of the river wrapped around a 12-pound cobblestone.

134 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

He now conceals his new reaction.

135 RESUME GROUP SHOT

WILLA touches PREACHER'S hand, warmly.

WILLA

Thank you, Harry.

She looks all around her, glowing, and stands up, hands to hair.

PEARL

John...

JOHN

Sshhh...

WILLA

I feel clean now! My whole body's just a-wuiverin' with cleanness!

She walks away towards ICEY and the WOMEN.

136 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

PREACHER  
John: here.

137 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

JOHN moves to stand in front of him; PEARL, to stand beside PREACHER, with the DOLL.

138 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER AND CHILDREN

From JOHN'S eye-level; as JOHN'S steps in front of him and PEARL beside him.

PREACHER  
Your tie's crooked.

139 HEAD CLOSE-UP - JOHN

The hand named LOVE and the hand named HATE come in to straighten the necktie. JOHN looks down. He looks up and sees:

140 GROUP SHOT - JOHN'S V.P.

PREACHER, in close-up, hands busy o.s.; PEARL, with doll; and between them, in BACKGROUND, WILLA. She is now running fast towards ICEY, who walks towards her with arms outstretched. Behind them, the group of WOMEN. BIRDIE'S guitar music begins o.s.

DISSOLVE TO:

141 EXT. BIRDIE'S BOAT - EVENING - MEDIUM SHOT - BIRDIE, JOHN AND SKIFF

Birdie sits beside his open door, strumming a guitar and singing. The scene is lamplighted from within. Ben's skiff is inverted on trestles in FOREGROUND. At start of scene we see only John's feet; he's under the skiff, examining it. After three lines of song he comes out from under, and lounges against the skiff, tracing a tarry seam with his forefinger.

(CONTINUED)



141 (CONTINUED)

BIRDIE

(singing)

'Twas down at Cresap's Landing,  
 Along the River Shore,  
 Birdie Steptoe was a Pilot  
 In the good old days of yore.

Now he sets in his old wharf-boat...

JOHN

(across him)

When'll Dad's skiff be ready?

BIRDIE

Can't hear ye, boy.

(singing)

...So the big boats heave a sigh,  
 They blow for Uncle Birdie...

JOHN

(across him)

When'll the skiff be ready?

BIRDIE

(singing)

And the times that are gone by.  
 I'll have her ready inside of a  
 week; and then we'll go fishin'.  
 How's your Maw?

Through rest of scene, Birdie picks lazily at his guitar.

JOHN

O, she's all right.

BIRDIE

How's your sister Pearl?

JOHN

Just fine.

He gets up.

BIRDIE

Leavin', boy?

JOHN

Yep; gotta watch out for Pearl,  
 Uncle Birdie.

(CONTINUED)

141 (CONTINUED)

BIRDIE

Well goodnight, boy. Come  
again - any time.

JOHN leaves the SHOT.

BIRDIE

And mind now - I'll have your  
Paw's skiff in ship-shape,  
'side of a week.

142 MOVING SHOT - JOHN

As he runs past SPOON'S, looking in, he is curious.

143 MOVING SHOT - SPOON'S, HIS V.P.

ICEY embraces WILLA or waltzes her around; WALT looks  
on, pleased.

144 FULL SHOT - JOHN

He hurries away from us towards home.

145 FRAMING SHOT - THE HARPER HOUSE

In the otherwise dark house, one window is lighted.  
JOHN enters the SHOT, his back to us, Seeing the  
lighted window, he hesitates.

JOHN

(softly)

Is somebody there?

Silent pause, listening; then he walks cautiously  
towards us.

146 FULL SHOT - JOHN

A tall, narrow shooting-frame; right and left thirds of  
screen are black.

We SHOOT from inside the screen door. JOHN crosses the  
porch and softly opens the door and enters on tiptoe and  
pauses, close to us, in the dark hallway, listening  
sharp.

(CONTINUED)

146 (CONTINUED)

JOHN  
(softly)  
Is anybody here?

Silence. Relieved, but puzzled, he tiptoes along towards the rear of the hallway in CLOSE-UP as we PULL AWAY. We bring in the bottom of the stairs.

PREACHER'S VOICE O.S.  
Good evening, John.

JOHN gasps, peering, and looks up.

147 TWO SHOT - JOHN AND PREACHER - NARROW SCREEN

PREACHER looks at JOHN; JOHN sinks onto the edge of a chair. PREACHER sits opposite. A bar of light from door falls across PREACHER'S face.

PREACHER  
I had a little talk with your mother tonight, John; and your mother decided it might be best for me to -- let you know the news.

From JOHN, just a questioning, helpless reaction.

PREACHER  
Your mother told me tonight she wanted me to be a daddy to you and your sister. We're going to get married, son.

JOHN is still.

PREACHER  
Did you hear what I said, son?

JOHN  
Huh?

PREACHER  
Married! We have decided to go to Sistersville tomorrow, and when we come back --

JOHN  
(just breathing  
it)  
You ain't my Dad! You won't never be my Dad!

(CONTINUED)

147 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER  
 (obsessed, disre-  
 garding him)  
 -- and when we come back, we'll  
 all be friends -- and share our  
fortunes together, John!

JOHN  
 (screaming)  
 You think you can make me tell!  
 But I won't! I won't! I won't!

He gawks at his own folly, covers his mouth with his hand  
 and looks up at PREACHER.

PREACHER  
 (softly)  
 Tell me what, boy?

JOHN  
 Nothin'!

PREACHER  
 Are we keeping secrets from  
 each other, little lad?

JOHN  
 No. No.

PREACHER stiffens, relaxes, and chuckles softly.

PREACHER  
 No matter, boy: we've got a  
 long time together.

148 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PREACHER

JOHN starts for the stairs.

DISSOLVE TO:

149 EXT. HARPER YARD - MORNING - CLOSE SHOT - BEN'S FORD

It stands vibrating, then moves out of shot with receding  
 engine sound o.s., disclosing:

150 TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

ICEY'S skirts in BACKGROUND. They are awfully spic-and-  
 span; they even wear shoes.

(CONTINUED)

150 (CONTINUED)

ICEY O.S.  
Wave yer hands! Great sakes!

They wave after the car, bewilderedly.

ICEY O.S.  
 You wait here while I get your  
 night-things.

She hustles out of shot.

PEARL  
Now can I tell?

JOHN  
 Hm?

PEARL  
 When Mr. Powell's our Daddy  
 then I can tell him about -

His hand clamps over her mouth. She struggles and whimpers.

JOHN  
 You swore, Pearl!

PEARL  
 (across him)  
 John! Don't!

JOHN  
 You promised Dad you wouldn't  
never tell!

He takes his hand away but holds it ready.

PEARL  
 I love Mr. Powell lots and lots,  
 John!

JOHN grabs her by the shoulders and glares.

JOHN  
Don't you tell! Don't you  
 NEVER DARE tell!

Over them we

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

151 SHOULDER CLOSE-UP - WILLA

She is caressing her shoulders.

152 FULL SHOT - WILLA

Her back is to us. She is in a pathetic night dress; she stands before a mirror in a hotel bedroom in Sistersville. She walks to the door.

153 INSERT - WILLA'S HAND

It hesitates on the doorknob.

154 CLOSE SHOT - WILLA

Shooting OVER her as she opens the door, we see PREACHER in bed, his back to us. Beyond him, a window. The drawn shade rustles quietly.

155 CLOSE SHOT - THE DOOR

...from within the room. WILLA closes the door, on which PREACHER'S coat hangs. The closing brings a knocking sound. WILLA feels the outside of the coat; feels something hard; takes out the knife and looks at it.

156 INSERT - THE KNIFE IN HER HAND - CLOSE SHOT - WILLA

A moment of perplexity; then a little smile.

WILLA  
(whispering)  
Oh! It's...uh...

She puts it back in the pocket and gives the pocket a pat. She starts towards the bed.

157 TWO-SHOT - WILLA AND PREACHER

We SHOOT OVER PREACHER as she approaches modestly and stands by the bed.

WILLA  
(softly)  
Harry...

(CONTINUED)

157 (CONTINUED)

His hand comes up; she puts out her own, expecting a loving hand-clasp; but PREACHER points to the window.

PREACHER

Fix that window shade.

Startled, then again tender, she moves to:

158 CLOSE SHOT - WILLA AT WINDOW

She adjusts the shade, looking always towards the bed. She smiles maternally. As we PULL BACK and PAN into FULL SHOT OF BED she comes to the bed and sits on the edge and slips off her mules. PREACHER'S back is to her.

WILLA

(softly)

Harry!

PREACHER

(cool and clear)

I was praying.

WILLA

Oh, I'm sorry, Harry! I didn't know! I thought maybe --

With a sounding of bedsprings PREACHER turns. His voice is quiet and cold.

PREACHER

You thought, Willa, that the moment you walked in that door I'd start in to pawing you in the abominable way men are supposed to do on their wedding night. Ain't that right, now?

WILLA

No, Harry! I thought --

PREACHER

I think it's time we got one thing perfectly clear, Willa. Marriage to me represents a blending of two spirits in the sight of Heaven.

(CONTINUED)

158 (CONTINUED)

He gets out of bed. WILLA puts her face down to the pillow and moans. PREACHER snaps on a harsh bare bulb at center of room.

PREACHER  
(quietly)  
Get up, Willa.

WILLA  
Harry, what --

PREACHER  
Get up.

She obeys.

PREACHER  
Now go and look at yourself  
yonder in that mirror.

WILLA hesitates.

159 FULL SHOT - OVER PREACHER - CENTERING A STAINED BUREAU MIRROR

PREACHER  
Do as I say.

WILLA walks to meet her image in the mirror; her eyes on PREACHER.

PREACHER  
Look at yourself.

Her head drops, facing the mirror.

160 CLOSE SHOT - WILLA, PREACHER, BULB

WILLA is in HEAD CLOSE-UP; bulb hangs at center; PREACHER, in his nightshirt, is beyond it.

PREACHER  
What do you see, girl?

Her mouth trembles; she can't talk.

(CONTINUED)



160 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER

You see the body of a woman!  
The temple of creation and  
motherhood. You see the flesh  
of Eve that Man since Adam  
has profaned. That body was  
meant for begetting children.  
It was not meant for the lust  
of men.

WILLA just opens her mouth.

PREACHER

Do you want more children,  
Willa?

WILLA

I -- no, I --

PREACHER

It's the business of our marriage  
to mind those two you have now  
-- not to beget more.

WILLA

Yes.

He stands watching her for a moment; then he snaps off  
the light and gets into bed.

PREACHER

You can get back into bed now  
and stop shivering.

WILLA, in the darkness, does not move. She folds her  
hands in prayer and lifts her eyes.

WILLA

(whispering)

Help me to get clean so I can  
be what Harry wants me to be.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

161 INSERT - A TORCH OR RAILROAD FLARE

VOICES O.S.

AAA-MEN!

## 162 GROUP SHOT - CONGREGATION

A dozen country men and women in religious ecstasy.

(NOTE: No set necessary for this scene. Flare, or flares, in every SHOT. Faces lighted by flares.)

CONGREGATION

AAA-MENN!

WILLA O.S.

(very loud)

You have all sinned!

CONGREGATION

Yes! Yes!

## 163 HEAD CLOSE-UP - WILLA

WILLA

But which one of you can say  
as I can say: I drove a good  
man to murder because I kept  
a-houndin' him for clothes and  
per-fumes and face paint!

## 164 GROUP SHOT - CONGREGATION

WILLA O.S.

And he slew two human beings  
and he come to me and he said:  
Take this money and buy your  
per-fumes and paint!

165 FULL FIGURE SHOT - WILLA, STANDING; PREACHER STANDING  
IN B.G.

WILLA

But Brethren, that's where the  
Lord stepped in! That's where  
the LORD stepped in!

PREACHER

Yes!

CONGREGATION O.S.

Yes! Yes!

166 GROUP SHOT - CONGREGATION

WILLA O.S.  
(screaming)  
And the Lord told that man --

CONGREGATION  
Yes! Yes!

167 CLOSE SHOT - WILLA

WILLA  
The Lord said, Take that money  
and throw it in the River!

CONGREGATION O.S.  
Yes! Yes! Hallelujah!

WILLA  
Throw that money in the River!  
In THE RIVER!

CONGREGATION O.S.  
IN THE RIVER - ER !

CUT TO:

168 EXTREME CLOSE DOWN-SHOT - PEARL'S DOLL

It lies face down on arbor bricks, its back wide open;  
money spilling out. A little breeze toys with the money.  
HOLD, a moment, in silence. Then we hear a snipping  
sound o.s. TILT UPWARD into -

169 CLOSE SHOT - PEARL

She sits at the end of the grape-arbor. She finishes cut-  
ting a skirted paper-doll out of a hundred dollar bill  
and lays it down beside a male hundred-dollar paper-doll.  
She pats the dolls.

PEARL  
Now! You're John - and you're  
Pearl.

JOHN'S VOICE O.S.  
(calling)  
Pearl?...Pearl?

(CONTINUED)

169 (CONTINUED)

PEARL starts guiltily and looks towards him, scrambling money together. JOHN'S footsteps o.s.

PEARL  
You'll get awful mad, John.  
I done a Sin!

170 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN - PEARL'S ANGLE

JOHN  
You what?

He hears the frantic rustling of paper -

JOHN  
(aghast)  
Pearl! You ain't --

171 CLOSE SHOT - PEARL, OVER JOHN

PEARL  
John, don't be mad! Don't be mad! I was just playing with it! I didn't tell no one!

172 FLASH CUT CLOSE-UP - JOHN

...as he stoops toward her, dumb with horror.

173 CLOSE SHOT - PEARL

She continues to gather the money together.

PEARL  
(pleading)  
It's all here.

174 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

JOHN  
Pearl! Oh, Pearl!

She's stuffing bills back into the torn doll. They slide through her fingers. He helps.

175 FLASH INSERT - PREACHER'S FOOT

...as he plants it, with sound, in damp grass.

176 CLOSE SHOT - THE CHILDREN

JOHN freezés.

PREACHER'S VOICE O.S.

John?

JOHN

Oh -- yes?

177 LONG SHOT - PREACHER - CHILDREN'S V.P.

He stands at far end of arbor.

PREACHER

What are you doing, boy?

178 LONG SHOT - CHILDREN - PREACHER'S V.P.

JOHN

Getting Pearl to bed. I --

PREACHER

What's taking you so long  
about it?

179 FLASH INSERT - THEIR FRANTIC HANDS, MONEY, THE BOLL

JOHN O.S.

It - she --

180 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER - PEERING TOWARDS THEM

PREACHER

What's that you're playing  
with, boy?

181 LONG SHOT - CHILDREN - PREACHER'S V.P.

JOHN

Pearl's junk. Mom gets mad  
when she plays out here and  
don't clean up afterward.

PREACHER

Come on, children!

182 INSERT - JOHN'S HANDS PIN THE DOLL TOGETHER

183 FULL SHOT - CHILDREN STAND UP, LOOK TOWARDS PREACHER,  
AND SLOWLY START TOWARDS HIM. THE TWO FORGOTTEN PAPER-  
DOLLS ARE BLOWN TOWARDS HIM TOO.

184 MOVING SHOT - PREACHER - JOHN'S V.P.

PREACHER'S watch-chain gleams. The shot SLOWLY CLOSES  
DOWN on it and becomes still. We see the paper-dolls  
blow past him.

PREACHER'S VOICE

Now, up to bed with the both  
of you.

185 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

JOHN starts to laugh uncontrollably. We PAN them past  
PREACHER'S stomach into FULL SHOT.

PREACHER'S VOICE

Come here, John.

PREACHER'S VOICE

Run along, Pearl.

PEARL goes, JOHN comes towards PREACHER.

186 PREACHER - JOHN'S V.P.

PREACHER

Your mother says you tattled  
on me, boy. She says you told  
her that I asked you where that  
money was hid.

JOHN O.S.

Yes. Yes.

PREACHER

That wasn't very nice of you,  
John. Have a heart, boy.

187 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

His helpless reaction. Pause.

(CONTINUED)

187 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER'S VOICE

Run along to bed.

As JOHN turns away we

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

188 CLOSE SHOT - WILLA IN PROFILE

...and PULL AWAY showing JOHN as he turns to her.  
(PEARL'S head is turned away; she's asleep.)

WILLA

Were you impudent to Mr. Powell,  
John?

JOHN

Mom, I didn't mean --

WILLA

What were you impudent about?

JOHN

He asked me about the money  
again, Mom.

WILLA

You always make up that lie,  
John! There is no money,  
John. Can't you get that  
through your head?

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

189 CLOSE SHOT - A GAR, UNDERWATER

190 CLOSE UPWARD TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND BIRDIE

They look down into the water.

BIRDIE

Meanest, orneriest, sneakiest  
critter in the whole river,  
boy! A gar!

191 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND BIRDIE

They sit up into it.

(CONTINUED)

191 (CONTINUED)

JOHN

Here's your can o' hooks,  
Uncle Birdie.

BIRDIE

There hain't nary hook in the  
land smart enough to hook  
Mister Gar. What a feller  
needs is mother-wit - and a  
horse-hair.

Over this, he pulls horse-hair out of his hatband. He  
sets to work rigging his noose.

JOHN

Won't he bust it, Uncle Birdie?

BIRDIE

Shoot, a horse-hair'll hold a  
lumpin' whale.

He puts over his line. Pause.

BIRDIE

Do you mind me cussin', boy?

JOHN

No.

BIRDIE

Tell you why I ask - your step-  
pa bein' a Preacher an' all...

JOHN'S lips go like string. BIRDIE sees it.

BIRDIE

Never was much of a one for  
preachers myself. I dunno  
what's wrong up at your place,  
but just remember one thing,  
Cap - if ever you need help  
you just holler out and come  
a-runnin'. Old Uncle Birdie's  
your friend.

A powerful strike. BIRDIE lands the gar. The air is full  
of sparkling water.

BIRDIE

There! You slimy, snag-toothed,  
egg-suckin', bait-stealin' so-  
and-so!



192 QUICK INSERT - THE THUMPING FISH IN BOTTOM OF BOAT

193 FULL SHOT

He beats the fish with the heel of an old shoe.

BIRDIE

(beating)

Mind what I told you. If ever  
you get in a crack, I just come  
a-runnin'.

Now there is no sound of thumping or beating.

194 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

Admiring BIRDIE, he squares his shoulders, full of confidence.

JOHN

Can we eat him, Uncle Birdie?

BIRDIE

If you got an appetite for  
bones and bitterness.

On this, he flings the dead gar in a wide arc out into the river.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

195 INT. CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The children are ready for bed.

196 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

Smiling, quiet, awaiting an answer.

197 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

JOHN

I don't know.

198 TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PREACHER

PEARL plays unconcernedly in background.

(CONTINUED)

198 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER  
 (intimately)  
 She thinks that money's in the  
 river, but you and me, we know  
 better, don't we, boy?

JOHN  
 I don't know nothin'!

PREACHER  
 The summer is young yet, little  
 lad.  
 (he turns away  
 from John)  
 Pearl?

He holds out his hands to her; she comes to his lap, dropping her doll at his feet. JOHN turns his back and looks out the window beside bureau.

PREACHER  
 John's a feller who likes to  
 keep secrets.

PEARL  
 Mm-hm.

PREACHER  
 I'll tell you a secret.

PEARL  
 Yes?

PREACHER  
 I knowed your Daddy.  
 (PEARL frowns)  
 And do you know what your Daddy  
 said to me? He said, "Tell my  
 little girl Pearl there's to be  
 no secrets between her and you."

199 INSERT - JOHN'S HAND COMES TO REST BESIDE A HAIRBRUSH

200 RESUME TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND PEARL, JOHN IN B.G.

PEARL  
 Yes?

PREACHER  
 Now it's your turn.

(CONTINUED)

200 (CONTINUED)

PEARL

What secret shall I tell?

PREACHER

How old are you?

PEARL

That's no secret. I'm five.

201 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN - PREACHER AND PEARL IN B.G.

A look of impotent hatred.

PREACHER

Sure, that's no secret.

202 RESUME TWO-SHOT

PREACHER (continuing)

What's your name?

PEARL

(giggling)

You're just foolin'! My name's Pearl.

PREACHER

Tst-tst! Then I reckon I'll have to try again! Where's the money hid?

JOHN throws the hairbrush, striking PREACHER'S head.

JOHN

(screaming as  
he throws)

You swore you wouldn't tell!

(he beats the  
air with his  
fists)

You swore! You swore! You swore!

203 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

He is sure now PEARL knows.

204 THREE-SHOT - PEARL, PREACHER, JOHN

PEARL  
(awed)  
You hit Daddy with the hair-  
brush!

Another silence.

PREACHER  
(cheerfully)  
You see? We can't have any-  
thing to do with John.  
(light off)  
You and me will go down to the  
parlor.

PEARL  
Miz Jenny! Miz Jenny!

She gets the doll. We PAN them through the door.

205 TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND PEARL

Outside door as he closes it.

PREACHER  
John's just plumb bad through  
and through -

206 CLOSE SHOT - PEARL

As PREACHER'S hand locks the door.

PEARL  
(at door)  
Yes, John's just plumb bad.

CUT TO:

207 INT. SPOON'S ICE CREAM PARLOR - THREE-SHOT - WILLA,  
ICEY, WALT

We shoot OVER ICEY as WILLA opens the door to leave.  
WILLA is in outdoor clothes and is not dressed for  
work in the parlor.

WILLA  
That boy's as stubborn and  
mulish as a sheep!

(CONTINUED)

207 (CONTINUED)

ICEY  
(sighing)  
It's a shame!

WILLA'S face shines like one possessed.

WILLA  
Goodnight.

WALT enters shot, his back to us.

ICEY  
Goodnight, honey.

As WILLA starts away we DOLLY THROUGH DOOR and PAN her to deserted street. There is a river mist.

208 TWO-SHOT - WALT AND ICEY

WALT is ill at ease.

209 RESUME SHOT ON WILLA

ICEY O.S.  
(calling)  
Plan on a longer visit next time.

WALT O.S.  
You don't hardly get settled till you're frettin' to git home again.

Again WILLA pauses and turns.

WILLA  
(with sweet radiance,  
To Walt:)  
I'm needed to keep peace and harmony between them.  
(to Icey:)  
It's my burden and I'm proud of it, Icey!

She walks off into the mist.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

210 EXT. HARPER HOME - NIGHT - MEDIUM SHOT - LIGHTED PARLOR WINDOW; REST OF HOUSE DARK

Distant muffled sound of river-boat whistle.

PEARL O.S.

John's bad.

WILLA enters, her back to us; she stops.

PREACHER O.S.

Yes; John's bad.

PEARL

Tell me another secret about my Dad.

211 CLOSE SHOT - WILLA

She smiles benignly.

PREACHER O.S.

O no! Your turn!

PEARL

All right.

PREACHER

Where's the money hid.

WILLA keeps smiling.

PEARL

John's bad.

PREACHER

Where's the money hid? Tell me, you little wretch, or I'll tear your arm off!

Still smiling, shaking her head as in disbelief, WILLA makes for house as PEARL screams.

212 INT. HARPER HALLWAY - TWO-SHOT - WILLA AND PREACHER

Narrow screen, same set-up as in earlier corridor scene, PREACHER and JOHN. Their eyes meet. Pause.

PREACHER

(stunned)

I didn't expect you home so soon.

213 CLOSE SHOT - WILLA

She still smiles; her eyes turn to sound of PEARL'S sobbing.

214 TWO SHOT - AS BEFORE

PREACHER stands still; WILLA in BACKGROUND opens closet door where PEARL sobs.

CUT TO:

215 TWO-SHOT - WALT AND ICEY

...washing and drying glasses. ICEY is washing briskly, WALT is drying slowly.

WALT

Icey, I'm worried about Willa.

ICEY

How do you mean?

WALT

I'm figurin' how I can say it so's you won't get mad.

ICEY

Say what, Walt Spoon!

WALT

There's somethin' wrong about it, Mother.

ICEY

About what!

WALT

About Mr. Powell. All of it!

ICEY

Walt!

WALT

Now, Mother, a body can't help their feelin's.

ICEY

May the Lord have mercy on you, Walt Spoon!

(CONTINUED)

215 (CONTINUED)

WALT  
 Mother, I only --

CUT TO:

216 INT. WILLA'S AND PREACHER'S BEDROOM - FULL SHOT -  
WILLA ON BED - PREACHER IN BACKGROUND

WILLA lies in profile on the bed along the bottom of the frame. A prim, old woman's nightdress makes her look like a child. Her hands are clasped. PREACHER, fully dressed, stands at the window, which is in BACKGROUND towards foot of bed. His coat, hung over a chair, is in silhouette. River mist outside window halated by exterior gas-lamp. The window shade is up. She is mumbling in prayer. She stops.

PREACHER  
 (his back still  
 turned)  
 Are you through praying?

WILLA  
 I'm through, Harry.

He turns. WILLA is calm and immobile with the ecstasy of a martyr.

PREACHER  
 You were listening outside the  
 parlor window.

WILLA  
 It's not in the river, is it  
 Harry?

PREACHER  
Answer me!

WILLA  
 Ben never told you he threwed  
 it in the river? Did he?

.PREACHER hits her across the mouth. A pause.

WILLA  
 (continues, un-  
 ruffled)  
 Then the children know where  
 it is hid? John knows? Is  
 that it?  
 (continued)

(CONTINUED)



216 (CONTINUED)

WILLA (cont'd)

(a pause)

Then it's still here, some-  
where amongst us, tainting us?

217 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER, LISTENING FOR A VOICE

218 RESUME TWO-SHOT

WILLA

So you must have known it all  
along, Harry.

219 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER, LISTENING

After a moment, the river boat whistle blows, nearer.  
HOLD CLOSE-UP a moment after whistle.

220 CLOSE DOWN-SHOT - WILLA, SAINT-LIKE

WILLA

But that ain't why you married  
me, Harry. I know that much.  
It couldn't be that because  
the Lord just wouldn't let it.

221 RESUME TWO-SHOT - WILLA

WILLA

He made you marry me so's you  
could show me the Way and the  
Life and the Salvation of my  
soul! Ain't that so, Harry?

222 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

He has heard the VOICE and starts to move out of CLOSE  
SHOT.

223 RESUME TWO-SHOT

He has moved over to the coat on back of chair.

224 CLOSE SHOT, - COAT

His hand goes into the pocket and brings the knife out.  
(It is the same coat, and pocket, as in the wedding-  
night scene.)

225 RESUME TWO-SHOT

WILLA

So you might say it was the  
money that brung us together.

He pulls down the blind. He moves toward the bed.

WILLA

The rest of it don't matter,  
Harry.

226 INSERT - PREACHER'S HAND AND KNIFE

It clicks open.

227 RESUME TWO-SHOT

As he raises his arm to strike:

228 HEAD CLOSE-UP - WILLA

...with foolish, ecstatic eyes.

WILLA

Bless us all!

DISSOLVE TO:

229 INT. CHILDREN'S BEDROOM - FULL SHOT - THE SHADOWS  
ON THE WALL

They are shaped as in earlier scene, but altered by mist.  
Set-up as in earlier scene. Over them we hear the whinny-  
and-catch and the failure of the Ford being cranked; once;  
then again: then JOHN'S shadow moves on the wall and on  
a third cranking which engages the engine, we PAN TO  
WINDOW, shooting over JOHN, who peers out, into blind  
mist.

(CONTINUED)

229 (CONTINUED)

The gears of the car shift; the car moves away, unseen; its sounds diminish slowly, and die. A moment of silence; then JOHN turns and we PAN him to the bed. He gets in beside PEARL, who is asleep, and, as we TIGHTEN IN CLOSE, puts his hand across the face of the doll.

DISSOLVE TO:

230 HEAD CLOSE-UP - ICEY

An ominous expression. She looks sharp to WALT, beckoning secretly; through rear screen door of kitchen, onto porch.

ICEY  
(loud whisper)  
Walt! Come quick!

231 FULL FIGURE SHOT - WALT

He is scrubbing out an ice cream container on the back porch. He looks up and moves towards her.

WALT  
(natural voice)  
What's wrong, Mother?

232 MED. CLOSE - ICEY, THEN WALT

ICEY  
(whisper)  
Sshhh! He's in there.

WALT ENTERS SHOT with pipe.

WALT  
Who?

ICEY  
(whisper)  
Mr. Powell!  
(Walt looks  
enquiry)  
Willa has run away!

WALT  
I'll be switched!....

They enter the kitchen. We hear muffled sounds of sobbing o.s.

233 MED. CLOSE TWO-SHOT

WALT  
Just went?

ICEY  
She took out some time durin'  
the night, -- in that old  
Model-T --

WALT clucks his tongue.

WALT  
Is he hit pretty bad?

ICEY  
All to pieces!

WALT moves towards kitchen cabinet.

WALT  
There's a little peach brandy  
- maybe a sip?

ICEY  
A man of the Cloth?

234 MED. CLOSE SHOT - WALT

He pours, snaps it down; weak defiance.

235 MED. CLOSE SHOT - ICEY

ICEY  
Walt Spoon, that's for sick-  
ness in the house!

236 MED. CLOSE SHOT - WALT

He looks towards o.s. sobbing.

WALT  
What can we do, Mother?

237 TWO-SHOT

ICEY  
I thought if you went and  
talked to him -- another man -

238 MED. SHOT - PREACHER

He sits at a table, his back towards us, mumbling over his Bible.

239 TWO-SHOT - WALT, ICEY BEHIND HIM, ENTERING THROUGH DOOR

WALT  
Mister Powell?

PREACHER  
(suddenly loud)  
A strange woman is a narrow  
pit!

ICEY  
(a reverent  
whisper)  
Amen! Amen!

PREACHER  
She lieth in wait as for a  
prey. And increaseth the  
transgressors among men.

He closes his Bible and turns to them with weepy eyes and a brave little smile.

PREACHER  
My dear, dear friends! What-  
ever would I do without you!

240 CLOSE SHOT - ICEY

ICEY  
(wailing)  
Mister Powell!

241 THREE-SHOT - NEW ANGLE

WALT  
Is there anythin' -- any-  
thin'...?

PREACHER  
It is my shame - my crown of  
thorns. And I must wear it  
bravely.

(CONTINUED)

241 (CONTINUED)

ICEY  
What could have possessed  
that girl!

PREACHER  
(simply)  
Satan.

ICEY  
Ah.

WALT sits across from PREACHER. ICEY is at PREACHER'S  
elbow.

WALT  
Didn't you have no inkling?

PREACHER  
Yes; from the first night.

WALT  
The first night?

PREACHER  
Our honeymoon.

242 CLOSE SHOT - WALT

WALT  
How's that?

243 TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND ICEY

PREACHER  
She turned me out of the bed.

ICEY  
(with pleasure)  
Nnnoooo!!

244 CLOSE SHOT - WALT

Filling his pipe.

WALT  
What do you figure to do?

245 TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND ICEY

PREACHER

Do? Why stay and take care of them little kids. Maybe it was never meant for a woman like Willa to taint their young lives.

ICEY

(hands clasped;  
with approval)

Mmmmm!

246 CLOSE SHOT - WALT

Dabbing at moisture in the corner of his eye.

WALT

That's mighty brave of you,  
Reverend.

247 TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND ICEY

PREACHER

I reckon it's been ordained  
this way, Brother Spoon.

248 CLOSE SHOT - WALT

WALT

Didn't -- didn't she leave  
no word?

249 TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND ICEY

PREACHER

A scrawl. On a piece of note-  
paper on the bureau.

ICEY smiles sideways.

PREACHER

I burned it.

(Preacher holds  
out his hand,  
stares in dis-  
gust, and wipes  
his palm dramati-  
cally on his coat-  
sleeve)  
(continued)

(CONTINUED)

249 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER (cont'd)  
I tore it up and burned it --  
it stank so strong of hell-  
fire.

ICEY

Amen.

PREACHER  
The pitcher has went to the well  
once too often, my friends.

250 CLOSE SHOT - WALT

WALT  
She'll come draggin' her tail  
back home.

251 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

PREACHER  
She'll not be back. I reckon  
I'd be safe in promisin' you  
that.

252 CLOSE SHOT - WALT

WALT  
Maybe she's just run off on  
a spree.

PREACHER'S VOICE O.S.

No!

WALT  
Well, there's no harm in  
hopin'.

253 TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND ICEY

PREACHER  
Ain't no sense in it, neither.  
I figured somethin' like this  
was brewin' when she went to  
bed last night.

(CONTINUED)



253 (CONTINUED)

ICEY  
(all woman)

How?

PREACHER  
She tarried around the kitchen  
after I'd gone up, and when I  
went downstairs to see what was  
wrong...

ICEY  
(eagerly)  
What!

PREACHER  
She'd found this fruit jar of  
dandelion wine  
(Icey touches him)  
that the husband -- Harper --  
had hid somewheres in the  
cellar.  
(playing his ace)  
She was drinking.

254 CLOSE SHOT - ICEY

ICEY is happy to let her mouth fall open and let out a  
gasp.

255 CLOSE SHOT - WALT

Sniffling.

256 THREE-SHOT - PREACHER, ICEY, WALT

PREACHER  
I tried to save her.

ICEY  
I know you did, Reverend.  
Oh, I know how you tried!

PREACHER  
The devil wins sometimes!

257 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

PREACHER  
(eyes upturned)  
Can't nobody say I didn't do  
my best to save her!

DISSOLVE TO:

258 CLOSE UNDERWATER SHOT (TANK)

We PAN, with slowly streaming weeds, and bring in WILLA in close profile; the current, coming from behind her, drifts her long hair across her throat.

259 MEDIUM SHOT - WILLA AND CAR

She is in profile as before -

260 CLOSE SHOT - A BAITED HOOK

It descends, and catches on the windshield, and the line tautens; then tugs. We start to follow the line up.

261 CLOSE SHOT - ABOVE WATER - THE LINE

We continue to follow the line up, and bring in, close, the stern of BEN HARPER'S skiff.

262 MEDIUM SHOT - UNCLE BIRDIE

He sits back, tugging unconcernedly at the line. Then he leans over to see what's wrong.

263 CLOSE SHOT - BIRDIE

...as he peers over side.

264 DOWN-SHOT - FULL SHOT OF CAR AND WILLA; BIRDIE'S VIEWPOINT

265 CLOSE SHOT - BIRDE, HORROR-STRICKEN

266 MOVING UNDERWATER SHOT - WILLA

We hear PREACHER'S voice o.s., singing:

PREACHER O.S.  
Leaning! Leaning! Safe and  
secure from all alarms!

Meanwhile we move vertically DOWNWARD TOWARDS HER FACE, serene in death. We may or may not glimpse the gashed throat, through drifting hair,

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

267 EXT. HARPER HOME - FULL SHOT - THE HOUSE AND TREE

PREACHER leans against the tree; he continues singing:

PREACHER  
Leaning! Leaning! Leaning  
on the Everlasting Arms!  
(seductively)  
CHILDREN!

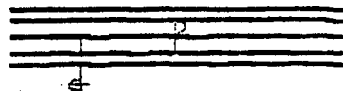
268 CLOSE MOVING SHOT - PREACHER

We start moving before he does. LOW CAMERA; full figure. We TILT to frame him from the waist downward and follow close behind him. As he leaves the tree and walks along the side of the house; we TILT DOWNWARD and CLOSE IN, to follow only his feet; he steps past a tiny cellar window and we PAN AND TIGHTEN IN CLOSE ON IT, into -

269 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

Their noses are flat against the glass; their cheeks touch; their window isn't quite big enough to hold both their heads. It is on the ground; we don't see their chins. They look towards the departed PREACHER.

PREACHER'S VOICE (O.S.)



Chill - dren?

PEARL, who is on the side PREACHER has left by, turns her head towards JOHN.

270 INT. CELLAR - MED. CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL  
They are standing on a coal heap, faces at window.

PEARL

John, why do we have to hide?

JOHN has taken charge. He speaks very quietly, but calmly and cheerfully, as to an invalid. He starts down the rustling coal-heap, helping PEARL down.

JOHN

Careful...

The following dialogue as they climb down, making as little noise as possible.

We PULL slowly away.

PEARL

Where's Mom?

JOHN

She's gone to Moundsville.

PEARL

To see Dad?

JOHN

Yes, I reckon that's it.

They have achieved the cellar floor.

PREACHER'S VOICE

(more peremptorily  
outside)

Children!

During the following dialogue we hear, o.s., the opening of a door, and PREACHER'S footsteps indoors as he crosses floor, climbs stairs, and opens another door.

JOHN

Someone is after us, Pearl.

PEARL

I want to go upstairs. It's cold and spidery down here. I'm hungry.

JOHN

Now listen to me, Pearl. You and me is runnin' off tonight.

(CONTINUED)

270 (CONTINUED)

PEARL

Why?

JOHN

If we stay here somethin'  
awful will happen to us.

PEARL

Won't Daddy Powell take care  
of us?

JOHN

No, that's just it. No.

271 FULL SHOT - A ROOM UPSTAIRS

PREACHER looks under the bed.

272 RESUME CELLAR TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

PEARL

Where are we goin', John?

JOHN

Somewheres. I don't know  
yet.

O.S., PREACHER'S footsteps come down stairs; JOHN leads  
PEARL carefully past a rake, a hoe, and a shelf-prop and  
they crouch down into -

273 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

...beside an apple barrel. PREACHER'S footsteps cross  
kitchen o.s.

PEARL

I'm hungry, John.

JOHN

We'll steal somethin' to eat.

PEARL

It'll spoil our supper.

PREACHER'S VOICE O.S.

Pearl?

Both look sharp towards cellar door o.s.

## 274 THE CELLAR DOOR - CHILDREN'S VIEWPOINT

The door opens; PREACHER'S head, carrying a candle in a holder; a whitewashed wall and stairs are lighted.

PREACHER'S VOICE

I hear you whisperin', children,  
so I know you're down there.  
I can feel myself gettin' awful  
mad, children.

## 275 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

PEARL

(whispering)

John...

JOHN claps his hand over her mouth.

## 276 CELLAR DOOR

PREACHER'S VOICE

My patience has run out, children.  
I'm comin' to find you now.

He clop-clops nearly to the bottom of the stairs.  
ICEY'S voice cuts cheerfully across his descent.

ICEY O.S.

(calling)

Yoo-Hooooo! Mis-ter Paow-welll!

He goes up the stairs and vanishes. Light on wall through open door to kitchen.

ICEY'S VOICE

Just a little hot supper I fixed  
for you and the children.

PREACHER'S VOICE

Bless you, bless you!

ICEY'S VOICE

And how are the children?

PREACHER'S VOICE

They're down there playin' games  
in the cellar and they won't mind  
me when I call 'em. I'm at my  
wit's end, Miz Spoon.

(CONTINUED)

276 (CONTINUED)

ICEY clucks her tongue o.s.

ICEY'S VOICE

(yelling)

John: Pearl:

She appears at head of stairs. Her voice crackles with authority.

ICEY

John: Pearl: shake a leg!  
(she claps her  
hands sharply)

277 FULL SHOT - THE DARK CELLAR - OVER ICEY

ICEY (continuing)

I won't have you worryin' poor  
Mister Powell another minute!

A short pause; then the children, covered with coal-dust, emerge into the light and climb the stairs. JOHN'S head is hung in defeat. As they enter the kitchen we PULL BACK.

ICEY

Just look at you! Dust and  
filth from top to toe!

278 GROUP SHOT - THE CHILDREN, OVER PREACHER AND ICEY

ICEY

Want me to take 'em up and  
wash 'em good?

PREACHER

Thank you, no. Thank you,  
dear Icey. I'll tend to  
them. Thank you.

ICEY pats JOHN'S head.

279 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

ICEY'S VOICE

Don't be too hard on 'em,  
Reverend. Poor motherless  
children.

(CONTINUED)

279 (CONTINUED)

JOHN looks to PEARL and we PAN HER IN as PREACHER'S hand named LOVE moves through her locks. We PAN with PREACHER and ICEY as they move towards the door.

ICEY

Remember now Mister Powell,  
don't be afraid to call on  
us. Good night.

280 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He watches ICEY leave, o.s.

PREACHER O.S.

Good night Mrs. Spoon, and  
thank you again.

281 FULL SHOT - PREACHER AND ICEY

ICEY goes away along path outside. PREACHER, his back to us, watches her a moment, then turns.

PREACHER

Weren't you afraid, my little  
lambs, down there in all that  
dark?

282 HEAD CLOSE-UP - JOHN

Wondering what to do next.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

283 CLOSE SHOT - BIRDIE, OVER BESS'S PICTURE

We begin with HEAD CLOSE-UP of BIRDIE as he rocks, and  
PULL BACK:

He is rocking; and drunk. A bottle stands beside the  
picture. He turns and speaks to the picture.

BIRDIE

They'll think it was me!  
They'll think it was old  
Uncle Birdie!



284 CLOSE SHOT - BIRDIE - NEW ANGLE

His hands grip the edge of the chest on either side of the picture, which we now see.

BIRDIE

If you'd o' seen it, Bess!  
I'm drunk as a lord and I  
know it, but...

285 INSERT - BESS'S PICTURE

BIRDIE'S VOICE O.S.

(continuing)

...Sweet Heaven, if you'd o'  
seen it!

286 RESUME PREVIOUS SHOT

BIRDIE picks up the bottle. His hand and the liquor tremble.

BIRDIE (continuing)

Down there in the deep place...  
her hair wavin' lazy and soft  
like meadow grass under flood  
waters and that slit in her  
throat just like she had an  
extry mouth.

287 INSERT - BESS'S PICTURE

BIRDIE'S VOICE O.S.

And there ain't a mortal human  
I can tell but you...

288 RESUME PREVIOUS SHOT

BIRDIE (continuing)

...Bess, for if I go to the  
Law they'll hang it on to me.

The bottle falls from his hand onto its side on the edge of the chest.

289 CLOSE SHOT - BIRDIE - NEW ANGLE

The reverse angle of the opening shot. BIRDIE rocks heavily; liquor gurgles from bottle to floor.

(CONTINUED)

289 (CONTINUED)

BIRDIE

Sweet Heaven save poor old  
Uncle Birdie!

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

290 MEDIUM THREE-SHOT - PREACHER, JOHN, PEARL

PREACHER sits at head of table. JOHN stands to PREACHER'S right, around corner of table; he remains expressionless and immobile, until he speaks. PEARL stands to JOHN'S right, hugging the DOLL. The table is loaded with good food.

PREACHER, well-fed and at leisure, dabs his mouth delicately with his napkin, folds it, puts it in a ring, and folds his hands. He waits.

PEARL

(at last)

I'm hungry.

PREACHER

Why, sure. And there's fried  
chicken and candied sweets and  
cornsticks and apple cobbler!

PEARL

Can I have my supper please?

PREACHER

Naturally.

PEARL

Can I have milk too?

PREACHER

Yes. But first of all we'll  
have a little talk.

PEARL frowns and puts her finger in her mouth; she remembers he twisted her arm.

PREACHER

(softly)

About our secrets.

PEARL

No.

(CONTINUED)

290 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER  
Why, pray tell?

PEARL  
Because John said I mustn't.

291 THREE-SHOT - REVERSE - PREACHER, OVER NECKS OF CHILDREN  
He slaps the table; his eyes crackle.

PREACHER  
NEVER -- MIND -- WHAT -- JOHN  
-- SAID!

PEARL starts to snivel.

PREACHER  
John is a meddler. Stop snivel-  
ing. Looky here a minute!

He brings out the knife.

PREACHER  
Know what this is?

PEARL shakes her head for no.

PREACHER  
Want to see something cute?  
Looky now!

He touches the spring; the blade flicks open.

PREACHER  
How about that!

This is what I use on meddlers.

He lays the open knife on the table.

PREACHER  
John might be a meddler.

292 THREE-SHOT - THE CHILDREN, OVER PREACHER

PEARL thinks the knife is a toy and crosses behind JOHN  
to pick it up.

(CONTINUED)

292 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER

No - no, my lamb. Don't touch  
it! Now don't touch my knife!  
That makes me mad. Very, very  
mad.

She hugs the DOLL and he puts the hand named LOVE on her  
curls.

PREACHER

Just tell me now; where's the  
money hid?

PEARL

(affectionately)

But I swore. I promised John  
I wouldn't tell.

293 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

PREACHER

JOHN - DOESN'T - MATTER!  
Can't I get that through  
your head, you poor, silly,  
disgusting little wretch!

294 HEAD CLOSE-UP - PEARL

Her mouth quivers; a large tear brims in her eyes.

295 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

PREACHER

There now! You made me lose  
my temper!

296 THREE-SHOT - CHILDREN, OVER PREACHER

PREACHER

I'm sorry! I'm real sorry!

PEARL snuffles and wipes her eyes with her free fist.

PREACHER

(in a caressing tone)

Now! Where's it hid, honey?

(CONTINUED)

296 (CONTINUED)

JOHN  
(suddenly and  
lightly)  
I'll tell.

297 THREE-SHOT - PREACHER, OVER NAPES OF CHILDREN

PREACHER  
(lightly)  
I thought I told you to keep  
your mouth shut --

JOHN  
(light and quick)  
NO, - it ain't fair to make  
Pearl tell when she swore she  
wouldn't. I'll tell.

PREACHER'S eyes crinkle and he turns to PEARL, smiling  
brightly.

PREACHER  
(chuckling)  
Well I declare! Sometimes I  
think poor John will make it  
to heaven yet!

His eyes snap back to JOHN and his voice is like a whip.

PREACHER  
All right boy: where's the  
money?

298 HEAD CLOSE-UP - JOHN

JOHN  
In the cellar. Buried under  
a stone in the floor.

299 THREE-SHOT - PREACHER OVER CHILDREN

He closes and pockets the knife. His eyes never leave  
JOHN'S.

PREACHER  
It'll go hard, boy, if I find  
you're lyin'.

300 THREE-SHOT - CHILDREN, OVER PREACHER  
PEARL gapes up at JOHN as he speaks.

JOHN  
I ain't lyin'. Go look for  
yourself.

301 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER  
...as he gets up, cellar door in BACKGROUND.

PREACHER  
All right...  
(he turns towards  
the door; then  
glances around)  
Come along.

302 HEAD CLOSE-UP - JOHN

JOHN  
What?

303 THREE-SHOT - PREACHER, OVER CHILDREN

PREACHER  
Go ahead of me - the both of  
you.

They cross him, towards the door.

304 FULL SHOT - THE CELLAR STEPS - FROM THE BOTTOM

The CHILDREN precede PREACHER, who carries a candle in holder. PEARL is gaping at JOHN'S lie. JOHN is looking left and right, casing the joint.

PREACHER (continuing)  
You don't reckon I'd leave you.

JOHN  
(with forced  
lightness)  
Don't you believe me?

PREACHER  
(sardonically)  
Why sure, boy, sure.

(CONTINUED)

304 (CONTINUED)

Now they are at bottom of stairs. JOHN sees PEARL'S expression and takes her hand.

PREACHER

Now where, boy? Mind; no tricks.  
I can't abide liars.

JOHN

Yonder.

He squeezes PEARL'S hand harder, and points.

305 FULL SHOT - NEW ANGLE - OVER THE THREE

JOHN points out a place beneath a shelf laden with Mason jars; it is at the most distant part of the cellar from the stairs.

PREACHER starts towards it, leaving them at foot of stairs, then turns, catching JOHN'S ruse.

PREACHER

(sardonic)

O no you don't!

He shepherds them ahead of him.

306 THREE-SHOT - NEW ANGLE

They arrive beneath the shelf.

PREACHER

Now: Where?

JOHN

(lying magnifi-  
cently, meeting  
Preacher's eyes)

Under the stone in the floor.

PREACHER sets the candle on a barrel near the shelf-prop and sinks to his knees below-shot as PEARL gapes at JOHN and JOHN looks stony. She seems about to speak.

307 FLASH INSERT - JOHN SQUEEZES PEARL'S HAND HARD

308 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER, FEATURING FLOOR

His hands sweep dust and expose concrete. He straightens on his knees and turns to the children in close BACKGROUND.

309 HEAD CLOSE-UP - PREACHER

...as he turns.

PREACHER

This is concrete.

310 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

A moment's silence.

PEARL

John made a Sin. John told  
a lie.

311 THREE-SHOT - FAVORING PREACHER

PREACHER gets slowly to his feet and puts on his "listening" look. His sincerity is beyond doubt.

PREACHER

The Lord's a-talkin' to me  
now. He's a-sayin', "a liar  
is an abomination before mine  
eyes."

He takes his knife out, and springs it open.

312 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - FAVORING JOHN

PREACHER

Speak, boy: Where's it hid?  
(the knife pricks  
the flesh under  
John's ear)

Speak, before I cut your throat  
and leave you to drip like a  
hog hung up in butcherin' time!

313 CLOSE SHOT - PEARL

She starts to sob.

314 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PREACHER

JOHN

Pearl, shut up! Pearl, you  
swore!

PREACHER

You could save him, little bird.



315 HEAD CLOSE-UP - PEARL

PEARL  
 (crying)  
Inside my doll! Inside my  
doll!

316 TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PREACHER, FAVORING PREACHER

PREACHER is astounded. His hands fall away from JOHN.  
 He leans back against the wall and talks through laughter.

PREACHER  
 In the doll! Why sure! Sure!

317 HEAD CLOSE-UP - JOHN

His eyes are all over the place.

PREACHER'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 The last place anyone would  
 look!

318 THREE-SHOT - PREACHER, JOHN, PEARL

PREACHER makes a lunge across JOHN for the doll; JOHN ducking under his arm, pulls PEARL forward with his left hand; he turns backwards and with his free hand, in one movement, knocks over the candle and pulls out the support on the shelf.

319 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

Jars shower over him; one crowns him and breaks, shedding guck, which he wipes from his eyes.

320 TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

They start up the stairs.

321 FULL SHOT - PREACHER

He makes one step forward, steps on a rolling jar, and falls.

## 322 TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

They are near the top of the stairs. We hear PREACHER below them. JOHN slips and they nearly fall backward. As JOHN recovers, PREACHER enters the shot, his back to us. The children get through the open door as PREACHER reaches top. JOHN slams the door, catching PREACHER'S hand. PREACHER screams. JOHN'S astonished eyes peer through the crack in the door; the door loosens; PREACHER yanks his hand loose and sucks it, groaning; the door slams to; the bolt is shot home.

## 323 HEAD CLOSE-UP - PREACHER

...over sound of slamming bolt. He snarls like the Big Bad Wolf.

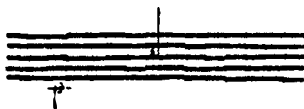
All the above happens at once.

## 324 INT. KITCHEN - CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL, BY DOOR

PEARL, dangling her doll, cries. JOHN panting, leans against wall by door. JOHN is wondering what to do now. Pause.

PREACHER'S VOICE O.S.

(sweetly)



Chill - dren?

PREACHER'S VOICE (continuing)

The only reason I wanted that money is so's you could have it.

JOHN

(to himself;  
panting)

The River. That's the only where! Uncle Birdie Steptoe!

PREACHER'S VOICE

(cooing)

Puhr-urrl? Want your Mommy back?

(Pearl hugs her  
doll)

Want me to get her right now?

(CONTINUED)

324 (CONTINUED)

PEARL  
(sharply)

John?

JOHN  
Hush, Pearl. Come on.

They fly out of the house.

PREACHER'S VOICE  
(bellowing, as  
they go)  
OPEN THAT DOOR, YOU SPAWN OF  
THE DEVIL'S OWN STRUMPET!

325 FRAMING SHOT - EXT. THE HARPER HOUSE

A pretty, pastoral shot of the house in light mist, as they run across and leave the shot. Before they disappear, we hear PREACHER'S fists hammering against the door. We stay on the house at leisure; we hear him lunging, shoulder to door; we begin to hear squeaking of hinges and splintering of wood.

326 FULL CIRCLE SHOT - FRAMING BIRDIE'S WHARF-BOAT

An ultra romantic image of shelter and peace. Frogs or river noises O.S., then the rattle of running footsteps. The children center, their backs to us, sprinting towards the boat. Light mist as in previous shot.

JOHN  
(calling)  
Uncle Birdie! Uncle Birdie!

327 INT. BIRDIE'S BOAT - GROUP SHOT - BIRDIE AND CHILDREN

We shoot over BESS'S turned photograph and over BIRDIE, close, passed out in his rocker. The children run through open door in BACKGROUND and JOHN runs up to BIRDIE.

JOHN  
Uncle Birdie!

328 CLOSE SHOT - BIRDIE

BIRDIE  
(gesturing feebly)  
Don't!

329 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - NEW ANGLE - BIRDIE, OVER JOHN

JOHN

Hide us Uncle Birdie! He's  
a-comin' with his knife!

He grabs BIRDIE'S shoulder; BIRDIE half-rises, and falls  
face down on floor.

330 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - BIRDIE ON FLOOR, OVER JOHN

JOHN

It's me! John Harper and  
Pearl! You said to come a-  
runnin' if we needed you!

BIRDIE rears on one elbow and looks up at him.

BIRDIE

(in friendly  
recognition)

Johnny!

He falls face down again.

331 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - NEW ANGLE - FAVORING JOHN

JOHN grabs BIRDIE by one ear, turning his face up.

JOHN

Uncle -- Birdie! Oh -- please!  
Please wake up!

332 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - FAVORING BIRDIE

He looks up earnestly at JOHN.

BIRDIE

I never done it, boy. Sweet  
Heaven I never done such a  
terrible thing! I'll swear on  
the Book to it, boy! I never  
done it! I never!

JOHN stands up into:

333 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He is lost; and he becomes a man.

(CONTINUED)

333 (CONTINUED)

BIRDIE'S VOICE (O.S.)

Lord save poor old Uncle  
Birdie Steptoe that never  
hurt a fly!

(he snores, softly)

JOHN

(quiet)

There's still the river. --  
The skiff is down by the  
willows.

He masterfully takes PEARL by the hand and leads her  
into the night.

334 LONG SHOT - THE CHILDREN

We shoot from the river. They struggle through the sumac  
and pokeberry bushes at edge of river, towards skiff,  
whose prow, tethered to willow, we see throughout this  
un-moving shot, at our extreme right. When they come  
opposite skiff - which is a few yards out from shore -  
we CUT TO:

335 TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

PEARL, frankly bored, dangling her doll, is yawning.  
JOHN, as he finishes undoing rope from a willow root,  
looks up and around, checking on pursuit. His eyes  
fix.

336 FULL SHOT - PREACHER'S SHADOW

On the bank above, it is huge in the mist. Same camera  
position as foregoing; new angle.

337 TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

BACK view: skiff in BACKGROUND. Same camera position;  
new angle.

JOHN

(whispering)

Please be quiet -- Oh please,  
Pearl!

(CONTINUED)

337 (CONTINUED)

PEARL  
(natural voice)  
John, where are we g--

JOHN  
Hush.

338 FULL SHOT - SHADOW, THEN PREACHER

Same position and angle as before.

PREACHER'S own figure advances to supplant his shadow.  
He peers downward, his open knife catching the light.

PREACHER  
(businesslike)  
Children:

He starts slashing his way down through the brush-filth.

339 FULL SHOT - THE CHILDREN

Same camera position as before. They are floundering  
through mud, half-way to the skiff.

340 FULL SHOT - PREACHER

Same position and angle as in previous shot of him. He  
is half-way down the bank. With his knife, he hacks at  
an entangling vine.

341 FULL SHOT - THE CHILDREN

Position and angle as before. They reach the skiff,  
Hacking sounds O.S.

JOHN  
Get in the skiff, Pearl,  
goodness, goodness, hurry!

PEARL  
(hesitant)  
That's Daddy!

He picks her up and throws her into the skiff.

- 342 CLOSE SHOT - PEARL AND DOLL  
...as they land, sprawling, in bottom of skiff among fish-heads and bait cans. JOHN gets in after them.
- 343 FULL SHOT - PREACHER - CHILDREN'S V.P.  
He tears free of brush to edge of river, knife glittering.
- 344 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN  
With his oar, he tries to push the boat free of mud.
- 345 FULL SHOT - PREACHER - CHILDREN'S V.P.  
He wades towards them, knee-deep in mud.
346. CLOSE SHOT - JOHN  
He is shoving at the oar even more desperately.
- 347 INSERT - JOHN'S HANDS  
Straining.
- 348 FULL SHOT - PREACHER - CHILDREN'S V.P.  
He flounders deeper and more heavily through the mud; much closer.
- 349 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN  
He pushes the boat free of mud.
- 350 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER - CHILDREN'S V.P.  
He hurries much closer through shallow water. Prow of boat in FOREGROUND.

PREACHER

Wait, you little whelps! Wait!

Another step forward and he does a pratt-fall and makes a splash.

351 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN - PEARL IN BACKGROUND

He is trying to feather the boat out to where the current will catch it. In panic and haste he is clumsy.

JOHN

Why can't I do it when I know  
how to do it!

352 FULL SHOT - PREACHER

...as he gets up, at edge of mud.

PREACHER

Wait! Wait! I'll slit your  
guts!

353 FULL DOWN-SHOT - THE SKIFF, THEN PREACHER

The current catches it and spins it round like a leaf. JOHN'S efforts with the oar are useless. PREACHER enters, wading fast. His hands are within an inch of reaching the helpless skiff; capriciously the current takes it downstream.

354 TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL

The skiff is taken steadily by the current. PEARL sits up, doll in arms. JOHN is almost asleep with exhaustion.

355 FULL SHOT - THE SKIFF, OVER PREACHER

It is well away from him and getting smaller. Waist-deep, he wades a couple of steps after it, then just looks.

356 HEAD CLOSE-UP - PREACHER

He begins a steady, rhythmical, animal scream of outrage and loss.

357 LONG SHOT - THE RIVER AND LANDSCAPE, FEATURING STARLIGHT;  
AND THE DRIFTING BOAT

358 TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

JOHN is asleep. PEARL sits sleepily whispering to her doll.

(CONTINUED)



358 (CONTINUED)

PEARL

Once upon a time there was a  
pretty fly, and he had a wife,  
this pretty fly....

359 MEDIUM LONG SHOT - THE DRIFTING BOAT THROUGH FIREFLIES

PEARL'S VOICE O.S.

...and one day she flew away,  
and then one night his two  
pretty fly children...

360 SPECIAL SHOT - THE MOVING SKIFF, THROUGH DEW-JEWELED  
SPIDER-WEB

PEARL'S VOICE O.S.

(continuing)

...flew away too, into the sky,  
into the moon...

361 SPECIAL SHOT - A FROG, AND SKIFF

A big frog is profiled; the skiff drifts by in distance;  
the frog twangs out a bass-note.

362 HIGH HELICOPTER SHOT - THE MOONLIT RIVER (DAY FOR NIGHT)  
- CENTERING THE SKIFF, PULLING UP AND AWAY

DISSOLVE TO:

363 INSERT - A PICTURE POSTCARD - A COUNTY COURTHOUSE

As the card is turned to the handwritten side we CUT TO:

364 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - WALT AND ICEY

WALT

(reading aloud)

Dear Walt and Icey: I bet you  
been worried and gave us up for  
lost. Took the kids down here  
with me for a visit to my sister  
Elsie's farm. That a little  
change of scenery would do us

(continued)

(CONTINUED)

364 (CONTINUED)

WALT (cont'd)  
all a world of good after so  
much trubble and heartache. At  
least the kids will git a plenty  
of good home cooking.

Your devoted Harry Powell

ICEY  
Now ain't you relieved, Walt?

WALT  
Sure, but you was worried too,  
Mother; takin' off with never  
a word of goodbye. I even got  
to figurin' them gypsies busted  
in and done off with all three  
of 'em.

ICEY  
You and your gypsies! They  
been gone a week!

WALT  
Not before one of 'em knifed  
a farmer and stole his horse.  
Never caught the gypsies nor  
the horse.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

365 DESCENDING HELICOPTER SHOT - THE RIVER

A man is going along a river lone on horseback.

366 GROUND SHOT - THE MAN ON HORSEBACK

It is PREACHER; he walks the horse away from us.

DISSOLVE TO:

367 DESCENDING HELICOPTER SHOT - ANOTHER BEND OF THE RIVER

We descend to a poor riverside farmhouse; JOHN and PEARL  
tether a boat in front of it.

368 GROUP SHOT (FROM GROUND) - THREE HOMELESS CHILDREN, OVER JOHN AND PEARL

They are eating hot boiled potatoes. A glance at JOHN and PEARL, and they turn away towards lane in BACKGROUND. JOHN and PEARL proceed towards the house.

369 MED. SHOT - JOHN, PEARL, WOMAN, THROUGH DOOR

We shoot from within open door of kitchen. JOHN and PEARL advance to edge of porch. A Tired Farm Woman stands by door, within. We shoot OVER her.

TIRED FARM WOMAN  
Hungry, I s'pose. Well, I'll see if there's any more potatoes to spare. Where's your folks?

JOHN  
Ain't got none.

She leaves the shot briefly; we HOLD on the CHILDREN. She re-enters and goes to them with a bowl of steaming potatoes. They take hands-ful, and make to eat.

TIRED FARM WOMAN  
Go 'way; go 'way.

They turn away and walk towards boat. She looks after them.

TIRED FARM WOMAN  
Such times, when youngins run the roads!

She leaves the SHOT. We frame them briefly, walking away, then:

DISSOLVE TO:

370 CLOSE SHOT - A PLACARD - NIGHT

It is lit by firelight. It reads:

PEACH-PICKERS WANTED

WEEKLY HIRE

PREACHER'S VOICE O.S.

An ungrateful child is an abomination...

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

## 371 GROUP SHOT - PREACHER AND MEN

PREACHER stands behind the flames; in FOREGROUND an OLD MAN sits profiled on a box. Other workers, all men, sit around fire.

PREACHER (continuing)  
 ...before the eyes of God. The  
 world is fast going to damnation  
 because of impudent youngins  
 a-flyin' in the face of Age.

Short silence, as the other men look at PREACHER without liking. Then the old man spits into the fire.

## 372 CLOSE SHOT - THE FLAMES

A spurt of steam as spit strikes.

## 373 CLOSE SHOT - A HOOT-OWL

...hooting.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

## 374 CLOSE SHOT - A TURTLE - NOONDAY

He comes down to water.

JOHN'S VOICE O.S.  
 They make soup out of them...

## 375 LONG SHOT - THE CHILDREN IN PASSING SKIFF

Full landscape in BACKGROUND.

JOHN (continuing)  
 ...but I wouldn't know how to  
 go about gettin' him open.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

376 LONG SHOT - CHILDREN AND SKIFF, OVER RABBITS IN GRASS

We shoot OVER two sitting rabbits as they watch, their ears up. The skiff passes. PEARL plays with doll. JOHN unsnarls line.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

377 FULL SHOT - THE CHILDREN AND SKIFF, FRAMED BY WILLOWS - TWILIGHT

The skiff passes. Baa-ing of sheep O.S.

378 MOVING SHOT - FROM RIVER - A SHEEP

The sheep bleats. We PAN in a big barn near the river, then a lighted house; willows along shore.

379 FULL SHOT - THE SKIFF - FROM THE BANK

JOHN re-sets his oar. They angle towards us for the shore.

JOHN

We're gonna spend a night  
on land.

380 UP-SHOT - THE CHILDREN, OVER THE MOORED SKIFF

...they reach top of the bank. Corner of barn and lighted window in BACKGROUND. Sounds of mouth-organ and girl singing O.S.

381 FULL SHOT - A LIGHTED WINDOW, THE SHADE DRAWN

A wire bird-cage hangs close to the shade, silhouetted. On the perch, a canary. Lullaby and mouth-organ continue O.S. After a moment the CHILDREN enter, backs to us, and stop, looking.

382 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - THE CHILDREN

Window-light on faces, song over. A moment.

PEARL

Are we goin' home, John?

(CONTINUED)

382 (CONTINUED)

JOHN

Ssh...

He turns, her hand in his. We PAN as they tiptoe towards the big, open door of barn; big open hayloft window above.

383 INT. ROOM - LOW TRACKING SHOT - THE CHILDREN

As they walk down aisle of barn we shoot them past bellies and legs of row of cows. Sounds of munching and soft lowing O.S. JOHN helps PEARL up a little ladder to the hayloft.

384 MEDIUM SHOT - THE CHILDREN, WINDOW

...as the CHILDREN bed down in hay, only legs visible, protruding into frame of window, which frames a middle-distant white lane beyond house, and a landscape. Whippoorwill O.S. A darkening of light.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

385 SAME SET-UP

The full moon is half-risen. Whippoorwill O.S.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

386 SAME SET-UP

The moon is well above the horizon. Whippoorwill O.S.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

387 SAME SET-UP

The moon is still higher. A pause; the whippoorwill stops in mid-phrase. Brief pause; then John sits up into silhouette.

388 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He listens intently. We hear nothing. His eyes alter. We hear, distantly:

(CONTINUED)

388 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER'S VOICE O.S.  
(singing)  
Leaning. Leaning...

At various distances O.S., we hear dogs barking at the sound of the singing.

PREACHER'S VOICE  
(continuing; louder)  
...safe and secure from all alarms;

The dog from the farm rushes braying to his gate. Other dogs continue O.S. PREACHER appears, astride his walking horse, singing.

PREACHER  
Leaning...

389 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

Watching; dread and despair. Sounds go.

PREACHER O.S.  
...Leaning; Leaning on the  
Everlasting Arms.

390 FULL SHOT - PREACHER

He approaches and crosses center screen, continuing the hymn. (We do not PAN with him; he crosses the frame of the great window.)

391 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

Eyes following PREACHER. PREACHER and dogs continue O.S.

JOHN  
(to himself)  
Don't you never sleep?

392 FULL SHOT - PREACHER

He vanishes beyond trees, his singing more distant. Dogs continue.

393 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL - NEW ANGLE

He wakes her. PREACHER'S singing O.S.

JOHN

(scared whisper)

Pearl: wake up! Come on, Pearl!

394 FULL SHOT - PREACHER

He vanishes; scuttling of children in hay, O.S.; dogs quiet; his song dies. Brief silence. The whippoorwill resumes.

395 MEDIUM LONG SHOT - THE CHILDREN, NEAR BARN

Hand in hand, they hurry out of barn and, as we PAN, along its side, towards River, O.S. Whippoorwill O.S.

396 FULL SHOT - A BRIGHT FULL MOON

The whippoorwill's singing continues O.S.

397 FULL SHOT - CHILDREN AND SKIFF

JOHN steers through turbulent, moonlit water. Whippoorwill continues. Low moon --

398 CLOSE SHOT - A FOX, BARKING

399 CLOSE DOWN-SHOT - CHILDREN ASLEEP IN SKIFF (TANK)

Blank, calm water; the skiff enters and passes full length below us, the CHILDREN asleep in it; blank water again; again the fox barks.

400 MEDIUM SHOT - THE SKIFF, DRIFTING SHOT THROUGH RIVERSIDE GRASS

Crickets O.S. The skiff nears a sand-bar.

401 INSERT - THE PROW, GROUNDING

The prow softly grates against sand.



402 MEDIUM SHOT - THE GROUNDED SKIFF, AGAIN THROUGH GRASS  
Crickets fainter. TILTING UPWARD.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

403 FULL SHOT - THE STARLIT SKY

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

404 FULL SHOT - RIVER LANDSCAPE - SUNRISE

Distant; medium; the near; roosters. crow O.S.

405 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN WAKING

He looks to PEARL O.S.

406 FULL SHOT - PEARL, THEN RACHEL, OVER JOHN

PEARL is picking daisies. A fence up beyond her. Beyond the fence, a woman, RACHEL COOPER, appears. She carries a berry-basket on her arm. JOHN scrambles up, grabs an oar, and holds it defensively. PEARL freezes.

RACHEL

(loud)

You two youngsters get up here  
to me this instant!

407 TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND PEARL - RACHEL'S ANGLE

RACHEL O.S.

Mind me now!

JOHN lowers the oar at the female authority in her voice.

RACHEL O.S.

Now git on up to my house.

They hesitate.

408 THREE-SHOT - OVER JOHN

RACHEL

I'll git me a willow switch.

(CONTINUED)

408 (CONTINUED)

They still hesitate. She breaks off a switch and comes for them, squishing through the mud. She surrounds them and drives them like geese up the bank.

409 LOW FULL SHOT - THE THREE, FROM SIDE

They move across the meadow like a nursery fireze. She tweaks with her switch. As she goes near PEARL'S calves, JOHN turns.

JOHN

Don't you hurt her!

RACHEL

Hurt her nothin'! Wash her's  
more like it!

(hand to mouth,  
yelling)

Ruby!

410 FULL SHOT - A TOMATO PATCH

Three crouching figures pick tomatoes beyond a low white fence; Rachel's house in background. RUBY, thirteen, pops her head up like a rifle-target.

RACHEL O.S.

Clary!

Clary, eleven, pops up.

RACHEL O.S.

Mary!

Mary, four, pops up.

THE GIRLS

(in chorus)

Yes Miz Cooper!

411 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND HARPERS, MOVING TOWARDS FENCE

She has JOHN and PEARL by their napes.

RACHEL

Bring yer baskets.

The three girls enter, their backs to us, carrying baskets of tomatoes.

## 412 GROUP SHOT - THE GIRLS, OVER RACHEL AND HARPER CHILDREN

She holds JOHN and PEARL very firmly, inspecting baskets, across gate of fence.

RACHEL

Nicely picked, Clary. Mary; put the big ones on top. Ruby, most o' them ain't fit to go to market. Put them baskets down. Ruby, fetch the wash-tub and put it by the pump. Mary, Clary, fetch me a bar o' laundry soap and the scrub brush.

GIRLS

(in chorus)

Yes Miz Cooper!

They hurry off.

RACHEL

Come on, now; up to the house.

She opens the gate, pushes the Harper children through, shuts the gate, and walks between them, her back to us. The children hesitate. She turns to them and stops.

## 413 THREE-SHOT - THE CHILDREN, OVER RACHEL

She looks them up and down. If we saw her face, her lips would be pursed and working with anger.

RACHEL

Gracious! If you hain't a sight to beat all! Where you from?

No answer; their eyes are wide with curiosity.

RACHEL

Where's your folks?

## 414 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

RACHEL O.S.

Speak up now!

His eyes go down to her feet. He, and we, start to examine her from foot to head; for this is our heroine at last.

415 CLOSE TILTING SHOT - RACHEL

...from JOHN'S eye-level. We TILT SLOWLY UP her height. She wears man's shoes, heavy with mud; a rough skirt; a shapeless sweater hangs over her shoulders; she is in her middle sixties and wears a man's old hat. Her face says:

RACHEL  
(sort of roughly)  
Gracious! So I've got two more  
mouths to feed!

416 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

For no reason at all he feels he has come home.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

417 GROUP SHOT - JOHN, PEARL, RACHEL, RUBY, DURING WASHING

RACHEL mercilessly scrubs JOHN; JOHN doesn't like it; RUBY washes PEARL with a cloth.

418 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

Hating the scrubbing. He breaks away.

419 FULL SHOT - JOHN AND RACHEL

JOHN dodges behind a bush, RACHEL in hot pursuit.

420 CLOSE SHOT - THE BUSH; RACHEL

RACHEL'S head bobs up and down above the bush; we hear the unmistakable sound of a female hand on a child's bottom.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

421 FULL SHOT - A SHELF, FULL OF MARKET BASKETS, NEATLY COVERED WITH DAMP MUSLIN

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

422 FULL SHOT - THE CARRIED BASKETS IN MOTION

423 EXT. MOUNDSVILLE STREET - TRACKING SHOT - RACHEL AND HER BROOD

All carry baskets. RACHEL charges along at the head of the procession. A CATTLE DEALER strolls the other way.

CATTLE DEALER

Howdy Miz Cooper - you goin' to sell me yer hog this year?

RACHEL doesn't stop walking.

RACHEL

With the price o' pork what it is?

424 CLOSE TRACKING SHOT - RACHEL

She keeps walking.

RACHEL

(talking to herself)

I'm butcherin' my hog myself, smokin' the hams, and cannin' the sausage.

(she calls to children over her shoulder)

You-all have your work cut out!

425 CLOSE TRACKING TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND CLARY IN MID-PROCESSION

JOHN

She talks to herself.

CLARY

All the time.

JOHN

Your Maw's funny.

CLARY

She ain't our Maw. We just live at her house.

They walk in silence.

JOHN

Where's your folks?

(CONTINUED)

425 (CONTINUED)

CLARY

Some place.

MARY

My Daddy's in Dee-troit.

JOHN

(to Ruby)

Who's your folks?

RUBY

I dunno.

426 FULL SHOT - THE STREET

A WAITRESS, wearing an apron labeled EMPIRE EATS, hurries across the street towards the GROUP. We PAN her in to MARY. The procession halts briefly. She embraces MARY.

WAITRESS

Mary! Honey! Mornin' Miz Cooper.

(to Mary)

Guess what! I'm savin' up to buy ye a charm barcelet!

427 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

RACHEL

Never mind the gewgaws; don't you miss your visit this Sunday; and come to Church with us.

428 FULL STREET SHOT

The WAITRESS hurries away. She dodges past a car.

WAITRESS

See ye Sunday, love!

429 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

She follows WAITRESS, then LOVERS in car, with her eyes.

430 FULL STREET SHOT

The car CENTERS, held up in traffic; two lovers in it, sitting close.

431 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

She takes in the LOVERS.

RACHEL

Women is durn fools! All of 'em!

She signs, angry at all women, herself included, and turns away. We are at the door of a GROCERY STORE. The GROCER is on his doorstep..

432 FULL SHOT - GROUP AND GROCERY

RACHEL

(to children)

Take yer baskets in.

The CHILDREN file in past her and GROCER.

RACHEL

(to Grocer)

Looky there.

(she indicates the lovers)

She'll be losin' her mind to a tricky mouth and a full moon, and like as not I'll be saddled with the consequences.

She starts into store with the GROCER..

433 INT. STORE - GROUP SHOT - RACHEL, GROCER, CHILDREN

RACHEL and GROCER come up to counter.

RACHEL (continuing)

(she takes a list from her bosom and gives it to Grocer)

Here's what you owe me.

(she counts baskets)

One, two, three, four, five...

where's the other basket? Where's Ruby?

(CONTINUED)

433 (CONTINUED)

CLARY

She went.

RACHEL

John: you go fetch Ruby.(John goes. As  
Grocer empties  
baskets and tots  
up, Rachel con-  
tinues:)Big Ruby's my problem girl.  
She can't gather eggs without  
bustin' 'em; but Ruby's got  
mother hands with a youngin,  
so what're you to say?

434 EXT. DRUG STORE - FULL SHOT - RUBY

She stands with her market-basket, reacting to wolf whistle  
O.S.; she is seeking the world.

435 THREE-SHOT - RUBY, OVER TWO YOUNG LOAFERS

1ST LOAFER

How 'bout tonight, Ruby?

RUBY gestures RACHEL'S nearness.

2ND LOAFER

(to 1st)

What gives?

1ST LOAFER

The Old Lady's around.

(to Ruby)

How 'bout Thursday?

RUBY nods.

1ST LOAFER

(to 2nd)

The old gal thinks she comes in  
fer sewin' lessons o'-Thursday.

436 FULL SHOT - RUBY; JOHN IN B.G.

JOHN

(calling)

Miz Cooper wants you.

He turns and goes; RUBY, with an eye to 1ST LOAFER, turns  
and follows.



437 INT. GROCERY STORE - GROUP SHOT - CENTERING RACHEL

GROCER  
 (to Pearl)  
 And will you show me your  
 dolly, little lady?

JOHN has entered in BACKGROUND. PEARL holds the doll to her, and JOHN moves in quietly to her side. They stand together, as so often before.

GROCER  
 See ye got two more peeps  
 to your brood.

RACHEL  
 Yeah, and ornerier than the  
 rest.

GROCER  
 How's your own boy, Miz Cooper?

RACHEL  
 Ain't heard from Ralph since  
 last Christmas.

Don't matter -- I've got a new  
 crop.

(she laughs.  
 Loudly:)  
 I'm a strong tree with branches  
 for many birds. I'm good for  
 something in this old world and  
 I know it, too!

Rachel laughs; we know that she will rout the Devil.

GROCER  
 (a good trades-  
 man)  
 Got a good buy in soap, Miz  
 Cooper.

RACHEL  
 (triumphant)  
 Don't need no soap. I'm boillin'  
 down the fat from my hog.

DISSOLVE TO:

438 INT. RACHEL'S SCREENED PORCH - ~~EVENING~~ - GROUP SHOT -  
RACHEL, GIRLS, JOHN ASIDE

CENTERING RACHEL as she takes a book from table, and the GIRLS MOVE to set at her seat, and JOHN stands to one side. RACHEL glances at him.

439 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He looks suspiciously to the Book in her hands, for to him it has come to mean only Preacher.

440 INSERT - THE BIBLE

...as she opens it on her lap O.S. we hear a screen door opens.

441 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL, CHILDREN, JOHN IN BACKGROUND

We see the door closing as JOHN goes out. The girls sit on low stools in semi-circle at RACHEL'S feet. We CENTER RACHEL. RACHEL, keenly aware of JOHN, pretends to ignore him. JOHN crosses behind her and STANDS with his back to us. We see the back of his head through the screen. RACHEL, changing her mind about what story to tell, finds the new page she's after, and spreads her hands flat on the pages. She never glances at the text. She is fishing for JOHN.

RACHEL

Now old Pharoah, he was the  
King of Egyptland! And he  
had a daughter, and once upon  
a time

(louder)

she was walkin' along the river  
bank and she seen somethin'  
bumpin' and scrapin' along down  
on a sandbar under the willows.

442 CLOSE SHOT - THE BACK OF JOHN'S HEAD, IMMOBILE

RACHEL O.S.

And do you know what it was,  
children?

## 443 RESUME GROUP SHOT

RUBY, CLARY, MARY  
(excited)

No!

PEARL

No!

RACHEL  
(still loud)

Well, now, it was a skiff,  
washed up on the bar. And  
who do you reckon was in it?

RUBY  
(confidently)

Pearl and John!

RACHEL  
(still loud)

Not this time! It was just one  
youngin - a little boy babe. And  
do you know who he was, children?

## 444 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN'S HEAD

...as he turns around.

RUBY, MARY, CLARY, PEARL  
(O.S. in unison)

No!

## 445 RESUME GROUP SHOT

RACHEL closes the Bible; she knows the Lord's battle is  
won. As she continues, she puts aside the book and  
takes up her mending.

RACHEL  
(very quietly)

It was Moses! - A King of men,  
Moses, children. Now. Off to  
bed. Hurry.

On "off to bed," JOHN turns his back again.

446 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL; JOHN IN BACKGROUND

She mends for a few moments.

RACHEL  
(commandingly)  
John: git me an apple.

JOHN crosses behind her and off, towards door. We hear it open and close.

RACHEL  
Git one for yourself, too.

447 MEDIUM SHOT - JOHN

He approaches with two apples. We PAN him into a:

448 TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND RACHEL

He gives her an apple. She immediately takes a bite. He doesn't bite his. She looks up at him from her apple.

RACHEL  
(suddenly)  
John: where's your folks?

JOHN  
(plainly)  
Dead.

RACHEL  
Dead.  
(she nods with finality)

JOHN starts to eat his apple.

RACHEL  
Where ye from?

JOHN  
Up river.

RACHEL  
I didn't figger ye rowed that skiff from Parkersburg!

JOHN makes a move; he slowly and tenderly reaches out his hand and lays his fingers on her knuckles.

(CONTINUED)

448 (CONTINUED)

JOHN

Tell me that story again.

Our heroine would like to thank the Lord openly, but she knows she must not show her feelings; she speaks gruffly -

RACHEL

Story, honey? Why, what story?

JOHN

About them Kings. That the Queen found down on the sandbar in the skiff that time.

RACHEL

Kings! Why, honey, there was only one.

JOHN

I mind you said there was two.

RACHEL

Well, shoot! Maybe there was!

449 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

Maybe we see - though JOHN does not - the thanksgiving in her eyes.

RACHEL

Yes, come to think of it, there was two, John.

O.S., in distance, we hear the whistle of a river boat.

DISSOLVE TO:

450 EXT. MOUNDSVILLE STREET - EVENING - MOVING SHOT - RUBY

Her head and shoulders from behind as she walks down the neon-lighted street; drugstore and loafers in b.g.; jazz music O.S.

451 FULL SHOT - RUBY, OVER DRUGSTORE LOAFERS

Our two loafers lounge on a bench. RUBY approaches.

2ND LOAFER

(to 1st)

Hey. Must be Thursday.

(CONTINUED)

451 (CONTINUED)

1ST LOAFER

Here we go.

He gets up and starts towards RUBY, who catches his eye.

452 RUBY, FROM BEHIND

She turns to a magazine stand and fingers a magazine, awaiting LOAFER, who approaches in BACKGROUND.

452A INSERT - RUBY'S HAND; MAGAZINES

They are lurid, tawdry fan and pin-up magazines.

452B RESUME #452

PREACHER enters, between RUBY and LOAFER, and turns to RUBY into CLOSE TWO-SHOT. LOAFER pauses in BACKGROUND.

PREACHER

You're Ruby, ain't you, my child?

RUBY

Can I have this?

PREACHER

Surely. I'd like to talk to you, my dear.

RUBY

Will you buy me a choclit sody?

PREACHER

O' course.

LOAFERS

Watch out Preacher!  
Why, Preacher!

PREACHER

(sternly)  
Shet yer dirty mouths!

452C CLOSE SHOT - RUBY

She looks up at him admiringly; then to LOAFERS; back to PREACHER.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

453 INT. DRUGSTORE - CLOSE TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND RUBY  
 RUBY is finishing her soda.

RUBY  
 Ain't I purty?

This is a familiar clue to PREACHER.

PREACHER  
 Why, you're the purtiest girl  
 I've seen in all my wandering.  
 Didn't nobody never tell you  
 that, Ruby?

RUBY  
 (hoarsely)  
 No. No one never did.

PREACHER  
 (moving in)  
 There's two new ones over at  
 your place, ain't there Ruby?

She nods.

PREACHER  
 What's their names?

RUBY  
 Pearl and John.

PREACHER  
 Ahhh.  
 (whispering)  
 And is there - a doll?

RUBY  
 (nods)  
 Only she won't never let me  
 play with it.

PREACHER  
 Ahh!

He gets up and heads for door. RUBY, dismayed, hurries  
 after him.

PREACHER  
 (firmly)  
 Yes!

He strides through door, RUBY following.

454 THREE-SHOT - PREACHER AND RUBY ON SIDEWALK, 2ND LOAFER  
IN B.G. 1ST LOAFER HAS GONE

PREACHER comes out fast, RUBY touches his arm, he turns  
on her. They are in CLOSE TWO-SHOT. RUBY goes on tip-  
toe. PREACHER inclines his ear.

454A CLOSE SHOT - RUBY

RUBY

Did you ever see such purty  
eyes in all your born days?

454B CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

454C INSERT - PREACHER'S HAND

It slides into his knife pocket. We hear a click.

2ND LOAFER O.S.

Don't let him git away, Sugar!

454D THREE-SHOT - PREACHER AND RUBY, LOAFER IN B.G.

RUBY

He ain't like you-all! Next  
time I won't even ask him to  
buy me a sody!

She turns to PREACHER, but PREACHER, on "next time," has  
left the SHOT.

454E CLOSE SHOT - RUBY

She looks after him, clasping the magazine under her  
chin.

454F FULL SHOT - PREACHER

Her hero strides away into darkness.

454G CLOSE SHOT - RUBY

Gazing after him.

RUBY

I been bad!

DISSOLVE TO:



455 CLOSE DOWN-SHOT - THE MAGAZINE, OPEN, IN RACHEL'S LAP

We PULL UP and AWAY into:

455A TWO-SHOT - RACHEL, SEATED; RUBY STANDING BESIDE HER

RACHEL

Ruby, you didn't have no  
money to buy this.

RACHEL

You'll whip me!

RACHEL

When did I ever?

RUBY

This man down at the Drugstore...

RACHEL

The Drugstore?

RUBY

Miz Cooper. I never went to  
sewin' lessons all them times.

RACHEL

What you been up to?

RUBY

I been out with men.

RUBY collapses face down over RACHEL'S lap and sobs, as  
we TRACK IN CLOSE.

RACHEL

Dear God, child!

Now RACHEL also weeps. She bends low over RUBY, stroking  
her hair.

RACHEL

You was lookin' for love, Ruby,  
the only foolish way you knowed  
how.

(she lifts Ruby's  
face cheek to cheek  
beside her own)

We all need love.  
Ruby, I lost the love of my son -  
I've found it with you-all.

They weep together.

(CONTINUED)

455A (CONTINUED)

RACHEL

You must grow up to be a fine,  
full woman; and I'm goin' to  
see to it you do.

She starts making up RUBY'S hair like that of a young  
woman.

RUBY

This gentleman warn't like  
them! He just give me a sody  
and the book.

RACHEL

Now who was this?

RUBY

He never asked me for nothin'.

RACHEL

He must have wanted somethin',  
Ruby. A man don't waste time  
on a girl unless he gets some-  
thing.

RUBY shakes her head.

RACHEL

What'd you all talk about?

RUBY

Pearl and John.

RACHEL

John and Pearl!

RUBY nods.

RACHEL

Is he their Pap?

RUBY shrugs.

RACHEL

Why hasn't he been to the house?

DISSOLVE TO:

456 FULL SHOT - PREACHER ON HORSE ON ROAD

457 FULL FIGURE SHOT - RUBY

Seeing PREACHER, she drops two eggs.

(CONTINUED)

457 (CONTINUED)

RUBY  
(shouting)  
Miz Cooper!

RACHEL  
(o.s. from within  
house)  
What?

RUBY  
The man! The man!

458 TRACKING SHOT - PREACHER

He tethers his horse and, as we PAN and TRACK on behind him, walks to the bottom of the steps; RUBY moves into side of SHOT: beyond PREACHER, RACHEL stands behind her screen door, hands folded under apron.

PREACHER  
Mornin', ladies.

459 FULL FIGURE SHOT - RACHEL, BEHIND SCREEN

RACHEL  
How'do.

460 FULL FIGURE SHOT - PREACHER

RACHEL'S VIEWPOINT, through screen.

461 FULL FIGURE SHOT - RACHEL, BEHIND SCREEN

PREACHER  
You're Miz Cooper, I take it.

RACHEL  
(coming through  
door)  
It's about that John and that  
Pearl?

462 THREE-SHOT - PREACHER, RACHEL, RUBY IN BACKGROUND

PREACHER'S face twitches with emotion. He breaks out into great thankful sobs. He falls to his knees.

(CONTINUED)

462 (CONTINUED)

PREACHER

My little lambs! To think I  
never hoped to see them again  
in this world! Oh, dear Madam,  
if you was to know what a  
thorny crown I have borne in my  
search for these strayed chicks!

463 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

She takes him in. He doesn't take her in.

464 THREE-SHOT - AS BEFORE

RACHEL

Ruby, go fetch them kids.

RUBY minces off around the side of the house.

465 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER - RACHEL'S ANGLE

He wipes off tears with the heel of his left hand,  
watching her.

PREACHER

Ah, dear Madam, I see you're  
looking at my hands!

466 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

She is.

467 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER - AS BEFORE

He holds up the right hand.

PREACHER

Shall I tell ye the little  
story of Right-Hand-Left-Hand  
- the tale of Good and Evil?

468 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

PREACHER O.S.

It was with this left hand that  
old brother Cain struck the blow  
that laid his brother low --

(CONTINUED)

468 (CONTINUED)

RACHEL  
(wanting to know)  
Them kids is yours?

469 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

PREACHER  
(recovering from  
the interruption)  
My flesh and blood!

470 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

RACHEL  
Where's your Missus?

471 TWO-SHOT - PROFILING RACHEL AND PREACHER

PREACHER gets to his feet.

PREACHER  
She run off with a drummer one  
night. Durin' prayer-meetin'.

RACHEL  
Where's she at?

PREACHER  
Somewheres down river! Parkers-  
burg, mebbe! - Cincinnati! - One  
of them Sodoms on the Ohio River.

RACHEL  
She took them kids with her?

PREACHER  
Heaven only knows what unholy  
sights and sounds those innocent  
little babes has heard in the  
dens of perdition where she  
dragged them!

472 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

RACHEL  
Right funny, hain't it, how  
they rowed all the way up  
river in a ten-foot john-boat!

473 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

...recovering, and by-passing it.

PREACHER

Are they well?

He turns his head.

474 FULL SHOT - RACHEL AND PREACHER, FROM SIDE

All the CHILDREN enter, around corner of house. As they move in, RACHEL replies:

RACHEL

A sight better than they was.

By now JOHN is on the top step beside RACHEL. One of his hands holds on to her skirt, as if he were pulling her towards him. His eyes never leave hers. All the CHILDREN freeze. PEARL is on ground, just beyond JOHN. Others in BACKGROUND; RUBY as near PREACHER as she can get.

PREACHER

Gracious, gracious! You are a good woman, Miz Cooper!

RACHEL

How you figgerin' to raise them two without a woman?

PREACHER

The Lord will provide.

PEARL, with a wail of happiness, drops the DOLL on the step and runs to PREACHER, who picks her up. JOHN instantly picks up the DOLL and holds it to him. He looks up at RACHEL.

475 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND RACHEL

JOHN looks deep into RACHEL'S eyes.

PREACHER O.S.

The Lord is merciful! What a day is this! --- And there's little John!

RACHEL

What's wrong, John?

(CONTINUED)

475 (CONTINUED)

JOHN  
Nothin'.  
(he smiles)

PREACHER O.S.  
Come to me, boy!

RACHEL  
What's wrong, John?

476 TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND PEARL

PREACHER  
Didn't you hear me, boy?

477 TWO-SHOT - JOHN AND RACHEL

RACHEL bends a little over him. She wants the situation clarified.

RACHEL  
John, when your Dad says  
'come', you should mind him.

JOHN  
He ain't my Dad.

478 HEAD CLOSE-UP - RACHEL

She takes this in; JOHN has sold her. She looks to PREACHER O.S.

RACHEL  
He ain't no Preacher neither.  
I've seen Preachers in my time,  
an' some of 'em was saints on  
earth. A few was crookeder'n  
a dog's hind leg, but this 'un's  
got 'em all beat for badness.

She starts to turn.

479 GROUP SHOT

She walks purposefully into the house. PREACHER lunges for JOHN and the DOLL.

480 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - PREACHER AND JOHN

JOHN ducks under the porch and PREACHER tries to follow him. He can't get under. O.S. we hear the slam of the screen door. PREACHER'S head comes up to see and we TILT UP, shooting OVER the back of his head. RACHEL stands there, full figure, with a pump-gun.

RACHEL

Just march yourself yonder to  
your horse, Mister.

(CONTINUED)



480 (CONTINUED)

Back of PREACHER'S head is still immobile.

RACHEL

March, Mister! I'm not foolin'.

481 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER, OVER GUN-BARREL

PREACHER gets to his feet. The open knife is in his hand. As we see it, the gun-barrel twitches. PREACHER backs away towards his horse, bouncing the knife lightly in his hand.

PREACHER

(screaming)

You ain't done with Harry Powell yet! The Lord God Jehovah will guide my hand in vengeance! You devils! You Whores of Babylon! I'll come back when it's dark!

As he mounts his horse we

DISSOLVE TO:

482 FULL SHOT - RACHEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It is dark. O.S. we hear PREACHER singing Leaning.

483 FULL FIGURE SHOT - RACHEL

She sits in profile, her gun across her knees. Song continues O.S.

484 FULL SHOT - THE CHILDREN, ASLEEP

...in a big bed. RUBY sits up, listening to song O.S.

485 FULL FIGURE SHOT - RACHEL, AS BEFORE

Song continues O.S. We PAN to PREACHER outside. We see him through window. He sits hunched on a stump.

486 FULL SHOT - THE HOUSE, OVER PREACHER

He continues singing.

487 HEAD PROFILE - RACHEL

After a moment we see her mouth open; and either to comfort herself or to drown out PREACHER'S voice, she joins in the hymn.

488 FULL SHOT - THE HOUSE - AS IN OPENING SHOT

A descending candle moves past a window; RACHEL and PREACHER sing O.S.

489 FULL SHOT - PREACHER ON STUMP

...over back of RACHEL'S head. The song ends. RUBY enters SHOT carrying a candle. Its light blacks out the window-glass. RACHEL looks up.

RACHEL

Moonin' around the house over  
that mad dog of a Preacher!  
Shame, Ruby!

She blows out the candle. We see through the window. PREACHER has gone.

490 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

RACHEL

Merciful Heaven!

She stands up.

491 CLOSE TWO-SHOT - RACHEL AND RUBY

RACHEL

Ruby, get the children out of  
bed. Bring them all down here  
to the kitchen.

RUBY leaves the SHOT. RACHEL moves towards window. She puts her hand over her eyes.

RACHEL

Women is such fools!

The soft hoot of an owl O.S. RACHEL looks up.

492 CLOSE SHOT - AN OWL ON A BRANCH, LOOKING DOWN

493 CLOSE SHOT - A BABY RABBIT

494 CLOSE SHOT - THE OWL SPREADS HIS WINGS AND SWOOPS

495 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

Still for a second; then O.S., the scream of a rabbit.

RACHEL

It's a hard world for little things.

OVER this line we have heard the patter of feet down staircase. She turns.

496 GROUP SHOT - THE CHILDREN

They look at her with complete trust.

497 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL, OVER CHILDREN

RACHEL

(snapping)

Children, I got lonesome. I figgered we might play games.

PEARL and MARY jump up and down, patting their palms. RACHEL extends her hands and they gather close to her.

PEARL

Won't you tell us a story?

498 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

RACHEL

I might:

(a swift furious glance into the moonlight)

I might tell A Story.

She sits down, the gun across her knees.

499 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

...as MARY and PEARL sit at her feet. RUBY stands beside RACHEL. JOHN stands near RACHEL.

CLARY  
I'll light the lamp.

RACHEL  
It's more fun hearin' stories  
in the dark.

CLARY sits at RACHEL'S feet.

500 CLOSE PANNING SHOT - JOHN

He is alert now. He moves in close beside RACHEL, whom we PAN into CLOSE TWO-SHOT with him, and presses the whole of his right arm against her arm. RACHEL registers quietly.

501 CLOSE GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

RACHEL  
Well...mind what I told you  
about little Jesus and his Ma  
and Pa and how there was No  
Room at the Inn?

502 HEAD CLOSE-UP - RACHEL

Her eyes, sharp and glittering, look outside.

503 FULL SHOT - THE OUTSIDE, FEATURING EMPTY STUMP,  
RACHEL'S V.P.

504 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

She gets up, with gun; we PULL AWAY; in BACKGROUND, CHILDREN turn faces to keep watching her. She comes close to window, gun ready, CHILDREN in BACKGROUND.

RACHEL  
Well now, there was this sneakin',  
no-'count, ornery King Herod!

She turns round and walks back to her chair; CHILDREN'S eyes always on her.

(CONTINUED)

504 (CONTINUED)

RACHEL

And he heard tell of this little  
King Jesus growin' up and old  
Herod figgered: Well, shoot!  
There sure won't be no room for  
the both of us!

(she sits down)

I'll just nip this in the bud.

504A GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN, FROM SIDE

RACHEL (continuing)

Well, he never knowed for sure  
which one of all them babies of  
the land was King Jesus.

504B HEAD CLOSE-UP - RACHEL

Her eyes glittering as she turns to look towards us.

504C RESUME SIDE GROUP SHOT

RACHEL gets up, with gun. Again we PULL AWAY, as faces  
of all CHILDREN in B.G. turn to watch her.

RACHEL

And so that cursed old King  
Herod figgered if he was to  
kill all the babies in the land,  
he'd be sure to get little Jesus.

Without speaking, she goes back to her chair.

504D FRONT GROUP SHOT

RACHEL

(more relaxed)

And when little King Jesus' Ma  
and Pa heard about that plan,  
what do you reckon they went  
and done?

CLARY

They hid in a broom closet!

MARY

They hid under the porch!

504E HEAD CLOSE-UP - JOHN

JOHN  
No; they went a-runnin'.

505 TWO-SHOT - RACHEL AND JOHN

RACHEL  
Well now, John, that's just  
what they done! They went  
a-runnin'!

The clock starts striking three. RACHEL looks to sound  
O.S.

506 FULL SHOT - CLOCK AND HALL MIRROR, BEYOND DARK KITCHEN

In the mirror, a shadow ducks.

507 FULL GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

RACHEL gets up, gun at port, and faces into the darkness.

PREACHER O.S.

Figgered I was gone, eh?

Eyes on the darkness, she bends low to the CHILDREN.

RACHEL

(whispering)

Run hide in the staircase!  
Run quick!

They scatter out of shot; RUBY lingers.

RACHEL

(without turning  
to her)

Ruby: git.

RUBY obeys in a trance. RACHEL, gun at ready, looks into the darkness.

508 FULL SCREEN - DARKNESS

Pause.

RACHEL (O.S.)

(in a high, steady  
voice)

What do you want?

PREACHER O.S.

Them kids!

RACHEL O.S.

What are you after them for?

PREACHER O.S.

None of your business, Madam.

RACHEL

I'm givin' you to the count  
of three to get out that  
screen door; then I'm a-comin'  
across this kitchen shootin'!

A stepped-on cat screams O.S. and PRACHER'S satanic face, and his hand lifting the open knife, rise swiftly from floor.

509 FULL FIGURE SHOT - RACHEL - SAME SHOT AS BEFORE

She fires off her gun.

510 FULL SHOT - SCREEN DOOR

PREACHER staggers out and runs yelping with pain into the barn. O.S. we hear the zing-zing of a country phone being cranked.

511 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL, OVER BACKS OF CHILDREN'S HEADS

They huddle on the stairs in reverent silence. RACHEL, her gun slung sportily under one arm, talks into wall phone which hangs just within the box stairway.

RACHEL

Miz Booher? Rachel Cooper.  
Git them State Troopers out  
to my place. I done treed  
somep'n up in my barn.

DISSOLVE TO:

512 FULL SHOT - RACHEL AND JOHN

RACHEL sits on the screened porch, awake, gun on knees.  
JOHN sits on floor, asleep, his head leaning against her.  
Barn in BACKGROUND. Sunrise.

513 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL AND JOHN

Same positions. JOHN wakes.

JOHN

I'll see to Pearl.

RACHEL

I'll make coffee.

They get up and start into kitchen.

514 GROUP SHOT - THE CHILDREN, OVER RACHEL AND JOHN

They lie huddled in calm sleep. JOHN and RACHEL watch a moment.

JOHN

She's all right.

They start for the stove.



## 515 TWO-SHOT - RACHEL AND JOHN, AROUND STOVE

RACHEL puts her gun beside the stove, ready to hand, and picks up a coffee-pot; JOHN puts kindling in stove.

RACHEL

John, you know? When you're little you have more endurance than God is ever to grant you again? Children are Man at his strongest. They abide.

JOHN looks at her a moment. O.S. we hear police car sirens. They look towards the sound.

## 516 FULL SHOT - THROUGH POLICE CAR WINDSHIELD

We SHOOT OVER two TROOPERS. Sirens loud, they rapidly approach RACHEL'S house as RACHEL, without gun, holding JOHN'S hand, comes down to fence. Presently, the other CHILDREN hurry out of house behind. The car brakes.

## 517 FULL SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN OVER TWO POLICE CARS - BARN IN BACKGROUND

The TROOPERS, fanning wide, advance towards barn. RACHEL and the CHILDREN are grouped a short distance behind them. The barn door gapes black. Short pause; then PREACHER appears.

A TROOPER

(shouting)

Is that him, Ma'am?

RACHEL

(shouting)

Yes! Mind where you shoot, boys! There's children here!

TROOPER

Whyn't you call us up before?

RACHEL

Didn't want yer big feet trackin' up my clean floors.

## 518 CLOSE SHOT - PREACHER

He stands, swaying; his left arm is bloody and helpless. In his right hand the open knife hangs apathetic. His eyes are glazed. He does not seem to care whether they come or not.

(CONTINUED)

518 (CONTINUED)

TROOPER'S VOICE O.S.  
Harry Powell, you're under  
arrest for the murder of  
Willa Harper!

519 MEDIUM SHOT - PREACHER AND TROOPERS - JOHN'S V.P.

TROOPERS close in on PREACHER, from before and behind,  
exactly as for BEN'S arrest.

520 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

The same sickly look, as at BEN'S arrest.

521 MEDIUM SHOT - PREACHER AND TROOPERS - JOHN'S V.P.

One TROOPER smacks the back of PREACHER'S head with a  
pistol-barrel.

522 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

JOHN  
(shouting)  
Don't!

523 RESUME VIEWPOINT SHOT

Another TROOPER, with a pistol barrel, knocks the knife  
from PREACHER'S lifted hand.

524 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

JOHN  
(shouting)  
Don't!

525 RESUME VIEWPOINT SHOT

PREACHER sinks to his knees as both men, and two others  
from the front, close in on him. The tableau is the  
same as in BEN'S arrest.

526 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

JOHN  
(shouting)  
Dad!

527 FRONT GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

JOHN grabs the DOLL from PEARL and starts to run.

RACHEL  
John! John!

She starts after him.

528 FULL SHOT - TROOPERS, JOHN, RACHEL, OVER PREACHER

PREACHER prostrate along bottom of screen. TROOPERS are beating him. JOHN runs up from BACKGROUND followed by RACHEL. JOHN rushes among the TROOPERS, flogging PREACHER over the head with the DOLL. The TROOPERS, astounded, lay off. RACHEL is stopped in her tracks.

JOHN  
Here! Here! Take it back!  
I can't stand it, Dad! It's  
too much, Dad! I don't want  
it! I can't do it! Here!  
Here!

The DOLL has burst open and the money has spilled over PREACHER. Now two TROOPERS gently lift JOHN away. RACHEL lifts him in her arms; she turns towards house.

529 FULL FIGURE PULL SHOT - RACHEL AND JOHN - GROUP IN BACKGROUND

She carries JOHN towards the house. His head hangs back over her arm. We hear his dry, exhausted sobs.

530 INT. COURTROOM - DAY - CLOSE SHOT - ICEY

ICEY  
(yelling)  
Lynch him! Lynch him!

531 TWO-SHOT - WALT AND ICEY

ICEY  
(yelling)  
Bluebeard!

WALT  
(yelling at all  
the men around him)  
Twenty-five wives!

ICEY  
And he killed every last  
one of 'em!

532 GROUP SHOT - WALT, ICEY, MEMBERS OF COURTROOM AUDIENCE

Perhaps ten faces. Most are frenetic. Our two LOAFERS  
are having fun. General hubbub O.S. A gavel O.S.

ICEY  
(yelling)  
If the People of Marshall  
County...

LOAFERS  
(cynically, across  
her)  
Bluebeard! Bluebeard!

533 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

He looks to sound of gavel. The hubbub and the gaveling  
stop.

LAWYER O.S.  
Will you identify the prisoner?

JOHN looks over his shoulder in same direction as the  
gavel.

LAWYER O.S.  
Please, little lad. Won't you  
look yonder...  
(his pointing  
finger enters  
the shot. John  
shakes as if he  
had a cold)  
...and tell the Court if that  
is the man who killed your  
mother?

JOHN looks at the finger. Short pause.

(CONTINUED)

533 (CONTINUED)

LAWYER O.S.  
It's all right, Mrs. Cooper.  
You can take the little fellow  
away.

The LAWYER'S hands gently help him from chair.

534 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

...as LAWYER'S hands consign JOHN to RACHEL.

LAWYER  
Merry Christmas to you and  
yours, Mrs. Cooper.

The CHILDREN bob and reply, ad lib. "Merry Christmas to  
you." RACHEL sniffs.

LAWYER O.S.  
And what's Santy Claus  
going to bring you,  
little man?

ICEY O.S.  
Them is the ones he sinned  
against, my friends!

Gaveling starts.

Above JOHN'S head, by  
winding and holding to  
ear, RACHEL pantomimes  
a watch.

LOAFER O.S.  
Bluebeard! Bluebeard!

CROWD O.S.  
Bluebeard! Bluebeard!

LAWYER O.S.  
O-ho-oo-o!

As RACHEL and CHILDREN turn to go, gaveling and hubbub  
fade and we

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

535 INT. A CAFE - NIGHT

RACHEL and her CHILDREN sit in two booths, in a corner,  
next to a big front window. In this arrangement:

Mary	Clary
	Ruby
	Rachel
Pearl	John

But RUBY has gone. Christmas parcels on bench at RACHEL'S  
right.

536 FULL SHOT - RACHEL AND HER GROUP, THEN CAFE AND WINDOW

Sound O.S. of approaching crowd. As we PULL BACK we bring in a few other customers and the big window. There are Christmas decorations in the cafe and the street outside is hung with them. Thirty feverish people, some of whom carry torches, enter the scene; ICEY stares in the window and screams.

ICEY  
(high-pitched)  
Them's hers!

Everyone in the cafe stands up. RACHEL gathers her parcels. ICEY rushes to door and opens it.

ICEY  
Them's her orphans!

She turns to crowd.

RACHEL  
Where's Ruby?

CLARY  
She went.

ICEY shouts into the cafe.

ICEY  
Them poor little lambs!

ICEY turns to the street mob. RACHEL hurries her CHILDREN to door.

ICEY leaves door to yell at mob.

ICEY  
Them's the ones he  
sinned against, my  
friends!

CASHIER  
(across Icey)  
Go out the back way, Miz  
Cooper.

As RACHEL leaves SHOT, the CASHIER shuts and locks the door.

537 EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT - PANNING SHOT - RACHEL AND COMPANY EMERGING FROM DOOR

MARY and CLARY come out first and start walking to our left. RACHEL comes out and hurries off to our right, followed by JOHN, holding PEARL'S hand. We PAN to MARY and CLARY.

(CONTINUED)

537 (CONTINUED)

CLARY

Ain't we goin' to the Bus  
Depot?

No answer. They turn and we PAN with them as they hurry after RACHEL, and we bring in RACHEL, charging away from us with her brood hustling to keep up.

538 GROUP SHOT - FEATURING WALT AND ICEY

ICEY carries a torch. She is flanked by rabid faces and by smiling LOAFERS, one of whom carries an axe. As she speaks, a MAN rushes up to WALT and gives him a rope.

ICEY

(shouting; high-  
pitched)

Draggin' the name of the Lord  
through the evil mud of his  
soul!

WALT

(bellowing)

Come on!

They all start marching, in step.

539 PANNING SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

Marching and voices O.S. and in BACKGROUND.

Carrying Christmas parcels, they hurry alongside a building and, at CENTER of PAN, cross the end of a street.

The MOB marches down the street TOWARDS CAMERA; Men run to join it.

ICEY

(high-pitched)

He lied!

WALT

Tricked us!

ICEY

He taken the Lord's name in  
vain and he trampled on His  
Holy Book!

WALT

String that Bluebeard up to  
a pole!

(CONTINUED)

539 (CONTINUED)

ICEY  
He's Satan hiding behind the  
Cross!

OTHERS  
(ad lib)  
Lynch him! String him up!

We PAN RACHEL and CHILDREN past this street and they hurry towards RUBY, who stands alone in BACKGROUND, facing the jail.

540  
and (OMITTED)  
541

542 HEAD CLOSE-UP - RUBY'S ECSTATIC FACE

In BACKGROUND, RACHEL and CHILDREN hurry towards her. MOB noise O.S. Hearing the approach of RACHEL'S GROUP, RUBY turns the back of her head towards us. Now there are no mob voices; only the ominous sound of fifty-odd people marching in step.

RUBY  
I love him!

543 TRACKING SHOT - RUBY

Ominous silence.

RUBY  
He loves me because I'm so  
purty! You think he's like  
them others!

544 SIDE TRACKING SHOT - RUBY, RACHEL AND GROUP

Marching sound O.S.

RACHEL firmly takes RUBY'S arm and drags her off in our direction. RACHEL shoos MARY and CLARY ahead of her. JOHN and PEARL flank RACHEL, clinging to her wide skirts. RUBY, nearest us, keeps looking back over her shoulder. We TRACK them along side of JAIL to real of JAIL.

(CONTINUED)



544 (CONTINUED)

RUBY (continuing)

You took on something awful  
about him buying me that  
there movie book. You was  
so mad you shot him and the  
blue men took him.

On "blue men," we stop TRACKING and, as GROUP leaves SHOT,  
CENTER a POLICE CAR, waiting at rear door of JAIL.  
POLICEMEN start out of door.

545 MEDIUM GROUP SHOT - POLICEMEN AND PREACHER

They roughly hustle PREACHER into the car. Marching  
sound O.S.

546 SHOT - FROM WITHIN CAR - BART

PREACHER and POLICE are in B.G. Through car window we  
see BART the HANGMAN come out of his door. He wears his  
derby. A POLICEMAN puts head out of window. Marching  
sound O.S.

547 MED. SHOT - BART THE HANGMAN

Same set-up as #55, including doll's perambulator, but  
with a Christmas wreath on door. Marching O.S.

POLICEMAN O.S.

Hey Bart!

Auto engine starts up O.S.

548 HEAD CLOSE-UP - BART

BART

Yeah?

549 MED. SHOT - BART

Marching O.S.

POLICEMAN O.S.

We're savin' this bird up fer  
you!

549A HEAD CLOSE-UP - BART

Marching O.S.

BART

This time it'll be a privilege.

549B FULL PANNING SHOT - POLICE CAR, THEN RACHEL AND GROUP

The car jumps fast out of SHOT and we PAN PAST BART and CENTER RACHEL and GROUP, walking fast away from us.  
Mob voices O.S.

A VOICE O.S.

(over departing  
car)

Bust the door down!

549C CLOSE GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

Clutching Christmas parcels they hurry away from us into darkness. RUBY, hanging back, dragged by RACHEL, babbles over her shoulder.

RUBY

(happily)

They'll git him out.  
I'll git my things  
ready - my shawl and  
my Mickey Mouse wrist-  
watch that don't run  
and the straw hat with  
the flower, and we'll be  
married and live happily  
ever after!

VOICES O.S. AD LIB

(cutting across Ruby)

Bust the door down!  
Set fahr to it!  
Where's that axe!  
Climb up on the balcony!  
You six git 'round to the  
back!

ICEY O.S.

(screaming)

People of Marshall County!

DISSOLVE TO:

550 FULL SHOT - NIGHT LANDSCAPE - PINE TREES, AND SOFTLY  
FALLING SNOW

DISSOLVE TO:

551 EXT. RACHEL'S HOUSE - EVENING; SNOWING - CLOSE SHOT -  
RACHEL AT MAILBOX

She peers into empty mailbox.

RACHEL

Nothing!

She slams the box shut and, as we TILT and PAN, walks  
away from us through snow towards her lighted house.

RACHEL

I'm glad they didn't send me  
nothing! Whenever they do it's  
never nothing I want but some-  
thing to show me how fancy and  
smart they've come up in the  
world.

She goes into the house.

552 INT. RACHEL'S KITCHEN

It is decorated for Christmas.

553 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

Rachel enters; the four girls stand in line, packages  
ready; JOHN stands in b.g., in doorway to next room.

MARY

Can we give you your presents  
now?

554 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

RACHEL

Shoot! You don't mean to say  
you got me a present!

Their hands hold packages up to her.

RACHEL

Shoot now!

She takes a package.

555 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

RACHEL O.S.

Why, Ruby!

Embarrassed, JOHN leaves the shot.

RACHEL O.S.

A POT-HOLDER!

556 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN - NEW ANGLE

From a fruit bowl, he selects the biggest apple, shines it on his shirt, wraps it in the doily under his bowl, opens a drawer and gets out a clip clothes-pin, clips his package, and leaves shot.

RACHEL O.S.

(continuing)

And much neater than last year's, Ruby!

(Sound of tearing gift-paper O.S.)

RACHEL O.S.

And Clary! ANOTHER POT-HOLDER! Ain't that thoughtful. I'm always burnin' my hands.

557 FULL SHOT - RACHEL, AND CHILDREN, OVER JOHN

...as he enters with present. RUBY and CLARY are standing aside; MARY and PEARL hold up a third pot-holder.

RACHEL

And did you two make this together?

Both nod.

MARY

You hop us, some.

558 CLOSE SHOT - RACHEL

She opens it.

RACHEL

(quietly)

John, that's the richest gift a body could have.

(continued)

(CONTINUED)

558 (CONTINUED)

RACHEL (cont'd)  
 (briskly)  
 You'll find your presents in  
 the cupboard under the china-  
 closet.

559 GROUP SHOT - RACHEL AND CHILDREN

RACHEL  
 You know where, Ruby.

All turn and run through door except Ruby, whom RACHEL  
 detains.

RACHEL  
 Ruby:  
 (she takes a box  
 from her apron  
 pocket)  
 This is yours.

RUBY opens it quickly; it is a cheap costume-jewelry  
 flower-spray. RUBY and RACHEL kiss like grown women  
 and RUBY goes to join the others.

560 FULL SHOT - RACHEL

She turns to her stove and is framed by Christmas garland  
 in b.g.; banging pots about and stirring; praying as she  
 works, which is the best way to pray.

Appropriate noise, o.s., of opening presents.

RACHEL  
 Lord save little children!  
 (bang)  
 You'd think the world would  
 be ashamed to name such a day  
 as Christmas for one of them...  
 (bang)  
 ...and go on the same old way.  
 (she starts stir-  
 ring)  
 My soul is humble  
 When I see the way little ones  
 accept their lot.  
 (she pauses in  
 stirring)  
 Lord save little children!  
 The wind blows and the rain is cold.  
 Yet,  
 They abide.

(CONTINUED)

560 (CONTINUED)

In BACKGROUND, the girls run upstairs, their new dresses over their arms. RACHEL glances over her shoulder.

561 MEDIUM SHOT - JOHN - RACHEL'S VIEWPOINT

JOHN stands in next room, looking at something in his hand.

562 CLOSE SHOT-- JOHN - IN OTHER ROOM

We see he holds a watch. He looks like any boy, rich or poor, with his first watch.

563 HEAD CLOSE-UP - RACHEL

RACHEL

(whispering, so  
that he does not  
hear)

For every child, rich or poor  
There's a time of running through  
a dark place;  
And there's no word for a child's  
fear.

A child sees a shadow on the wall, and  
sees a Tiger.

And the old ones say, "There's no tiger;  
go to sleep."

And when that child sleeps, it's a  
Tiger's sleep, and a Tiger's night,  
and a Tiger's breathing on the  
windowpane.

Lord save little children!

JOHN enters boldly behind her and, with a scrape, masterfully swings a chair around close to her and straddles it. RACHEL turns her back to us. She expects him to speak, he doesn't, so she fills in:

RACHEL

That watch sure is a fine, loud  
ticker!

JOHN gives her a burning, proud smile.

RACHEL

It'll be nice to have someone  
around the house who can give  
me the right time of day.

JOHN finds his tongue.

(CONTINUED)

563 (CONTINUED)

JOHN

This watch is the nicest  
watch I ever had.

RACHEL

A feller can't just go around  
with run-dpwn, busted watches.

She turns back, face to us, and goes on with her stirring.  
JOHN goes off towards the staircase to join the girls;  
then turns back.

564 CLOSE SHOT - JOHN

JOHN

I ain't afraid no more! I got  
a watch that ticks! I got a  
watch that shines in the dark!

He turns and hurries to the stairs.

565 HEAD CLOSE-UP - RACHEL

Over the sound of his running upstairs:

RACHEL

(telling us)  
They abide and they endure.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

566 FULL SHOT - STARRY SKY

Fade in TITLE:

T H E     E N D