

"THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER"

Screenplay  
by  
James Agee

Adapted for the screen by  
James Agee and Charles Laughton

Based on the novel  
"The Night Of the Hunter"  
by  
Davis Grubb

FADE IN:

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.

5 MEDIUM SHOT -- "IT"

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

"IT"  
What's wrong?

6 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!

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

8 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.

9 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:

10 HIGH LONG SHOT -- HELICOPTER

CENTERING the river.

VOICE

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

11 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.

We stoop low towards the car.

VOICE

Wherefore by their fruits, ye shall know them.

CUT TO:

12 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.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

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:

13 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:

14 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER DRIVING

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

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 daylight.

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:

15 INT. A BURLESQUE HOUSE -- MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT -- A DANCER

She is hard at work to music o.s.

16 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.

17 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT -- THE DANCER INSERT -- PREACHER'S LEFT HAND

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

18 INSERT -- HIS RIGHT HAND

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

19 EXTREME CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

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

20 INSERT -- RIGHT HAND AND POCKET

We hear the snapping open of a switchblade knife and the point of the knife cuts through his clothes.

21 LESS EXTREME CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

He seems to "listen" for something.

PREACHER

No, There are too many of them; you can't kill the world.

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

22 TILT TO 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:

23 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!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
Picked up where you were! A man of  
God?  
(to Clerk)  
Harry Powell.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

24 FULL SHOT -- MOUNDSVILLE PENITENTIARY -- DAY (HELICOPTER)

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

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

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 sideyard 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 MEDIUM SHOT -- BEN HARPER

BEN  
Where's your Mom?

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

BEN  
Listen to me, John.

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 the 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.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

TROOPER  
(driving)  
That's him.

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

31 CLOSE GROUP SHOT -- BEN AND THE 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 will 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.

BEN  
You, Pearl. You swear too.

32 CLOSE SHOT -- PEARL

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

33 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- JOHN

JOHN  
(under his 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!

35 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He runs forward and clasps his stomach, with his mouth open.

36 MEDIUM SHOT -- BEN AND TROOPERS -- JOHN'S VIEWPOINT

One TROOPER smacks the back of BEN's head with a pistol barrel.

37 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

JOHN  
(shouting; a sickly  
smile)  
Don't!

38 MEDIUM SHOT -- BEN AND TROOPERS -- AS BEFORE

Another TROOPER, with a pistol barrel, knocks the pistol from BEN's lifted hand.

39 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

JOHN  
(shouting)  
Don't!

BEN AND TROOPERS  
BEN sinks to his knees as both men,  
and two others from the front, close  
in on him.

40 HEAD CLOSE UP -- JOHN

JOHN  
Dad!

He takes in the GROUP with his mouth open.

o.s., we hear the slamming of car doors, and car starting away.

41 FULL SHOT -- JOHN'S VIEWPOINT -- THE CARS

They drive away fast in road dust.

42 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.

43 CLOSE SHOT -- WILLA

She has a rich body.

44 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:

45 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::

46 FULL SHOT -- THE MOUNDSVILLE PENITENTIARY

Same view as before but now it is NIGHT.

LAP DISSOLVE TO::

47 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!

PREACHER'S VOICE

(o.s., very low)

Where, Ben? Where? Where?

BEN

(distinctly)

And a little child shall lead them.

48 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 awakes, 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.

(CONTINUED)

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

PREACHER  
No, Ben.

BEN  
What'd I say?  
(he grabs Preacher by  
the 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!

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.

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.

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:

DISSOLVE TO:

50 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.

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:

51 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.

52 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.

53 EXT. BART'S HOUSE -- MEDIUM SHOT -- BART AND THE GUARD

On porch, by door, is a doll's perambulator. BART and GUARD walk into the SHOT.

GUARD

He never told about the money.

(CONTINUED)

53 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.

54 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.

55 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.

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

BART  
Sometimes I wish I was back at the  
mine.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

WIFE

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

He looks at her for a moment. She goes out. He looks o.s.  
towards his CHILDREN. He goes into their room on tiptoe.

56 MEDIUM SHOT -- BART

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

57 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::

58 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- BART, HOVERING HIS CHILDREN

CHILDREN'S VOICES

(o.s., chanting)

Hing, hang, hung. See what the  
Hangman done!

LAP DISSOLVE TO::

59 EXT. CRESAP'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); 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 the 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.

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

LAP DISSOLVE TO::

61 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- JOHN HARPER

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

62 PULL BACK TO CLOSE PULLING TWO-SHOT -- PEARL AND JOHN

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

63 MEDIUM 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 --

64 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

65 MEDIUM 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.

CHILDREN

(chanting)

Hing, hang, hung! Now my song is  
done!

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

66 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.

67 INSERT -- THE WATCH

A watch with a moving sweep-hand, ticking.

68 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND PEARL

PEARL

Are you goin' to buy it, John?

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

No answer. JOHN's eyes are fixed on the watch. OVER a shop door-bell we hear:

MIZ CUNNINGHAM'S VOICE (O.S.)

Uh-Hawwww!

They glance toward her.

69 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?

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.

70 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.

71 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.

72 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?

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.

73 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

75 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.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

ICEY

Willa Harper, there is certain plain facts of life that adds up just like two and 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.

76 CLOSE SHOT -- ICEY

ICEY

(fiercely)  
Fiddlesticks!

LAP DISSOLVE TO::

77 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::

78 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

(calling o.s.)  
One solid brown sody, one Lover's 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:

79 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. Starlit sky.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

80 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.

81 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.

JOHN  
... 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.

82 We PAN JOHN to the WINDOW. He looks out.

83 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER -- THROUGH WINDOW -- JOHN'S VIEWPOINT  
He stands motionless.

84 RESUME PREVIOUS SHOT -- JOHN AT WINDOW

He turns and we PAN him to bed.

JOHN  
(casually)  
Just a man.

He climbs into bed and pulls up the covers.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

JOHN  
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  
quiet o.s.:

"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms."

DISSOLVE TO:

85 EXT. RIVER AND TOWN -- MORNING -- FULL SHOT -- 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.

86 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

87 MEDIUM SHOT -- BIRDIE, THEN JOHN

... as boat passes. BIRDIE's head sticks through a porthole.  
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  
Ain't nobody stole Dad's skiff.

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.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

BIRDIE'S VOICE

(calling o.s.)

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

88 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.

89 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 years  
and never takes her eyes off me.

CUT OVER his line to --

90 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.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

BIRDIE  
This mornin' I was talkin' to this  
stranger up at the boardinghouse.  
He knowed your Dad!

91 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

JOHN looks cautious.

JOHN  
Where'd he know Dad?

92 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.

93 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- NEW ANGLE

JOHN puts his cup down and gets up.

JOHN  
I got to go now, Uncle Birdie.

BIRDIE  
Why, shucks, boy, you just got here.

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

94 EXT. STREET -- MEDIUM SHOT -- JOHN

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

95 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He is horrified by what he sees.

96 INT. SPOON'S ICE CREAM PARLOR

97 GROUP SHOT through door-glass, from JOHN'S VIEWPOINT:

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.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

All the grown-ups are avid for his words, which we don't hear through the glass.

98 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

We SHOOT THROUGH the DOOR; he quietly enters.

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...

99 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.

FLASH-CUT:

100 CLOSE-UP -- JOHN

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

101 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!

102 CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

WALT

So you ain't with the State no more?

103 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?

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

104 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He looks on, in dumb alarm.

105 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  
left hand)  
See these here fingers, dear friends!  
These fingers has veins that run  
straight to the soul of man! The  
right hand, friends! The hand of  
love!

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

They are impressed in their different ways.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

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, cracking the joints.

PREACHER

Look at 'em, dear hearts!

107 MEDIUM SHOT -- JOHN -- OVER PREACHER'S HANDS

He looks on with unseeing eyes.

PREACHER (O.S.)

Old Left Hand Hate's a-fightin' and  
it looks like Old Right Hand Love's  
a goner!

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

PREACHER (O.S.)

But wait now! Hot dog! Love's a  
winnin'! Yessirree!

109 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

PREACHER

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

He crashes both hands down to the table.

110 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 benefit. You jest got  
to stay for our church pick-nick  
Sunday!

PEARL offers PREACHER the doll to kiss. PREACHER complies.

111 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN'S REACTION

112 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!

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

PREACHER  
He don't mean no impudence, do ya,  
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?

113 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.

114 GROUP SHOT

JOHN  
Is that all?

115 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!

116 CLOSE SHOT - ICEY

ICEY  
(with horrid archness)  
It's for the pick-nick. And 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:

117 EXT. THE RIVER-BANK - CHURCH IN B.G. - FULL SHOT - THE  
SINGING PICKNICKERS

A pleasant, grassy river-bank. Few men in proportion to  
women and children.

118 We CENTER PREACHER. They are singing "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.

119 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.

120 MEDIUM SHOT -- THE TREE, JOHN AND PEARL

They sit on the 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.

JOHN  
Where?

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

ICEY  
Down by the river. My goodness!

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

121 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 silly, but it's like there was something still between him and his Dad.

ICEY  
What he needs is a good dose o' salts!

WILLA  
There's something else.

ICEY  
What?

WILLA  
The money, Icey.

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.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

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!

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

ICEY  
(yelling)  
John! Pearl!

123 CLOSE SHOT -- PEARL AND JOHN

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

ICEY  
(yelling o.s.)  
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  
(shouting o.s.)  
You'll do what you're told!

They unwillingly get moving.

124 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.

125 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 --

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

ICEY

You!!!

126 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.

ICEY

She's not the only fish in the river!

More agreement. JOHN and PEARL join ICEY. ICEY speaks to JOHN.

ICEY

Now, you two stay put!

127 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He looks hard towards WILLA and PREACHER o.s.

ICEY

(o.s., to women)  
Shilly-shallying around ...

128 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.

129 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- WILLA AND PREACHER

They sit by the water; drooping 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?

130 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- PREACHER

His head goes slantwise and he smiles oddly.

PREACHER

My dear child, don't you know?

131 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

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

132 GROUP SHOT -- WOMEN, JOHN AND PEARL

ICEY

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

(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 towards his mother,  
takes one nibble and throws the rest away.

ICEY

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'd swear in all that  
time I'd just lie there thinking  
about my canning.

In BACKGROUND WALT looks sheepish.

WILLA'S VOICE

(calling o.s.)

John! John?

All look towards her.

133 LONG SHOT -- OVER GROUP

WILLA is standing, beckoning JOHN.

134 MEDIUM TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND PEARL

They start towards their mother.

135 GROUP SHOT -- ICEY AND WOMEN -- NEW ANGLE

ICEY

A woman's a fool to marry for that.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

ICEY (CONT'D)

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.

136 CLOSE GROUP SHOT -- PREACHER, WILLA, CHILDREN

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

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.

137 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

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

138 RESUME GROUP SHOT

PREACHER

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

139 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN AND PEARL

He now conceals his new reaction.

140 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...

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED:

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

She walks away towards ICEY and the WOMEN.

141 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

PREACHER  
John: here.

142 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN AND PEARL

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

143 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER AND CHILDREN

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

PREACHER  
Your tie's crooked.

144 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:

145 GROUP SHOT -- JOHN'S VIEWPOINT

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:

146 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)

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.

BIRDIE

Well, goodnight, boy. Come again --  
any time.

JOHN leaves the SHOT.

(CONTINUED)

146 CONTINUED: (2)

BIRDIE

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

147 MOVING SHOT -- JOHN

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

148 MOVING SHOT -- SPOON'S, HIS VIEWPOINT

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

149 FULL SHOT -- JOHN

He hurries away from us towards home.

150 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.

151 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.

JOHN

(softly)

Is somebody 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.

152 TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND THE PREACHER -- NARROW SCREEN

PREACHER looks at JOHN; JOHN sinks onto the edge of a chair.  
PREACHER sits opposite.

(CONTINUED)

A bar of light from door falls on 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

(breathing it)

You ain't my Dad! You won't never be my dad!

PREACHER

(obsessed, disregarding 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 moth with his hand and looks up at PREACHER.

PREACHER

(softly)

Tell me what, boy?

JOHN

Nothin'!

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED: (2)

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.

153 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND PREACHER

JOHN starts for the stairs.

DISSOLVE TO:

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

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

155 TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND PEARL

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

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  
can I tell him about--

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

JOHN  
You swore, Pearl!

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED:

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:

156 SHOULDER CLOSE-UP -- WILLA

She is caressing her shoulders.

157 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.

158 INSERT -- WILLA'S HAND

It hesitates on the doorknob.

159 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.

160 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.

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

A moment of perplexity; then a little smile.

(CONTINUED)

161 CONTINUED:

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

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

162 TWO-SHOT -- WILLA AND PREACHER

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

WILLA  
(softly)  
Harry...

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:

163 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?

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED:

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.

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.

164 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.

165 CLOSE SHOT -- WILLA, PREACHER, BULB

166 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)

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

(whispering)

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

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

167 INSERT -- A TORCH OR RAILROAD FLARE

VOICES (O.S.)

AAA-MEN!

168 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-MEN!

(CONTINUED)

168 CONTINUED:

WILLA  
(o.s., very loud)  
You have all sinned!

CONGREGATION  
Yes! Yes!

169 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!

170 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!

171 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!

172 GROUP SHOT -- CONGREGATION

WILLA  
(o.s., screaming)  
And the Lord told that man--

CONGREGATION  
Yes! Yes!

173 CLOSE SHOT -- WILLA

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

CONGREGATION (O.S.)  
Yes! Yes! Hallelujah!

(CONTINUED)

173 CONTINUED:

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

CONGREGATION (O.S.)  
IN THE RIVER!

CUT TO:

174 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 --

175 CLOSE SHOT -- PEARL

She sits at the end of the grape-arbor. She finishes cutting 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?

PEARL starts guiltily and looks towards him, scrambling money together.

176 JOHN'S FOOTSTEPS

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

177 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN -- PEARL'S ANGLE

JOHN  
You what?

He hears the frantic rustling of paper --

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

178 CLOSE SHOT -- PEARL, OVER JOHN

PEARL  
John, don't be mad! Don't be mad!  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

178 CONTINUED:

PEARL (CONT'D)  
I was just playing with it! I didn't  
tell no one!

FLASH CUT:

179 CLOSE-UP -- JOHN

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

180 CLOSE SHOT -- PEARL

She continues to gather the money together.

PEARL  
(pleading)  
It's all here.

181 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.

182 FLASH INSERT -- PREACHER'S FOOT

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

183 CLOSE SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

JOHN freezes.

PREACHER'S VOICE (O.S.)  
John?

JOHN  
Oh -- yes?

184 LONG SHOT -- PREACHER -- CHILDREN'S VIEWPOINT

He stands at far end of arbor.

PREACHER  
What are you doing, boy?

185 LONG SHOT -- CHILDREN -- PREACHER'S VIEWPOINT

JOHN  
Getting Pearl to bed. I--

PREACHER  
What's taking you so long about it?

186 FLASH INSERT -- THEIR FRANTIC HANDS, MONEY, THE DOLL

JOHN (O.S.)

It-- she--

187 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER -- PEERING TOWARDS THEM

PREACHER

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

188 LONG SHOT -- CHILDREN -- PREACHER'S VIEWPOINT

JOHN

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

PREACHER

Come on, children!

189 INSERT -- JOHN'S HANDS PIN THE DOLL TOGETHER

190 FULL SHOT -- CHILDREN

They stand up, look towards PREACHER, and slowly start towards  
him. The two forgotten paper-dolls are blown towards him  
too.

191 MOVING SHOT -- PREACHER -- JOHN'S VIEWPOINT

PREACHER's watch-chain gleams. The shot SLOWLY CLOSSES 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.

192 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN AND PEARL

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

PREACHER'S VOICE

Come here, John. Run along, Pearl.

PEARL goes, JOHN comes towards PREACHER.

194 PREACHER -- JOHN'S VIEWPOINT

PREACHER

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

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

JOHN (O.S.)

Yes. Yes.

PREACHER

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

195 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

His helpless reaction. Pause.

PREACHER'S VOICE

Run along to bed.

AS JOHN TURNS AWAY WE

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

196 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:

197 CLOSE SHOT -- A GAR, UNDERWATER 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!

They sit up into it.

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

BIRDIE  
There hain't nary a 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  
You don't mind my 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, snaggle-toothed,  
egg-suckin', bait-stealin' so-and-  
so!

199 QUICK INSERT -- THE THUMPING FISH IN BOTTOM OF BOAT 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 just come a-runnin'.

Now there is no sound or thumping or beating.

200 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:

201 INT. CHILDREN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The children are ready for bed.

202 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

Smiling awaiting an answer.

203 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

JOHN

I don't know.

204 TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND PREACHER

PEARL plays unconcernedly in BACKGROUND.

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'!

(CONTINUED)

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.

PREACHER  
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."

205 INSERT -- JOHN'S HAND comes to rest beside a hairbrush

206 RESUME TWO-SHOT -- PREACHER and PEARL, JOHN in b.G.

PEARL  
Yes?

PREACHER  
Now it's your turn.

PEARL  
What secret shall I tell?

PREACHER  
How old are you?

PEARL  
That's no secret. I'm five.

207 CLOSE SHOT -- John -- Preacher and Pearl in b.g.  
A look of impotent hatred.

PREACHER  
Sure, that's no secret.

208 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!

209 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

He is sure know PEARL knows.

210 THREE-SHOT -- PEARL, PREACHER, JOHN

PEARL  
(awed)  
You hit Daddy with a hairbrush!

Another silence.

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

PEARL  
Miz Jenny! Miz Jenny!

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

212 TWO-SHOT -- PREACHER AND PEARL

Outside door as he closes it.

PREACHER  
John's just plumb bad through and  
through--

213 CLOSE SHOT -- PEARL

As PREACHER's hand locks the door.

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

CUT TO:

214 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!

ICEY  
It's a shame!

WILLA's face shines like one possessed.

WILLA  
Goodnight.

WALT enters the shot, his back to us.

ICEY  
Goodnight, honey.

215 As WILLA starts away, we DOLLY THROUGH DOOR and PAN her to  
deserted street.

There is a river mist.

216 TWO SHOT -- WALT AND ICEY

WALT is ill at ease.

217 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  
your 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:

218 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  
Yes, John's bad.

PEARL  
Tell me another secret about my dad.

219 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.

(CONTINUED)

219 CONTINUED:

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 in disbelief, WILLA makes  
for house as PEARL screams.

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

Narrow screen, same set-up as in earlier corridor scene,  
PREACHER and WILLA.

Their eyes meet. Pause.

PREACHER  
(stunned)  
I didn't expect you home so soon.

221 CLOSE SHOT -- WILLA

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

222 TWO SHOT -- AS BEFORE

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

CUT TO:

223 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 something wrong about it,  
Mother.

(CONTINUED)

223 CONTINUED:

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!

WALT  
Mother, I only--

CUT TO:

224 INT. WILLA'S AND THE 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!

(CONTINUED)

224 CONTINUED:

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

PREACHER hits her across the mouth. A pause.

WILLA  
(continues, unruffled)  
Then the children know where it is  
hid? John knows? Is that it? Then  
it's still here, somewhere amongst  
us, taintin' us?

225 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER, LISTENING FOR A VOICE

226 RESUME TWO-SHOT

WILLA  
So you must have known it all along,  
Harry.

227 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER, LISTENING

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

228 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.

229 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?

230 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

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

231 RESUME TWO-SHOT

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

232 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.)

233 RESUME TWO SHOT

WILLA  
So you might say that 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.

234 INSERT -- PREACHER'S HAND AND KNIFE

It clicks open.

235 RESUME TWO-SHOT

As he raises his arm to strike:

236 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- WILLA

...with foolish, ecstatic eyes.

WILLA  
Bless us all!

DISSOLVE TO:

237 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. 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:

238 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!

239 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?

240 MEDIUM 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.

241 MEDIUM CLOSE -- TWO-SHOT

WALT  
Just went?

ICEY  
She took out some time during 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?

(CONTINUED)

241 CONTINUED:

ICEY  
A man of the Cloth?

242 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

He pours, snaps it down; weak-defiance.

243 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT -- ICEY

ICEY  
Walt Spoon, that's for sickness in  
the house!

244 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

He looks towards o.s. sobbing.

WALT  
What can we do, Mother?

245 TWO-SHOT

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

246 MEDIUM SHOT -- PREACHER

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

247 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 and 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! Whatever  
would I do without you!

248 CLOSE SHOT -- ICEY

ICEY  
(wailing)  
Mister Powell!

249 THREE-SHOT -- NEW ANGLE

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

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

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.

250 CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

WALT  
How's that?

251 TWO-SHOT -- PREACHER AND ICEY

PREACHER  
She turned me out of the bed.

ICEY  
(with pleasure)  
Nnnooooo!!

252 CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

Filling his pipe.

WALT

What do you figure to do?

253 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!

254 CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

Dabbing at moisture in the corner of his eye.

WALT

That's mighty brave of you, Reverend.

255 TWO-SHOT -- PREACHER AND ICEY

PREACHER

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

256 CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

WALT

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

257 TWO-SHOT -- PREACHER AND ICEY

PREACHER

A scrawl. On a piece of notepaper on the bureau.

ICEY smiles sideways.

PREACHER

I burned it.

PREACHER holds out his hand, stares in disgust, and wipes his palm dramatically on his coat sleeve.

PREACHER

I tore it up and burned it -- it stank so strong of hellfire.

(CONTINUED)

257 CONTINUED:

ICEY

Amen.

PREACHER

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

258 CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

WALT

She'll come draggin' her tail back  
home.

259 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

PREACHER

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

260 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'.

261 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.

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...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

261 CONTINUED:

PREACHER (CONT'D)

(Icey touches him)  
... that the husband -- Harper --  
had hid somewheres in the cellar.  
(playing his ace)  
She was drinking.

262 CLOSE SHOT -- ICEY

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

263 CLOSE SHOT -- WALT

Sniffing.

264 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!

265 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

PREACHER

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

DISSOLVE TO:

266 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.

267 MEDIUM SHOT -- WILLA AND CAR

She is in profile as before--

268 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.

269 CLOSE SHOT -- ABOVE WATER -- THE LINE

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

270 MEDIUM SHOT -- UNCLE BIRDIE

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

271 CLOSE SHOT -- BIRDIE

... as he peers over side.

272 DOWNSHOT -- FULL SHOT OF CAR AND WILLA; BIRDIE'S VIEWPOINT

273 CLOSE SHOT -- BIRDIE, HORROR-STRICKEN MOVING UNDERWATER SHOT -- WILL

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

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

Meanwhile, we move vertically DOWNWARDS TOWARDS HER FACE, serene in death.

We may or may not glimpse the gashed throat, through drifting hair.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

274 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!

275 CLOSER 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--

276 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.

277 INT. CELLAR -- MEDIUM CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND PEARL

They are standing on a coal heap, faces at the 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.

(CONTINUED)

277 CONTINUED:

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.

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.

278 FULL SHOT -- A ROOM UPSTAIRS

PREACHER looks under a bed.

279 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 --

280 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.

281 THE CELLAR DOOR -- THE CHILDREN'S VIEWPOINT

The door opens; PREACHER'S head, carrying a candle in holder, a white-washed 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.

282 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

PEARL

(whispering)  
John...

JOHN claps his hand over her mouth.

283 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

(calling o.s.)  
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.

ICEY clucks her tongue o.s.

ICEY'S VOICE

(yelling)  
JOHN! PEARL!

(CONTINUED)

283 CONTINUED:

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

ICEY  
John! Pearl! Shake a leg!

She claps her hands smartly.

284 FULL SHOT -- THE KITCHEN -- OVER ICEY

ICEY  
(continuing)  
I won't have you worrying 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!

285 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.

286 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

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

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.

287 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He watches ICEY leave, o.s.

(CONTINUED)

287 CONTINUED:

PREACHER (O.S.)  
Good night, Miz Spoon, and thank you  
again.

288 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?

289 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- JOHN

Wondering what to do next.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

290 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.

291 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...

292 INSERT -- BESS'S PICTURE

BIRDIE'S VOICE  
(o.s., continuing)  
Sweet Heaven, if you'd o' seen it!

293 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.

294 INSERT -- BESS'S PICTURE

BIRDIE'S VOICE (O.S.)  
And there ain't a mortal human I can  
tell but you...

295 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.

296 CLOSE SHOT -- BIRDIE -- NEW ANGLE

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

BIRDIE  
Sweet heavens, save poor old Uncle  
Birdie.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

297 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?

(CONTINUED)

297 CONTINUED:

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.

PREACHER  
Why, pray tell?

PEARL  
Because John said I mustn't.

298 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 sniveling.  
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.

299 THREE SHOT -- THE CHILDREN, OVER PREACHER

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

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.

300 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

PREACHER

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

301 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- PEARL

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

302 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

PREACHER

There now! You made me lose my  
temper!

303 THREE SHOT -- CHILDREN, OVER PREACHER

PREACHER

I'm sorry! I'm real sorry!

PEARL sniffles and wipes here eyes with her free fist.

PREACHER

Now! Where's it hid, honey?

JOHN

(suddenly and lightly)  
I'll tell.

304 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?

305 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- JOHN

JOHN

In the cellar; buried under a stone  
in the floor.

306 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'.

307 THREE SHOT -- CHILDREN, OVER PREACHER

PEARL gapes up at JOHN as he speaks.

JOHN

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

308 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

... as he gets up, cellar door in BACKGROUND.

PREACHER

All right...

(CONTINUED)

308 CONTINUED:

He turns towards the door; then glances around.

PREACHER

Come along.

309 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- JOHN

JOHN

What?

310 THREE SHOT -- PREACHER, OVER CHILDREN

PREACHER

Go ahead of me -- the both of you.

They cross him towards the door.

311 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.

Now they are at the bottom of the 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.

312 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 toward it, leaving them at foot of stairs, then turns, catching JOHN's ruse.

(CONTINUED)

312 CONTINUED:

PREACHER  
(sardonic)  
O no you don't!

He shepherds them ahead of him.

313 THREE SHOT -- NEW ANGLE

They arrive beneath the shelf.

PREACHER  
Now: where?

JOHN  
(lying magnificently;  
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 up at JOHN and JOHN looks stony. She seems about to speak.

314 FLASH INSERT -- JOHN SQUEEZES PEARL'S HAND HARD 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.

315 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- PREACHER

... as he turns.

PREACHER  
This is concrete.

316 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

A moment's silence.

PEARL  
John made a Sin. John told a lie.

317 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.

318 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- FAVORING JOHN

PREACHER  
Speak, boy: where's it hid?

The knife pricks the flesh under JOHN's ear.

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

319 CLOSE SHOT -- PEARL

She starts to sob.

320 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND PREACHER

JOHN  
Pearl, shut up! Pearl, you swore!

PREACHER  
You could save him, little bird.

321 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- PEARL

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

322 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!

323 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- JOHN

His eyes are all over the place.

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

324 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.

325 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

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

326 TWO SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

They start up the stairs.

327 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER

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

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 the 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.

328 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- PREACHER

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

All the above happens at once.

329 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? 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.

(CONTINUED)

329 CONTINUED:

PREACHER'S VOICE  
Want me to get her right now?

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!

330 FRAMING SHOT -- EXT. 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.

331 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 enter, their backs to us, sprinting towards the boat. Light mist as in previous shot.

JOHN  
(calling)  
Uncle Birdie! Uncle Birdie!

332 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!

333 CLOSE SHOT -- BIRDIE

BIRDIE  
(gesturing feebly)  
Don't!

334 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.

335 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.

336 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!

337 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!

338 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He is lost; and he becomes a man.

BIRDIE'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Lord save poor old Uncle Birdie  
Steptoe that never hurt a fly!

He snores softly.

(CONTINUED)

338 CONTINUED:

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.

339 LONG SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

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

CUT TO:

340 TWO-SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

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

341 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER'S SHADOW

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

342 TWO-SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

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

JOHN

(whispering)  
Please be quiet-- Oh, please, Pearl!

PEARL

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

JOHN

Hush.

343 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?

(CONTINUED)

343 CONTINUED:

He starts slashing his way through the brush-filth.

344 FULL SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

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

345 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.

346 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.

347 CLOSE SHOT -- PEARL AND DOLL

... as they land, sprawling, in bottom of skiff among fish-heads and bait cans. JOHN gets in after them.

348 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER -- CHILDREN'S VIEWPOINT

He tears free of brush to edge of river, knife glittering.

349 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

With his oar, he tries to push the boat free of mud.

350 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER -- CHILDREN'S VIEWPOINT

He wades toward them, knee-deep in mud.

351 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He is shoving at the oar even more desperately.

352 INSERT -- JOHN'S HANDS

Straining.

353 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER -- CHILDREN'S VIEWPOINT

He flounders deeper and more heavily through the mud; much closer.

354 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He pushes the boat free of mud.

355 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER -- CHILDREN'S VIEWPOINT

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.

356 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!

357 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER

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

PREACHER

Wait! Wait! I'll slit your guts!

358 FULL DOWN SHOT -- THE SKIFF, THEN PREACHER

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

359 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.

360 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.

361 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- PREACHER

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

362 LONG SHOT -- THE RIVER AND LANDSCAPE

Featuring starlight; and the drifting boat -- PEARL in stern.

363 TWO-SHOT -- THE CHILDREN -- FRONT ON

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

PEARL

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

364 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...

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

PEARL'S VOICE (O.S.)

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

366 SPECIAL SHOT -- A FROG, AND SKIFF

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

DISSOLVE TO:

367 INSERT -- A PICTURE POSTCARD -- A COUNTY COURTHOUSE

As the card is turned to the handwritten side we

CUT TO:

368 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.

(CONTINUED)

368 CONTINUED:

That a little change of scenery would do us all a world of good after so much trouble and heartache. At least the kids will git 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' those 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:

369 DESCENDING HELICOPTER SHOT -- THE RIVER -- DAY

A man is going along a river lane on horseback. It is PREACHER; he walks the horse away from us.

DISSOLVE TO:

370 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.

371 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.

372 MEDIUM 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 the 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?

(CONTINUED)

372 CONTINUED:

JOHN  
Ain't got none.

Woman leaves shot briefly (we HOLD on 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 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:

373 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:

374 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.

375 CLOSE SHOT -- THE FLAMES

A spurt of steam as spit strikes.

376 CLOSE SHOT -- A HOOT OWL

... hooting.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

377 CLOSE SHOT -- A TURTLE -- NOONDAY

He comes down to water.

JOHN'S VOICE (O.S.)

They make soup out of them...

378 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:

379 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:

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

The skiff passes. Baa-ing of sheep o.s.

381 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.

382 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.

383 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.

384 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.

385 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- THE CHILDREN

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

PEARL  
Are we goin' home, John?

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.

386 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.

387 MEDIUM SHOT -- THE CHILDREN, WINDOW -- TWILIGHT

... 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:

388 SAME SET-UP

A full moon is half-risen. Whippoorwill o.s.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

389 SAME SET-UP

The moon is well above the horizon. Whippoorwill o.s.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

390 SAME SET-UP The moon is still higher. A pause; the whippoorwill stops in mid-phrase.

Brief pause; then JOHN sits up into silhouette.

391 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

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

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;  
([LANE])  
The dog from the farm rushes braying to his gate. Other dogs continue o.s.

PREACHER appears astride his walking horse, singing.

PREACHER  
Leaning...

392 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

Watching dread and despair. Sounds go.

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

393 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.)

394 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

Eyes following PREACHER. PREACHER and dogs continue o.s.

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

395 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER

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

396 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN AND PEARL -- NEW ANGLE

He wakes her. PREACHER's singing o.s.

397 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER

He vanishes; scuttling of CHILDREN in hay, o.s.; dogs quiet; his song dies.

Brief silence. The whippoorwill resumes.

398 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.

399 FULL SHOT -- A BRIGHT FULL MOON

The whippoorwill's singing continues o.s.

400 FULL SHOT -- CHILDREN AND SKIFF

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

401 CLOSE SHOT -- A FOX, BARKING 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.

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

Crickets o.s. The skiff nears a sand-bar.

403 INSERT -- THE PROW, GROUNDING

The prow softly grates against sand.

404 MEDIUM SHOT -- THE GROUNDED SKIFF, AGAIN THROUGH GRASS

Crickets fainter. TILTING UPWARD.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

405 FULL SHOT -- THE STARLIT SKY

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

406 FULL SHOT -- RIVER LANDSCAPE -- SUNRISE

Distant; medium; the near; roosters crow o.s.

407 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN WAKING

He looks to PEARL o.s.

408 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!

409 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.

410 THREE-SHOT -- OVER JOHN

RACHEL

I'll get me a willow switch!

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.

411 LOW FULL SHOT -- THE THREE, FROM SIDE

They move across the meadow like a nursery frieze. 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!

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.

(CONTINUED)

411 CONTINUED:

RACHEL (O.S.)

Clary!

CLARY, eleven, pops up.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Mary!

MARY, four, pops up.

THE GIRLS

(in chorus)

Yes, Miz Cooper!

412 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.

413 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 washtub 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.

414 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.

(CONTINUED)

414 CONTINUED:

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?

415 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.

416 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!

417 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

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

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

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

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

419 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

Hating the scrubbing. He breaks away.

420 FULL SHOT -- JOHN AND RACHEL

JOHN dodges behind a bush, RACHEL in hot pursuit.

421 CLOSE SHOT -- THE BUSH; RACHEL

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

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

422 FULL SHOT -- A SHELF

Full of market baskets, neatly covered with damp muslin.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

423 FULL SHOT -- THE CARRIED BASKETS, IN MOTION

424 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?

425 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 the  
children over her  
shoulder)

You-all have your work cut out!

426 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)

426 CONTINUED:

CLARY

Some place.

MARY

My Daddy's in Dee-troit.

JOHN

(to Ruby)

Who's your folks?

RUBY

I dunno.

427 FULL SHOT -- THE STREET

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

WAITRESS

Mary! Honey!

(to Rachel)

Mornin', Miz Cooper.

(to Mary)

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

428 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

RACHEL

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

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.

FULL STREET SHOT

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

430 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

She takes in the LOVERS.

RACHEL

Women is durn fools! All of 'em!

(CONTINUED)

430 CONTINUED:

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

431 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.

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

RACHEL and GROCER come up to counter. She takes a list from her bosom and gives it to the GROCER.

RACHEL  
Here's what you owe me.  
(she counts baskets)  
One, two, three, four, five... where's  
the other basket? Where's Ruby?

CLARY  
She went.

RACHEL  
John, you go fetch Ruby.

JOHN goes. As GROCER empties baskets and tots up, RACHEL continues:

RACHEL  
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?

433 EXT. DRUG STORE -- FULL SHOT -- RUBY

She stands with her market-basket, reacting to wolf whistles o.s.; she is seeking the world.

434 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.

435 FULL SHOT -- RUBY; JOHN IN BACKGROUND

JOHN  
(calling)  
Miz Cooper wants you.

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

436 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 by 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?

(CONTINUED)

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! We know that she will rout the  
Devil.

GROCER  
(a good tradesman)  
Got a good buy in soap, Miz Cooper.

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

DISSOLVE TO:

437 INT. RACHEL'S SCREENED PORCH - EVENING -

438 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  
open.

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. 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 Pharaoh, he was the King of  
Egyptland! And he had a daughter,  
and once upon a time...  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

441 CONTINUED:

RACHEL (CONT'D)

(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, 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.

(CONTINUED)

445 CONTINUED:

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 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.

JOHN  
Tell me that story again.

(CONTINUED)

448 CONTINUED:

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. MOUNDVILLE 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 bench. RUBY approaches.

2ND LOAFER  
(to 1st)  
Hey. Must be Thursday.

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.

453 INSERT -- RUBY'S HAND; MAGAZINES

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

454 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?

LOAFERS

Watch out, Preacher! Why, Preacher!

PREACHER

(sternly)

Shet yer dirty mouths!

455 CLOSE SHOT -- RUBY

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

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

456 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?

(CONTINUED)

456 CONTINUED:

RUBY  
(hoarsely)  
No. No one ever 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.

457 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 tiptoe. PREACHER inclines his ear.

458 CLOSE SHOT -- RUBY

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

459 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

460 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!

461 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.

462 CLOSE SHOT -- RUBY

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

463 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER

Her hero strides away into darkness.

464 CLOSE SHOT -- RUBY

Gazing after him.

RUBY

I been bad!

DISSOLVE TO:

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

We PULL UP and AWAY into:

466 TWO-SHOT -- RACHEL, SEATED; RUBY STANDING BESIDE HER

RACHEL

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

RUBY

You'll whip me!

RACHEL

When did I ever?

RUBY

This man down at the Drugstore...

(CONTINUED)

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.

467 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.

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

They weep together.

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 wasn'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.  
(MORE)

467 CONTINUED:

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
A man don't waste time on a girl  
unless he gets something.

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:

468 FULL SHOT -- PREACHER ON HORSE ON ROAD

469 FULL FIGURE SHOT -- RUBY

Seeing PREACHER, she drops two eggs.

RUBY  
(shouting)  
Miz Cooper!

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

RUBY  
The man! The man!

470 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.

471 FULL FIGURE SHOT -- RACHEL, BEHIND SCREEN

RACHEL

How'do.

472 FULL FIGURE SHOT -- PREACHER

473 RACHEL'S VIEWPOINT, through screen.

474 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?

475 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.

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.

476 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

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

477 THREE-SHOT -- AS BEFORE

RACHEL

Ruby, go fetch them kids.

RUBY minces off around the side of the house.

478 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!

479 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

She is.

480 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?

481 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

PREACHER (O.S.)

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

RACHEL

(wanting to know)  
Them kids is yours?

482 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

PREACHER

(recovering from the  
interruption)  
My flesh and blood!

483 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

RACHEL

Where's your Missus?

484 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! Parkersburg,  
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  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

484 CONTINUED:

PREACHER (CONT'D)  
babes has heard in the dens of  
perdition where she dragged them!

485 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

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

486 CLOSE SHOT -- PREACHER

... recovering, and by-passing it.

PREACHER  
Are they well?

He turns his head.

487 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.

488 CLOSE TWO-SHOT -- JOHN AND RACHEL

JOHN looks deep into RACHEL's eyes.

(CONTINUED)

488 CONTINUED:

PREACHER (O.S.)  
The Lord is merciful! What a day is  
this! And there's little John!

RACHEL  
What's wrong, John?

JOHN  
Nothin'.

He smiles.

PREACHER (O.S.)  
Come to me, boy!

RACHEL  
What's wrong, John?

489 TWO-SHOT -- PREACHER AND PEARL

PREACHER  
Didn't you hear me, boy?

490 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.

491 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.

492 GROUP SHOT

She walks purposefully into the house. PREACHER lunges for  
JOHN and the DOLL.

493 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.

Back of PREACHER's head is still immobile.

RACHEL  
March, Mister! I'm not foolin'.

494 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:

495 FULL SHOT -- RACHEL'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

It is dark. O.s. we hear PREACHER singing "Leaning."

496 FULL FIGURE SHOT -- RACHEL

She sits in profile, her gun across her knees. Song continues o.s.

497 FULL SHOT -- THE CHILDREN, ASLEEP

... in a big bed. RUBY sits up, listening to song o.s.

498 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.

499 FULL SHOT -- THE HOUSE, OVER PREACHER

He continues singing.

500 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.

501 FULL SHOT -- THE HOUSE -- AS IN OPENING SHOT

A descending candle moves past a window; RACHEL and PREACHER sing o.s.

502 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.

503 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

RACHEL

Merciful Heaven!

She stands up.

504 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.

505 CLOSE SHOT -- AN OWL ON A BRANCH LOOKING DOWN

506 CLOSE SHOT -- A BABY RABBIT

507 CLOSE SHOT -- THE OWL SPREADS HIS WINGS AND SWOOPS

508 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.

509 GROUP SHOT -- THE CHILDREN [IN KITCHEN]

They look at her with complete trust.

510 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

511 Won't you tell us a story?

CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL

RACHEL

I might.

(a swift furious glance  
into the moonlight)

I might tell a story.

She sits down, the gun against her knees.

512 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.

513 CLOSE PANNING SHOT -- JOHN

514 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.

515 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?

516 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- RACHEL

Her eyes, sharp and glittering, look outside.

517 FULL SHOT -- THE OUTSIDE

Featuring empty stump, RACHEL's viewpoint.

518 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, there was this sneakin', no-  
'count, ornery King Herod!

She turns round and walks back to her chair; CHILDREN's eyes always on her.

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.

519 GROUP SHOT -- RACHEL AND CHILDREN, FROM SIDE

RACHEL  
(continuing)  
Well, he never knowed for sure which  
one of all them babies in the land  
was King Jesus.

520 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- RACHEL

Her eyes glittering as she turns to look towards us.

521 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.

522 FRONT GROUP SHOT

RACHEL  
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!

523 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- JOHN

JOHN  
No; they went a-runnin'.

524 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.

525 FULL SHOT -- CLOCK AND HALL MIRROR, BEYOND DARK KITCHEN

In the mirror, a shadow ducks.

526 FULL GROUP SHOT -- RACHEL AND CHILDREN

RACHEL gets up, gun at port, and faces into the darkness.

PREACHER (O.S.)  
Figured I was gone, huh?

Eyes on the darkness, she bends low to the CHILDREN.

(CONTINUED)

526 CONTINUED:

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.

527 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 PREACHER's satanic face,  
and his hand lifting the open knife, rise swiftly from the  
floor.

528 FULL FIGURE SHOT -- RACHEL -- SAME SHOT AS BEFORE

She fires off her gun.

529 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.

530 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 over to my place.  
I done treed somep'n up in my barn.

DISSOLVE TO:

531 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.

532 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL AND JOHN

Same position. JOHN awakes.

JOHN  
I'll see to Pearl.

RACHEL  
I'll make coffee.

They get up and start into kitchen.

533 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.

534 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.

535 FULL SHOT -- THROUGH POLICE CAR WINDSHIELD

536 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.

537 FULL SHOT -- RACHEL AND CHILDREN OVER TWO POLICE CARS -- BARN IN BACKGROUND

The TROOPERS, fanning wide, advance towards the 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.

538 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.

TROOPER'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Harry Powell, you're under arrest  
for the murder of Willa Harper!

539 MEDIUM SHOT -- PREACHER AND TROOPERS -- JOHN'S VIEWPOINT

TROOPERS close in on PREACHER, from before and behind, exactly as for BEN's arrest.

540 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

The same sickly look, as at BEN's arrest.

541 MEDIUM SHOT -- PREACHER AND TROOPERS -- JOHN'S VIEWPOINT

One TROOPER smacks the back of PREACHER's head with a pistol-barrel.

542 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

JOHN  
(shouting)  
Don't!

543 RESUME VIEWPOINT SHOT

Another TROOPER, with pistol-barrel, knocks the knife from PREACHER's lifted hand.

544 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

JOHN  
(shouting)  
Don't!

545 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.

546 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

JOHN  
(shouting)  
DAD!

547 FRONT GROUP SHOT -- RACHEL AND CHILDREN

JOHN grabs the DOLL from PEARL and starts to run.

RACHEL  
John! John!

She starts after him.

548 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!  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

548 CONTINUED:

JOHN (CONT'D)  
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.

549 FULL FIGURE 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.

550 INT. COURTROOM -- DAY -- CLOSE SHOT -- ICEY

ICEY  
(yelling)  
Lynch him! Lynch him!

551 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!

552 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!

553 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

He looks to sound of gavel. The hubbub and the gaveling stop.

(CONTINUED)

553 CONTINUED:

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.

LAWYER (O.S.)  
...and tell the Court if that is the  
man who killed your mother?

JOHN looks at the finger. Short pause.

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.

554 GROUP SHOT -- RACHEL AND CHILDREN

... as LAWYER's hands consign JOHN to RACHEL.

LAWYER (O.S.)  
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?

Above JOHN's head, by winding and holding to ear, RACHEL  
pantomimes a watch.

LAWYER (O.S.)  
Oh-ho-oo-o!

ICEY (O.S.)  
Them is the ones he sinned against,  
my friends!

Gaveling starts.

LOAFER (O.S.)  
Bluebeard! Bluebeard!

(CONTINUED)

554 CONTINUED:

CROWD (O.S.)  
Bluebeard! Bluebeard!

As RACHEL and CHILDREN turn to go, gaveling and hubbub fade and we

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

555 INT. A CAFE -- NIGHT

RACHEL and her CHILDREN sit in two booths in a corner, next to a big front window. Christmas parcels on bench at RACHEL's right.

556 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!

(CONTINUED)

556 CONTINUED:

CASHIER  
(across Icey)  
Go out the back way, Miz Cooper.

As RACHEL leaves SHOT, the CASHIER shouts and locks the door.

557 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.

CLARY  
Ain't we goin' to the Bus Depot?

558 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.

559 GROUP SHOT -- FEATURING WALT AND ICEY

ICEY carries a torch. She is flanked by rabid faces and 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.

560 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!

(CONTINUED)

560 CONTINUED:

ICEY

He taken the Lord's name in vain and  
he trampled on his Holy Book!

WALT

String that Bluebeard up to a pole!

ICEY

He's Satan hiding behind the Cross!

OTHERS

(ad lib)

Lynch him! String him up!

561 We PAN RACHEL and CHILDREN past this street and they hurry towards RUBY, who stands alone in BACKGROUND, facing the jail.

562 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 step.

RUBY

I love him!

563 TRACKING SHOT -- RUBY

Ominous silence.

RUBY

He loves me because I'm so purty!  
You think he's like them others!

564 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 alongside of JAIL to rear of JAIL.

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.

(CONTINUED)

564 CONTINUED:

POLICEMEN start out of door.

RUBY

565 MEDIUM GROUP SHOT -- POLICEMEN AND PREACHER

They roughly hustle PREACHER into the car. Marching sound o.s. 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 o.s.

566 MEDIUM SHOT -- BART THE HANGMAN

On porch, by door, is a doll's perambulator, but this time there is a Christmas wreath on the door. Marching o.s.

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

Hey, Bart!

Auto engine starts up o.s.

567 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- BART

BART

Yeah?

568 MEDIUM SHOT -- POLICEMAN MARCHING

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

We're savin' this bird up fer you!  
We're savin' this bird up fer you!

569 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- BART MARCHING

BART

This time it'll be a privilege.

570 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!

571 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.

(CONTINUED)

571 CONTINUED:

RUBY

(happily)

They'll git him out. I'll git my things ready -- my shawl and my Mickey Mouse 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 down the door! 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:

572 FULL SHOT -- NIGHT LANDSCAPE -- PINE TREES AND SOFTLY FALLING SNOW

DISSOLVE TO:

573 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 something to show me how fancy and smart they've come up in the world.

She goes into the house.

574 INT. RACHEL'S KITCHEN

It is decorated for Christmas.

575 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?

576 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.

577 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN

RACHEL (O.S.)

Why, Ruby!

Embarrassed, JOHN leaves the SHOT.

RACHEL (O.S.)

A POT-HOLDER!

578 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.

579 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.

(CONTINUED)

579 CONTINUED:

RACHEL  
And did you two make this together?

MARY  
You hop us, some.

580 CLOSE SHOT -- RACHEL, ACCEPTING JOHN'S GIFT

She opens it.

RACHEL  
(quietly)  
John, that's the richest gift a body  
could have.  
(continued, briskly)  
You'll find your presents in the  
cupboard under the china-closet.

581 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.

582 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 then  
go on the same old way.  
(she starts stirring)  
My soul is humble when I see the way  
little ones accept their lot.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

582 CONTINUED:

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
(she pauses in stirring)  
Lord save little children! The wind  
blows and the rain is cold. Yet,  
they abide...

In BACKGROUND, the GIRLS run upstairs, their new dresses  
over their arms. RACHEL glances over her shoulder.

583 MEDIUM SHOT -- JOHN -- RACHEL'S VIEWPOINT

JOHN stands in next room, looking at something in his hand.

584 CLOSE SHOT -- JOHN -- IN OTHER ROOM

We see he holds a watch. He looks like any boy, rich or  
poor, with his first watch.

585 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)

585 CONTINUED:

JOHN

This watch is the nicest watch I  
ever had.

RACHEL

A fella just can't go around with  
run-down, 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.

586 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.

587 HEAD CLOSE-UP -- RACHEL

Over the sound of his running upstairs:

RACHEL

(telling us)  
They abide and they endure.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

588 FULL SHOT -- STARRY SKY

FADE IN TITLE:

THE END