

The Scarlet Letter

TITLE: A Sunday morning in Spring ... New England ... in the year 1645.

1 EXT. VILLAGE STREET LONG SHOT INCLUDING CHURCH  
The Puritans are marching in solemn procession down the street toward the church. The crime of laughter on Sunday is so severely punished that no one ever dares nod a head in friendly salute as neighbors pass neighbors. Life is vigorous and hard.

DISSOLVE INTO:

2 CLOSE-UP CHURCH BELLS TOLLING

DISSOLVE INTO:

3 SEMI CLOSE-UP GROUP OF CHILDREN  
The children make a comic picture as they march solemnly by with measured steps, their frightened faces set in rigid masks, their eyes round and staring as glass marbles. They look like little undertakers.

DISSOLVE INTO:

4 CLOSE-UP CHURCH BELLS TOLLING  
(The repetitious ringing bells in the orchestra pit, deep-throated, clanging solemnly, have a funereal sound. They are arresting and demand attention. They suggest a Puritan atmosphere, a call to church, often theirs is a fearful warning tone.)

DISSOLVE INTO:

5 INT. HESTER PRYNNE'S HOME  
In her quiet room on this gay morning, Hester Prynne, the little seamstress, makes ready for church. She moves with fixed solemnity, her face as serious a mask as the children's who have just passed by. There is something quaint and precise about her gestures. At first sight, she is all Puritan, filled with firm resolves, pious, reserved. All this while she buttons herself into her dove-grey dress, then draws her flowing hair back and binds it into a tight, firm coil at her neck. It would be un-Christian if one lock escaped. But when she comes to her bonnet, the eternal feminine is revealed. A bonnet can throw a dreadful shadow over a face, or it can be beautifully becoming. She places it upon her head. Shall she wear it perched high, or well down over her eyes? Or perhaps just a wee bit to one side? She really must see for herself. Cautiously she moves to the wall, and stands before a framed worsted mat.

INSERT: CLOSE-UP HESTER AT WALL  
She regards the worsted mat. On it is inscribed this warning from the scriptures:

"Vanity is an evil disease."

Then Hester sets it aside and lifts it down. Behind it is a piece of polished metal which serves Hester as a mirror.

6 CLOSE-UP HESTER

She practices how she will wear her hat, and her eyes smile reflectively, for there is someone at church who may look upon her, and she would meet with his approving glance. Hester forgets it is Sabbath and smiles. It is entirely the fault of that jaunty little hat. Something stirs within her, springtime--a longing for life--and love, which is the fulfillment of life. She starts! The church bells! She hears their warnings.

CUT TO:

7 CLOSE-UP CHURCH BELLS TOLLING

CUT BACK TO:

8 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AT MIRROR

Hester leans down quickly to put the worsted mat over her mirror. Oh, that she should have dared--and on the Sabbath, too! The vision of how charming the new bonnet is warms her, and her mind is filled with material thoughts. The reflection of the mirror stops on the bird cage that hangs by the window. Hester, from where she is standing, sees the little imprisoned bird. She puts the worsted mat back in place and starts toward the window.

9 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE SEMI LONG SHOT

Hester moves swiftly toward the open window, through which the light is streaming. She seems conscious of the transition wrought within herself, aware, perhaps for the first time of the prison which she has so long endured.

10 SEMI CLOSE-UP AT WINDOW

Close to the window is a rustic cage with a bird in it. But a black shawl has been thrown over the cage; for the bird's song is forbidden to mount on the Sabbath. A shaft of sunlight has fallen upon the cage. Hester's face as she gazes at the cage, becomes wistfully sad. Why should she hide its song, Hester asks herself in this moment of faint rebellion. She draws the black shawl away.

11 CLOSE-UP CAGE

The bird trilling his song.

12 EXT. HESTER PRYNNE'S HOUSE

(There is charm to the little thatched cottage. On the door is the sign: "VILLAGE SEAMSTRESS").

A stern, forbidding group of men and women is passing. Among them is Mistress Hibbins, a gossipy, garrulous woman of fifty, and Giles, a tall, gaunt Puritan, an unconscious comedian. The former is Hester's persecutor, the latter her friend. The Puritans pause by the window, listening with horror. A bird singing on the Sabbath! Mistress Hibbins, with sly, meaningful glances, points at the window. There they see--

13 HESTER PRYNNE'S WINDOW

Hester is listening to the song of the bird. She makes a gay little figure framed in the dark window.

14 EXT. HESTER PRYNNE'S HOUSE

Mistress Hibbins, who is the village gossip,--it is she who always points her finger in scorn at Hester--urges one of the Puritans to mark Hester Prynne's door. It is she who says, with malicious intent:

TITLE: "Bird singing on the Sabbath! Hester Prynne must answer for this!"

The man stalks over, and, with a lump of gypsum, marks a cross upon the door. The group nods in righteous approval, all save Giles, who pleads that Hester be spared. And as he does this, Mistress Hibbins watches him with malicious suspicion.

15 INT. HESTER PRYNNE'S HOUSE SEMI CLOSE-UP WINDOW

Hester opens the door of the cage and peeks in. "Good morning, little prisoner!" with a merry smile. The bird is like the yellow shaft of an arrow as he darts past her hand and out of the window. She gazes out of the window, terrified that she has lost him. She looks out--sees the bird--

16 CLOSE-UP PURITAN (WALKING ALONG)

A horrified expression on his face--the bird has lit upon his shoulder. It flies off.

17 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE LONG SHOT

Hester hurries out.

18 EXT. GARDEN IN REAR OF HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester enters, running. She spins around and around, frantically searching for some sight of her bird. Her hat is shading her eyes. Swiftly she pulls it off and tosses it upon a bench. Then she runs out of the garden.

19 CLOSE-UP MISTRESS HIBBINS

An exclamation of horror is wrung from the old lady when the bird lights upon her bonnet.

20 GARDEN OF HESTER'S HOUSE SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER

Hester's lips are pursed as she whistles her call to the bird.

21 FLASH OF BIRD FLYING OVER FENCE

22 SEMI LONG SHOT GARDEN

Hester runs through the garden and plunges into the thicket beyond.

23 EXT. HESTER PRYNNE'S HOUSE

Mistress Hibbins and the Stern Ones hear her calling--hear her daring to make strange whistling sounds. They shake their heads solemnly. Mistress Hibbins is triumphant! She can hardly wait to get to church and tattle to the minister. Giles looks at her as if he would like to choke her.

24 WOODS VERY LONG SHOT

Hester's hair is now flying loose--the wind stirs it--and her dress is caught in the brambles. A little, disordered figure,

running and searching the tree-tops.

25 CLOSE-UP CHURCH BELLS TOLLING

CUT TO:

26 INT. CHURCH

Mistress Hibbins, Giles, and the Puritans enter the church. The women are seated on one side, the men on the other. Giles stalks along and takes his place in a pew near the pulpit and on the aisle. Mistress Hibbins, who is going to wait in the vestry-room until the minister arrives so that she can tell on Hester, bustles down the aisle toward the vestry. Giles sticks one of his long legs out in the aisle and almost succeeds in tripping her.

27 EXT. DEEP WOODS

Hester running farther and farther away from the church and the sound of the bells. Running rather gaily now. She is calling--whistling--looking for the bird.

DISSOLVE INTO:

28 CLOSE-UP OF BELLS RINGING

DISSOLVE INTO:

29 INT. VESTRY (THROUGH OPEN DOOR MAIN ROOM OF CHURCH CAN BE SEEN)

Reverend Dimmesdale is talking with a few of his parishioners when Mistress Hibbins enters. Mistress Hibbins fairly bustles with excitement, she does so love to have a tidbit of gossip to impart. She begins:

TITLE: "Though it grieves me to tell thee, Reverend Dimmesdale about Hester Prynne--"

BACK: As she says this, Mistress Hibbins can hardly hold back her smiles. To be quite close to him, she edges nearer.

30 SEMI CLOSE-UP REVEREND DIMMESDALE AND MISTRESS HIBBINS

Reverend Dimmesdale listens to Mistress Hibbins. "We were passing Mistress Prynne's house--she stood by the window--she uncovered the bird--the bird sang--and then if she didn't deliberately go running after the bird! And if that wasn't enough, Reverend Dimmesdale, we heard her whistle." The old lady purses up her lips and whistles--then gives an imitation of Hester calling, "Come, birdie, birdie!" beckoning to the bird.

Into Reverend Dimmesdale's eyes comes a look of stern condemnation. (He has known a rigorous school of religious training, and it has made him stern and severe toward the transgressor. He has no pity for the frailty of human nature, and is relentless when he sits in judgment on his parishioners who have sinned. The story of Arthur Dimmesdale is of a man who becomes guilty of the very sin he damns in others, and his spiritual growth through sorrow and repentance.)

"It is wicked of Hester Prynne to do this--and on the Sabbath,"  
Mistress Hibbins is pleased to hear him say.

DISSOLVE INTO:

31 EXT. BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY LONG SHOT

Hester Prynne is running now, a tiny figure against the pattern of tall trees. The running has excited her. She enjoys this unexpected freedom. We see her spin around, almost in pirouette, as she looks and calls and darts toward the bird--one moment frightened with fear she has lost him, the next moment laughing. The springtime of the year, the wind blowing her hair, and she is surrounded by the holy beauty of nature.

32 CLOSER SHOT OF HESTER

The bird has lit on the branch of a flowering tree. Hester is creeping up to him; she is breathless; her eyes are sparkling. She no longer suggests the precise little Puritan girl--she is a sprite of the woods! Her dress is torn, her hair is tumbled. The bird flies away from her outstretched hand.

33 LONG SHOT

Hester is running again. All the latent elfin joy in Hester Prynne has sprung into being. She does not know that a group of Puritans, dark and grim as the silhouette of trees through which they walk, have stopped to watch her.

34 SEMI CLOSE-UP GROUP OF PURITANS

They stop short, aghast as they hear laughter and a woman's song. They look off and see Hester. What is Hester Prynne doing? To them it looks as if she were dancing.

35 SEMI LONG SHOT OF HESTER

Hester is spinning again in gay pirouette as she sees the bird here one moment, there the next. Now she plunges laughingly into the flowering thicket.

36 SEMI CLOSE-UP GROUP OF PURITANS

The Puritans gaze at each other in horror and set their lips--then hurry even faster toward the church.

DISSOLVE INTO:

38 INT. CHURCH

The church is partially filled with sour faced, straight backed people who sit there in terrible solemnity, as though it would be a sin if anyone should think that they were about to enjoy the service. The beadle, whom we shall name Jonathan Appletree, walks through the aisles, carrying a long pole. A general movement in the church. The Governor enters! A most important man, pompous, elegant and dignified. (The men all rise until he is seated.)

39 EXT. WOODS

Hester Prynne is running and now laughing, so exhilarated is she by this unexpected release. She sees--

40 CLOSE-UP BRANCH OF TREE

The bird is singing.

41 CLOSE-UP HESTER

As Hester looks at the bird, there comes to her the realization that freedom has brought happiness to the bird. She will no longer try to capture him. She is breathless, her eyes are dancing with happiness. She sees--

42 SKY AND TREES

The bird flying to freedom.

43 LONG SHOT

Hester runs and waves a happy farewell to the bird.

44 CLOSE-UP CHURCH BELLS TOLLING

45 EXT. WOODS CLOSE-UP HESTER

She has heard the bells at last! She stops and listens to them with growing terror. She looks about her bewildered, realizing that she is far from church. Her torn dress! Her streaming hair! She starts to bind it as she hurries past the camera.

46 INT. CHURCH SEMI LONG SHOT

Giles is now seated in back of the Governor. The beadle walks down the aisle.

47 SEMI CLOSE-UP OF THE BEADLE

He carries his long pole, intently eyeing the congregation for the slightest wayward gesture.

48 CLOSE-UP SHOT OF THE CONGREGATION

Giles is trying to sit there stiffly attentive. Then his face suddenly convulses--we see him struggling not to sneeze. He makes a desperate effort to hold it in. When he does sneeze, it is with such violence as to startle the congregation. Not only that, but he has dared to sneeze upon the Governor. The beadle leans over, and, with his long stick, raps Giles smartly on the head. The Governor casts an upbraiding glance at Giles. He feels his dignity has been ruffled by this unconscious, but vulgar, gesture of Giles.

49 CLOSE-UP CHURCH BELLS TOLLING

DISSOLVE INTO:

50 INT. VESTRY

Through the open door can be seen the parishioners in their pews. The Puritans who had seen Hester in the woods have arrived, and they are telling Reverend Dimmesdale of Hester Prynne's sin of dancing and running on the Sabbath.

A look, so forbidding as to be cruel, sets Reverend Dimmesdale's face in a firm mold.

51 EXT. HESTER PRYNNE'S HOUSE

Hester Prynne who has returned for her bonnet, is seen again as she hurries out of the house putting on her bonnet. But there is no longer any happiness in her movements. She is terrified.

She knows now that she is late for church, will be caught and undoubtedly punished!

52 INT. CHURCH LONG SHOT

Reverend Dimmesdale steps into his pulpit, and all the people quiet themselves, for service is about to begin.

53 EXT. CHURCH

Hester, breathless, stands outside, wondering if she dare enter the church; then she almost glides in, earnestly praying that she will be able to slip into her pew unnoticed.

54 INT. CHURCH CLOSE-UP CONGREGATION AND PULPIT

The backs of the parishioners are to the camera. Reverend Dimmesdale is in the pulpit preaching. There is no soft, kindly light in his eyes. He doesn't talk to them of salvation, but his attitude shows that he is condemning them for their sins. He stops for a moment, as his eyes sweep over the congregation, because he catches sight of Hester.

55 SEMI LONG SHOT SHOWING THE CONGREGATION

They are facing the camera, which is in the direction of the pulpit. Looking straight ahead, not daring to move or glance sideways, even out of the corner of their eyes, they do not see Hester. She comes creeping into the church, looking very little and child-like, in fact, quite like a naughty child, praying she won't be caught. But just as she is about to slink into her pew, she gazes up at the minister and sees his piercing eye upon her. When she drops down into a seat between two tall Puritans with a third tall Puritan in front of her, she is almost lost to sight.

56 CLOSE-UP REVEREND DIMMESDALE

He is quite infuriated by Hester's effort to escape punishment. "Hester Prynne!" and he points a finger at her dramatically. "Thou hast sinned--and wouldst try to hide thy shame! Child of the devil! Come before me that I might advise thee and teach a lesson to my flock through thee!"

57 CLOSE-UP HESTER

His voice ringing out terrifies her. It is like blows upon her. With a guilty look in her eyes, she tries to force a wistful smile as she moves to rise.

58 LONG SHOT OF CHURCH

Reverend Dimmesdale's eyes are like a brand upon Hester. His voice rises and thunders through the church as he points a condemning finger at her. Trembling, she rises at his command and moves slowly up the aisle toward his pulpit--until she stands there, her head bowed in humility.

59 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND REVEREND DIMMESDALE

Still pointing his finger, he is crying out: "Woe unto him who disobeys the inexorable laws of God's Sabbath! On this, His day of worship, thou hast listened to the voice of the devil calling thee! Thou hast run, and sung, and danced with thy hair unloosened. And now dost thou stand before my people in shame and humiliation?"

60 LONGER SHOT OF CHURCH

The minister is swept away by his passionate denouncement of Hester. "Let this be a warning to thee!" and he turns back dramatically to the congregation. "God is just and merciful, but His punishment is swift and heavy upon the sinners who yield themselves to petty vanities."

Again he turns upon Hester:

"Thou knowest well that laughter on the Sabbath is forbidden. Thou knowest well that dancing is the gesture of the devil. Thinkest thou there is any escape for thee? No, thou shalt be punished here by the shame of our pointing fingers! Though shalt be punished hereafter by the pointing finger of God. Thou shalt not escape!"

All through this dramatic tirade, Hester stands with bowed head-- a very little figure before this bleak pulpit.

61 CLOSE-UP HESTER

She raises her face toward him, her eyes are filled with tears; but in them is a look so pitiful, so pleading, that there is revealed the secret of Hester Prynne's heart--she is in love with the minister. Her eyes caress the stern face that bends above her. His words are lost; she hears only his voice, the voice of the man that she loves.

62 CLOSE-UP REVEREND DIMMESDALE

He is looking down at Hester. He is still crying out, "Shame on thee, Hester Prynne, that thou, a young girl of our village, hast broken the sacred laws! Shame on thee!" And then it is that her eyes, so pitiful and pleading arrest him in his dramatic protest against the sins of the flesh. And there comes into his eyes a strange wonderment, as if he has become aware of Hester's love for him.

63 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND REVEREND DIMMESDALE

There is between these two a long exchange of tense, dramatic glances. Reverend Dimmesdale, unconscious of everything save the presence of Hester, bends close to her. And eyes look long into eyes they lean to. It shocks him--this realization that Hester Prynne is in love with him. And through what emotion is he passing? She is lovely to look upon; there is something almost divine about her tenderness, so forgiving is she. And how can he stand there and in cruel words denounce her? What is stirring within his own heart? Could it be possible that he, too, is awakened to response by that great love of hers?

(This long exchange of glances may have to be divided into close-ups--back and forth between the two, because it is a poignant moment, this birth of their love.)

64 SEMI LONG SHOT OF CHURCH

Almost in a daze, the minister turns away from Hester. It takes a few seconds to gather himself together before he can summon again that dynamic force which so marked the beginning of his sermon. But he must not weaken in his firm resolve; he must continue with his tirade. He turns away from Hester, back to

those Puritans, who bend their heads under the scourge of his warnings.

65 CLOSE-UP HESTER PRYNNE

The tears have never left Hester Prynne's eyes, but her faint smile reveals hidden ecstasies in her heart.

66 SEMI CLOSE-UP PULPIT

Hester's back is to the camera. Reverend Dimmesdale is preaching. Once again his face is set in stern condemnation; but as he addresses the parishioners, his eyes stray again toward Hester's face. Now he looks at her as if he were afraid of her, almost resentful that she has awakened the dormant emotion of love in his heart.

FADE OUT

67 FADE IN INT. REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY

Through the open window streams the sunlight. Reverend Dimmesdale sits there poring over his Bible, making notes for sermons; but the thoughts of Hester crowd out all thoughts of duty, and he sits there idly dreaming and wondering how far this attraction will carry him. He presents a romantic figure. As he gazes into space, he is startled by a white rose being thrown in through the window. He picks up the rose, and we know at once by his expression that he believes it was thrown to him by Hester. A slight sigh escapes him.

68 EXT. REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY

It isn't Hester, but Mistress Hibbins, who has thrown the rose, because there she stands with the second rose in her hand and is about to toss it also when Giles comes along. Rather sheepishly she hides the rose. The two quarrel. Giles hates her so that he can hardly keep his hands from reaching out and wringing her neck. Mistress Hibbins, switching her skirts, walks away.

69 INT. REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY

He is still gazing dreamily at the rose. Now he goes to the window to peek out, to catch Hester, to see her smiling, upturned face.

70 CLOSE-UP MINISTER AT WINDOW

He looks out, expecting to see Hester--and he does! He gazes dramatically a short distance away into the square--and this is what he sees:

71 SEMI CLOSE-UP STOCKS

The stocks are set close to the bleak wall of the church. A bright ray of sunshine strikes full upon Hester, a prisoner of the stocks. She is suffering now from slight exhaustion, her head droops forward wearily. When she raises her eyes, in them is a haggard look of one who has endured hours of discomfort. Several Puritans passing by pay little heed to her. Punishment in stocks is an ordinary event. Then comes Mistress Hibbins. Her nose is in the air. She smirks triumphantly and switches her skirts as she sails past.

72 INT. REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY

Shocked, the minister hurriedly leaves his study.

73 LONG SHOT OF SQUARE

The minister is seen hurrying out of his house and up to the stocks.

74 CLOSE-UP WOODEN SIGN OVER THE STOCKS

On it is inscribed in old English script:

PUNISHED FOR LAUGHING AND  
SINGING ON THE SABBATH.

LAP DISSOLVE INTO:

75 SEMI CLOSE-UP AT STOCKS

A dreadful weakness has overcome Hester. Hearing footsteps approaching, she raises her head, and, upon seeing the minister standing there staring at her aghast, she speaks through scarcely moving lips, "Water."

76 LONGER SHOT

The minister hurries away to the pump, not far from the church. He fills the small pewter mug with water, and then turns and hurries back to Hester, dropping on his knees beside her.

77 STREET

A shot of Mistress Hibbins and Giles seeing Reverend Dimmesdale administering aid to Hester.

78 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

The minister, sincerely touched by Hester's suffering, kneels that he may hold the cup of water to her lips. Again their eyes meet, hers filled with a melting tenderness and forgiveness.

In his voice there is a pleading note as he tells her:

TITLE: "I did not know that the committee had meted out further punishment to thee ... canst thou forgive me, Hester Prynne?"

BACK: In her eyes is not only forgiveness but the expression of deep love for him. He seems strangely stirred by it, as he kneels before her. Their faces are quite close together; his gaze plunges into hers. ... Again he is profoundly stirred. There is a softer look in his eyes as he bows his head when Hester Prynne assures him "I did not believe that thou didst order this punishment for me." Then her head droops again. It is the sight of this that makes him realize she is suffering; it brings him to sudden action.

79 LONGER SHOT

The minister rises to his feet. He looks about him, and sees, coming out of the meeting-house, the Governor followed by the beadle and two other Puritans. The minister, eager for Hester's freedom, hurries over toward the steps of the meeting-house.

80 EXT. MEETING-HOUSE CLOSE SHOT OF STEPS

The Governor is slow, ponderous and wordy. His dignity is almost exaggerated. The beadle thinks he is equally important. He carries with him the keys to the stocks. The minister, in a few words, speaks to the Governor about Hester; he points dramatically

off scene, and asks for her release.

The Governor gives orders to the beadle to open the stocks and free Hester. The minister, almost intensely eager, hurries away followed by the beadle.

81 SEMI CLOSE-UP STOCKS

The minister and the beadle enter. As the beadle starts to put the key into the lock--

CUT TO

82 SEMI CLOSE MISTRESS HIBBINS AND GILES

They are watching--Mistress Hibbins indignant because Hester is spared, Giles delighted.

83 SEMI CLOSE-UP STOCKS

The minister raises Hester to her feet. She is weak; her legs are stiff from sitting so long in that rigid position. She totters slightly. Believing that she is going to fall, he puts his arm around her to support her. She looks up at him gratefully. Thus they exit toward her home.

FADE OUT

84 FADE IN EXT. HESTER PRYNNE'S HOUSE

Hester and the minister have reached the house and are standing outside her door. They are standing there in strange quiet, for Hester is still weak from the ordeal through which she has passed. She holds out her hands and he takes them both in his. His words are stern for he is saying:

TITLE: "I hope thou hast learned a great lesson, Hester Prynne  
--to beware the vanities of life."

BACK: But his eyes linger upon the sweetness of her face. Reverend Dimmesdale realizes this very moment what he has feared to acknowledge to himself!--that he is in love with Hester. She reaches for his hand and draws it to her lips--a gesture to express her gratitude. This caress startles him. He grows afraid of her, as if hers was the voice of the devil luring him from cold piety. Without a word he turns and hurries away from her.

85 LONGER SHOT

The minister flies from Hester because he is afraid of this love. Then he looks back. Another dramatic pause; she is leaning forward over the little gate, looking after him.

86 CLOSE-UP REVEREND DIMMESDALE

For one brief moment he is carried away by an impulse to hurry back to her side, perhaps even to declare his love. He is fighting with his innermost conscience. Again that look of fear! He turns and walks away.

87 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER

Hester is gazing after the minister. How deeply she loves him! How unashamed she is of this love! And, though filled with infinite

longing for him, there comes over her an emotion of happiness; she is now aware that he is in love with her. With this happiness singing in her heart, she hurries into the house.

88 INT. HESTER'S HOME

Hester enters. She walks in deep reverie.

89 CLOSE-UP REVEREND DIMMESDALE (CAMERA ON TRACK)

As Reverend Dimmesdale walks along in great strides, as if he were hurrying to escape from the lure of Hester, we see his struggle to put her out of his heart. Again he is afraid. He is saying to himself, "No--no, I cannot let myself yield to material love." For a moment he hates her; he hates her for the acknowledgement of his own weakness; and then there comes again a transition. It brings him to a sudden stop. There sweeps over him a tender feeling for her, a longing to see her again--something of the same ecstasy that Hester had known. His face is suddenly aglow with beauty and softness. His eyes are deeply tender. He seems almost overcome by this sudden rush of emotion.

90 EXT. DIMMESDALE'S HOUSE

Dimmesdale, walking toward the door of his house, is in such a gaze that he doesn't notice Giles. Giles greets him happily and then stares after the minister amazed, because the minister, with wide open eyes, walks like one in a sleep.

91 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester is seated on a little stool at work on a bridal veil. She is busy with her needle; for it is she who makes the wedding veils for the village girls. Now she stops to bite off a thread. When this is done, she holds it up and studies it, pleased with the result. Now there comes to her a desire to try this veil upon herself to see if it becomes her. She rises and goes to the wall ... where the hidden mirror is hung.

92 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AT MIRROR

Hester has again set aside the worsted mat and is trying on the bridal veil.

93 CLOSE-UP HESTER

Hester's eyes are filled with loving memories of Reverend Dimmesdale as she gazes at herself in the mirror, and she sighs as she draws her hand caressingly over the veil. She whispers "Beloved," her face leaning so close to the mirror that her lips almost caress the reflection.

94 INT. REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY

Reverend Dimmesdale sitting there dreaming of Hester. His eyes reflect her own thought of him.

95 INT. HESTER'S ROOM SEMI CLOSE-UP

Hester is gazing dreamily into the mirror. Then there comes a complete transition of her expression from ecstasy to fear. "No--no!" she cries aloud. "I can never wear a bridal veil--never!" And with a dramatic gesture she pulls the bridal veil from her head. Hester, who is married, knows that she cannot wed Dimmesdale even though he should ask her. This thought brings fear and sorrow to her. She looks down at the bridal veil, her tears falling

upon it.

96 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Giles is knocking at the door.

97 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester tries to wipe away her tears as she hurries to the door. She opens it and Giles enters. Giles, who is grinning happily as he comes into the room, because he likes Hester and is always glad to see her, stops short as he sees the tears which she has not successfully wiped away. Hester, afraid that he has seen them, drops down onto a little footstool and starts putting the last stitch or two into the bridal veil, busying herself with her work.

98 CLOSE-UP GILES

His mouth drops open as he looks upon Hester with ludicrous sympathy. "Hast thou a tear in thy eye?" unconsciously indicating his own.

99 CLOSE-UP HESTER

As she continues sewing on the veil, she forces a little smile, answering:

TITLE: "They are tears of happiness at the thought of thy bride who will wear this veil, Master Giles."

100 SEMI CLOSE-UP GILES AND HESTER

Hester rises to show the veil to Giles. He handles it in his big clumsy hands, awkwardly holding it out and grinning a sheepish, embarrassed grin. Hester clasps her hands as she looks at the veil. When Giles sees her intent gaze upon it, he suggests:

TITLE: "Perhaps thou wilt be wearing a bridal veil someday?"

BACK: At this the same look of pain that he had seen in Hester's eyes comes back to them again. Giles is a simple person; he has no idea how she betrays herself when she cries out, "No, no, Giles! Never! Never!" Then, to his utter astonishment, she turns her back to him and buries her face in her hands. Giles makes several very awkward gestures. He doesn't know whether to place his big hand on her shoulder and pet her--to offer consolation--to inquire into the cause of her grief--or what to do. So he just stands there rocking on his big, flat feet, looking wild-eyed and bewildered.

FADE OUT

101 FADE IN CLOSE-UP COVERING THE ENTIRE SCREEN A VOLUME OF THE LAWS OF THE COLONY

The Governor's hand wavers and turns over the pages.

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP OF THE GOVERNOR

The Governor is studying the book, peering through his huge spectacles at the page he has turned to.

INSERT: CLOSE-UP OF PAGE

This paragraph covers the entire page:

LAW FOR WASHING ON MONDAY

Nether garments of women are necessary though immodest. They must be washed in secret and hidden far from masculine eyes.

LAP DISSOLVE THIS PAGE INTO:

102 EXT. STREAM IN THE COUNTRY LONG SHOT

It is summer now. A lovely scene of the brook, the trees--and here and there women washing their clothes.

103 EXT. LONELY ISOLATED BEND IN THE STREAM

Hester has found an isolated spot to do her washing. She rises from her knees beside the brook, wrings out a pair of panties, then hurries away to where she is hanging the nether-garments to dry.

104 EXT. LIMB OF TREE SEMI LONG SHOT

There is hanging on the low branch of the tree a petticoat. Hester enters, unwraps the article that she has brought with her, straightens them out and starts to hang them up. When they are in place, with her fingers she flutes the ruffle. While she is in the midst of doing this, she looks up, startled. She hears--

105 CLOSE-UP MINISTER'S FEET

The feet come down heavily on a fallen twig--and it snaps in two.

106 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER

With a little suppressed cry of horror, she snatches the panties from the line and holds them in back of her. The footsteps are approaching. She looks around, bewildered, for some avenue of escape. And then that expression of horror deepens when she sees ...

107 LONGER SHOT

Who should be walking along in meditation as he reads from a small prayer book but Reverend Dimmesdale. Hester tries to escape before he sees her, plunging behind a large protective bush.

108 CLOSE-UP REVEREND DIMMESDALE

He has looked up in time to see a woman running guiltily. He calls out to her:

TITLE: "Woman, whoever thou art, stop!"

109 LONG SHOT OF A CLUMP OF BUSHES

Drawing himself up to a dignified height, Reverend Dimmesdale stalks over toward the bush. Hester, hiding in back of it, is vainly trying to keep away from him. The action almost resolves itself into a game of tag. He starts one way--she runs around the other way. They keep this up, until, both running, they find themselves face to face. Hester, with a wild, guilty look in her eyes, holds the garment in back of her.

110 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

The minister is endeavoring to gaze at her sternly. "Hester Prynne, thou hast a guilty look in thine eyes. Thou hast been sinning again!"

Hester, wild-eyed, keeps backing away from him. "No--no!" she pleads. "I am innocent--I have done no wrong. Please go away! Please leave me!"

111 LONGER SHOT

Hester is slowly backing away--her eyes fixed on the minister's face. His command rings out again. "Stop, Hester! Thou art hiding something!"

Blushing, embarrassed and shy, Hester keeps backing away. "Hester Prynne, stop!" So compelling is the note in his voice that she dares not move and stands there transfixed, her hands in back of her.

With a stern, forbidding look, Reverend Dimmesdale stalks over to Hester, stops short before her, and peers over her shoulder. He stands there stunned for a moment. Then, without a word, he turns on his heel and walks away with head lowered and his eyes modestly on his prayer-book. Hester watches him until he is gone from sight. Then with one swift gesture she tosses the garment to one side and hurries after him.

112 EXT. WOODED LANE LONG SHOT

From a distance we see the minister walking along, quite swiftly, away from Hester, his gaze still upon the prayer-book that he holds in his hands. Then comes the little figure of Hester running toward him until she is at his side.

113 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER (CAMERA ON TRACK)

The minister with a most pious air tries to pretend that he doesn't even see Hester. She cannot keep up with his long strides. Sometimes she falls behind and has to run to keep up with him. Then with mock seriousness, she steps out with long strides to mate his own footsteps. He looks up, pretending surprise, nods to her rather curtly, then glances straight ahead of him. But at that he is rather pleased, for the Reverend Dimmesdale, though he would deny it himself, is seriously in love with Hester. And as they walk, they look toward each other again, the minister trying to preserve an air of dignity and slight disapproval that she should make so bold as to persist in talking to him.

At last she breaks the silence. She says in a very quiet, demure manner, though there is an arch smile in her eyes:

TITLE: "It would be pleasant, sir, to walk beside thee and hear thee condemn me for my sins."

BACK: And with this she edges one step nearer him so that, as they walk side by side, her swinging arm touches his sleeve.

114 EXT. COUNTRY VERY LONG SHOT

We see fading away into the distance, until they are lost in the silhouette of trees, the minister and Hester.

FADE OUT

115 FADE IN EXT. COUNTRY AT BROOK

This is a beautiful location. Its beauty plays a part in the story, because years later Hester and the minister return to this scene of the first declaration of their love.

They are seated beside the brook, gazing into each other's eyes-- the minister prone upon the ground, leaning up on his elbow as he studies Hester. Though he loves her, he must always struggle to hide his love.

116 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

Hester's eyes as they search Reverend Dimmesdale again betray the great love that she feels for him. Again he is stirred profoundly, though always there is within him that constant struggle against all emotional expression. Hester, who loves deeply, loves unreservedly, and has neither false pride nor false modesty. She bends close to him. Her eyes pleading that he care for her, willing to yield herself to the glowing joy of love that she may find a sacred happiness in his arms.

She asks him with quiet emphasis:

TITLE: "Is it so great a sin to love? Why are we taught to be ashamed of it?"

BACK: Reverend Dimmesdale cannot answer. He moves closer to her as if his arms would reach and draw her into them. It is a moment pregnant with emotional suspense. An impulse seizes him to crush her in his arms; his hand, taut upon her wrist, would draw her nearer ... wild, unspoken words of love thrill through him, but remain soundless in his heart. Thus they face each other; Hester in an ecstasy of yielding; Reverend Dimmesdale glowing with a great desire, yet held in leash by the fear of life that has been taught him through all those years of grueling religious training. With a despairing gesture, he turns away from her.

117 LONGER SHOT

Reverend Dimmesdale springs to his feet. He hurries from Hester. But Hester does not move. She sits there quietly in a shaft of light that pierces through the tall trees, divinely happy because his eyes have told her that he loves her.

Reverend Dimmesdale stops short.

118 CLOSE-UP REVEREND DIMMESDALE

He stands there struggling against all these years of discipline-- against emotional outlet. His face is tense and set.

119 CLOSE-UP HESTER

Her eyes are filled with dreams. She waits happily as if she knew that he would return to her.

120 LONG SHOT

Reverend Dimmesdale walks swiftly back to Hester, falls on his knees before her, draws her into his arms, and kisses her with a fierce tenderness.

121 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND REVEREND DIMMESDALE

Again and again he kisses her, whispering to her passionate words of love; because once a man of his nature releases himself to a great physical emotion, all restraint is torn away; he knows no barriers; it becomes a terrific, hysterical release.

After her first moment of yielding, there comes a fear of so great a passion in the man she loves. Hester draws away from him, a slight, almost unconscious gesture, her eyes searching his face perhaps fearfully, as if she were seeing him in the light of a stranger for that brief moment. It is when he sees this slight challenge in Hester's eyes that he cries out in fierce protest:

TITLE: "Hester, I love thee. There is no sin in a love like ours!"

BACK: And as he holds her close to him, his lips seek hers again.

FADE OUT

122 FADE IN EXT. VILLAGE STREET NIGHT WINTER

A light snow is falling. The village is plunged in darkness except for the lights from a few windows.

DISSOLVE INTO:

123 INT. BEADLE'S HOUSE

In this plain, somber living-room filled with only the barest necessities of furniture, Giles is courting Patience, the girl of his heart. The two of them are seated on a long wooden bench, making love by talking to each other through a long speaking tube. A fire flickers in the fireplace.

Mother sits in the room busy at the loom. Jonathan Appletree is reading out loud from the Bible.

124 SEMI CLOSE-UP GILES AND PATIENCE (AKELEY  
SHOT FROM ONE TO ANOTHER)

Patience is a typical Puritan girl who, unlike Hester, has no springtime in her heart. Mechanically she obeys all the prescribed laws. Giles has asked her father for her hand in marriage, and has been accepted. So now he is trying to whisper sweet nothings through the speaking tube into her ears.

As Giles, through his end of the tube, is whispering quite tender words, Patience listens quite primly, then her lips begin to curve in a pleased smile at his flattering words, and her eyes drop in shy modesty, and she simpers, "How dare you!" Their pantomime explains the scene.

125 LONGER SHOT

The beadle looks at his heavy watch, raps on the Bible and tells Giles it is time he left. Giles reluctantly reaches for his tall hat-- and she leads the way to the door. Giles looks up and sees that

the beadle is engrossed with his Bible. With a mischievous twinkle in his eyes, Giles watches his chance, bends over and kisses her chastely upon the cheek. An outcry from the girl as she draws back in horror. Father and Mother both rise and march over to them. The stern old beadle denounces Giles, and the girl then and there refuses to marry Giles, exclaiming with great dignity and righteous wrath:

TITLE: "Father, I cannot allow thee to wed me to a man of such unbridled passions."

BACK: Giles pleads with Patience to forgive him, but she turns her back, and her father orders Giles out, while the mother tries to comfort her daughter.

126 LONG SHOT OF MARKET-PLACE IN THE SNOW

Giles, crossing the market-place, passes the meeting-house. The door opens and the minister comes out.

127 EXT. MEETING-HOUSE CLOSER SHOT

Through the lighted door we can see into the room. There sits the Governor and two or three of the Puritans. Reverend Dimmesdale hurries out and closes the door after him. Giles and the minister pass, exchanging a brief greeting. The minister hurries on toward Hester's house.

128 EXT. SHOWING HESTER'S HOUSE

The minister going toward Hester's house. A group of Puritans pass and the minister is forced to step into the shadows until they are gone from sight.

129 EXT. CORNER OF MARKET-PLACE

Giles passes the old man who rings the curfew bell for "Lights out!" The old fellow carries a huge lantern in one hand and a bell in the other. We can see by his expression that he is saying, "Why out so late, Giles? Hurry on thy way home! Be gone--I will soon be ringing the bell."

130 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester is seated before the fireplace at the loom. The quiet room is made interesting by the glow of candlelight. Hester is spinning her thread preparatory to weaving.

She hears the approach of footsteps outside, as they crunch upon the snow. She listens, startled and intent, rising and going toward the door.

131 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE

The snow is fast piling upon the eaves. Reverend Dimmesdale enters quickly, gliding into the shadows for fear that he might be seen. The door is opened slightly--a chink of light shows that Hester is standing there. She opens the door wide enough to admit Dimmesdale, who enters, then the door is closed after him.

132 INT. HESTER'S HOME

The minister's face is aglow with a new interest. After their embrace, she looks toward him to know what has caused his strange, almost happy,

animation. And he tells her eagerly:

TITLE: "The Governor has appointed me as delegate to carry the petition of our colony to the King. I sail on the next boat!"

BACK: Hester's eyes widen with alarm as they search his face. A look of doubt and fear--they are to be separated--and yet his expression reveals nothing but an eager happiness to be away. Dimmesdale, seeing that she does not understand, smiles with great protective tenderness as he draws her into his arms.

133 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

He laughs almost boyishly, as if it pleased him a little to tease her; and then his voice lowers to a caressing note as he explains how she is to share his happiness:

TITLE: "Thou canst no longer refuse to marry me, Hester--"

BACK: "Shame on thee!" he adds, hardly conscious of the change in her expression. "For the moment thou didst doubt me--thou didst think that I was eager to be away from thee." And then, the laughter dying away, "As if every moment from thee would not be pain! Far easier for me to give up the sun than thee, my Hester."

It is when he ceases protesting his love that he becomes aware of the change in her; for Hester is staring at him dumbly, piteously. She knows now that the moment has come when she must tell him that she is married. But how shall she begin? Will he ever forgive her for the deception? Tumultuous thoughts rage through her, tormenting her, bringing her almost to the verge of breaking down before she has even made her confession. Almost as if she were afraid to speak, for she has beheld a look of fear in his eyes, she turns away from him.

134 LONGER SHOT

The minister stares at her incredulously for a few moments as she drops on her knees before a small, worn trunk. She opens it and rummages through its treasures until she finds a little leather bag. She dumps its contents upon the floor and searches until she has found a ring, a plain, broad wedding-ring. She picks it up, and carries it to Dimmesdale.

135 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

Hester holds the ring before him; it lies in the palm of her outstretched hand. He stares at it for a few moments and cannot quite understand.

"My wedding ring," she says simply. "I have worn it upon this finger," making to slip it upon the fourth finger of her left hand. He stares at it, then drops it from his hand as if it were a live coal that had burned his fingers. "O my God, Hester!" is wrung from his very heart. "Thou hast betrayed our love. Thou hast been false to vows made to another. Thou hast lied to me and cheated me!" A terrible pain tugs at his heart. It seems at this terrific moment as if he hated Hester for the intense agony he is passing through. "Thou!" and he points his finger at her, "who

art the wife of another! And in my heart thou wert my wife!' Our love held all the sacredness of marriage. Oh, my God, Hester!" and his grief mounts. "Why didst thou so betray me?"

Pitifully she goes to him, and lays a gentle hand upon his arm. "I am guilty," she replies quietly, "and I am guilty of a great love for thee."

She beseeches him to listen to her. With eyes pleading for understanding and forgiveness, she explains to him:

TITLE: "I was never wife to him. I hated him!"

She continues after a dramatic pause:

TITLE: "On the day I left England, my father married me to a wealthy surgeon. ... He was to follow on the next ship when his estates had been settled."

BACK: Hester is reviewing her past--she sees it all before her as if it were yesterday, her eyes wide with remembrance:

TITLE: "These years that have passed have brought no word from him, though my father wrote me that he had left England."

BACK: The minister stands there listening to her, so utterly crushed because he cannot make her entirely his, his to love and protect, his to journey with him on the mission which is to take him away a year. So shaken is he that though he has forgiven her, he has no words for her, no look, no gestures.

136 LONGER SHOT

He turns with bowed head to leave her, as if he could not endure any longer an intimacy that had been sacred to him until this shadow had been thrown upon it. Why must he leave with this sorrow in his heart? She hurries to the door and stops him.

137 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

She clings to him. "O my darling!" she cries, "do not leave me at such a shadowed hour. I love thee. It is my love which has betrayed thee. Parting from thee is twisting my heart with pain!" He hears the caress of her voice, he feels the warmth of her arms. He turns back to her, conscious only of his love for her. Again there is pleading in her voice.

TITLE: "O my beloved, I was afraid if thou didst know the truth, thou wouldst deny me those moments of great happiness that have passed between us--"

BACK: They cling to each other, tragic figures lost in their mutual sorrow. (And now the church, which stands between them, tolls its warning voice.) They are listening.

CUT TO:

138 STREET NIGHT SNOWING

The old man is ringing the bell which warns the villagers, "Lights out!"

139 EXT. VILLAGE STREET NIGHT SNOW  
The lights in the windows blink out.

140 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

The two are standing by the door. The curfew has brought them back to sudden consciousness. He must leave, hurriedly! He cups her face in his hands, and his gaze plunges deep into her eyes. He studies her intently as if to photograph indelibly upon his memory every detail of her beloved face. Then, without a farewell pressure of lips upon lips, he turns and hurries away while he still has the courage to leave her. When he is gone, she stands there staring after him--her body poised for flight. Then there comes flooding over her the realization that he is gone--that she is going to bring into the world a child--and that she must face this tragedy alone!

Fear, stark and terrifying, lays hold of Hester. Her hand goes to her heart. How can she face those grim Puritans alone? What will become of her? And of the child who sleeps under her heart? The thought of her child works a strange miracle in her--it calms her into a wistful reverie, wherein fear for the moment plays no part. Hester's arms feel her child in them. Then fear touches her again, as there floods over her all the tragedy that the future holds for her. "I can't face it alone! I haven't the courage," she cries aloud.

141 LONGER SHOT

She sweeps open the door.

142 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE

In the lighted doorway, we can see Hester. She runs out into the snow, beckoning, "Come back! Come back!" ... But he is already gone. She stops. She cannot let him know--she cannot send him away with this burden on his heart. She turns back into the house and closes the door after her.

143 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester seems white and drawn and her eyes are flaming with budding terror. At last when her emotion has reached a crisis she cries out, "O Lord forgive me--and make Thine eyes to shine upon me in my hour of travail and repentance!"

FADE OUT

144 FADE IN VOLUME OF LAWS OF THE COLONY

The Governor's hand again enters--turns over the pages.

LAP DISSOLVE INTO:

145 CLOSE-UP PAGE

On this page in large, legible type is written:

TITLE: Punishment for Adultery

The text is as follows:

The wanton creature shall be called to the scaffold in the village square and branded before the eyes of the world.

THIS PAGE LAP DISSOLVES INTO:

146 EXT. MARKET-PLACE LONG SHOT

The scaffold stands in grim, bleak silhouette against the barren walls of the church. At the base of the scaffold are quiet groups of Puritans. They look almost as forbidding as the scaffold itself. Many Puritans are marching solemnly toward it. The whole picture suggests something grim and terrible.

147 INT. MEETING-HOUSE SEMI LONG SHOT

The Governor and several funereal looking Puritans are in the meeting-house. Their eyes reflect the solemn occasion. They are trudging down the steps, their faces almost expressionless, when one looks through the window. There is a flare of excitement when he points off scene, "Look Reverend Dimmesdale is returning!"

148 EXT. MARKET-PLACE SEMI LONG SHOT

Reverend Dimmesdale on horseback is riding toward the meeting-house. As he passes the camera his face is aglow, for he brings them good news. His eyes are lit with other fires--he is soon to see Hester!

149 INT. MEETING-HOUSE

The Governor and the Puritans, in their eagerness to greet the minister, have forgotten the solemnity of the occasion. Their faces are now wreathed in smiles and he enters and hurries over to them.

150 CLOSER SHOT OF GROUP

After the greeting is over, Reverend Dimmesdale tells them with eager enthusiasm:

TITLE: "I have brought good news to thee: our petition has been granted by the King!"

BACK: This is indeed good news. There is movement and interest and conversation.

151 EXT. FOOT OF SCAFFOLD SEMI LONG SHOT

There stands on the scaffold a Puritan with face like an executioner. He is the drummer. Very solemnly he raises his sticks and beats the drum. It is a call to arms.

152 INT. MEETING-HOUSE SEMI CLOSE UP GOVERNOR, REVEREND DIMMESDALE AND PURITANS

The ominous sound of the drum has arrested them.

"What are the drums beating for?" asks the minister, although the prophetic shadow of fear is already upon his face.

The Governor's eyes narrow to cruel slits. He speaks in an ugly voice filled with stern condemnation: "In a few minutes Hester Prynne will be brought from her prison cell."

Dimmesdale stands like one stunned. He turns to the Governor and asks with tragic mien:

TITLE: "Why hast thou imprisoned Hester Prynne? What crime hath she committed?"

The Governor is a man of dignity. He cannot speak of such indelicate things as "babies" in a loud voice, so he leans close to the minister's ear and whispers Hester's crime. When its full significance dawns upon him: "She is one of my parishioners. I must go to her. She is suffering; I must bring comfort to her." When he leaves, the Governor and the beadle look after him. "A good man," says the Governor. "His first thought is for his flock."

"A very good man," repeats the beadle, looking after the minister with kindly eyes. "He suffers deeply for the sins of others."

153 INT. PRISON CELL LONG SHOT

It is a grim, bleak, formidable prison. Huge spiked doors. A high-barred window through which streams a path of daylight. In a rough cradle lies Hester's baby. Hester sits there on a little stool, gazing straight ahead, her supine hands in her lap, no light coming into her great eyes which are dull, almost expressionless. Eyes that are like ghosts of a remote sorrow. All emotion seems whipped from her, so much has she suffered. Her gestures are eloquent of her utter abandonment of hope. She has already endured so much she gives the impression that life has passed her by and nothing will ever be able to hurt her again. She sits there staring down at the baby. Once she leans over to pick some little piece of lint from off the woven coverlet, or to draw her finger lightly over the sleeping child's face.

154 EXT. PRISON

The beadle protests slightly about Reverend Dimmesdale's entering the prison, but his protests are waved aside.

155 INT. HESTER'S PRISON CELL CLOSE-UP

Hester hears footsteps and voices outside. She glances dully toward the door, wondering if the guards have come for her.

156 INT. HESTER'S CELL

The warden has opened the door. Reverend Dimmesdale enters and stands there staring transfixed at Hester. So stunned is he that he makes no perceptible move.

157 CLOSE-UP HESTER

So much has Hester suffered that one feels her reactions are not quite normal. She stares at Reverend Dimmesdale through veiled eyes, almost as if she were not quite certain that it is he, as if she could not believe that he had really come to her at last.

158 LONGER SHOT

It is when the door is closed by the warden and these two are alone that an agonized cry is wrung from the heart of the minister, "Hester!"

It is his voice that brings him closer to her. When he rushes toward her and drops on his knees before her, she could almost

swoon from the surge of sorrow commingled with infinite relief at having him close to her again, to give her courage, to endure the ordeal through which she is about to pass. Dimmesdale glances at the baby.

INSERT: CLOSE-UP OF BABY

159 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

The tears have dried in Hester's heart--they do not well to her eyes. It is the minister who breaks down completely. He is sobbing, "O Hester, canst thou ever forgive me? I never dreamed but that thou wert happily waiting for me. Oh, what thou must have suffered. And I, free, unpunished, allowed to walk in God's sunshine, while thou art doomed to a prison cell--"

His tears fall onto her hand while she sits there looking at him, loving him, pitying him, as a mother would love and pity her child, so tenderly does she lay her hand upon his head in sweet comfort. When a woman has endured as much as Hester, there comes to her a strange, almost abnormal, calm. She is not aroused from this until the minister cries out to her:

TITLE: "Thou shalt suffer no longer! I shall tell them that I am to blame, that I am the one who should be scourged!"

BACK: Then it is that Hester is fully aroused. The thought that he must suffer, that he must be branded, is more than she can bear. She pleads with him, "No--no! Thou must keep our secret locked in thy heart! I cannot bear to have thee suffer!" She covers his mouth fearfully with her hand. "Be silent! Or thou wouldst cause my death! I am dying--dying! I could no longer live once I did see thee dragged through the village square, mocked at, hissed at, despised!"

It is then that he challenges her: "But what right hast thou to suffer alone? Wouldst thou make of me a coward?"

All the mother-love that Hester shows toward her baby is revealed in her eyes as she looks upon him who at this moment is also a child to her. She tells him with pious sincerity:

TITLE: "We have sinned. I am paying for my sin..."

He looks up at her compassionately. She speaks again:

TITLE: "Thou must answer for thine in service to others. Thy people love and honor thee. ... What right hast thou to tear down their ideal?"

BACK: Hester's admonition's make their impression upon Dimmesdale. He hesitates in pain--then protests: "Hester wouldst thou brand me a coward--cheapen me--and make me unto myself a Pharisee? I must go at once and tell them."

He rises as if he were about to rush out of the cell.

160 LONGER SHOT

As he starts toward the door, Hester runs to him and clings to him. With all her heart she is pleading with him to hold to this silence in protection of others, crying out:

TITLE: "If we serve God we will atone for the sin that is ours.  
Thy service lies in the salvation of souls."

BACK: He stands staring at her with stunned eyes. Before he can answer, the guards have flung open the door. Hester has sprung away from him so that all they see is the humble figure of Hester with bowed head standing before their beloved minister. The guard tells him the Governor wants him.

He leaves, his burning eyes fastened upon her. Her last motion to him is a pleading one not to reveal himself. When the doors are closed and she is left alone with one of the guards, she looks fearfully in the direction he has departed, her fear growing because she does not know whether or not her pleas have convinced him that he must endure his silence as part of his punishment.

161 CLOSE-UP OF DRUM BEATING

The ominous sound of the muffled drum (interpreted in the orchestra pit) is dramatic preparation for Hester's entrance from prison and her march to the scaffold.

162 INT. HESTER'S PRISON CELL

Hester's back is to the camera. The guard is standing there watching her. Hester's movements indicate that she is pinning something upon her breast, but we do not see what it is. Then she lifts the sleeping child from out its cradle and holds it against her breast. And when she turns around, her badge of shame is not revealed.

163 INT. MEETING-HOUSE

Reverend Dimmesdale enters the meeting-house. His face is white and drawn.

164 EXT. PRISON GATES

The prison gates are opened. Two guards march out, huge, solemn-looking men who suggest executioners. Then Hester comes, slowly, carrying her child upon her breast. Though her face is marked with suffering, she holds her head high with fine sweeping pride; for soon she is to pass through the crowds who will point their fingers at her.

165 EXT. BALCONY OF MEETING-HOUSE

The Governor, the beadle, and several Puritans stand out on this balcony, which is parallel with the scaffold. It is from there, over the heads of the people, that the Governor will call out Hester's sentence. The minister joins them there. A fearful change is wrought in him. His eyes are stark and staring; his face looks haggard; a dreadful weakness has come over him. He is staring down at the foot of the scaffold where he sees Hester, the martyr, reviled by the villagers who have gathered there to witness the consummation of her shame.

166 EXT. SCAFFOLD SEMI LONG SHOT

As Hester marches through the crowd to the scaffold, they stand there, grave, disturbed with hatred of her.

167 CLOSER SHOT OF HESTER

Mistress Hibbins cackles and points her fingers. "Adultress!" she screams in her high, shrill voice.

Giles pushes forward, and with his sharp elbow stabs Mistress Hibbins until she is forced back. Then he takes her place. His eyes are sad. He speaks the only words of comfort she has heard. "Have courage, Hester, thou hast in me a friend." His face is made grotesque by his sympathy for her. She walks past, head held high, regal as a queen. She hears neither Mistress Hibbins' reviling nor Giles' words of comfort.

168 CLOSE-UP BALCONY OF MEETING-HOUSE

There is a certain satisfaction to the Governor and the beadle, who have ordered this punishment, to see how much the sinner is enduring. They exchange pompous and dignified glances. The more pain and sorrow she endures, the better example she will be to the other women of the village. Interested in their own reactions, they do not notice the tragic figure of the minister as, in agony, he watches Hester.

169 LONG SHOT OF THE VILLAGE SQUARE

Hester has now mounted to the scaffold and is standing there, her child held close to her breast. All the villagers are gathered around the scaffold. On the balcony, even from this distance, can be seen the Governor, the minister and the beadle.

170 EXT. BALCONY

Dimmesdale is staring at Hester, distraught. The Governor turns to him and is apparently unconscious of the dreadful expression on his face. He insists to the minister:

TITLE: "The charge of her soul has been with thee. Exhort her to confess her fellow sinner."

BACK: Dimmesdale is staring at the Governor, realizing that he, despite his struggle, has to step forward before the crowd and speak to the woman that he loves.

171 CLOSE-UP SCAFFOLD

Hester with pitiful dignity stands there holding her child in her arms. Now she looks over and sees Dimmesdale on the balcony-- his eyes almost on a level with hers. And again there comes to her the fear that he will reveal himself.

172 SEMI CLOSE-UP BALCONY OF MEETING-HOUSE

Reverend Dimmesdale steps forward. "Hester Prynne," he cries out, "I charge thee to speak out the name of thy fellow-sinner and fellow-sufferer!"

173 EXT. SCAFFOLD AND BALCONY SEMI LONG SHOT

This shot is to establish that the crowds standing around the scaffold now turn from Hester, who has held their attention, to the minister, whose voice, ringing out to Hester, holds them. His gestures very clearly show that he is speaking to Hester. And it

is across the heads of the multitude that Hester and the minister play their dramatic love scene, wherein Hester tells to him, whose ears alone understand, the depth and beauty of her love; wherein his words of pity and sympathy make known to her the tragic tenderness that he feels.

174 SEMI CLOSE-UP OF BALCONY

Dimmesdale, struggling with his own emotion, inwardly praying that she will point her finger at him and free him from his struggle with his own conscience, beseeches her:

TITLE: "O Hester, be not silent from any mistaken pity and tenderness for him."

BACK: He pauses for a moment until he has the courage to continue:

TITLE: "'Twere far better that he should stand on thy pedestal of shame than hide a guilty heart through life..."

BACK: He holds out his arms supplicating her to speak his name.

175 CLOSE-UP HESTER

Hester has never loved so deeply as at this moment; her eyes are caressing his face. A faintness overcomes her. She smiles with lovely tenderness. The hand of the baby reaching up plucks at her mouth. Then Hester glances down at the child, and the smile deepens. Once more her eyes are upon him. Her voice carries over to him this message of her heart:

TITLE: "I will never betray him! I love him ... and my love will follow him through all eternity!"

176 CLOSE-UP OF BALCONY

Reverend Dimmesdale stands there as one who walks, eyes open, in a deep sleep. He cannot speak. He can only bow his head. And when he looks up again, tears glisten in his eyes.

177 LONG SHOT SHOWING THE SCAFFOLD, THE CROWD AND THE BALCONY

The gaze of the Puritans turns from the minister to Hester-- and back to the minister again. They are rather moved by the low cadences of those voices, though the meaning of the words is too deep for them to understand.

178 CLOSE-UP AT SCAFFOLD

A beautiful light seem to fall upon Hester's face, the light of love, as she calls across the heads of the people to him in words that are almost a prayer:

TITLE: "O would that I would endure his agony as well as mine!"

BACK: Her eyes are full of a deep, forgiving compassion.

179 SEMI CLOSE-UP BALCONY

So broken is the minister by now, so crushed is his spirit, that he cannot speak again. The Governor infers from his bowed head that the minister is sorrowful because he has not made Hester

confess. Now it is he who steps forward. A pompous man who enjoys his power and his position, he clears his throat before he makes this peroration: "Hester Prynne, thou art a sinner! Thou art a wanton and a fallen woman--and I stand before thee to mete out thy punishment!"

180 SEMI LONG SHOT PILLORY CROWD AND BALCONY

There is a movement among the crowd, an eager pressing forward. The Governor's words, "I shall mete out thy punishment," hold their attention. Some are looking at Hester; some are waiting almost breathlessly for the Governor to give his orders.

181 CLOSE-UP BALCONY

The agony of the minister is increasing. He stands in back of the Governor as the latter, pointing to Hester, cries out:

TITLE: "Reveal the brand of thy shame which thou shalt wear until thy death--a brand which will mark thee so that the world shall forever shun thee."

182 CLOSE-UP HESTER

Slowly, Hester lowers the child that is in her arms. On her breast is the scarlet letter "A" for adultery.

183 EXT. SQUARE LONG SHOT

A very definite reaction on the crowd. Now they can let loose their jeers, their hisses, their revilements. They can cry "For shame, Hester Prynne! Look at her--the branded woman!"

184 CLOSE-UP HESTER

Like a martyr Hester stands there. The little hand of the baby now tugs at the letter "A." Hester is looking up as if inwardly she were praying for strength to endure her sorrow and humiliation.

FADE OUT

185 FADE IN INT. REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY NIGHT

It is night, and a flickering candle casts interesting shadows about the room. Reverend Dimmesdale is alone in his study with that grim shadow, "Conscience." He paces up and down the floor, up and down, up and down, his mind so disturbed that his body cannot be at rest. He pauses before an iron cross hanging on the wall and stands regarding it tensely. Then he is drawn out of his absorption by the sound of footsteps hurrying by--and he turns toward the window to see:

186 STREET NIGHT EXT. PRISON (SHOOTING THROUGH THE WINDOW IN REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY)

A group of Puritans marching toward the prison. In the light of the torches (or lanterns) which they bear, their faces appear weird and fanatical. They are bent on some secret mission.

187 INT. REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY CLOSE-UP REV. REVEREND DIMMESDALE AT WINDOW

A wild light comes into his eyes as he watches them pass. Can it be that they have found some other means of torturing the woman that he loves? He has seen her endure too much already; the

frail craft would break under any more torture.

188 INT. HESTER'S PRISON CELL LONG SHOT

Hester is sitting there nursing her baby; its little face rests against the scarlet letter. She lays the child in its cradle. It is night. Only a tall, flickering candle lights the gloom of the darkened cell. Suddenly, without warning to Hester, and she is shocked by it, the prison doors swing open, and there marches into the room the group of Puritans we have just seen passing through the street. Among them is Mistress Hibbins. She alone cackles and crows over Hester and looks at her with sly, meaningful glances; the others are cold and silent.

No word is spoken until they have filled the cell. Hester, as if she expected some further sentence upon her, rises. Though fearful of them, there is beautiful dignity about her. "Why art thou here?" she asks. "What dost thou want of me?"

189 CLOSE-UP GROUP OF PURITANS

Among this group is Mistress Hibbins; but it isn't she who speaks. It is the beadle whose very coldness of manner is terrifying. He says:

TITLE: "We have decided amongst us that thy child shall be taken from thee and brought up by a Christian woman--"

BACK: He says these few words forcibly--then stops short, regarding her coldly.

190 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER

Hester listens. She has heard that dreadful sentence, which for a moment leaves her too stunned to make protest.

191 LONGER SHOT

The beadle takes a step toward the cradle. Hester springs in front of it protectingly. Now it is that the grief she has kept pent-up within her is unleashed. She pleads--pitiful, heart-breaking pleading--her body racked with sobs.

She is telling them: "Thou canst not take my baby from me. She is all I have to love--to cherish! I will make myself worthy of her; I will devote my life to her! She is the heart of my heart. Thou canst not tear it out of my body."

But they shut their ears and whisper coldly among themselves. Mistress Hibbins seems to be urging them forward. She sidles up to the beadle and whispers in his ear. One instinctively knows that she is saying, "Seize the child! Take it away from her--the wanton! Have not pity for it--it is the child of the devil." When the beadle starts toward the baby in its cradle, a tigerish mother-love possesses Hester. She takes the baby in her arms. Her voices rises to an hysterical crescendo, and her body trembles with the violence of her denunciation. "Thou canst never take my child! Mine! Far rather would I see her dead than to be given over to thy care! Brought up to know only intolerance, injustice, damnation!"

"Silence, Hester!" the man's voice rings out. "Stand back that we may take the child without violence."

A scream tears out of her. "Stand back! I will strike to kill the first one who dares lay a hand upon my baby!"

192 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER

In the flickering light of the candle, Hester's staring eyes are those of a mad woman. Her face is distorted with terror and rage. "Stand back!" she screams again, "or I will tear thee limb from limb! I will tear the hearts out of thy bodies! I would make thee suffer as thou hast crucified me! Stand back!"

193 SEMI CLOSE-UP PURITANS

Even Mistress Hibbins is silenced by Hester's eyes, blazing with a fury that is close to madness. There is no perceptible move.

194 LONG SHOT

But just as they are galvanized into action and make to surround Hester, Reverend Dimmesdale enters the cell, pushes his way through them, hurling them to one side with a force that is born of despair, until he stands before Hester, ready to protect her. His voice echoes Hester's frantic command, "Stand back!" There is something so compelling in the fiery eyes of their minister that they move toward the door and stand shame-faced before him. Some of them shuffle their feet and look about uneasily. "Shame on thee that thou wouldst attack a helpless woman!" The minister's voice is broken with compassion for her.

195 SEMI CLOSE-UP THE MINISTER AND HESTER

Hester holds her baby against her breast, her arms fearfully around her, ready to shield her.

The minister looks at her and down at the child. It is the first time his eyes have lingered upon his own baby. It is a tragic look he bends upon it--then a mutely tragic look at Hester which speaks of his suffering.

196 SEMI CLOSE-UP GROUP OF PURITANS

Mistress Hibbins, cackling to herself, dares to break the silence. She is pointing toward the baby:

TITLE: "Wouldst thou protect a nameless brat?"

Her eyes are narrowed with suspicion.

197 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

They had never thought of this before. A nameless brat! This child, so sacred in their eyes, must be branded "a nameless brat" in the eyes of the world. There is tragic pathos in his voice when he speaks to Hester:

TITLE: "Before God, thy child shall have a name, and I shall baptize her--"

198 LONGER SHOT

At this news there is general protest from the assembled crowd.

But the minister raises his hand commanding silence, and they obey him. Then he orders Hester to stand forward under the glow of light. She holds the child in her arms and faces him. He looks around for water, which is one of the properties of baptism. On the crude table in the room, or perhaps by the cradle of the child, is a pewter mug with water in it. This he takes and places near him, or asks one of the Puritans to hold. He reaches for the child and holds it tenderly in his own arms while he baptizes it.

199 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

"Hester Prynne, what wouldst thou name thy child?" he asks. Hester, gazing down at the child, answers quietly:

TITLE: "I name thee Pearl--for thou art indeed a pearl of great price."

200 SEMI LONG SHOT

It is a simple ceremony, this baptism. The minister dips his fingers in the water and then upon the head of the baby, as he says: "I name thee Pearl, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

And then--"Let us bow our heads in prayer."

The Puritans are forced to kneel in that darkened room while the minister offers a prayer for the soul of the child.

201 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

The minister prays with a fervor that tells of the agony of his own soul. Hester, deeply touched, weeps silently. Her burning tears fall upon the baby's upturned face.

202 CLOSE-UP BABY'S HEAD

One of Hester's tears falls upon the baby's cheek. It laughs. When the second tear drops upon its lips, the baby's little tongue licks it off. (This can be easily done by letting fall a drop of water sweetened with honey upon the baby's mouth.)

203 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE BABY

Hester looks down at the baby. This little funny gesture of the baby's which will undoubtedly make the audience laugh, makes Hester laugh, strange, terrible, hysterical laughter which is born of sorrow.

204 LONG SHOT

Laughter is a ghastly thing in this grim, dank prison cell. Hysterical laughter, which has a note of madness in it, sends the cold chills down their spines as they, still kneeling, look up at her in horror. Even the minister steps back from her, aghast, though realizing that it is laughter born of Hester's broken spirit. (As a scene of hysteria is dangerous, it is advisable to play it two ways.)

SLOW FADE OUT

TITLE: Four years have passed. Hester Prynne is no longer

permitted to make bridal veils, but must sew on palls for the dead.

205 FADE IN INT. HESTER'S HOUSE LONG SHOT

Hester is sitting by the window. She wears a dark dress. It is somber work sewing on black palls. The child is the only bright, fantastic element close to her. She comes dancing toward her mother, seizing her by the hand and trying to draw her out into the garden. Hester shakes her head and, indicating her work, says that she cannot leave.

206 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE CHILD

There is an intense love between these two. Hester looks down into the little laughing face and bends to embrace her. Her eyes search the child with sweeping tenderness. She brushes her hair back from her forehead; she makes a little spit-curl on one cheek. She scrutinizes the child's ears to make certain they are clean. She takes a handkerchief and blows the child's nose. Then she says triumphantly, "Thou art ready for play."

207 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE SEMI LONG SHOT

The minister is passing Hester's house. We note at once the shocking change in him. He is haggard--his eyes are sunken in their sockets. He looks like a man who has suffered a severe illness.

At the window are Hester and the child.

208 CLOSE-UP OF WINDOW (WHAT THE MINISTER SEES)

Hester bends forward with a sharp intake of breath as she sees the minister passing. There is mute recognition, an exchange of tragic looks between the two. The child, curious to see what has attracted her attention, peeks out at the minister.

209 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE (WHAT HESTER AND THE CHILD SEE)

The minister hesitates. He looks with dumb pain toward Hester and the child. His hand goes over his heart as though it were twisting and torturing him.

210 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE CHILD

The sight of the man she loves leaves Hester faint, almost overcome for the moment. Her eyes close wearily. Then her mind is brought to sharp focus by the voice of her child.

"Mother?" the child is asking curiously.

When Hester looks at the child, the little one has her hand over her heart, and her voice is curious:

TITLE: "Mother, why doe the minister always put his hand over his heart?"

BACK: Hester shakes her head. "I do not know, my child. Thou must not ask me so many questions." She reaches for the pall upon which she has been working. "Thou must go out to play-- dost thou not see how busy I am?"

The child exits.

211 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE

A group of youngsters go hurrying by. Pearl, like all youngsters, runs and climbs on the gate. "Good morning to thee!" she calls. They stand there staring at her--arrogant little Puritans who stare, point scornfully, then without a word rush away from her.

212 CLOSE-UP PEARL

The child's eyes widen; for a moment she almost yields to a desire to cry; then she sets her little jaw, presses her lips together, and cries, "Scat, or I'll pepper you with prickly burrs!"

213 EXT. OF HOUSE LONGER SHOT

Pearl is now ready to do battle. She is a wild little sprite. She sits perched up on the fence and watches a group of Puritans who are walking toward her. Among them is Mistress Hibbins. They are on their way to the meeting-house.

"Good morning!" cries Pearl again, making another attempt to be friendly.

The women draw their skirts to one side as if the child would contaminate them; and with their heads held high, they walk past her.

214 CLOSE-UP PEARL

The child's face flushes with anger. She hates Mistress Hibbins. She casts them one threatening look, then starts to climb down the fence.

215 LONGER SHOT

Close to the fence, in a hiding-place under some leaves, is Pearl's little store of prickly burrs.

INSERT CLOSE-UP OF PILE OF PRICKLY BURRS

Pearl's little hands enter the scene and start to pick them up.

BACK: Pearl flies to the fence and hurls these burrs at the Puritans.

216 CLOSE-UP PURITAN

A well-aimed burr perches on top of his hat.

217 CLOSE-UP PEARL

She throws another burr.

218 CLOSE-UP MISTRESS HIBBINS

The burr has caught in her hair behind her ear. She cries out with pain and rage, and shakes a threatening finger at the child.

219 SEMI LONG SHOT

Pearl is laughing as she sees the Puritans running to escape this little, but deadly, enemy of theirs. She doesn't notice that the children have returned and are creeping close to the fence. In their outstretched hands are piles of mud.

220 CLOSE-UP GROUP OF CHILDREN

They are creeping toward the camera, which is in the direction of Pearl, and we see what they are going to do--throw mud at the child. One little boy swings his arm and lets the mud-cake fly past the camera.

221 CLOSE-UP PEARL

The mud catches Pearl on the side of the face. She wheels around, startled.

222 LONGER SHOT

Pearl jumps from the fence and runs over to where are the prickly burrs. She begins hurling these at the children while they, in turn, throw the mud, covering her from head to foot with it.

223 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester is folding the pall when she hears the outcries of the children. She springs to her feet, lays her work to one side, and hurries out.

224 EXT. REAR OF HESTER'S HOUSE

Pearl is standing there, a spraddle-legged, tempestuous figure, slinging the burrs at her enemies. Some of the children are still throwing mud, and Pearl is covered from head to foot. Hester, frightened, comes running out and up to Pearl. At sight of her, most of the children fly, but one little boy waits, ducks, and hides. He is going to let Hester have a handful of it.

225 CLOSE-UP LITTLE BOY

The boy has a malicious face. He studies his aim for a moment, then throws a pile of mud.

226 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND PEARL

Hester has dropped on her knees beside Pearl. She is gazing at the child aghast. The mud comes into the scene, striking Hester full in the breast, half-covering the letter "A." Pearl is crying.

227 INT. VESTRY OF CHURCH

Several of Reverend Dimmesdale's parishioners are there to see him about church duties. He is trying to hide the ravages of grief and troubled conscience that have just been made by the sight of Hester and the child. He is surrounded by his people, who look upon him with eyes filled with an awed love and respect. Their attitude toward him will make it very evident that to them there is something very saint-like about him.

A child enters and runs up to her mother. The minister leans down and with a tender gesture touches the child's head. He speaks in a wistful, distraught manner to two old people. How marked a contrast between his attitude now and his former intolerant, condemning manner.

Enter Mistress Hibbins and the Puritans, who were the objects of little Pearl's wrath. Mistress Hibbins is bristling with indignation. She tells them of what the child has done to them. Her eyes are flashing. There is a note of triumph in her voice when she concludes:

TITLE: "Every time I pass the house I put a curse upon that child of sin."

BACK: There are dreadful words for the minister to hear. He starts to protest against her tirade, but her shrill voice drowns his, as she bitterly exclaims, "Hester Prynne should be run out of the village." All are agreeing.

The woman he loves--and his child. Again his conscience twists--that pain shoots through his heart. His hand goes to it. They all show their alarm. He assures them it is nothing; he is quite all right and able to go on. When he leaves them, they whisper among themselves, shaking their heads sadly. They do not believe that the minister will be long with them.

228 INT. HESTER'S HOME

A small wooden tub sits before the fireplace. Hester has just washed Pearl and is now helping the child into her shirt when she turns, hearing a knock upon the door.

229 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE

A funeral group of three men. They have come there for the pall. One is knocking on the door.

230 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester reaches for a shawl, wraps it quickly around Pearl, and opens the door. The men enter. Hester greets them pleasantly, but they make no response. Their gestures are stiff, and their words few. "Mistress Prynne, is the pall ready?"

Hester gets the pall and shows it to them. They examine it carefully to see if her work is well done.

During this action, the youngster has gone over to the window which is close to the door leading out into the backyard.

231 CLOSE-UP WINDOW

The profile of the child peering out of the window. In the garden beyond can be seen those wicked children creeping into the yard after Pearl's store of burrs.

232 SEMI LONG SHOT OF THE ROOM

While Hester is folding the pall and the men are waiting, we see Pearl with one eye on her mother, crawl out of the window. The shawl gets caught on the sill and is left there.

233 EXT. REAR GARDEN

The children have their hands full of her store of prickly burrs before they see Pearl descending upon them like a raging little fury. They fly before her. When she discovers that they have taken her treasures, she forgets everything. She forgets the garb she is in, or else doesn't care, and starts in pursuit of them.

234 INT. HESTER'S HOME

The men are leaving with the pall. When the door is closed, Hester turns back to speak to Pearl. She looks around, surprised, and then startled, to find her gone. She peeks around the bench,

looks into the closet, believing, of course, that the child must be hiding.

235 EXT. VILLAGE STREET

The children, running past the camera. In back of them runs Pearl.

236 EXT. REAR OF HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester comes hurrying out, looking around for Pearl. She is nowhere to be seen.

237 LONG SHOT OF VILLAGE SQUARE

The naughty little girl, attired only in her shirt, is running down the main street toward the market-place, the children screaming and flying before her. Oh, what a commotion it makes! How shocked those Puritan women are!

238 SEMI CLOSE-UP (CAMERA ON TRACK)

The back of Pearl is to the camera. In this shot the children running ahead of her can be seen.

239 EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE SHOWING THE SCAFFOLD

The Puritans are horrified. Now Pearl chases the children around the scaffold. She leans down to pick up rocks and fling them at them.

240 EXT. CHURCH

Reverend Dimmesdale is just coming out of the church. He is astonished to see coming toward him, on a dead run, three or four children, pursued by Pearl. The children run around him as if seeking protection from Pearl, who, like a little witch, chases them. Once as she runs around him, she catches hold of his coat, darting in back of him--from one side to the other. He turns as if to protect her and catches her in his arms. Here Mistress Hibbins enters.

241 SEMI CLOSE-UP REVEREND DIMMESDALE AND MISTRESS HIBBINS AND PEARL

The minister is trying to quiet the child, assuring her that he isn't going to harm her, but protect her. She, terrified, not understanding, is kicking at him, trying to free herself. Her terror increases when she sees Mistress Hibbins in back of her. Now she manages to free herself. Mistress Hibbins, pointing at her, spits after her: "Child of sin! Child of the devil--in the devil's own garb!"

242 EXT. VILLAGE STREET LONG SHOT

Hester, hurrying down the street in search of Pearl. She catches sight of her as she scoots across the square.

243 EXT. POOL OF WATER NEAR THE SCAFFOLD

The child runs through it, splashing the water as she makes for a hiding place under the steps of the pillory.

244 CLOSE-UP STEPS OF PILLORY

The child huddles under the steps. She is shivering with cold, and thoroughly frightened.

245 EXT. NEAR CHURCH

Reverend Dimmesdale, listening to Mistress Hibbins tirade, turns upon her and silences her. Then he starts forward to go to the aid of Hester.

246 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND PEARL

The child lies there wet, shivering and frightened. Her mother wraps her in the shawl. The child bursts into tears.

247 SEMI LONG SHOT OF MARKET-PLACE

The Puritans, furious at this exhibition of wanton immodesty, revile Hester as she hurries past them, carrying the child. They point their fingers, they jeer at her. The minister hurries to her side. He holds up a hand in protest. At this, all evidence of physical violence ceases; but their scornful looks and pointing fingers make Hester aware that their hatred of her is still alive in their hearts.

248 CLOSE-UP MINISTER

His hand pressing his aching heart--to think that he can go free, while Hester must suffer!

249 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND CHILD

Hester, hurrying past the camera on her way home, carrying the child in her arms.

FADE OUT

250 FADE IN INT. MINISTER'S STUDY NIGHT

The minister's study is lit only by the glow of firelight. A strange, almost disheveled figure is the minister as he kneels before the fire, his eyes fastened on an iron poker which he lays on the coals until it is itself a glowing coal. He reaches into the fire and, lifting it up by the cool end, holds it before him, his lips fashioning a prayer. In his eyes is the look of a fanatic. He tears off the front of his cassock and bares his breast. As he brings the smoking brand close to his breast, we

FADE OUT--OR CUT TO:

251 INT. HESTER'S ROOM CLOSE SHOT

Pearl is dangerously ill with a fever. Hester watches anxiously, bending over the bed, fixing her frightened eyes upon the child, who tosses about. "Pearl!" she cries to the child, and waits with agonized suspense for a response. Pearl is unconscious; now her little hands are growing cold. Hester breathes upon them and chafes them to warm them. She is frightened, bewildered--she does not know what to do. Suddenly, she rises, calling out: "Giles!" as if her voice would carry to him.

252 LONGER SHOT

She darts away from the bed as though to go after Giles--then she darts back to Pearl, hating to leave her; but finally, in desperation, she throws a shawl about herself and runs from the room out into the night.

253 EXT. HESTER'S COTTAGE

Hester exits from her cottage and starts toward the village.

254 INT. MEETING-HOUSE FULL SHOT

The building is filled with the male colonists seated in the body of the house; the dignitaries of the Government and Church are upon the platform. No women are present.

Giles, serving as interpreter, is conducting a conversation between a group of Indians in full regalia and the Governor.

255 CLOSER SHOT OF PLATFORM

The Indians turn to call from their midst a white man dressed in fantastic garb. This man is Hester Prynne's husband; he is old and slightly deformed, and unnaturally bright eyes peer out from a sinister face. There is something forbidding about him as he stands there explaining to the Governor:

TITLE: "For seven years these Indians have held me prisoner, waiting for a chance to demand ransom--"

256 CLOSE-UP ROGER PRYNNE

He is a mysterious, menacing figure. He is addressing the Governor:

TITLE: "--but during that time I learned much of their alchemy of herbs--for in England I had earned quite a reputation as a physician."

257 SEMI LONG SHOT

The Governor is quite impressed with this; his attitude toward Prynne is friendly and suggests that he will come to his aid.

258 EXT. GILES' BARBER SHOP

A lantern over the door shows this sign: HORACE GILES--BARBER AND SURGEON. Hester is pounding on the door. Giles' assistant opens the door. He tells her Giles isn't there and points over toward the meeting-house. Hester exits in the direction of the meeting-house.

259 EXT. MEETING-HOUSE

Hester comes outside of the meeting-house, hesitates, and rushes up to the window.

260 CLOSER SHOT OF WINDOW

Hester, peering in, dramatically tense and eager. She searches until she finds--

CUT TO

261 INT. MEETING-HOUSE CLOSE-UP GILES

Giles looking in the opposite direction from Hester.

262 INT. MEETING-HOUSE CLOSE-UP AT WINDOW

The face of the frantic little mother is peering in at the window, trying to attract the attention of Giles. Her white face is pressed against the panes, her eyes, stark and staring, are trying to draw his attention. She even beckons with her hand, thinking that perhaps the motion will attract him. Finally she taps upon the window.

263 INT. MEETING-HOUSE LONGER SHOT (SHOWING WINDOW)

The beadle, hearing the tapping on the window, turns around and sees Hester. Furious that she dare come there to pry into their affairs, he motions her away and orders two very tall, gaunt Puritans to step in front of the window to shield what goes on within from Hester's eyes. Hester, forced to leave, runs to the door.

264 EXT. MEETING-HOUSE CLOSE SHOT AT ENTRANCE

Hester is trying to push her way through the crowd at the door, but the two stern-looking Puritans refuse her admittance. No women are allowed there in the first place, and how does she dare, she who wears the badge of shame, to enter in search of Giles? Hester, pitting her puny strength against theirs, tires to force her way in, but they force her farther from the entrance. Then she frantically pleads with them:

TITLE: "My child is ill--I must speak with Giles, our barber-surgeon."

BACK: But they only order her away, forming a bulwark through which she cannot pass.

265 EXT. MEETING-HOUSE AT ENTRANCE LONGER SHOT

Hester pushes her way through the crowd at the door, calling, "Giles! Giles!" But the hand of one of the Puritans closes over her mouth. Ducking under his arm, she evades him and pushes on past the tall figures.

266 INT. MEETING-HOUSE

Hester is a pathetic little gray figure among the men who are like the tall trunks of dark trees.

Upon the platform can be seen the Governor, making an address of welcome to the stranger. Hester's entrance has caused quite a commotion and attracted everyone's attention, so that the Governor pauses in his address.

Forgetting everything in her terror but the thoughts of her child, she runs toward Giles. She seizes him by his hand, crying:

TITLE: "Come with me! My child is dying! Thou must save her!"

BACK: Giles rises, embarrassed but eager to serve Hester, and they start out.

Hester has not noticed the stranger, who rose at her entrance and has been staring at her dramatically.

267 SEMI CLOSE-UP ROGER PRYNNE, THE BEADLE AND THE GOVERNOR

The Governor can be seen in the back, getting the ledger. In the foreground Roger Prynne and the beadle. The face of the stranger is drawn and dark. He turns toward the beadle, standing beside him, and asks: "Who is that woman?"

The beadle tells him, "Hester Prynne--the only woman in our village who wears the badge of shame."

Roger Prynne has seen the scarlet letter. He has heard her speak

about her child. The beadle whispers to the stranger the story of Hester Prynne, but does not notice that the man's face glows with revengeful light. The Governor motions for Prynne to come and write his name in the ledger. Prynne walks over toward him.

268 CLOSE-UP PRYNNE

He looks down at the ledger, takes the quill, and starts to write:

INSERT: CLOSE-UP LEDGER

Prynne's hand enters. He writes ROGER--and starts to write PRYNNE, getting as far as the PR--when the hand pauses and he writes over these two letters the word CHILLINGWORTH.

269 INT. HESTER'S ROOM SEMI CLOSE-UP BED

Giles and Hester are at the bedside of the child, who lies there rigid, in a spasm--a spasm that has all the appearance of death. Giles bends over her, examines her pulse and eyes, while Hester watches fearfully, not daring to ask the verdict. Finally she gasps: "Canst thou do anything for her?" and her voice raises to a wail.

Giles shakes his head with growing apprehension. "I cannot help thee, Hester."

"Then she will die!" Hester turns back to her child. Heartbreaking sobs now rack her body. "Pearl! Pearl! Thou canst not be taken away from me! Thou art my life!" She covers the little stiffened hand with kisses. Then comes to her the thought that at this tragic moment the father of the child should be there, and she fairly screams at Giles:

TITLE: "Go for the minister! Tell him my child is dying!"

BACK: Giles, like one in a daze, staggers out. Hester turns back to the child, whose eyes are now stark and staring. Hester's own eyes are those of a mad woman. The enforced inertia, her inability to do anything to help Pearl, is almost killing Hester.

270 EXT. MEETING-HOUSE

In the lighted doorway the beadle is pointing out the way to Hester's house to her husband. His sharp eyes shine under lowered brows, and there is an evil look in them as he walks away.

271 INT. HESTER'S ROOM

These moments of delay are harrowing ones to Hester. She knows not which breath may be the last. She feels that she can endure inaction no longer. She lifts the child, heavy and stiff, in her arms and staggers with her to the center of the room as if she were going to run to the church for fear that the minister is not coming to her. Then, swaying under the weight of the child, she knows it is madness, and carries the little one back to the bed.

272 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Prynne, walking toward the door.

273 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Hester hears the sound of footsteps upon the gravel. She is listening. Hope lights her face. It is as though her heart had cried out,

"He is come!" She rushes to the door and swings it open.

274 CLOSE-UP DOORWAY

Roger Prynne's face leers at Hester from the shadows.

275 SEMI CLOSE-UP ROGER AND HESTER

Hester recoils as though she had been struck. "Thou!" she cries, staring at him transfixed.

His moves are slow and deliberate, as if guided by inner cruelty. He closes the door, and, as he comes toward her, she backs away, her eyes still fastened upon him, wide with terror. "I thought that thou wert dead!"

Without a word, he points to the letter "A" upon her breast. "Adultrous!" he cries, and then with his face convulsed with pain and hatred, he tells her:

TITLE: "All these years I have thought of thee--dreamed of returning to thee! And now that I do find thee--"

BACK: The words seem choked off, and he can only point again to the scarlet letter. For a moment it would seem as if Hester's reason were tottering, she is so spell-bound by the ominous presence of this man. Then, hearing a slight convulsive movement from the child, her mind is brought into sharp focus again.

276 LARGER SHOT

Hester drops on her knees beside the bed, her fear for the child surmounting every other emotion. For a moment Prynne stands watching these two; and then without a word he leans over and examines the child. Hester watches him fearfully. At last he slips the knapsack off his back, opens it, and searches for a small leather medicine case.

Hester pays no heed to him as he prepares some medicine. When she looks up, he is pouring it into a phial. He tells her:

TITLE: "Have no fear, Mistress Prynne--I can cure her!"

227 SEMI CLOSE-UP AT BED

Prynne holds out the phial to her, saying: "Woman, this child is yours--she is none of mine. Administer this, therefore, with thine own hand."

Hester, her eyes filled with suspicion, makes no movement as his hand draws close to hers with the phial in it. Her eyes meeting his, she asks apprehensively:

TITLE: "Wouldst thou avenge thyself on an innocent child?"

BACK: A twisted, unhappy smile comes to Prynne's lips, though his eyes remain cold. She watches him intently. Although he controls his deep emotions, his eyes are brilliant and fired with strange fever as he says to her:

TITLE: "I could do no more for her were she thy child--\_and mine!\_"

BACK: Hester administers the draught to the child. Prynne now kneels with his head on the child's heart. Hester watches, concentrated upon the child.

278 SEMI CLOSE-UP PEARL AND ROGER PRYNNE  
Prynne listening to Pearl's heart. Almost immediately Pearl begins to show signs of relaxation--and signs of life returning.

279 CLOSE-UP HESTER  
She is intently watching the child and, as she signs of returning life, tears spring to her eyes, and her lips are torn between a smile and a sob.

280 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND ROGER  
Hester looks up at Prynne, who is studying the child. Her eyes are inquiring of him, "She is better?" He tells her:

TITLE: "All danger is past. 'Twas but a spasm--in a few hours she will be well again."

BACK: For the moment, forgetting that his motives may have been sinister, Hester is conscious only of hysterical relief commingled with a certain gratitude for his having saved her child. The child out of danger! Hester relaxes. Tears are in her eyes; and yet she is happy, quite happy, in spite of Prynne.

It is when he sees her relief that his face hardens and fills with hatred. This transition comes slowly and definitely. He leans toward her and, with eyes flaming and filled with menace, he charges her:

TITLE: "Who is the father of this child?"

BACK: Hester stares at him, shocked by the suddenness of this change in him. She cries out to him, "It is a secret locked in my heart. No one shall ever know."

That long cruel finger is pointing at her! "Answer me, woman! Reveal thy secret to thy husband!"

"No! No!" Hester cries, "I would die first."

Now she sees him slowly rising and creeping over toward her. When he reaches her, his outstretched hand seizes her wrist and drags her to her feet.

281 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND PRYNNE  
Prynne, with Hester's wrist held in a firm grasp, draws her toward him. His fingers press cruelly into her flesh. There pours from him a bitter, scathing denunciation. "The name of the man!" he keeps repeating. "Confess!"

Hester is like a baited animal. "Never! Never!" she cries. "Not even to my child!"

He holds her to him, his temper working up to a violence which

he can scarcely control. Then it is that they stop, as if they heard steps outside. Hester, terrified, looks instantly toward the door. She knows it is the minister--and that he will find Prynne there!

282 EXT. HESTER'S HOUSE AT DOOR

The minister is dismissing Giles, for he would be alone with Hester and the child. So weakened is he by the ordeal through which he has just passed that he is almost on the verge of a collapse.

283 INT. HESTER'S HOUSE

Roger Prynne releases Hester from his firm, cruel grasp. There is an expression of fiendish cunning in his face as he turns and kneels down beside the child with his back to the door. Hester hurries forward, inwardly praying that she can stop the minister. But she is too late. As Prynne drops down beside the bed, the door flings open and the minister comes in. He does not see Prynne as he staggers toward Hester, crying out:

TITLE: "Hester! Our child!"

BACK: Hester's face is frozen with horror, but the minister's arms have caught her and held her close in an embrace that is born of despair.

284 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

Hester's first thought is for the protection of the man she loves, but she seems paralyzed with horror as she draws out of his arms and looks toward Prynne.

285 CLOSE-UP PRYNNE

Prynne is smiling that diabolical smile which is filled with a threat and a promise of revenge. He slowly rises, his eyes fixed upon Hester and the minister.

286 LONGER SHOT

The minister is shocked to discover a stranger in the room. As Prynne rises and makes one step toward the minister, Hester's one thought is that he will do no bodily harm to the man that she loves. She springs toward the minister protectingly; but Roger Prynne's revenge is more subtle. He smiles; there is a suggestion of a bow in his gesture as he faces them. Indicating Hester, he says:

TITLE: "I am her husband."

287 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

So much has the minister endured of physical and mental suffering that he has now reached the peak of despair. Hester still stands before him in that protecting attitude, her eyes fixed upon Prynne, as if she were hypnotized by him. She waits for the sentence that he will pronounce upon them, as if waiting for her doom.

288 SEMI LONG SHOT OF ROOM

Prynne moves slowly, with deliberate, measured footsteps. He gets his knapsack and puts it over his shoulder. He walks over to the bed and picks up his hat. He acts as if he were alone in the room, that these two terrified people whose destiny he has in his

hands are not there, staring at him transfixed. When he reaches the door, he pauses. His hand is already on the knob before he looks back at them.

289 CLOSE-UP PRYNNE

Prynne's face is snake-like. His little eyes are still fixed upon them. He smiles again that twisted, terrible smile, and he speaks quietly with sinister emphasis:

TITLE: "Have no fear--I will not betray thy secret!"

290 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

They are almost spell-bound at what Prynne is saying to them.

291 CLOSE-UP PRYNNE AT THE DOOR

He opens the door as if he were going out; then he looks back again and speaks:

TITLE: "My revenge will be infinite!"

292 LONGER SHOT OF THE ROOM

Slowly, Prynne walks out, closing the door after him. Hester clings to the minister.

FADE OUT

293 FADE IN INT. TAVERN LONG SHOT DAYLIGHT

The captain from the Spanish ship and several of his crew are seated at one of the tables. They are colorful, interesting pirates. The captain is a jolly cavalier, rotund and friendly. At the other tables are somber, sanctimonious Puritans eating with great solemnity. Hester and Pearl enter. The child, bashful, clings to her mother's skirts. Hester goes over to the innkeeper to ask him which of the men there is the captain of the Spanish boat. The innkeeper, surprised at Hester's request, goes to the captain, asking him if he would speak with Hester. The old pirate, delighted to speak to any pretty girl, rises and goes over to her.

294 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE CAPTAIN

The captain bows before Hester with quite a show of gallantry. When Hester talks to him, she keeps her hand over the scarlet letter on his breast. She is asking him eagerly:

TITLE: "Thy boat sails tomorrow afternoon--after the election celebration?"

BACK: The captain nods heartily--tells her that his boat leaves America for the Spanish Main. Hester continues eagerly:

TITLE: "I would secure passage for three--a man, my child, and myself."

BACK: There is a roguish twinkle in the captain's eye. "I would be glad to accommodate thee."

Hester hands him a little leather purse filled with coins. He opens it and pours out into his hand the coins, counting them while he agrees upon the price for the passage. As Hester watches

him, her face radiates new hope. Fear is slowly leaving it; a light is coming back into her eyes; she breathes easier, as if she felt that freedom were close at hand.

FADE OUT

295 FADE IN EXT. WOODS NEAR BRIDGE OVER STREAM

Hester is waiting anxiously near the old trysting-place. Pearl can be seen in the background playing at the edge of the brook. Hester's eyes fairly glow with happiness when she sees the minister coming toward her. He walks with an effort. Death is already knocking at his door. His face seems drawn and white. His eyes are deep-shadowed and have in them that far-away look of one whose vision is fast dimming.

296 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

Hester tells him breathlessly her plans--that she has seen the captain of the boat, that he must leave, fly from the threatened revenge of Roger Prynne. Earnestly, she is trying to persuade him.

TITLE: "In some far-away country happiness is to be enjoyed.  
There is the broad pathway of the sea."

BACK: She watches him eagerly, her eyes searching his face. But hope has long been dead within his heart. It cannot so easily be brought to life. Slowly, despairingly, he answers her:

TITLE: "There is not the strength or courage left in me to  
venture alone--"

297 CLOSE-UP HESTER

Hester is watching him intently. Her eyes are deep with love. She whispers with scaring happiness--her heart already relieved of much of its pain:

TITLE: "Thou shalt not go alone!"

298 CLOSE-UP DIMMESDALE

Dimmesdale hears her words and looks at her as their meaning begins to dawn on him. His eyes widen with wonder and longing. Then slowly does he catch the infection of her courage; he begins to yield to her persuasion.

299 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND DIMMESDALE

She draws closer to him--her hands find his. Her face is glowing now with the happiness that had been lost through the long years of suffering. She cries out to him:

TITLE: "We need never look back. The past is gone."

BACK: Her fingers go to the letter on her breast. She fumbles with it. When she looks up at the minister, it is with shining eyes as she tells him:

TITLE: "See! With this symbol I undo it all and make it as  
it had never been."

BACK: Eagerly she begins to unclasp the letter. Dimmesdale watching her, listening as if he had been called upon to realize a dream. Exultantly Hester flings the scarlet letter from her. Unconsciously she stands straighter as though her shoulders were free of some burden. She takes a deep, free breath of happy relief. Another quick, impulsive thought lights up her face. She draws the cap from her head and allows the full shining radiance of her hair to fall unconfined. Thus she stands once more, beautiful --her eyes wide with hope--a beckoning smile on her lips as she looks at Dimmesdale. He is breathless with wonder at her beauty. As his soul throws off its shackles, he stumbles toward her almost exultantly. He takes her in his arms, looking at her with shining eyes. "Yes, I will go with thee. We will go away together to another land." He clasps her more closely to him. His hands linger upon her hair. His eyes plunge into the depths of her eyes. His lips touch hers. "O my beloved," he cries, "with the past forgotten--with the thought of future happiness ahead for us!"

Hungry for this embrace that they have been denied all these years, forgetting all the agony that has gone past, they release themselves to this beautifully tender and emotional love scene. Then slowly they withdraw from each other's embrace, as the child's little hand reaches up and plucks her mother's sleeve.

300 CLOSE-UP HESTER

The wind is blowing Hester's hair--her eyes are lighted with the divine light of happiness. Then slowly there comes over her face a strange expression which is unexplained for a few moments. She is staring down at the child. What is that the child is holding in her hand? Memories of the past come flooding back, terrifying her. Will she never be allowed to forget the past? Two little hands reach up into the scene and pin the scarlet letter on Hester's breast. Then the hands withdraw, and slowly Hester's hands rise and start binding her hair.

FADE OUT

301 FADE IN EXT. MISTRESS HIBBINS' HOUSE

Mistress Hibbins is sitting by the window. She has been sewing on a dress but she has fallen asleep against the high back of the chair, her sewing falling to the floor.

302 LONGER SHOT OF HOUSE TO INCLUDE WINDOW

Giles creeping out from behind a bush. He has been waiting for Mistress Hibbins to fall asleep. He peers around--no one is watching. Then he steals into her house.

303 INT. MISTRESS HIBBINS' HOUSE

Mistress Hibbins' hat and shawl rest on a chair nearby. Giles picks up the dress, stealthily, lest the old gossip should awaken and see him. Then he tiptoes out to the fireplace, gets the broom, and, returning, slips the head of the broom through the dress, stuffs the shawl into the dress, and jams the hat on the head of the broom, hiding the twigs. And in but a few minutes Master Giles has rigged up an effigy of Mistress Hibbins!

A peek out of the window, and there is a hopeful grin on Giles' face as he sees--

CUT TO

304 STREET SHOOTING FROM GILES' POSITION

The Governor and the beadle walking down the street very pompously, discussing weighty affairs of state. They have almost reached the window.

CUT TO

305 SEMI CLOSE-UP GILES

Giles, hiding himself behind the wall at the side of the window--the effigy hiding the sleeping Mistress Hibbins. Giles addresses the effigy:

TITLE: "What, Mistress Hibbins? Does thou think that the Governor is an old fossil and doest thou hope to see him defeated at election tomorrow?"

306 EXT. MISTRESS HIBBINS' HOUSE

The Governor and the beadle stop short as they hear these words. The Governor looks toward the window. He sets his jaw; his eyes flash as he sees:

CUT TO

307 EXT. WINDOW

Mistress Hibbins (the effigy) is nodding.

308 INT. MISTRESS HIBBINS' LIVING ROOM

Giles, peeking around the edge of the window to see how the Governor is taking it, continues: "Fie, for shame, Mistress Hibbins!"--and then he bends over close to the bonnet as if he were listening with his hand to his ear:

TITLE: "It would cost thee a ducking, but, fear not, I would never betray thee."

309 SEMI CLOSE-UP BEADLE AND THE GOVERNOR

The Governor's brows are drawn into a hard line. He and the beadle exchange glances which bode ill for Mistress Hibbins. They are just starting on when the Governor says threateningly:

TITLE: "Mistress Hibbins shall be punished for this. She shall be ducked by Giles tomorrow."

BACK: The beadle nods in decided approval.

310 INT. HIBBINS' HOUSE

Giles grins from ear to ear! He blows a kiss to the sleeping Hibbins. "At last!" he whispers, "At last!"

311 INT. REVEREND DIMMESDALE'S STUDY

In his study Reverend Dimmesdale is gathering his few things

together--his favorite books. He is almost feverish in his haste, working as though he would keep from thinking.

312 INT. HESTER'S HOME

Hester is on the floor, kneeling before the little trunk. There is a pile of clothes--hers and Pearl's--near the trunk, and she packs and unpacks the things, so bewildered by her happiness that she does not know what she is doing. Pearl is trying to help. She carries her funny-looking doll to her mother to be carefully packed away with the other things. Hester spins around in sheer happiness as she dreams that on the morrow the three of them will have escaped, and all pain and unhappiness will be forgotten.

FADE OUT

TITLE: With pomp and ceremony the Puritans celebrated Election Day.

312 FADE IN EXT. MARKET-PLACE

The street is agog with activity. An air of festivity prevails. As the people pass to and fro, drums beating, the band strikes up and some of the Puritanical solemnity seems lost.

In the market-place a crowd has gathered. The people are being jostled to and fro as they crane their necks to see over the heads of the people in front of them.

314 SEMI LONG SHOT OF THE DUCKING POND

Giles is about to duck Mistress Hibbins. The crowd is waiting in breathless expectancy.

The beadle is standing by, stiffly waiting as though to see punishment properly administered, but there is a gleam in his eyes as though he were enjoying it.

Mistress Hibbins pleads with Giles--with the beadle--that she is innocent. But Giles, with great pleasure, spits on his hands, seizes the handle, and with much flourish drops Mistress Hibbins into the water. When she comes up sputtering and mad as a wet hen, she calls out:

TITLE: "I have been falsely accused! I have been sinned against!"

BACK: Giles listens to this in great glee. He has never been quite so happy in all his life. The beadle does not weaken in the least at her defense--for had he not himself heard Mistress Hibbins hold the Governor up to ridicule? And the beadle tells Giles:

TITLE: "Duck her again!--For the lie that is on the tip of her tongue."

BACK: Giles grins--and down goes Mistress Hibbins. As she comes up, dripping water, she squawks: "I have been sinned against!"

With a motion of his hand, the beadle orders, "Again--for good measure!"

Giles never dreamed of so much pleasure. His face is like a melon

that has been cut with a knife, so wide is his grin. Another good grip on the handle--and down she goes.

315 EXT. MARKET-PLACE

The Election Day procession is coming down the street--the people in the foreground eager to see.

316 SEMI CLOSE-UP MARKET-PLACE

Hester is standing there, watching the parade. She is as eager and as excited as a child--even more so than Pearl who clutches at her mother's hand, rising on tiptoe when the soldiers go past. The people have moved away from Hester, so that she always stands alone.

Indians can be seen in the background.

Mistress Hibbins comes running past Hester on her way home. She is like a wet hen flying for shelter.

317 FLASH OF THE PROCESSION GOING TOWARD THE CHURCH

Much pomp. The band is followed by the soldiers in glittering armor with weapons flashing in the sunlight. Men from off the Spanish ship. Puritans in their holiday garb. The minister walks beside the Governor.

318 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND GROUP

Hester is no longer able to control her eager excitement. In a few moments the minister will pass by and their eyes will meet. There will be a salute between them--a flash of recognition. In a few hours they will be away! She doesn't notice that Roger Prynne is walking up to her, standing in back of her.

319 CLOSE-UP PRYNNE AND HESTER

Hester, conscious that someone is near her, turns slowly and looks into the eye of Prynne. Prynne smiles and bows, then quietly moves away. Hester's eyes follow him. The light of her happiness dies out, and then slowly comes back to her as she dismisses this fear. It is only a transient one. A few hours longer!

320 MEDIUM LONG SHOT

In this shot we see the procession passing by Hester. The minister walks beside the Governor--the beadle in back of them. They march close to Hester.

321 CLOSE-UP MINISTER--CAMERA ON MOVING PLATFORM

The minister, walking along, looks over at Hester. His eyes signal to hers. There is in them a sudden sparkle. He, too, knows a divine happiness.

322 CLOSE-UP HESTER

At the sight of the minister she has forgotten Prynne. There is an air of suppressed excitement about her. Her eyes answer the signal shot from the minister's eyes. Their glances say very plainly, "In a few hours, my loved one."

323 EXT. CHURCH

The minister and the Governor and the beadle enter the church. Then all the people pour into the church, for the minister is to preach the election sermon.

324 INT. CHURCH

For the cutting, it might be well to have a semi close-up of Prynne. His face is gloomy and foreboding in spite of his smile. He slinks into one of the pews and sits down, waiting for his evil moment of triumph.

325 EXT. CHURCH

The Puritans have poured into the church. Hester sees that the church is filled. She would go in, but the beadle motions her away. She and Pearl go over to the foot of the scaffold.

326 INT. CHURCH

The church is now filled. The minister is stepping up into the pulpit.

327 CLOSE-UP PULPIT

Dimmesdale is standing ready to begin his sermon. There is something akin to ecstasy in his expression. This is to be his last sermon, preached with an exaltation of spirit as if his troubled heart had found repose at last.

328 EXT. PILLORY

Hester stands there alone with Pearl. The Indians, passing by, stop and stare at her curiously. The child is frightened and hides behind her mother's skirts. When one of the Indians points to the letter on Hester's breast, her hands fly to hide it. She looks at them, hurt and frightened. Two Indians pass by close to the camera, one saying to the other:

TITLE: "She must be some great dignitary here."

(Title to be written in Iroquois language, dissolving into English.)

329 INT. CHURCH LONG SHOT

Minister preaching. He is looking from his pulpit upon an audience whose very inmost spirits have yielded to his control. They gaze upon him as though he held them spellbound.

330 CLOSE-UP MINISTER

As he preaches his face is glowing with light. He seems scarcely aware of the people in the church. His hands are uplifted, as if in supplication.

331 EXT. CHURCH AT PILLORY

Hester stands there alone, waiting for the minister. She seems lost in a reverie of dreams. The sunlight is falling upon her face which reflects her inner happiness.

FADE OUT

TITLE: The congregation was spellbound. Never had their preacher spoken as eloquently as he did to-day. He spoke as one inspired.

332 FADE IN INT. CHURCH LONG SHOT

The eyes of the congregation are upon their minister. As he stands in his pulpit he seems almost transfigured, so far has the exaltation of prayer carried him. Then suddenly we see him stop short; his hands fall to his sides. His eyes are focused on someone in the church! What are his tragic eyes looking at as they strain in their sockets?

333 CLOSE-UP ROGER PRYNNE IN THE CONGREGATION

Roger Prynne is sitting there, his eyes focused upon the minister. In them is a look--terrible, meaningful, triumphant.

334 CLOSE-UP MINISTER

The minister makes an effort to go on, but all strength seems to have ebbed from him, all inspiration is gone. He cannot move; he cannot speak. His hand goes to his heart. He makes a gesture of dismissal.

335 LONG SHOT

The minister steps from the pulpit and we see quite a movement among the people in the church. Why had that flow of eloquence stopped so suddenly? When they see the minister with his hand upon his heart, they know. He has overtaxed himself; he had summoned too much strength to try to give them a great sermon and had over-reached himself.

336 EXT. CHURCH

Hester Prynne in the foreground with Pearl, waiting. She moves forward eagerly when she sees that the people are beginning to pour out of the church. The captain of the Spanish boat passes close to her. She hurries over to him with light happy steps.

337 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE CAPTAIN

She beckons for him to bend his shaggy head close to hers. She whispers in his ear: "Thou hast the cabins all ready?"

The captain nods--a twinkle in his eye as though he divined her happiness.

338 EXT. MARKET-PLACE

The crowd has gathered outside of the church, waiting for their minister. They prepare for the continuation of the procession. It has reached some size. Again there is evidence of pomp and formality. Soldiers are lining up, forming a pathway which leads to the church. They keep the crowd back, though the latter presses forward ready to cry out a welcome to its minister when he shall cross the threshold of the church.

339 CLOSER SHOT

The trumpeters pass by Hester and Pearl. They are followed by men blowing fifes and beating drums. Hester, reaching the very height of her happiness, stands there watching them.

340 INT. CHURCH

The church is fast emptying; only a few are left. The Governor and the minister are walking toward the door when Roger

Prynne steps up to the minister. The minister can hardly retain his self-possession at the sight of Prynne. The Governor, seeing that Prynne wishes a few words alone with the minister, passes on. The minister is ashen-white; his hand goes to his heart.

341 CLOSE-UP MINISTER AND PRYNNE

The two talk low, tensely. "Thou art planning to escape," warns Prynne. "Thou hast dreamed that freedom would come to thee-- freedom!" and he laughs scornfully.

The minister stares at him, stricken. Prynne continues menacingly:

TITLE: "The boat that takes thee and Hester away, takes me!"

BACK: The minister stares at him as if he could not realize the significance of his words. A fearful weakness overcomes him. He would clutch at something to hold himself up. He makes a supreme effort to keep from falling. Prynne speaks again:

TITLE: "Wherever thou dost go, I will follow. Thou shalt never escape."

BACK: The minister reads into this bitter accusation more than the revenge of this one man who has been cheated out of his happiness. He sees the relentless pursuit of conscience, and he cries out against it.

342 EXT. CHURCH

The crowd is eagerly waiting for their minister and in the foreground is Hester.

343 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE CHILD

Hester can no longer hide her joy. The child, laughing, clutches at her mother's hand and looks up into that flushed, excited face.

344 EXT. CHURCH LONG SHOT

A cry goes up from the crowd--a cheer at the sight of their minister.

345 CLOSE-UP HESTER

Her heart quickens; she will behold him in this hour of triumph.

346 SHOT OF CROWD

Another cry goes up--then startled silence.

347 EXT. AT ENTRANCE OF CHURCH

The minister is staggering forward. He seizes hold of the portals of the door to keep from falling. There is drama in his very weakness.

348 SHOT OF CROWD

Hester is in the foreground. A silence like a pall has fallen upon the crowd. Hester is straining forward, her agonized eyes upon the minister.

349 SEMI CLOSE-UP AT DOOR OF CHURCH

Dimmesdale struggles against his growing weakness. He looks

over the crowd with fast-dimming eyes and then he sees--

350 EXT. PILLORY (WHAT THE MINISTER SEES) A LITTLE OUT OF FOCUS

351 MEDIUM SHOT INCLUDING THE MINISTER AND HESTER

Hester watches as a radiantly happy smile illuminates the minister's face and, gathering new strength, he starts down the steps. Hester stands directly in his path, and it would seem that his happy smile is for her. She draws back, fearful that any contact with her will cast its reflection upon him. And then, when he sways unsteadily, she starts forward as though to help him. But when he comes close to her, she sees that his radiant eyes are fastened upon something beyond, and he passes by without even seeing her.

352 LONG SHOT

The Puritans make way for the minister in hushed silence, watching. He goes toward the scaffold and starts up the steps.

353 CLOSE-UP HESTER

It is suddenly revealed to Hester what the minister intends to do. A scream almost tears out of her. Then she stifles it and stands there, not knowing what to do. She starts forward as though she would stop him--then hesitates. Anything she does will damn him in the eyes of the people.

354 LONG SHOT

The minister has reached the platform of the pillory and is standing there, swaying unsteadily as he motions for the people to listen to what he has to say.

355 CLOSE SHOT OF PRYNNE

Prynne, standing near the church, is malevolently watching Dimmesdale.

356 SEMI CLOSE-UP THE MINISTER

The minister straightens and lifts his head as though throwing a burden off his shoulders. There is something strangely triumphant in his voice as he cries aloud to the crowd:

TITLE: "I stand here where I should have stood six years ago--by the side of Hester Prynne."

357 SEMI LONG SHOT

For a second the hushed silence of the crowd is unbroken--and then the figure of Hester flies through the stunned crowd and up the steps of the scaffold to the side of the man she loves.

358 SEMI CLOSE-UP PILLORY

The minister falls on his knees beside Hester, crying out, "Hester Prynne!" with piercing sweetness.

But Hester turns to the crowd, pleading with them to listen to her, as she cries out:

TITLE: "He is mad! His illness hath unbalanced his mind! He wears the veil of my sorrow; he accuses himself falsely!"

BACK: As she speaks, the minister is trying to summon enough strength to rise and deny her feeble attempt to save him, but he sinks at her feet again.

Pearl has followed her mother, and now shyly clings to her.

359 CLOSE SHOT OF CROWD

It would seem that she has convinced them. So eager are they to believe their minister innocent that they echo her own words: "He is mad! The poor man, his illness hath made him lose his mind." And they nod to each other, trying to convince themselves that their saint is still a saint.

360 EXT. PILLORY SEMI LONG SHOT

The Governor now walks to the foot of the scaffold. There is movement among the waiting crowds.

The minister staggers to his feet again. "Stop!" he cries dramatically. "Turn thy eyes back to me again! Look upon me, the sinner. Hester Prynne would protect me again--but it is too late! Thou must behold the evidence of my guilt!" The minister steps passionately forward a pace before Hester and the child.

361 CLOSE-UP MINISTER

He is crying out, "I bid thee look again as I, in my death hour, stand before thee. I bid thee look again at Hester's scarlet letter!" With a convulsive motion, he tears away the ministerial band before his breast, and there is revealed the letter "A"--the badge of shame which he had burned upon his breast with the fiery cross.

362 SEMI LONG SHOT

For an instant the horror-stricken gaze of the crowd is concentrated upon the ghastly miracle. The minister stands with a flush of triumph in his face as one who, in the crisis of acutest pain, has won a victory. Then he sinks down upon the scaffold.

363 CLOSE-UP PRYNNE

Roger Prynne cries out:

TITLE: "Only death could have cheated me out of my revenge!"

364 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER, THE MINISTER AND PEARL

The dying man's eyes are fixed upon the child. "My little Pearl," he says feebly. There is a sweet and gentle smile over his face as of a spirit sinking in deep repose. "'Wilt thou kiss me?'"

Pearl kisses his lips. The spell is broken. Her tears fall upon her father's cheek. Then she crawls away from him so that she may make place for her mother.

365 CLOSE-UP HESTER AND MINISTER

Hester holds him in her arms with his head resting against her breast. "Hester," breathes the clergyman, "It is farewell."

Then Hester, bending his face close to his, her eyes shining with

tears, whispers tenderly:

TITLE: "Shall we not meet again? Shall we not spend our immortal life together?"

BACK: When the minister is able to speak, it is with tremulous solemnity:

TITLE: "God knoweth--and he is merciful--for he hath brought me hither to this death of triumphant ignominy before the people--"

BACK: Her lips touch his forehead in a farewell caress. And he breathes these words to her: "Pray for my soul, Hester." Life is fast ebbing away.

Hester, lifting her eyes in a moment's swift, silent prayer, holds him in her arms. With his last feeble gesture, he tears the scarlet letter off her breast. His fast-dimming eyes seek the eyes of the Governor.

366 CLOSE-UP GOVERNOR

The old man bows his head. The last dying wish of the minister shall be fulfilled; Hester Prynne shall never again wear the badge of shame.

367 SEMI CLOSE-UP THE MINISTER AND HESTER

His last words to her are:

TITLE: "We could never have fled from our sin--we could never have hidden it. It is better to cleanse our souls. ... Forgive me, Hester--"

BACK: And his eyes close in quiet repose as if he were sinking into a peaceful sleep.

For a few moments she is not aware that death has come. She sits there rocking him in her arms, but over her has fallen a veil of peace, as if she, too, were at rest, as if she, too, knew something of the eternal forgetfulness that gives to his face a smile even in death. When she see that he is dead, she quietly lays him down.

368 LONGER SHOT

The Puritans stand awed into silence at the scene before them.

369 SEMI CLOSE-UP HESTER AND THE MINISTER

Hester is enveloped in a great calmness now that she knows he is at rest, and she says very simply:

TITLE: "He is dead. Let us pray for his soul."

370 LONG SHOT

The people scarcely move; as if they couldn't quite believe that the minister was dead, that the voice of Hester was falling upon their ears, asking that they should pray. She has risen now and stands before the cross.

371 SEMI CLOSE-UP THE GOVERNOR

The Governor reveals his hat and stands on the stairs of the scaffold in prayer.

372 LONG SHOT OF THE MARKET-PLACE

Hester praying. Slowly, one by one, the Puritans kneel in prayer; for this is their tribute to Hester Prynne; their answer to her plea for forgiveness.

373 SEMI CLOSE-UP CROSS ON PILLORY

Hester stands before the cross praying, praying for the soul of the man she loves. Out of her martyrdom has come an infinite peace and quiet beauty. And as she prays

FADE OUT