

"BLUE HOTEL"

Screenplay by

James Agee

1949

UNPRODUCED

TITLE

on black screen above center:

NEAR THE MIDDLE OF THE UNITED STATES

o.s., quiet, but swiftly louder, the humming, then hammering of rails; then over this, increasing SOUND, the SOUND of a hoarse, old-fashioned train whistle coming swiftly nearer: two long blasts, one short, one long, which trails down and out.

Over the fading train whistle and increasing train SOUND

FADE IN:

TITLE

below center:

TOWARDS THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Start the rapid SOUND of a train bell. SWOOP SOUND of bell and train up suddenly two seconds before

CUTTING TO:

CLOSE SHOT – A TRAIN (NITE)

Instantly bring SOUNDS of train and bell up as loud as the audience can stand. A transcontinental express-train crosses through r.s. to l.s. at frightening velocity. CAMERA is pulling back from a close shot at medium height of the train. In the train's wake, a long, luminous ruche of snow is raised, filling the screen, and slowly sinking, as SOUNDS dwindle

O.S.

As the last snow settles to the ground, and the SOUNDS die o.s., the CAMERA ends its pull-back about 12 feet off the ground in a

LONG SHOT – EXT. A STATION, A SMALL HOTEL, A SMALL TOWN, THE PRAIRIE – IN DARKNESS AND SILENCE

It is not snowing and the night sky is overcast but the snow on the ground gives off enough light – using infra-red if need be – to establish the station (extreme l.s.), the hotel (dead center), the edge of the town (extreme r.s.). Even in darkness the hotel gives off something odd and curdled. Beyond and between these buildings, as our eyes become accustomed to the darkness, we see an immense perspective of snowed land, and a very distant low horizon against a black sky which holds two thirds of the screen.

HOLD THIS DARKNESS perhaps eight seconds Then, within a maximum thirty seconds, the darkness alters through the lights of pre-dawn, dawn, etc., to the light of late morning. At the proper early juncture, one or two small lights appear in windows, and go out again. At the edge of the town, in the earliest real daylight, a man's tiny figure comes out of a door and walks out of r.s. Little flags of smoke and steam sprout, compact and crisp, in the bitter air. Shading and detail become increasingly clear. The station is coal-black; its sign FORT ROMPER, is just readable. The town is mostly low, mean, frame construction – the drab shades of tired blotting-paper. The Hotel, of a disturbing shade even in darkness, gives off under the changing light an always more and more sinister and unearthly fish-belly glare. Its sign, PALACE HOTEL, is newish, and easy to read. It is a crummy rather frail-looking wooden building of two stories, crowned by florid cornice work.

Beyond these buildings we can see perhaps forty miles. The sky is dull gray; the snow is like rice; there are farms, at lonely distances apart.

When high, shadowless morning light is established, the tiny silhouette of a man – SCULLY – walks briskly out of the Hotel front door and towards the station. o.s., begin and bring up SOUNDS of an overworked locomotive and a train; he walks faster; bring up the SOUNDS; he trots; a somewhat archaic locomotive, crusted and bearded with ice and snow, slowing, drags on from l.s. a baggage car, a daycoach, the

first of a string of boxcars; covering SCULLY as he trots; stopping. As quickly as will not be absurd, SCULLY reappears, walking towards the Hotel, followed by the COWBOY, the EASTERNER, the SWEDE, in single file. At the same moment, the CAMERA, which is centered on the hotel door, starts towards the door at their pace, holding them within left-screen. We get at first only character by silhouette and near-silhouette, then in more detail.

SCULLY is in the lead, half-turning as he walks, to talk; short, chunky, late middle-aged. Next, the COWBOY, size and structure of John Wayne, tight city trousers, a solid block of mackinaw, his best hat; he walks like a horseman and with the stooping, rather diffident stride of a man of his height; he carries a scarred raw-hide suitcase or a splotched Holstein-hide roll-grip. Next, the EASTERNER. He is small, slender, bears himself well and entirely without the bumptiousness of so many small men. Without at all mincing, he is more neat-footed along the icy boards than the others are; he carries a briefcase and a middle-sized, neutral valise, possibly with faded labels on it. Last, the SWEDE: He is above average height but stocky enough to seem shorter than he is, and disturbed and scared enough, as a rule, to sag an inch or two more. A shiny black leather coat to the middle of the thighs, trousers which look as if he had on two suits of long underwear beneath them, a cap of coarse hairy wool, two sizes too small, high on his head, with earflaps which at best cannot thoroughly cover his ears. There is something shaky, equivocal and arhythmic about his walking. An outsize new suitcase which looks to be covered by black oilcloth increases his clumsiness at the knees.

As these men grow out of silhouette into detail and size, and we begin to hear their SOUNDS, the CHOWF-CHOWFINGS of the locomotive, o.s., drown out these SOUNDS and the locomotive and the train, gathering speed, cut off the men from view and then fill most of the screen, the Hotel still jutting above. As locomotive makes r.s., the CAMERA is quite close to train and place-names, emblems and names of lines, swinging by, suggest the whole nation and continent in geography and history.

CUT OR LAP:

DISSOLVE TO:

MEDIUM TWO SHOT – FACADE OF HOTEL – DOOR AT CENTER

The CAMERA is still creeping, lowering quietly to eye height. o.s. SOUNDS of walking on icy boards. The four men enter, in single file and in the same order, at l.s. SCULLY steps a pace past his door and wheels and stops abruptly, bowing slightly and flinging out one hand in a slightly uneasy parody of Mine Host and causing the others to stop or tread water in uneasy courtesy, indulging his spiel. The CAMERA stops creeping at the same moment; they are medium close. The EASTERNER looks quietly and curiously at the strange color.

EASTERNER

(politely concealing
his faint nausea)

I've never seen the shade before,
but once.

SCULLY

(a little jealous,
but very polite)

And where might that be, may I ask?

EASTERNER

On the legs of a kind of heron; one
of the wading birds. It's a very
strange color; there's nothing else
quite like it in Nature. It declares
the bird's position against any
background.

SCULLY

Declares his – does it now! Well
now, surely that's a mischievous hue
for the Almighty to paint a poor
craytcher in this murderin' world.
Declare me position indeed. Against
inny background. That's nicely put.
That's it in a nutshell. You kin see
the Palace Hotel for miles up the
line, all weathers, and she's starin'
like the morning star. Now didn't
ye? And do ye truly admire it?

EASTERNER

It's a very remarkable shade.

SCULLY

Ahh, count on a traveled man for
connisewership! But gintlemen, may

heaven forgive me an' me guests
rattlin' their teeth on me own
doorstep.

(he hurries to open
the door and wave
them past him)

Come in! Come in!

(to Johnnie)

One twenty-two three an' – No, line
'em up along the south corridor and
don't let the grass grow under yer
feet. Hang yer coats in here,
gintlemen, unless ye prefer to go
straight to yer rooms.

AD LIBS

No. – No, thanks.

SCULLY

(continuing)

Let's thaw ourselves out a bit; ye
can sign up at yer layzhure. Not
that ev'ry room in me establishment
ain't as warm as toast, gintlemen,
but in weather the likes o' this, ye
should have the binifit o' the lee
o' house.

AD LIBS

Sure. – Of course, thanks.

SCULLY

Now here's something, friends, ye
couldn't hope to find in the Waldorf.
Ye see?

(he pours a slashing
tinkle of ice-
splintery water into
the first basin)

What would ye git there?

(contemptuously)

Shteem! Where fer the chills there's
nuthin' on earth to set the blood
hummin' agin like a bit o' nice brisk
water.

(Meantime, he is
filling two more
basins)

Ye don't believe me?
(to the Easterner)
Don't be shy! try it! You'll see.
(The Easterner plunges;
the instant the water
hits his face he
utters four sharp
coughs, but he stays
at it and emerges
gasping and groping;
Scully produces a
towel he grabbed
from a shelf under
the tub and now says
with an air of great
graciousness)
Yer towel, sir.

SCULLY
Yer towel, sir.
(same old towel)

DOLLY along to the Swede, eyes downcast and shifting a little;
he plants his heavy fingers in the water up to their second
knuckles, and quickly withdraws them, quailing profoundly.

SCULLY
(handing out the towel,
now quite draggled,
politely but with
less enthusiasm)
Yer towel, sir.

The Swede sinks one finger at a time into the towel and
twists.

CLOSE UP – THE EASTERNER

He is looking into a mirror. His skin shines as if he had
used some kind of metal polish on it; he is quietly surprised
and pleased. He glances down casually to see if his nails
are clean.

CLOSE UP – THE COWBOY

Also gazing into the mirror. He has the same burnished look
of metal polished. Impersonal light eyes, a little bit bovine,
very virile and empty, fixed through most of the shot on his

hair, which he is tidying with a public comb. His eyes rake down, casually and impersonally across his face at the finish of the shot.

CLOSE UP – THE SWEDE

He is twisting his fingers, one by one, heavily in the towel; by the angle of his eyes and their surreptition, it is clear that he is very carefully watching the other three men in the mirror. At the end of the shot, Scully walks into it as the Swede drops the towel beside the basin. The Swede turns for the door, Scully picks up the towel, tosses it into a cardboard box, CAMERA SWINGING as they make for the door.

SCULLY

(in re the towel)

Thank you.

(calling after them)

Now just make yerselves comfortable by the stove, gintlemen. It won't be no time till dinner.

They start through the door.

MEDIUM CLOSE – THE MAIN ROOM

Past stove on the FARMER as he glances up and starts to edge back his chair to make room.

FARMER

Mean weather.

COWBOY

Mean enough.

FARMER

Seven below, last night.

COWBOY

That a fact.

FARMER

Warmed up a leetle, but it's jest makin' fer more snow.

COWBOY

Snowin' a'ready.

FARMER

Big wind a comin' too, shouldn't wonder.

COWBOY

Shouldn't wonder.

FARMER

No sir, shouldn't wonder if we git us a real ole fashion' blizzard. If ye don't mind my askin', stranger, where might ye be from?

COWBOY

I was down to Omahaw; a little business.

FARMER

An' where might ye be headin'?

COWBOY

Got me a little ranch, up near the Dakota line.

FARMER

That a fact? Stoppin' over fer the Spur train, 's 'at right?

COWBOY

That's right.

FARMER

Myself, I'm a farmer.

COWBOY

That right?

FARMER

Yup. That's right. Started as a homesteader, back in seventy-six, but now I own muh land.

COWBOY

Uh huh.

FARMER

Quarter section.

COWBOY
That right?

FARMER
Yup. Quarter section. When I come here it warn't nuthin' but a untamed wilderness like you might say. But now I own me a quarter section.

A silence. Farmer spits again, then addresses the Easterner.

FARMER
An' what might yer own business be, stranger, if ye don't mind my askin'?

EASTERNER
Not at all, sir. I'm a journalist.
Newspaper man.

FARMER
Now is that a fact?
(carefully)
Not meaning no offense, you're from the east, ain't you?

EASTERNER
(smiling)
Yes.
(against his natural reticence)
A Philadelphia paper.

FARMER
Is that right now. Well, not meanin' no offense, I'm mighty glad to hear that.

EASTERNER
(smiling)
Why's that, sir?

FARMER
I was skeered ye might be from Noo York City. Not that I've ever laid eyes on one, an' o' course, it could be I heard wrong. But what ye hear tell...
(a half silent

whistling whew with
a shake of the head)
...them Noo Yorkers!
(Uneasy glance at the
Swede; tactful change
of subject)
But they ain't never nuthin' happens
out here, Mister, not that's fer the
nooze papers. – Is they?

EASTERNER

Well, you see, I'm not after news
stories just now.

(politely)

Back east we're all so ignorant of
the rest of the country, that's all.
I am too, and I don't like to be
ignorant. I just want to learn what
things are really like, If I can,
and tell others who don't know, you
see.

FARMER

(chews it over,
interested but puzzled)

An' they'll pay ye a livin' fer that?

EASTERNER

(smiling)

That's right.

FARMER

But if ye don't mind me askin', why
how come ye coms to Rawmpr? Ain't
nuthin' ever happens here.

EASTERNER

(careful and very
polite but candid)

Frankly I didn't know I was getting
off till I got here. Seeing it from
the train, I just felt I couldn't go
on by without seeing more of the
Blue Hotel.

FARMER

Blue Hotel! Oh! You mean right where
we're sett'n'?

The Easterner nods, smiling.

FARMER

Well, I ain't no proper jedge, but the woman, she thinks it's mighty purty.

EASTERNER

I never saw a color like it. Not on a hotel.

FARMER

Is that a fact now? Well I'll be dogged.

(pause. To the Swede)

An' how 'bout you, Mister, if ye don't mind me askin'? Where might you be from?

DISSOLVE TO:

MOVING CLOSE SHOT – ALCOVE OF THE DINING ROOM

CAMERA VERTICAL over the dining table, starting at the head, pulling down along the aisle of places moderately slow. Perhaps one or two heads ad lib into the shot, ducking over the plate for a bite, but except for this, heads are not visible – only what is on the table, and the busily eating and reaching hands. Subdued SOUNDS of shy, speechless, hungry eating. The food is all on the table and by evidence of damage done, we are well on into the meal. Voices are very sporadic and ad lib, possibly recognizable; close to monosyllabic and wholly utilitarian except for the Easterner.

AD LIBS

Meat please... Pass the potatoes...
Turnips.

They are passed, used and returned without comment. A hand and fork reach to spear a biscuit.

EASTERNER

Could I have the butter, please.

An almost inaudible "Sure," in reply and

EASTERNER

(quietly)
Thanks.

The voices are o.s., such hands as reach deeper into the terrain than the eating plates, appear at unpredictable angles and rhythms; perhaps two might also collide and spring apart with the almost electric-shock celerity of shy courtesy. Not more than ten seconds to this VERTICAL PULL before we begin to hit barren space, the tundra-like lower reaches of the table, all much-mended, not perfectly clean, white tablecloth, no places set. After just a little of this, CAMERA begins to tilt and settle so that as it reaches the end of the long table, (room for a crowded 14) it is at eye level of a seated man looking up the center of the table at Scully at the head. Along l.s., the Swede (next Scully), and Johnnie; r.s., the Cowboy, (next to Scully) then the Easterner and the Farmer. We pause just long enough to get a glimpse of Scully's character through his eating: a business-like but rather frugal and finicky eater, even a touch of old-maidishness; an old fashioned and rather cute old guy; absorbed in eating, he loses entirely his Mine Host mannerisms, he's just an aging pappy at home, reloading. Rather frail eyelids and stretched neck when he drinks water; an evidently self-taught but deeply habitual care to take small bites and to keep his lips closed over his chewing; dabby with his fork; delicate at harpooning a biscuit; a suggestion of dental plates which don't quite fit.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

A big napkin is tied under his ears, its knot-ends make spare ears below his own. He is sweating a little. He uses his fork left-handed and upside down, European style. He eats steadily with heavy square gestures, and we see in his eating and chewing a conflict between the hunger of a fairly heavy eater and his uneasiness. He is intensely silent and his eyes are darting all over the joint with a dog's eating-vigilance plus his own special kind of uneasiness. Elbows wide and clumsy, he usually grazes Johnnie and as CAMERA pulls to the left losing the Swede and picking up Johnnie, the elbows collide rather hard and the first we see of Johnnie's face involves a spasm of annoyance.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE COWBOY FROM JOHNNIE'S ANGLE

The Cowboy is winking at Johnnie, amused.

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE

He watches the Swede. A small, sour smile, friendly eyes, in reaction to the Cowboy. His eating is the normal fast heavy eating of a not very well mannered, far from meek, kid, exactly on the watershed between being a boy and a very young man.

CLOSE UP – THE COWBOY

A napkin tucked fairly high into his dark shirt, his large elbows held in with unaccustomed tightness. His eating system is to mash whatever can be mashed into malleable material, mix it, load his fork by help of his knife as heavy as possible, sculpture and trim it with his knife; changes fork to right hand, brings it up to a mouth which opens for it and closes over it as efficiently as a steamshovel, then working his full jaws with a fair amount of SOUND which he keeps reasonably subdued, meanwhile lowering his fork, changing hands, and starting all over again. He swallows exactly as soon as the new load is ready and takes a swallow of water just before shifting the fork to the right hand: solid machine-like reciprocation between knife, fork, left hand, right hand, mouth and water glass. Otherwise, as a rule, his eyes are either attentive to his plate, or out of focus.

PULL CAMERA TO THE RIGHT, losing the Cowboy and picking up the Easterner: his are the ordinary eating manners of a well-brought-up middle-class Easterner, shaded by his own considerable natural elegance. The modestly hearty appetite of a small healthy man. Small, strong, fine hands. As with his way of speaking, he neither obtrudes nor tries to conceal or modify what is natural to him or to his background. He is a clear master at seeing everything there is to be seen without appearing to stare, or to sneak glances, or even to look, or even to be careful not to look. As the CAMERA leaves him, PULLING RIGHT, he touches his mouth with his napkin, which has been in his lap.

TAIL OFF briefly on the Farmer, napkin tucked broad over bib of overalls, hard, heavy-knuckled red-looking hands: looking at nobody; hoeing it in; an aging, hard working countryman, at home at this table, and unself-conscious of strangers.

MEDIUM SHOT – THE WHOLE TABLE FROM THE EMPTY END

They are all eating slower, the tail-end of the meal. AD LIB and unobtrusively behind this, is Scully's daughter moving,

waiting on table, silently. She is a pale, melancholic, pious, once-pretty spinster of about 30. By-play and reaction between her and the diners should be present but minimal, and played ad lib in passing, never pointed up.

Scully rearranges himself to lean back in his chair and puts his hands on the table. A heavy silence as they dab at their food.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

His eyes angle sharply to the Cowboy and then to the Easterner.

TWO SHOT –
THE EASTERNER AND THE COWBOY FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

The Easterner catches the Swede's eye, looks quickly down. The Cowboy's eyes up; down. The Easterner looks up again with an inevitable tinge of surreptition.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

The Swede is disturbed by the Easterner's look; glances sharply to the Cowboy.

TWO SHOT –
THE EASTERNER AND THE COWBOY FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

The Cowboy looks up with inevitable surreptition.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

The Swede is still more worried. Gives Scully a sharp glance.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY FROM THE SWEDE'S ANGLE

He looks up at the worried look, quickly down again; up again, slyly.

CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

Eyes sidelong to Johnnie, very sly and worried, then to the Easterner and the Cowboy, intensely suspicious and deeply worried.

TWO SHOT –
THE EASTERNER AND THE COWBOY FROM THE SWEDE'S

ANGLE

The Cowboy looks up in flat perplexity; the Easterner looks up in curiosity so veiled it looks almost criminal; then he looks down; then the Easterner and the Cowboy glance toward each other, each rather secretly, checking if the other had noticed anything odd; it looks very much like complicity.

CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

Very deeply bothered, he rakes his glance at each man in turn, then sharply up at the wall above Scully.

INSERT: WALL ABOVE SCULLY FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE A SOMBER STEEL ENGRAVING OF "THE STAG AT BAY."

CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

The Swede's eyes leave the engraving, quick glances all around again; he is sweating. He looks into his plate and at his heavy hands on either side of it. He is working hard to brace himself, he begins to get brave and to resolve himself; at last he determines to speak.

SWEDE

(to Scully)

Me, I come from New York City.

The Swede casts quick somber eyes at the Farmer.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE FARMER FROM THE SWEDE'S ANGLE

His fork hesitates a fraction near his mouth and goes in fast. The Farmer looks even more absorbedly into his plate.

SCULLY

(juicily polite)

Do ye now! Now isn't that intristin'!

Isn't that fascinatin'! A great city.

Ah a great city. Well I remember me own arrival.

SWEDE

You come from New York too?

SCULLY

No, I only seen it fer a matter of days.

The daughter passes behind them; bread pudding to each.

SCULLY

My home was Bahstin Mass.

Every one quietly starting to eat dessert.

SWEDE

I lived there ten years.

SCULLY

Tin yearrs. Ye don't say. Tin years.
A great city.

SWEDE

Before that I come from Sweden.

SCULLY

Ye don't say. Fine people, the Swedes.

SWEDE

In New York I was a tailor.

SCULLY

A tayylor! Ye don't say! A tailor ye
say. Now isn't that simply
fascinatin'.

(to the table at large)

The gintleman here tells me he was a
tailor. Isn't that intristin'!

SWEDE

Yah: tailor.

SCULLY

Well sir, tailorin' I never learned.
Ye might call me a jack of all trades
and master o' none, exceptin'
hotelkeeping...

(laughs modestly,
glancing hopefully
around the table)

...but tailorin', no, that's a mystery
to me... It must be a fascinatin'
trade.

SWEDE

(dead silence)

SCULLY

Hard on the eyes, maybe.

SWEDE

(More silence; his
eyes go again to
Scully; a kind of
suspicion is in them,
and in his voice)

How long you been here?

SCULLY

Fourteen years this last August I
came here and I never had cause to
regret it. A good town, sir. Good
neighbors.

Scully beams a little nervously, glancing around.

SWEDE

What are the crops?

SCULLY

Wheat, sir. That's the main crop, ye
might say the only crop. Wheat.

(Eyes and polite
gesture to angle of
Farmer)

Here's a man kin tell ye all there
is to know about wheat, can't ye
Henry? Henry's a wheat farmer.

The Cowboy and the Easterner are eating very quietly.

The Farmer nods, saying nothing.

SCULLY

Splendid soil. Rich as cheese. Some
farms here, the yield is up to thirty-
five bushels to the acre.

(to the Farmer)

Isn't that correct?

The Farmer nods.

SCULLY

Last summer at the best it brought
20 cents a bushel. So ye can readily
see it's a prosperous community.

(A rather wretched
smile)

Plain but prosperous.

(More silence)

There are farmers hereabouts who are
to be accounted as wealthy men.

(Silence)

Farmers, mind ye.

(To table at large,
almost pleadingly)

Wealthy!

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY FROM THE SWEDE'S ANGLE

Appalled, his glasses wobble on his nose. SOUND of Swede's
laughter o.s.

MEDIUM SHOT – COWBOY, EASTERNER AND FARMER – FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

The Cowboy's jaw hangs open as if he were dead; in the
Easterner, a far more sophisticated astonishment and
wondering; the Farmer scowls more with puzzlement than anger;
all dead silent, hands of all three arrested; continue Swede's
laughter o.s.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE'S HEAD

Laughing and gleaming and glinting at them in great amusement
and a glitter of fear.

GROUP SHOT – FULL LENGTH OF TABLE

Towards Scully. Everyone motionless and silent except the
Swede, all heads gawping at him: he is rocking with laughter
and quietly raising his heavy hands an inch from the table
and slapping them down again, over and over.

SLOW FADE:

FADE IN:

CLOSE SHOT – THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOW OF THE MAIN ROOM

Extreme violence of snow and wind, the only visual anchorage is a blanched gate post leaning rigid into it. SOUNDS of strong wind, shut away, and of snow against the window pane. PULL BACK as Scully's aging hand releases a harsh ornate lace curtain he has pulled back, and BACK PAST SCULLY turning his face in CLOSE UP from the window, smiling, and announcing to the room at large:

SCULLY

A real old-fashioned blizzard,
gentlemen.

(Almost proprietary
about it)

FULL SHOT – DOWN THE ROOM FROM SCULLY'S ANGLE

They are all filing in from the dining room past the stove in the profoundly relaxed few moments of shapeless drifting after a satisfying meal. In their whole demeanor and tone of voice there is absolute security; total lack of personal connection with the blizzard except the pleasure of being indoors.

EASTERNER

(forward along l.s.
and drifting toward
the center)

I should say it is.

(he continues leisurely
across the room
fishing in his pocket
for a cigarette)

The Cowboy is a little behind the Easterner.

COWBOY

Sure looks like it.

A little right of center he slowly turns his back, getting out tobacco sack and papers. The Easterner by now is lighting up. The Swede walks much more slowly, beveling almost straight toward the CAMERA, deeper towards us than any of the others, eyes on angle of window; slowly prodding tobacco into his pipe. His comment is a scarcely audible breathing; in his face is already the beginning of a strange excitement as he watches through the window and approaches it.

SWEDE
(with a strange,
private excitement,
almost a whisper)
Yaahh!

The Farmer, meanwhile, swings in just behind the chairs at the stove. He utters the quiet gasp of total belly-satisfaction, an "ahhh" not unlike Titus Moody's to Fred Allen, but earthier. He is loosening his belt and contentedly fingering through a gap in his shirt to scratch his belly. Johnnie is in, silent, between the chair and the stove. The Easterner starts glancing at the news headlines; the Cowboy starts slowly toward the stove; the Swede continues very ponderously and slowly toward the CAMERA and the window.

MEDIUM SHOT –
PAST EASTERNER TOWARD SCULLY; SWEDE IN B.G.;
COWBOY LEAVING R.S.

SCULLY
(sharply)
Johnnie! Lay on more coal.

MEDIUM SHOT –
PAST EASTERNER TOWARD JOHNNIE BACK OF COWBOY
AND FARMER

JOHNNIE
Want to burn the place down?

The Easterner turns to face the room. CUT IN MID-TURN.

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY PAST EASTERNER

Advancing from the window and leaning to peer toward the stove.

SCULLY
Sure, it's rid hot now.

He comes down to the middle of the room, the CAMERA with him, losing the Swede, still talking.

SCULLY
(continuing)
I tell ye, friends, there's nuthin'
like a chair beside a stove...

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE EASTERNER

His eyes and head following Scully who is already out of shot toward the stove. The Easterner is lazily and happily observant.

SCULLY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

...to make ye shpit 'n the eye...

MEDIUM SHOT –
FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE TOWARD SCULLY and the group coalescing toward the stove.

SCULLY

(back to CAMERA)

...o' the worst weather Heaven kin send.

COWBOY

(absently; contentedly)

That's right.

The startling SOUND, o.s., of hollowed palms being clapped together.

MEDIUM SHOT – SWEDE FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE

Pipe clenched, a queer grin on his face, just finishing his handclap of solitary excitement and pleasure.

CLOSE UP – EASTERNER

Much interested, his eyes flick from the Swede's angle to the angle of the stove and the group; the newspaper droops in his hand.

MEDIUM SHOT – GROUP AT STOVE FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE

They have noticed nothing.

SCULLY

Well, I'll be off about me dooties if you'll excuse me gintlemen.

COWBOY

Sure. So long.

EASTERNER'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Certainly.

Scully crosses up the room toward I.s. CAMERA FOLLOWING, losing the group.

JOHNNIE'S VOICE

(o.s.)

How 'bout it? Ready to get skinned
alive again?

GROUP SHOT – FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE – FARMER AT CENTER

FARMER

Son, day I see you skin a gopher
I'll deed ye my farm, an' my old
woman threwed in.

SOUND of a squeaky hinge across this.

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE

Going through the little swinging gate by the registration
desk.

GROUP SHOT – JOHNNIE CENTERED

JOHNNIE

Be good thing for your land and a
mercy for your wife.

COWBOY

Ouch!

FARMER

(approaching the table)

Jest get busy with that skinnin',
son, loud talk never proved nuthin'.

COWBOY

(swinging chair into
place)

I want to see this.

The Easterner walks into the shot as they severally arrange
chairs, cards and chips and start to settle down.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – FARMER – PAST JOHNNIE

Farmer sits in original position; Johnnie nearest the coatroom and with his back to it. They are cutting for deal and the Cowboy and the Easterner, who are doing the last necessary hiking of chairs, look on.

LONG SHOT – SWEDE FROM SAME ANGLE

His rigid, leaning stance has been four feet or so from the window. He is now very close to the window and is just pulling under himself a small stool. o.s. THE SOUND of the oily whirr of expert shuffling.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE FROM THE SAME ANGLE

The window is beyond him, his eyes are fixed deep into the snow. o.s. SOUNDS of dealing and ad lib bidding. CAMERA PULLS SLOWLY around so that the Swede is in still larger close up, filling most of the screen. He is looking out intensely past the CAMERA, giving tiny, rapid pulls on his pipe; his face showing signs of an inexplicable excitement; eyes becoming almost dreamy. CAMERA SLOWLY TURNS square on the window to focus on what his eyes are fixed on, – the post. Storm SOUNDS UP and card SOUNDS FADING to inaudibility. DISSOLVE to snow higher on post and, almost immediately, A LOUD SLAPPING DOWN OF CARDS and the Farmer's angry voice and the scrape of a chair.

EXTREME CLOSE UP – SWEDE

Deep fright and guile in the face and a strange and malignant smile.

MEDIUM SHOT – FARMER FROM JOHNNIE'S ANGLE

He is just finishing standing up, a look of heated scorn on his face.

JOHNNIE

Too bad. Poor feller just ought to
leave cards alone.

(They nod; they are
wholly on his side)

Or his temper, one or the other.

COWBOY

That's right. Ye can't afford a temper, not if ye play much cards.

EASTERNER

Or cards, if you have a temper.

COWBOY

(chuckles)

Mister, ya got sumpn' there.

JOHNNIE

How 'bout a whirl at four-handed; or do you reckon we can keep from bitin' each other's heads off?

COWBOY

(heavy jocosity)

Buster, my gun's right on the table so don't try nuthin' fancy.

EASTERNER

(smiling with Cowboy)

We might draw up a treaty of non-aggression.

COWBOY

Reckon I'll throw in with you, Johnnie, you look like a mean man to have agin ye.

EASTERNER

(in a low voice)

Better make sure the Swede'll play.

COWBOY

Hey buddy.

JOHNNIE

Hey Mister.

EASTERNER

I beg your pardon.

SWEDE

Hehnh?

EASTERNER

I wondered if you'd be my par –

JOHNNIE
How 'bout a little game?

Uneasy but determined to show everyone that he is not afraid.

SWEDE
Yeh? What kind of a game?

JOHNNIE
High Five.

SWEDE
Never heard of it.

COWBOY'S VOICE
Some call it Cinch.

JOHNNIE'S VOICE
Ain't no cinch the way that poor
Farmer plays it.

EASTERNER'S VOICE
Some call it Double Pedro.

COWBOY
Never knowed that.

SWEDE
Ohh. Yaah. Double Pedro. Is that it.

JOHNNIE
Five o' trumps yer Pedro, five o'
same color's yer left,...

SWEDE'S VOICE
(across him)
Yah.

JOHNNIE
...ranks jest below yer five o'
trumps, each count ya ten points.

SWEDE
Yaahh. Suure I played it.
(sharp pause)
For money you mean?

JOHNNIE
Either way suits me.

COWBOY'S VOICE
Let's just play for fun.

EASTERNER'S VOICE
Suits me.

COWBOY
(voice up)
Just for fun, if that suits you.

SWEDE
Fun. Yah. Yah. I play.

EASTERNER'S VOICE
(o.s.)
Fine.

They all pull up their chairs. The Swede laughs shrilly and strangely.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER FROM THE SWEDE'S ANGLE

He looks up quickly at the Swede (lens)

CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY FROM JOHNNIE'S ANGLE

His jaw drops open, his head and eyes toward the Swede.

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE FROM THE COWBOY'S ANGLE

Not really looking except very quietly, 'as if from under his eyes', holding the cards with still fingers.

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE PAST COWBOY AND EASTERNER

His hands still suspended motionless.

JOHNNIE
Well, let's get at it. Come on now!

Faint nods of agreement and shiftings forward as they begin to cut for deal.

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE'S HANDS SHUFFLING THE CARDS

He is a very fast shuffler. We watch him finishing one whirr, and through another, then he puts the cards toward the Swede for the cut, the CAMERA FOLLOWING AND PULLING BACK. The Swede slowly and seriously cuts the deck three ways as the CAMERA RECEDES AND RISES to take in his face and Johnnie's. He is smiling at Johnnie who seems about to speak – not quarrel-somely exactly – but lets it go and starts gathering in the deck.

CLOSE VERTICAL SHOT – OVER TABLE

Johnnie deals very rapidly, three cards to a man at a time, the CAMERA following the cards around and the eyes of the four men following too. The Swede picks up his first three cards as quick as they fall, the others leave theirs on the table. He instantly takes them in so close to his chest that, in looking, he is like a woman looking down the front of her dress.

"CIRCULAR" SHOT

They all pick up their cards and look and arrange them.

CAMERA ON SWEDE – EASTERNER'S VOICE BIDDING

CAMERA ON JOHNNIE – COWBOY'S VOICE BIDDING

CAMERA ON EASTERNER – SWEDE'S VOICE BIDDING

CAMERA ON COWBOY – JOHNNIE'S VOICE PASSING

The Swede's VOICE names the trump suit.

VERTICAL SHOT OF TABLE

The players discard, face up. (They have been dealt nine cards each). They lay them down almost simultaneously: The Easterner 7, the Cowboy 7, the Swede 5 and Johnnie 8. The Cowboy WHISTLES softly.

THREE SHOT – SWEDE CENTERED

Johnnie fills for them. 4 to the Easterner, 4 to the Cowboy and 1 to the Swede.

THREE SHOT – JOHNNIE CENTERED

He robs the deck for 5 cards.

"CIRCULAR" SHOT

The Swede leads, Johnnie lays a card out, then the Easterner, then the Cowboy. The Cowboy lays his first card down quietly but already his face, especially the eyes, have strangely altered. He seems essentially quite a gentle guy but the usually rather slow eyes are bright and ruthless. THE SHOT CONTINUES to the Swede as he rakes in a trick and leads his next card; past Johnnie for his and the Easterner for his to the Cowboy who, with a face like the Archangel Michael goosing Satan, WHAMS down his card.

THREE SHOT – SWEDE, JOHNNIE, EASTERNER

The instant the card hits the table with its startling noise, the Swede jumps with fright, is mad at being scared and flicks a smoldering, mean eye at the Cowboy.

Johnnie is mildly startled and quietly amused, much aware of the reactions of the other two.

The Easterner flinches with startlement; mildly annoyed; a little annoyed with himself for being annoyed; an automatic and almost successful effort to show nothing.

CAMERA ON SWEDE AND JOHNNIE – THE SWEDE LEADING

CAMERA ON JOHNNIE AND EASTERNER – JOHNNIE PLAYING

CAMERA ON EASTERNER AND COWBOY – EASTERNER PLAYING

THREE SHOT – FROM COWBOY'S ANGLE

As the hand and card WHAM down again, Johnnie's eyes go to the Cowboy, more amused. The two others take care not to look up.

CLOSE UP – COWBOY FROM JOHNNIE'S ANGLE

He is on top of the world.

CLOSE UP – THE SWEDE

SOUND of shuffling. His face has begun to darken, swell and crease; he is looking dull daggers toward the Cowboy from under his brows; sore as a boil. It is clear the Cowboy has busted hell out of his bid.

CLOSE UP – EASTERNER

SOUND OF cowboy's VOICE bidding. The Easterner is sizing him up with care; he is a little annoyed and shaken, but a disciplined man.

CLOSE UP – JOHNNIE

He is playing a card, eyes very watchful of his two opponents and still more amused. He knows how sore they are getting and how off-their-game it is putting them.

CLOSE UP – COWBOY

Still more tickled with himself and more ruthless than before. WHAM.

COWBOY
Bullet by golly.

NEW CLOSE UP – COWBOY

Still more so than before. WHAM.

COWBOY
Reckon that'll learn ye.

NEW CLOSE UP – COWBOY

A card lifted high to wham, then laid out quite gently.

COWBOY
Reckon we'll leave um take this-un
Johnnie-boy, sure looks like they
could use it.

WHAM on CLOSE UP OF SWEDE By now boiling internally, he sullenly plays his card.

WHAM on CLOSE UP OF EASTERNER Managing almost perfectly to control his wincing and hide his anger.

WHAM on CLOSE UP OF JOHNNIE Eyes quick at Swede and the Easterner, just managing to hold in his laughter.

WHAM on CLOSE UP OF COWBOY Sweat bright on his forehead, his tie and collar loosened, impervious to their anger; happy as

a clam.

WHAM on CLOSE UP OF JOHNNIE He can no longer contain his laughter.

WHAM on CLOSE UP OF EASTERNER Looking pinched around the nostrils and pretty sick.

CLOSE UP – SWEDE

Ready for the wham; a light card falls.

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Reckon we can afford it.

The Swede does a quiet collapse equivalent to that of leaning against a strong wind which suddenly stops; Johnnie's laughter LOUDENS o.s. The Swede, still wearing coat and vest, is in a great state of dishevelment, sweating hard, miserable; by now he is as mad at quiet cards as at whams and as mad at Johnnie as at the Cowboy.

WHAM on CLOSE UP OF THE EASTERNER His vest unbuttoned, unable to sit up straight any more; he is smiling bitterly; SOUND of Johnnie's laughter intensifies o.s.

CLOSE UP – JOHNNIE

Weak with laughter, but still at it; by now his shirt is unbuttoned down to the waist and he is sweating with laughter, laughing as much at the Cowboy as at the others.

CLOSE UP – COWBOY

His large, thick, long red neck sprouting enormously from a tie and collar still more awry than before; aware he too is being laughed at but stolidly and hugely pleased with himself: eyes to all three players: WHAM.

The CAMERA lifts and loses his head and shoots over it and the slickening SOUND of the cards, up the length of the room, centering on the window and the wild snowing outside: ordinary full daylight: HOLD, fading the card SOUNDS and the laughter and the beat of wham almost to inaudibility and whiffing up the blizzard SOUNDS:

CUT TO:

SAME SHOT

Well into the beginning of dusk; a melancholy and slightly sinister light through the window, touching everything visible; fade card SOUNDS in and up, and Johnnie's laughter, much more tired and habituated; LOWER CAMERA to take Cowboy's head, the kind of guy who never knows when a joke stops being a joke; another full-sized WHAM;

CUT OVER JOHNNIE'S FIRST WORDS TO:

MEDIUM SHOT –

SWEDE, JOHNNIE, EASTERNER from COWBOY'S ANGLE

Johnnie is practically sick with laughter; the other two are beat-out and sick to death of it. They are almost sorer at Johnnie than at Cowboy and show it in their hangdog glances at him.

JOHNNIE

Haahh, Lordy, I could die laughin'!

The Swede, and even the Easterner, flick him bitter glances. Johnnie relaxes still more limp in his chair, tears on his cheeks, catching their hard looks and totally unmoved; just another whicker of laughter at them.

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Your deal Johnnie, and you'd better give the other boys some cards for a change. They sure look like they could use a few.

JOHNNIE

Gett'n' chilly in here.

(looking up and around)

Hey, it's gett'n' dark.

MEDIUM SHOT – FROM MIDDLE OF ROOM

They all look up and around towards the window and realize it for the first time. Johnnie gets up; behind the following lines he puts on coal:

EASTERNER

Hmm!

(he acts bemused coming

out of deep
concentration on the
cards)

A pause. From mid-room, in the fading light, we watch them watching the darkening, the strange light on their faces, the faces calming, even saddening a little.

COWBOY
(quietly)
Snow sure does look blue, this time
a day.

The Easterner nods; a little surprised that Cowboy notices it.

COWBOY
Funny, cause snow ain't blue, it's
white. Snow white, like they say.

The Easterner smiles very quietly.

COWBOY
Reckon it's the light.

EASTERNER
(nods; then all but
whispers)
Yes.

The Swede, throughout this, is deeply still and withdrawn; his face is preparing, inconspicuously, the strange line on which he will re-enter the conversation.

Johnnie, finished with the stove, crosses between CAMERA and the table to side table o.s., their eyes follow him quietly, light changes on their faces as, o.s., he lights and turns up a lamp.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – FROM SAME POSITION – JOHNNIE

As he finishes with the lamp and leaves the shot, HOLD a moment on the lamp, its light tender and magical in the fading day, and disclosing their faces, still bemused in the ambiguous lightings of the last daylight and of lamplight on in daylight. There is a soft, strange point of light in each eye.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – ON JOHNNIE –
PAST EASTERNER AND COWBOY

Johnnie reseats himself, pulls up, and gets the deck ready for shuffling; and their heads turn back from the lamp toward the game. Johnnie, realizing the shift and slowing of mood and influenced by it, dawdles a little, more or less idling and toying with the cards. A deeply pleasant and comfortable silence, tinged with the melancholy of dusk.

SLOW "CIRCULAR" SHOT –

Beginning on the Easterner's quiet face; then the Cowboy's (past him we see the whole room and the darkening window); then the Swede whose strange eyes still catch the lamplight; then Johnnie, ready to resume playing but waiting for them. This shot is to crown and epitomize the mysterious yet peaceful mood – which is now broken by

SWEDE'S VOICE

(o.s., quiet and musing)

I suppose there have been a good
many men killed in this room.

A short, electrified pause.

JOHNNIE

(quietly)

How's that?

MEDIUM SHOT – COWBOY, JOHNNIE, EASTERNER –
FROM THE SWEDE'S

ANGLE All looking at the Swede sharply.

CLOSE UP – SWEDE

His eyes move to the Cowboy and the Easterner, then to Johnnie.

SWEDE

I said, I suppose there have been a
good many men killed in this room.

CLOSE UP – JOHNNIE – FULL FACE

A short pause.

JOHNNIE

What the devil're you talkin' about?

QUICK, CLOSE FULL FACES OF THE COWBOY AND THE EASTERNER
astounded and intensely curious.

CLOSE UP – SWEDE

SWEDE

(a blatant laugh,
full of false courage
and defiance)

Oh, you know what I mean, all right!

CLOSE UP – JOHNNIE

JOHNNIE

I'm a liar if I do!

FAST FLICKED CLOSE SHOTS OF EASTERNER, COWBOY AND JOHNNIE
FROM THE SWEDE'S ANGLE

JOHNNIE

(very much the son of
the proprietor)

Now, what might you be drivin' at,
Mister?

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE

SWEDE

(winks at Johnnie, a
wink full of cunning)

Oh, maybe you think I have been to
nowheres. Maybe you think I'm a
tenderfoot?

JOHNNIE

I don't know nuthin' about you and I
don't give a whoop where you've been.
All I got to say is I don't know
what you're drivin' at. There hain't
never been nobody killed in this
room.

COWBOY

(a sudden swing of
his whole head toward
the Swede)

What's wrong with you, Mister?

ALL FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE, AT SPEED OF FLICKING EYES: Cowboy with the Easterner in the b.g. and slightly blurred focus; Johnnie with the Easterner in the b.g. and slightly blurred focus; the Easterner alone, in sharp focus; all are tightly looking into the Swede's eyes but the Easterner is the only one who looks at all "concerned" or in the least sympathetic.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE –
PAST EASTERNER, COWBOY AND
JOHNNIE

He seems to feel he is "formidably menaced". He sends an appealing glance to the Easterner. Start very quietly, bring up ever louder, o.s. SOUND of "some loose thing beating regularly against the clapboards" – "like a spirit tapping".

SWEDE
(mockingly, to
Easterner)
They say they don't know what I mean!

EASTERNER
(impassively)
I don't understand you.

Johnnie and the Cowboy exchange glances and look to the Swede.

MEDIUM SHOT – SWEDE –
PAST EASTERNER: COWBOY AND JOHNNIE
FLANKING

SWEDE
(shrugging)
Oh, I see you are all against me. I
see –

During the shrug, the CAMERA creeps a little to the r. past the Easterner and bores in on the Swede and the Cowboy, the latter in deep stupefaction and rising impatience. By the time of the second "I see", the CAMERA loses the Swede entirely and the Cowboy, in solitary CLOSE UP, slams down his hands on the board:

COWBOY
Say, what're you gett'n' at, hey?

WHIP CAMERA TO SWEDE AND TILT UP as he springs up with the celerity of a man escaping from a snake on the floor.

SWEDE

(standing in tilted
close up from the
angle of the center
of the table)

I don't want to fight! I don't want
to fight!

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE (STANDING) – LEVEL A LITTLE ABOVE THEIR HEADS

They have saved the table from his sudden getting up; their hands clench it. The Cowboy stretches his long legs insolently and deliberately. He jams his hands deep in his pockets. He spits, twisting past his shoulder, into the cuspidor almost at the Swede's feet.

COWBOY

(quiet and contemptuous)

Well, who in tarnation thought you
did?

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE AND COWBOY

The Cowboy's turned head and jaw in floor of shot at the beginning; slowly CREEP ON THE SWEDE, gaining a little, losing the Cowboy, as the Swede backs rapidly toward the wall near the coat room, in his eyes, "the dying swan look". The TAPPING outdoors is VERY LOUD by now.

SWEDE

(voice quavering)

Gentlemen, I suppose I am going to
be killed before I can leave this
house! I suppose I am going to be
killed before I can leave this house!

SOUND of door opening o.s.

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY, FROM SAME POSITION, NEW ANGLE

He enters from his office near the front door. He pauses in surprise.

MEDIUM SHOT – SWEDE – GROUP IN B.G. – FROM SCULLY'S ANGLE

SWEDE

(eagerly and swiftly;
head turning to answer
Scully)

These men are going to kill me.

SCULLY

Kill you! Kill you? What are you
talkin'?

The Swede makes the "gesture of a martyr".

SCULLY

What is this, Johnnie?

JOHNNIE

(sullen, but looking
at Scully)

I dunno. I can't make no sense to
it.

(eyes drifting, he
begins to shuffle
the cards with an
angry snap)

He says a good many men have been
killed in this room, or something
like like that. And he says he's
goin' to be killed here too. I dunno
what ails him. He's crazy, I shouldn't
wonder.

SCULLY

Kill you? Kill you? Man, you're off
your nut.

SWEDE

Oh, I know. I know what will happen.
Yes, I'm crazy – yes. But I know
one thing...

GROUP – FROM THE SWEDE'S ANGLE

An almost lightning quick shot of all of them from the Swede's
angle.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

SWEDE

...I know I won't get out of here
alive.

HOLD on him, sweating and full of dread, at least three
seconds of silence.

CLOSE UP – COWBOY

He "draws a deep breath, as if his mind was passing into the
last stages of dissolution".

COWBOY

(whispering almost to
himself)
Well, I'm doggoned.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

Wheeling suddenly on Johnnie.

SCULLY

You've been troublin' this man!

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE – PAST COWBOY, SCULLY IN L.S.

JOHNNIE

(loudly; with grievance)
Why good night, I ain't done nothin
to 'im!

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE –
PAST EASTERNER AND COWBOY, AND
PAST SCULLY, STANDING, JUST BEYOND COWBOY

SWEDE

(one step forward;
stops)
Gentlemen, do not disturb yourselves.
I will leave this house. I will go
away, because –

He accuses them dramatically with his glance.

CLOSER SHOT – SAME ANGLE

SWEDE

– Because I do not want to be killed.

SCULLY

(wheeling, furious,
to Johnnie)

Will ye tell me what's the matter ye
young divil? What's the matter,
annyyhow? Speak out!

JOHNNIE

Blame it! I tell you I don't know.
He – he says we want to kill him,
and that's all I know. I can't tell
what ails him.

SWEDE

Never mind Mr. Scully; never mind. I
will leave this house. I will go
away because I do not want to be
killed. Yes, of course, I am crazy –
yes. But I know one thing! I will go
away. I will leave this house. Never
mind, Mr. Scully; never mind. I will
go away.

SCULLY

You will not go away. You will not
go away until I hear the reason of
this business. If anybody has troubled
you I will take care of him. This is
my house. You're under my roof, and
I will not allow any peaceable man
to be troubled here.

SWEDE

Never mind, Mr. Scully; never mind.
I know you don't want trouble, but
you can't stop them. Nobody can stop
them, not God Himself.

(sad wag of head)

No Mr. Scully, I will go away. I do
not wish to be killed. I'll get my
baggage.

The screen is empty for a moment, then Scully darts into the
shot, half across the screen.

SCULLY

(peremptorily)

No, no!

MEDIUM SHOT – SAME POSITION

Angle for the Swede's "beyond words" backward glance at Scully, and his sad and deliberate exit.

Scully still transfixed in c.s., looking after the Swede;
SOUND of a door closing and the Swede's slow feet on the stairs. He holds, slowly turns, walks slowly and very impressively back toward the table, CAMERA with him.

SCULLY

Now. What does this mane?

CLOSE SHOT –
THE THREE FROM SCULLY'S STOOPED, INVESTIGATORY
ANGLE

JOHNNIE AND COWOY

(rather loudly and
almost in unison)

Why, we didn't do nuthin' to him!

CLOSE SHOT – UP AT SCULLY – FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE

So close that Johnnie and the Cowboy are not in the shot.

SCULLY

(coldly)

No? You didn't?

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE – FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE

JOHNNIE

Why this is the wildest loon I ever
see. We didn't do nuthin' at all. We
were jest sett'n' here playin' cards,
and he...

SCULLY'S VOICE

(o.s., interrupting)

Mister –

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY – FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE – LOOKING
STRAIGHT INTO LENS

SCULLY

(solemnly)
Mister: what has these boys been
doin'?

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER – FROM SCULLY'S ANGLE

EASTERNER
(slowly, after a long,
careful pause)
I didn't see anything wrong at all.

PULL BACK to frame in Johnnie and the Cowboy; vindicated and
a little smug.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

Miserably and desperately chewing that one over: a sudden
outburst.

SCULLY
(howling)
But what does it mane?
(to Johnnie)
I've a good mind to lather ye for
this, me boy!

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE – FROM SCULLY'S ANGLE

JOHNNIE
(frantic)
Well what've I done?

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY – FROM JOHNNIE'S ANGLE

CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY – FROM SCULLY'S ANGLE

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER – FROM SCULLY'S ANGLE

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY – PAST THE THREE

SCULLY
(scornfully)
I think you are tongue-tied.

He looks at them 1-2-3 again, turns on his heel; walks toward
the stairway door and out of shot, CAMERA LIFTING a trifle
to follow.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE THREE –
PAST SWEDE'S EMPTY CHAIR

Over SOUND of closing door and Scully's climbing feet, each looks from one to the other, speechless, dumbfounded.

QUICK FADE:

FADE IN:

CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE'S ROOM (UPSTAIRS)

The Swede's leaning left shoulder; he is strapping his valise. A LITTLE NOISE; he straightens up wheeling with a loud cry, CAMERA following into CLOSE UP; his terrified eyes are fixed just to the right of the lens.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY AT THE OPEN DOOR

He is carrying a small kerosene lamp which scare-lights his wrinkled face. He should "resemble a murderer" sufficiently to startle even the audience.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE – PAST SCULLY

Still sick with terror as Scully leaves the dark corridor and enters the lighted room.

SCULLY

Man! Man! Have you gone daffy?

CLOSE TWO SHOT – SCULLY WALKING INTO SHOT

Carrying his lamp; ordinary lighting of room.

SWEDE

Oh, no! Oh, no!

(short pause)

There are people in this world who know pretty nearly as much as you do – understand?

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE – FROM SCULLY'S VIEWPOINT

On his deathly pale cheeks are two spots, "as sharply edged as if they had been carefully painted". His eyes brighten almost as if with tears. For a moment his mouth trembles; then he makes it firm.

SWEDE
(quiet, solemn,
profoundly sad)
Just one rule, Mr. Scully, and I
learned it young. Don't never trust
nobody. Be ready for anything.

He looks at Scully, both daring him to contradict, and
desperately pleading for assurance that this is not so.

SWEDE
My father beat that into me. That's
why I'm alive today.
(his pleading,
forbidding look
intensifies)

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY FROM SWEDE'S VIEWPOINT

Scully means well but all this is far beyond him; besides,
he is wholly wrapped up in the immediate situation. He is
studying the Swede very carefully, in deep concern and
puzzlement. After a moment he puts his lamp on the table and
sits on the edge of the bed, CAMERA SWINGING to keep him
centered.

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY R.S. – SWEDE STANDING L.S.

AS SCULLY SITS

SCULLY
(ruminatively)
By cracky, I never heard of such a
thing in my life. It's a complete
muddle. I can't for the soul of me
think how you ever got this idea
into your head.
(a short silence)
And did you sure think they were
going to kill you?

SWEDE
(scans him as if he
wants to see into
his mind. At last,
with a great effort)
I did.

He turns again to the valise straps, back to Scully. His whole arm shakes, his elbow wavering like a bit of paper.

SCULLY

(banging impressively
on the footboard of
the bed)

Why, man, we're goin' to have a line
of illictric street-cars in this
town next spring.

SWEDE

(stupidly, vacantly)
A line of electric street-cars.
(he gets busy on the
other strap)

SCULLY

And there's a new railroad goin' to
be built down from Broken Arm to
here. Not to mention the four churches
and the smashin' big brick
schoolhouse. Then there's the big
factory, too. Why in two years
Rrhahmpr'll be a metropolis.

SWEDE

(he straightens up
and politely awaits
the termination of
the foregoing lines)
Mr. Scully, how much do I owe you?

SCULLY

(sore; getting up)
You don't owe me one red cent.

SWEDE

Yes I do.
(he takes coins from
his pocket and offers
them to Scully, who
snaps his fingers in
disdainful refusal;
their eyes rest on
the open palm between
them, gazing in a

strange fashion)

INSERT:

The open palm, very heavy and alive, tailors' marks and callouses on it, trembling faintly; three quarters on it.

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY R.S. – SWEDE STANDING L.S.

Their eyes lift from the open palm and meet strangely in silence.

SCULLY

(quietly)

I'll not take your money. Not after what's been goin' on here.

All of a sudden he begins to look very crafty. The Swede watches the change in his face with deep uneasiness.

CLOSE UP – THE SWEDE

His eyes to Scully, looking still more uneasy.

CLOSE UP – SCULLY – FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

Looking still more crafty.

SCULLY

Here, here!

(he turns and picks up the lamp, CAMERA following, and comes back close again, beckoning, guileful)

Come with me a minute.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE – PAST SCULLY

Recoiling in overwhelming alarm.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY – FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

Pressing closer; wheedling, crafty.

SCULLY

Yes! Come on! I want you to come and see a pitcher – just across the

hall – in my room.

Swede very close, his teeth shaking like a dead man's; PULL BACK to bring in Scully very close in almost the posture of a Judas about to plant the kiss, eyes slantwise up to the taller man.

SCULLY

Come on. There's nuthin' to be afraid of: Come on.
(he starts for the door)

PULL CAMERA BACK and lead them out through the door, Scully holding his lamp high, the Swede following with the step of one hung in chains.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY'S BEDROOM

The lamp is thrust through darkness high upward against the wall of Scully's room, picking up first a sliding swatch of ornate wallpaper, then a ridiculous photograph of a little girl, the figure graceful as an upright sled-stake. She is the hue of lead. She leans against a balustrade or gorgeous decoration. The formidable bang to her hair is prominent.

SCULLY

There, that's the pitcher of my little girl that died. Her name was Carrie. She had the purtiest hair you ever saw.

PULL BACK to take Scully close, looking up.

SCULLY

(continuing)
I was that fond of her, she –

Scully's eyes to the Swede, SWING CAMERA onto the Swede, Scully beyond him. He is not looking either at Scully or the picture but is keeping keen watch on the gloom at the rear.

SCULLY

(continuing)
Look, man! That's the pitcher of my little girl that died. Her name was Carrie.
(Swede is around,

reluctant, scared,
uninterested. As his
eyes lift toward the
picture, SWING CAMERA
to lose him, and
past Scully, and to
new picture as Scully
continues)

And then here's the pitcher of my
eldest boy, Michael...

(graduation shot, cap
and gown, a smart,
shrewd, ambitious-
looking young Irishman)

...he's a lawyer in Lincoln, an'
doin' well. I gave that boy a grand
eddication an' I'm glad for it now.
He's a fine boy. Look at him now.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY AND SWEDE – FROM PICTURE'S ANGLE

SCULLY

Ain't he bold as blazes, him there
in Lincoln! An honored and respected
gintleman.

(turning to the Swede)

An honored and respected gintleman.

(he smites the Swede
jovially on the back;
the Swede smiles
faintly, lugubriously)

Now, there's only one thing more.

(he turns from the
wall and the Swede
turns his head back
to CAMERA to look.)

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY

He drops to knees, plants his lamp on the carpet, and burrows
under the bed.

SCULLY'S VOICE

(muffled)

I'd keep it under me piller if it
wasn't fer that boy Johnnie.

MEDIUM CLOSE – SWEDE – FROM JUST OFF ANGLE OF LAMP

SCULLY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Then there's the old woman – Where
is it now?

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY'S HIGH RUMP AND THE LAMP

SCULLY'S VOICE

(from under bed)

I never put it twice in the same
place. Ah, now, come out with ye.

Scrambling and grunting he backs from under the bed dragging
an old coat rolled into a bundle, flecked with lint.

SCULLY

I've fetched him!

He starts brushing off flecks of lint.

MEDIUM CLOSE – SWEDE – FROM JUST OFF ANGLE OF LAMP

The Swede, his eye sharpening.

Scully brushes off a last little whisk of lint and carefully
unrolls the coat, and extracts from its heart a large yellow-
brown whiskey bottle. He holds the bottle against the
lamplight. Reassured that nobody has been at it, he thrusts
it upward with a generous movement toward the Swede.

MEDIUM SHOT – SWEDE – PAST SCULLY

He is about to eagerly clutch this element of strength but
suddenly jerks his hand away and casts a look of horror upon
Scully.

Scully gets to his feet, lamp in one hand, bottle in the
other, and takes a step toward the Swede.

SCULLY

(affectionately)

Drink.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY AND SWEDE

Lighted only by the lamp. A silence. Scully clamps the bottle
under the lamp-bearing arm, twists out the cork, holds out

both bottle and cork.

SCULLY

Drink!

Suddenly the Swede laughs wildly. He grabs the bottle, screws it into his mouth.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY – PAST SWEDE

Small, worried, the beginning even of a look of fright.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

In witch-like lamplight: bottle tilted high, lips curling around the opening, throat working and SOUNDS of his swallowing: his eyes, burning with hatred, fixed upon Scully.

DISSOLVE TO:

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY, EASTERNER, JOHNNIE – PAST SWEDE'S EMPTY CHAIR

A long astounded silence. The Easterner lights a cigarette.

JOHNNIE

(almost reverently)

That's the dod-dangdest Swede I ever see!

COWBOY

(contemptuously)

He ain't no Swede.

JOHNNIE

Well what is he then? What is he then?

COWBOY

(astutely and deliberately)

It's my opinion he's some kind of a Dutchman.

Johnnie is impressed; the Easterner, interested and amused by both of them, covers his amusement.

COWBOY

(continuing)
Yes, sir, it's my opinion this feller
is some kind of a Dutchman.

JOHNNIE
(sulkily)
Well he says he's a Swede anyhow.
(to Easterner)
What do you think?

EASTERNER
Oh, I don't know.

COWBOY
Well, what do you think makes him
act like that?

EASTERNER
Why, he's frightened.
(he flicks ash in
spittoon)

CAMERA slowly creeps them into close up.

EASTERNER
(continuing)
He's clear frightened out of his
boots.

JOHNNIE AND COWBOY
(in unison)
What at?

The Easterner reflects.

JOHNNIE AND COWBOY
(again in unison)
What at?

EASTERNER
(slowly turning the
cigarette between
his fingertips,
scrutinising the
coal)
Oh, I don't know, but it seems to me
this man has been reading dime novels
about the wild west, and he thinks

he's right out in the middle of it –
the shootin' and stabbin' and all.
(he looks to the Cowboy
and then to Johnnie)

CLOSER SHOT – COWBOY – FROM ANGLE OF JOHNNIE'S RIGHT
SHOULDER, EASTERNER'S BACK, IN L.S.

COWBOY
(deeply scandalized)
But this ain't Wyoming, ner none o'
them places. This is Nebrasky.

CLOSER SHOT – JOHNNIE – FROM ANGLE OF COWBOY'S LEFT
SHOULDER, EASTERNER'S BACK, IN R.S.

JOHNNIE
(sore and eager)
Yeah, an' why don't he wait till he
gits out West?

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER – FROM ANGLE OF SWEDE'S CHAIR

EASTERNER
(laughs quietly)
It isn't so wild out there even –
not in these days. But he thinks
he's right in the middle of hell.

He is quiet. Johnnie and the Cowboy muse long.

JOHNNIE
(after a silence)
It's awful funny.

COWBOY
Yeah, this is a queer game. I hope
we don't git snowed in...
(Easterner glances
toward front window)
...'cause then we'd have to stand
this here man around with us all the
time. That wouldn't be no good.
(he wags his head)
No sir ree bob tail.

JOHNNIE
I wish Pop ud throw him out.

COWBOY

Couldn't do that. He ain't done nuthin'. Not edsackly.

JOHNNIE

I don't care. I don't like him.

COWBOY

You or me neither.

They are alerted by SOUND of loud stomping on the stairs, o.s. Scully's ringing voice ad lib, no words audible; the Swede's laughter. They all look quickly to the stairway door, then "vacantly" at each other.

COWBOY

Gosh!

SOUND of door opening o.s.; all look sharply toward it.

LONG SHOT – SAME POSITION – UP ROOM TO DOOR

Scully, flushed and anecdotal, swings into the room and down toward the table like all three musketeers. The Swede follows, laughing bravely.

SCULLY

(more or less over his shoulder)

An' then he sez, sez, 'Oh', he sez, 'I've got to bring thim along to hould the jackass,' he sez: 'He don't like it.'

(plenty of haw haw from Swede and Scully)

'He don't like it', he sez! Wouldn't that kill yez?

SWEDE

He don't like it, huh? Haw, haw,!
Durn good!

Scully is almost up to the stove, Swede close behind; CAMERA PULLS BACK to shoot past them at the seated men during Scully's next line.

SCULLY

(sharply)
Come now, move up and give us a chance
at the stove.

The Cowboy and the Easterner obediently sidle their chairs
to make room. Johnnie, keeping the board on his lap, simply
arranges himself in a more indolent attitude.

SCULLY
Come, git over there.

JOHNNIE
Plenty of room without me movin'.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY –
FROM JOHNNIE'S ANGLE SWEDE IN
BACKGROUND

SCULLY
(roaring)
An' you with the warmest spot in the
house?

SWEDE
(a patronising bully)
No, no. Let the boy sit where he
likes.

SCULLY
(deferentially)
All right! All right!

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY AND EASTERNER

They exchange glances of wonder.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT –
ACROSS GROUP BETWEEN EASTERNER AND
JOHNNIE

SWEDE
Anyhow, I don't know as I want to
sit with these people.

SCULLY
Just suit yourself Mister. We'd be
glad of yer company, but just suit
yourself. Liberty Hall, ye know.

(he laughs nervously)

SWEDE

I want a drink of water.

SCULLY

(at once)

I'll git it for you.

SWEDE

(contemptuously)

Nahh, I'll get it for myself.

He walks off with the air of an owner toward and into Scully's office. CAMERA LIFTING TO FOLLOW, shooting past tops of the heads of the seated men. As soon as he is out of sight Scully and CAMERA lean down quick and close into the group.

SCULLY

(in an intense whisper)

Ye know what? Upstairs? I gave him a little snort o' what's good for yez, an' he thought I was tryin' to poison 'im!

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – ON JOHNNIE AND SCULLY – PAST THE EASTERNER AND COWBOY

JOHNNIE

(not lowering his voice)

Say, this makes me sick, why...

SCULLY

(finger to lips)

Ssh!

JOHNNIE

(voice scarcely lowered)

...why don't you throw 'im out in the snow?

SCULLY

Why, he's all right now. It was only that he was from the East, and he thought this was a tough place...

CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY

Looking with admiration toward the Easterner

SCULLY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

...That's all. He's all right now.

As the Cowboy speaks, the CAMERA SWINGS to include the Easterner.

COWBOY

You were straight. You were onto that there Dutchman, dead to rights.

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE – FROM COWBOY'S ANGLE

JOHNNIE

Well, he may be all right now, but I don't see it. Other time he was scared, but now he's too fresh. Ain't that right?

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Sure looks like it to me.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY AND EASTERNER – PAST JOHNNIE

COWBOY

Looks like to me he's bound to fall off one side a th' hoss or t'other.

The Easterner nods quietly.

JOHNNIE'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Why don't you kick him out, Pop?

A sharp INTAKE OF BREATH from Scully; all look up sharply.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

PULLING BACK with him as he leans down into group, hands on knees, thundering at him with passionate solemnity.

SCULLY

What do I keep? What do I keep? What

do I keep?

(he slaps one knee
impressively; shouts)

I keep a hotel! A hotel, do ye mind?
A guest under my roof has sacred
privileges. He is to be intimidated
by none. Not one word shall he hear
that would prijiduce him in favor of
goin' away. I'll not have it. There's
no place in this here town where
they can say they iver took in a
guest of mine because he was afraid
to stay here.

(he wheels intensely
on the Cowboy and
the Easterner – to
the Cowboy)

Am I right?

COWBOY

(solemnly)

Yes, Mr. Scully, I think you're right.

SCULLY

(to Easterner)

Am I right?

EASTERNER

(solemnly)

Yes, Mr. Scully, I think you're right.

CAMERA tilts upward a little, shooting across the group,
still HOLDING them in the bottom of the shot; after a second
the Swede re-enters from the office and walks toward them,
his footsteps heavy, his eyes on them. None of them look up
or around at him.

The SOUND of an opening door, o.s.; Scully's eyes toward it.

MEDIUM SHOT – SAME POSITION BUT NEW ANGLE – DINING ROOM
DOOR

Past the stove on the dining room door; Scully's daughter is
leaning through it.

DAUGHTER

(low, inhibited voice)

Papa: supper.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

SCULLY

(almost under his
breath)

Supper, gentlemen.

(he gestures them up)

They are all up and filing toward the door; still no eye for the Swede who is walking alone toward them.

QUICK FADE:

FADE IN:

CLOSE SHOT – DINING ROOM – THE SWEDE

His head is against an almost halation-brassy highlight, through glass, on a broad perforated mechanical-music disc and, when we PULL BACK, a mechanical violin or mandolin: stentorian NOISE of the nervous plucking of the perforations and the exact driven rasping screech of the violin (playing some potpourri of Waldteufel waltzes or of early honky-tonk ragtime): also a NOISE of cranking and of tightening springs. The Swede's stooped round shining malignantly grinning face is on level of disc and much like it. His napkin on, his hair wetted and combed slick but beginning to spike up awry; he laughs low, finishes his cranking and listens a moment with burlesque of connoisseur's or Old Maestro's relish, imitates a would-be-lyrical phrase of the violin with the skreeky humming of a bass humming falsetto and with mock-affected hands mocking those of a violinist and with a look of mock ecstasy; then smacks his hands together loudly and does a peasant dance step on his way back to his chair, which is almost directly in front of the machine so that the turning disc backs Swede's head throughout this scene like a phony halo. He scrapes back his chair as loudly as he can; sits down, and looks triumphantly and cruelly and with an air of great benefaction from man to man, while he shovels down the food in the manner of Henry VIII.

QUICK FLICKING SHOTS, AS FROM THE SWEDE'S EYES: SEATING SAME AS AT DINNER

THE EASTERNER

Looking even smaller than he is, eating rather little; encased

in reserve.

THE COWBOY

Staring across at the Swede in wide-mouthed amazement, forgetting to eat.

SCULLY

His own version of the Easterner, shoulders huddled, eyes to plate, trying to pretend to eat as if nothing were happening.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE AND JOHNNIE – PAST EASTERNER AND COWBOY

The Swede is leering happily sidelong at Johnnie, who is eating quickly and savagely. PULL AROUND to lose Johnnie and CREEP INTO FULL CLOSE UP on the Swede, losing the Cowboy and the Easterner.

The Swede munches and finishes a huge mouthful, drinks from his tumbler with parodistic extension of thick pinkie, swabs his mouth royally with the apron of the napkin which is tied under his ears; flicks glances from eye to eye.

SWEDE
(with brutally mock
incredulity)
You gentlemen don't like a little
dinner music?

FLICK SHOT OF EASTERNER AND COWBOY FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

They are even more-so what they were, than before.

FLICK ON SCULLY – FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

He primly and delicately sips from his glass, looking a little like a hurt old lady.

CLOSE ON SWEDE

SWEDE
Or maybe it ain't the custom in your
country?
(leans toward Scully)

CAMERA SWINGS to bring in Scully

SWEDE

(continuing)

Ain't it the custom Mr. Scully? Am I making a foe pah, like the feller says?

SCULLY

(not looking up;
mumbling)

O, yes, yes. It's a custom. Music or not, it's all the same.

SWEDE

(to table at large,
talking with mouth
full most of the
time, CAMERA PULLS
BACK to center him,
Scully flanking on
r., Johnnie and
Cowboy's shoulder on
l.)

Now on the other side, go to a high class restaurant, beer garden, why they wouldn't call it a nice place to eat without they have a feller with a fiddle, pianner, couple a palm trees on a little platform, they play you sweet music while you eat.

(bite; gobble)

New York City it's the same. Calms you down. Cheers you up. Settles yer stummick good.

(drink; bite)

But here,

(chew)

seems like you gentlemen don't enjoy it.

(bite)

Maybe you just don't like music.
Hehnh?

(he giggles low as he
looks around)

FLICK SHOT – EASTERNER – FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE FLICK SHOT –

COWBOY CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

SWEDE

(Takes another big
bite)

'Course in a low-class joint – a
domp...

(Scully winces)

...you can't expect no musicians,
nor no appreciation, neither. Bunch
of ignorant louts is all. Ain't that
right, Mr. Scully?

Scully half nods, not speaking or looking; trying to pretend
to eat.

SWEDE

(continuing)

Yah, just a bonch a louts.

(flicks his eyes around)

Tough guys.

(flicks eyes and
giggles)

But this ain't no domp!

(giggles)

Oh no.

(giggles harder)

And you ain't no tough guys.

(flicks and giggles
harder)

Ooohh no!

(laughs outright)

Are ye Johnnieboy?

(he side-swipes Johnnie
with his eating elbow;
Johnnie swipes back
hard; Swede roars
with laughter.)

Oh, I beg yer pardon Johnnieboy! I
got to mind my manners I can see
that!

INSERT

Vertical over biscuit plate as the Easterner's small, reaching
hand is all but impaled by the Swede's fork, reaching for a
biscuit.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER –
QUICK SHOT FROM SWEDE'S

ANGLE Easterner's reaction, which is to cover up as quick as possible.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

He glints expectantly toward the Easterner, bursts into loud laughter at his reaction, which he translates as cowardice.

Up through the SOUND of his hard loud laughter and the hard loud music, comes an enigmatic racket; the chuffing, growling roar, the banshee wail of wind in the chimney. The Swede's laugh bites off like a hatchet through a hen's neck: he is transfixed by the profound fright which unexpected noises cause in some men.

SWEDE
(to Scully)
What's that?

No answer. The ROAR continues. The Swede's fear increases.

MEDIUM SHOT – DOWN THE TABLE PAST SCULLY

Three grateful, happy faces, nobody eating, eyes all lifted to study Swede.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE – SCULLY IN AT R.S.

SWEDE
What's that I said!

CAMERA PULLS BACK a little, equalizing the Swede and Scully

SCULLY
(with sardonic relish)
Nuthin' to be scared of Mister. Just
the wind. Just the angle of the wind
in the chimney.

They all resume eating; little glances to the Swede and each other; plenty pleased.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

He listens a moment; the SOUND begins slowly to diminish.

SWEDE
(coldly, heavily)
Who's scared?
(he looks around;
silence)
Who says so?
(looks around again)

CAMERA begins to PULL BACK on his bullying glance to their silence.

SWEDE
(continuing; low hard
giggle begins)
Me scared?
(giggle)
Me?

CAMERA arrests pull-out; Swede is centered, Scully and Johnnie and the Cowboy's shoulder flanking. The giggle breaks into full malicious laughter.

SWEDE
(continuing; finally;
to Johnnie)
Butter please.

Johnnie acts as if he didn't even hear.

SWEDE
(continuing; reaching
across Johnnie for
the butter just short
of brutally enough
to require action)
Thankk you, son.
(he takes a huge hunk
of butter, while
Scully winces, and
loads it onto a split
biscuit. In a
friendly, chatty
manner, to Scully)
That's what I like about the hotel
you keep Mister Scully.
(chomp, chomp)
It ain't got no class but they ain't
nobody can say you're stingy with

the vittles: hah?

On "hah?", a mouthful of buttery biscuit wide open in mock-friendliness; some of it falls out almost on Scully's plate. Swede, in mock embarrassment, picks it up as prissily as if it stank and puts it on the edge of his own plate.

Scully's daughter enters to clear plates.

SWEDE

O parrdon mee. Marrdon me paddum
this pie is occypewed, allow me to
sew you to another sheet, a-har-har-
har-har-har, that's a hot one, huh?
How do you like that! This pie is
occypewed. Huh? Oh marrdon me paddum.

(the daughter, behind
him, is trying to
get past his elbow:
he makes her have to
lean against him)

Miss I ought to say. Mardon me...

(he begins to finish
the spoonerism with
silent lips, is taken
by mock surprise,
mock shock, amusement
and delight; Scully
glances up at him
very sharply; to
Scully, pleasantly)

She ain't married is she Mister
Scully?

(silence; even more
honeyed)

How old is your daughter, Mister
Scully?

(no answer. – Daughter
by now has collected
Scully's plate and
vanished down the
line of Cowboy and
Easterner, out of
shot)

Mardon me sir I mean sardon me mur;
that ain't a question a gentleman
would ask, is it? Is it Mister Scully?

(silence)

But it's a fair bet she's older than
Johnnieboy, huh Johnnie? Could pretty
near be Johnnie's mother, huh?

She is coming behind him with dessert and now tries to serve him; again he forces her to lean, twisting and looking up at her with broad mock-admiration; at the moment her face leans lowest he winks into her face enormously and clicks his gums; she shrivels, shoveling his saucer onto the table, and hurries away. Scully is damn near ready to take action but the Swede breaks through a comfortable giggle in a voice of deep and kind concern, genuine-seeming enough to counter Scully.

SWEDE

Poor girl. I must of said something
that hurt her feelings. You tell her
how sorry I am Mister Scully if I
don't get a chance to tell her myself,
will you?

(no answer)

Please sir. They ain't nothing a
gentleman feels so ashamed of as if
he hurts a lady's feelings. Yes, I
tell you, Mister Scully, you're a
mighty lucky man, you got a fine
girl will stay with you she likes
her old Dad so much, when plenty
would just get married and clear
outa this town quick as they got the
chance. Cuts down the overhead, you
don't have to hire no help. Maybe
she gives you her tips, hah? Besides,
you run a hotel that ain't so much
fer class, it makes up fer a lot if
you see a pretty girl around the
place. Hah? Little services she can
do the guests, don't ya know, that
need the woman's touch? Yes, sir, my
opinion is, you're a mighty lucky
man.

(but instead of quite
getting out "man"
clearly, he nurses
and relishes along
and delivers a slow
tremendous growling
belch)

Now where I come from, a feller that

done that, they'd say it was somethin'
so awful it ain't any use to make
excuses. They'd just say, go on out
an' eat with the pigs. That's in
Europe. But heere: In Americah: Course
in China they tell me, why if you
don't give a nice big belch why your
host his feelings get hurt cause you
ain't got no manners. You give a
belch to prove you like the eats.
Like that. See? But then you ain't
no Chinaman, are you Mister Scully.

(the low steady giggle
and the look around)

No sir, it takes all kinds.

He looks around for something else to say; picking his teeth
and talking through it.

SWEDE

Funny thing, you fellers don't eat
enough. Look hearty, except a course
our little friend from Philadelphia,
but you don't eat enough. Except
Johnnieboy here. He'll eat you outa
house and home, hah Johnnie? But
Johnnie needs it. Gonna make a man
of him someday hah Johnnieboy?

(giggle)

If he can eat enough.

(giggle)

Now me: one thing I can say for
myself, ain't nothing ever hurts my
appetite. I betcha I could eat hearty
off my dead mother's coffin.

(the look around)

Take tonight. Nobody talking hardly
but me. Nobody but me trying to be
sociable and keep the ball rolling.
Lotsa people that'd put um off their
feed like it done you fellers, but
not me. Like you see it in the papers,
the condemned man ate a hearty
breakfast. Supper I mean.

(pleasant laugh)

All it takes now to make it perfect
is another little glass of schnapps,
uhh? Settle our chow? Put the stummick

juices to work? Hehnh?

CAMERA PULLS BACK to bring Scully into TWO SHOT

SCULLY

(almost inaudible
muttering)

No... think not... moderation...
save it for medicinal purposes...

SWEDE

(archly)

Oohh, Miss-ter Scully!

Scully pulls back his chair and gets up, CAMERA PULLING BACK to include whole group and table as all pull back and rise with relief. The Swede gets up too; as Scully passes he gives him a hell of a whack across the shoulders and steps along with him.

SWEDE

Well, anyhow old boy, that was a
good square meal.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

It looks for a moment as though he might flame out over the matter.

MEDIUM CLOSE – THE GROUP – PAST SCULLY

On their hopeful, expectant eyes.

Scully breaks down into a sickly smile and remains silent. It is clear from his manner that he is admitting his responsibility for the Swede's new viewpoint.

The Swede towers past Scully and past CAMERA toward the door; Scully follows, CAMERA SWINGING with him. As he passes Johnnie, Johnnie plucks at his sleeve and whispers something to him.

SCULLY

(in undertone)

Why don't you license somebody to
kick you downstairs?

They go along toward and through the door, CAMERA following.

CAMERA PICKS UP the Easterner and the Cowboy as they come along the end of the table toward the door.

EASTERNER

(low)

I thing that Swede had something.

COWBOY

Anything he's got he can keep.

EASTERNER

When he thought Scully was trying to poison him.

COWBOY

Mister!

They go through the door into the main room.

MEDIUM SHOT – MAIN ROOM

CAMERA on dining room door, already swinging, catching them as they file in, stiff and silent with antagonism; swing with them as they pass on the far side of the stove to the crescent of empty chairs; the Swede strides immediately to the best chair, (nearest CAMERA) hand proprietarily on its back; not yet sitting; he wheels on the others as they straggle into the shot. They are all very tense and still with lounging hostility, intensely silent except when speaking. The Swede just keeps looking at them until they are all there, all still standing; as if he were a Chairman, waiting for members of a meeting to assemble.

SWEDE

(domineering)

All right: where's them cards?

SCULLY

(gently)

Oh, I don't think that's such a very good idea perhaps...

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE – FROM SCULLY'S ANGLE

SWEDE

(with a wolfish glare)

Oh you don't huh?

MEDIUM SHOT – THE GROUP – STOVE AT CENTER

SCULLY

(subsiding; meekly)

Well, of course it isn't for me to
decide...

SWEDE

(threateningly; to
the Easterner)

How about you?

CLOSE SHOT – THE EASTERNER

EASTERNER

(tightly)

It suits me if you gentlemen want to
play.

CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

SWEDE

(to Cowboy)

Got any objections?

CLOSE SHOT – THE COWBOY

COWBOY

(hard and taciturn)

Suits me Mister.

SWEDE

Looks like you're out voted Mister
Scully so where's them cards?

SCULLY

(still trying to be
pleasant)

Well now that's friendly of you but
if you gentlemen don't mind I think
I'll just look at me paper; here it
is night already and all day I
haven't...

SWEDE

(interrupting; to
Johnnie)

So?

For a moment their glances cross like blades. Then Johnnie smiles.

JOHNNIE

Yes; I'll play.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to include the whole group as he starts for the table. The Swede nods curtly. The Easterner and the Cowboy swap quiet glances. Scully looks uneasy enough almost to intervene; then purses his lips, shrugs faintly, and drifts out of the group and across shot nearer.

CAMERA SWINGS AND HOLDS on him, back-to, turning up the lamp on the side table for reading.

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE'S HANDS

The purring shuffle, swiftly, twice, PULLING OUT AND UP on second shuffle to take Johnnie, back to stove as before, and Swede at his left – i.e. in r.s.

CLOSE UP – COWBOY – SCULLY IN DEEP B.G. AT WINDOW

SCULLY

(turning from window)

It's quit snowin' gintlemen.

COWBOY

Yeah?

SCULLY

(back toward reading table)

But a worse wind than ever. Bitter night.

(No comment from anyone)

CLOSE UP – EASTERNER

Arranging his cards. He is absorbed in the tensions rather than the game.

CLOSE UP – JOHNNIE

He is the only one of them well inside the cards. We see also his extreme hatred for the Swede, quietly and rather gracefully borne.

JOHNNIE
(to Swede, after a
silence)
Well, it's your bid.

CLOSE UP – THE SWEDE

His eyes, in a jagged flickering, down to the cards close to his chest, then toward each face in turn.

SWEDE
Don't hurry me, boy.
(a pause)

He bids rather high: in this game trumps are named only after bidding is finished.

HOLD CAMERA on the Swede as the Cowboy raises, Easterner passes and Johnnie passes.

SWEDE
(to Easterner)
Couldn't help me out, Huh?

No answer.

SWEDE
I pass.

He throws out his discards and picks up his new cards; looks to the Cowboy, expecting, as we do, the usual WHAM.

Move CAMERA into the CIRCULAR SHOT; on the Cowboy as he lays down his card, quite gently for him; on the Easterner's mildly surprised reaction as he plays; on Johnnie playing, his face very quiet and hating; on the Swede as, vindictively, with scarcely any amusement about it, he WHAMS harder than the Cowboy did all afternoon. His hand moves to rake in the trick.

COWBOY'S VOICE
(o.s.)
That's my trick.

SWEDE
(a dead voice)
So? I played the ace.

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

That ain't the trump suit.

SWEDE

(his hand still on
the trick)

So?

JOHNNIE'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Yeah, so.

SWEDE

It's yours.

(he shrugs and tosses
trick to center of
table)

CAMERA turns on them again, a little more quickly as each plays, picking up their smoldering reactions to the Swede's perversity; on the Swede's play he WHAMS again, even harder than before. Again he starts to rake in the trick.

EASTERNER'S VOICE

(o.s.)

That's Johnnie's trick.

SWEDE

So? What's trumps?

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Clubs, and besides you didn't only
play a trey.

SWEDE

My left Pedro.

COWBOY

Five o' spades yer left Pedro.

SWEDE

Oh, five; oh yaah. Five.

(shrugs)

Okay; it's yours.

(he tosses the trick
toward Johnnie)

It's only in fun.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE THREE FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

Just looking at him.

SWEDE'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Your play.

Cowboy wonders for a moment whether to go on; then he plays a card quietly.

CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

Watchful and somber. SOUND of Easterner's and Johnnie's playing.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

In his chair, flinching at the SOUND of the Swede's WHAM o.s. Continue card sounds and low voices ad lib o.s. as Scully loads his pipe; lights it; unfurls and arranges his newspaper for reading as the CAMERA creeps very slowly toward him into CLOSE UP; starts reading. Card SOUNDS fade and wind SOUND is brought up a little. Easterner's voice comes as vague as if through ether.

EASTERNER'S VOICE

(o.s.)

If you'd held onto that Jack we could have busted them you know.

SWEDE'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Just play your own hand Mister. I'll take care of mine.

SOUND of shuffling o.s., then of dealing; the card SOUNDS FADE OUT completely and the wind fades to a dreaming whine as we slowly FADE on Scully, deeply absorbed in his reading, his lips moving a little.

FADE IN:

Just a little soft in focus, faint card SOUNDS, the wind up a little; Scully is dozing; a wind-whicker wakes him with a jerk with which we jerk to pure focus. He glances up at the

clock on the wall to his left; it is eight-twenty-seven and for those who noticed it before the fade, was then seven-fourteen: Scully registers an aging man's surprise and mild embarrassment at old-age dozing. He clearly reproves himself and determines to wake up thoroughly and stay awake till a fit hour. He brushes spilled ash and tobacco crumbs from his lapel, polishes his glasses, readjusts them on his nose, resets himself to read; realizes the lamp is smoking a little; gets up fussily and adjusts it properly; business with paper again and really settles down to read, with that peering look of an old priest; lips moving, half-whispering what he is reading; a great rumpling turn of the paper, resettles again, peacefully reading fillers and mumbling to himself.

CAMERA CLOSE

SCULLY

(a whispering mumble)

"Lake Titicaca in Peru is the highest body of fresh water in the world, altitude a thousand feet. It's depths have never yet been plumbed." Niver yet been plumbed. Fascinatin'. Now isn't that fascinatin'!

(he peers)

"Some of the Giant Redwoods in California were sturdy saplings in the days of King Solomon (Circa 700 B.C.)". Think o' that!

(he clucks his tongue)

Sturdy saplings were they! My!

(he peers)

"The longest railroad tunnel on the North American Continent is –

SWEDE

(o.s.; in a terrible voice)

You are cheatin'!

Catch just the beginning of Scully's reaction then

QUICK CUT TO:

LONG SHOT

The CAMERA is well toward the front of the room, height of the eyes of the seated men; Scully MEDIUM in r.s., players

LONG, down center-to-left.

Scully is half out of his chair at the start of the shot; he stands up fast, his paper floating, forgotten, to his feet, making the only SOUND in the room. His spectacles fall from his nose as he gets up but, by a clutch, he saves them in mid-air; the hand grasping them is poised awkwardly near his shoulder. From the moment he is on his feet, a solid two seconds of frozen tableau: the Swede half crouching out of his chair, a huge fist, (not shaking) in Johnnie's face; Johnnie still seated, looking steadily into the blazing orbs of his accuser. The Easterner, gripping the arms of his chair, sits very still and is very pale.

After this 2-second paralysis, everybody moves as suddenly and simultaneously as if set off by a starter's gun. Johnnie, rising to hurl himself on the Swede, stumbles slightly because of his curiously instinctive care for the cards and table. The loss of this moment allows time for the arrival of Scully (an old man sprinting) and also allows Cowboy time to give the Swede a shove which sends him staggering back. They all find tongue together (ad lib variants and fragments of lines below) and hoarse shouts of rage, appeal or fear, burst from every throat. The Cowboy pushes and jostles feverishly at Swede; Easterner and Scully cling wildly to Johnnie; but through the smoky air, above the swaying bodies of the peace-compellers, the eyes of the two warriors meet each other in glances of challenge which are at once hot and steely.

At the same instant everybody moves, the CAMERA ZOOMS TO CLOSE UP at average shoulder height, arriving just in time to catch them standing up and straining.

CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE

Struggling against restraint INTO CLOSE UP

JOHNNIE

He says I cheated! He says –

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

SWEDE

(shrilly)

I saw him! He did! I saw him! I saw –

CLOSE UP – SCULLY

CLINGING TO JOHNNIE

SCULLY

Stop now! Stop I say! Stop now –

CLOSE UP – COWBOY

HOLDING BACK THE SWEDE

COWBOY

Quit now! Quit! D'ya hear –

CLOSE UP – EASTERNER

CLINGING TO JOHNNIE

EASTERNER

(to all; unheeded)

Wait a moment can't you? Oh, wait a moment!

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE AND COWBOY

Voices are simultaneous.

EASTERNER

(o.s.)

What's the good of a fight –

COWBOY

Quit it! Quit now! Qui –

SWEDE

He did! He did!

CLOSE THREE SHOT – EASTERNER, SCULLY, JOHNNIE

Voices are again simultaneous.

EASTERNER

...over a game of cards? Wait a moment!

SCULLY

Stop it now! Stop it I say! St –

JOHNNIE

He says I cheated! He –

In a lower tone, o.s., the Cowboy and Swede repeat their lines.

CENTER CAMERA ON JOHNNIE and advance slowly on him into CLOSE UP SHOT as he continues

JOHNNIE
(continuing)
...he says I cheated! I won't allow
no man to say I cheated! If he says
I cheated he's a...

His lips form whatever most extreme suggestion of obscene or profane insult can be permitted by inference, covered and silenced by the Swede's still louder bellowing.

SWEDE
(o.s.)
He did cheat! I saw him!

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE – FULL FACE

SWEDE
I saw him! He did! He did!

CAMERA, starting with a shot past the Swede's head, centering on Johnnie MEDIUM CLOSE, makes, fairly fast and accelerating, steadily tighter and faster and closer, the circling movement by which a tethered heifer winds herself up short around a post. The players meanwhile are all simultaneously repeating their lines as heretofore with only very close ad lib variations: out of the din of their voices only key words ring out sharply. The weave of salients is roughly:

Stop n...

Wait a mom...

Quit now...

He says...

He did!...

What's the good...

Fight...

As the CAMERA thus ropes them in they all close tighter and tighter against one center as if it were literally a rope around them: they come as close as five people can get. The ROUNDING CAMERA, at shoulder height, SWINGS through an extreme CLOSE UP of the Swede past Johnnie's head and then of Johnnie past the Swede's head practically as if they were waltzing, and comes to a stop, very close in, profiling Johnnie's glaring head at l.s and the Swede's in r.s. Now there are no words; only the SOUND of excited breathing, then not even that: a sudden great cessation. It is as if each man has paused for breath.

CAMERA PULLS BACK INTO MEDIUM CLOSE –
THE WHOLE GROUP as

hands relax and there is a cautious unstiffening away from center; even the Swede and Johnnie step back a little way. Then Johnnie steps forward, fairly close in to the Swede and the CAMERA moves in about a foot.

JOHNNIE

(less loudly)

What did you say I cheated for? What
did you say I cheated for? I don't
cheat and I won't let no man say I
do.

SWEDE

I saw you! I saw you!

CAMERA CREEPS very slowly in: Its motion is that of a very slowly winding snake. CAMERA CENTERS ON JOHNNIE

JOHNNIE

Well, I'll fight any man what says I
cheat!

CAMERA SLOWLY DOLLYING CENTERS COWBOY

COWBOY

No you won't. Not here.

SCULLY

Ah be still can't you?

CAMERA CENTERS SCULLY AS HE STEPS between Johnnie and Swede

EASTERNER'S VOICE

(o.s.; he walks back
into shot)
Oh, wait a moment can't you? What's
the good of a fight over a game of
cards? Wait a moment.

A short pause: the eyes of all five are visible. Already the
momentum toward war is in them and is already all but
irresistible.

Now a series of quick shots, closer in:

SCULLY – HIS EYES TO COWBOY

(His main meaning: How're the chances?)

COWBOY – HIS EYES TO JOHNNIE

(His look means: Boy, will he back down on a man that accuses
him of cheating?)

JOHNNIE – HIS EYES TO SWEDE

(His look means: You lying son of a bitch, take that back or
fight.)

SWEDE – LOOKING STRAIGHT BACK AT JOHNNIE

(His look means: You know damn well you cheated).

SCULLY – HIS EYES TO JOHNNIE

(His look means: How about it, son?)

EASTERNER – HIS EYES AT JOHNNIE

(His look means: For God's sake let's not have a fight.)

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE

The others flanking: quick, steady glances at Scully, Cowboy,
Easterner. From each face we can see from Johnnie's face
that he gets fuller and fuller confirmation toward fighting.

Johnnie steps from behind Scully and walks slowly forward.
He looks very quiet and brave.

JOHNNIE

(quietly)
Did you say I cheated?

MEDIUM CLOSE QUICK SHOT – EYES OF SCULLY, EASTERNER AND COWBOY TO THE SWEDE

Intense silence.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – JOHNNIE

Very gallant and graceful, waiting.

SWING CAMERA SLOWLY to lose Johnnie and bring in Swede who is standing still.

A short silence. The Swede looks like a liar sticking with his lie. Even after he finally decides, he waits a moment: when he speaks his monosyllable it is as if he finally jumped off a high building.

SWEDE
(showing his teeth)
Yes.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE GROUP

Johnnie in l.s., the Swede in r.s. For a moment everyone is very still.

JOHNNIE
(very quietly)
Then we must fight.

SWEDE
(instantly; roaring)
Yes, fight!

CLOSE UP – SWEDE

SWEDE
(roaring like a demon)
Yes fight! I'll show you what kind of man I am!

CAMERA PULLS AWAY slowly to include the three noncombatants.

SWEDE
(continuing)

I'll show you who you want to fight!
Maybe you think I can't fight! Maybe
you think I can't! I'll show you,
you skin, you card-sharp! Yes, you
cheated! You cheated! You cheated!

By the last sentence CAMERA also includes Johnnie, who stands cool and quiet. A pause.

JOHNNIE
(coolly)
Well, let's get at it, then, Mister.

All five stand very still. Then Cowboy, catching Scully's eye, beckons him aside with his chin. The others stay still as they move apart toward the middle of the room.

CLOSE SHOT – PULLING SLOWLY BACK – COWBOY

He walks slowly, stooping next to Scully.

COWBOY
(just above a whisper)
What ya goin' to do now?

CAMERA SWINGS to include Scully, the Cowboy watching him closely.

CAMERA LOSES Cowboy by middle of Scully's lines, centering on Scully.

SCULLY
(stalwartly)
We'll let 'em fight. I can't put up
with it any longer. I've stood this
crazy Swede till I'm sick. We'll let
them fight.

He turns out of shot, toward the coats. In his place, MEDIUM DISTANCE, we see the Easterner, his eyes on the Cowboy, very closely. SWING AND PULL CAMERA so that the Cowboy is again in CLOSE UP r.s., Easterner MEDIUM, watching him closely. In the Cowboy's earnest face there is deep-country blood-lust. He turns from the CAMERA toward the Easterner and the group and walks through them toward the coatroom, not speaking. As he walks and diminishes, the others come into view.

The Easterner holds his eye until he is past. Johnnie, hands

hooked in his belt, is looking coolly, studiously, at the Swede. The Swede, hands open and heavy at his sides, shoulders rounded, a little farther apart from the group than they are from each other, is looking calmly, darkly and a little solemnly, at Johnnie; in a sense he may suggest a chained bear which is about to be baited. It is the Easterner who has especially caught the Cowboy's eye and expression. His reaction is that strange, wavering, uncontrollable smile with which some people, to their astonishment and shame, react to news of catastrophe. Just before the Cowboy gets out of their range the other two glance toward him. Johnnie, with a little smile, looks back into the Swede's eyes. The Swede, looking sweaty, ungainly and bashful, looks at the floor.

The Cowboy walks on between them and toward the coat-corridor: Johnnie is the first to follow him; then the Swede, with a curious lethargic doggedness, looking almost sleepy; then the Easterner, as shakily as if it were he who was going to fight. In the b.g. Scully is already hunching into his coat.

MOVING SHOT

CAMERA PULLS BACKWARD through the coat-corridor (lighted by lamp) past Scully, who is now buttoning up his coat. The only SOUNDS are breathing, carefully controlled, and the SOUNDS of clothes and feet. Johnnie comes up to Scully and past him, for his coat; a silent exchange of glances, the son calm, the father calm and proud: Johnnie slips into his coat easily and gracefully. Only he and Scully are completely calm. The Cowboy, with excited hot eyes is putting on his fur cap with shaky hands. Johnnie meets the Swede's eyes very coolly, almost humorously, as the Swede muscles through for his coat. In this highly charged atmosphere all of the men try their best not to touch each other, but the Swede, in ungainliness, does touch Johnnie as he passes. A cold little smile from Johnnie; Swede tightens his mouth.

As we PULL BACK, and the Easterner works his way in, the Cowboy catches his eye; the Easterner's glance quickly drops. The Swede looks at nobody and nobody looks at the Swede except when they are sure he will not see. The Easterner and the Swede get to their coats at about the same time. The Easterner is very nervous; he has trouble finding the sleeve of his coat but he finally makes it. The Swede wraps a thick knitted muffler high around his throat. He is very thick-fingered buttoning his leather coat and, in spite of his efforts to subdue it, we HEAR him begin to breathe heavily. The Easterner

watches his clumsiness; he clearly has a sudden impulse to help and he clearly knows that he must not. The Swede puts on his foolishly small cap and tries to pull the too-small flaps down over his ears; the cap would obviously not stay on in a fight; he takes it off, looks at it for a moment, and hangs it back on a hook.

Those who are already in their coats start drifting away from the CAMERA into the main room and out of shot; the Swede and the Easterner are alone at this last moment. Almost timidly, the Easterner looks up into the Swede's eyes, obviously thinking hard about something; perhaps even about to speak. The Swede walks past without even seeming to see him. The Easterner, with the helpless and fatal look of a piece of foam snapping over the lip of a waterfall, follows him.

LONG SHOT – MAIN ROOM – FRONT DOOR IN DEEP R.S.

The shot is made from the corner opposite the door, inward end of the room, past the stove, including the side table and lamp.

SCULLY

(at the door, calling
the stragglers who
are already halfway
up the room)

Well, come on.

With their very differing gaits, they all hurry up a little.

Scully opens the door. STORM NOISE. A terrific blast of wind makes the lamp struggle at its wick, a puff of black smoke springs from the chimneytop as the men hurry out; the stove gets the cold wind next: its voice swells to equal the roar of the storm and there is the frightening crackling and hammering of hot metal too abruptly chilled; SWING CAMERA DOWN as some of the scarred and bedabbed cards are caught up from the floor and dashed helplessly against the end wall, (some, including a face card or two, hang flat against the wall a few inches from the floor) with SOUND of closing door, these cards start to fall; before they reach the floor,

QUICK CUT TO:

Outdoor violence as, with lowered heads, the men plunge into the tempest as into a sea.

MEDIUM SHOT – PAST FRONT DOOR – EXT. HOTEL (NITE)

The CAMERA is medium close to the door, waist-high, shooting past the door toward the station, as they stumble out. FULL SOUND of a very strong wind, but more compelling than any other noise, a pure electric or electronic SOUND, without timbre, either so high it is just at the limit of audibility or so high that it is just beyond that limit and works purely on the nervous system (experiment will determine which is better used in this context).

There is no falling of snow; the wind is so strong it makes them stagger and stumble; they all bow deep and turn their backs to the wind as promptly as if they saw God; the wind blows great whirls and clouds of flakes, streaming southward with the speed of bullets. Though we have known from inside that a strong wind is blowing, this exceeds all expectation: a solid shrieking roar like flame, plus the supersonic scream, which is on a high dead level.

BOOM SHOT

A little above head-height, leads their floundering along the hotel facade toward the station, (leeward side of the hotel). As they flounder into a thigh-deep drift we hear the shapeless illegible bawling of the Swede,

SWEDE

(rough approximation)

I haven't got a chance against you bastards.

CAMERA DIPS a little toward them into a fairly CLOSE SHOT as Scully waits, puts a hand on his shoulder, and projects an ear.

SCULLY

(shouting: it is just possible to hear him)

What's that you say?

SWEDE

(bawling)

I say, I won't stand much show against this gang. I know you'll all pitch on me.

SCULLY
(hits him reproachfully
on the arm; yelling)
Tut, man!

Violent wind.

SWEDE
(booming)
You're all a gang of...

Wind obliterates the word.

They start again, CAMERA PULLS AHEAD of them all, facing them; brings in the corner of the hotel and swings swiftly into the lee of the building as the Cowboy and Johnnie turn in. Immediate and striking diminution of NOISE: but SUPERSONIC NOISE is not diminished. CAMERA with them, facing the wall, they walk a few paces in and stand waiting, fairly close to the wall, Johnnie looking toward the corner, the Cowboy toward the CAMERA. There is a little light from one first-floor window (coat corridor); its shade is drawn.

MEDIUM SHOT – DOWN PAST JOHNNIE AND COWBOY

An irregular v-shape of heavily encrusted grass amid this great devastation of snow. A long faint rectangle of light from the window.

SOUND of crackling of feet on grass o.s.; both heads turn sharply.

MEDIUM SHOT – EASTERNER, SCULLY AND THE SWEDE

They come around the corner. CAMERA at Cowboy's distance from the corner but a few feet farther out from the wall.

SWEDE
(still bellowing as
they come up)
Oh I know what kind of a thing this
is! I know you'll all pitch on me! I
can't lick you all!

SCULLY
(turning on him
'panther fashion'.)
You'll not have to whip all of us.

You'll have to whip my son Johnnie.
An' the man what troubles you durin'
that time will have me to dale with!

SWING CAMERA to center on Cowboy, Easterner and Johnnie. The latter is quiet, noncommittal; a spasm of contempt on the Cowboy's face; the Easterner's teeth are chattering, he is stomping his feet and is as jittery with cold as a jumping jack.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

His big head pivoting as he looks from one to another sullenly, still suspicious. Scully takes him by the upper arm and leads him cumbrously, CAMERA SWINGING and PULLING BACK a few feet, away from the wall and into shot with Johnnie, who steps forward into shot; Scully grabs Johnnie's upper arm too. The Cowboy comes in close behind Scully; the Easterner close behind the Swede, (in l.s.) the Easterner alone among the men, is still trying to keep himself warm.

SCULLY

(in a voice of iron
authority)

All right now. Fight as ye are: ye'll
not strip in this weather. Bare fists
to a finish, no holds, no kneeing,
no kicks, no gouging. Fight to be
ended when ayther man calls quits or
at me own discretion. That
satisfactory?

Johnnie and the Swede glance at Scully briefly and at each other briefly. The Swede nods.

JOHNNIE

Suits me.

They keep on looking at each other, the Swede very pale and still; Johnnie serene yet ferocious. Both are taking care not to blink but the Swede blinks once; on Johnnie's face, noting it, a calm flicker of contempt.

Scully plants a hand on each chest and sets them away from him and apart just out of each other's reach.

SCULLY

(as he sets them apart)

Now await me signal and abide by me
instructions.

They raise their fists, Johnnie with something of the suppleness of a good modern boxer of his time; the Swede bearish and archaic, slightly suggesting early 19th century boxing prints, pumping his fists just perceptibly. He stands solid as rock, very heavy and dead on his feet but looks hard to knock off them. The Cowboy, hands on sprung thighs like a shortstop, face tight, eyes brilliant; the Easterner hugging his arms, looking sick, glancing intently from fighter to fighter. It is while CAMERA CENTERS on him or during his close up that the storm seems to get its long mellow cry.

CLOSER SHOT – SWEDE

The Cowboy and the Easterner are not in the shot unless in the b.g. Pretty close on the Swede, CAMERA at about shoulder-height: he is pale, motionless, terrible; SWING to Scully, the iron-nerved master-of-ceremony; then to Johnnie, serene yet ferocious, brutish yet heroic; PULL AWAY and CENTER on Scully with the Swede in r. s. and Johnnie in l.s.

SCULLY

(after a sharp glance
to each of them)

Now!

(no manual gesture)

A NOTE ON THE FIGHT: This is to be a sensational fight but not in any traditional melodramatic sense of that. It is extremely violent but spasmodic, full of unskillfulness, and very clumsy – the clumsiness enhanced by heavy clothing and by occasional veerings onto patches of glare-ice. Though the violence is of itself shocking, the chief shock or sensational element is getting the shock of two essential amateurs, non-fighters, in something close to mortal combat: almost as disconcerting as if one saw a couple of clergymen trying to beat each others' brains out. This can be arrived at through the ice, heavy clothes, ungainliness and lack of skill. It is also clear that you can kill a man whether you know how or not. Both soon learn that in such heavy clothing practically all that's worth trying to hit is the head; though Johnnie, assuming that the Swede is soft in the middle, tries pumping them into his belly with hard loud smacks of fists against leather. The fight is not shot in detail or from either fighter's angle, but as the spectators see it – not very clearly. SOUNDS of blows and breathings are way up.

Insofar as possible, the best fight would come of ad libbing it, barring a few junctures necessary to the story.

The two men crash together like bullocks and there is a perplexity of flying arms. We so exaggerate the SOUND of the crash that the audience feels it like a kick in the belly; and instead of any sparring or fooling around they instantly start socking with all their speed and strength. Both are evidently trying for instant and pulverizing victory; also it is very thoroughly a hatred-fight. They work with this intensity as long as their first wind and strength holds. They veer side to side and back and forth enough in this first phase that the CAMERA has to waver back and fill a little, but nothing special – except that it should not frame them too carefully or neatly. The spectators, moving slightly when they need to, get into and out of shot ad lib. As they first crash and sock, a squeezed curse, – it is indistinguishable from which fighter. (For 'curse,' try saying the first 2/3rds of "God" and "Christ" simultaneously, from between tight teeth).

CLOSE SHOT – THE EASTERNER

His pent-up breath explodes with a pop of relief from the tension of the preliminaries.

COWBOY
(o.s., a sort of Texas
yowl)

CLOSE SHOT – THE COWBOY

In mid-yowl and in mid-air; he lands on his feet again and, hands on knees, looks intently.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

Immovable as from supreme amazement and fear at the fury of the fight which he himself had permitted and arranged.

SOUNDS of fight are strong o.s. over all these shots.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE AND JOHNNIE

and as suggested above; till they draw away to get their wind; and they now come at it more cautiously. After some sparring and some wild misses, the Swede becomes impatient and tries to be a bulldozer; by his sudden drive toward the

CAMERA, the fighters all but knock it over, and the CAMERA has to "step" quickly aside, mindful for a moment only of its footing, as the fighters pass in a blur.

MEDIUM SHOT – REVERSE ANGLE

The fighters are past the CAMERA which now, reversed on former position, shoots away from the hotel wall; the three spectators come slowly into the shot, flanking and back-to. The drive continues though Johnnie is now giving near as good as he gets; but retreating a little and wheeling. Wheeling, they almost simultaneously hit glare-ice. Johnnie, surer-footed, keeps his feet, the Swede falls heavily backward, to some extent saving himself with one hand. Scully comes up to them fast, the CAMERA nearly as fast; he needlessly stays Johnnie with one hand for Johnnie is standing a little too close over the Swede.

JOHNNIE

(with what breath he
has, but not jumping
him)

Get up. Get up and fight. Get up.

Scully has lifted his other hand as if for a count but the Swede grunts:

SWEDE

I ain't out.

JOHNNIE

Don't lay there all night then you
yellow...

SCULLY

Shut up Johnnie it was no true fall.
The man's got a right to...

But already the Swede lumbers to his feet, dukes ready.

SCULLY

(staying the Swede)
Git back off the ice both o' yez.

He leads them in toward the hotel, the CAMERA PULLING BACK with them, and steps back to the edge of shot, skidding a little himself.

A second's hesitation, the Swede seeming a little slow and stunned, then Johnnie drives in on him with terrible intensity, the Swede covering up clumsily, Johnnie working mainly on the head.

CLOSE QUICK SHOT – THE COWBOY

Looking much more excited than before.

Johnnie is delivering hard, fast blows against the Swede's hands which are trying to guard his head, and is then hammering clublike wrists on the bowed nape of the Swede's neck.

COWBOY

(yelling and springing
forward into the
shot)

Go it Johnnie! Go it! Kill him! Kill
him!

Scully comes into shot quickly.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY AND COWBOY

SCULLY

(barring him)
Kape back.

By his glance the Cowboy can see that this man is Johnnie's father. Scully's manner in this must be something to respect.

MEDIUM SHOT – THE FIGHTERS

Johnnie is still hammering but has grown wholly careless of his guard. Suddenly the Swede uncorks a sonofabitch to the belly which doubles Johnnie, and misses a lulu to the head as Johnnie ducks and backs off, getting his guard up; then the Swede lands a wild one to the head which Johnnie sufficiently covers and glances off that they are now again somewhere near even. The Swede rushes it, taking as much as he gives, which is plenty.

CLOSE QUICK SHOT – THE EASTERNER – WATCHING MEDIUM SHOT – PAST THE EASTERNER

A monotony of unchangeable fighting which is an abomination.

Both horribly skid but stay on their feet. As soon he has his balance, the Swede closes and pours it on; Johnnie regains equality; they lurch so near the Easterner that he has to scramble hastily backward and we HEAR them breathe like men on the rack.

CLOSE SHOT – THE EASTERNER

His sickened face, wishing it would end, no matter how.

COWBOY'S VOICE
(o.s., bellowing)
Kill him Johnnie! Kill him! Kill
him!

CLOSE SHOT – THE COWBOY

By the middle of the foregoing line. His face is contorted like one of those agony masks in museums.

CLOSE UP – SCULLY

SCULLY
(icily, to Cowboy)
Keep still.

The Cowboy leans into the shot, puzzled and offended, looking at Scully and Scully at him.

SOUND o.s., of a sudden loud grunt, incomplete, cut short; their eyes toward the fight.

MEDIUM SHOT – FROM ANGLE OF SCULLY AND COWBOY

Johnnie's body swings away from the Swede and falls with sickening heaviness. The Swede, with a kind of wild animal snarl, (roughly, Arghrgh) is obviously about to swing himself headlong on Johnnie.

UPWARD SHOT – ACROSS JOHNNIE

SOUND o.s., of running as the Swede hovers. The Cowboy runs into MEDIUM CLOSEUP and interposes an arm.

COWBOY
(to the Swede)
No you don't! Wait a second!

Scully hurries into the shot, nearer us, standing but leaning over his son like a mother to a crib.

SCULLY

(tenderly)

Johnnie! Johnnie, me boy! Johnnie!

Can you go on with it?

(he is looking
anxiously down)

Bring CAMERA down into a CLOSE SHOT, almost upside down from our angle, of Johnnie's bloody, pulpy face.

Scully squats and his head returns into the shot, close above Johnnie's. A moment of silence.

JOHNNIE

(in his ordinary voice)

Yes, I... it... yes.

Scully's arm under his nape and then his shoulders, tenderly, nearest to us; clumsy, humiliated and piteous getting-up and helping-up, mostly back-to the CAMERA. CAMERA LIFTING to level of the standing men, brings in the Cowboy and the Swede in b.g.,

COWBOY

(still rumbling)

You wait a second.

The Easterner steps into the shot at r.s., a hesitant hand toward Scully's sleeve.

As Johnnie gets fully to his feet, the CAMERA PULLS AROUND his left shoulder; Scully still has an arm across his back; the Easterner comes closer into the shot on the far side of Scully. But the moment he gets his footing, Johnnie moves to throw off his father's arm and veers toward the Swede, fists readying, but obviously weak.

SCULLY

Wait a bit now till you get your
wind.

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

You wait a second.

EASTERNER

(a hesitant hand at
Scully's sleeve, a
low sick voice,
pleading)

Oh, this is enough! This is enough!
Let it go as it stands. This is
enough!

During this speech, the CAMERA has PULLED AROUND so that Scully is in full face CLOSE UP, the Easterner a pinched profile at the side. Scully acts exactly as if he hadn't heard except that his face gets hard as iron. We hear the SOUND of Johnnie's wavy breathing but his face is not in the shot.

SCULLY

(coldly)

Bill.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY – FROM SCULLY'S ANGLE –
SWEDE
BEHIND HIM

The Cowboy says nothing; an enquiring look.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT –
SCULLY AT CENTER, EASTERNER AND JOHNNIE

SCULLY

(still more iron in
his voice)

Git out o' the road.

SOUND o.s. the Cowboy's backward step.

MEDIUM SHOT – FULL FACE, FULL LENGTH – THE SWEDE

Cowboy one more step back and at side. The Swede, fists coming up, starts slowly, stonily forward.

MEDIUM SHOT – FULL FACE, FULL LENGTH – JOHNNIE

Scully stepping out of shot toward the CAMERA. Johnnie is more cautious and much less arrogant than before: still half stupid from weakness.

After Johnnie's advance is started, the CAMERA PULLS OUT,

facing the wall and opposite the referee's position (the three spectators pull close into a bunch), HOLDING Johnnie in the shot in r.s., the Swede coming in from the left. The Swede aims a lightning blow that carries with it his entire weight. Johnnie, despite his daze, miraculously dodges. His (Swede's) fist sends the overbalanced Swede sprawling (far side of Johnnie, almost fouling up his feet) a brutally heavy fall to shoulder and a hog-like grunt; a burst of cheering from the three onlookers. The Swede cuts it short by scuffling agilely to his feet and coming in berserk abandon at his foe. Another blinding perplexity of flying arms and again, not from any particular blow we can distinguish, Johnnie swings away and falls, even as a bundle might fall from a roof. The Swede staggers out of l.s. as the three others, and the CAMERA, hurry to Johnnie.

The CAMERA fetches up opposite Scully as he stoops, shooting from a little above him, down on his face and on Johnnie. Johnnie is lying on his face, the bloody backs of his unfisted hands, are near his head, rather like a sleeping baby's, on the snow. LOWER CAMERA CLOSER on to him, to height of Scully's stooped head; TILT TO CLOSE UP of Scully's heartbroken face.

MEDIUM CLOSE – AT HEAD-HEIGHT – COWBOY AND EASTERNER

They are standing but leaning. The Cowboy is looking down, past Scully, at Johnnie; so is the Easterner at first; then he looks out l.s. toward the Swede.

MEDIUM SHOT – THE SWEDE – FROM EASTERNER'S ANGLE

He is leaning heavily against a little wind-waved tree, breathing like an engine, while his savage and flame-lit eyes roam from face to face... a mysterious and lonely figure, waiting... a splendor of isolation in his situation.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

His sad but awed reaction, still looking toward the Swede; his eyes turn to Johnnie.

CLOSE THREE SHOT – JOHNNIE, SCULLY AND COWBOY

Almost vertical over Johnnie as Scully and the Cowboy (who has come opposite Scully) gently turn him onto his back, their arms sustaining his head and chairing his shoulders a little off the ground. The faces of Scully and the Cowboy are hardly visible at this angle, and are drastically

foreshortened, so that the upper face of each looks like some kind of grotesque mourning mask. Johnnie's face, cradled up toward nearly vertical CAMERA, is also somewhat foreshortened but much less so. It is ghastly beaten, bloodied, cut and swollen, eyes shut, neck limp; head far backward and point of chin highest at start of shot, then up through normal view into aforementioned foreshortening; then again to normal view. Blood has matted his dark hair to his forehead and over one eye. Ice and snow are on his face like a broken mask.

SCULLY

Are you any good yet, Johnnie?

Nothing from Johnnie.

With his free right hand, tenderly as a woman, Scully smooths back the clotted hair from the smeared, smooth, very young-looking forehead, and wipes away the ice and snow.

Johnnie gasps and opens his eyes languidly.

JOHNNIE

(after a moment)

No... I ain't... any good... any... more.

(he begins to cry)

He was too... too... too heavy for me.

As Scully gets to his feet, PULL CAMERA up and back to center on him in MEDIUM CLOSE UP from the Swede's angle. Cowboy and Johnnie low in r.s., the Easterner still closer in l.s., watching Scully. Scully straightens up.

SCULLY

(evenly)

Stranger, it's all up with our side.

The Easterner's eyes to the Swede, quickly back to Scully.

CLOSE UP – SAME ANGLE – SCULLY

SCULLY

(quietly tragic)

Johnnie is whipped.

MEDIUM SHOT – SWEDE

Without replying, he leaves his tree, walks toward and past them, CAMERA keeping him centered, the Easterner's eyes following him, Scully not moving or looking at anything: CAMERA SWINGS with the Swede (who passes between it and the hotel wall) and HOLDS ON HIM as he passes out of the lee of the house to where the wind hits him like a Mack truck and tears at his clothes; he disappears bowed-over deeply, back-to the storm.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

His eyes return from the Swede, absently and indifferently, toward Johnnie. He is chiefly aware that he is freezing. Bring up SOUND of storm strongly.

CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY

His crumpled, leaning face, from Johnnie's angle.

COWBOY

(whispering)

Tsah-right Johnnie. Tsah-right kid.
We'll fix him. We'll sure fix him.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

His eyes are still on the Swede's face but are out of focus. He has not moved since his surrender. His face has changed only in looking still older, more stern, more sad, more tragic. He lowers his eyes and stoops toward Johnnie.

CLOSE THREE SHOT – CENTERED ON JOHNNIE

The Cowboy has him half-sitting; Cowboy's profile r.s., Scully's comes into shot at left; Johnnie's eyes are avoiding everything. Scully puts out a hand toward an instinctive caress and quickly withdraws it.

SCULLY

Johnnie, can you walk?

JOHNNIE

Did I hurt... hurt him any?

SCULLY

Can you walk, boy! Can you walk!

JOHNNIE
(with robust impatience)
I asked you if I hurt him any!

COWBOY
Yes, yes, Johnnie, he's hurt a good
deal.

SCULLY
(to Cowboy)
Let's get him up, Bill.

CAMERA PULLS SLOWLY BACK and up with them:

They get well under him and lift; he winces and gasps in
spite of himself.

SCULLY
Aisy does it. That's the ticket.

COWBOY
How's 'at now?

Johnnie savagely shakes off their hands, totters toward the
CAMERA, quickly gets his bearings and turns, walks between
them and leads them, back-to the CAMERA, toward the corner
of the hotel. Scully and the Cowboy fall in, timidly guardian-
like, just behind each shoulder; the Easterner, who has not
moved since the Swede left, falls in behind them.

BOOM SHOT – THE GROUP

From just above and ahead of them as they flounder along
past the facade of the hotel toward the door. Storm SOUNDS
up.

The Swede's staggering, shapeless tracks are still conspicuous
in the difficult snow; Johnnie, in the lead, avoids making
use of them. After a few paces he flounders badly in the
drift near the door: the Cowboy and Scully, flanking him,
are alert but still shy to touch him. They are all practically
blinded by the blowing snow. After another couple of steps
Johnnie is about to fall: the Cowboy comes swiftly to him,
obviously shouting something the screaming wind tears away
from us; Johnnie fights him off furiously and lunges ahead,
CAMERA stooping swiftly as he falls: the Cowboy swiftly to
him; Scully's heartsick face is disclosed as the Cowboy
stoops, and Easterner's frozen face behind him as Scully

leans; the CAMERA on down to the Cowboy and Johnnie as the Cowboy picks him up as if he were a child and staggers with him up the drifted steps, Johnnie protesting violently, Scully hurrying ahead to get the door open.

FULL SHOT – MAIN ROOM – INT

From same position of last interior shot, from deepest indoor corner. For perhaps a half-second, SOUND of ferocious crackling of the stove and the wrestling trouble inside the lamp in l.s., then the door closes; we hear the SOUND of falling cards; the lamp rights itself and burns steadily.

The Cowboy, painfully embarrassed, is just setting Johnnie on his feet; the Easterner has just got inside; Scully is shutting the door. The Cowboy is slow, embarrassed, careful not to walk ahead of Johnnie; Johnnie, rubber-legged and intensely humiliated, wobbles toward the stove; Scully is at his shoulder, taking great care not to touch him or say anything; the Easterner, the last in, walks as fast as he can past them and up to the stove – CAMERA ADJUSTING to center on him – almost as if he would embrace the stove: he is desperately cold and his face looks like ice. We look past the stove at his face and past that as the CAMERA DOLLIES into position where all the chairs will be visible, MEDIUM CLOSE. As the others come up, the Easterner quits hogging the stove, moves aside to l.s. chair nearest the wall; Johnnie sinks into a chair and, folding his arms on his knees, buries his face in them.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

Standing, Scully warms one foot and then the other at the rim of the stove; he shakes his head quietly, looking down at the hot shoe, making tst-tst-tst with his tongue.

SWING CAMERA to the Cowboy, also standing; removing his cap with a dazed, rueful air, running one hand through his tousled locks. SOUND o.s., of the floor creaking and a heavy step; he glances toward the ceiling sadly and grimly.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

SOUND of another creak or step. He doesn't look up; his head bows a little.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – GROUP

On the stove, and beyond it, the dining room door. CAMERA at standing height shooting downwards across Johnnie's bowed head (he is back-to us); the Easterner's subtle, melancholy profile; the slack hands and bodies, not the heads, of the two standing men. o.s. the SOUND of another creak or footstep; minimal reaction from the men; then a sudden bursting SOUND, the noise of a door flung open, (we can see a little of this and of those who enter, past the stove in b.g.): the Easterner listlessly raises his eyes as the CAMERA lifts swiftly past the bovine head of the Cowboy and the resigned, caught-with-pants-down head of Scully, to catch the wife and daughter swarming in, oh-ohing and ad libbing brogue lamentations.

Mrs. Scully shoulders swiftly past the men toward Johnnie; CAMERA closes onto her in CLOSE UP, at her speed, above Johnnie. She is a wiry, fierce, worn-out woman of 55.

MRS. SCULLY

(crossing to him)

Did he hurt ye child did he hurt ye
so bad?

(she squats in front
of him)

Lookit me Johnnie let me see yez.

(Under this Johnnie,
from his first hearing
of them, has been
shrinking into himself
and now mutters across
her line)

JOHNNIE

(muttering)

Cut it out Ma...

(a couple of half-
whispered words,
covered by loud talk
from her...)

...sake cut it out!

But she is tugging at his wrists and putting a hand under his forehead to lift his face while he still groans, head muffled in hands,

JOHNNIE

Please! Please! Quit it! Le' me be!

But he knows there's no use and she gets his face up (away

from us) and gives a close quick look and then a low keening wail as tears spring out of her and she turns loose of his stubborn humiliated head to bring her hands incompletely toward the primordial gesture of tearing her hair at the temples.

MRS. SCULLY

(hands distraught in
the uncompleted
gesture: a wailing
sob)

Ohh, me boy! Me little boy! And him
sitchy charmer! Lookit 'im Katy!
Jist lookit that! Ohh ain't it
dreadful, did you ever see sitch a
starin' horror!

With "and him sitchy charmer," CAMERA PULLS BACK and up a little; through the rest of her lines and, the CAMERA, from the same position, does quick flicking shots like glances of the eye, centering reactions of one or another of the men in turn and of the daughter – shots A, B, C, et seq. The daughter meanwhile is horning in ad lib with "Ohh," and "Aww" and "Johnnie dear," "ain't it just awful," "it's a sinful shame," etc., and by a violence of gesture and voice, Mrs. Scully drags CAMERA (by quick cut and a shade belated) back to MEDIUM CLOSE UP of herself past Johnnie's bowed head.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – MRS. SCULLY

As she flings herself on her knees before Johnnie, catches his face between her hands, already talking loudly.

MRS. SCULLY

(in a mixture to her
son and the room at
large)

Crazy ye are, jist outa yer mind,
an' him a man twice his age an' size,
the great bullyin' murderer...

JOHNNIE

(across her lines, in
rage, humiliation
and disgust)

Get away, cut it out, quit it I tell
ya, I ain't hurt bad, I'm all right...

SCULLY

(leaning weakly into
shot, aghast with
disgust and sympathy
for Johnnie; in a
weak voice)

Molly!

(she neither hears
nor sees him)

Molly! Please! Molly! Hush now! Molly!
Not here. Molly!

Mrs. Scully does a slow take on him when she finally hears him, cuts off her former lines and whips her head at him.

MRS. SCULLY

(with cold fury)

Shut up an' keep outa this, you!
Haven't ya done enough, standin' by
while a man half kills my baby boy?

(her eyes rake all of
them)

Crazy men! Bloodthirsty brutes!

(her daughter echoes
her less noisily, ad
lib)

Mrs. Scully starts bustling up from her knees, CAMERA RISING with her.

MRS. SCULLY

(rising)

Poor darlin'! Crazy boy, brawlin'
young fool, now jist come with mother,
gently darlin', come darlin', kin ye
walk, son? Come on, let's bathe the
poor blood off an' fix 'im up comfy.

Johnnie meanwhile is still protesting ad lib and is trying at least to walk alone, as he had with the men, but not a chance; they wholly disregard his gestures of pride, his efforts to shake them off. With ad libs of "Silly boy," and such, they cling to him like limpets, helping him out past the stove and thence toward the dining room door.

CAMERA meanwhile, SLOWLY TRACKS crabwise, parallel with the wall opposite the coatroom, so that until they get past the stove they are in a kind of Recessional from the CAMERA.

They reach the far side of the stove from the CAMERA

MRS. SCULLY

(straightening;
reproachfully)

Shame be upon you, Patrick Scully!
Yer own son, too! Shame be upon you!

DAUGHTER

(ad lib)

Shame, shame.

Scully has huddled meekly out of their path but now comes close to the stove as if he needed the warmth.

SCULLY

(gently, almost
inaudibly, meeting
no eyes)

There, now! Be quiet now!

MRS. SCULLY

Shame, I say. Shame.

They turn toward the door on the far side of the stove; the CAMERA continues its crabwise glide and stops when stove centers and blanks out screen, but SWINGS to HOLD them as they half-carry Johnnie back through the dining room door, side and back-to the CAMERA; the door closes.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE THREE MEN

Over the SOUND of the closing door cut to a new angle, from the same position, MEDIUM CLOSE of the survivors. The Easterner, I.s., is in near profile; a crescent of empty chairs; the Cowboy is standing behind between two chairs; Scully is all but hidden by the stove. Scully walks slowly into the shot, sits down slowly and sadly in the chair next Johnnie's (next the Easterner, it stays empty); hangs his hands between his knees. His head is bowed; he wags it slowly, sighs very deeply; head still.

The Cowboy, deeply sad and embarrassed, walks slowly around a farther chair and sits, facing the CAMERA, staring at the stove. The Easterner just looks at the floor.

SCULLY

(after a long pause)
Tst-tst-tst.

The Cowboy exhales a deep damp breath through o-ed lips.

The Easterner's hand is on his knee, flat and limp except for the forefinger, which he slowly raises and brings down, repeatedly.

The Cowboy gets his sack and papers part way out, puts them back.

SCULLY
Tst-tst-tst.

SOUND o.s. of the creaking board in the Swede's room. From Scully, a short sharp intake of breath, no raising of the eyes. The Cowboy's eyes don't raise but they harden. He glances with shy calculation at Scully and at the Easterner and again at Scully.

COWBOY
(carefully)
I'd like to fight this here Swede
myself.

The Easterner's hand goes still, forefinger up in the air; no change in his eyes.

SCULLY
(tempted for a moment,
then, wagging his
head sadly)
No, that wouldn't do. It wouldn't be
right. It wouldn't be right.

COWBOY
(knowing why but making
him say it)
Well why wouldn't it I don't see no
harm in it.
(he looks to Easterner
whose eyes do not
change)

The Easterner's finger is lifted a little higher; motionless again.

SCULLY

(with mournful heroism)

No, it wouldn't be right. It was
Johnnie's fight, and now we musn't
whip the man just because he whipped
Johnnie.

The Easterner's finger relaxes and stays flat.

COWBOY

Yes, that's true enough, but

(hopefully)

he better not get fresh with me,
because I couldn't stand no more of
it.

SCULLY

(commandingly)

Ye'll not say a word to him.

Under Scully's line, the SOUND of the Swede's heavy tread on the stairs. Hearing it, Scully makes his last couple of words all but inaudible. None of them look up or register hearing, but all go very still. The Swede enters "theatrically," his cap on, sweeps the stairway door shut with a bang, and swaggers to the middle of the room. He is dressed to go and carries his valise in his hand. He has washed his face but even from here we can see that it is bleeding again in two or three places. Nobody looks at him, or even looks up. All sit side or back to him, facing the CAMERA.

SWEDE

(loud and insolent,
to Scully)

Well, I spose you'll tell me now how
much I owe you?

SCULLY

(no move or look;
stolidly)

You don't owe me nothin'.

COWBOY

(turning slowly to
look at Swede)

Stranger, I don't see how you come
to be so gay around here.

SCULLY

(shouting across the
last words, a hand
forth almost in
Cowboy's face, palm
out, fingers straight
up)

Stop! Bill, you shut up!

COWBOY

(spitting carelessly
into the cuspidor)

I didn't say a word, did I?

The Swede has been watching this, his body tightening like a fist, but quite unfrightened; as he sees there will be no fight, a sour spasm of smile.

SWEDE

(interrupting Cowboy)

Mr. Scully, how much do I owe you?

SCULLY

(imperturbably; as
before)

You don't owe me nothin'.

SWEDE

Huh! I guess you're right. I guess
if it was any way at all, you'd owe
me somethin'. That's what I guess.

(he pivots fast and
rigidly and takes
two paces toward the
Cowboy; then, leaning
forward, stiff-legged
from his heels, and
mimicking even the
Cowboy's agony-mask,
screams)

Kill 'im! Kill 'im! Kill 'im!

(he guffaws
victoriously)

Kill 'im!

He is convulsed with ironical laughter. He watches them with great interest and delight all the time he laughs. He bites it off sudden and cold. There is an arrogant and expectant

silence.

But the three men are immovable and silent. As throughout this act of the Swede's, they stare with glassy eyes at the stove. They hold it while he waits for trouble, and while he walks leisurely to the front door and, with one last derisive glance at the still group, passes into the storm.

After the door closes (omit all former STORM EFFECTS except a moment's howl of wind while the door is open) hold a few seconds of absolute stillness. Then the Cowboy and Scully jump up and begin to tramp around. The Easterner stays very still in his chair, hardly, if at all, even looking at them; but listening.

COWBOY
(whipping from his
chair; fist hard
into palm)
Unh! Byg! Golly!

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – REVERSE ANGLE – COWBOY

He circles behind his chair; he is finishing the above line; the first words of Scully lines, o.s., come over this shot; Cowboy's eyes to him.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY – PAST COWBOY

His fists are shaking with great intensity near his temples; he is working his way out between the chairs and toward the Cowboy.

SCULLY
Oh, but that was a hard minute! That
was a hard minute! Him there leerin'
an' scoffin'!
(he is pretty CLOSE
now, WHEEL CAMERA
for TWO SHOT, still
favoring Scully)
One bang at his nose was worth forty
dollars to me that minute! How did
you stand it, Bill!

The Cowboy and Scully are equal in the shot now.

COWBOY

(a quivering voice)
How did I stand it? How did I stand
it? OH!
(a violent fist through
the air)

CAMERA PULLS BACK a little, follows Scully. Scully begins paddling back and forth in front of the Cowboy (who stands sort of treading water, making hard little shadow-boxing jabs); Scully's hands are close together; his shoulders are hunched, he is rapidly hammering fist into palm and wailing in deep brogue:

SCULLY
Oi'd loike to take that Swede and
hould him down on a shtone flure and
bate 'im to a jelly wid a shtick!

COWBOY
(up to him and almost
groaning in sympathy)
I'd like to git 'im by the neck and
h-ha-aaammer 'im...
(speechless, a hand
down on a chairback
with a SOUND like a
pistol shot)
...hammer that there Dutchman till
he couldn't tell himself from a dead
coyote!

Toward the end of the Cowboy's lines, CAMERA favors Scully's reaction.

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

Eyes to the Cowboy leaning into upper l.s., Scully is almost crying with the lust of this kind of self-abuse.

SCULLY
I'd bate 'im until he...

CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY

Past Scully's round little head.

COWBOY
(tries to speak; unable)

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY – FROM COWBOY'S ANGLE

He looks grateful, even loving – and as if he could hardly wait, and as if he wants to prompt him like a stutterer.

CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY

COWBOY
(he looks loving too)
I'd show him some things...

CLOSE SHOT – SCULLY

Satisfied, nodding very rapidly but curtly; almost the masculine equivalent of an old-maid gossip's 'yes-yes-yes.'

CLOSE TWO SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY

Faces contorted, a kind of gloating; as if embracing in operatic duet, they look almost straight into the lens.

COWBOY AND SCULLY
(almost in unison: a
yearning, fanatic
cry)
Oh-o-OH! If we only could...

They look at each other with breathless and terrible yearning and again speak almost in unison.

COWBOY
YES!

SCULLY
YISS!

The CAMERA SWINGS to lose them, bringing in their inane shadows on the wall opposite the lamp, chasing each other in circles.

COWBOY'S VOICE
(o.s.)
An' then I'd...
(a sock)

SCULLY'S VOICE
(o.s.)

Yis, an' I'd...
(more socking)

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Yeah, an' I'd...
(a terrific blow on
the air; four hard
fast jabs, a gigantic
uppercut, hard
breathing)

SCULLY'S VOICE

(o.s.; a fierce grunt
of hatred and effort;
he kicks something
which is prostrate)

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

A-aaahhh!
(he jumps up and down
on it)

SCULLY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Oh-o-OH!

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Oh-o-OH!

Over Scully's grunting and kicking

CUT TO:

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE EASTERNER

He is staring at the stove, hands slack on his knees; he is listening keenly. As contempt and self-contempt increase in his face beyond silence, CREEP CAMERA INTO CLOSE UP.

EASTERNER

(quiet but piercing)

Oh, stop it!

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY AND COWBOY – NEUTRAL ANGLE

They are as arrested by his words as in a stopshot. They look toward him, more surprised than offended.

COWBOY
How's that, pardner?

SCULLY
(at same time)
Eh?

MEDIUM SHOT – EASTERNER – SAME POSITION, NEW ANGLE

EASTERNER
(quietly contemptuous)
I said, stop it.
(he gets up and walks toward CAMERA and out of shot toward the front of the room. Over his next line, CAMERA SWINGS across Cowboy and Scully, watching him, astonished; loses them and again picks up Easterner as he nears the stairway door.)
Surely there's some limit to childishness and cowardice and shame!

COWBOY'S VOICE
(o.s.)
What's eatin' you, Mister?

The Easterner pauses abruptly at the door.

EASTERNER
That's all. I'm going to find that Swede and try to make up for what we've done to him.

He goes through the door and starts upstairs.

MEDIUM SHOT – SCULLY AND COWBOY – FROM ANGLE OF DOOR

Slowly, dumbfounded, they turn and look at each other. o.s.
SOUND the Easterner's footsteps and, just audible, a train

whistle.

LONG SHOT – EXT. (NITE)

Shooting down the narrow boardwalk from the corner of town (edge of a building in r.s. toward the hotel and station. Minimal lighting. Same SOUND of shrieking wind and blowing snow as before; same SOUND of storm and high, timbreless scream at the edge of audibility. The line of the boardwalk is marked by a little line of naked, gasping trees. In the deep distance, when blowing snow allows, we see the small, single, stinging light of the station.

The Swede is about halfway between the hotel and the edge of town, coming toward us floundering, struggling into the eye of the wind, with terrifying spirit and energy – carrying his big valise and now and then clutching his cap almost like Harry Langdon. Within a few seconds (see note below for method) he comes a full hundred yards. CAMERA shoots him at shoulder height, a little upward toward his face. As he gets nearer an ordinary CLOSE UP the CAMERA PULLS BACK. For a moment he just wags his head a little, fast, almost paretically, looking all around; growing in his face is a hunger for enormity, violence, bragging, love, glory, something, anything so long as it is huge enough to meet him half-way. Suddenly he opens his mouth and yells at the top of his lungs – then stands, like an idling locomotive, breathing quiet and fast through clenched teeth. Then his hands begin to move; fists hitting the air. Becoming aware of the suitcase, heavy in his right hand, he mingles grinning and weeping and moaning and hits it as hard as he can with his left fist, and drops it and kicks it twice, three times, as hard as he can. It isn't enough for his desperation and joy; again he scans the darkness; and suddenly, with his right fist, he hits himself as hard as he able on the joint of the jaw. He reels a little with the blow and whispers something, and stoops and picks up his valise (CAMERA adjusts to these violences). As he straightens and starts down the street into the middle of the town, he is smiling with a strange peacefulness and hope and sweetness – a tired Pilgrim on the homestretch to Paradise.

The CAMERA PANS as he passes closer, and centers on him as he plods down the middle of the snow-founded, lightless street.

(A NOTE ON THIS SHOT): It is to be heightened above realism, during the Swede's advance up the boardwalk. When he is still

in the deepest distance, we use only every third frame; then every second; then cut every third frame; then every fourth; meanwhile slurring the CAMERA speed a little, fewer frames per second, so that his speed of approach is at all time superhuman and grotesque, but becomes smoother as he approaches. By the time his features become distinct no frames are skipped but the motion, though regular, is fast and dry rather than silky; it is at this time and pace that the train is run through. As he comes into full close up, shade back to normal speed, omitting no frames. The SOUND runs smooth, not clipped; it is not recorded on the spot.

MEDIUM SHOT – MAIN ROOM – INT

The staircase door; o.s. the SOUND of the fast train quickly dies. The Easterner comes through the door with his traveling bag, ready to go. His eyes meet Scully's o.s., and he pauses. He is quiet and grave.

MEDIUM SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY – FROM EASTERNER'S VIEWPOINT

They stand waiting for him in the middle of the room and looking at him with a kind of mystified grimness.

SCULLY

(quiet and reasonable)

Now Mr. Blanc, what's all this about?

MEDIUM SHOT – THE EASTERNER

He walks toward them, extending his hand

MEDIUM CLOSE THREE SHOT – SCULLY, COWBOY, EASTERNER

As the Easterner walks into the shot, offering Scully coins,

EASTERNER

(quietly)

Here's what I owe you Mr. Scully.

SCULLY

(not accepting)

What's your complaint? I thought we was friends here.

EASTERNER

Please. Take it. There's no time to

waste.

Scully makes no move to accept the money.

COWBOY
(incredulous)
You fer that Dutchman?

SCULLY
Yes, what is this about the Swede?

A brief pause: the Easterner's feeling conquers his aversion against going into it. They watch him judicially.

EASTERNER
(quietly)
We've done him a great wrong.

COWBOY
(astounded)
Huh?

SCULLY
Wrong! We couldn't treat him fairer –
we never touched a hair of his head!

EASTERNER
(quiet but feeling it
strongly)
Ah you don't know the meaning of
fairness. Either of you.

They move nearer him; he stands his ground. CAMERA SLOWLY
CREEPS CLOSER.

COWBOY
Now you look here, Mister...

SCULLY
(Solemn and quiet;
slowly tapping
Easterner's chest
with his forefinger)
See here, Sir: guest or no guest,
nobody can tell Patrick Scully he
ain't a fair man.

EASTERNER

Suppose I prove it.

SCULLY

Try, just. Fair enough. But Mister:
ye better make it shtick!

COWBOY

That goes for me too.

EASTERNER

Very well.

He sets down his bag as the CAMERA stops advancing: A CLOSE THREE SHOT, favoring the Easterner. He looks coldly from one to the other as he talks. They watch him judicially.

EASTERNER

When the Swede said Johnnie was cheating, and Johnnie called him a liar, it was one man's word against another. Am I right?

They nod, with a look, "of course."

EASTERNER

That was all we had to go on to prevent a fight. Correct?

SCULLY

Correct.

EASTERNER

All right.

(very quiet and cold)

Did it occur to either of you that the Swede might be telling the truth?

CLOSE TWO SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY

COWBOY AND SCULLY

(together; vaguely)

Truth?

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

He is watching them mercilessly.

EASTERNER

(icy; just audible)
Mm-hm. That's the word.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY

COWBOY AND SCULLY
(gaping, incredulous,
innocent)
HIM?

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

He watches them a moment very tensely, then abruptly relaxes.

EASTERNER
(throwing it away)
Thank you, gentlemen: there's your
proof.
(again trying to pay)
Now please...

CLOSE THREE SHOT – EASTERNER, COWBOY, SCULLY

CAMERA circles, favoring each man as he speaks.

SCULLY
(intensely)
Are you accusin' Johnnie of...

EASTERNER
(quiet, cold)
I'm accusing nobody. I'm proving you
don't know the a-b-c-'s of fairness.

COWBOY
But that Dutchman, he's crazy.

EASTERNER
(biting the words out)
Stick to the point.

SCULLY
If he ever did tell the truth – an'
that I beg leave to doubt – it'd be
the first time in his life.

EASTERNER
That would make it a lie?

COWBOY
Good as a lie.

Scully nods.

EASTERNER
Fine. Splendid.

CAMERA, shooting past the Easterner, favoring the Cowboy, stops circling.

COWBOY
Why, that bird, if he did tell the truth, I wouldn't keer.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

EASTERNER
(to both)
You've proved my point several times over; don't strain yourselves.

His eyes glide quietly from man to man.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY

A pause. They are cornered; half-comprehending, deeply resentful. They are in some degree trying to face it.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

In deep stillness he watches them.

CLOSER TWO SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY

The effort to face it weakens; they glance toward him almost reproachfully and look quickly down; they glance toward each other but their eyes don't meet. Each does his equivalent of a shrug.

LESS CLOSE SHOT – THE EASTERNER

He looks at them in silence a moment.

EASTERNER
(quietly)
That's right; shrug it off; it's a

small matter. It's why wars are fought; why a great nation can fall apart like rotten meat.

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s., booming)

Yeah? Well what're you...

CLOSE SHOT – COWBOY

SWING CAMERA to bring in Scully, reacting.

COWBOY

(continuing)

...talkin' so high and mighty about, I want to know! You was there too, but I didn't notice you sayin' nuthin'!

The shot now favors Scully.

SCULLY

(eager, vindictive)

Now how about, yes how about that! Tarr'd with the same brush, ain't you?

They look to him in bitter triumph.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

A pause as he returns their gaze.

EASTERNER

(with calm self-loathing)

Oh no. A blacker brush.

(still quieter)

You see: I knew.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY

They are held in a strange, prescient pause.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

EASTERNER

(very quietly)

Yes: Johnnie was cheating.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY

COWBOY AND SCULLY

(blankly)

Johnnie...

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

He nods, watching them closely.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – COWBOY AND SCULLY

A silence. We can almost see their wheels go round. Finally, relief and pleasure dawn in the Cowboy's face. As he starts to speak he makes a foolish, rather pathetically helpless gesture, and CAMERA PULLS AND SWINGS to bring in the Easterner.

COWBOY

Why, no. We wasn't playin' fer money.

It was just in fun.

Scully nods, hopefully. The Easterner's reaction to the word "money" is quiet, sick, ineffable contempt.

EASTERNER

(unconsciously; just audibly)

Oh, yes!

The MOVING CAMERA now favors the Easterner in the THREE SHOT

EASTERNER

Fun or not, Johnnie was cheating. I saw him. I know it. I saw him.

A pause.

SCULLY

(solemnly)

Mister: I don't believe you.

EASTERNER

Why would I lie to you?

COWBOY

That's for you to tell us.

In spite of everything, there is a flicker of amusement in the Easterner over this lulu.

SCULLY

(shrewdly)

Ye lied before or now, by yer own admission. I'll take me pick.

EASTERNER

(mildly)

I lied when I kept quiet.

SCULLY

Why? If ye saw what ye claim?

A pause. CAMERA moves into CLOSE SHOT of the Easterner, losing them.

EASTERNER

(quietly)

Cowardice.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – SCULLY AND COWBOY

They can't comprehend or believe such an admission.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

EASTERNER

That's all.

(his eyes show us they still can't understand; with self-contempt and weary patience)

We hated the Swede; you believed Johnnie; you liked me. I wasn't man enough to make enemies of you. I let that poor fool fight it out alone.

He looks from man to man in silence.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – SCULLY AND COWBOY

They are silent a moment.

SCULLY
(quietly)
Then why're ye tellin' us now?

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

EASTERNER
Because there's a limit to cowardice.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – SCULLY AND COWBOY

A short silence as they ponder that.

COWBOY
(solemnly)
Mister, if you're tellin' the truth,
you're makin' yerself out the
yallerist coward ever I seen.

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

PULLING BACK, as he speaks, into a CLOSE THREE SHOT

EASTERNER
Oh, we're all cowards; that's the
root of the trouble. Johnnie is behind
us; you're afraid to face the truth
about him and your own unfairness;
I'm just the worst of a bad bunch.

A short pause.

SCULLY
(bitterly)
I s'pose that Swede's your idea of a
hero.

EASTERNER
He was the only brave man here
tonight.

SCULLY
Brave? Him?

COWBOY
Him? His knees was knockin'!

CLOSE SHOT – EASTERNER

EASTERNER

(new realizations
breaking open)

Sure; he was scared sick. My bet is, he's been sick all his life, with cowardice. What a living hell! But I guess he reached his limit too. He stood up to it tonight – worse fear than we'll ever dream of. And beat it too – sure as he beat up Johnnie. Yes Mr. Scully, he's my idea of a hero. And whatever becomes of him now, it's our fault as much as his.

COWBOY'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Our fault! Why, that feller's just...

EASTERNER

(catching fire more)

Certainly our fault. Good heavens, we flatter ourselves we're civilized men... fit to cope with Destiny, Fate, the Devil Himself. And we come up against some puzzling minor disturbance like this Swede, and all we can do is the worst that's in us.

(a strange, almost
clairvoyant bitterness)

Oh, we declared ourselves, all right... as sure as that blue-legged heron! Yes indeed! We made him what he's become tonight. We're the ones who've put him in danger!

SCULLY'S VOICE

(o.s.; bewildered
scorn)

Talk sense, man! Danger!

EASTERNER

Look here. Any man is in danger who has spent a lifetime in fear and humiliation, and then suddenly finds his right to be alive. He's a danger to others, too. He doesn't know any better yet how to handle his power,

than a child with a loaded gun.

He studies their baffled, hostile faces with deep intensity as the CAMERA PULLS AWAY into a CLOSE THREE SHOT and, with almost a snarl of impatience over having delayed too long and uselessly, reaches down for his bag. Scully's hand detains him.

SCULLY

Just a minute, you: Johnnie's goin'
to have a fair hearin'.

EASTERNER

Oh by all means for Johnnie! But
don't waste my time with it. I've...

o.s. SOUND of the dining room door opening. Instantly they all become very still and look toward it.

MEDIUM LONG SHOT – JOHNNIE – NEUTRAL ANGLE

He limps toward them, washed, but cut and bruised; partly undressed; on his way to bed. As he comes nearer the CAMERA SWINGS to bring in the other three, MEDIUM CLOSE, favoring Scully.

SCULLY

(quietly)
Johnnie...

JOHNNIE

H'lo, Pop.
(to the others, with
a sad, brave smile
as he starts past)
'Night.

SCULLY

(gravely)
Johnnie...

His tone makes Johnnie stop.

CLOSE THREE SHOT – EASTERNER, COWBOY, SCULLY –
FAVORING
SCULLY

SCULLY

(quietly)
Mr. Blanc has something to say to
you.

CLOSE TWO SHOT – JOHNNIE – PAST SCULLY

Cutting across the foregoing line.

There is a cold, lightning-like spasm in Johnnie's eyes.
Then he is friendly, tired, ingenuous.

JOHNNIE
Leavin' us, Mister?

CLOSE GROUP SHOT – FAVORING JOHNNIE AND EASTERNER

The others watch them closely, but watch the Easterner sharper
than Johnnie.

JOHNNIE
(likably)
Well what's up?

EASTERNER
(very quiet)
You cheated, Johnnie.

JOHNNIE
(smiling incredulously)
What's that?

EASTERNER
I said, you cheated. I saw you.

Johnnie looks at him very hard for a moment; then to Scully
and the Cowboy, with the smile of a tired good-guy.

JOHNNIE
(to Scully and Cowboy)
What is this, a joke?

They are silent.

JOHNNIE
(dignified, quiet and
reasonable)
You must of made a big mistake,
Mister; 'cause I don't cheat.

SCULLY
(with pathetic
eagerness)
Now how about that, Sir!

COWBOY
(forgivingly)
Anybody can make a mistake.

For several seconds Johnnie and the Easterner look hard and quietly at each other. Then the Easterner turns to Scully, again extending the coins.

EASTERNER
(not unkindly)
I owe you this, Mr. Scully.

Johnnie surges toward him but is restrained with curious ease by the Cowboy and Scully.

SCULLY
Now none o' that, son. There's been
enough o' that.

EASTERNER
(to Scully)
You won't take it?

There is no answer from Scully.

EASTERNER
Well I can't keep it.

He quietly lays the coins on the floor at Scully's feet. Then he wipes the coin-sweat from his palms onto his coat and picks up his bag.

EASTERNER
(on a queer, wild
impulse)
I'm sorry it isn't thirty pieces of
silver.

He turns and walks away toward the door and out of the shot. They watch after him. The Cowboy is utterly baffled by his remark but Scully calls after him bitterly.

SCULLY

So now he's sacred into the bargain!

MEDIUM SHOT – EASTERNER – FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT

This shot cuts across Scully's line. The Easterner is still walking away from the CAMERA toward the front door. He stops and turns, looking from man to man and, at one moment, directly into the lens.

EASTERNER

(quietly)

Sacred enough; he's my conscience.

Yours too, if you only knew it.

He turns away and goes out the front door.

MEDIUM THREE SHOT – SCULLY, JOHNNIE, COWBOY

o.s. SOUND of the closing door. They watch after him. A silence.

JOHNNIE

(quietly)

Matter with that guy? Gone crazy?

No answer.

SCULLY

(even more quietly)

We can't let him shpread it all over town.

While the others start for their coats he squats and, with sad dignity, starts to pick up the coins. ON HIM, as he does so, SWIFTLY IRIS OUT.

MEDIUM SHOT – SWEDE – A STREET CORNER (NITE)

He emerges from almost pitch darkness into faint visibility, into MEDIUM CLOSE UP, looking right and left as he comes to the new intersection. His face lights up and he stops in his tracks. He is still transcendent, but much more tired than before.

The CAMERA wrenches through an almost 120-degree, streaking turn to the left of him, and stops as abruptly as it started. Slant-wise down the side street, fairly distant, there is a

blur of light through furious snow. A dim sign reads BAR or SALOON.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

With a weary, grateful air of seeing home at last, he sets down his valise. Then he bends over deep-below-screen and straightens up again and his hands are full of snow, with which, with great simplicity and infinite refreshment, he washes his cut face and hands. Then he flicks and shakes the wet from his hands, lifts his cap with one hand and rakes his other hand through his hair, replaces his cap and, his face alight with anticipation and new hope, almost with love, picks up his valise, and bevels off toward the light in a rigid oblique, regardless of drifts, the sidewalk, etc.; the CAMERA SWINGING to center on his plodding back.

QUICK FADE:

FADE IN:

INT. MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE BAR – FOUR MEN AT A TABLE (NITE)

It is a clean, well-lighted place; not big. A table at the rear; four men at it: a lawyer, a doctor, a merchant and a gambler.

We shoot past the Gambler's left shoulder, MEDIUM CLOSE, on the Doctor at our left; the Lawyer facing toward the front of bar, the Merchant on our right. It is self-evident by their looks that the three we can see are among the most respectable and well-to-do men in town. Smoothest of all is the Lawyer. Of the Gambler we see nothing yet except the shoulder of his coat and perhaps a rather fine hand with a wedding ring on it, and a soberly-jewel-linked cuff, and a sleeve of a suit as sober as the others, except it is an elegant dove-gray. They are all smoking cigars, and there are drinks on the table. The Lawyer is doing all of the talking, quietly, smoothly and earnestly; looking always directly into the Gambler's eyes. We soon realize he is the spokesman for the rest, by the way the Doctor gazes into the table, nodding now and then, and the Merchant gazes at the Lawyer, nodding more often and more sensitively; and by what he is saying.

LAWYER

Of course we hardly need to tell

you, Sir, how deeply we regret it:
Even those of us who voted against
you on principle... and it is in our
honorableness and candor due a friend
that I tell you that I was one of
them...

(the Merchant is deeply
moved by admiration
for all this)

...even we regretted it most
painfully, perhaps most painfully of
all if I may say so. After all, every
responsible person in Fort Romper,
every self-respecting man in this
part of the State, knows you as a
square gambler. You have never yet
been known to take advantage of any
man who didn't, in every sensible
person's... uh... in the opinion of
every sensible person, richly deserve
it, one might say "ask for it". Your
family life is exemplary. Your
companionship is a pleasure which
all of us hope to share for many
years to come

(even more earnestly
and gently)

But we do hope you understand, Sir.
After all,

(his voice all but
cracks with
earnestness)

the Pollywog Club is a pleasure club.
Oh, stakes, perhaps modest stakes,
but among amateurs as it were;

(a feeble would-be-
charming smile)

greenhorns. Of course there isn't a
single member of our little club who
could imagine that you would ever...
ever, well, as it were, uh, well,
violate, uh, take advantage of...

(by now he is
thoroughly miserable)

...I do hope you understand me, Sir.

(the invisible man
just lets him fry)

But a professional gambler, after

all. It's just the principle of the thing you know. The ap... the appearance of the thing. No personal offense in the world.

(pause; no help from the Gambler)

(miserably but with dignity)

I do only hope you understand me, Sir, how very deeply embarrassing this is for me... for all of us. How very deeply we regret it.

They wait, eyes as before. A medium pause.

GAMBLER'S VOICE

(o.s.; an even smoother, gentler voice, whose icy central irony totally escapes them)

My dear sir: friends: I wish I might have saved you this painful embarrassment. It is because I honor you as gentlemen and as friends that I know that you must meet me with candor, however painful that might be for you. I am deeply grateful for that candor. Allow me to meet you with equal candor. I think I need say only this: If I were a member of the Pollywog Club, and my own name or that of any other professional gambler were brought to a vote, I would have acted precisely as you have done, for precisely the same reasons, and with precisely the same sentiments, before, during, and after. In a word, I would have blackballed myself from the Pollywog without a second thought.

During this speech the Doctor and the Merchant have turned their eyes slowly to him in wonder and almost in unbelief, and the Lawyer's eyes have stayed on his, burning with a steadily increasing light of deep emotion. By the end of it they are all looking at him practically as if he were Jesus and could cook into the bargain.

The Lawyer's eyes are brimming; he clears his throat but he can't speak yet; the Merchant looks at him and now his eyes brim too. At last the Lawyer rises (the others hurriedly following suit) with his glass.

LAWYER

(all choked up; very quietly)

Let us stand, my friends, and drink:
to a gentleman!

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE GAMBLER

As he rises quickly; he is elegant, histrionic; quietly dignified, cold as ice.

GAMBLER

(with a slight bow)

To you: gentlemen: and my good friends.

They all touch glasses and drink with their respective ideas of 18th century elegance. The Merchant, overwhelmed with emotion, clearly has the sudden idea of smashing his glass and makes the start of a gesture toward that end.

BARKEEPER'S VOICE

(o.s., gently but alarmed)

Hey – Hey!

The Merchant shrivels up with humiliation like a spider in a flame; the Gambler's amused delight is beautifully concealed. He doesn't look around at the barkeeper, but modestly at the table. Both others glance sharply at the barkeeper.

MEDIUM SHOT – BARKEEPER

From their angle, about halfway up the bar. His forehead is still wrinkled with dismay; he is awfully embarrassed to have spoken so sharp to such respectable folks.

BARKEEPER

(in a low voice)

'Scuse me, folks, it just slipped out.

CLOSE GROUP SHOT

Between the Lawyer and the Doctor, on the Merchant and the Gambler. The Lawyer, by his slight stiff turn of head away from the Barkeeper, does not even deign to grant him pardon. The Gambler is very quiet; an almost tenderly sympathetic smile behind which he is reveling in a cruel delight of ironic amusement. The Doctor's head rugged and quiet, a little more scraggy looking than before. The Merchant, crumpled with embarrassment, is just carefully setting down his glass. The Lawyer saves the situation virtually unimpaired by bowing slightly and formally to the Gambler, who returns it to the table at large; the Doctor bows, and the Merchant, a trifle late; as they sit down, the Lawyer gently, manfully claps the Merchant on the shoulder; a glance from the Merchant of spaniel-like gratitude. Their noble mood is addled but not utterly destroyed: they seek to repair it. By the Gambler's smile we know exactly the smile, from the Lawyer, which elicited it; the Merchant is trying to smile too when there is the o.s. SOUND of the front door opening and a stamping in the vestibule between the street door and the swinging doors: all glance toward the door except the Gambler, who watches the Lawyer.

LONG SHOT – THE FRONT DOOR

Top rim of the bar in r.s. The rim of the bar is exactly level in perspective and sprouts from exact center of the right edge of the screen. An almost instantaneous shot as the Swede starts coming through the swinging doors.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE

At head height, as he comes through. He is as high and glowing as before, though slightly less wild; the sudden warmth hits him like a shock of peace and good prospect; his face softens and swells; his eyes flick the joint. Again a very brief shot; he is stepping forward.

LONG SHOT – THE TABLE

Faces and eyes just at the end of casually looking at him; resuming their private conversation. This shot is as quick as a glance.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – BARKEEPER

At his station near mid-bar. Eyes quick from the table to

the Swede, a quick size-up; underplayed and, again, as quick as a glance.

CLOSE SHOT – DOWN ON THE SWEDE'S VALISE AND RIGHT FOOT

He plants his right shoe on the rail; it is clogged with snow; he stomps and scrapes rather loudly, trying to clear it.

MEDIUM LONG SHOT – THE TABLE

Quick, gentlemanly glances of annoyed wondering what it is, finding out, gentlemanly ignoring of the boorishness; back to their mutttons.

CLOSE SHOT – BARKEEPER

A sharp little glance toward the table and toward the noise; annoyance; a tinge of refinement.

CLOSE DOWN SHOT – VALISE AND FOOT

The Swede gets his foot hung comfortably.

CLOSE SHOT – THE SWEDE

He settles his elbows at the bar. He is tired, almost sleepy with the sudden warmth; glowing like a stove; still on top of the world but becoming very peaceful.

SWEDE

(eyes to Barkeeper)

Gimme some whiskey, will you?

The Barkeeper walks quietly into the shot with a high-grade Bartender's faintly insolent politeness toward a low-grade customer; he plants a bottle on the bar, a whiskey glass, and a glass of ice-thick water.

The Swede pours himself an abnormal portion and drinks it down in three gulps. While the Swede pours and gulps, the Barkeeper, past him, pretty close in the shot, is making the pretension of blindness which is the distinction of his class, but it can be seen that he is furtively studying the half-raised bloodstains on the Swede's face.

BARKEEPER

(indifferently)

Pretty bad night.

No answer.

BARKEEPER

Bad night.

(his meaning is clearly
double and quietly
discourteous: bad
night for you, bud,
that's clear enough)

SWEDE

(pouring more whiskey)
Oh, it's good enough for me.

He roots under his coat and deep into his britches-pocket, slaps down a coin, and tosses off the new drink, eyes following the Barkeeper.

MEDIUM SHOT – BARKEEPER – FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

Putting the coin through a highly-nickeled cash register with a brilliant clanging of the bell.

CLOSER SHOT – SWEDE

As he finishes his second drink; he is heavier now yet still tremendously elated and at peace with himself: he pivots eyes and head in a slow benign sweep down the bar and in the direction of the table, looking toward the men, o. s., with towering benign vanity and self-confidence, and friendly interest. SOUND o.s., of a coin slapped on the bar, rouses him from this boozy musing.

CAMERA "adjusts" about as heavily and clumsily as the Swede does, to get the Barkeeper into the shot.

SWEDE

(a wave of the hand)
Keep it, keep it.

BARKEEPER

(with a tinge of
sarcasm; the change
is only a nickel)
Thank you sir.

SWEDE
(grandly; abstractedly)
Buy yourself a cigar.

A pause.

The Barkeeper is looking toward the table; the Swede at the Barkeeper. The Swede is trying to cogitate. He's somewhat disappointed; nothing is going as he had wildly imagined it would go with people, from now on; but he has just enough sense to realize: after all, this guy doesn't know me for what I am. Better let him in on it a little.

SWEDE
No, this isn't too bad weather. It's
good enough for me.

BARKEEPER
(languidly)
So?
(he drifts a foot or
so away, down bar)

The Swede is sweating a little; the booze is getting to him now; his breathing is a little heavier.

SWEDE
Yes, I like this weather. I like it.
(nodding heavy time
to his words)
It suits me.

BARKEEPER
(after a short pause)
So?
(he turns to study
the bar mirror)

Swede flinches, confused with disappointment and uncertain what to try next, follows his eye along and down the mirror.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE'S REFLECTION IN BAR MIRROR

Eyes glittering in the scrolled mirror, o.s. SOUND of his heavy breathing. After a few moments of this mirror-gazing, the mirror blurs a little and comes as if effortlessly back into focus; blurs again:

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE FROM ANGLE OF HIS REFLECTION

He squeezes his eyes tight shut and opens them; his head is lower than when we saw it before; he is leaning deep and heavy on his elbows. Evidently triumph, melancholy, fatigue, loneliness, the dismay and disappointment of a dream confronting actuality, all balled up in him, not to mention the whiskey and the warmth, are all hard at work in him, with all the liabilities a little outweighing. It is in the need for counterbalance that he speaks next.

SWEDE

Well, I guess I'll have another drink.

(he pours, a heavier
slug than before but
slower and, raising
his glass, needing
company bad but trying
to make it seem
casual, he eyes
Barkeeper o.s.)

Have something?

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – BARKEEPER PAST SWEDE

BARKEEPER

No, thanks, I'm not drinking.

The Swede downs his drink fast but a little more doggedly than before; no real relish for it; while the Barkeeper studies him more openly.

BARKEEPER

How'd you hurt your face?
(a tinge of mild insult
which the Swede misses)

SWEDE

(loud and blustery;
grateful for the
chance)

Why, in a fight. I thumped the soul
out of a man down here at Scully's
hotel.

LAWYER'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Who was it?

Swede turns quickly.

MEDIUM LONG SHOT – TABLE FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

They are all looking at him.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE – FROM SAME ANGLE – BARKEEPER IN B.G.

SWEDE

Johnnie Scully. Son of the man what runs it.

MEDIUM LONG SHOT – TABLE FROM SWEDE'S ANGLE

Their reaction is not one of overjoy.

MEDIUM CLOSE – SWEDE

Seeing they are not as impressed as he is, he tries to better it by making it bigger. He is beginning to squint as if seeing them through a needle eye.

SWEDE

He'll be pretty near dead for some weeks, I can tell you.

Again he waits a reaction.

MEDIUM SHOT – SAME ANGLE

SWEDE

(talking a little louder)

I made a nice thing of him, I did. He couldn't get up. They...

MEDIUM LONG SHOT – SWEDE – FROM ANGLE OF TABLE

SWEDE

(continuing)

...had to carry him in the house. Have a drink?

LONG SHOT – ON TABLE FROM BEHIND BAR – PAST SWEDE'S HEAD

The men at the table have in some subtle way encased

themselves in reserve.

LAWYER

(voice neither pleasant
nor unpleasant)

No thanks.

Now none of them look at the Swede. The Swede keeps looking at them. A couple of seconds after the "no thanks" he turns his face into the shot, disappointed, mixed-up and a little sore.

SWEDE

(to Barkeeper)

Come on, have a drink.

(he grabs the bottle
and holds it out)

CAMERA SWINGS losing table and bringing in Barkeeper.

BARKEEPER

(shakes his head)

SWEDE

What... No? Well, have a little one
then.

(thick fingers measure
a little one)

By Golly, I've whipped a man tonight,
and I want to celebrate. Whipped him
good too.

(he turns his head
suddenly again into
hindsight close up of
his face. Calls loudly)

Gentlemen, have a drink?

BARKEEPER

Ssh!

The table is back in the shot now; only a fragment of the Barkeeper as in the start of the shot.

The Doctor looks up.

DOCTOR

(curtly)

Thanks. We don't want any more.

They all conspicuously pay "no attention" to the Swede.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE – FROM ANGLE OF TABLE

The Swede is still looking toward the table, sore as a boil; he ruffles up like a rooster, and explodes.

SWEDE

(loudly, wavering in
his speech between
Barkeeper and table)

Well, it seems I can't get any one
to drink with me in this town. Seems
so, don't it? Well!

BARKEEPER

Ssshhh!

SWEDE

(leaning toward him,
snarling)

Say, don't you try to shush me up. I
won't have it. I'm a gentleman, and
I want people to drink with me. And
I want um to drink with me now.

(hard fist on the bar)

NOW! You understand?

BARKEEPER

(callous and sulky)

I hear you.

SWEDE

(louder)

Well, listen hard then. See those
men over there?

(he flings out a thick
arm)

Well, they're gonna drink with me
and don't you forget it! Now you
watch!

BARKEEPER

Hey! This won't do!

SWEDE

(already walking;

chops out the words.)
Why won't it?

CAMERA is with the Swede, along his right side as he walks. He is in pretty large CLOSE UP, filling the right half of the screen, his angry profile almost pushing the right edge of it; the bar streaking past in left half and the Barkeeper hesitantly hurrying, as he walks fast and drunkenly up to the table. Just as he comes up, lower CAMERA a little to his outlifting hand and speed its SWING a little to bring in a flash of the men at the table, not getting up, but tightening in their chairs.

CLOSE SHOT – SWEDE'S HAND

In a heavy combination of a clap and a fall, hits the gray shoulder of the man who happens to be nearest him – the Gambler's.

CLOSE UP – THE GAMBLER – FROM SWEDE'S VIEWPOINT

A diminutive man, twists his head slowly and looks up into the Swede's eyes. From this angle he is all eyes and forehead; the chin looks weak.

STEEP CLOSE UP – SWEDE – FROM GAMBLER'S ANGLE

From this angle he is all truculent jaw and mouth, little glittering eyes above; apishly small upper half of head.

SWEDE
(wrathfully)
How about this? I asked you to drink
with me.
(his eyes flick sorely
and quickly toward
the others)

DOWN SHOT – ON LAWYER AND MERCHANT – PAST SWEDE AND GAMBLER

Keeping their seats; looking at the Swede in icy disgust.

GAMBLER
(coolly; somewhat
melodiously)
My friend, I don't know you.

SWEDE

(roughly; trying to smile and be his idea of "Western" about non-introductions)

Ahh, come on and have a drink!

CLOSE SHOT – DOCTOR, MERCHANT, LAWYER

All eyes to the Swede, all registering their respective kinds of well-bred silence

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – BARKEEPER

Opposite the table, behind his bar; sprung like a ready trigger; watching everyone very carefully.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – GAMBLER AND SWEDE

Gambler very low in screen, the Swede very high, past the Doctor in f.g.

GAMBLER

(face still up-turned; coolly and with mock-kindness but very firm; very much the gentleman)

Now, my boy, take your hand off my shoulder and go 'way and mind your own business.

ZOOM CAMERA TO EXTREME CLOSE UP OF SWEDE, slanting up at him a little.

SWEDE

What! You won't drink with me, you little dude? I'll make you then!
I'll make you!

On the first "I'll make you" he is rapidly stooping; **STREAK CAMERA DOWN TO EXTREME CLOSE UP** of his hands and the Gambler's face; the hands are already grabbing him by the throat and dragging him from his chair, over noise of scraped-back chairs and rising ad libs of Hey! stop! Great Scott! Stop him!

CUT OVER THESE SOUNDS AND WORDS MEDIUM SHOT –

THE GROUP

Past the three men at the table, centering on the Gambler and the Swede, (SOUND of running Barkeeper and his ad libbing o.s.). The three men are rising in their far from rough or halfway ready way, to help; but everything is too fast for them. The Gambler almost instantly stops resisting the upward drag and gets up, throwing the Swede off balance; pivoting as he rises so that he drives the Swede behind the chair toward the wall opposite the bar; getting under the Swede's clumsily placed elbows with his whole left arm and shoulder and lifting as he rises so that the Swede's whole slick and shiny chest and belly of leather coat bulges taut, swollen and shiny as a watermelon, catching highlight from the bar light. Just while it can still be visible before the pivoting hides it, he reaches deftly into his trouser pocket and pulls out something; the snap of a spring and a long blade flicks out, flashing the same highlight we have just seen on the Swede's soft belly. SOUNDS of breath drawn in sharp with horror. The Gambler's arm straightens back, drives forward; a horrifying SOUND as the blade enters the leather (on far side of fighters from us), and a deep weird groaning grunt from the Swede.

CLOSE UP – SWEDE

Almost a head taller than the Gambler, whose back is to the shot. The Swede's eyes and mouth are amazingly wide: pain in them, but far more, supreme astonishment: childlike.

Low in the shot the Gambler, not too easily, (SOUND o.s.) extracts the knife and vanishes out of the shot to the left (we don't see his face) as CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER ON THE SWEDE.

The Swede is drawing as deep a breath as his lungs can hold; eyes and mouth are now even more wide and amazed; then, very long and slow and gentle, incredulous, downward-trailing to a damp breath, he utters the Swedish word for "no," which is "nej," pronounced 'nay,' in a tone almost beyond sorrow and wonder but partaking of both: he begins to step backward very slowly, CAMERA gently and implacably following, and gaining on him a little, very gradually; and still more slowly to sink; CAMERA ditto: at the end of the "Nay" his chin trembles a little, the staring eyes alter, one tear runs out of each:

As the two tears spring out, a SWIFT THRUST OF CAMERA up to

the eyes – not too close;

THEN CUTTING:

NOT DISSOLVING:

and with great rapidity: The supersonic tone used pianissimo at first and steadily increasing to ultimate unbearable intensity, behind all the shots: likewise a subsonic tone, same intensification.

In a huge soft radiant CLOSE UP involving munificent crystal and mahogany and a spray of potted palmleaves, over distant male cheers and discreet streaming SOUNDS of high grade dinner music, the Swede and the Gambler, in soup and fish, touch glasses, smiling, courtly; in b.g., the vague-focused heads of the three other men raise glasses; superimposed for a fraction of the time it takes him to say it, the Barkeeper in smiling CLOSE UP saying, "It's on the house, gentlemen."

Over brass disc of music of supertime, very faint, Scully, Easterner, Cowboy rush to congratulate him by his tree just after the fight.

Over same music, indoors by the stove, Johnnie, battered and sheepish, nods and grins as he lifts the Swede's hand as the victor's.

Over same music, a little louder, Swede in CLOSE UP, his arm around Johnnie's shoulders, both faces beaten up, both grinning as Scully, grinning, in l.s., offers the yellow-brown whiskey bottle.

Over the SOUND of transcontinental express, an unknown good looking well-bred blonde woman of a ripe thirty-five loses a look of hauteur and smiles up at him promisingly.

Over train and disc music a whole parlorfull of floozies in negligee hasten, happily, to swarm around an advancing CAMERA.

A fearsome heavily-mustached blond man in clothes of lower middle-class Sweden (circa 1860, – his father), glaring down into the lens over the SOUND of whipping and child's crying, suddenly smiles beautifully and benignly: total approval and respect as eyes and lens lift and come level: no whipping SOUND: then scowls again.

The immense vague tender face of a young woman, shot from

the angle and nearness of a baby looking up from the crook of her elbow; over the SOUND of a warm untrained contralto half-humming a lullaby or folksong in a foreign language, she gazes with infinite tenderness and pity into the lens.

SOUND of impact of a tremendous blow, exploding 398-H into a white flash and recovering into a close image of Johnnie past his still landing fist.

Easterner, from earlier, his mouth saying, "I don't understand you": but silent.

From the Swede's viewpoint: Johnnie does something shady with the cards.

A long line of hard men in a dark bar look up rather dangerously at the advancing CAMERA over the SOUND of swinging doors.

CLOSE detail-shot of "The Stag at Bay," very dark. (The HIGHSOUND is by now very strong; no other SOUNDS.) Then SOUND of child's crying o.s.

A little boy pulverizing the face of another little boy who is crying and not hitting back. LOUDEN SOUND of child's crying; begin lullaby.

Face of the Father, closer and fiercer: same SOUNDS.

Swede in EXTREME CLOSE UP at the corner of the town in fullest magnificence. He is not shouting but add the SOUND of his shout, at a great distance, to the other SOUNDS.

The tigerish reflection in the mirror; continue shout and other SOUNDS.

Same small boy alone, face beaten, crying: SOUND of crying.

Again the huge vague maternal face: silent except for HIGH SOUND which is now at its peak!

EXTREME CLOSE UP – SWEDE

His mouth is almost closed now, his eyes are still wide; he slowly, mournfully, wags his head once to and fro as he sinks: the eyes again alter and slowly freeze into an expression of unutterable horror, dread, recognition and grief. The film, with this change in eyes, very gradually darkens, by darker

printing: the eyes remain fixed on the same o.s. spot, just off lens, and it is as if they now die and the rest of him is merely trailing them. CAMERA stops following him: he backs against the edge of a little side table; gropes backward with one hand; fumbles backward between two of the small tables which line the wall and backs between them to the bench and slowly lets himself down and, within a second more, is still. After a second of this stillness (make it a stop shot and stop the HIGH and LOW SOUNDS) his eyes are still fixed on the same spot.

MEDIUM LONG SHOT – THE GROUP

The Swede is just out of the shot beyond r.s. The Gambler stands just where we left him; his knife, point downward is still in his hand. Only the Doctor moves. After perhaps three seconds of immobility he comes through his friends and past the Gambler and over to the Swede, CAMERA SWINGING with him, SOUND of his shoes very quietly crackling on the sanded floor. When he gets to the Swede he stands sufficiently between us and the Swede that we can't see what he's doing, but it isn't much – no need for it to be. Then he straightens up and turns, with desperate eyes, and goes back past the Gambler and his friends, CAMERA SWINGING, same quiet, sandy SOUNDS, and gets his coat. As he lifts it from the coatrack.

MERCHANT

(softly)

O my Gahhd-uh. O my Gahhhd-uh.

He turns and starts toward his coat and stumbles against a chair as if he were blind. The Lawyer reaches out swiftly, as to catch him should he fall; he doesn't; the Lawyer gently pushes-helps him to the coatrack, a hand against his nearest upper arm; they start getting on their coats. The Lawyer is quick, the Merchant clumsy as a child; the Lawyer helps him; the Doctor, all set, starts toward the front door.

MEDIUM SHOT – GAMBLER

He faces the bar squarely (the Swede is not in the b.g.). He is standing very straight and graceful, almost military, facing the CAMERA, looking to l.s. He is managing this with terrific effort and his knees are just visibly trembling. SOUND of the Doctor's footsteps; the Gambler's eyes moving steadily with him: he comes across close, l.s. to r.s.; the Gambler's eyes on his. The Doctor doesn't look at him; he is so scrawny and rugged with shock and distress he looks sick

and ten years older. He crosses the shot and out. The Gambler's eyes very quietly to l.s. again: 3 flicks of his eyes, to height of the Lawyer, the Merchant and then the Lawyer again, swinging with them. They enter and cross the shot, side by side; the Merchant on the far side of the Lawyer and almost totally obscured by him.

MERCHANT

(half-moaning)

O my Gaaahhdd-uh, my Gaaahhdd-uh.

He says this about every five seconds from the time he starts to his exit, ever more moistly, softly, calflike, never louder. The Lawyer's head, close, high in screen, is desperate icy granite, noble Roman; his eyes, which look straight forward, unseeing as a statue's. The Gambler's eyes follow as they exit right screen.

LONG SHOT – THE FRONT DOOR

The rim of the bar in the middle of the edge of r.s., and level in perspective. The Lawyer very erect, an arm across the Merchant's shoulders; the Merchant caved in and stumbling as a widow. Now they either just avoid stumbling, or stumble brutally against, the Swede's valise; then on, not looking back, and out the door.

MEDIUM SHOT – THE GAMBLER

SOUND of closing door. Very slowly he lifts his knife and looks at it. Again by terrific effort he brings the trembling of the blade down to just perceptible. After a long pause he lifts his eyes toward the Barkeeper, o.s.

GAMBLER

(very quietly)

May I have your bar-cloth, please.

MEDIUM SHOT – BARKEEPER

BARKEEPER

(limply; almost
inaudibly)

Yes, sir.

He walks unsteadily up the bar for the cloth, toward the edge of the shot, while the Gambler walks even more slowly to the bar; his back, like his front, expressive of terrific

shock and incredible control.

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – GAMBLER AND BARKEEPER

As they converge at the bar, Barkeeper extends the cloth delicately and the Gambler takes it as delicately. Gambler nods thank you. The Gambler wipes his blade and as he does that his hands and knees start trembling badly in spite of himself. With an almost suicidal effort he controls the trembling and makes the faintest beginning of handing the cloth back to the Barkeeper, who winces very faintly; then, reaching carefully rather than tossing, he puts the cloth on the bar. He folds his knife and puts it in his pocket.

GAMBLER

(in an unearthly calm,
dry voice with a
scratchiness
underneath)

Charlie, you tell 'em where to find
me. I'll be home, waiting for 'em.

The Barkeeper tries to speak; he can't; he nods, then nods again.

The Gambler walks into the shot and past the CAMERA and returns, within a couple of seconds, walking into the shot and away, back-to; his hat is already on; as we first see him he is finishing shrugging into and settling his overcoat; and now, by faint motions of hands and elbows, as he continues, we know he is buttoning it. It must be clear that though he walks very erect, calm, and even, he is scarcely able to stand up. He takes a long slanting line to avoid the valise; rectifies the line the instant he passes it; and so out the door. (Under all these exits use SOUND of feet on sanded floor).

The Barkeeper, who leaned back against the bar as the Gambler went for his coat, stays there very still a moment after the door shuts; then up the bar, knees wobbly, a hand on the bar sustaining him now and then, to the bottle on the bar at the Swede's place. He lifts the bottle and the Swede's glass, puts down the glass and drinks from the bottle, deeply. The inevitable violent reaction of a kind of writhing of his whole interior; a kind of gobbling SOUND. Then a great HUH expulsion of breath: then loud deep breathing, stunned eyes wandering vacantly. Then we see that they must light on the Swede, o.s., for they stop abruptly, and so does the

breathing. Then after a couple of seconds the breathing begins again, great HUHs, but this time much more terrible shattering with shock and with a kind of dry sobbing: an off-balance pump: HUH – uhhhhh: dead silence: HUH – uhhhhh: dead silence. He takes two almost sneaky steps toward the door; hand reaching behind and untying his apron: then sprints ungainly, his apron fouling legs and feet and kicked aside as if it were a snake, with another awful HUH – uuuhhh carrying him at high speed through the door. No SOUND of closing door, but SOUND of the scream of the storm, very far down.

BARKEEPER'S VOICE

(o.s.; retreating in
the street and muffled
in the storm, bawling,
bestial)

HeIIlllp! Murrrrrder! HeIIlllp!

HOLD SHOT ON BARE BAR and perspective of its rim, through these lines.

FULL SHOT – THE WHOLE INTERIOR (ORTHOCHROMATIC FILM)

A formal shot from the dead center of the front of the room: a shot modeled on postcards of 1890-1910: our first full view of the nicest bar in a small town: pathetic but not completely unsuccessful in its efforts at a kind of barren charm and grace. The sand on the floor in the f.g. is swept in pretty curcliques; these are scuffed along the bar and where the fight took place. HOLD three or four seconds, long enough to register fully the Swede and the cash register, dead-opposite each other, at exact middles of their sides of the room. No storm SOUND: pure silence.

EXTREME CLOSE UP – THE SWEDE'S LEFT EYE (ORTHOCHROMATIC)

Occupying the whole screen except enough to show a little of a contused cheekbone and across it, a crooked rill of dried blood and a snailtrack shining of a not yet dried tear. The eye, if technically possible, is glazing as we watch. Silence.

EXTREME CLOSE SHOT – THE CASH REGISTER (ORTHOCHROMATIC)

The ornate cast-iron top of the nickel-plated cash register. Its florid shape recalls the florid cornice of the Blue Hotel.

The cash amount is below-screen. The stamped lettering of the legend is fiercely cold, glittering, massive and hard – a little ornate like much of the lettering of the time:

THIS REGISTERS THE AMOUNT OF YOUR PURCHASE

o.s. SOUND of a door opening. HOLD the shot a couple of seconds after it.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT – THE EASTERNER

As he comes through the swinging doors, advances a couple of paces, and stops dead in his tracks as his eyes find the Swede. An impulse to go to him is instantly arrested; it is so clear that he is beyond help. Almost unconsciously, he sets down his traveling bag. A freezing anguish of guilt enters his still face.

After a sufficient pause to make clear they did not come with him, Scully, Johnnie and the Cowboy come in, quietly, but winded. They also look, see, and are silent. They try to subdue their breathing. They have left the street door open and we can see that there is no more storm or SOUND outside.

The Easterner is aware when they come in; we feel that he even knows who they are. But throughout the scene, he never shifts his eyes from the Swede; and they shift theirs only rarely. Throughout, they stand behind Easterner.

After a considerable silence:

SCULLY
(in a subdued voice)
How did it happen?

The Easterner says nothing. A pause.

COWBOY
(quietly too)
You ask me, that feller was lookin'
for trouble. An' he sure found himself
a plenty.

A pause.

EASTERNER

(in a strange, vague
voice)

Looking...?

(more firmly, but
very quiet)

Like all troubled men.

(pause)

And we helped him find it, and we
trapped him into it.

A pause. The three men behind now glance at each other.

SCULLY

(a little less subdued)

See here, Mister.

The Easterner says nothing.

SCULLY

Just one thing.

EASTERNER

(quietly)

Go home.

SCULLY

Just one little thing. Johnnie an'
me live in this town. We don't want
no stories shpread around that ye...

EASTERNER

(as quietly)

Go home. Stop worrying. Tell whatever
story you please.

SCULLY

Ye mane ye – ye won't...

EASTERNER

Your conscience is your business.
Each one of you. My own is enough
for me to cope with.

They linger, unsure and weary.

EASTERNER

(with deep exhausted
bitterness)
So just go home now. Leave me alone.
(pause)
If you please!

A silence.

SCULLY
(quietly and solemnly)
We didn't have no part in it.

The three shake their heads, but they don't look at each other.

EASTERNER
Every sin is a collaboration.
Everybody is responsible for
everything.

The three look unsurely at each other; they are obscurely abashed.

SCULLY
(with a slight gesture
and an almost
inaudible whisper)
Come on.

Each looks a last time toward the Swede, each in his own strange way, kind of gloomy, shy, foreboding reproach and resentment; and each, one by one, turns away from the CAMERA and walks quietly outdoors and out of the shot. We hear only the SOUND of the faint squeaking of their shoes on snow, and soon this dies.

With the absolute silence an even more fierce and living quiet intensifies in the Easterner's face and becomes, as well, sorrow, pity, tenderness, a passionate desire for, and hopelessness of, expiation. The face rises on a high wave of realization, almost transfigured, on the verge, even, of mysticism, yet iron, virile, tragic – as, very slowly, his eyes still fixed toward the Swede, he walks into extreme CLOSE UP and PAST THE CAMERA out of the shot.

THE CAMERA HOLDS for a few seconds on the swinging doors, whose subtle breathing stops. Beyond them, through the open door, the air is utterly still.

LONG SHOT – THE BLUE HOTEL –
SAME AS THAT WHICH OPENED THE
PICTURE

Three tiny figures walk in single file down the home stretch. In the immense silence we can just hear their feet. They go in. Light gapes and vanishes, as the door opens and closes. After a few seconds, light appears in the upstairs windows. After a few more seconds, the downstairs light goes out. Then one upstairs light. Then the other. The sky is emblazoned with a freezing virulence of patterned stars.

Almost inaudibly, deep in the distance, o.s. SOUND of a train whistle. In the silence after it, the cold stars sharpen; and very slowly, like a prodigious wheel, the whole sky begins to turn.

FADE OUT:

THE END