

"THE CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE"

Screen Play

by

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The MAIN and CREDIT TITLES are SUPERIMPOSED on a series of line drawings of elves, small forest creatures, tree limbs, and other grotesqueries drawn in the delicate, fanciful, and yet frightening style of Arthur Rackham, The DISSOLVES from one card to another are accomplished by a gust of wind blowing autumnal leaves past the title as the card begins its dissolve. The drawing on the last card shows an oddly shaped tree trunk.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

CAMERA IS SHOOTING PAST the actual tree which we have seen depicted in the last card. Up the path, marching two by two, are a dozen children of kindergarten age. At their head is Miss Callahan, a young, pleasant-looking teacher. The children are singing rounds and she directs this operation by blowing a pitch pipe and extending her hand first to the left hand column which starts the first lines of the round.

CHILDREN

(singing)

"The goldenrod is yellow, The corn is
turning brown,"

Miss Callahan extends her arm toward the right column. They take up the words the left column has just finished, while the left column now goes on with the second part of the round.

CHILDREN (CONT'D)

(singing)

"The trees in apple orchards 'With fruit
are bending down."

Miss Callahan smiles in satisfaction at her pupils, and turning around, continues along the pathway, waving time with her hands as the children go on and on with their musical round.

EXT. BRIDGE CROSSING A SMALL STREAM - DAY

With Miss Callahan at their head, the children march onto the bridge. Here Miss Callahan halts and the children stop with

her. She turns to face them and makes a motion for them to gather around her. With them grouped about her, she half turns facing the sunny glade on the other side of the stream.

MISS CALLAHAN

Take a good look, children. It may seem just a little valley with a stream running through it. But, no. It's Sleepy Hollow. Just because you are lucky enough to be the kindergarten class of Tarrytown, you can run and play in Sleepy Hollow --

(glancing at her watch)
for exactly fifteen minutes.

Almost with the grace of a child she rises and begins to run. As if this were a signal for them to begin their play, the children run after her.

MED. SHOT of children as they begin to run past the camera, laughing and shouting. Finally, one little girl comes running past the camera and the CAMERA TRACKS WITH her. This girl is Amy Reed. There is a haunting quality about her childishness; almost a feeling such as Wordsworth expressed, that her youth still keeps her in touch with the memory of another world, a memory which fades with each passing day, and whose fading leaves a sense of emptiness and loss.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - Amy. Apart from the other children, she raises her arms and looks up to the sun and the sky. A butterfly, perched on a stalk of mullen, attracts her attention, and she tiptoes softly toward it, kneels beside it, and begins to speak to it. Her voice can be heard, but the words cannot be distinguished. Suddenly the butterfly spreads its wings and flies away. Amy rises with a smile and runs after it.

MED CLOSE SHOT - a stand of goldenrod in the meadow. The butterfly flies into the scene and lights on one of the blossoms. A moment later Amy comes and kneels beside it. She whispers, but only a word or two can be heard.

AMY

Where are you going - why do you fly?
The whole wide world -- -- my friend --
you're my friend.

The butterfly flutters its wings and soars into the air. Amy chases after it.

MED. CLOSE SHOT of several children ruthlessly pulling up the goldenrod. The butterfly goes fluttering past them. Amy, her face rapt and concentrated, runs past in friendly pursuit. One of the boys, a stocky, heavy-set youngster named Donald, looks after her and begins to run.

The CAMERA DOLLIES WITH Amy as she pursues the butterfly. From behind her comes a shout.

DONALD'S VOICE
I'll get it for you, Amy.

Donald enters scene and runs past her.

DONALD'S VOICE (cont'd)
I'll get it for you, I'll get it.

He runs ahead of her, and before she can protest, snatches off his cap and with a quick sweeping movement catches the butterfly and presses his cap closely to him. As Amy and the CAMERA HALT together, he opens the cap with a smile, puts in his hand and brings out the torn, crushed body of the butterfly. He offers it to Amy.

CLOSEUP of Amy. The shock and hurt have hit so deep in her childish mind that her face is almost expressionless.

TWO SHOT - Amy and Donald. He still stands stupidly smiling at her. Amy makes a quick movement with her hand and slaps him hard across the face.

DISSOLVE

INT. SCHOOLROOM CORRIDOR - DAY

In the long, echoing corridor of the Tarrytown Public School, Amy, a small and pathetic figure stands forlornly before the closed door of a classroom. From behind this door can be heard the murmur of adult voices; deep in conversation.

INT. KINDERGARTEN SCHOOLROOM - DAY

A kindergarten schoolroom in one of the public schools of Tarrytown. In the room are blackboards and tacking boards on the walls; it is antiseptically clean and cheerfully light with afternoon sunlight, The little chairs and tables are arranged in an orderly semi-circle facing the teacher's desk. Grouped around this desk are Miss Callahan and Oliver and Alice Reed.

MISS CALLAHAN
(smiling and with the air of
one who tries to bring calm)
to a situation)
Really, Mr. Reed, there isn't anything to
worry about. It was only a slap --

ALICE
(brightly, and trying to put
the whole discussion on a
social footing)
That's exactly what I told Mr. Reed, but

he insisted upon remaining home from business to talk to you, Miss Callahan.

OLIVER

I know it may seem stupid of me--but it isn't the slap I'm worried about -- it's the reason.

MISS CALLAHAN

Something to do with a butterfly-- they were quarreling about it.

OLIVER

No. Amy slapped Donald because he had hurt the butterfly -- and it was her friend.

MISS CALLAHAN

Well, that seems a harmless fancy --

OLIVER

(interrupting)

Amy has too many fancies -- too few friends. It worries me. It doesn't seem normal.

ALICE

(apologetically, to Miss Callahan)

You know these fond fathers with their only chicks.

Miss Callahan disregards this. She looks seriously into Oliver's face

MISS CALLAHAN

I can see you're worried. And she is a very sensitive and delicately adjusted child.

She makes a slight pause as if hesitant to go on; then, abruptly, resumes talking.

MISS CALLAHAN (CONT'D)

But a good deal of the blame for that may lie with you, Mr. Reed. Perhaps you're over-anxious -- watch her too closely -- worry too much. The child's bound to feel it.

Oliver is about to answer, but Amy, who has been in the corridor suddenly comes into the room

AMY

It's late, Mommy -- you haven't forgotten my birthday party.

MISS CALLAHAN
Your birthday, Amy --
(crosses the room, talking) as
she goes)
-- and I have something for you in my
locker. A present.

AMY
Mommy's having a party for me. I asked
Robert, and Donald, and Lois --

By this time Miss Callahan has taken Amy's hand and is
leading her to the door.

MISS CALLAHAN
(over her shoulder)
Amy and I will meet you at the car.

She takes the child out of the room. Alice and Oliver follow
at a more leisurely pace.

INT. CORRIDOR OF THE TARRYTOWN SCHOOL - DAY

Miss Callahan and Amy go down the corridor. The teacher
walks quickly and the child trots along beside her. The two
parents walk along sedately, Alice pausing now and again to
examine the pictures, crude childish daubs, displayed on the
tack-up boards. One drawing catches her eye. She stops.

ALICE
Here's a drawing by Amy.

Oliver goes over toward her.

ALICE (CONT'D)
She certainly doesn't seem to have
inherited any artistic abilities from
either of us. Look at that.

Oliver peers over her shoulder at the drawing.

OLIVER
(grinning)
Well, it shows imagination, anyhow.

ALICE
(turning to face him)
I wonder if you don't resent that in her?

OLIVER
I'm sure I don't, Alice. It's something
else -- something moody -- something
sickly --
(pauses)
She could almost be Irena's child.

Alice studies his face for a moment.

ALICE

And that's what worries you?

He nods.

OLIVER

I'd hate her to grow up like that.

ALICE

She's not Irena's child -- there's nothing of Irena in her. She's my child.

Oliver, smiling, reaches over to take her hand, and pat it affectionately.

OLIVER

All I have to do is look at Amy's eyes, blue and deep like yours.

ALICE

I'm not a jealous woman, Oliver.

OLIVER

I know that.

ALICE

That's why I can tell you, straight out, you think too much about Irena -- blame yourself for her death. And its your thinking and brooding about her that makes you so unnaturally concerned about Amy.

OLIVER

No. It's not that. It's because I know what can happen when people begin to lie to themselves -- imagine things. I love Amy too much to let her lose herself in a dream world where butterflies become pals. I saw what happened to Irena with her Cat People.

ALICE

I know, dear. I understand. But try to worry a little less about her -- be a little easier in your thinking. And especially today -- let's forget about it. We want a really bang-up birthday party, don't we?

OLIVER

(grinning)

You make me sound like the father in

"East Lynne."

ALICE

Darling, no father could be nicer to a child than you are to Amy.

Miss Callahan comes in from the street door. Alice and Oliver, interrupted, start toward her.

MISS CALLAHAN

You'd better hurry. I've left Amy in the car and she's getting impatient. She tells me there's something especially important about a sixth birthday.

OLIVER

(smiling)

We'll see that she gets there in good time

Alice extends her hand to Miss Callahan.

ALICE

I'm so glad to have met you at last. You're just as nice as Amy told me you were. I hope you'll come to see us.

MISS CALLAHAN

I'd love to.

They shake hands. Alice takes Oliver's arm. He nods to Miss Callahan and both of them start down the corridor, the teacher watching them.

DISSOLVE

EXT. FRONT YARD - REED COTTAGE - DAY

Edward, a small, trim, colored man, wearing a brown sweater and cap, is raking leaves into a pile. The pile is already alight and burning. He is singing as he works, an old, sad, Dutch-English song of the district. ("Johnny Has Gone For a Soldier")

EDWARD

(singing)

Who can blame me if I cry my fill, Johnny has gone for a soldier.

An auto horn sounds in the street - a succession of short, squawky, joyous toots. Edward looks up.

LONG SHOT - ANOTHER ANGLE of the street in front of the Reed Cottage. The Reed car comes down the street and draws up to the curb. Amy is the first to come bouncing out. She runs to Edward.

EDWARD

Getting the yard all fixed up for your party, Amy. You'd better hurry and get yourself fixed up too.

AMY

Mommy's taking me upstairs to change my dress right away.

Alice and Oliver have gotten out of the car. Alice crosses the yard, takes Amy's hand and they walk into the house together. Oliver pauses to watch the burning leaves.

EDWARD

Everything all right down there at the school, Mr. Reed?

OLIVER

Yes, everything's all right, Edward.

EDWARD

(shaking his head)

When I first heard all that talk about you going down to the school to see the teacher I got really afeared. I thought maybe you might call off this birthday party -- and me with the cake already in the oven.

OLIVER

I imagine a child would have to commit murder or rob the Seventh National Bank of Tarrytown to be deprived of a birthday party.

He takes a final lick at the pile with the rake, picks up another implement that he has there and carrying this and the rake, he starts off around the driveway, Oliver goes in at the front door.

INT. HALLWAY - REED COTTAGE - DAY

Oliver passes through the hall and glances into the dining room which has been decorated with paper streamers. The birthday table has been set with twelve places with a paper tablecloth, paper napkins, party favors and place cards. He stands for a moment in the doorway, and then passes into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM - REED COTTAGE - DAY

Oliver passes through and goes on into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - REED COTTAGE - DAY

As Oliver comes in one door, Edward comes in at the other. There is a huge birthday cake on the kitchen table. Edward takes off his cap and sweater and hangs them up in a broom closet. At the same time he takes out a white butler's jacket. He begins to put this on and as he struggles into the freshly starched sleeves, Oliver extends his hand and helps him to get it on.

OLIVER

I thought we were going to save those leaves you were burning for the compost bin.

EDWARD

Got more leaf mold now than we'll ever need, Mr. Reed. I thought I'd burn 'em up and get the yard clean.

It is at this moment that Amy comes in dressed in a Kate Greenway style party dress. Edward quickly whips a tea towel from the rack and covers the birthday cake.

AMY

Is that my birthday cake? May I see?

OLIVER

You'll see it when it's all lit and ready for you.

EDWARD

(with a glance at the clock)
You won't have long to wait. In just a few minutes this house will be overflowing with boys and girls. Off with you now, Amy. Go out and watch from the gate for all the children who'll be coming.

OLIVER

Go on -- out with you.

He gives her a little shove from behind to propel her toward the hall door. With a backward look at the covered cake, Amy goes out the door. Oliver and Edward stand watching her go.

Oliver crosses over to the sink and runs himself a glass of water. He leans against the sink, drinking it while Edward takes up a handful of birthday candles, already mounted in their candy sconces, and begins to put them into the cake. Edward suiting the action to the word; half singing, half speaking, but avoiding any musical comedy feeling.

EDWARD

One for the one year:
Then she didn't say a word.

One for the two year:
That was whooping cough we heard.
One for the three year:
She got lost then for an hour.
One for the four year:
She turned pretty as a flower.
One for the five year:
Best child I ever did see.
One for the six year:
I don't know what that'll be.

Oliver laughs, sets down the glass of water, and crosses over to him.

OLIVER

We'll all see that it's a good year for her, Edward.

He gives him a friendly touch on the shoulder and starts out of the kitchen.

INT. REED DINING ROOM - DAY

Omitted.

INT. REED YARD - DAY

The Reed yard is surrounded by a white picket fence. There is a lawn and in the back there is a fringe of very young birches and maples. Behind the tall fence at the rear there is a wood of sturdier and older trees. There is one large tree in the garden, and on a wide limb of this tree a swing has been fastened. Amy is swinging in this swing now, holding the kitten in her arms as she swings.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - DAY

A pleasant, light, airy room, tastefully furnished. Over the fireplace mantel is the copy of Goya's Don Manuel Osorio de Zuniga that had once hung in Irena's apartment. Alice, still wearing her hat, is getting ready some games to be played by the children. She is hiding jelly beans in odd places about the room for the children, to seek out. On the wall is a cut out of a donkey minus its tail, and on a table is a bunch of assorted paper tails. Also on the table are several games of tiddlywinks. Oliver comes in from the hallway.

OLIVER

Why don't you take off your hat and stay awhile?

ALICE

(taking it off)
I forgot I had it on.

She starts smoothing her hair, looking in a wall mirror.
Oliver looks at his watch-

OLIVER
Where is everybody?

ALICE
It's early yet.

OLIVER
It's nearly a quarter after four. The party was for four, wasn't it?

ALICE
Yes, darling,

OLIVER
Gosh, in my day kids arrived at birthday parties before anybody was ready for them,

ALICE
Times have changed.

Oliver looks ruefully down at his watch and frowns.

LAP DISSOLVE

EXT. REED YARD - DAY

Amy is at the gate, looking up one side of the street and down the other for the first sign of her guests.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - DAY

Oliver is idly playing with the game of tiddlywinks, snapping the small disks into a cup. Alice turns and sees him,

ALICE
Ollie, that's for the children to play with.

OLIVER
No kids yet. Something's gone wrong. Maybe I ought to call somebody.

ALICE
(good-humoredly)
All right, Ollie. Go ahead. Call the Boyds...3000W...see if their darling Donald has left.

OLIVER
I think I should.
(going into hall)
3000W?

ALICE
(cheerfully)
That's right.

Alice moves to the window and looks out.

EXT. REED YARD AND SIDEWALK - DAY

Amy has moved outside the yard and is standing on the sidewalk, looking up one way and down the other for some sign of her guests.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - DAY

As Alice turns away from the window, Edward enters from the dining room. He has a birthday present in his hand. They start toward the dining room, but Oliver comes in from the hallway.

OLIVER
Something's haywire,

ALICE
What do you mean?

OLIVER
I called not only the Boyds but the Irvings. Neither of them received invitations.

ALICE
But they must have. Amy and I made them out together. You mailed them, didn't you, Edward?

EDWARD
Well, ma'am, the truth is, I gave them to Amy herself to post.

OLIVER
And Amy mailed them?

EDWARD
She pleaded so to do it

Oliver looks at the two a moment, and then turns and leaves the room.

EXT. REED FRONT YARD - DAY

Oliver comes out of the house, and Amy, seeing him, runs up the walk to meet him,

OLIVER

Amy, you remember the party invitations
Edward, gave you to mail?

AMY

Yes, daddy.

OLIVER

Did you mail them?

AMY

Yes, I did.

OLIVER

Where did you mail them?

AMY

I'll show you.

She takes his hand and starts leading him around the side of
the house.

EXT. REED BACKYARD - DAY

Amy and Oliver come around the corner of the house and walk a
few steps toward the big tree that stands at one corner. This
is a very old tree with a hollow trunk. Halfway toward the
tree, guessing what Amy has done, Oliver stops.

OLIVER

Amy, not that old tree!

AMY

Yes, daddy.

OLIVER

But I told you about that so long ago;
you couldn't have been more than three
when I told you that tree was a magic
mailbox.

AMY

(proudly)
I didn't forget.

OLIVER

But, Amy, that was just a story; it
wasn't real. That tree's no mailbox.

He looks at the child seriously, and going to the tree,
reaches down within the hollow trunk to bring out a batch of
damp, slightly mouldy invitations. He holds them out to Amy.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Well, there they are.

(kneels down beside Amy)

Look, darling, Mother and daddy keep

telling you over and over again, but you go right on dreaming, and then things like this happen.

She looks for a second at the invitations.

AMY

If the invitations didn't go, then that means nobody will come, doesn't it? There won't be any party.

Oliver tries to lighten her disappointment.

OLIVER

Yes, there is going to be a party! We'll have one ourselves -- you and me and mommy and Edward.

DISSOLVE

INT. REED DINING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP of a party favor held between two hands - Oliver's and Amy's, The hands pull and the party favor explodes with a loud snap.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK TO show a pathetic little party in progress. Amy sits at the head of the table with Oliver and Alice on each side of her.

Almost as if the snap of the party favor were a signal for his entrance, Edward comes in from the kitchen bearing aloft the huge birthday cake with its six shining candles and places it before Amy.

EDWARD

You've got to blow 'em all out in one blow, Amy.

Amy prepares to blow, gathering herself for the effort.

OLIVER

Amy, make a wish. Wish real hard, and then blow out the candles, and your wish will come true.

AMY

(perplexed)
But wishes don't come true.

OLIVER

Certain wishes do.

AMY

But you told me in the garden-- that the wish about the tree couldn't come true.

OLIVER

But this is different. Go on blow,

He looks at her for a second, the strange inconsistency of adult counsel to children completely lost to him.

Amy blows mightily. The candle flame streams out and flickers. As her breath is exhausted, she inhales sharply and the candles go out.

ALICE

You get your wish!

AMY

(looking at her father)

You know what I wished, Daddy? I wished I could be a good girl.

EDWARD

Now it's all ruined, you shouldn't speak your wish.

Amy looks hurt. Alice comes quickly to the rescue.

ALICE

But Edward, in this kind of a wish that doesn't matter.

AMY

I can make wishes like this come true. I'll be just like Daddy wants me to be -- play with the other children -- not sit around by myself -- tell the truth --

OLIVER

(interrupting her with a hug)

That's right, darling, and you'll make daddy very happy if you'll just leave that dream world of yours and come into the same world with Daddy and Mommy the nice, pleasant world of everyday things.

Amy puts her cheek against his, happily.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. SUBURBAN SIDEWALK - DAY

Amy lets herself out of the gate and starts skipping down the sidewalk, humming to herself. She skips along, sometimes hopping on one foot as if she were playing a game of hopscotch, sometimes swinging herself diffidently around the trunk of the tree and continuing on in the sunlight. Up the

sidewalk toward her comes Jack on his tricycle. Amy sees him and stops. As he passes her, she calls out to him:

AMY

Hello, Jack.

SHOT of Jack as Amy sees him. He passes her on his tricycle, but turns his head and makes a face at her.

MED. CLOSEUP of Amy as she reacts to this new slight. She is distinctly troubled. Thoughtfully she starts walking on down the street. Occasionally she turns and looks after Jack, frowning. She reaches a corner, where she stops for a second, pulling herself backward and forward contemplatively as she holds on to the cornerpiece of a fence. She still is looking after Jack, puzzled. She shakes her head, giving the problem up, and turns down the side street. She stops almost immediately, her face brightening again with the anticipation of new joy.

FULL SHOT as Amy sees them, of three little girls sitting on the sidewalk playing a game of jacks. One of them looks up, sees Amy, motions to the others, and they whisper very briefly. They all turn around, look at Amy, and then return to their game of jacks, devoting their entire attention to it.

MED. SHOT as Amy walks down the street toward the three little girls, the CAMERA PANNING WITH her. She stops when she reaches the three children. They do not look up, but go on with their game as if it were the only thing taking place in life. Evelyn, the little girl whose turn it is, makes a grand final play, throwing the ball, catching up eight jacks, knocking with her forefinger knuckle on the pavement, and catching the ball.

EVELYN

What comes next?

LUCILE

Double knocks, of course.

Evelyn starts on double knocks, but misses almost at once.

EVELYN

I just seem to stay in double knocks
forever.

She passes the ball on to Lucile, observing as she does so:

EVELYN (CON^D)

Of course, it's very hard to do anything
with somebody breathing down your neck.

LUCILE

What was I In?

DOROTHY

You were in threes of over the fence.

LUCILE

Oh, yes.

She starts to do threes in over the fence, but misses at once. She looks in exasperation at her two companions. Simultaneously all three little girls turn and glare at Amy.

REVERSE SHOT of the three little girls in the f.g., Amy in the b.g. takes a step forward.

AMY

May I play too?

DOROTHY

Why don't you go home?

AMY

I'm a good player.

LUCILE

You might just as well stop being nice to us, Amy Reed. We're mad at you.

AMY

Why?

LUCILE

Because you said you were going to invite us to your birthday party.

EVELYN

And you didn't!

AMY

But I did! I did invite you!

The three little girls simply look at Amy; to them she is a complete liar. They put their heads together and whisper. One of them giggles. Dorothy looks up and points down the street behind Amy.

DOROTHY

Look at the giraffe!

Amy turns her head, and the minute she turns around the three little girls scramble to their feet and with screams of laughter start running down the street. Amy turns around, puzzled, and then starts after the children. The three little girls can be heard screaming to one another:

GIRLS

Run!

Run faster!
Ditch her!

AMY
I invited you to my party. I did, I did,
I did.

SHOT of the three little girls running. They turn the corner. Amy can be seen running up to the corner, still shouting.

AMY
I did invite you. I did invite you. I
did. I did.

She finally gets to the corner, still running, and makes the same turn the other children did.

EXT. FARREN HOUSE & GARDENS - DAY

A late Victorian house, with gables and cupolas and a wide piazza, stands on the fringe of the forest. It is overgrown with ivy, morning glories, and wild honeysuckle. The yard, too, which had once been a formal garden, is a tangle of wild growth. The house is silent, no sign of life about it. A very low, crumbling, and in some places completely broken iron rail sets the garden off from the dirt pathway. There are ornate statues in the garden, and in front of the entrance is an old elaborate carriage post. The children come running into the scene, screaming and laughing.

CHILDREN
(ad lib)
We ditched her.
Serves her right.

CLOSER SHOT of the children. Suddenly they notice where they are and they immediately grow more quiet. Their whispers can be heard as they go past on tiptoe.

CHILDREN
(ad lib)
The old house.
There's a witch in it.
It's haunted.
Count three, count four,
Run past the door.
That's the best thing to say for witches.

LONGER SHOT of the children as they near the other end of the fence. Their courage suddenly leaves them, and they all make a frantic run for it.

SHOT of Amy as she comes up to the old house. She is out of breath and quite evidently her playmates have gotten out of her sight. She looks with interest at the strange house and the overgrown garden. She stands gazing about her. A voice

from an upper window begins to call her. The voice is sweet, professionally trained and full of enticement.

VOICE

Little girl. Little girl. Come into the garden. It's pleasant and cool here -- ever so pleasant -- ever so cool out of the hot sun --

Amy is fascinated. She looks up, and still looking up, slowly and hesitantly begins to go into the garden. She passes under the pergola and peers at the frightening heraldic lion in the bushes. With an occasional glance in the direction of the voice which still can be heard calling, she goes on to the path and approaches the sculptured figure of "Comedy." On the porch steps from above her the voice calls:

VOICE

Little girl, step back away from the house so that I can see you. Step back, little girl.

Amy looks puzzled, but to get a better view she takes one or two natural steps backward, looking up.

CLOSE UP of an open window. A gentle breeze is blowing the lace curtains. Through the opening between the curtains, a woman's gnarled hand appears in a velvet sleeve. This hand holds a handkerchief weighted at one corner, and tosses the handkerchief out the window.

EXT. FARREN GARDENS -- DAY

Amy watches as the handkerchief flutters down. She makes a futile effort to catch it. It falls near her. She picks it up and examines it.

INSERT AMY'S HANDS as she holds up the handkerchief. One corner of it has been drawn through a silver ring. She removes the ring and tries it first on one finger and then another. It fits her thumb.

MED. CLOSE SHOT of Amy. She puts the ring on her thumb and stands a moment, holding the handkerchief up between her two hands. Suddenly and silently from behind a bush beside her a thin, white arm and hand appears. The hand grasps the handkerchief.

TWO SHOT of Miss Barbara Farren, cadaverously tall and thin, with only her bright hair to speak of a beauty which is quickly fading, as she steps out into the sunlight from behind the bush. As she does so, she tears the handkerchief from Amy's hands. Amy, stunned and silent, relinquishes the handkerchief and watches while Barbara Farren paces stately across the garden and around the corner into the house. From above her the voice can be heard calling:

VOICE

Go away, little girl. Go away.

Amy looks up and starts to move away. At first she walks slowly with many & backward glance, but upon reaching the protective shadows of the pergola, she breaks into a run.

DISSOLVE OUT

(END PART I)

DISSOLVE IN

INT. REED KITCHEN - DAY

Edward, wearing a blue and white striped denim apron, has a fat roasting chicken on the table and is dexterously proceeding to stuff and truss it. As he works, he solemnly addresses the fowl.

EDWARD

Oh, you were a lordly fellow handsome as a king and full of pride. Struttin' and showin' off and scratchin' up the earth and callin' all the hens to account for this and that.

He pats in a bit of stuffing.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

A lordly fellow -- a lordly fellow -- and now you lie on your back with your legs in the air, and you don't even know what the score is -- no, sir, you don't even know what the score is.

Amy comes in from the back yard. She is hot and breathless as if she had been running. Edward takes a look at her and a quick look at the kitchen clock. He leaves his former companion lying on the table and crosses to the icebox.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Guess you'll be wanting a glass of milk, Amy.

She nods. He opens the icebox door and takes out a glass of milk which has been standing waiting, covered with a saucer. As Amy takes the glass with her right hand, she holds up her left thumb,

AMY

Look at my ring.

EDWARD

That's a fine-looking ring.

AMY

A lady threw it to me.

EDWARD

Most surely that was a nice lady to give a ring to a little girl.

AMY

It's a pretty ring.

EDWARD

I wouldn't be surprised if it were a true wishing ring.

Amy looks at it.

AMY

A ring that I can wish on like I wished on the candles?

EDWARD

Maybe, if it's a real mourning ring like we have in Jamaica. All you got to do is turn it on your finger, close your eyes, and make a wish.

AMY

(holding) the ring up to him)
What's a mourning ring?

EDWARD

They're given to the living in memory of the dead. If this is a real one -- I can't be sure -- you can make a wish, and it will come true in the twinkling of an eye.

AMY

Well, if it's a real mourning ring,. I'm going to think hard for something I want more than anything else in the world before I wish.

EDWARD

That's the clever way to do it.

Edward looks at her appraisingly.

EDWARD (cont'd)

You look good and hot and good and tired. Guess you've been playing real hard with your friends.

AMY

I didn't play, Edward. They wouldn't play with me,

Edward looks up in concern, and Amy hastens to bury her face in the glass of milk.

EDWARD

Your daddy isn't going to like that. He had his heart set on your playing with the other kids.

He shakes his head, uttering a clucking sound of disapproval. Amy takes her face out of the glass long enough to say:

AMY

(thoughtfully)
I'd better tell him.

She drinks the remainder of her milk, thinks a moment, and evidently feels it better to get the worst over right away. She starts toward the door.

INT. OLIVER REED'S WORKSHOP - DAY

This is a pleasant, many-windowed room with a neat array of shelves, nail bins, work benches, and small power tools. Oliver, in an old sweater, flannel trousers, and moccasins, is working on a ship model. It is a planked model of the "Half Moon." Oliver very carefully fits a plank and drives in two brads to hold it. Amy comes in and stands watching until he has finished.

OLIVER

Your daddy's so pleased with you he's building a model ship for your very own. Come take a look at it.

He takes her by the hand to show her the model on the bench. Amy looks at it, but she is not particularly happy. Her father's kindness makes it all the more difficult for her to tell him what she has to say.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

You see, when you are a good girl and play with other children instead of moping and dreaming by yourself, your daddy wants to do everything he can to make you happy.

This has not helped Amy any. She stands still, staring at him, wondering how to begin.

OLIVER (cont'd)

How you run along and join your playmates.

Turning away from her, he turns on the electric saw. Amy still stands watching, him. He is about to feed a piece of

wood to the saw, when she finally summons up courage enough to tug at his sleeve.

AMY

Daddy --

Oliver looks at her and tries to hear what she is saying but cannot because of the noise of the machinery. With an impatient gesture, he turns it off.

OLIVER

What do you want. Amy?

AMY

I wanted to talk to you, I wanted to tell you about the other children.

OLIVER

Can't you tell me later?

AMY

But I didn't play with them, Daddy. They wouldn't play with me.

Oliver is annoyed at having been interrupted and further angered by the fact that he had jumped to his own conclusion of the child's "goodness." He sits down on a little stool to bring himself on the same level with the child.

OLIVER

What do you mean you didn't play with the other children?

AMY

It was on account of the birthday party.

OLIVER

Because you didn't ask them? I don't blame them for being angry. Why didn't you explain what happened?

AMY

They ran away.

OLIVER

Why didn't you run after them?

AMY

I did. I came to an old dark house, and a voice called to me -- a lovely, sweet voice ---

Oliver cocks his head apprehensively.

OLIVER

Now Amy

AMY

It's true.

OLIVER

And who did the voice belong to?

AMY

It was just a voice.

OLIVER

(completely angry)

Now look, this is the last time you come to me with any such stories - I'm sick of this sort of thing.

AMY

Daddy, it's true.

OLIVER

Let me be the judge of that.

His voice has been rising. As Amy starts to steal out of the workshop into the yard, Alice, dressed for gardening, pokes her head in at the open doorway.

ALICE

(trying to pour oil on the troubled waters)

My, my, what a coil we're in! What's this all about?

OLIVER

Amy's been lying again.

AMY

No, I didn't.

OLIVER

(scornfully)

Voices from an old dark house!

ALICE

Did you hear the child out?

OLIVER

Well, it seemed to me --

ALICE

You mean you didn't. It seems to me the least you could do. You can't just jump at conclusions that way. You're being unfair.

OLIVER

I'm never unfair.

ALICE
(almost tearfully)
You're shouting at me.

OLIVER
(roaring)
I'm not shouting at you, but there's no
doubt in my mind that you spoil this
child!

Amy, who has been listening intently, shrinking away with mingled embarrassment and hurt, suddenly begins to cry. Oliver is the first to kneel beside her.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Daddy and Mommy are a little
upset.

AMY
You're upset about me -- I made you fight
--I hate for you to fight.

ALICE
We're not really fighting darling -- just
a little argument. You run out and play --
go on now -- We'll make up.

She shoos the child out of the door

EXT. REED YARD -- DAY

Amy, still dabbing at her eyes, comes a few feet out of the workshop door and turns back to look at her parents. In the background Alice is dabbing at her eyes with her handkerchief, but she is smiling. Amy starts down the path. Edward, trundling a wheelbarrow toward the front yard, passes her, notices the tears, and stops.

EDWARD
Been crying? That won't please your
Daddy. You'd better cheer yourself up.

AMY
I'm trying to.

EDWARD
(remembering)
Let me take another look at that ring.

She lifts it up and he looks at it.

EDWARD
Sure enough, that's a real mourning ring
and it's got wishing power. You'd, better
sit down and think of some good wishes to

make.

Edward, with a kindly pat on her shoulder, picks up his wheelbarrow and starts off. Amy looks after him, absorbed. Then she turns.

ANOTHER ANGLE. Amy ambles along the walk. In one hand she carries the hoop and stick. Idly she kicks up & pebble with the toe of her shoe. As she passes a bush, she tears off a leaf and chews on it. She reaches a snail pond and drops down beside it with a sigh. Amy looks down into the pond.

INSERT THE SURFACE OF THE POND. A large goldfish is lazily swimming around.

BACK TO SCENE. Amy smiles and leans over the pond. She puts one hand in the water and ripples the surface. Then, staring at her hand, she stops, fascinated.

CLOSE UP of Amy's hand under the surface of the water. The silver ring glistens brightly.

Amy draws her hand out of the water and stares at the ring. A smile lightens her face. She knows now what she will wish for. She sits down on a large rock, closes her eyes, and firmly turns the ring on her finger as she makes her wish.

AMY

I wish for a friend.

For a second she remains with her eyes closed; then, slowly, she opens her eyes looks about her.

EXT. THE WOODS -- DAY

LONG SHOT. The trees stand still and quiet. At first, no breeze rustles the leaves, the yaddo lying on the lawn is motionless. Then a whisper of a breeze moves the branches of the trees, and the yaddo flutters gently, coming to life.

EXT. REED YARD - DAY

Amy is standing up and looking with anticipation at the, moving sunlight and shadow.

Through the picket fence, on the fringe of the woods, a cluster of dandelions grow. The breeze blows the dandelions, and they incline their tufted heads toward the yard. The little spears of dandelion fluff are loosened in the air and enter the yard, sailing on the wind. The musical motif of Irena's song sounds faintly, growing stronger.

Amy looks about her as the dandelion tufts come dancing by her.

She laughs happily and in the moving sunlight and shadow begins to roll her hoop. Irena's song, which fills the track,

is gay and happy.

INT. OLIVER REED'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Oliver is at his handsaw. He is feeding a long thin strip of wood into the saw and Edward stands behind him holding up the other end of the stick. Ho has on a carpenter's apron. Through the window Amy can be seen playing, happily racing along the path.

The saw cuts to the end of the stick and Oliver turns it off. Both men look out of the window.

EDWARD

Amy looks happy - seems almost as if she were playing with another child; like somebody else were running with her and playing.

OLIVER

(simply)

I like to see her happy.

EDWARD

So do I, Mr. Reed.

Oliver reaches over for the next stick of wood to cut. The two men take their positions at the saw. Oliver turns it on.

EXT. REED YARD - DAY

Amy, humming, flits through the dappled shadow in the rear of the yard.

DISSOLVE

DISSOLVE IN

INT. REED KITCHEN - NIGHT

Amy is finishing her supper. Dressed in nightgown and bathrobe, she is seated, at the kitchen table and is taking the last bites of a cup custard. Edward is moving about the kitchen, preparing dinner. Oliver comes in the back door, moves up to Amy, and puts his hand on her shoulder. He looks down at the empty plates.

OLIVER

Nothing wrong with your appetite, is there?

Amy shakes her head.

EDWARD

I didn't even have to coax her tonight.

OLIVER

That's because she made a promise, and she's keeping it, aren't you, darling.

(to Edward)

You saw the way she played this afternoon, Edward.

EDWARD

Indeed I did. Up and down the garden she went, laughing and singing to herself.

Alice comes in and stands, watching, smiling.

AMY

I wasn't singing to myself.

EDWARD

Oh, I suppose it was to the wind you sang, or maybe to the sun, or the clouds, or maybe it was to the flowers in the garden.

Oliver goes to the sink to wash his hands. Amy puts aside her dish and spoon, wipes her mouth with her napkin, and climbs down from her chair.

AMY

All through.

Her mother takes her hand and they start out of the kitchen.

INT. REED LOWER HALLWAY AND STAIRS - NIGHT

Amy walks along the hallway holding Alice's hand. She is humming a song.

ALICE

(turning to her)

What are saying, darling?

AMY

I wasn't saying anything. I was singing.

ALICE

I suppose any note, no matter how sour, is a song if you hold on to it long enough.

Amy frowns, pursing her lips and shaking her head.

AMY

I thought I'd never forget that song.

They have reached the stairs and start up.

ALICE
What song, dear?

AMY
The song I was trying to hum. The song my
friend, taught me.

ALICE
(carelessly)
Oh, you'll remember it some time.

They go on up the stairs and into Amy's room.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Alice comes into the room with Amy and switches on the light while Amy pulls off her bathrobe. On the dressing table is a small basin of water and a wash cloth. Amy stands patiently while Alice dabs at her face with a soaped cloth.

AMY
Mommy --

ALICE
Yes, darling.

AMY
Did you ever make a wish?

ALICE
Oh, lots of times.

AMY
Did your wishes ever come true?

ALICE
Sometimes.

AMY
I made a wish today, and it came true
just like Edward said it would.

Alice picks up the child's hand to wash it and notices the ring.

ALICE
Where did you get this ring?

AMY
That's what I wished on. Edward says it's
a wishing ring -- and it is!

ALICE
(slipping the ring' off Amy's
finger)
But where did you get it, Amy?

AMY

At the old house with the voice.

Alice begins to turn down the covers of Amy's bed.

ALICE

Someone gave it to you? Where was this old house?

AMY

On the back street - a green house

ALICE

The Farren house

AMY

Do you know the people?

ALICE

No dear. I don't know them, but I've heard about them.

AMY

Are they nice?

ALICE

I really don't know, but I do know that you must return the ring. You get Edward to take you up there and bring it back to the old lady.

Amy looks at her puzzled.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Well - the mother or daughter -- whichever one gave it to you. You ask Edward to go with you.

AMY

(getting into bed)
I got my wish anyway.

ALICE

(as she draws the covers up to Amy's chin)
You mustn't tell anybody, or it won't come true.

AMY

(as Alice kisses her)
But it's already come true.

ALICE

(raising her finger to her lips)

Sh! Then you must keep it true.
Goodnight, darling.

She turns out the lights and goes out the door.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of one of Oliver's model sailing craft; the sails flutter and stir as if it were sailing before a strong breeze. Over this shot is the sound of Edward's voice singing, "Blow The Man Down."

The CAMERA PULLS BACK TO show him working with a vacuum cleaner, blowing the dust from the model. Suddenly there is a click. The wind that filled the model sails dies abruptly, leaving them flat and becalmed. Edward turns to look at the body of the vacuum cleaner which lies on the floor. Amy is kneeling beside it. She has a shy smile on her face. It was she who had turned it off.

EDWARD

Little miss, you're stopping me in my work.

AMY

But I want to talk to you. Mommy says for you to come up to the old house with me. I've got to take back this ring.

EDWARD

You just wait until I finish here. I've got to dust these ships for your Dad.

AMY

Will you come soon?

EDWARD

Soon as I finish.

He snaps on the vacuum cleaner and goes back to his work. Amy sits down on the vacuum cleaner, astride, puts her elbow's on her knees, her chin in her hands and watches him patiently. Suddenly she flicks off the switch again. The vacuum cleaner stops.

EDWARD (cont'd)

(protestingly)

How, little miss

AMY

You're going to be busy all day long, Edward.

EDWARD

I do suppose so. But if you were there yesterday, guess you can get there today.

AMY

(jumping up)

That means I can go alone?

She snaps on the vacuum cleaner again. Over the noise Edward nods in reply. She starts out of the room and can be seen through the hallway going out the front door.

EXT. REED HOUSE -- DAY

Amy comes down the stairs and starts off down the walk.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Amy turns out of her driveway and starts off toward the corner. Down the street comes Miss Callahan riding on an English model bicycle with books in the basket on the handle bars. She sees Amy and slows down.

MISS CALLAHAN

Hello, Amy.

AMY

Are you coming to see us. Miss Callahan?

MISS CALLAHAN

No, darling, I hadn't intended to.

AMY

(pointing)

I live right here.

MISS CALLAHAN

Maybe I'll drop in and see your Mommy.

She smiles at the child and then peddles off, turning in at the Reed driveway. Amy watches her and then turns to resume her own walk toward the corner.

(END OF PART II)

INT. HALL - REED ROUSE - DAY

The doorbell is ringing. Alice in a gardening apron and with gardening gloves on her hands, comes hurriedly out.

ALICE

I'll get it. I'll get it, Edward.

From the living room Edward's voice can be heard.

EDWARD'S VOICE

Yes, Ma'am

Alice opens the door and finds Miss Callahan standing there

ALICE

Oh, hello.

MISS CALLAHAN

Hello. I just met Amy and she pointed out where you live.

Alice starts taking off her gloves and holds the door wide with her foot.

ALICE

Please come in.

Miss Callahan comes in.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Ever since yesterday I've been thinking about you.

She starts to close the door.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I've been thinking you're the sort of person I'd like to know better. I'm glad you came.

She has gotten her gloves off and she takes Miss Callahan's elbow to start her toward the living room.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET CORNER - DAY

Amy comes from the direction of her own house. She stands for a moment at the corner, hesitant, then looks at the ring and starts off toward the Farren house.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - DAY

Edward has departed, taking his cleaning apparatus with him, and Alice is showing the room to her new-found friend, Miss Callahan. They move along the fireplace wall. Alice points out a model to Miss Callahan.

ALICE

Oliver's pet, I'm sure it would be the first thing he'd grab if we ever had a fire.

MISS CALLAHAN

I know how it is. My Dad collects miniature canon.

Alice reaches to the mantel and holds up a bronze canon model.

ALICE

If they're connected with boats, we have 'em.

She sets the model down and they move toward the next wall.

MISS CALLAHAN

(as they go)

They may be trouble to dust, but they're nice. I like to see a home like this -- a home connected with people's work and thoughts -- things they love.

As she finishes speaking the two women come abreast of the Goya painting of the three cats with their mad, staring eyes.

ALICE

It doesn't fit, does it?

Miss Callahan shakes her head.

ALICE (CONT'D)

But it is a part of our lives too -- a part of our past, It's a Goya reproduction. Those three cats --
(points)
are supposed to be the most beautifully drawn cats in Western art.

MISS CALLAHAN

But you don't keep a cat, do you?

ALICE

We don't even like them,
(looks at the painting)
I've often thought of giving it away, but Oliver wouldn't stand for it. It was his first wife's favorite picture. She was an artist.

MISS CALLAHAN

I didn't know Mr. Reed had been married before.

ALICE

Yes. As a matter of fact, I was on the point of telling you about it yesterday -- about Oliver's first marriage -- and his wife's death. It has so much to do with Amy -- although he'll never realize it.

They have moved to the sofa. Alice sits down and Miss Callahan joins her. Alice pushes the box of cigarettes toward

her. Miss Callahan shakes her head. Alice takes one and begins to light it.

She gets up and Miss Callahan gets up after her.

EXT. FARREN GARDEN - DAY

Amy, with the serious mien of one intent upon an errand, comes down the street and turns in at the pergola of the Farren home.

EXT. FARREN HOUSE -- DAY

Amy crosses from the pergola to the porch. She climbs the steps, knocks and waits a moment. The door opens and Miss Farren stands there.

AMY

Can I see the lady who gave me this ring?

She holds up the ring. Without a word, Miss Farren lets the child pass in and closes the door behind her.

INT. HALL -- FARREN HOUSE -- DAY

The great heavy draperies of this room are drawn. As the door closes behind Amy, the twilight of this somber ante chamber closes around the child. The weird ornaments, the rococo furniture, the angular stairway, loom darkly around her. In front of her, tall and pale, stands Barbara Farren.

BARBARA

What is it?

AMY

My mother told me to give back the ring to the lady who gave it to me.

Barbara stretches out her hand. Amy shakes her head.

AMY (cont'd)

You're not the lady.

Barbara points to a tall high-backed chair.

BARBARA

Sit there.

Frightened, and keeping her eyes on Barbara, Amy hoists herself up into the chair. Without a word, Barbara turns and goes out. The child looks around. She glances at the sphinxes that guard the stairway and the grinning statue of a Negro serving maid. She tries to see beyond into the darkened living room. She moves trying to find a more comfortable position in this stiff, high chair.

EXT. REED FRONT YARD -- DAY

Edward, is gardening. At least he has on his gardening outfit, the brown sweater and cap and he has a pair of pruning shears in his hand but at the moment he has stopped to survey Miss Callahan's bicycle. His inspection of this vehicle has brought him to the books and he leans against the bicycle reading from one of the books.

INT. HALLWAY - REED HOME - DAY

Alice and Miss Callahan are coming out of the dining room into the hall.

ALICE
(as if continuing a conversation)
It's almost as if there were a curse on us. I wouldn't care if it were on me, but it seems to be directed against the child. Irena haunts this house.

Alice starts to open the door.

EXT. REED FRONT YARD - DAY

Alice opens the door and she and Miss Callahan step through. Edward puts the book back into the basket on the bicycle

ALICE
(to Edward)
I thought you were with Amy.

EDWARD
No, she went runnin' off to some old house she was talkin' about yesterday.

ALICE
That's the Farren house.

EDWARD
Is that where she got the ring, Mrs. Reed? She shouldn't be up there.

ALICE
But I told her to go with you.

EDWARD
She said something about that, Mrs. Reed - but she didn't tell me it was the Farren house. I'll get my other hat and coat and go over there.

ALICE

You do that, Edward.

He starts out for the side driveway and goes around the corner of the house.

MISS CALLAHAN
(wheeling her bicycle around)
That the old actress -- Julia Farren?

ALICE
Yes, She's a little odd, I understand.

MISS CALLAHAN
But quite harmless, I'm sure.

Miss Callahan wheels her bicycle down the drive, eases it off the curb and prepares to mount. She waves. Alice waves back.

INT. FARREN HALLWAY - DAY

Amy is sitting, a tiny figure in the big chair. She looks around her. The hallway is still silent. She slips the ring on her finger, and then slides down off the chair, and starts toward the door. A slight rustling sound attracts her attention, and she turns.

The entrance to the drawing room, as Amy sees it. A portiere like curtain separates the drawing room from the hallway. Inside the drawing room in the half-light are weird shadows.

Amy timidly steps forward to the drawing room. She reaches the curtain, gently pushes it aside, and steps within the room.

INT. FARREN DRAWING ROOM -- DAY

The drawing room, like the hallway, is deep with shadows. The drawing room is cluttered with useless Victorian and Edwardian antiques. Amy moves slowly into the room, her attention going from one baroque object to another. On a small mahogany table there is a glassed dome enclosing a stuffed dove that flutters over a mossy column of artificial forget-me-nots. A low, cackling laughter sounds o.s. Startled, Amy looks up.

A corner of the room. In the dim light, the furniture throws large shadows. An amused, cackling laughter is heard.

Amy, frightened, listens a moment. The laughter ceases. Amy takes a step toward the hallway. Suddenly, there is a sharp, quick, rattling sound, and sunlight floods the scene. Amy cowers, hiding her eyes from the bright light.

Julia Farren stands at the window, one hand still resting on the center rod of the old-fashioned shutter, through which

bright sunlight now pours. Mrs. Farren is a fabulous creature. Her face is painted, rouged, and powdered; and she wears a thick wig of outrageously red hair. There are jeweled pendants glittering in her ears, rings on her fingers, bracelets on her wrists. She wears a diamond necklace, and around her throat is a grosgrain ribbon with a huge ruby shining in the center. Her gown is of the period 1915, and was once a very elaborate Worth model. It is a tea gown of gold lace over velvet, but some of the panels of lace are torn and sagging. She leans on a black walking stick that has a diamond top. Her scarlet lips open in a smile as she looks down at Amy.

Amy slowly lets her hands fall from her face, and stares up at Julia Farren, blinking her eyes in the unaccustomed light. Julia Farren adjusts the rod on the shutter so that the light is softer and no longer glaring. She smiles at Amy.

MRS. FARREN

I agree with you. God should use a rose
amber spot. The sun is not kind.

Mrs. Farren moves a few steps to her chair, and sits down in it, as if it were a throne. With a wide flourish of one hand, she indicates the sofa across from her.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)

Sit down, my child.

Amy moves to the sofa and slides up onto it. A large white cat leaps onto the lap of Mrs. Farren, who caresses it gently. Amy is unable to take her eyes from the fabulous woman before her. Mrs. Farren smiles a glittering smile.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)

I've been watching you. You couldn't see
me, but I could see you. It was like
peeking through a slit in the curtain
before the play began. You would be a
very good audience. I can see that.

AMY

If you were the lady who gave me a ring,
my mother says I have to give it back to
you.

MRS. FARREN

Return it to me? Indeed you may not. I
gave it to you as a present.

AMY

But my mother says I mustn't accept
gifts from strangers.

MRS. FARREN

Stranger? Julia Farren a stranger.
Why I've played every theatre from
Boston to San Francisco. I've been
to London and Paris. Those days –
those beautiful, shilling, golden
days.

AMY

But I only came to give back the
ring.

MRS. FARREN

The ring? We'll have no more
nonsense about the ring.

She turns to the tea-table upon which a silver teapot, cups,
and tea-things are laid.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)

Let's have tea, shall we? The tea
will be good and strong and red now
– the way I like it!

She starts to pour, but there is a light sound of footsteps
in the hall. Mrs. Farren looks around. Her whole body seems
to freeze. An icy, hateful gleam comes into her eyes. Amy
looks at Mrs. Farren, then, apprehensively, glances around.

Barbara Farren stands in the doorway, staring at her mother.
Barbara is a woman of around thirty-five, tall blonde,
beautiful. Her eyes, lynx-like, glint as she stares; she
looks as if she might pounce, like a panther, into the room.
Her lip curls with faint contempt, and turning, she quits the
room.

Mrs. Farren looks at Amy.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)

She's always spying on me. She
creeps into the room. She lives
upstairs, yet she's always watching
me – always!

AMY

Who is she?

MRS. FARREN

That woman is an imposter, a liar,
and a cheat. How do you like
your tea?

AMY

Well... .sometimes I got a spoonful of
tea in a cup of hot milk.

Mrs. Farren hands the teacup to Amy.

MRS. FARREN

There you are. Take some cake, why don't you?

AMY

No, thank you.

MRS. FARREN

One little piece of cake won't hurt you. Go ahead, take one. It's full of fruit...citron, cherries and ginger. It'll make you dream. Yes, wonderful dreams.

Obediently, Amy takes a piece of cake and munches on it. Mrs. Farren is stirring her tea. Suddenly, she puts her teacup down, and leans forward with new interest to the child.

MRS. FARREN

Child, have you ever seen a play?

Amy shakes her head.

AMY

I like stories.

MRS. FARREN

Then I'll tell you a story - a lovely story. Do you know the story of Rapunzel?

AMY

Mommy read it to ne.

MRS. FARREN

Do you know the story of "The Headless Horseman?"

Amy shakes her head.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)

You live right here in Tarrytown and don't know the legend of Sleepy Hollow?

Amy shakes her head again.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)

Well, then you must hear it. I shall tell it to you.

Amy claps her hands together gleefully. Mrs. Farren gets up, takes Amy by the hand and leads her to a little chair which she places at the entrance of the alcove off of the living room.

MRS. FARREN
You sit here and we'll pretend that's a stage.

She starts toward the alcove.

MRS. FARREN
(as she walks)
The Headless Horseman --

AMY
Why hasn't he got a head?

MRS. FARREN
It was shot off long ago in the great battles that were fought here; with the British on one side and the Americans on the other.

She has reached the alcove and draws the curtains a little and stands in the arch-way, turning to face the child.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)
At night the Headless Horseman rides...

There is a banging on the, outer door and she stops abruptly. Both she and the child look off at the door.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)
I hear a knocking at the South entry,
Knock, knock, knock --- never at quiet
Wake Duncan with thy knocking --- I would
thy couldst.

INT. FARREN HALLWAY - DAY

With light, graceful steps, Barbara Farren crosses the hall and opens the door. Edward stands there, hat in hand.

EDWARD
Is my little miss here -- ? A little girl
with hair about the color of yours,
ma'am?

Without a word, Barbara steps back to let him in. He comes forward hesitantly. With a white hand she points toward the living room.

INT. FARREN LIVING- ROOM - DAY

Edward comes in. Mrs. Farren and Amy have gone halfway down the room to meet him.

EDWARD
About time for you to come home, Amy.

AMY

But Mrs. Farren just started to tell me a story. Please.

MRS. FARREN

(imperiously)

Let the child stay.

EDWARD

(beginning to hesitate)

Now, I don't know Amy --

AMY

(quick to take advantage)

He'll let me stay, Mrs. Farren. He'll let me stay.

MRS. FARREN

Good.

She starts back to her impromptu stage.

EDWARD

(protesting)

Now Amy, I didn't say --

Amy is already engrossed in the idea of the performance to come. She takes her seat again. Edward is forced to follow her and stands beside her. Before he can resume his protestations, Mrs. Farren begins her recital.

MRS. FARREN

On the dark nights – on the stormy nights -- you can hear him. He passes like the wind; The flapping and fluttering of his great cloak beating like gaunt wings. The thunder of his horse's hooves is loud, loud and louder, beating hard, beating strong on the frozen ground as he comes riding, riding, riding.

EDWARD

(whispering)

Little miss, you can't stay here. You've got to come with me.

Edward tries to take Amy's hand, but she puts her fingers to her lips shushing him.

MRS. FARREN

...At the hour of midnight, down the road that goes through Sleepy Hollow, across the bridge, he goes galloping, galloping, always searching, always seeking

EDWARD

Come away, Amy.

The child is too engrossed to even hear him, hanging on every word of the old lady's recital.

MRS. FARREN

-- If you stand on that bridge at the wrong hour -- the hour when he rides by, his great cloak sweeps around you, he swings you to his saddle bow, and you have to ride forever your eyes seeing for his blind eyes, your ears listening for his ears long deafened and dead, and always his cold arms around you, crushing you into the cavity of his bony chest. Then forever you must ride and ride and ride with the Headless Horseman.

Amy shudders. Mrs. Farren is delighted with the effect on the child. All her emotions spent on the narrative, she goes back to her chair, picks up her tea cup and sips.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)

My tea has gone cold -- bitter cold.

EDWARD

Come along now.

He takes Amy's hand and starts out of the living room. The old lady pays no attention to their departure. At the door Amy turns back.

AMY

I've had a nice time, but I have to go home now. Good-bye.

Mrs. Farren pays no attention.

AMY

Good-bye.

Edward has succeeded in getting her to the hall door and they go out into the hall.

INT. FARREN HALLWAY - DAY

Amy and Edward come out of the living room and go down the hallway to the front door. Edward fusses with the numerous bolts and chains which hold this structure closed. Suddenly, two slender, white hands come into the scene and, with a single twist, effortlessly unbolt the door. Amy and Edward look around.

Barbara Farren, as Amy sees her. There is no expression on her face, yet her eyes glint mysteriously as she looks down

at the child.

Barbara Farren opens the door. Amy looks at her and smiles.

AMY

Thank you.

She goes outside, and Barbara Farren closes the door after her and Edward. She turns back and starts toward the living room.

OMITTED.

INT. PERGOLA - FARREN HOUSE - DAY

Edward, holding Amy's hand comes halfway down the length of the pergola and leans over to talk at the same level as the child. He talks in a low voice.

EDWARD

Little miss, don't you never come here alone. You gave me a fright, you did.

AMY

But she's such a nice lady.

EDWARD

But I don't want you coming here alone. You get me to go with you when you want to come here. You promise?

The child nods solemnly without understanding. He wags his finger before her.

EDWARD (cont'd)

You be sure of your promise.

Amy nods again.

INT. FARREN LIVING ROOM - DAY

Barbara Farren enters and stands in front of her mother. She stands silently for a moment, then in a tone of terrible and suppressed bitterness, she speaks.

BARBARA

A liar -- an impostor -- your own daughter. You call me that and yet you are sweet and kind to the little girl -- a stranger --

The old lady doesn't even look up.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Look at me. I'm your daughter.

Without lifting her head, the old woman replies.

MRS. FARREN

My daughter, Barbara, died when she was six. That was long ago. You're only the woman who keeps care of me. I know you.

BARBARA

Look at me.

The old woman keeps her eyes fixed on the carpet. Barbara reaches down and firmly takes her mother's chin in her hand, drawing her face up. The old woman, despite the fact that she is forced to face her daughter, averts her eyes.

MRS. FARREN

You're an impostor.

Barbara drops the old woman's chin, turns and silently leaves the room.

DISSOLVE

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Amy is in bed asleep. Moonlight fills the room. Amy lies perfectly still in quiet sleep, her hair tousled on the white pillow. At the window a branch of a tree is beating its leaves against the panes of glass. In the distance, muffled and faint, issuing from no known direction, comes the beat of horse's hoofs. Mrs. Farren's voice can be heard.

MRS. FARREN'S VOICE

He comes riding, riding, riding. On the dark nights-- on the nights of storm...

The words are repeated in and, out of sequence, a mad and irritating cacophony of verbiage.

In the darkness of the window, against the background of beating boughs, great hooves appear, striking at the air, bright shoes flash, the calks catching the light. The hairy fetlocks are dank and wet. The chest of the horse, his flaring nostrils, the wildly rolling eyes, the mane, wind tossed and merging with the agitated branches of the tree, come into terrifying CLOSE UP. Then, suddenly, the Headless Horseman in Hussar uniform, the braid, white and ghastly, stretched across the darkness of his uniform, comes into view. Crooked in bias arm is his dead head, surmounted by a Hussar's cap. The eyes are closed and drooping. The cheeks hang putrescent and flabby. Only the spiked mustaches are upright and give the lie to death. Around this horse and figure, whips the great black cloak. One fold of it swoops across the face of the sleeping child and she awakens, sits up in bed and screams.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GROUP SHOT of Oliver and Alice with Miss Callahan and a man friend. They are seated around a card table, playing bridge. They are laughing as they conclude the game. Alice, who is dummy, suddenly puts out her hand, and they are silent.

ALICE

Listen!

Everybody listens a moment. Oliver looks at Alice.

OLIVER

What is it, Alice?

ALICE

(shrugging)

I thought Amy was calling. I guess not.

Miss Callahan smiles at her and begins to shuffle the deck of cards.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy is huddled in bed, badly frightened. There is only the pitiful, sighing sound of the branch of the tree outside, swaying in the wind. Amy, clutching her hands together, looks down and spies the ring on one finger. She turns the ring, whispering:

AMY

My friend... I'm frightened...
my friend.

FULL SHOT of Amy's window. The soft curtains billow out far into the room. In the moonlight the leafy branches of the trees seem to dance, throwing shadows into the room. The shadows dance across to Amy's bed, the CAMERA FOLLOWING them,

Amy smiles and settles down under the covers. Her eyes are heavy with sleep.

AMY

(softly)

I'm glad you came...my friend sing me
that song again.

Her eyes close in sleep, and as she nestles her head back against the shadow, the shadow gains the vague, gray outline of a woman's figure holding the sleeping child against her breast. Very softly a woman's voice sings the old French lullaby. In her sleep Amy smiles in contentment.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The four people are still playing cards. Oliver's attention is not on the game; he is listening to something, like a half remembered fragment of song. Alice leans forward and touches his arm.

ALICE
Ollie.

OLIVER
(his attention aroused)
What?

ALICE
It's your play.

OLIVER
I'm sorry. I was somewhere else. He
returns to the card game.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy is sleeping peacefully. The last notes of the song sung by Amy's friend are finished, and the indistinct shadow leans over the sleeping child. Amy smiles happily.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alice, with a kerchief tied around her hair and a cloth duster in one hand, is cleaning out a cabinet. From one of the shelves she takes a stack of photographs and sets them face down on the near-by table, Oliver and Amy enter the scene. Alice looks up from dusting the shelf.

ALICE
Edward will give you your breakfast, Amy.

AMY
(climbing up on a chair)
I had my breakfast while you were still
asleep.

Oliver leans over to kiss the back of Alice's neck.

OLIVER
I haven't had my breakfast.

ALICE
Well, you know where it is.

Oliver shrugs his shoulders to Amy.

OLIVER

You see the way I get treated. You're the only one who has any pull around here.

Amy laughs, and Oliver goes into the kitchen. While Alice continues with her cleaning, Amy, kneeling on the chair, leans over the table to inspect the photographs. She picks up the top one, turns it over, and is obviously fascinated by what she sees. Alice rises and crosses behind Amy. She stops and looks down at the picture which Amy is looking at with rapt attention.

INSERT THE PICTURE held in Amy's hands. It is of Irena Dubrovna, Oliver's first wife.

BACK TO SCENE. Alice takes the picture from Amy and looks at it.

ALICE

Where'd you get this, darling?

AMY

It was right there on top. Isn't she pretty?

ALICE

(quietly)

She was very pretty.

AMY

What's her name?

ALICE

Irena.

AMY

(repeating it, delighted with the sound)

Irena.

ALICE

(rising, with a change of mood)

Look! Why don't you run out and play? The sun's shining.

AMY

(scrambling down from the chair)

All right, mommy.

Amy runs outside. Alice quietly studies the smiling face of Irena. She looks up and discovers Oliver crossing the hallway. Alice calls to him.

ALICE

Ollie!

He comes into the room.

ALICE

I think maybe we should get rid of this,
don't you?

She hands him the photograph of Irena, which he takes. He looks at the picture.

OLIVER

Where did you get it?

ALICE

Amy picked it off the top of that stack.
Perhaps you'd better go through the whole
bunch. There may be others of Irena in
there.

Oliver nods and sits down on the arm of the chair. He starts to turn the photos over.

ALICE

Some day I'm afraid we're going to have
to tell her about Irena.

OLIVER

I suppose so.

Over the scene, from outside, sounds the gay, childish laughter of Amy. Oliver raises his head, and listens for a second. He then begins sorting the photos.

EXT. REED GARDEN - DAY

As Amy walks along the garden path, she is bouncing a large gaily-colored ball. She is bouncing it at first in an aimless sort of way; then she throws it up into the air and catches it. Over the scene comes the strain, of Irena's song, and Amy, with the ball in hand, looks up. Her eyes brighten with a curious interest, and her lips part in a friendly smile. She tosses the ball toward the camera. After a second it comes back to her. This time the CAMERA TRAVELS WITH the ball to show Amy's friend, who catches the ball and tosses it back to Amy. Amy's friend is a woman in gray, chiffon garments. This is the first-complete materialization of the friend, and it is evident that she has the pretty, kitten-like face of Irena, Oliver's first wife.

AMY

Who are you?

IRENA

You called me by my name.

AMY

Irena. But who are you?

IRENA
I'm your friend.

AMY
I've wanted a friend.

IRENA
I've wanted a friend too. I've been
lonely.

AMY
But where do you come from?

IRENA
You wouldn't understand. I come from
great darkness and deep peace

AMY
But where is that?

IRENA
I can not tell you.

AMY
Will you be friend for always?

IRENA
For as long as you'll let me.

AMY
I shall want you for always.

IRENA
(kissing Amy's brow)
For always, then. Only you must promise
never to tell anyone about me

AMY
Not even Daddy...or Mommy?

IRENA
No. This must be a friendship that only
we shall have... you and I... Amy and her
friend.

AMY
Oh, I like the sound of that.., Amy and
her friend... Amy and her friend.

Amy tosses the ball in an excess of joy and happiness. Irena catches the ball and running off, throws it back to her, Amy catches it, laughing delightedly.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - DAY

Oliver is standing before the fireplace, throwing the photographs on the flames. One by one, he throws the few remaining pictures onto the fire, all save one, the last in the stack. He stands looking at the picture.

INSERT THE PHOTOGRAPH which Oliver holds in his hands. It is one of Irena and him taken together; they are smiling at one another.

BACK TO SCENE. Oliver looks up from the photograph to note that Alice is in the dining room, and has her back to him. He weighs the photograph a moment in his hands and looks up at the bookshelves near by. There is a thick photo album on one of the top shelves.

Quickly he inserts the photograph between its leaves. He moves away from the bookshelf as Alice re-enters the room. She looks at him, and then at the fireplace.

The last part of the last picture that was thrown into the fireplace is curling up, a blackened wisp of burned paper.

EXT. REED GARDEN - DAY

Amy and her friend are playing happily. Suddenly Amy stops playing;, holding the ball instead of returning it,

AMY

You'll always play with me?

IRENA

Whenever you want.

DISSOLVE

A SERIES OF DISSOLVES

EXT. REED GARDEN - DAY

Amy and Irena are swinging in the old swing that is attached to a tall limb of the tree. Amy is seated, holding onto the ropes, while her friend stands behind her, pumping the swing into high rhythm. Amy is laughing very gaily, having a marvelous time. Irena is singing. Amy laughs merrily, as she and her friend swing up toward the heavens.

DISSOLVE

EXT. REED GARDEN - DAY

Amy is seated in a garden chair, doing sums. It is an afternoon in late fall. Amy is wearing a sweater. Beside her sits Irena, who watches the child anxiously.

IRENA

Can't you get it, darling?

AMY

I'll just never learn arithmetic.

IRENA

But you must!

AMY

The numbers simply don't mean anything

IRENA

Oh yes they do. Look. One is like a tall princess.

AMY

A princess?

IRENA

Of course. And Two is the prince who kneels before her on one knee.

AMY

Yes, yes! I see Prince,

IRENA

That's right!

AMY

(excited)

This is more fun than just pretend.

IRENA

Of course,

With renewed enthusiasm, Amy applies herself to her lessons.

INT. REED LIVING- ROOM - NIGHT

There is a fire in the fireplace, Oliver is seated on a stool before the fire, a highball in his hands, and his hands between his knees. He is gazing into the flames. Alice, on the sofa, is reading a book. She lowers it and looks at Oliver. As she watches him, he suddenly grins. She smiles in sympathetic reaction.

ALICE

What's funny?

OLIVER

(without)

That darn kid. I never in my life expected her to get an A in arithmetic. Math's is a practical science --- if she understands figures, she's well out of her own world of make-believe.

DISSOLVE OUT:

DISSOLVE IN

EXT. REED GARDEN - DAY

Amy and Irena are raking the dried leaves into a burning pile. Irena picks up a handful of leaves and scatters them onto the flames. Her voice takes on an eerie note,

IRENA

There's an oak leaf. Add a maple.

AMY

That one's an elm.

IRENA

(a strange) light shining) in
her eyes)

Throw sea weeds into the flames, and the
fire turns blue!

AMY

(perplexed)

But we don't have any sea weed.

IRENA

Pretend, darling. It's All Soul's Eve.

(taking the child's hand,
chanting)

Round about the fire we go...

(dropping the child's hand, she
dances around the fire)

Over the flames we leapt

On the other side of the bonfire, she calls to Amy.

IRENA (CONT'D)

Come on, Amy. Jump over the fire.

Amy hesitates, but then shakes her head and walks around the bonfire to join Irena on the other side-

AMY

No, I don't think that's very much fun.
Let's play house instead. You be the
friend who comes to see me. I'll show
you my children.

IRENA

Your children?

AMY

My dolls. We can pretend.

Irena smiles at Amy, pats her gently as they take a few steps

toward the dolls.

IRENA

All right, Amy.
(reeling beside the
child, buttoning Amy's sweater)
Button your sweater, darling. It's
turning cold.

AMY

Yes, winter's coming. I don't like the
winter,

IRENA

Oh, but the winter's fun. There's the
wind and the snow. You'll like the warm
fire upon the hearth, and the long, long
nights.

Amy has hardly listened to Irena; she is busily laying out
her dolls in a row.

AMY

All my children are taking their naps.
We must be very quiet. This is
Lottie...she's very good... this is Mary
Ann...she's good sometimes...this is
Virginia... she's hardly ever good.

Irena has seated herself on a rock near the pool, and watches
the child with a wistful smile upon her face. There is an
autumnal sadness in their pose and from the tree above them
two dead leaves drift silently down.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REED GARDEN -- NIGHT

The snow is falling in the same place where the leaves had
fallen. CAMERA LOOKS THROUGH the falling snow INTO the big
window of the Reed's living room. A Christmas wreath of
eastern holly is hung in the window. A decorated Christmas
tree is set up in a prominent corner of the living room, and
Edward can be seen lighting the lamps in the room. A pleasant
fire burns upon the hearth. Alice and Oliver can be seen
putting the last decorative touches to the tree.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GROUP SHOT of Alice, Oliver, Edward and Amy. As Alice and
Oliver fasten the final garland of popcorn to the branches of
the tree Amy comes into the room, her arms laden with
packages.

AMY

These are all from me.

OLIVER

(inspecting the top package)
This one says, "To Mother from Amy."

ALICE

Oh, thank you, darling.

AMY

You can't open it yet. You have to put
all of them under the tree until morning.

OLIVER

I guess if you can wait, so can we.

He starts to put the packages one by one under the tree,
reading aloud the name of each person for whom the package is
intended.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

"To Daddy from Amy." Here's one for Miss
Callahan. This one says, "To Edward from
Amy."

EDWARD

Good heavens! What could you be giving
me. Little Miss?

AMY

Just you wait!

OLIVER

And this one's for Mrs. Farren.

AMY

She gave me a ring, so I'm giving her a
ring. I paid twenty-five cents for it,
too.

OLIVER

(inspecting the last package)
This one hasn't got a name on it. Who's
this one for, Amy?

CLOSE-UP of Amy as she looks around at the others and then
looks away.

GROUP SHOT. Oliver holds the package out to her.

OLIVER

Who's it for, Amy? Do we have to guess?
Come on, tell us
who it's for.

CLOSEUP of Amy, as she lifts her head. It is on her lips to say that it is a secret, but at that moment the sound of caroling is heard from outside. Amy turns her head.

GROUP SHOT. Everybody listens for a moment as the carol continues.

CAROLERS' VOICES

(singing)

"It came upon the midnight clear, That
glorious song of old, Froci angels
bending near the earth, To touch their
harps of gold."

The four, meanwhile, go running to the window to look out. Outside in the falling snow stand about eight carolers of various ages and sizes. They are heavily over-coated and well wrapped up in scarves. Alice turns to Oliver and then to Edward.

ALICE

Ask them in, Ollie. Edward, fix
something warm for them to drink.

Oliver and Edward go to do as they are bid, and Alice turns away from the window. Only Amy stands looking out.

EXT. REED HOUSE - NIGHT

The eight carolers stand in the snow, continuing their carol in close harmony.

CAROLERS

(singing)

"Peace on the earth, good will to men
From heav'ns all gracious King, The world
in solemn stillness lay to hear the
angels sing."

FULL SHOT of Oliver as he opens the front door and comes outside.

OLIVER

Merry Christmas! Come on in.

WIDE SHOT as the carolers cheer and start toward the house with its open door.

INT. REED HALLWAY - NIGHT

The carolers enter the hallway, stamping the snow from their boots. They take off their hats and scarves and coats. Among the carolers is Lois Huggins and Miss Callahan. Among the carolers, too, is Miss Plumett, a pleasant-looking club lady who looks as if she might have stepped right out of the Hopkinson drawings. Whenever Miss Plumett talks, which is

often, her clarion-like tones rise about everyone else's.

OLIVER

There's a big fire in the living room.
Edward's fixing something hot for you all
to drink.

MISS PLUMETT

How bounteous! But then I have always
remarked that you were a very bounteous
young man, Mr. Reed.

OLIVER

The sentiment is mutual, Miss Plummet.

She laughs giddily. Oliver smiles wanly and indicates the
living room.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Right in here.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As the carolers enter the living room, Alice comes forward to
greet them.

ALICE

Merry Christmas, The carols were
beautiful.

AD LIBS

Merry Christmas... Thank you, Mrs.
Reed...what a marvelous fire... And what
a beautiful tree...

MISS PLUMETT

My dear Mrs. Reed, of all the houses we
have visited tonight, yours.. I do
swear.. has the truest dyed-in-tradition
Christmas spirit.

ALICE

Why, thank you.

MISS CALLAHAN

(to Oliver)

The old girl ought to make a record of
that. She says it at every house we go
to.

OMITTED.

TWO SHOT of Amy and Lois Huggins. Amy is still standing in
the bay window alcove, silently watching the scene with the
adults, Lois comes up to her

LOIS
What'd you get for Christmas?

AMY
I don't know yet.

LOIS
(making it sound very
antediluvian)
My goodness, don't you open your presents
until Christmas morning?

AMY
No.

LOIS
We open ours on Christmas Eve. That's
considered proper.

AMY
Well, I guess we're not a very proper
family.

Lois looks at Amy as if she were last year's hat.

LOIS
Hm.

She strolls away. Amy shrugs her shoulders and looks out at
the assemblage again.

ANOTHER GROUP SHOT. Alice is talking to two of the carolers.

ALICE
Couldn't we have another carol? I'll play
it for you,, or at least try to, on the
piano.

Miss Plumett overhears and takes charge immediately.

MISS PLUMETT
Of course you may have another carol.
What shall it be, good friends?

They all gather around the piano, as Alice declares;

ALICE
Oh, I know one. "Shepherds Shake off
your drowsy sleep."

There is a murmur of assent.

MISS PLUMETT
(counseling)
Now remember, all. We start con vivace,

MED. CLOSEUP of Amy, who now stands in the hallway. She is bored by the adult celebration. Suddenly all the sound for her is wiped out of her consciousness, and she hears only a very sweet voice singing o.s. an old seventeenth century French carol. She turns and looks out the window.

LONG SHOT as Amy sees her through the back window. Irena standing in the garden beneath the big tree in the snow. She is singing.

IRENA

(singing)

"D'ou vient cetts troupe d'anges, Et tous
les cieux plelms d'eclairs! Eh! fi'ou
viennent ces louanges, Qui resennent de
dans l'air!"

MED. SHOT of Amy as she, with a secret purpose shining in her eyes, starts back through the hall. She goes into the living room, picks up the present that has no name on it, and goes out into the hall. Meanwhile, everyone has gathered around the piano, and no one pays any attention to Amy's action, all their attention being riveted on the singing of the carol.

MISS PLUMETT

Ready, friends? Remember now, con
vivace, and at the very end, poco
ritardo, if you please.

CAROLERS

(singing)

"Shepherds, shake off your drowsy sleep,
Rise and leave you silly sheep; Angels
from heav'n around loud singing, Tidings
of great joy are bringing."

INT. REED HALLWAY - NIGHT

MED. SHOT of Amy, as she takes her coat down from the closet rack, slips into it, and softly goes outside. From within the living room the carolers are heard.

CAROLERS' VOICES

"Shepherds! the chorus come and swell!
Sing Noel, O sing Noel!"

EXT. REED GARDEN -- NIGHT

As Amy comes out of the house and down into the frozen garden, the CAMERA PANNING WITH her, the clear, sweet voice of Irena is heard, continuing to sing the old seventeenth century carol.

IRENA

(singing)

"Je vous chanto une merveille, Qui

remplit tout ce bas lieu D'une joie non
pareille De la part de ce grand Dieu,
D'une joie non pareille,
De la part de ce grand Dieu."

A few flakes of vagrant snow still fall. Amy stands before
her friend, who, finishing the carol, smiles at the child.

IRENA (cont'd)
Merry Christmas, Amy.

AMY
Merry Christmas, Irena.
(holding forth the gift)
I brought you a present.

IRENA
(taking it)
Oh, thank you, Amy.

AMY
You can open it now, I guess. Lois
Huggins says that's proper,

Irena smiles at her and opens the box. She takes out a
tinsel angel holding a tinsel star.

IRENA
Oh, how beautiful!

AMY
It reminded me of you, so I bought it. It
cost me more than all the others.

IRENA
(pinning it in her hair)
I shall wear it in my hair!

AMY
(clasping her hands)
Oh, that is more beautiful than I ever
imagined it!
(sorrowfully)
I wish I could show you to mommy and
daddy. I wish you could enjoy Christmas
with us.

IRENA
You and I shall enjoy Christmas together.
Shall I show you my Christmas gift to
you?

AMY
Oh, please!

Amy's friend smiles and lifts one arm heavenward.

EXT. SKYSCAPE - NIGHT - (PROCESS)

From behind a bank of dark clouds the full moon emerges.

EXT. REED GARDEN - NIGHT

As the full moonlight fills the scene, Irena turns her hand toward the trees and bushes of the garden and the forest behind it. Amy turns to look.

FULL SHOT as Amy and Irena see it. The scene is lighted up as if by magic. All the icicles on the trees glitter like jewels. The scene sparkles with the beauty of fairyland.

TWO SHOT of Amy and Irena. Amy clasps her hands in sheer delight. From the house comes the voice of Alice calling.

ALICE'S VOICE

Amy! Amy! Where are you, Amy?

A long shadow falls across the scene from the doorway. Irena looks toward the house.

EXT. SKYSCAPE - NIGHT - (PROCESS)

The moon goes behind, a bank of dark clouds.

EXT. REED GARDEN - NIGHT

TWO SHOT of Amy and her friend as the shadow covers them.

ALICE'S VOICE

Amy!

IRENA

Better go in now.

(she kisses the child)

Run along, darling.

She runs a few steps, but then turns to call back:

AMY

Merry Christmas.

IRENA

A merry Christmas to you, Amy.

Amy turns and runs toward the house.

CLOSEUP of Irena, as she smiles tenderly after the departing child.

DISSOLVE

EXT. REED GARDEN - NIGHT

The CAMERA TRAVELS THROUGH the falling snow TO the place beneath the tree, where Irena had sung and waited for Amy. Almost covered by the snow are the footprints which Amy made going to and from her friend. In the snow lies the package which Amy had brought out to Irena. It is unopened. The gentle snow is rapidly covering Amy's gift from sight. The bittersweet melody of Amy's friend sounds over the scene.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - DAY

Miss Callahan stands with Alice. She is dressed for walking and there are still little patches of snow on her coat. Quite evidently they have exchanged gifts for both of them hold boxes in glossy Christmas paper and stickers.

ALICE

It has been a Merry Christmas and a happy one for us.

Amy, who is seated at the base of the tree, looks up to corroborate this information.

AMY

I got lots of presents.

MISS CALLAHAN

And you should. Your mommy tells me you've been such a good girl, and your daddy is so pleased with you.

Amy picks up a little package, gets up and comes toward the two women.

AMY

Mommy, could Edward take me to Mrs. Farren's house to give her her present?

ALICE

Wouldn't it be just the same, darling, if daddy dropped the present at Mrs. Farren's on his way to town tomorrow morning?

AMY

But it won't be Christmas tomorrow.

ALICE

(laughing in consent)
All right, Amy. Go tell Edward to take you.

Amy runs off toward the kitchen.

MISS CALLAHAN

Does she go up to the Farren's often?

ALICE

No. I only let her go with Edward. It's alright.

EXT. REED GARDEN - THE BACK PORCH - DAY

Amy comes out of the kitchen and she holds the door open a moment to call.

AMY

Hurry Edward, Hurry.

From inside Edward's voice can be heard.

EDWARD'S VOICE

Just have patience, little miss.

Amy starts toward the steps, when suddenly her attention is arrested by something back of the garden.

EXT. REED GARDEN - DAY

On the other side of the fence, its delicate fetlocks deep in snow, outlined against the green pine trees, stands a doe. Its great mild eyes look at the child.

MED. SHOT of Amy looking at the doe. An expression of great delight and enthrallment is on her young face. Suddenly, from behind her, Irena steps and stands there watching the deer. Without turning her head, the child speaks.

AMY

So beautiful, Irena. So beautiful.

IRENA

You wanted to share this moment with me.

AMY

It stands so still.

IRENA

Because it knows it can move with the swiftness of strong wind.

AMY

I can sea its breath in the cold.

IRENA

It's a warm breath -- warm and strong -- warmed by the sunlight that shone on the deer's back in the hot summer; sweet with leaves and mosses.

AMY

May I pet the deer?

IRENA

It is wildness and freedom. No one can touch it.

AMY

I want to touch it.

Irena smiles. The child runs forward down the steps and into the yard. With one great bound, the deer leaps away and is gone from sight. The child stops. From behind her she hears the heavy clumping of Edward's galoshes on the porch. Irena has vanished.

AMY

There was a deer on the other side of the fence.

EDWARD

It's a hard winter. All the animals are bold as brass, coming down into the streets for food. You'll see a lot of deer this winter.

He takes Amy's mittened hand.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Come on now, we'd better hurry if we want to get to Mrs. Farren's before dark. They start out of the yard.

DISSOLVE

INT. FARREN DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Farren is seated on the sofa. She wears one of her fabulous creations, a Lucille tea gown, with long flowing sleeves and web-like lace. Jewels again cover her fingers and arms and throat, and brilliants dangle from her ears. Amy is seated beside her and Edward sits stiffly on a little chair facing Mrs. Farren and Amy.

AMY

(holding out the gift)

I brought you a present. Merry Christmas.

MRS. FARREN

(pleased)

A Christmas present. It's been so long since I've had a Christmas present.

Edward points to a little, neatly wrapped box on the table beside Mrs. Farren.

EDWARD

There's a present you haven't opened yet,
ma'am.

MRS. FARREN

(glancing at it)

That's from her -- that woman.

Amy touches her own present in Mrs. Farren's hand. Mrs. Farren unwraps the gift as she talks.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)

Well, let's see what we have here. In my time I've had many presents, Christmas and otherwise. The King of Spain once gave me this ring.

She has the small package unwrapped, takes off the lid, and looks at the cheap, glittering ring inside. She takes it out and holds it up in the firelight.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)

A ring! A beautiful ring! Oh, how it shines.

She slips off the ring that the King of Spain had given her, tosses it carelessly onto the table, and fits the new ring to her finger.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)

What should I do with the King of Spain's ring when I have this to put in its place?

(admiring the new ring)

For this is a ring given to me out of friendship and love... and that's more than I can say for any of the others.

(smiling at Amy)

Thank you, my child.

Amy smiles at her. Suddenly, a shrill scream of anguish, like a child's is heard. Amy turns around. Mrs. Farren starts up.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)

What's that?

Looking into the room, stands Barbara Farren. One hand brushes aside the portiere. She looks at the old woman. GROUP SHOT. Mrs. Farren returns the glance of Barbara Farren.

EDWARD

It's some animal hurt in the woods that made that sound.

MRS. FARREN

(listening)
Wait a minute. Listen.

AMY
What?

MRS. FARREN
Don't you hear it?

EDWARD
What is it, ma'am?

MRS. FARREN
(hushed voice, tense with
madness)

Listen. There it is again. It's the horn of Herne, the Huntsman.

AMY
Who's Herne the Huntsman?

MRS. FARREN
Don't you read Shakespeare?

Amy shakes her head.

MRS. FARREN
(eyes shining, rising)
"There is an old tale goes, that Herne,
the hunter, Sometimes a keeper here in
Windsor forest, Doth all the winter time,
at still midnight, Walk round about an
oak, with great ragg'd horns; And there
he blasts the trees," (with a sigh)
Ah, well, it's a bad generation --
forgetting all the beautiful words. I'll
tell you plainly -- there's a wild
huntsman who scours the forest with his
dogs and his men. He winds his horn and
the woods echo with it. Everywhere he
passes the animals are slaughtered and
lie dead beneath his trampling feet. If
he should catch up with anyone walking in
the wood, forever and forever they would
have to hunt with Herne, the Huntsman and
his wild rout. Hear his horn?

The question is addressed to both persons. Amy nods and Edward shakes his head.

AMY
And does he kill people?

MRS. FARREN
No, not people -- just deer and game, but

the people he catches can never be free
again. They too must kill and kill,
covering themselves with blood.

Edward, getting alarmed by now, decides that the visit has
lasted long enough. He looks toward the shuttered windows.

EDWARD

It's dark. We'd better be getting on. The
family will be waiting.

MRS. FARREN

Such a brief visit, but dear child, it
has made my Christmas very merry.

She takes Amy's little hands and presses them against her
withered cheek, tenderly. From the doorway, Barbara watches,
bitten deep with jealousy and hurt.

AMY

(as Edward takes her hand and)
starts to lead her from the
room)

Merry Christmas.

She reaches the doorway and Mrs. Farren blows her a kiss.
Barbara moves with them to the door to let them out.

INT. FARREN HALLWAY - NIGHT

Silently, Barbara watches Edward and Amy pass out into the
snow-filled darkness, then she turns back into the hall.
Mrs. Farren, looking at the sparkling new ring on her finger
is walking toward the stairs.

BARBARA

(bitterly)
You didn't even open my present and I'm
your daughter.

MRS. FARREN

My daughter died long ago.

Very slowly, holding onto the banister, Mrs. Farren starts
ascending the stairs. Barbara stands watching her.

EXT. ROAD - DUSK

Early winter darkness is in the air. It is not snowing, but a
wind is blowing, rustling the garments of Edward and Amy, who
walk down the road. The colored man is leading Amy by one
hand; in his other hand is a pocket flash, which he now turns
on. The ray of the flashlight cuts through the darkness, the
beam falling upon the snowy road. Suddenly Edward stops
short, staring down before him.

The CAMERA PANS ALONG the ray to where it discloses lying upon the snow in a pool of blood the mangled body of the little deer.

Edward quickly tries to hide the pathetic sight of the dead deer from Amy's eyes by switching the flashlight off the object and by putting an arm around the child, shielding her from viewing the carcass.

EDWARD

Mustn't look, little miss. Mustn't look.

AMY

But I saw what it was. It's the little deer.

Edward has passed by the deer and is walking along more rapidly now with Amy.

EDWARD

Bad luck to see death in the snow.

AMY

But what happened to the little deer?

EDWARD

Probably hit by a car. Hard to see things in the twilight.

AMY

Why is it just lying there? Why doesn't it get up?

EDWARD

Because it can't. It's dead.

AMY

But it was alive – it was fast and strong!

EDWARD

It got hit.

AMY

But where has it gone? Where's all the strength and the quickness?

Edward cannot answer the child's question, so he makes a secret of it. He raises his finger to his lips. He shrugs

AMY

(pondering a moment)
I'll ask my friend. She'll know.

Amy immediately dismisses the whole project from her mind and walks along with Edward.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Oliver is just finishing dismantling the Christmas tree, putting the ornaments away in boxes for another year. Amy, Alice, and Miss Callahan are sitting before the fire, throwing the dry branches of the Christmas tree onto the grate, where they blaze up, burn brilliantly for a moment, and than die away.

ALICE

I love the smell of pine.

MISS CALLAHAN

It's one of the clearest memories I have. Twelfth night...burning pine... and mummers' plays.

ALICE

(laughing)

It's been ages since I've even thought of a mummers' play. When I was in college we used to do them every year - St. George and the Dragon, all kinds of sword dances.

She gets up and crosses to the bookcase where the album was put.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I've even got some pictures of myself all got up in tattered green and waving around a wooden sword. They're in here, I think.

As she comes back toward the group, a photograph falls from the album.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Oh, oh. What did I lose?

Amy scrambles forward to pick up the photograph.

AMY

I've got it, mommy.

Amy turns over the picture to look at it. She gasps, and then her face brightens with a happy smile.

INSERT THE PHOTOGRAPH IN AMY'S HANDS. It is the picture of Oliver and Irena, which Oliver had put in the back of the album weeks ago.

BACK TO SCENE. Amy runs happily to her father, gazing in wondrous delight at the photograph she holds in her hands.

AMY

Daddy!

OLIVER

Yes, Amy?

AMY

Why, daddy, you know my friend too!

Oliver stares at her a second, then takes the photograph from her and looks at it. There is a pause, and he looks closely at Amy.

OLIVER

You couldn't know this woman. She died before you were born. Why did you call her your friend?

Amy realizes by the seriousness of his tone that once more she has offended her father. She has no way, however, of knowing the reason for that offense. Alice has come over and is staring down at the picture which she has taken from Oliver. Oliver kneels down so that his eyes are on a level with Amy's.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Amy, answer me. Why did you call her your friend?

AMY

Because she is my friend.

Amy is confused and overwrought, Alice, hoping to divert Oliver, touches him on the shoulder.

ALICE

Oliver, please. Let's not go on with this. The child's trembling.

OLIVER

We've got to go on.

(to Amy)

Amy, here, all this time, you've let your mother and father think you had forgotten that old dream life of yours. Now we find you've only kept it secret.

AMY

(insistently)

It isn't a secret. She plays with me. She plays with me in the garden all the time. Right out there in the garden, she does!

OLIVER

In the garden? Would she be there now?

AMY

She's there whenever I call her!

Oliver looks at Amy a moment; then he rises and takes the child by the hand, going out of the room toward the - rear of the house. Alice and Miss Callahan look after the father and child, Alice holding in her hand the offending portrait.

EXT. REED BACK PORCH - EVENING

Oliver and Amy come out onto the porch. Oliver has picked up a coat and puts it over the child's shoulders, He has hold of Amy by one hand. He is very tense, and Amy is perplexed by his attitude.

OLIVER

Amy, I want you to look all around
...very carefully...and then I want you
to tell me if your friend is out there
now in the garden.

Amy looks at him.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Do you understand, Amy?

Amy nods and turns to look out into the garden. Almost immediately her face brightens.

EXT. REED GARDEN - EVENING

Under the old tree Irena stands, looking toward the child. O.S. is the sound of Amy's voice.

AMY'S VOICE

Irena!

EXT. REED BACK PORCH - EVENING

Oliver looks down at the child.

AMY

(happily)
She's there, just like I said she'd be.

OLIVER

Where, Amy? Where do you see her?

AMY

(pointing)
Don't you see her?...Right there, under

the tree.

EXT. REED GARDEN - EVENING

In alarm, Irena is making a desperate gesture of silence to the child.

EXT. REED BACK PORCH - EVENING

Oliver again kneels so that his eyes are on a level with the child's. He grips Amy's shoulders in the intensity of his emotion.

OLIVER

Amy, there's nothing there. There's no one at all in the garden.

AMY

But Irena is in the garden. She's right there, under the tree.

OLIVER

Listen, darling. I want you to look once more. Take as long as you want. Look very carefully, and then I want you to tell me that no one's there.

AMY

But...

OLIVER

(silencing her)

I have eyes too, and I tell you no one's there. If you deny that, if you insist that this woman you call your friend is in the garden, then I'm afraid I shall have to punish you. Do you understand?

Amy nods her head. Oliver turns her around so that she is facing the garden.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

All right. Amy. Tell me that you see nothing.

Amy looks toward, the garden.

EXT. REED GARDEN - EVENING

Irena raises a finger to her lips and shakes her head, warning in pantomime the child to deny her.

EXT. REED BACK PORCH - EVENING

Amy stands staring out at her friend. Oliver looks down at

her intently. Amy glances up at him, then again out toward Irena. Amy's lip is trembling. The tears gather in her eyes. Suddenly she covers her face with her hands and sobs in anguish.

AMY

But she is here.

Oliver looks at her, then takes her by the hand, opens the door, and goes back into the house with the child.

INT. REED LOWER HALLWAY -- EVENING

Oliver comes in from the back of the house, leading the child by the hand. He starts upstairs with her. Alice comes to the living room entrance and looks after Oliver and Amy. Neither one sees her, and Oliver continues on upstairs with the child.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Miss Callahan comes up behind Alice, who watches Oliver go on upstairs with Amy. From upstairs o.s. sounds the noise of a door closing. Alice takes a step forward, then, thinking better of it, turns to confront Miss Callahan. She tries to smile at the woman. Miss Callahan puts an arm around Alice and leads her back to the fire. Miss Callahan, in an effort to distract Alice's mind, picks up a branch of the Christmas tree.

MISS CALLAHAN

You know, there's another thing I just remembered, When you burn a pine branch torn from a Christmas tree, you're supposed to make a wish.

From o.s. upstairs sounds the murmur of angry voices, Oliver's and Amy's, Alice raises her eyes upward and sits, listening. Miss Callahan listens a second, then continues in an effort to be doubly gay.

MISS CALLAHAN (CONT'D)

We were such a large family that I remember one Twelfth Night there was no pine branch left for me to wish upon, but my brother, who was nearest me, said., "Don't you worry. I'll wish for both of us."

The voice upstairs reaches a climax in its anger. Miss Callahan cannot continue to feign joy. Alice looks upstairs bitterly.

ALICE

Forgive me, but it was superstition
...foolish, childish wishes...that

started, all this.

MISS CALLAHAN

What do you mean?

ALICE

I can see it all...the very day it began. Amy was lonely; she was desperate for friendship. I remember the night she told me she had wished on her ring. That must have been the day she first wished for a friend.

Miss Callahan is about to speak, but o.s. there is the sound of a door closing harshly. Alice and Miss Callahan look toward the hallway.

INT. REED STAIRWAY - EVENING

Oliver comes downstairs. At the foot of the stairs he pauses a moment, looking up toward Amy's room; then he turns and enters the living room.

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Oliver comes in, picks up a cigarette, lights it, and blows out a puff of smoke. He looks at the two women.

OLIVER

She refuses to deny it. She continues to believe in her lies.

MISS CALLAHAN

But don't you see...it's just what I was about to say to Alice...Amy in her own mind may not be lying.

OLIVER

But there was nothing, no one in the garden.

MISS CALLAHAN

She needed, a companion, so out of her own hunger she created one. In her mind her friend was in the garden. In her mind her friend never leaves her. Right this very minute I'm sure she's upstairs sobbing out her grief to a friend who exists only in her mind.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

SCENE OF FAREWELL BETWEEN AMY AND IRENA (ALREADY SHOT)

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Oliver is looking at Miss Callahan. Alice is by his side.

OLIVER

Everything you say is no doubt very true. But what worries me is that Amy keeps escaping from reality. I went through that once- with Irena. I saw her... Alice and I both saw Irena lose her mind. Do you think I can sit here calmly and watch my child.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Amy stands at the window, looking out the window after her friend. She turns, sees her coat on the chair, and makes up her mind. Still sobbing from her grief, she puts on her coat, crosses to her closet, gets out her galoshes, puts them on, wraps a scarf around her neck, and crosses to the door. Very quietly she opens the door. Downstairs, o.s., the voices of Oliver, Alice, and Miss Callahan are heard, although what they say is indistinguishable. On tiptoe Amy steals out into the hall. Through the open door of her bedroom she is seen to go down the hall and start softly down the stairs, her shadow looming up large on the wall at the head of the stairs.

EXT. REED BACK PORCH - EVENING

Amy softly closes the door behind her, looks around her for a moment. The air is cold but clear. With determination, she steps down into the garden.

EXT. REED GARDEN - EVENING

The CAMERA IS SET UP BEHIND Amy to show -the tiny traces of her footprints which she makes in the snow. She goes to the edge of the garden, ducks down between the hedges at one corner, and crawls out into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Amy rises up from the hedge and stares about her. The trees loom up in the night, tall and silent. She starts walking through the wood toward the road.

DISSOLVE

INT. REED LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Miss Callahan has picked up the portrait of Irena and is studying it. She turns to Oliver and Alice.

MISS CALLAHAN

It's perfectly normal for a child to dream. I can see how a sensitive little girl, finding this portrait, would take the image of this woman and make of her an imaginary friend. That image dwells only in her imagination, and that image can go as quickly as it was born.

ALICE

How?

MISS CALLAHAN

(quietly)

Once the emptiness in Amy's life is filled, the dream will go of itself. If a up to you, both of you. Only you two can bring her into a real world.. You must give her the friendship and love she craves.

OLIVER

But we have. She's wanted for nothing.

MISS CALLAHAN

Perhaps she's wanted for understanding.

Miss Callahan's words silence Oliver. He looks from her to Alice, who tries to smile encouragingly at him. Oliver looks upstairs. The glimmer of a smile shows on his face; he looks at the two women, and then hurries out of the room, going into the hallway and running up the stairs. Alice looks at Miss Callahan gratefully.

INT. REED LOWER HALLWAY - EVENING

As Oliver comes rushing down the stairs, Alice comes out of the living room with Miss Callahan behind her.

ALICE

Oliver, what is it?

Oliver has picked up his coat and is putting it on.

OLIVER

Amy. She's gone. Better get your coat.

He is on his way to the rear of the house. Alice picks up her coat and quickly follows him, putting on her coat as she goes. Miss Callahan, who has stood in the doorway, grabs her coat and starts after them, but then turns and quickly dials the operator on the phone.

MISS CALLAHAN

(into phone)

Give me the state police. And hurry!

EXT. REED GARDEN - NIGHT

Oliver and Alice come cut of the house. Oliver has a flashlight. He finds the footprints of Amy in the snow and follows them to the hedge. A cold wind is blowing. Oliver looks up at Alice.

OLIVER

She's gone into the woods.

Unable to crawl, like Amy, through the hedge, Oliver and Alice run down to the gate, where they are joined by Miss Callahan.

DISSOLVE

EXT. POST ROAD - NIGHT

Amy walks down the road, the CAMERA TRUCKING IN FRONT OF her. It is very quiet, and there is only the rhythmical sloshing of Amy's shoes as she plows her way through the heavy snow. She looks from side to side as she walks along.

CLOSEUP of Amy's face as she walks along, looking from left to right. Suddenly she looks ahead and stops abruptly.

The snail bridge that crosses the frozen stream, as Amy sees it. The bridge is blanketed with snow and is illumined by the full glare of the cold moonlight.

CLOSEUP of Amy's face as she looks at the bridge. Over the scene, as in her memory, is the voice of Mrs. Farren.

MRS. FARREN'S VOICE

Up and down he rides...

Amy starts slowly, the CAMERA PANNING WITH her, to the bridge. At the entrance to the bridge she stops and looks ahead.

EXT. POST ROAD BRIDGE - NIGHT

The snowy road stretches over the small length of the bridge and disappears into the gloom of the forest.

CLOSEUP of Amy's face as she looks round about her.

Amy swallows hard and then steps forward onto the bridge.

The CAMERA PANS WITH her as she walks along. About the time she has reached the halfway point in her journey across the bridge, she stops, stilled with terror. In the distance is a sound that seems very much like that of the hoofs of an approaching horse galloping closer through the winter night. Amy turns and looks behind her.

The post road, as Amy sees it, stretching out into the shadows. There is nothing stirring, but the sound of the approaching horseman grows louder and louder.

Amy turns her head away and starts to run. The sound grows louder, closer, filling the screen. Amy stumbles and falls. She cowers against the side of the bridge, as the rider thunders down upon her. The sound tears past her, and a shadow brushes by her and is gone. Timidly she looks up.

REAR SHOT of an old automobile, as Amy sees it, driven as fast as possible across the snowy road. The car has no lights.

CAMERA PANS DOWN TO a CLOSEUP of a back tire of the automobile. It is covered with a chain, but the chain has become; loose and is flapping rhythmically against the road, making a sound like that of horse hoofs.

REAR SHOT of the automobile as it disappears into the forest.

Amy rises to her feet. She brushes the wet snow off her coat and continues on across the bridge. As she reaches the end of the bridge, a few snowflakes begin to fall upon her. It is snowing again. Amy looks up.

EXT. SKYSCAPE - NIGHT - (STOCK)

The moon is disappearing behind a bank of gray clouds.

EXT. POST ROAD - NIGHT

As Amy looks up, the clear glow of the moonlight vanishes, and there is only an ominous gray reflection of suffused light upon her face. It snows harder, faster. Amy starts walking again, the CAMERA PANNING WITH her.

Amy hesitates a moment, looking at the tulip tree.

EXT. ANDRE'S TREE - NIGHT

Major Andre's tree, with its gnarled branches covered with snow and ice, stands black and forbidding against the background of white snow.

EXT. POST ROAD - NIGHT

Amy hesitates, reluctant to pass the tree. It is snowing hard now, and a shrill wind is blowing. The gaunt tulip tree is even more dreadful now, with the wind waving the branches about against the snow. The shadows are long and wavering. Suddenly with a gust of wind the branches blow downward, like long thin arms, reaching to ensnare Amy. Amy, terrified, turns, leaves the road, and runs into the adjoining snow

covered meadow.

EXT. MEADOW - NIGHT

Amy stops running and begins to walk, the CAMERA PANNING WITH her. Suddenly she sinks into a spot of soft snow, and it is only with a great effort that she pulls herself out. She crawls onto the hard snow and makes her way onward, disappearing into the snowstorm.

DISSOLVE

INT. FARREN DRAWING ROOM -- NIGHT

Barbara Farren, wearing a negligee, is standing at the lace curtained window, looking out at the storm. The wind sounds shrill. With a shiver, Barbara drops the curtain and comes back into the room. She picks up a decanter and pours herself a drink, which she downs quickly.

Julia Farren is sitting by a lamp, going through an old prompt book. She looks up, and the faintest shadow of a smile shows on her face as she looks at Barbara. The wind beats against the house. Nervously Barbara pours herself another drink and is about to drink it when she discovers her mother watching her. Mrs. Farren smiles, and a little chuckle escapes from her lips.

MRS. FARREN

Don't you like the wind, Regan? Or is your name Goneril?

She laughs to herself and lifts her face up to Barbara.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)

"Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!
rape! blow!... Now rain, wind, thunder,
fire, are my daughters..."

(smiling)

Oh, I could be queen to King Lear
tonight!

The wind sounds shrilly again. Barbara drinks the drink she has poured and covers her ears with her hands

BARBARA

I hate the storm. I hate it!

MRS. FARREN

(shaking her head, sadly)

The storms have done everything they can to me, I don't hate them. I don't even hear the wind. It blows beyond me. It was on such a night as this that Barbara died.

BARBARA

But I am Barbara. I didn't die.

MRS. FARREN

My Barbara was killed. I killed her. Yes, it was my fault. Everyone told me not to drive from the theatre. There was a raging wind that night, and snow and ice. All was well until we got to the Sleepy Hollow bridge. Barbara was singing a little song and then ...I don't know how it happened ..when I awakened, they told me the car was overturned, and they wouldn't let me see Barbara. Barbara was dead.

Barbara comes close to her mother and leans over her.

BARBARA

But I didn't die. Don't you understand? It was you. Your mind was dead for nearly ten years after that accident. You didn't know anybody; you couldn't remember anything. And then, when memory returned, you called for me, and I came into your bedroom to see you. I was sixteen years old then, ten years older than when you last remembered me. You said I wasn't your daughter... I loved you... I wanted you for my mother...but you denied me. You said they were playing tricks on you, that your daughter was a little girl.

She takes the old woman by the shoulders and stares at her intensely.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Look at me now. Look into my eyes. Tell me I'm Barbara... your daughter Barbara.

Mrs. Farren looks at Barbara for a moment, then shakes her head and withdraws back into her chair, tearing the girl's fingers from her shoulders.

MRS. FARREN

No, no. It isn't true. Everything you say is a lie. You're a poor, drunken woman. You're not my Barbara.

Barbara, frustrated, sighs heavily, and picking up the decanter, pours herself another drink.

DISSOLVE

EXT. MEADOW - NIGHT

Amy wanders blindly through the storm.

CLOSEUP of Amy's face, as she tries to peer ahead of her through the falling snow. Her lashes are frosted with snow. Her breath is icy.

Amy stumbles onward through the snowstorm. She falls and lies for a moment, her cheek against the cold whiteness. Then she drags herself to her feet and stands wearily, swaying with fatigue. She forces herself on and reaches a great boulder. She rests there for a moment, leaning hard against the frozen rock of ice and snow. She slips to her knees and leans back against the rock. She can go no further, The snow falls relentlessly upon her.

CLOSEUP of Amy's face as her eyes close. She leans her head against the rock and sleeps. The CAMERA PULLS AWAY until Amy is lost from sight, and there is only falling snow.

DISSOLVE

EXT. POST ROAD - NIGHT

The motorcycles (with sidecars) and police car, with headlights glaring in the falling snow, speed along with sirens blowing.

EXT. POST ROAD BRIDGE - NIGHT

The cars and motorcycles cross the bridge and come to an abrupt halt on the other side near the meadow and the beginning of the forest.

The captain of the troopers posts out of his car. Two troopers with two hounds on leashes stand waiting.

TROOPER

This is where she must have left the road. The hounds have picked up her scent on that frozen meadow.

CAPTAIN

Good.

Oliver, Alice, and Miss Callahan meet the captain on the road.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)

We'll have to leave the cars here and cut across the meadow on foot.

OLIVER

All right. Go ahead. We'll follow.

They enter the frozen meadow, preceded by the troopers with the hounds on leashes. Their flashlights gleam.

DISSOLVE OUT

DISSOLVE IN

EXT. MEADOW - NIGHT

Amy lies against the white rock. The snow has drifted down over her until her body is partially covered by it. Her head is fallen forward and to one side. She seems to be sleeping a sleep of death. Far in the distance o.s. is heard the barking of the hounds.

The CAMERA MOVES IN for a CLOSEUP of Amy's face. The hounds bark again far away. Amy's eyelids flicker. Over the scene, as in Amy's mind, is the voice of Mrs. Farren saying repeatedly:

MRS. FARREN'S VOICE

Herne, the Huntsman of death... Herne,
the Huntsman of death... Herne, the
Huntsman of death...

Again the hounds bark, and the captain's shrill whistle sounds in the distance. Amy is jolted suddenly out of her sleep. She rubs her eyes and listens. Far away, once more the hounds are heard barking. Amy, frightened, struggles to her feet and looks off.

LONG SHOT of the meadow. Through the falling snow, far away, are the tiny flashlights of the state troopers. The hounds bay dismally.

Amy, with new terror in her heart, stumbles off into the wind and storm.

DISSOLVE

INT. FARREN DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Julia Farren still has the old prompt book in her lap. Barbara, with a half drink in her hand, stands looking down at a butterfly case in which there are a great many beautiful insects mounted on Victorian backing. The old lady is gently humming to herself the song from "Cymbeline". Barbara listens for a moment. A new light comes into her eyes, and she comes down to her mother.

BARBARA

Yes, that's it. That's the very song! The
song from "Cymbeline." I was singing it,
just like you said, the night of the
accident. I can even remember the
words...

(singing)

"Fear no more the heat o' the sun. Nor
the furious winter's rages... "

She clasps her mother to her.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Oh, doesn't that prove something to you?
Doesn't it?

MRS. FARREN

Anybody could know that song.

Barbara is on her knees, leaning close to her mother.

BARBARA

Look at me. Look at me, mother darling.
Look into my eyes. What color eyes did
Barbara have?

MRS. FARREN

Gray. They were a lovely, lovely gray.

BARBARA

And my eyes...my eyes are gray. Look! You
see!

MRS. FARREN

(peering)

Yes...yes, that's true.

BARBARA

And my hair...what color hair did Barbara
have?

MRS. FARREN

It was pale...a shadowed gold.

Barbara gathers up the ends of her hair in her hands and
holds them out to her mother.

BARBARA

My hair's like that. Isn't it? Isn't it?

The old woman looks at the soft, faded hair, fingering it
gently.

MRS. FARREN

Yes, so it is...so it is...

(remembering)

Barbara.

Barbara seizes the word like a drowning person snatching at a
straw.

BARBARA

Mother! You called me by name!

MRS. FARREN

Yes, Barbara... Barbara...

Barbara throws herself into her mother's arms and clings to the woman, sobbing with joy.

BARBARA

Oh, mother! Mother, darling, you've called me. You know me. I don't mind anything now...all the long years of waiting...all the starved, hungry years. We've found each other. I love you, I love you!

She covers the woman's cheek with fevered kisses. Suddenly a new terror strikes her brain, and she holds the woman from her.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Promise me you won't forget tomorrow. You'll remember, won't you? You won't say that it was just a dream. Promise me.

MRS. FARREN

Yes. Yes, Barbara, I shan't forget.

Barbara rises happily to her feet; the girl is overjoyed.

BARBARA

It's a dream come true.

She grasps a piece of furniture to steady herself and brushes one hand against her eyes, tired. Then she turns back to her mother.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

There's another promise you must make me. That little girl who comes here...she mustn't ever come to see you again. Promise me you won't see her.

MRS. FARREN

I-shan't see her. No, Barbara, no.

BARBARA

(insanely)

If that child comes here...if I find her trying to steal your love from me...I'll kill her. Yes, I'll kill her:

MRS. FARREN

I'll not see her, Barbara. I promise.

Barbara smiles tenderly at the old woman, and leaning over, kisses her.

BARBARA
Good night, mother, good night.

MRS. FARREN
Good night...Barbara...

Barbara smiles and leaves the drawing room to go upstairs. Mrs. Farren sits in the chair, a little smile on her face. Over and over again she repeats the name of the girl.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)
Barbara...Barbara...Barbara..

DISSOLVE

EXT. MEADOW - NIGHT

Amy reaches a small knoll and struggles up to its top, the CAMERA PANNING WITH her. At the top she pauses and looks around her.

CLOSEUP of Amy's face as she brushes the snow away from her eyes. A strength born of desperation comes into her face.

Amy starts down the knoll. She is going too fast, stumbles, and rolls down over the snow-covered hillside. She stops rolling at the foot of the knoll. She picks herself up and plows forward through the drifts.

EXT. FARREN HOUSE AND GARDEN - NIGHT

Amy reaches an iron railing and is able to pull herself along from one railing to another. She reaches a gateway and pauses, then steps inside.

Amy walks timidly along the drive under the pergola.

Amy hesitates a moment beside a gargoyle-like statue in the garden, and then continues toward the house.

As Amy starts up the steps, she looks at the figures of the Muses, draped in snow, on either side of the steps, and then starts up onto the porch.

INT. FARREN DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Farren is sitting nodding in her chair. O.S. comes the sound of Amy's voice calling:

AMY'S VOICE
Mrs. Farren! Mrs. Farren!

There is a pounding on the door. Mrs. Farren is startled awake. She listens for a moment. The calling and the pounding

continue. She rises, and leaning on her cane, goes out into the hallway.

INT. FARREN LOWER HALLWAY AND STAIRS - NIGHT

Mrs. Farren goes to the door and with great difficulty manages to get it open. Amy, exhausted, almost falls into her arms. The child clings to the old woman. They stand in the open doorway, while the wind beats cruelly about them.

MRS. FARREN
Little girl....poor little girl...

She tries to shut the door, but the force of the wind is too much for her strength. As she pushes her weight against the door, the lights in the old house begin to flicker. Mrs. Farren looks around her in terror at the dwindling light. She forgets the door and stands hugging the child to her. The lights go out, leaving the two in shadows.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)
I'll have to hide you, little girl.

AMY
Hide me? Why?

MRS. FARREN
My little girl said she'd kill you if you came to see me. I can't let you die.
We'll have to hide you.

The old woman and the child move down the hallway toward the drawing room. The wind rushes through the open door, blowing the drapes out into the room. Two hurricane lamps with flickering candles burning in them light the scene dimly. On the threshold Mrs. Farren hesitates.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)
No, I can't hide you here. She knows every corner of this room. There's no safe place here. Where? Oh, where can I hide you?

She turns and looks up the stairs.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)
Yes, we'll have to go upstairs. There's a little room way up...a little forgotten room under the eaves...I can hide you there.

They start up the stairs together slowly. Mrs. Farren takes the steps one at a time, while the child, clings closely to her.

MRS. FARREN (CONT'D)

You'll have to help me. I rarely go up the stairs any more. The doctor forbade it. We'll have to be very quiet...ever so quiet...my little girl is in her room, waiting to kill you. We mustn't let her find you.

O.S. in the far distance sounds the baying of the hounds. Mrs. Farren stiffens and listens, a look of utter panic crossing her face.

EXT. MEADOW - NIGHT

Against a curtain of falling snow, the shadows of the policemen are projected, angular, figures. The hounds look like enormous, prehistoric animals. The captain's whistle is heard blowing, and the dogs bark loudly.

INT. FARREN LOWER HALLWAY AND STAIRS - NIGHT

She starts up the stairs with the child clinging to her. She leans heavily on her cane with one hand and holds fiercely to Amy with the other. She is gasping for breath.

MRS. FARREN

We must hurry. We must hide together, you and I.

She pulls herself up another step. The wind fills the hallway with echoes of the storm. The great tapestries and long somber drapes billow out, weirdly shroud-like, whipping in the gusts of wind. The effort is costing Mrs. Farren a great deal. She is breathing hard. There is a cold sweat on her brow. Amy clings to her, frightened.

AMY

Hurry, hurry.

MRS. FARREN

Yes, yes -

Her lips are trembling; her face is drawn with pain. The child and the old woman reach the first landing and are about to start up the second part of the stairs, when Mrs. Farren stumbles forward, drops her cane, and grasps the balustrade. She falls down onto the step, huddling, up close against the banister. Amy kneels beside her.

AMY

Hurry!

MRS. FARREN

I can't do it! I can't do it!

She begins to whimper and holds her pounding heart, trying to quiet it. O.S. the hounds are heard again, closer. Mrs.

Farren lifts her anguished face and holds tightly to Amy. She hugs the child to her, pressing her cheek closely against Amy's. Her lips draw tightly with constricted pain.

MRS. FARREN (cont'd)
It's such a pity...such a
pity...Barbara...

Her head falls forward against Amy's shoulder.

CLOSEUP of Mrs. Farren's hand as it clutches tightly against Amy's arm and then slowly relaxes and falls limp.

Mrs. Farren lies huddled lifelessly against the banister, Amy is looking at her. She reaches forward and touches the old woman.

AMY
(softly)
Mrs. Farren,...Mrs. Farren...

Slowly Amy draws back and away from the dead body of the old woman. From upstairs, o.s., suddenly comes a pounding on the door and the muffled, drunken voice of Barbara calling out:

BARBARA'S VOICE
Let me out! Let me out!

Amy shrinks away, terrified. From upstairs comes a disparate sobbing and then there is quiet. Amy looks about her.

The wind fills the hallway again like a cavern. The drapes and tapestries flap dismally, reaching out toward her like talons. Amy looks down the stairs into the hallway.

LONG SHOT of the hallway as Amy sees it, with the drapes billowing, the wind moaning and sighing. The hounds sound, O.S., very close.

Amy sinks down slowly onto the steps. She is shivering with terror. She buries her face in her hands and begins to cry hysterically, her little body shaken with great sobs. Suddenly the voice of Irena is heard o.s.

IRENA'S VOICE
Amy. Amy.

Amy stops sobbing, lowers her hands from her face, and looks up.

CLOSEUP of Irena, as Amy sees her, coming down the stairs. She smiles comfortingly at the child.

TWO SHOT of Amy and Irena. Amy rises, clutching her friend eagerly. The tears are running down the child's cheeks.

AMY

It's you...Irena...my friend!

IRENA

(brushing away the tears)
Don't cry, Amy.

AMY

(looking around at Mrs. Farren)
She's dead! I know what it is now when people say somebody died. I know what they mean! And I'm afraid. She's dead; she's dead!

The child sobs hysterically. Irena touches Amy's hair.

IRENA

You mustn't be afraid.

AMY

(sobbing)
But she's dead!

IRENA

Amy, listen to me. Death isn't such a terrible thing.

AMY

Oh, it is, it is! Death's terrible.

IRENA

But, Amy! Amy...I'm dead.

CLOSEUP of Amy as she looks at her friend.

CLOSEUP of Amy's friend as she smiles at the child.

TWO SHOT of Amy and her friend.

AMY

(in a whisper)
You?

IRENA

Yes, Amy.

AMY

But why?

IRENA

(quietly)
Death's like life. Death's a part of life. It isn't frightening. It isn't the end of everything. It isn't quiet and nothingness. It's a part of all eternity.

Amy looks at her friend, and a slow smile forms on her face. Irena bends down beside her and brushes the tears away from the child's sailing face.

IRENA (cont'd)

You're not frightened now, are you?

Amy shakes her head, Irena clasps her to her, kissing the child's hair. Suddenly there is the sound of booted footsteps on the porch, voices calling o.s.

TROOPERS' VOICES

In there. She must be in there.

Amy and Irena look toward the open door.

The porch, as Amy sees it. Flashlights are gleaming, cutting through the wind and storm. The hounds are baying loudly. The rays of the flashlights are coming up into the house.

Irena draws away from Amy. As the ray of flashlight cuts through the shadows and holds on Amy, Irena slips back, vanishing into the shadows on the stairway.

Oliver enters the hallway, bounds up the stairs, and gathers Amy into his arms. The hallway is almost immediately illuminated, as the lights go back on. Oliver hugs Amy closely to him.

OLIVER

Oh, Amy! Darling, I thought we'd lost you. I thought I'd never find you again!

There are tears in his eyes, a happy sob in his voice.

Amy presses her face close against her father's. Oliver brings the child downstairs with him, where Alice and Miss Callahan are waiting in the hall.

ALICE

Darling. Are you all right, darling?

Amy nods and kisses her mother.

Several of the troopers have found the dead body of Mrs. Parren on the stairs. The captain rises, looks down at Oliver.

CAPTAIN

Mr. Reed.

Oliver turns and looks upstairs. The captain indicates the body of Mrs. Farren on the stairway,

CAPTAIN (cont'd)

This woman's dead.

AMY

Yes, she was afraid. She said there was someone who wanted to kill me.

OLIVER

But there's no one here, darling.

AMY

She's upstairs... the lady who lives up there.

The captain looks at Oliver, turns to two of his men, and goes on upstairs.

INT. FARREN UPPER HALLWAY - NIGHT

As the captain and his men are coming down the hallway there is a muffled sound of sobbing behind one of the doors. The captain stops and goes to the door. He tries the knob.

CAPTAIN

The door's locked,

TROOPER

The key's there in the lock, sir.

The captain, puzzled, turns the key and opens the door. Huddled on the floor against the door is Barbara Farren, hysterical with rage and drink. The troopers pick her up. She brushes the hair from her face.

BARBARA

Who turned the key in that lock? I heard, the voice of my mother and the voice of that child, and when I tried to get out, the door was locked. Who turned that key and locked me in?

The men look at her, puzzled.

CAPTAIN

There's been no one up here,

She looks at them dully, and then her eyes, looking beyond them, sees the poor huddled figure on the stairway. She pushes aside the men and runs down the hall toward the stairs.

INT. FARREN LOWER HALLWAY AND STAIRS - NIGHT

Barbara Farren kneels beside the body of her mother. The troopers follow her and stand beside her.

BARBARA

— (sobbing)

Even your last moment was stolen from me.

-

She looks down the stairs.

Amy, in her father's arms, is staring up at the woman on the stairway.

In a terrible fury Barbara rises, glaring at the child.

BARBARA

You did it! You stole her love! Thief.
Thief. You thief!

As she starts down toward the child, the two troopers hold her and restrain her. She struggles in their arms, crying out in her rage, as they lead her back upstairs.

Alice has picked up an old Paisley shawl and now gives it to Oliver, who wraps it around the child. Oliver smiles down at Amy.

OLIVER

We're going home, Amy.

Amy smiles at him and nestles closer to him. Miss Callahan, Alice, and Oliver, with Amy in his arms, leave the house.

The captain signals good night to Oliver. He turns to one of his men, who stands holding the key in his hands, looking at it.

TROOPER

Who do you think locked that door?

CAPTAIN

(shrugging)
Whoever did saved the life of that child.
That woman's deranged.

They look up the stairs where Barbara was taken

DISSOLVE

EXT. REED BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Amy, is carried out onto the porch by her father. The child clings happily to Oliver's neck. He smiles down at her. Amy looks out into the garden.

EXT. REED GARDEN - NIGHT

Under the old tree stands Irena, smiling happily at the child. A few flakes of snow drift down before her.

EXT. REED BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Amy is smiling out into the garden.

AMY

Daddy?

OLIVER

Yes, darling.

AMY

Tell me the real truth. You can see my
friend, can't you?

Oliver doesn't even look out into the garden. He leans down
and brushes a kiss on Amy's forehead.

OLIVER

Yes, darling, I can see her.

Amy turns, smiles at him, and hugs him closely.

THE END

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