

STORY CONFERENCE

SEQUENCE 9-A WITCH PREPARES POISON APPLE

Nov. 24, 1936 - 8:30 to 11:00 - Present: Grant, Cottrell, Dave, Walt,
Creedon, Dorothy, Fergy, Hennesy,
Clurchill

SCENE 1

Walt: How are you going to open - on the long shot or on the raven? If we open in the long shot and come down, we don't have to bother with the long shot again.

Fergy: You end on the raven in the previous sequence.

Walt: I don't see any value in coming back to the raven. (Not a strong enough connection.) You'd come back to the long shot and plant setting. If you open on him you have to come back to a long shot, or else forget a long shot of the place. Open on a long shot and come in to the business you are concerned with which is the cauldron.

Dave: You'll see the raven there in the long shot, I think. (In answer to Fergy's idea that a cut to the raven will be abrupt.)

Walt: I don't think it matters whether you see him in the long shot.

Fergy: He's going to be in on the scene following which is down on the witch.

Walt: Yes, but that doesn't mean he has to be in the opening scene. I think you have got a better picture to open on the long shot. Bring the raven in when you need him.

SCENE 2

(Music)

Walt: I think "Boil, caldron, boil" could stand out more in the bass - the pound of the bass and the rhythm of it.

Dave: Melody in the bass rather than treble, you mean.

Frank: Muddy orchestration - all the lower instruments close together.

Walt: Suggests sustained instead of rumbling music under bubbling sounds.

Frank: Hold the music smooth or sustained and let the bubbling sounds come up.

SCENE 5

Walt: Suggests getting special effects to experiment on reflections on the apple. Might shine enough to show witch's reflection.

SCENE 8

Walt: The thought just struck me on the build up of the music to where

SCENE 8
(cont.)

she says: NOT TURN RED, etc. that where it starts, you might go into innocent, sweet music while she is saying something about how innocent it looks. Instead of saying how it will tempt Snow White. The music changes as the apple changes and could stay that way until she says: HAVE A BITE. It would be a good contrast.

Dave: You mean the innocence of the apple or of Snow White?

Walt: The apple - you have seen the poison seeping into it and the build up on the hocus pocus around it. Then some innocent little theme there, coming back to the heavy music after she says: HAVE A BITE.

Creedon: Admiring the apple as if she'd like to eat it herself.
"Pink as a maiden's blush"

Walt: Something to show how tempting the apple is - how tempting it would be to anybody she offered it to.

Bill: Wouldn't you want that when you are back on her. She even goes sweet herself. — She'd change her personality into the peddler woman. Then look over at the raven for: "HAVE A BITE?"

Walt: It could be part of her sales talk there. The apple has just changed from this terrible thing in blow fly colors and the skull to the beautiful red.

There wouldn't be much of it - just enough for contrast.

Bill: Musically, I'd see the apple change as effective rather than sweet.

Walt: It comes from that terrible color into the beautiful apple though, Bill.

Dave: She'd describe the apple in such terms as "the blush of dawn" or "its fair cheek".

~~Walt: She can hold it up on her fingers.~~

Dave: When the apple turns red, suggests "the blush of youth to tempt her sight" - then - "have a bite"

Dorothy: Better to go out of rhyme there because, if you notice, there are five "ite" rhymes and two "bites". I think a line out of rhyme will sound better there.

Fergy: "NOBODY COULD RESIST YOU, MY BEAUTY" - or something.

Dave: "SO SWEET AND FAIR"

Walt: It's turning and you run into the pretty music as she says something about its innocence. I got the feeling the first time that it was heavy all the way thru and you needed relief. She's successful now and happy.
"NOW TURN RED TO TEMPT SNOW WHITE - MAKE HER HUNGER FOR A BITE" - or whatever it is.

Frank: Vibra harp in major - a bright key.

SCENE 8

(cont.) -

Walt: Truck up on the apple. There is her finished product, and she's proud of it - then - HAVE A BITE.

Dorothy: I think a flowery quotation would be good even if it didn't pertain especially to an apple - something almost silly like "What's so rare as a day in June" -

Welt: It's her description of the thing. Like Dorothy says, might be some little quotation, something that hasn't anything in particulier to do with an apple. Might be a series of descriptive words.

Creedon: I like "innocent as a maiden's blush" or "a baby's cheeks"

Dave: Something might lead into the antidote idea.

SCENE 9

Walt: The apple comes into the camera for HAVE A BITE, then you cut to the raven and she throws it into his face for the second: HAVE A BITE? It is said with a different inflection the second time.

Frank: Like she's kidding the second time.

Dave: Yes, it should be that way.

Walt: If you don't repeat it you don't get the value of the cut. On the second one, he'd be back against the wall and she'd laugh and say: IT'S NOT FOR YOU - IT'S FOR SHOW WHITE.

SCENE 11

Walt: There is another spot where you could yet contrast by stopping your music. That's when she says: BUT WAIT - NOTHING MUST BE OVERLOOKED - THERE MAY BE AN ANTIDOTE. Then as she is trying to find it, a suspense, and she reads it.

Dave: Then go on with THERE MUST BE AN ANTIDOTE.

Walt: She'd have shifting eyes.

She could run to the back and as she went thru, saying: NOTHING MUST BE OVERLOOKED - she could go on with THE VICTIM OF THE SLEEPING DEATH instead of repeating part of the formula.

BUT WAIT - THERE MAYBE AN ANTIDOTE - she runs thru the book, NOTHING MUST BE OVERLOOKED - NOTHING MUST SPOIL MY PLANS - LOVE'S FIRST KISS, HAH - NO FEAR OF THAT - As she's running thru she goes on and says why - nothing must spoil it.

Walt: It would be good for contrast to stop when she says: BUT WAIT - There's a break in our routine there - until she says what it is.

Fergy: Pick up when she reads THE VICTIM Of THE SLEEPING DEATH.

Walt: Pick up when she finds it. It won't come back to that theme

SCENE 11
(cont.)

Walt: until she says: LOVE'S FIRST KISS - HAH - NO FEAR OF THAT.

Frank: Finish with a big chord - then: BUT WAIT.

Walt: NOTHING MUST BE OVERLOOKED - NOTHING MUST SPOIL MY PLANS - She's busy hunting up the antidote as she says it, then she finds it.

Bill: She'd say: BUT WAIT - THERE MAY BE AN ANTIDOTE - then look in the book.

Fergy: Would it be too much of a burlesque on her if when she said I'LL BE FAIREST IN THE LAND and started to pretty up (fixing her hair - touching it up)

Walt: Why not - she's clowning - Take that attitude with her in it.

Bill: Don't you think she ought to be serious in there.

Fergy: She gets serious after that.

Dave: I don't like to see a thing treated too seriously when we can get out of it.

Bill: She clowns when the apple changes and with the raven, but I think she becomes serious again. It's the purpose of the apple to deceive Snow White and to kill her. I suppose it could be done either way.

Walt: I'd like to see us take the light attitude to relieve the seriousness.

Joe: Like she's kidding herself.

Fergy: She's forgetting what she looks like when she's touching herself up.

SCENE 14

Walt: BURIED ALIVE - is the thing where the raven ought to take it big. Her eyes ought to pop out when she says BURIED ALIVE - she laughs and goes out - do you see her coming to the door and raising it up?

Bill: When you cut to the scene she could be standing in the door down a couple of steps.

Walt: How do you get her in the spot - stay with the raven?

Bill: Stay with him or cut to him.

Walt: Then come to her just as she's going down, finishing her laugh and saying BURIED ALIVE and the second laugh.

As the door closes - do it by double exposing it out - seeing nothing but the eyes.

Joe: The face goes into shadow and then you see nothing but eyes.

SCENE 15

Walt: (Skeleton business) If you do it, she should come down sort of cackling, sees it, says: THIRSTY? HAVE A DRINK - as she kicks it over to him she laughs and goes right down and with the laugh gets in the boat and pushes out. Just take the length of time necessary for her to look at it and kick over.

Joe: Incidental business.

Walt: If she kicked it over a spider ought to run out.

There's not a lot to it. We can put it in and see how it goes along. You're not taking out a lot. See what kind of touch it gives. If it carries thru the feeling that she is in a jovial mood and sees it and is just trying to be funny - it would be only 7 or 8 feet.

She could come down and stop and see it and say THIRSTY? Then cut to her foot kicking the pitcher off in close up and have her laugh. Maybe her shadow going along and pick up with her coming into the boat. Shows how mean she is, or you could pan from the close up around as she kicks the pitcher, you see her shadow going down like as the light is coming up, and you pan on the shadow into the other scene. As you do you pick her up getting into the boat.

I'd rather have her come from darkness after dropping the trap door.

Dave: Too much light at the top of the stairs.

Hugh: Thought the shadow on the wall would be interesting.

Dave: Might a silhouette of her at this point be good - just a dim feeling of her at the top of the stairs.

Walt: The architecture at the top doesn't look enough like a dungeon. Looks like she's coming out of a banquet hall.

SCENES 18 and 19

Dave: Right at the end I'd like to see her go off in the distance to the right and back more than just going right back. Instead of filling in the trees on the right, to allow her to disappear into the mist more.

Bill: Not just lose her in this little area, but more fog and trees.

Dave: Take out the trees to begin with.

Walt: Let her go off and pan with her and let the trees come in on the side.

Bill: I like the fading into the fog.

Walt: She'd still do it, but as she did, also have it move along the trees in the foreground. You can fade out on it. It just fills your scene in and you still see her back there thru the trees.

Walt: As she came up to the camera, pick up with the basket. Move a little with the basket and move into the other scene. She comes up so close around a clump of trees - you're with the basket and apples, then you go off into the distance. The one poison apple on top shines as we come to it.

Should get more marshy feeling and more reeds.

Turn over a scene to [Paul] Sprunk and see what he can get on the mist. We can get the fog just moving a little in there, I think. Maybe we'll find we don't have to.

GENERAL
(Footage)

Walt: I think around 300 feet for the whole thing is safe.

(Tempo)

Dave: I have a feeling that the tempo of the music which you are figuring in 20's is just a little slow. Maybe 18's would give more life.

Walt: I wouldn't definitely set the tempo until you see how the lines read.

Frank: It's free beat, but the action stuff you can shoot in tempos.

(Shooting)

Walt: Get pretty close to the old hag for close ups.

Plan everything, make the props and shoot the action. Just plan it for the layouts. Build the layouts from the roto-scope. Get steps and things. You don't need overlays - just the things they come in contact with. Cauldron, book, table and location of raven - get some prep the approximate size of the raven. Have Hal Helvenston get the props set for you.

(Start and
Finish)

Bill: This sequence fades in and fades out, doesn't it?

Walt: Yes, but not long fades ins. Two-foot fades.

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Walt: I'd like to see her come down those steps into this place and slam the door. You could have the raven asleep. It knocks him off his perch, and maybe knocks a couple of bottles down. She's madder than hell. She's been tricked. She comes to him - TRICKED! MY OWN HUNTSMAN - CHICKEN-HEARTED! BLUNDERING FOOL.

It gives you a chance for this queen - she's not the hag here, but the queen - to be more active - to make her actions more forceful. She slams books and everything around.

Think that would be the place for her to say (or up above starting down) - I'M NOT GOING TO TRUST IT TO HIS BLUNDERING HANDS AGAIN.

Bill: She could repeat the idea downstairs, then - how to do it. She looks in the book of disguises.

Walt: She would sweep in and say it just as she's ready to slam the door. Bang goes the door and wakes the raven, and knocks a bottle off to show the force. I think it's too late when she's coming down.

Different things see her coming down and she comes with such a sweep they scurry out of the way.

Bill: When she decides to disguise herself that would be when she'd get the book of disguises and look up and find the peddler woman disguise.

Dot: If she could get the recipe without looking in the book it would be better.

Bill: We don't show her looking in the book - she quotes from memory you might say.

Walt: Don't we show her find the poison and fade out on that?

Dot: It's a repetition of action.

Walt: "I'LL HAVE TO DISGUISE MYSELF" -

Bill: She could do it without the book, or

Dots: Or make it up herself.

Fergy: Could she mention a few, then decide on the peddler woman?

Walt: What about the library? Blowing the dust off the books? There are all the books - I like that. One time we had "What Every Witch Should Know"

Dot: She should have all the books, but if she has to look in the book, it would be the same thing.

Walt: She pulls it out, blows the dust off, opens it and a silver fish run out.

Bill: If she did it without the book, I'd see her making up her own formula as she goes along.

Walt: You still see bringing in the sobbing retorts and the laughing - to change it. We don't have to feature the book, but she can get the book and work from it. She gets a tube and fills it up, turns spigots to get something. Get them all

Walt:

(cont.)

working together, the sobs and everything - like a lot of people chattering. I believe the stuff cooking could look very interesting. It didn't work out in this thing (Worm Turns) because I don't think it was featured right where the stuff coughed and sputtered. The different things she uses should all have something to do with this disguise - like the old hag's cackle.

The retorts and stuff would be kind of crude.

There has to be something in her dialogue that brings out what she is cooking there. You know when you hear the sobbing thing cooking what it is. I think there might be a kind of comic slant on it too - The moan of a dying calf - the old hag's cackle.

Joe:

Keep it descriptive.

Walt:

Fantastic too.