TD n°6: The third Scaffold Scene in *The Revelation of the Scarlet letter*

Analyze the development of the scene and the actors.

Partly supported by Hester Prynne, and holding one hand of little Pearl's, the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale turned to the dignified and venerable rulers; to the holy ministers, who were his brethren; to the people, whose great heart was thoroughly appalled, yet overflowing with tearful sympathy, as knowing that some deep life-matter--which, if full of sin, was full of anguish and repentance likewise--was now to be laid open to them. The sun, but little past its meridian, shone down upon the clergyman, and gave a distinctness to his figure, as he stood out from all the earth to put in his plea of guilty at the bar of Eternal Justice.

"People of New England!" cried he, with a voice that rose over them, high, solemn, and majestic,--yet had always a tremor through it, and sometimes a shriek, struggling up out of a fathomless depth of remorse and woe,--"ye, that have loved me!--ye, that have deemed me holy!--behold me here, the one sinner of the world! At last!--at last!--I stand upon the spot where, seven years since, I should have stood; here, with this woman, whose arm, more than the little strength wherewith I have crept hitherward, sustains me, at this dreadful moment, from grovelling down upon my face! Lo, the scarlet letter which Hester wears! Ye have all shuddered at it! Wherever her walk hath been,--wherever, so miserably burdened, she may have hoped to find repose,--it hath cast a lurid gleam of awe and horrible repugnance round about her. But there stood one in the midst of you, at whose brand of sin and infamy ye have not shuddered!"