

BRIGHT STAR

By

Jane Campion

SHOOTING SCRIPT

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(includes all Amendments)

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1 **EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAWN** 1

Morning light, lemon and faint through the trees of HAMPSTEAD HEATH. A SQUIRREL runs along the BRANCH of a tree.

OCTOBER 1818.

2 **INT. BEDROOM ELM COTTAGE - EARLY MORNING** 2

A THREAD of COTTON noses it's way through the eye of the needle.

FANNY BRAWNE aged 18 is SEWING by FIRST LIGHT while her 9-year old sister MARGARET sleeps. Her stitches are confident, intricate and fast. The WHITE MUSLIN she is sewing is delicate and fine. The glint of the STEEL NEEDLE as it weaves then pulls, weaves then pulls a trail of perfect stitches.

3 **INT. THE KITCHEN ELM COTTAGE - MORNING** 3

MRS BRAWNE 40 enters the KITCHEN dressed to go out. Fanny, the MAID CHARLOTTE and little Margaret are all sewing different parts of Fanny's white muslin dress. Samuel, her 14-year old brother, sits apart munching toast.

MRS BRAWNE

Have you forgot we are going to Mr and Mrs Dilke for tea? We are to meet Mr Brown's poet friend Mr Keats.

FANNY

No I have not forgot. Can you help Margaret, the stitches must be small and exactly even.

Mrs Brawne takes over from her youngest daughter.

FANNY (cont'd)

What if Mr Brown has already poisoned Mr Keats against me? I shall not be afraid to take them on in wit. If I am in the mood I could lash them both.

MRS BRAWNE

Why not ignore Mr Brown?

FANNY

He provokes me! Mama it is his game. I must defend myself.

4 **INT. BEDROOM ELM COTTAGE - MORNING** 4

Fanny finishes some intricate hair arrangement, with the help of little Margaret, who passes the pins to her mother who is securing them.

FANNY

You do nothing to me, or for me and that is how I prefer to keep it.

Mr Brown holds up his arms in mock wonder, enjoying teasing Fanny as he might a lap dog.

MR BROWN

What!?

FANNY

All right, your offence is to my fashion to which I am "so helpless slavish!"

MR BROWN

I didn't say that, Mrs Dilke? I never would say such nonsense. I have been ill quoted.

The gathering moves into the DRAWING ROOM where tea is served. Maria is bowing her head guiltily.

MR DILKE (TO MR BROWN)

Baiting...baiting...

FANNY

..."her obsession with flounce and cross stitch?"

MR BROWN

Cross stitch? Miss Brawne I don't even know what it means, I have been wrongly used.

FANNY

I feel the same about your poems Mr Brown, I know nothing of what they mean. In fact, they have the quality of your cigar, they puff, smoke and dissolve leaving nothing but irritation...

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny why not talk to one of us you hold in higher favour?

FANNY

Mr Brown sets out to irritate and he is successful, now I set out to demolish and I am only begun.

MR BROWN

Ohhh...

MARIA DILKE

Fanny take this tea to poor Mr Keats, he is in very poor spirits.

FANNY (LOOKING CONCERNED)

Oh. Will he have sugar?

MR BROWN

He is composing and does not want disturbing.

FANNY

It is my finding in the business of disturbing you are the expert.

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny that is too far.

FANNY

I am praising him!

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny...

FANNY

What now I am restrained because I compliment him too much? I withdraw. Let someone else take Mr Keats's tea, I want to be left alone to examine the length of my stitches.

MARIA DILKE (POURING KEATS'S TEA)

Please Fanny I want you to go, I am wanting to know what you shall say about Mr Keats. I have been waiting two weeks that I may enjoy your opinion. I cannot look upon him without smiling and he is quick with his thoughts though now they are mostly sad.

MR DILKE

His brother Tom is not at all better, very diminished.

Fanny's sympathy is engaged.

MARIA DILKE

Mr Keats nurses him alone. It is difficult work.

MRS BRAWNE

Are there no other family members?

MARIA DILKE

No. The parents are both dead. There is only a much younger sister and a brother who emigrated to America.

MRS BRAWNE

How old is Tom?

MR DILKE

Only 19, very painful and Keats is not much older.

MRS BRAWNE

I am so sorry.

9

INT. MR BROWN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

9

Fanny stops mid corridor to check her hair and self in the hall glass.

She is possessed, neither pleased or displeased with her appearance and dispassionate in her attention.

Outside Mr Brown's DOOR Fanny stops to knock and then to turn the handle but KEATS surprises her by pulling the door suddenly open (expecting Mr Brown).

Keats and Fanny are eye to eye, each other's petite equal. They laugh. The tea sloshes.

FANNY

You like jokes Mr Keats? I like jokes. I hope we shall play some on each other. Mr Brown I warn you, does not like my jokes, he complains I care for nothing but fashion. Should you like cake?

Fanny turns to leave.

KEATS

And what shall be said of me? You have come to spy.

FANNY

I came to bring you tea.

KEATS

How will you describe me? My character?

FANNY

I am not the least interested in your character.

KEATS

My jacket then or my pantaloons?

FANNY

You need a new jacket that is what I would say.

KEATS

That is all?

FANNY

That it should be of velvet.

KEATS

Tell me Miss Brawne, how are you so sure?

FANNY

All that I wear I have designed and sewn
myself. Is it not well done?

(MORE)

FANNY (cont'd)

I am often told I am clever to exception about design, I have originated the pleated edge upon the ribbon. It is charming and it has been copied...

Mr Brown enters the room and sits at his spot at the WRITING DESK opposite Keats, pushing his chair back to look at Fanny.

MR BROWN

Has she annoyed you sufficiently? She has done brilliant well with me. Men's room, men's room, OUT, thank you. Poets writing.

Mr Brown picks up his PEN and acts writing. Fanny leaves calmly as if Mr Brown was not scuttling her.

KEATS

Goodbye minxstress.

FANNY

My stitching has more merit and admirers than your two scribbling's put together.

KEATS AND MR BROWN

Ohhhh. Ohhhh.

FANNY

And I can make money from it.

KEATS

Ouch!

10 **EXT. STREET HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY** 10

Margaret and Samuel make their way to the BOOKSHOP, careful not to catch the eye of the HUNGRY and HOMELESS.

11 **INT. BOOKSHOP - DAY** 11

The BELL on the BOOKSHOP DOOR rings. Margaret and Samuel enter. Their boots clunk on the boards of the quiet shop, they walk to the counter. There is no-one there, they stand in front of it. A VOICE speaks from a shelf behind.

SHOPKEEPER

Yes?

Samuel moves to the counter.

SAMUEL

Have you got John Keats's poem book Endy...

SHOPKEEPER

Endymion? I've not heard much good about it. I've not sold one and took twenty.

The SHOPKEEPER takes a copy from a tallish pile.

MARGARET

My sister has met the author. She wants to read it for herself and decide if he is an idiot or not.

12 INT. BEDROOM ELM COTTAGE - DAY

12

Fanny at home in her room sews the tiny pleats of a TRIPLE MUSHROOM PLEATED COLLAR. Her needle weaving in and out, then drawing the thread through. Her eyelashes caught in the PALE WHITE SUN. Standing in her PETTICOAT, she holds the almost complete collar to her neck and checks it's effect in the glass. She gently tilts her head to the side and points her toe.

13 INT. BEDROOM ELM COTTAGE - DAY

13

Margaret and Samuel come upstairs and enter Fanny's bedroom. Margaret takes off her COAT and sits. Fanny's steel needle pauses.

FANNY

Unwrap it.

Margaret takes the BROWN PAPER from the book. Fanny watches. She takes the book in her own hands, turns it over, opens it to the title page. Then passes it back to Margaret.

FANNY (cont'd)

Read it.

Her needle weaves in and out of the pleats, drawing it's pale thread behind it.

MARGARET

ENDYMION

BOOK 1

***"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet
breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth"***

Fanny's eyes stop and go deeply inside, she is listening. Her needle again weaves in and out of the fine pleat. She is sewing faster.

MARGARET (cont'd)

"Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth"

FANNY

Stop.

Margaret stops and looks to Fanny. Fanny stops sewing.

FANNY (cont'd)

I am completely lost...

Fanny takes the book from Margaret.

FANNY (cont'd)

***"...yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits."***

14

INT. THE ROYAL ARTILLERY MESS - EVENING

14

The ROYAL ARTILLERY MESS at WOOLWICH, a DANCE and Fanny in the centre of it in her new gown. She dances with a studied grace. The effect is elegant yet mannered.

In the interval she sights an under dressed Keats sitting back, ignoring the dancers absorbed in his thoughts. Near him Mr Brown and their friend REYNOLDS and his SISTERS talk loudly. Fanny whispers to her younger brother Samuel. Samuel slouches over to Keats.

SAMUEL

My sister Miss Brawne wishes to greet you Mr Keats.

KEATS

And where is she?

Fanny is all alone waiting for him strategically posed by a large ORNATE MIRROR near the dining hall.

FANNY

***"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness;"***

Keats looks surprised.

KEATS

You have read Endymion?

FANNY

I wanted to adore it.

KEATS

But you hate it?

FANNY

I cannot say.

KEATS

Are you afraid to speak truthfully?

FANNY

Never.

KEATS

Well tell me then.

FANNY

No. I am not at all clever with poetry.

KEATS

Neither it seems am I. Still I have hope for myself. What do you make of my hope Miss Brawne?

FANNY

I think hope very useful.

KEATS

But...

FANNY

But hope and results are very different. One does not create the other.

KEATS

Could practice help?

FANNY

Yes it might. I was not always able to stitch so well.

KEATS

Ah ha, I must practice my stitches.

Fanny looks at Keats.

FANNY

Let me do the sewing, I have such a start. This is the first frock in Woolwich or Hampstead to have a triple-pleated-mushroom collar.

Keats looks about to realise there is only Fanny, himself and their reflection.

KEATS (INTIMATELY)

Behind you I see one I fear to be identical.

Fanny disconcerted, turns to see her own reflection, she laughs very pleased with the joke.

She sees a GROUP of MILITARY MEN, dance partners searching for her. She puts her back to them so she may finish talking.

FANNY

My card is completely full; three I have met before and are suitors. Mr Tarrant is scaring me with his talk of estates and his dogs, he has eleven. Maman says it is possible to love almost anybody and I will come to understand that.

KEATS (GESTURES)

Even Mr---?

FANNY

Tarrant? Yes, isn't that a miracle? But you don't dance Mr Keats. I love to dance.

KEATS

I don't feel like dancing..

FANNY

Your brother is still ill?

KEATS

He is no better.

FANNY

I have thought of him often and wish to make him something. Would lemon wafers be agreeable?

KEATS

He would like so much that you had thought of him.

FANNY

My Papa was ill for as long as I can remember. He died when I was still a child.

Fanny tears up. She takes out a small WHITE EMBROIDERED HANDKERCHIEF and pats her eyes.

The TWO MILITARY MEN spot Fanny and come over.

Keats bows and departs while Fanny is led out on to the dance floor. She has recovered herself and is dancing with quaintly exaggerated hand movements aimed at affecting a personal stylishness. The Reynolds sisters notice and comically impersonate. Apparently for Keats's benefit. He is not amused by them or by Fanny but is alone and alienated

15

INT. KITCHEN ELM COTTAGE - DAY

15

On the kitchen table Fanny and the maid are grating LEMON RIND. Dabbing WAFER MIX onto an OVEN TRAY. Stoking the FIRE. From the cooked wafers Fanny tosses all but the most perfect onto a rubbish heap. She lines a BASKET with LINEN. Then pausing, she turns from the table.

Quickly she swoops on Margaret's frock where she snips a LEMON RIBBON off her neckline and begins to tie it decoratively on the basket.

MARGARET

Mother! Fanny has taken my ribbon and she never asked. Mama!

Margaret goes in search of her mother who she finds in the hall way.

MARGARET (cont'd)

She has cut my ribbon.

Mrs Brawne enters the kitchen to see a mess of SHATTERED and DISCARDED wafers and Fanny tying the ribbon on her basket of 20 PERFECT wafers.

MRS BRAWNE

What are you doing Fanny?

FANNY

I am trying to bring some comfort to a dying man.

Mrs Brawne picks up one of the discarded wafers from a huge stack.

MRS BRAWNE

What dying man? Where are you taking them?

FANNY

I cannot offer poor Mr Keats's brother anything that is not perfect.

MRS BRAWNE

But so many of them look quite well.

FANNY

Mama, quite well! He may die. I cannot offer him anything but our most beautiful and our best.

16 **EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

16

Fanny carries the BASKET of wafers as the THREE young Brawne's walk up the path to Wentworth House.

17 **INT. WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

17

Inside the house they walk down the corridor to Mr Brown's apartment. Fanny knocks.

MR BROWN

No thank you, poets at work.

FANNY

It is me, Miss Brawne. I have something to deliver to Mr Keats.

MR BROWN

Leave it at the door.

FANNY

Is Mr Keats not there?

KEATS

I am here.

MR BROWN

We are working Miss Brawne.

FANNY

I have something for Mr Keats's brother.

Heavy footsteps. Mr Brown opens the door. Fanny holds out a basket with a LACE NAPKIN laid over the top. Mr Brown whips off the LACE COVER and pinches a wafer.

MR BROWN

Mmmm...delicious...

FANNY

You vile, disgusting, ape!

A sad Keats turns his head towards Fanny at the door and watches listlessly.

KEATS

Invite Miss Brawne inside. Let them all come in.

Mr Brown stands aside, gobbling his wafer.

MR BROWN

Be careful you enter the apes cage, (mimicking a monkey) Hoo, hoo, hoo.

FANNY

You are invisible to me, you idiot, you...

KEATS

Come and sit here, next to me Miss Brawne. My prospects in the world feel very faint.

FANNY

This room is so poorly cared for. It is half night in here for want of pulling your drapes back.

She passes over the wafers.

FANNY (cont'd)

Please try one. I am anxious they will cause him to choke.

Keats takes one. Mr Brown puts his hand into the basket Fanny whips it away.

FANNY (cont'd)

No! They are baked for someone very ill. Try another and I swear I shall bite you.

MR BROWN

Ohhh, I'm very scared.

KEATS

Take care, she has sharp teeth. She has sunk her fangs into my poor poem and shook it apart.

FANNY

I am very sorry I could not love your Endymion completely Mr Keats. Perhaps I did not say but I thought the beginning of your poem something very perfect.

Fanny turns to go.

KEATS

No, don't leave us. You can see for yourself, nothing is happening. All day we lie about the room begging for inspiration. Tell me what I must do.

FANNY

There is something sordid and menacing that I don't at all enjoy in the atmosphere. I am in a hurry to get myself away. I feel I am inside a cage with two monkeys.

KEATS

We monkeys just want a little company.

Mr Brown steals another wafer. Fanny spins away.

FANNY

How dare you!

Fanny, Margaret and Samuel walk back fast through the Heath. A great GUST of WIND sends the AUTUMN LEAVES spiralling upwards. Keats, flush faced is jogging after them but somewhat behind them. He has Fanny's basket in his hand.

KEATS

If we've finished tiffing, come and say
"hello" to Tom, it might cheer him.

MARGARET

We will have to ask Mama.

FANNY

No we don't Toots.

MARGARET

Yes we do, isn't that so Samuel? We have to stay together.

Samuel shrugs. Fanny walks off.

FANNY

Well then, I am going and you will have to come with me.

Keats stands at the junction of many tracks.

KEATS

Should you like to go by the pond or through the wood? I have explored all these paths which are more in number than your eyelashes.

FANNY

My eyelashes?

Fanny bats her eyelashes and laughs. She walks beside Keats.

FANNY (cont'd)

It amazes me that you can sit opposite Mr Brown all day. I have never heard him say one thing of wit. Not one!

KEATS

You favour wit?

FANNY

I rate it the highest.

KEATS

You like the fashionables?

FANNY

Yes, I do.

KEATS

Men who say things that make you start without making you feel?

FANNY

No, things that are amusing.

KEATS

I know these dandy's, they have a mannerism in their very eating and drinking, in their handling of a decanter.

FANNY

You are making an attack on me.

KEATS

No, I am defending Mr Brown's generous good heart.

FANNY

By attacking myself?

KEATS

Forgive me. I have been too long at my brother's sick bed.

FANNY

Can we not still appreciate clever humour?

KEATS

What witty thing can be said of a nineteen year old drowning in his own blood?

Fanny suddenly realises the seriousness of Tom's illness.

FANNY

Nothing, nothing at all.

19

EXT. KEATS'S APARTMENT WELL WALK - DAY

19

The three Brawne's led by Keats, arrive in the COURTYARD of his rented apartment in WELL WALK. Keats leads them in.

MRS BENTLEY

Oh thank God! He's been calling out for you.

KEATS

Excuse me.

20

INT. TOM'S ROOM WELL WALK - DAY

20

He enters TOM'S ROOM

In the other room Fanny glimpses Keats holding his pale, groaning brother who struggles to breathe. It looks grim, hopeless.

MARGARET

I want to go. I want to leave. It smells.

FANNY

Shush, or I'll cut your hair in the night.

Keats comes back out looking pale and saddened.

KEATS

He is feverish and cannot speak.

FANNY
Should I call a nurse?

KEATS
I trained for 5 years as a doctor, there is
nothing to be done.

Tears spring to Fanny's eyes, she gives Keats the LEMON
WAFERS.

FANNY
The wafers.

21 **EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 21

Wentworth House in the evening. Both sides of the house are
LIT UP for an evenings entertainment. PEOPLE are arriving,
walking up the path to the house.

22 **INT. HALL WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 22

Inside Fanny and her family are removing their PELISSES and
OVERCOATS with the Dilke's help when Keats arrives. There
are lots of "Good Evenings" and jollities.

MR DILKE (TO KEATS)
I don't see your bassoon, I hope you have not
forgotten it.

KEATS
Not at all, it's in my waistcoat pocket.

Fanny watches Keats arrival keenly.

FANNY
Mr Keats.

KEATS
Hello Minx.

FANNY
How is Tom?

Keats looks away from Fanny suddenly anxious.

MR BROWN
Gentlemen of the orchestra to the left, Ladies
to the right.

FANNY
Mr Keats how is...

KEATS (TO FANNY)
Don't ask me of Tom, Minx. The only good I
can do is say how I love him.

MR BROWN

Rehearsal has begun. Hurry on gentlemen.

KEATS

Let us start with some claret to tune the instruments.

Mr Dilke walks after Keats playing an invisible violin.

Fanny watches them disappear.

23 **INT. DILKE'S DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 23

The ladies, Mrs Brawne, Mrs Dilke, the Reynolds sisters, Fanny and the children sit quietly together in the Dilke's drawing room. The Reynolds sisters play CARDS with the older women while Fanny sews a flower pattern onto a piece of lawn. From their room they can hear the loud voices of the MEN in the opposite wing. Fanny's needle picks out the outline of the leaf.

24 **INT. DILKE'S KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 24

In the kitchen Mrs Dilke, her COOK and Fanny carry PLATES of PICKLES, CHEESE and MEAT through into the men's room. Fanny seeks out Keats who is drowning his sorrows in play, he and another friend, MR SEVERN the artist, are having a duel using CELERY STICKS. Fanny puts the plates down on the TABLE and leaves with the others unnoticed.

25 **INT. DILKE'S DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 25

Fanny and Mrs Dilke come back into the insular world of ladies.

REYNOLDS SISTER 1 (TO MARIA DILKE)

We were just telling Mrs Brawne of John Keats's review in Blackwoods.

REYNOLDS SISTER 2

We did not know there were people left who had not read it.

REYNOLDS SISTER 1

You have not seen it?

MARIA DILKE

In this house we do not acknowledge it.

FANNY

Was it so very bad?

MARIA DILKE

I can't bring myself to remember...

REYNOLDS SISTER 2

It has stuck in my mind. "...no man, whose mind has ever been imbued with the smallest knowledge or feeling of classical poetry or classical history, could have..."

REYNOLDS SISTER 1 (JOINS IN)

"...profaned and vulgarised every association in the manner which has been adopted by this "son of promise"..."

FANNY

Did they not admire the opening? The opening was perfect even I could know that.

REYNOLDS SISTER 1

Do you like poetry Miss Brawne?

FANNY

No. Poems are a strain to work out - and I never can tell if I have worked them well.

The Reynolds sisters titter.

JOHN REYNOLDS enters the room. He is a lawyer poet friend of Keats

REYNOLDS SISTER 1

John we are talking or about to talk of your defence of Mr Keats's poem *Endymion*.

JOHN REYNOLDS

Yes...

"I have clung to nothing, loved a nothing, nothing seen or felt but a great dream! O I have been presumptuous against love against the sky, Against all elements, against the tie of mortals each to each."

The rhythm is beautiful and unique. There are rhymes but not on the beat, they are quiet but binding and the repetitions set you up to fly.

"I have clung to nothing, loved a nothing, nothing seen."

Reynolds indicates the expanse of flight.

JOHN REYNOLDS (cont'd)

Here you come out
"Or felt but a great dream..."

FANNY

It's beautiful.

JOHN REYNOLDS

There are immaturities but also immensities and that is what they didn't say.

REYNOLDS SISTER 1
It was said, you said it brother.

JOHN REYNOLDS
Thank you.

REYNOLDS SISTER 1
Indeed you said it beautifully.

REYNOLDS SISTER 2
Very bravely.

Mr Severn walks into the room.

MR SEVERN
Ladies the Hampstead Heathens are about to begin. Reynolds?

JOHN REYNOLDS
Not me, I'm expelled.

26 **INT. MR BROWN'S ROOMS WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 26

The AUDIENCE of lady folk squeeze into Mr Brown's CANDLE LIT rooms. The fifteen gentlemen are formally assembled. Keats, Mr Brown and their friends perform a well known MOZART PIECE with their human orchestra. Fanny watches quietly focusing on Keats. The Reynolds sisters enter confidently into the festivities, "ohhhing" and "ahhhing", laughing affectedly.

27 **INT. ELM COTTAGE - DAY** 27

Fanny and her brother and sister are having dance instruction from their very effeminate FRENCH DANCE MASTER. They use a BOX MIRROR to correct their posture. Through the window, Fanny notices a teary faced Maria Dilke gesturing to Mrs Brawne who leaves. The class continues with Fanny dancing in the formal style of the time but her feelings overwhelm her. Tears fill her eyes.

DANCE MASTER
Fanny, tempo. Un deux trois, un, deux, trois.

Fanny has stopped still. Tears roll down her cheeks. She leaves the room.

DANCE MASTER (cont'd)
Mademoiselle...

She walks down the hall to the kitchen where Maria Dilke is being comforted by Mrs Brawne and a CUP of TEA.

FANNY
Is it Tom? Has he died?

Maria Dilke turns and nods her head. Fanny leaves, pushing past Toots.

MARGARET

Fanny vient de quitter la classe de danse.
(Fanny just left the class.)

MRS BRAWNE

Laisse-la.
(Leave her.)

28 **INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM ELM COTTAGE - DAY**

28

Fanny pulls out a piece of IVORY SILK. She slices through the material with SCISSORS.

Mrs Brawne enters the room. She watches Fanny sobbing loudly as she works, then bends to help Fanny pin TWO rectangles of the silk together.

Fanny's needle is thread with a light GREEN COTTON. Her needle flies in and out making a line of grass. Out of the grass she sews stems and wild flowers.

29 **INT. BRAWNE'S PARLOUR/HALL/FRONT DOOR ELM COTTAGE - DAY**

29

John Keats, Charles Brown and the Brawne's sit in the Brawne's PARLOUR. Fanny is silent. Mr Brown talks to Mrs Brawne who is all solicitude.

MR BROWN

I woke with the strange sensation of someone holding my hand. I opened my eyes and there was John. I knew immediately what had happened and then he said "Tom died at 8 o'clock quietly and without pain." Of course Mr Keats can't go on living there, so I have invited him to stay with me.

Mr Brown stands, sighing, looking towards a numb Keats.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

Aghuh, we have a long schedule of visits.

Fanny sits with her eyes downcast. Keats is watching her sensing her disappointment that they are leaving so soon.

MRS BRAWNE

I don't want to interfere with your city plans but you are most welcome to have dinner with us. We have provided and set the table...

KEATS (QUIETLY TO FANNY)

Minx? Are you unwell? I have never seen you so quiet.

FANNY

I am sad for your brother Mr Keats.

Fanny hands him the silk embroidered PILLOW SLIP wrapped in BLACK CLOTH.

MARGARET

She has been sewing it all through the night.

Keats begins to unwrap it, enough to see the beautiful stitching and the simple pattern of wild flowers on the edge.

KEATS

I am afraid I will break down. Tell me what it is?

FANNY

It is a pillow slip.

KEATS

Then I shall rest Tom's head upon it.

MR BROWN

Keats, the Reynolds are expecting us.

KEATS

I will catch you up. Thank you.

Keats kisses the pillow slip.

Mr Brown has come across and is whispering in Keats ear.

MR BROWN

Let us get out of here.

It is a loud whisper, loud enough so that Fanny and Keats both hear. Fanny, shamed, watches as the two men continue discussing, she catches phrases, "would like to stay", "we are expected by HAYDEN and LAMB".

Keats puts on his COAT.

KEATS

Invite me again, alone.

FANNY

Come for Christmas.

KEATS

Shouldn't you ask your mother?

FANNY

No, what one of us wants we all wish for, that is how we are.

Keats looks unconvinced.

FANNY (IN FRENCH) (cont'd)

Maman I have invited Mr Keats for Christmas dinner.

MRS BRAWNE

Yes, Mr Keats, please do join us.

Margaret and Samuel loudly enthuse.

MARGARET AND SAMUEL

Yes. Hurrah. Please do, please!

MR BROWN

But Marianne Reynolds invited us for Christmas. You were there when she said it, remember they are having musicians?

The Brawne children are crestfallen. Fanny defiant.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

I am sorry to spoil things.

MRS BRAWNE

Not at all. Wherever Mr Keats is happy we are happy for him.

MARGARET

Why can't he be happy with us?

FANNY

Because Mr Brown wants Mr Keats all to himself.

MR BROWN

I am merely remembering to Mr Keats a previous engagement.

Fanny turns and walks back inside Elm Cottage.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

You are walking away Miss Brawne! I thought we were conversing...

30 **INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM ELM COTTAGE - DAY** 30

Fanny and her sister sew in silence.

31 **INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN ELM COTTAGE - DAY** 31

Mrs Brawne and Charlotte the maid work quietly together making MINCE PIES.

A LETTER is delivered to the kitchen door. Charlotte gives the letter to Mrs Brawne.

32 **INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM ELM COTTAGE - DAY** 32

Mrs Brawne comes into the drawing room with the open letter. Margaret and Fanny look up but Fanny does not pause in her neat small stitches

MRS BRAWNE (READS)

*"Dear Mrs Brawne, May I yet join you for
Christmas? I have not the health or the heart
to be anywhere but with a family such as your
own."
John Keats.*

33 **INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN ELM COTTAGE - EVENING** 33

Fanny, the maid, Mrs Brawne and Margaret prepare the Christmas dinner. POTATOES are peeled, PROFITEROLES are filled with cream, PEAS are shelled, a GOOSE is baking in the oven. Margaret is counting CUTLERY at the window.

MARGARET

Mr Keats has come!

Margaret runs out the kitchen back door. Fanny's hands are covered in flour. She turns her back to her mother who unties her APRON. Fanny rinses her hands and dries them. Carefully she adjusts her hair and smooths her frock.

34 **EXT. STREET ELM COTTAGE - EVENING** 34

Margaret flies down the street and throws herself into Keats's arms who carries her.

KEATS

Do you know the difference between a caterpillar and a cheese?

MARGARET

A caterpillar and a cheese?

KEATS

Yes.

MARGARET

Of course.

KEATS (DROPPING HER TO HER FEET)

Then you are too old for me to carry you.

Keats looks up the garden path to see Fanny, a perfect doll, framed at the open front door.

35

INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM ELM COTTAGE - EVENING

35

Keats is crouched on the sitting room floor stroking the Brawne's CAT. Fanny comes in with a TRAY of GLASSES, she is shy of looking at Keats but acutely aware of him. She polishes each glass with a cloth and places it on the table.

FANNY

I wondered this morning if you are sleeping in my bed.

KEATS

Pardon?

FANNY

Are you sleeping in my bed?

Keats is confused and amazed.

KEATS

No...

FANNY

You see I believe you are. Have you forgot that we rented Mr Brown's half of the house this summer while you were journeying in Scotland? Which room did you sleep in?

KEATS

The one overlooking the back garden.

FANNY

That was my bed. For proof, pull it out from the wall and by the pillow you will find a figure I drew with pin holes.

KEATS

Is the figure you?

FANNY

No. It was a fairy princess.

KEATS

Should I be feeding her?

FANNY

No, she refuses to eat. But what she might like is a good night poem. Mr Keats will you teach me poetry? I want to understand, but I don't know how to begin.

Margaret comes in putting a BREAD ROLL on each persons plate. Keats strokes the CAT watching Fanny, the movement of her hands as she folds the NAPKINS and the angle of her head as she examines the arrangement of the table.

36

INT. BRAWNE DINING ROOM ELM COTTAGE - EVENING

36

The Brawne's sit about the DINING TABLE including the maid. The meal is finished and Keats has invented a skit that compares the English and the Scottish. There are THREE CUPS OF TEA on the table and the maid, Toots and Fanny are being instructed to stir their teas in different and complimentary rhythms, clanging the edges of their cups with their SPOONS at the end of each cycle.

KEATS

The English drawing room, now the Scottish.

Keats nods to Samuel who begins to play an impression of a highland tune on his VIOLIN.

With PLEATED NAPKINS tucked into his pantaloons kilt-like, Keats does a wild impression of a highland fling.

KEATS (SCOTTISH ACCENT) (cont'd)

Theeey Kick and jump it and toe and go it and twirl it and wheel it, stamp and sweat and tattoo the floor!

The family clap and laugh. Keats bows and removes his napkins.

MRS BRAWNE

Formidable, very good.

MARGARET

A poem!

OTHERS

Oh yes, a poem.

MARGARET

A short one.

The others laugh.

Fanny is quiet, watching, scared to betray her growing affection for Keats, her head bowed.

Keats sits opposite and as he sits he begins to speak so naturally they are only gradually aware he is reciting.

KEATS

*"When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,
Before high-piled books, in character,
Hold like rich garners the full ripen'd grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance."*

Fanny looks up, she and Keats are looking into each other's eyes. Keats is suddenly speechless.

The family look at Keats, there is an awkward pause.

KEATS (cont'd)

I do apologise, I have gone blank.

But Keats seems tranced.

MRS BRAWNE

You must be tired. Should you like coffee and cakes, we have not had cake.

Mrs Brawne is getting up, clearing the table.

Fanny sits opposite Keats. Neither move. Finally with what seems an enormous effort Fanny rises and moves around the table to take Keats's plate. As Fanny leans forward, Keats leans in towards her. As they touch, there is a suspension of time, of breath in the room that makes even Samuel puzzle a moment as he loosens his bow. Keats looks up at Fanny, at her irresistible closeness. He runs a finger across Fanny's wrist, both confirming and breaking the spell.

KEATS

"Two witches eyes above a cherub's mouth."

37

INT/EXT. FRONT DOOR SELM COTTAGE - NIGHT

37

At the door everyone is saying goodbye and waving. Fanny walks out into the street with Keats.

FANNY

Mr Keats have you remembered the poem?

KEATS (HE NODS AND CLEARS HIS THROAT)

*"...Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance:
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of an unreflecting love; - then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink."*

Fanny and Keats look at each other. Keats is bewitched, so is Fanny. Keats makes an awkward bow and coughing, walks into the frosty night.

38

INT. WENTWORTH HOUSE HALL - DAY

38

In the dark hallway Fanny knocks on Keats and Mr Brown's door. Behind her Maria Dilke takes Samuel into her half of the house. Mr Brown opens the door.

FANNY

I have come for my poetry class.

Fanny slips under his arm.

MR BROWN

Poetry classes!

39

INT. BROWN'S DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

39

Fanny and Keats sit together. Fanny listening intently. Keats seems a little flat.

KEATS

A poet is not at all poetical, he is the most un-poetical of anything in existence, he has no identity - he is continually filling some other body, the sun, the moon...

Mr Brown watches disturbed.

MR BROWN

I cannot restrain my credibility longer. Miss Brawne may I ask you a question?

FANNY

You may.

MR BROWN

Is this really you? Or are you acting?

FANNY

It is really me.

Keats is looking irritated.

KEATS

Charles I have a pupil, desist or depart.

Mr Brown gets up, takes some BOOKS and his TEA CUP with him.

MR BROWN (UNDER HIS VOICE)

My modest hope is the cost of the lessons will not be the poet.

FANNY (STANDING)

The cost Mr Brown is that Mr Keats will forthwith discuss poetry with me not you as I shall study.

MR BROWN

You don't mean to read the poems?

FANNY

I do until I know all the poets and poems in the world. I have an excellent brain and nothing to do as you have so many times noted.

MR BROWN

Let me bow to your ambition.

Mr Brown exits.

FANNY

Now Mr Brown has gone I shall find it easier to talk, he is forever scrutinising.

Fanny looks at Keats. She is unsettled by his darkening mood.

FANNY (cont'd)

...can you say something of the craft of poetry?

Keats's face darkens.

KEATS

Poetic craft is a carcass, a sham. If poetry does not come as naturally as leaves to a tree it had better not come at all.

Fanny is writing NOTES as Keats speaks.

KEATS (cont'd)

I am mistaken I am not sure I can teach you.

FANNY

Am I so extremely hopeless? Is it Mr Brown? I was too rude? I can apologise.

KEATS

I don't think I have the right feeling towards women. I'm suspicious of my feelings.

FANNY

I don't understand you.

KEATS

If you knew what a slave to my affections I fear myself to be, and the fury it brings about in me, you might understand.

FANNY

Do you not like me?

KEATS

I am attracted without knowing why, all women confuse me, even my mother. I yearn to be ruined by shrews and saved by angels and in reality, I have only ever loved my sister.

Fanny begins to put on her BONNET.

FANNY

I am annoyed by my sister as often as I love her. And I still do not know how to work a poem out well.

KEATS

You do not work out a poem. That would undo
it's magic. Poems need understanding through
the senses, they develop your negative
capability not rational capability.

FANNY

And what is negative capability?

KEATS

Your capacity for being in uncertainties,
mysteries, doubts, without any irritable
reaching after fact and reason.

Fanny listens, not understanding.

KEATS (cont'd)

The point of diving in a lake isn't
immediately to swim to the shore but to be in
the lake, to luxuriate in the sensation of
water. You do not work the lake out, it is an
experience beyond thought. Poetry soothes and
emboldens the soul to accept mystery.

FANNY

I love mystery.

KEATS

I found your little princess, on the wall by
my bed.

FANNY

You could make her out?

KEATS

I joined the pin pricks with my pen, she wears
a butterfly frock. Shall we continue with
Spencer?

Then sits on the BED and removes the PILLOW to see the tiny PRINCESS just as Keats had said, outlined in pen.

Fanny trots down the STAIRS. Mr Brown waits at the bottom.

MR BROWN

I have ordered tea for us both. If you tell me what you have read, maybe I can catch up.

Fanny hesitates.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

I'm interested...

44

INT. DILKE SITTING ROOM - DAY

44

NOTE - This scene now includes SAMUEL

Warm and pretty Maria Dilke pours tea into ELEGANT LITTLE CUPS. Her son lays his head in her lap.

MR BROWN

What Chaucer did you read?

FANNY

All of it...also Mr Spencer, Mr Milton, and The Odyssey...

MR BROWN

That is a lot to read in one week. What did you think of The Odyssey?

FANNY

I am yet part way through but I have read all Mr Keats has written twice and learnt some by heart. **THE EVE OF ST. AGNES**

**"Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She closed the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No utter'd syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should
swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in
her dell."**

Mr Brown listens, impressed, a little smitten and also dubious of her claims.

MR BROWN

And what Miss Brawne, did you make of Paradise Lost?

FANNY

I liked it.

MR BROWN

You didn't find Milton's rhymes a little
pouncing?

Fanny looks back wide-eyed at Mr Brown. Mrs Dilke looks up, puzzled.

FANNY

No, not very.

Mr Brown regards Fanny and her wide eyes.

MR BROWN

Is it the material of her dress that makes Miss Brawne's eyes so violet like?

Mrs Dilke sits forward to look into Fanny's eyes. Fanny, quite pleased, opens them towards Mrs Dilke.

MARIA DILKE

Oh, yes they are blue.

MR BROWN

Violet almost.

MARIA DILKE

Yes, yes. What colour are yours Mr Brown.

Mr Brown BIG EYES Mrs Dilke and then Fanny.

FANNY

Suitcase brown.

45

EXT STREET HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY

45 *

Samuel and Fanny walk home through the Hampstead streets. *

FANNY *

Did you see Mr Brown? He was amazed, he was gaping. *

SAMUEL *

So many authors in one week is a bit incredible. *

FANNY *

I know, he sees I am serious, and I will read them when I have the time. *

46 **EXT. ELM HOUSE - DAY** 46

A MESSENGER BOY approaches Elm House with a LETTER.

VALENTINES DAY 1819

47 **INT. BRAWNE HOUSE STAIRS ELM COTTAGE - DAY** 47

Margaret climbs the steps to their bedroom.

MARGARET

Fanny! You have a letter.

Margaret looks hard at the ENVELOPE against the light.

MARGARET (cont'd)

I think it is a valentine card.

Fanny comes to the door. Margaret hands her the envelope. Fanny promptly shuts the door before Margaret can walk in and join her.

Fanny sits neatly on the end of her bed. At her feet a PATTERN is pinned out.

FANNY

"The suitcase?" Oh it is from Mr Brown.

Fanny is clearly disappointed and confused.

FANNY (cont'd)

*"Darling Valentine
I am not sure if you should have a kiss for
your violet enchantress eyes or a whipping!
Yours, the suitcase."*

48 **INT. BRAWNE ELM COTTAGE KITCHEN - DAY** 48

Keats is pacing in the rain amidst the clothes lines outside Elm Cottage.

Inside Mrs Brawne and the maid watch him from the kitchen window. Keats appears very agitated.

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny, Mr Keats is behaving very oddly, should I invite him inside?

Fanny joins the women at the window where Keats continues his vigil.

49

EXT. ELM COTTAGE - DAY

49

Fanny puts on her COAT and joins Keats outside. Keats looks at Fanny who is pleased to see him.

KEATS

Mr Brown sent you a Valentine?

FANNY

I think it is a joke.

Mr Brown is walking up the road towards them. Keats sees him and backs off, walking towards the Heath.

MR BROWN

Keats! John, wait.

Keats strides up the road, Fanny and Mr Brown follow him.

50

EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY

50

Fanny and Mr Brown cross the road onto the Heath, where Keats leads them down an AVENUE OF TREES, then across a FROST SCORCHED MEADOW to a COPSE of WINTER ELMS.

No one speaks. There is gravity to Keats's mood and an anger. Keats takes sidelong glances at Fanny.

KEATS

I was away but 10 days Brown, with you encouraging me to stay on and get well. Now you send Miss Brawne a valentine card. Are you lovers, is that the truth?

Keats walks off again unable to stand still. Keats walks past Mr Brown.

MR BROWN

No John...

KEATS

You sent a card Charles, you have the income to marry, where I cannot. Did you accept him Miss Brawne? Am I to congratulate you?

Mr Brown moves to Keats and by putting his back to Fanny talks privately.

MR BROWN

John, easy, it was a jest.

KEATS

For whom? I do not laugh, Miss Brawne does not laugh.

MR BROWN

I wrote the valentine to amuse Fanny who makes a religion of flirting. I am simply smoking her so you may see who she is.

Mr Brown puts his arm about Keats. Keats pulls away.

KEATS

You disgust me.

MR BROWN

John she is a poetry scholar one week and what, a military expert the next? It is a game, she collects suitors.

KEATS

You astound me...both of you. There is a holiness to the heart's affections, know you nothing of that? Believe me it's not pride, it hurts my heart.

Keats walks up to Fanny and stands in front of her.

KEATS (cont'd)

Are you in love with Mr Brown? Why don't you speak?

MR BROWN

She can't speak because she only knows how to flirt and sew.

Fanny walks away, humiliated.

MR BROWN (CALLING AFTER HER) (cont'd)

And read all Milton whose rhymes do not pounce because Miss Brawne there are none! There are one or two of her kind in every fashionable drawing room of this city "aheming" over skirt lengths.

A troubled Keats takes a moment or two to decide then runs after Fanny. Together they walk across the Heath.

KEATS

I'm sorry. We could have a poetry lesson tomorrow.

Fanny turns to him, tears streaking her face.

FANNY (AN IMPRESSIVE RAGE)

NO! NO! I want to dance and flirt and talk of flounces and ribbons and beading until I find my old happiness and humour.

Keats is impressed by her passion.

FADE TO BLACK.

SPRING.

A SILHOUETTE of BLOSSOMS on the Heath's trees.

52 **INT. MRS BRAWNE'S BEDROOM ELM COTTAGE - DAY**

52

Mrs Brawne, Margaret and Fanny sit together on Mrs Brawne's bed in their NIGHTGOWNS sipping TEA and NIBBLING TOAST from a shared plate. TREE FILTERED SUNLIGHT plays on the bed covers.

Fanny is attaching the last SLEEVE to a DUSTY PINK JACKET.

MARGARET

I was dancing, but my dress was not properly on and no matter how I hauled it up it slipped until it was around my ankles.

FANNY

Did you have on a petticoat?

MARGARET

No, nothing.

FANNY

Naked?

Margaret nods and they laugh.

MRS BRAWNE

Did you dream Fanny?

Fanny is remembering her dream but she is not telling. The others know better than to press her.

53 **EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

53

Fanny walks along the street then up the path to Wentworth House with a WHITE BLOSSOM TWIG. She is wearing a FROCK of snowy whiteness over which she has DUSTY PINK EMPIRE LENGTH JACKET. She looks adorable.

Behind her Samuel follows kicking a WOODEN BALL.

Fanny sees Keats inside his room and taps at the WINDOW.

54 **EXT. KEATS'S ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

54

Keats leaves Mr Brown at the table and throws open the window.

Fanny gives Keats the BLOSSOM SPRIG from behind her back.

FANNY

I dreamed of your eyes, it is a sign I think that I do like you.

KEATS

Even though I don't dance?

From behind Keats Mr Brown watches edgily.

MR BROWN(LOUDLY)

Have we broken for the day? Keats?

But Keats appears not even to hear.

Samuel comes over to the window excited.

SAMUEL (TO KEATS)

We are going to live next door, Mr and Mrs Dilke are moving to Westminster and we can have six months half rent!

FANNY

It is a great economy for Maman. But if you like, only if you like.

Keats climbs out the window. Mr Brown closes his books moodily.

55 **EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

55

NOTE - BRAWNE cat in basket for move to Wentworth House

While the Dilke's, Maria, Charles and their son move out of their side of the house, the Brawne's move in. Mr Brown and Keats are talking intensely in the GARDEN, hands behind their backs.

MR BROWN

If the princess has already abandoned the dwarf, we cannot keep his love speech...

Samuel's BALL passes in front of them and Keats splits off to kick it back. Samuel and Keats begin a game together.

Keats playfully kicks at Mr Brown twice but the ball simply bounces off his legs and then Samuel and Keats pass and tackle leaving Mr Brown alone. He walks fast into the house.

56 **INT. BRAWNE LIVING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

56

The Brawne's goods are part unpacked. Mr Brown has the family gathered in the Dilke's old living room. Mr Brown stands at the fireplace while they sit and stand about their unsettled furniture.

MR BROWN

If Mr Keats and myself are strolling in the garden, lounging on a sofa, staring into a wall, do not presume we are not working. Doing nothing is the musing of the poet.

FANNY (TEASING)

Are these musings what we common people may
know as thoughts?

MR BROWN

Thoughts yes, but of weightier nature.

FANNY

Sinking thoughts?

MR BROWN

Not really Miss Brawne, musing, making one's mind available to inspiration.

FANNY

As in amusing?

MRS BRAWNE

Our thoughts are all very simple so you never need worry about interrupting us. We are always glad of company and should be happy if you joined us for dinner on any day.

57 **INT. KEATS'S ROOM/STAIRS/FANNY'S ROOM W'WORTH HOUSE - DAY 57**

Keats walks upstairs to his room. His hands behind his back, distracted with thought, the words of Mr Brown can be heard faintly from the living room. Keats walks into his room and stares at the wall.

Fanny and Margaret climb up their stairs and enter their bedroom where they resume unpacking and tidying away their CLOTHES and EFFECTS.

Keats moves towards the wall and knocks.

Fanny and Margaret stop still.

MARGARET

Mr Keats?

Fanny moves towards the wall.

Keats on his side again knocks a little rhythm.

Fanny replies with the same rhythm from her side.

Keats moves his BED against the wall.

Fanny and Margaret listen to the sound of the bed scraping and thudding against the wall.

58 **INT/EXT. GARDEN/KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

58

A SPRING morning. The FLOWERS are opening their petals to early DAPPLED SUN and the BEES are busy visiting each and every bloom.

Amongst the flowers are Keats, Fanny and Margaret. They are moving between the blossoms sniffing them.

Inside Wentworth House kitchen, Mrs Brawne is helping their maid with TOAST and TEA.

MR BROWN

Good morning, good morning.

Mr Brown's fine good spirits fade when he notices Keats and Fanny amongst the flowers. Mrs Brawne joins him at the window. They watch as Fanny and Keats sniff from flower to flower. Samuel sits eating his toast.

SAMUEL

They are sniffing every flower in the garden to find the best scent.

CHARLOTTE

Mr Keats is being a bee.

Mr Brown can bear it no more. He takes his tea and leaves.

Now Fanny and Keats are nose down in the same flower.

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny! I need your help.

Fanny appears not to hear.

Mrs Brawne goes outside but is immediately drawn into judging between TWO blooms

59

OMITTED

59

60

INT. BROWNS ROOM & BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM/TERRACE WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY 60

Mr Brown observes the dance class through the open door, before he returns to the table where he scans Keats' writing. Mrs Brawne matches Keats with Margaret but the Dance Master changes them so Keats becomes Fanny's partner.

MR BROWN(READING ALOUD EVE OF ST
AGNES)

*"Soon trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud
again."*

Mr Brown is blinking, touched and impressed

Fanny and Keats dance together, small and delicate faery people.

61

INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

61

Upstairs Mrs Brawne helps Fanny dress in a NEW BALL GOWN, as ever it is cleverly conceived and original.

A COACH arrives and a young woman friend MARY ROBINSON walks up the path to Wentworth House.

Inside Keats can hear Fanny coming down the stairs. Keats meets her in the hallway just as Fanny is greeting her friend.

KEATS

Where are you going, are you keeping secrets?
You said nothing of this on our walk.

FANNY

It is not a secret. I am going with Mary to a
dance at the Mess.

KEATS

Not to dance?

FANNY

Yes. Of course I will dance - why don't you
come too?

KEATS (LOW TO FANNY)

To watch as soldiers put their arms about you?

Mrs Brawne comes down the stairs.

MRS BRAWNE

Hello Mary, you've not left yet?

FANNY

I was just asking Mr Keats to join us but he
is not persuaded.

Keats bows and full of jealousy retreats.

ADD SOME DANCING.

62 **INT/EXT. FANNY'S ROOM/GARDEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 62

Fanny puts her dance sore feet on the floor of her room. She opens her CURTAINS to let the morning light in and sees Keats lying beneath her window. Keats is looking up at Fanny.

63 **EXT. THE HEATH - DAY** 63

It is a beautiful day. The HEATHER on the Heath is sprinkled with WILD FLOWERS. CHILDREN sail their PAPER BOATS on the POND. Keats and Fanny wait while Margaret buys an ICE CREAM.

KEATS

Lie to me tell me you did not dance last night.

FANNY

I did not sit down a single tune. You can see the truth in my slippers they are completely scuffed. I don't think they can be wiped clean even with methylated spirits. Mama is annoyed as they are expensive but I do not know how I could have prevented it.

Margaret returns with a VANILLA ICE CREAM.

MARGARET

May I watch the boats? I don't want to wait again under the trees while you talk.

Fanny and Keats walk together up the HILL to their favourite spot shaded from the sun and prying eyes by long limbed OAK TREES.

KEATS (ON THE WAY TO THE TREES)

I had such a dream last night.

FANNY

Ohhh?

KEATS

I think one of the greatest enjoyments I have ever had in my life.

FANNY

Well tell me.

KEATS

I was floating above the trees with my lips connected to those of a beautiful figure for what seemed an age. Flowery tree tops sprang up beneath us and we rested on them with the lightness of a cloud.

Keats sits back into the long grass. Fanny is rattled, jealous.

FANNY

Who was the figure?

KEATS

I must have had my eyes closed for I am not sure.

FANNY

Yet you remember the tree tops.

KEATS

Not so well as the lips.

Fanny looks at Keats.

FANNY

Whose lips? Were they my lips?

Keats touches Fanny's lips with his finger

KEATS

They may have been yours.

Keats closes his eyes and presents his lips for Fanny to kiss. Fanny gently places her lips on his.

Keats waits and Fanny kisses him again. Keats pulls Fanny on top of him and kisses her and she him and he her. They lie down together lip to lip.

KEATS (cont'd)

"Pale were the lips I kiss'd."

Keats kisses her again.

KEATS (cont'd)

"- and fair the form. I floated with about that melancholy storm."

Margaret comes calling up the hill. Keats makes sound effects of wild flowers squealing as Margaret stops.

KEATS (cont'd)

"Help." "Ahhh."

Keats slows her to a halt. To her chagrin she cannot step without crushing something.

MARGARET

Stop it!

64 **EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - EVENING** 64

The three make their way across the Heath home. Keats and Fanny follow behind Margaret who plays a game of catching them touching, kissing.

65 **EXT. TERRACE BACK OF WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 65

Fanny, Keats and Margaret return. A glowing Keats walks backwards looking at Fanny. Keats lets Fanny pass and watches her from behind. Fanny smiles and slyly touches hands.

In the garden Samuel has climbed onto the HEDGE. Mr Brown stands underneath, disconcerted by Keats's attention to Fanny. Fanny walks in a cloud up to her room.

66 **INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 66

Fanny lies stretched on her bed listening to her body tingling with new and beautiful sensations.

67 **EXT. GARDEN/PLUM TREE WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 67

Samuel is high in the tree branches.

SAMUEL

Mr Brown bet I couldn't find the nightingale's nest.

MR BROWN

There is no nest and no bet.

Keats makes nightingale trills.

Mr Brown puffs his PIPE while Keats joins Samuel in the tree, SILHOUETTED against the last of the SUN WINKING THROUGH THE LEAVES.

68 **INT. MR BROWN'S DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT** 68

Late at night Keats sits in the drawing room writing a LETTER to his brother George and sister-in-law Georgina when Mr Brown enters in a DRESSING GOWN with a PLATE of MIDNIGHT SNACKS. Mr Brown sits beside Keats and eats without pause.

KEATS

You are making a liar of me - I had just writ -
"Brown is gone to bed - and I am tired of
rhyming - there is a north wind blowing,
playing gooseberry with the trees."

MR BROWN

I read your Eve of St Agnes today it does not trip, not once, it is perfect, extraordinarily good.

"Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:"

KEATS

***"Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;"***

MR BROWN

"Her soothed limbs,..."

I spent the afternoon sorting through your sins and think Ode to Psyche very keen, beautiful and clear.

***"And there shall be for thee all soft delight
That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
To let the warm Love in!"***

See here there are tears, you are so far ahead of me and above me.

KEATS

Brown, I am amazed.

MR BROWN

Your writing is the finest thing in my life. A greater miracle than to see new life born. That sort of miracle is in compare common place.

Mr Brown holds out his hand to Keats who takes it. Mr Brown pats Keats hand.

MR BROWN (TO KEATS'S HAND) (cont'd)

You wrote this little hand.

KEATS (PLAYFULLY)

Yes, while he was dreaming I wrote it all, see this is where the pen pressed.

Mr Brown clasps the hand.

MR BROWN

As one who truly loves you I must warn you kindly of a trap you are walking into.

KEATS

If you are going to speak of Miss Brawne we have never agreed and cannot agree.

MR BROWN

No that is not true, we both agree she is an exquisite dressed creature.

KEATS

Is it a sin to look well?

MR BROWN

For one or two of your "slippery blisses" you will lose your freedom permanently. You will be slaving at medicine 15 hours a day - for what? To keep Mrs Keats in French ribbon?

Keats looks dismayed, sick.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

I cherish your talent, I truly do.

KEATS

Then allow me my happiness for I am writing again.

69 **EXT. PLUM TREE WENTWORTH HOUSE - MORNING** 69

Keats looks up into the PLUM TREE. He whistles. The NIGHTINGALE sings.

70 **INT/EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE - MORNING** 70

Fanny watches Keats from her bedroom window.

71 **INT/EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE AND GARDEN - MORNING** 71

Keats picks up a CHAIR from the living room table. As he takes it outside Fanny comes down the stairs and goes to the Brawne sitting room where she sees Keats place the chair under the plum tree in the DAPPLED SHADE.

Out of Keats's pocket he takes a FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER and a LEAD PENCIL. He does not write but becomes perfectly still, his body relaxed, his focus inward.

KEATS (V.O.)

ODE to a NIGHTINGALE

***"My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of their happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness, -"***

Fanny watches Keats move his chair to the shade and his pen make its steady journey across the paper.

Mr Brown enters his living room, he notices the chair gone, then Keats under the tree one leg crossed over the other completely still except for the pen flying.

KEATS (V.O.) (cont'd)
*"That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singing of summer in full-throated ease."*

THE NIGHTINGALE SINGS AGAIN THEN FLIES OUT THROUGH THE BRANCHES LIKE AN ARROW. [CGI SHOT]

Keats watches the bird's flight then continues writing.

Fanny rises and walks to the window her SEWING in hand.

Keats has gone. The chair is empty.

72 **INT. BROWN'S DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 72

Keats stuffs his NOTES into a gap in the BOOKSHELF of the drawing room. Mr Brown looks up and watches as Keats walks out of the room. Mr Brown retrieves the notes. Carefully Mr Brown lays the PAGES out on the table.

73 **INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 73

Keats is playing with the Brawne CAT. Toots stands ready in a BONNET for a walk. Samuel has a BALL and CRICKET BAT.

Fanny joins them, BONNET, GLOVES and PARASOL ready. Keats looks across and smiles.

Mr Brown enters the drawing room unannounced, he looks very intense.

MR BROWN
John, can you come?

KEATS
I was about to accompany the Miss Brawnes to the Heath.

Mr Brown looks urgent, intent.

MR BROWN
Now. Please.

Fanny glumly undoes the BOW on her bonnet and Keats follows Mr Brown out of the room. As Fanny goes to the stairs bonnet in hand, she pauses. She can hear the sound of Keats's voice and sometimes Mr Brown reading with him.

KEATS (AND MR BROWN)
*"Darkling I listen: and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath."*

Fanny opens the door softly despite Mr Brown's sign KEEP OUT POETS AT WORK.

Keats turns and sees her. Mr Brown is at the table trying to make out Keats's handwriting as he makes a fair copy.

MR BROWN

"Now more than ever seems it rich to die."

KEATS

*"To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!"*

Fanny sits on a chair against the wall listening, thrilled. Mr Brown stops work and scrapes back his chair looking at Keats exasperated.

KEATS (cont'd)

What?

MR BROWN

Did you tell Miss Brawne of our summer holiday, or shall I?

Fanny looks at Keats.

KEATS

Not as yet. Brown is doing his summer rental and we both have to leave.

MR BROWN

We are meeting up on the Isle of Wight for some undisturbed writing and carousing.

Fanny is burning with humiliation. Head bowed she rises from the chair and leaves.

74

INT. HALL WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

74

In the DARK HALL Fanny leans against the wall and sobs. The door opens, it is Keats.

KEATS

Fanny I was going to tell you.

FANNY

When? When were you going to tell me? You play with me like a cat. I won't be PICKED UP AND PUT DOWN!

Fanny shrieks at Keats stalking back to her side of the house. Slamming the door. Mr Brown opens the door. Samuel comes downstairs to look.

Keats knocks on the Brawne sitting room door. He lets himself in. Fanny is sobbing onto her mother's lap.

KEATS

May I speak to Fanny Mrs Brawne?

FANNY

NO, NO, I will not speak to him. (Shrieking at Keats) YOU HAVE HUMILIATED ME! YOU COULD NOT HAVE DONE BETTER IF YOU HAD STRIPPED ME BARE!

Keats is white with fright.

KEATS

I have no money Fanny in fact I am in debt. I must earn, I must write and make a living. If I fail though I hate to think on it, I must make way so another may marry and adore you as I wish to.

FANNY

I will not be adored ever again by you or anyone! I hate you! I hate you! I HATE YOU!

Keats sits, alarmed and helpless watching the sobbing Fanny in Mrs Brawne's lap. Mrs Brawne resumes her EMBROIDERY, raising her eyebrows at Keats.

FADE TO BLACK.

75

EXT/INT. BRAWNE HALF OF WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

75

The Brawne half of the house in it's summer suit. DAPPLED LIGHT, YELLOW LAWN, ROSES BOBBING. The Heath beyond full of MERRYMAKERS.

Samuel wanders out the FRONT DOOR. Mrs Brawne is cleaning TEASPOONS in the dining room. Margaret in the drawing room is sewing a SAMPLER. Fanny watches Samuel waiting at the gate. The POST MESSENGER passes but does not pause. Samuel turns and walks back.

SAMUEL (CALLING TO FANNY)

Nothing.

A disappointed Fanny is sitting on an UPRIGHT CHAIR with the CAT on her lap. Mrs Brawne counts the SPOONS and places them one by one in a VELVET LINED BOX.

FANNY

My life is no more than a cats. I sleep. I clean myself. I prowl around the rooms and barely ever leave this house or this neighbourhood.

TEARS begin to well in Fanny's eyes.

Mrs Brawne repairs to the kitchen for more SILVER.

MUSIC can be heard distantly on the Heath and the SHOUTS and LAUGHTER of the SUMMER CROWD.

Margaret carries a little SAMPLE WORK across to Fanny.

MARGARET (TOOTS)

Will you check my stitch Fanny it is an open work seam.

FANNY

Oh God no Toots, go away. I don't care a dam for stitches. Mama, please get rid of her.

The CAT is sent flying and Margaret's STITCHING is tossed aside.

76 **EXT/INT. FANNY'S ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - CLEAR SUMMER'S DAY 76**

Fanny is lying in bed.

Margaret kneels beside the bed, a set up of her TOY WORLD with ALL ITS ACCOUTREMENTS lined up on the floor.

Mrs Brawne enters with a TRAY OF TEA.

Fanny looks up.

FANNY

No letter?

MRS BRAWNE

Not today.

Fanny falls back softly CRYING.

FANNY

Am I in love? Is this love? It really is a very bad thing. I shall never tease about it again. It is very hard, so sore I believe one could die of it.

77 **INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

77

Fanny sitting in the drawing room POURING TEA for Mrs Dilke, her mother, Margaret and Samuel.

Fanny hears the STEPS of a MESSENGER outside the GATE. Her whole concentration shifts, she puts down the pot and moves to the window willing the messenger to stop at their gate. He does. The messenger opens the gate and walks up the path carrying a letter. Fanny is drawn to the door like one possessed. The messenger hands the LETTER IN KEATS'S HAND to Fanny.

She PAYS the messenger 1/6d and without further explanation takes the letter held to her bosom upstairs to her bed. She pulls the covers up over her head and in her tent like privacy opens the letter.

KEATS (V.O.)

SHANKLIN,**ISLE OF WIGHT, THURSDAY****My dearest Lady,**

"I am now at a very pleasant Cottage window, looking onto a beautifully hilly country, with a glimpse of the sea; the morning is very fine. I do not know how elastic my spirit might be, what pleasure I might have in living here if the remembrance of you did not weigh so upon me. --- ask yourself my love whether you are not very cruel to have so entrammelled me, so destroyed my freedom."

78

EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY

78

Fanny leaves the house trailed by Margaret and Samuel. As she walks out upon the Heath away from other strangers and far ahead of her brother and sister, she takes out Keats's LETTER.

Keats's letter continued.

"Will you confess this in a letter? You must write immediately and do all you can to console me in it --- make it rich as a drought of poppies to intoxicate me --- write the softest words and kiss them that I may at least touch my lips where yours have been."

Fanny gulps for breath, she kneels unaware of herself in the LONG GRASS studying the words. Pressing her lips against the letter.

Keats's letter continued.

"For myself I know not how to express my devotion to so fair a form: I want a brighter word than bright; a fairer word than fair."

Margaret and Samuel catch up with Fanny and collapse in the grass near her, watching her strange possession with the letter but knowing better than to interrupt.

Keats's letter continued.

"I almost wish we were butterflies and liv'd but three summer days --- three such days with you I could fill with more delight than fifty common years could ever contain."

Fanny beams at Margaret. She pulls her towards her and kisses her.

FANNY

If I have ever been mean and I know I might have been, please forgive me my darling Toots.

Margaret blinks with each kiss.

FANNY (cont'd)

Sorry, sorry, sorry.

79

INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

79

Fanny prepares the paper by kissing it.

My Dear Mr Keats,

"Thank you for your letter.

I have lately felt so nervous and ill that I had to stay five days in bed. But having received your letter yesterday, I am up and again walking our paths on the Heath.

I have begun a butterfly farm in my bedroom in honour of us. Sammy and Toots are catching them for me. Samuel has made a science of it and is collecting both caterpillars and chrysalises so we may have them fluttering about us a week or more."

The children and Fanny in the business of BUTTERFLY and CATERPILLAR collecting.

JAR TOPS are covered in GREASE PROOF PAPER and tied around the top with STRING. The paper is PRICKED with a FORK for air holes.

The jars are lined up around Fanny's bedroom.

Fanny's PEN DIPS into the INK, a BUTTERFLY in a GLASS COVERED JAR slowly CLOSES it's wings as she writes her letter.

80

INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

80

Fanny talks to her mother in the kitchen. She is dressed for an outing, all in WHITE, STRAW BONNET and WHITE PARASOL. Mrs Brawne is rolling out a PIE while the maid is IRONING.

FANNY

If a letter...

MRS BRAWNE

I promise I shall come and find you.

FANNY

But be ready. Have your hat and parasol ready.

MRS BRAWNE

Perhaps I'll send Abigail. Can you run?

ABIGAIL

Oh yes I can, if I lift my skirts go as fast as any boy or even a man.

81 **EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY**

81

Fanny and Margaret are strolling near the POND where CHILDREN wade and coax their TOY BOATS along with a STICK. Samuel is guiding his along from the edge. Fanny's eyes scan any sign of movement, a CHILD chasing a BALL, a MAN bowling a CRICKET BALL, A MOTHER rushing after a TODDLER.

Fanny lies on the GRASS face-down, dead-like.

Most of the Heath's revellers have left.

Margaret sits near Fanny not knowing what to do.

Samuel fiddles with his boat's RIGGING.

MARGARET (SPEAKING TO FANNY ON THE GROUND)

Shall we go home? Fanny? I have collected some leaves for the caterpillars.

82 **INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

82

On the staircase as Fanny enters lies a LETTER from Keats addressed to her. Fanny snatches up the letter and storms into the drawing room. Charles and Maria Dilke stand to greet her but she is in mid fury.

FANNY

Why didn't you send for me? Mr Keats has written and you did not send Abigail as you had said.

MRS BRAWNE

Please greet our friends.

FANNY

I'm sorry but I cannot be polite when I have been so betrayed. Why are you against me Mama?

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny the letter could wait an hour. I needed Abigail.

FANNY

Three hours!!!

Fanny storms out of the drawing room and upstairs to her room.

The party downstairs re-seats themselves, the air fatally electrified around them.

MARIA DILKE

When did this happen?

MRS BRAWNE

Under my nose - I am praying to God it will blow over.

83

INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

83

In the privacy of her room Fanny by CANDLELIGHT reads her new letter.

Keats's letter.

"I have two luxuries to brood over in my walks, your loveliness and the hour of my death. O that I could have possession of them both in the same minute.

I am miserable that you are not with me: or rather breathe in the dull sort of patience that cannot be called life. I never knew before, what such a love as you have made me feel, was; I did not believe in it; my Fancy was afraid of it, lest it should burn me up. But if you will fully love me, though there may be some fire it will not be more than we can bear when moistened and bedewed with Pleasures."

FANNY

"Bedewed with Pleasures..."

Fanny kisses the letter.

84

INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - AFTERNOON

84

Mrs Brawne enters Fanny's bedroom concerned by the romantic chaos, BUTTERFLIES in the air, CLOTHES scattered about. Attempted LETTERS littering the bed and all about Fanny, KEATS'S LETTERS. Fanny looks up smiling.

FANNY

I forgive you Maman.

Mrs Brawne OPENS a window.

MARGARET

No Maman we will lose them.

MRS BRAWNE

There is no air.

MARGARET

They love the heat.

FANNY (READING)

Listen, *"I love you more in that I believe you have liked me for my own sake - I have met with women who I really think would like to be married to a poem and to be given away by a Novel."* *"Married to a poem."*

Fanny laughs amused. Mrs Brawne does not. Butterflies flutter past Mrs Brawne.

FANNY (cont'd)

Maman do not be cross.

Fanny takes her mother's hand.

FANNY (cont'd)

When I do not hear from him it is as if I have died, as if the air is sucked out of my lungs and I am left desolate, but when I receive a letter I know our world is real and it is the only one I care for.

Mrs Brawne backs out of the door. Fanny gets up and follows Mrs Brawne to her own neat, clean bedroom.

FANNY (cont'd)

Was Mrs Dilke speaking against us?

MRS BRAWNE

She is your friend too. And she cares for and loves Mr Keats as I do.

FANNY

But not as I do. What did she say?

MRS BRAWNE

That he should not come back here and live is what Mrs Dilke said. What Mr Dilke is saying too.

FANNY

And you agree?

MRS BRAWNE

Yes.

FANNY

Let me marry him Mama, if he comes back let us be.

MRS BRAWNE

You ambush me Fanny.

FANNY

I will organise my life. Take all the letters, you keep them, and once a day, no better, once a week you may give them to me for one hour. The rest of the week I shall work. I shall sew 4 hours, and study, and take up my dance classes, we can all walk upon the Heath. I will make you laugh again Mama but let us be engaged.

MRS BRAWNE

No man wants to live off his wife's family who are barely managing.

FANNY

You insult him and you insult me. Why must you do this? His great worth is in the future. What can we not afford, another chop? Then I shan't eat and when I die the family can prosper, is this your logic?

Mrs Brawne looks at Fanny hopelessly.

MRS BRAWNE

Do your programme. Give me the letters, let us try.

FANNY

I may keep only the latest? Mama to have something of his.

85 **INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 85

Fanny, Margaret and Samuel are practising their dance steps. Mrs Brawne passes through the room cautiously pleased.

86 **INT. BRAWNE DINING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 86

Margaret and SIX OTHER CHILDREN receive instructions from Fanny on how to work a SWISS EMBROIDERY FRAME clamped to the table.

FANNY (TO MARGARET)

Fill the inside with as many padding stitches as you can, then use a wide slanted satin stitch.

Mrs Brawne watches, cautiously pleased.

87 **INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 87

Margaret runs into the kitchen looking frightened. Mrs Brawne and Abigail are ROLLING PASTRY.

MARGARET

Fanny wants a knife.

MRS BRAWNE

What for? What has happened?

Margaret's lip begins to quiver.

Mrs Brawne runs up the kitchen stairs.

88

INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

88

Fanny lies sobbing on the floor, clutching her latest letter, a TINY pair of SEWING SCISSORS lie nearby. The family cat sniffs curiously at her cheek, while only one live dazed BUTTERFLY flutters around the room. The CORPSES of many others lie about the floor and surfaces.

FANNY

It is all over. I have such a short letter, after all this time, saying he was in London, in London but couldn't bring himself to visit for fear it would burn him up!

MRS BRAWNE

He wrote that, "burn him up?"

FANNY

He has made no fortune and he is ashamed of it. If only he knew how little I, or even you, care for that now. I don't know how I will live.

Fanny breaks down, a small scratch on her wrist.

89

INT. BRAWNE STAIRS WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING

89

Abigail and Margaret carry an armful of EMPTY butterfly JARS full of DEAD LEAVES downstairs to the kitchen.

90

INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING

90

Fanny sweeps BUTTERFLY CORPSES into a dustpan.

FADE TO BLACK.

91

EXT/INT. WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

91

Margaret and Samuel are playing cricket in the garden, they stop and stare as Mr Brown appears on the path.

MR BROWN

Hello.

Margaret turns and leaves immediately. Behind Mr Brown a THIN YOUNG MAN pulls a cart piled with Mr Brown's holiday LUGGAGE.

A crushed Fanny and Mrs Brawne are quietly sewing; Fanny a DRESS, while Mrs Brawne DARNS. Margaret appears at the window.

MARGARET

Mr Brown has returned but no Mr Keats with my rocks he promised.

Mrs Brawne looks across at Fanny anxiously.

FANNY

What can he do to me? Hurt my pride? It has slipped so low I have stepped out of it.

92

INT. MR BROWN'S HALF WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

92

Mr Brown is surrounded by his LUGGAGE in piles in his drawing room. He is PAYING the CARTER who puts the last of the bags down.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Fanny enters followed by ABIGAIL their RED HEADED MAID, her head bowed.

FANNY

Mama asked me to welcome you home and to introduce you to Miss O'Donaghue who is our maid but may also do for you.

The young IRISH maid BLUSHES and CURTSEYS.

ABIGAIL

Please sir call me Abigail or Abby.

MR BROWN

Very well. Be sure you do not enter when the door is closed.

Abigail nods.

ABIGAIL

Yes sir.

Abigail leaves. Mr Brown watches, his interest mildly aroused. Fanny remains awkwardly.

MR BROWN

Mr Keats is not coming back. He is going to live in London.

FANNY

Please tell Mr Keats that we Brawne's have kept safe all his things.

The two stare at each other a long moment before Fanny removes the RIBBON from around her neck and gently pulls the KEY clear from her bodice where it had been nestling in her bust. Fanny drops it into Keats's hand.

Keats is transfixed by the warm KEY lying in his palm, burning it.

Samuel leaves, his voice FADING off.

SAMUEL

Mama we have found it, Fanny had it like I thought.

Ignoring everything but each other, Fanny gently takes the key from Keats and kneeling unlocks his CHEST. She opens the lid.

FANNY

What do you need?

Keats kneels beside her. He is unable to take his eyes from her. He watches as Fanny pulls out items of clothing.

FANNY (cont'd)

Your coat?

Fanny shakes it out holding it up.

FANNY (cont'd)

But it is not warm enough, there is no lining. These brown breeches are warm.

Their eyes connect as Fanny turns slowly towards Keats the FOLDED PANTS in her hands. She turns back to the trunk.

FANNY (cont'd)

And your black vest, Ohhh it has a small hole. I could mend it so well you will not see it.

Wordlessly Keats and Fanny continue bonding through the domestic chores simple and deep - all his resolve dissolving.

98

INT. 25 COLLEGE STREET - DAY

98

The Dilke family DINING ROOM where the Dilke's SON and a FRIEND play. Charles Dilke writes at one end of the TABLE Keats at the other while Maria Dilke is POURING TEA. Keats's PEN dips in his DARK BROWN INK.

11 & 13 October 1819

My Sweet Girl,

"I am living today in yesterday: I was in a complete fascination all day. I feel myself at your mercy. Write me ever so few lines and tell me you will never for ever be less kind to me than yesterday - you dazzled me - there is nothing in the world so bright and delicate.

*You have abosrbed me I have a sensation at the present moment
as if I was dissolving ---"*

99 **EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY**

99

Fanny and Keats walk slowly together through the AUTUMN LEAVES on the Heath. Samuel and Toots run ahead. The lovers lean together on the trunk of a huge ELM. Keats gives Fanny a RING. Keats kisses Fanny deeply on the lips. Toots and Samuel shocked, stop in their tracks.

100 **INT. BRAWNE DINING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY**

100

Mrs Brawne and Maria Dilke are talking gravely and taking TEA in the Brawne's dining room. Fanny passes through with her sewing.

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny.

FANNY

What is wrong, you are looking so grave?

MRS BRAWNE

Maria says Mr Keats is now proposing to live next door again. She wants to know if I have any objections.

FANNY

Of course you don't. No she doesn't. Mr Brown is Mr Keats's best friend, how can we object.

Maria Dilke is quiet, she looks at Mrs Brawne.

MARIA DILKE

Fanny, Mr Dilke and I are worried that such close connection may prove restrictive for you.

FANNY

No.

MARIA DILKE

I don't think you fully understand. Mr Keats can't afford to marry, his circumstances are really quite hopeless and if he is next door how will you meet anyone else? How will you go to dances?

Mrs Dilke notices Fanny's ring, shocked.

MARIA DILKE (cont'd)

Ohh but you are engaged?

FANNY

It was Mr Keat's mothers ring, not an engagement ring.

MRS BRAWNE (OVERLAPPING)

You were not to wear it

FANNY

See I wear it on the finger next door

MARIA DILKE

What a pretty ring.

MRS BRAWNE

Do not even discuss it. She is in no way bound to him.

Mrs Brawne is SHAKING her head exhausted by Fanny's powers of persuasion.

FANNY (CONT'D)

You taught me to love, you never said only the rich, only a thimbleful. Mr Keats is a genius. His poems will sell, and until then I could make money sewing.

MARIA DILKE

Attachment is such a difficult thing to undo

101

INT. HALL WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

101

Fanny is walking towards Keats and Mr Brown's door. She slips her GARNET RING off her middle finger and across to her engagement finger.

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny!

Fanny hides her left hand behind her back.

FANNY

I am going to say good morning.

MRS BRAWNE

How will he write his poems if you are with him? Come.

FANNY

It is alright he is simply fair copying the poems for a new book and in this I give him calm.

Fanny enters the poets rooms almost invisibly. Quietly she takes a CHAIR and places it next to Keats at the table. She begins to sew. Mr Brown, at the other end of the table, finally notices and leaves perturbed. As the door closes Fanny and Keats immediately begin to kiss. Keats rests his head on Fanny's chest.

KEATS

*"Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel forever it's soft swell and fall,
Awake forever in a sweet unrest
Still, still to hear her tender taken breath."*

FANNY

It's new, from which poem?

KEATS

Yours -

*"Bright Star would I were stedfast as thou art-
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night."*

FANNY

Why do you say Not? Not in lone splendour?

KEATS

Because I want to be close enough to you,
(kiss), to hear your every breath, (kiss), yet
I wish for the eternal faithfulness of a star.

FANNY (PUSHING HIM BACK)

You fear I am not steadfast because I oblige
Maman by going to a dance?

KEATS

Don't tease Fanny.

FANNY

I will tell Maman I am unwell.

Fanny kisses Keats.

KEATS

No, go, go.

102

INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

102

Mr Brown scoffs FRESH SCONES in the kitchen. Abigail BUTTERS them for him full of admiration. Fanny is working on her SCRAPBOOK of fashion ideas.

MR BROWN

Good Irish Abigail
Who never did fail
To make a scone
As good as a swan...

Abigail puts a hand over her rotted teeth as she giggles.

Suddenly Fanny rises, she is looking out the window as the SNOW begins to fall. Fanny leaves the room.

103 **INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 103

Mrs Brawne sees Fanny walking out into the snow. She moves to the window.

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny come in, it has turned very cold.

FANNY

Mr Keats has gone into London with no coat.

FADE TO BLACK.

104 **INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT** 104

The SNOW has turned to SLEET. The Brawne's make their way by CANDLE up to their rooms.

105 **INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT** 105

Fanny watches from her window. RAIN is reflected across her face. She is relieved to finally see the small chilled figure of Keats making his way unsteadily to the house.

106 **INT. MR BROWN'S HALL WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT** 106

Mr Brown comes out from his study as he hears the front door CLOSE.

Keats is WET and staggering, finding it hard to stand.

MR BROWN

Have you had wine?

Keats shakes his head.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

What is the matter, are you fevered?

KEATS

Yes, yes. I was severely chilled. I was on the outside of the coach - but now I don't feel it.

107 **INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT** 107

It is PITCH BLACK only the SOUND of Mr Brown's VOICE SHOUTING, BANGING and FOOTSTEPS.

MR BROWN (VOICE OFF)

Abigail! Abigail! Get up, dress yourself we need a doctor.

Fanny sits up terrified.

108

INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

108

Fanny in her DRESSING GOWN and with a CANDLE. Abigail is carrying SHEETS through to the laundry. Fanny follows her.

FANNY

What has happened?

ABIGAIL

I don't know Ma'am.

FANNY

Has a doctor arrived?

ABIGAIL

Yes Ma'am. Mr Brown told me to take these sheets off as they are bloodied.

Abigail places them in the LAUNDRY TUB and turns on the WATER.

FANNY

Is it Mr Keats?

Abigail makes her way back to the STOVE with its BOILING KETTLE.

ABIGAIL

I don't know Ma'am.

FANNY

Let me help.

Fanny puts CHINA CUPS on a TRAY. Her hands are shaking. Mr Brown comes through. Fanny moves towards him about to speak.

MR BROWN ECHOING (INTERRUPTING)

Not now Fanny, I can't talk.

FANNY

If he's ill I want to help. He would want me there.

MR BROWN

Move away, this is an emergency. A basin, I need a basin and a towel, glasses.

FANNY

I can bring them.

MR BROWN

NO! STAND BACK!

Fanny stands back offering no resentment. The SOUND of WATER filling the wash tub sends her to the laundry. She turns off the TAP, Keats's BLOODIED SHEETS blooming in the dark tub.

109

INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

109

Mr Brown is standing by the kitchen HEARTH, towels are folded on the table. Abigail crosses past with a barely touched TRAY of BROTH and TOAST from Keats's room. DR BREE is finishing up a plate of bacon and eggs. The Brawnes (including Samuel and Margaret) are sitting at the table listening anxiously.

MR BROWN

Doctor Bree was particular in saying that Mr Keats should avoid all sources of excitement. It is a disease peculiarly vulnerable to romantic anxiety.

Brown looks towards the Doctor who confirms Brown's explanation with a nod.

DR BREE

A lot of rest.

He leaves, head down, signalling them to remain.

MR BROWN

Keats has already asked to see Miss Brawne but I have managed him and said she had gone into town...

FANNY

But I have not. How could I go into town when Mr Keats is so ill?

MR BROWN

I am speaking of keeping Mr Keats calm.

FANNY

What must he be thinking? This is a deception I cannot join.

MR BROWN

It is not a deception, I am simply determined to preserve the life of my friend.

FANNY

He will be unquiet until he sees me...

MR BROWN

He has been profoundly unquiet since you have decided to love him Miss Brawne.

FANNY

He would be more unquiet if I decided not to.

MRS BRAWNE (SHARPLY)

Fanny!

FANNY

Mr Brown would have it that I kill Mr Keats
with affection.

MR BROWN

Perhaps you will. Perhaps there is nothing I can do to protect him from your insistence of loving him into an early grave. But I shall try, Miss Brawne, I shall try! All visits will follow my regime or they will not happen at all.

Fanny sits back shocked.

MRS BRAWNE

Please, we Brawne's will do whatever we can to restore Mr Keats to health.

110 **INT. KEATS'S ROOM/PASSAGE WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 110

Fanny waits outside Keats's room. She puts her GARNET RING onto her engagement finger. The DOOR opens, Mr Brown stands aside to allow Fanny through.

KEATS

Darling girl. I have been wondering where you were.

FANNY

I never did go to town, I have been waiting to be with you the whole day.

KEATS

Last night there was a great rush of blood, such that I thought I cannot survive, that I would suffocate. I said to Mr Brown very calmly "this is unfortunate" and my thoughts were of you.

Keats strokes her hand.

KEATS (cont'd)

Knowing you are next door makes a pleasant prison of my house.

Mr Brown enters the room and Fanny immediately lets go of Keats's hand and rises.

KEATS (cont'd)

Come as frequently as they allow. And write me when you cannot.

111 **INT. STAIRS/MRS BRAWNE'S ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT** 111

Fanny runs upstairs into her mother's room. Mrs Brawne takes her in her arms, Fanny SOBS onto her lap.

FANNY

He has a new greatcoat, why didn't he wear it?
Oh God, Oh God he spat so much blood. Why
must this happen to us? I am so afraid.

Fanny abruptly sits up wiping her face.

FANNY (cont'd)

Wait, I have to write him a note so he has
something of me tomorrow morning.

112 **OMITTED**

112

113 **OMITTED**

113

KEATS (V.O.)

"My sweet creature when I look back upon the ecstasies in which I have pass'd some days and the miseries in their turn, I wonder the more at the Beauty which has kept up the spell so fervently. When I send this round I shall be in the front parlour watching to see you show yourself for a minute in the garden. How horrid was the chance of slipping into the ground instead of into your arms - the difference is amazing Love. Do not take the trouble of writing much: merely send me my "good night," to put under my pillow."

J. Keats

Keats is resting in a MAKESHIFT BED made from chairs. Fanny appears in the garden, Keats's NOTE in her hand. She walks towards Keats's window.

Mr Brown looks up from his desk. He gets up and walks towards the windows.

MR BROWN (SHOOING FANNY)

Go! Go on!

Keats turns to see Fanny.

KEATS

No Brown I need to see her.

Fanny KISSES her NOTE and holds it to her heart. Keats smiles at her.

KEATS (cont'd)

I feel anxious if I miss a day.

MR BROWN

Why not bed her, she would do whatever you wished. It might relieve your condition.

Keats is writing a LETTER. On his SIDEBBOARD is a row of JARS and JELLIES, GIFTS from friends' larders.

- 115 **INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM - DAY** 115
- Fanny sits on the edge of her bed and writes on a SMALL PIECE OF PAPER the words "good night".
- 116 **INT. DOORWAY TO MR BROWN'S APARTMENT - DAY** 116
- The FOLDED PAPER with "Mr Keats" written in tiny handwriting is slipped under Mr Brown and Keats's door. Both men turn to look.
- 117 **INT. KEATS'S BEDROOM - EVENING** 117
- A BARE CHESTED Keats takes the NOTE from his trouser pocket, unfolds it, puts it to his lips then places it under his PILLOW. He RAPS on the wall.
- 118 **INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM - EVENING** 118
- The "rap" is faint on Fanny's side but she hears it and puts her hand against her side of the wall. Toots already in bed, watches the ritual. Fanny's SHADOW FLICKERS large against the wall.
- 119 **EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY** 119
- Fanny sits upon a STONE WALL on Hampstead Heath reading her note while Samuel and Margaret play with a CRICKET BALL.
- Fanny walks, still reading through some desolate SKELETONS of TREES, NO LEAVES above and MUD below.
- "Let me no longer detain you from going to Town - there may be no end to this emprisoning of you. Perhaps you had better not come before tomorrow evening: send me however without fail a good night. You know our situation - I am recommended not even to read poetry much less write it. I wish I had even a little hope. I cannot say forget me - but I would mention that there are impossibilities in the world."*
- Your affectionate*
- J.K.*
- 120 OMITTED 120

121 INT. HALL/MR BROWN'S DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY 121

Fanny walks quickly to Mr Brown's half of the house where Keats is propped up on a DAY BED. She draws a chair next to him.

Fanny sews and talks quietly.

FANNY

Why do you say impossibilities?

KEATS

I have coughed blood again. I fear the disease has the upper hand and I cannot recover.

FANNY

I cannot leave you. It is an impossibility. I have such clear hope about your new book of poems. When you are well enough you can finish the fair copying. They are more beautiful than any I have read of Mr Coleridge or Mr Wordsworth or even Lord Byron.

FANNY (cont'd)

*"Oh What can ail thee knight at arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake
And no birds sing!"*

FANNY (cont'd)

*"I met a lady in the Meads
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light
And her eyes were wild -"*

KEATS

*"I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song -"*

FANNY

*"She found me roots of relish sweet
And honey wild and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said
I love thee true -"*

KEATS

*"She took me to her elfin grot
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four."*

FANNY

*"And there she lulled me asleep
And there I dream'd - Ah! Woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side."*

122

INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

122

Fanny comes into the kitchen where Abigail is making an incredible RACKET, BANGING POTS, and STOMPING to and fro.

On the TABLE is a LETTER.

FANNY

Is it mine?

ABIGAIL

Aye it is. Mr Brown has said to give it to you tomorrow, but I shall not wait. He is every bit as cruel as any gaoler of any prison in this foul world. Let him do his own dirty work.

Fanny takes up the LETTER. She looks at Abigail and sees her eyes are red from crying.

ABIGAIL (cont'd)

If you have a note for poor Mr Keats I will take it as soon as you will.

Abigail bursts into TEARS. Fanny moves to comfort her.

ABIGAIL (cont'd)

I wish I were dead. Oh my God! Ohhh! Ohhh!

123

INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

123

Fanny writes at her PORTMANTEAUX.

Dearest Love,

"I hope you rested well last night. I am turning circles for joy that you have finished the fair copy of your book.

Did you hear from your side the banging of pots? Abigail has been sobbing without stop and believes you are the only one she can confess her troubles to.

I shall send you later your "good night" with Abigail. She has quite changed and will help me whenever I ask!"

Yours ever and with love Fanny

"P.S. Tell me as soon as you are able when Dr Bree has come and what he says."

124

INT. KEATS'S PARLOUR WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

124

Keats turns as Mr Brown enters.

KEATS

I am boiling with fury.

MR BROWN

What is it? This is not good, be calm. You must not convulse again.

KEATS

Abigail is with child, but to whom out of shame or fear she would not say. We Brown must find out and when we have his name, butcher or baker, he shall face up to his indecency. Call her, let us get it done..

MR BROWN

It's not necessary. She has me believe I am the father.

KEATS

My God, I had no notion of a love affair.

MR BROWN

There was none or I must have slept through it. I woke up after some claret to find the girl in my bed snoring like a fireman.

KEATS

With what ease you help yourself.

MR BROWN

It was an accident. Now she is starting a sobbing campaign to marry me. I shan't of course.

KEATS

And the child?

MR BROWN

I have agreed to pay expenses. The worst thing is I can't keep this place, I have to start my summer rental early. I feel wretched turning you out while you are unwell, but I haven't anything left, only debt.

KEATS

Don't be concerned, I shall manage. In what stumbling ways a new soul is begun.

125

INT. BROWN'S DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

125

Fanny quietly pours tea and moves softly amongst Keats's LITERARY SUPPORTERS and Dr Bree. She is invisible to all but Keats who constantly watches her.

MR HUNT

Gentleman I think we should hear Dr. Bree on the issue of climate for Keats health. Does he want to go to Rome?

*
*
*
*

DR BREE

He has to go. He won't live through another winter in England.

MR HUNT

How do you feel about Italy John?

*
*

Keats doesn't reply

*

MR BROWN

I think it's an issue of finance.

*

MR HUNT

Could we between us not start a fund or a collection? Where are we up to with the poems?

*
*

MR HASLAM

We have them in the Galley now.

*

JOHN REYNOLDS

Could they not generate income?

*
*

MR HASLAM

It is very hard to predict sales

*
*

MR HUNT

Of course he'll need a traveling companion.
Brown, you'll go?

*
*

MR BROWN

Yes, absolutely someone must go, but I'm not
sure I'll be able to.

*
*

MR HUNT

Is that a 'No'?

*
*

DR BREE

There is an excellent English doctor in Rome,
a Dr Clark, who could also find rooms for you
Mr Keats.

*

KEATS (TURNING FROM FANNY)

Pardon?

DR BREE

I am talking of a Dr Clark who attends the English colony in Rome.

KEATS

Ah.

MR HUNT

I can help find a room for the summer John if you want.

At that moment a pregnant Abigail makes her way into the room with a tray of hot tea.

(OVERLAPPING)

ABIGAIL (HISSING)

Miss, Miss.

But it is Mr Brown who strides irritated to the door and swiftly takes the hot pot. Abigail doesn't move, she stays still like a stunned rabbit. The men look then look away discretely.

MR BROWN

Which poem goes first? Is it to be Lamia or Eve of St Agnes?

MR HASLAM

It is Lamia I believe.

Keats nods once again watching Fanny.

126

EXT. STREET KENTISH TOWN - DAY

126

All along the street are signs of the precarious life of the poor, STREET URCHINS begging, a DRUNK collapsed in the pavement. Fanny and Samuel support Keats along the road, pausing as a cough racks his body.

Samuel walks a few steps behind, next to a BOY carting Keats's TRUNK.

FANNY

I want to come to Italy with you. We can marry and I'll go with you. Sammy walk behind.

Keats laughs.

KEATS

My friends talk of Italy but I have no money
and must yet make it through the summer in
London. Besides, I don't believe it possible
I could ever leave you.

Samuel is slinking up alongside Fanny and Keats.

FANNY (EXASPERATED)

Get back behind.

KEATS

Poor Sammy, he's not a dog.

FANNY

But he will tell!

SAMUEL

I won't tell.

FANNY

You see, he listens.

Keats stops.

KEATS (EVASIVE)

Farewell me here.

FANNY

Why?

127

INT. CORRIDOR/BASEMENT KENTISH TOWN HOUSE - DAY

127

Fanny and Keats follow the LANDLADY down a DAMP corridor into
a BASEMENT SUITE of TWO WATER STAINED ROOMS. There is a
TABLE DIMLY LIT by the basement's WINDOW. A SHRIEK followed
by another somewhere higher in the building.

LANDLADY

We don't do linen.

She leaves, SHOUTING back up the stairs.

Keats sits at the DESK. He pretends to write. He turns to
see Fanny's look of horror. Keats looks away, shamed,
steely.

FANNY

Mr Hunt cannot have meant these rooms.

Keats is going darkly into himself. He shakes his head.

KEATS

I told you not to come. Tell me how will you
fill your days when we are apart? Who will
you find to smile with?

FANNY
No one, I will wait.

KEATS
Wait?

Fanny nods, confused.

KEATS (cont'd)
Yes you can wait, you can probably find
amusements. I am not the same as you. The
very air I breathe empty of you is unhealthy.
You are to me an object intensely desirable.
But that's all right because you can wait!
You don't know what it is to love. It is
making me glad there is such a thing as the
grave!

128

INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

128

Fanny, her mother, Samuel and Margaret and the Dilke's are
sitting at their FORMALLY SET TABLE. All are very subdued.

Fanny is deeply depressed. Out of nowhere she starts to sob.

The children and Mrs Brawne watch her anxiously. All decorum
is swept aside as Fanny's sobs become convulsive. Mrs Brawne
waves the children away. She takes Fanny's head in her arms,
stroking her tears away but they do not stop. Mrs Dilke also
strokes her.

FANNY
He wrote that I don't love him. He was told I
have been flirting...but I haven't.

MARIA DILKE
How long has Mr Keats been gone?

MRS BRAWNE
Five weeks.

MARIA DILKE
Perhaps it is for the best.

FANNY
Whose best?

MARIA DILKE
I thought it might be a relief to be separated
when the circumstances are so difficult.

FANNY
Everyone wishes I would give up, but I cannot,
even if I wanted to I cannot. There is no one
in this world so beautiful or so brilliant.

Mrs Dilke and Mrs Brawne exchange looks of anxiety. Toots's face appears at the window.

FANNY (cont'd)

Get rid of her!

129 **EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE GARDENS - EVENING** 129

Margaret is outside in the garden PICKING FLOWERS when she notices something strange under the HEDGE. A LEG, then as she cautiously circles, ANOTHER LEG and a BUNDLE beside it.

130 **OMITTED** 130

131 **EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE GARDENS - DAY** 131

Fanny approaches the tree slowly like a cat until a very ill Keats, barely recognisable, turns, his eyes accusing and frightened on Fanny. Keats puts an arm out to fend Fanny off.

KEATS

Keep away if you do not love me, if you have not a crystal conscience this past month.

FANNY

John...?

Fanny does not hesitate, she kisses Keats. He is sheet white and sweating.

KEATS

I thought my heart was breaking.

FANNY

You are shivering. What is this, blood? Maman! Toots, call Maman.

KEATS

Hunt's son opened your letter and hid it for two days...I've walked out, I've left them...
(KEATS IS BARELY ABLE TO SPEAK)

Keats falls to one side unconscious as Mrs Brawne arrives outside.

135 **INT. MRS BRAWNE'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT** 135

Fanny sits beside her feverish fiance, cooling his head with a WET CLOTH. She moves her ENGAGEMENT RING across to the fourth finger on her left hand. Her RING SPARKLES in the night. Bright Star.

136 **INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 136

VEGETABLES are being peeled and chopped. A CHICKEN BROTH is strained.

137 **OMITTED** 137

138 **INT. MRS BRAWNE'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 138

Inside Keats is dressed, lying dreaming on a DAY BED by the window.

Fanny takes the tray and puts it carefully on Keats's lap. Margaret steps shyly towards Keats smiling.

KEATS

Toots have you been eating rosebuds?

TOOTS

No, I never have.

KEATS

So where do your cheeks get their blush?

Fanny pulls her chair close, signalling Margaret to leave.

FANNY

Bye, bye.

Keats begins to sip the SOUP. There is a WILD ROSE on Keats's tray. Fanny takes a PETAL and winds it around her finger.

KEATS

***"fold a rose leaf around thy finger's
taperdness,
And soothe thy lips."***

Fanny rubs the PETAL across her lips.

KEATS (cont'd)

...sometimes remember that I did not only dote on roses but climbed mountains and cut up bodies.

139

INT. BRAWNE LIVING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

139

There is a small gathering of Keats's inner circle in the Brawne living room. MR TAYLOR and MR HASLAM Keats's publishers, Mr Severn a young and very nervous painter friend and MR HUNT a loyal supporter. The tea has mostly been drunk and people are preparing to leave.

Fanny is quietly sewing a silk lining onto a CAP. An improving Keats sits next to her. They are very much a couple.

MR TAYLOR

I confirmed your ship, the Maria Crowther sailing to Naples.

MR SEVERN

When does she leave?

MR HASLAM

In ten days.

Keats winces, he looks at Fanny stops sewing, stops breathing.

MR TAYLOR

Autumn is coming, it's getting colder, I'm afraid if you delay there will be less and less reason to hope.

KEATS

So there is no putting it off I must march against the battery.

Mr Severn has SPILT his TEA onto his SAUCER and is neurotically dallying about what to do.

FANNY

Let me pour you another.

MR SEVERN

Really, well perhaps I might just tip it back, no well perhaps not. Did I take sugar?

FANNY

Yes I think you did.

MR SEVERN

Well then I did not stir it.

FANNY

Mr Keats tells me you are planning to paint in Rome...

MR SEVERN (DISTRACED)

We shall be in need of an Italian dictionary Mr Keats. Sorry, yes indeed I shall definitely paint.

Shaking hands with Keats Mr Severn leaves. Mr Haslam says his farewell to Keats.

MR HASLAM (DISCREETLY)

Mr Brown could not go?

KEATS

Sadly not! I am waiting to hear but I think it not likely.

Mr Haslam nods a moment thinking.

MR HASLAM

Well there is no alternative, we must put all our hope and faith in Mr Severn.

A distressed Fanny continues the TINY, PERFECT STITCHES around Keats's CAP.

140

INT. BRAWNE KITCHEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

140

Fanny is putting a TRAY together for her and Keats's supper. Mrs Brawne is SHELLING PEAS.

FANNY

My God what I would do to accompany him. He is still so weak.

MRS BRAWNE

No. No! I have looked into it, we can't afford the fare and if anything should happen to Mr Keats or even you in a foreign country, how could you survive?

FANNY

But it should not be Mr Severn he barely knows him. Where is that fool Mr Brown when he is needed? Why doesn't he write?

Fanny picks up the tray.

MRS BRAWNE

I have found a goose for Mr Keats's last dinner.

FANNY (SUDDENLY TERRIFIED)

Do not say "last".

141

EXT. GARDEN WENTWORTH HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

141

Fanny puts Keats's arm in the correct position about her waist for a waltz. She is giggling, shaking her head happily. Beside her Margaret and Samuel stand ready except Margaret is laughing at Keats who is clowning in his efforts. The dance class is happening on the lawn in the BACK GARDEN. It's late afternoon and the trees are casting beautiful SHADOWS across the GRASS, while the ROSES bob in the breeze. Mrs Brawne is at the open windows.

MRS BRAWNE

Ready?

FANNY

Yes, please.

Mrs Brawne sits back at the PIANO and begins.

FANNY (cont'd)

One, two, three, turn...

KEATS

Two or three Posies
With two or three simples -
Two or three Noses
With two or three pimples -

Margaret and Samuel are laughing too much to keep dancing. Keats is making up his own mad steps. Fanny is nimbly keeping up.

KEATS (cont'd)

What?
Two of three Wiggles
With two or three Giggles.

Keats stops beside an AUTUMN LEAF.

KEATS (cont'd)

What's that?

Fanny playfully stands on it.

FANNY

Nothing whatsoever. There is no autumn in this house only summer. Please remove it.

Margaret takes the LEAF by the stork like a mouse by the tail and drops it over the fence.

MARGARET

And don't come back.

Keats and Fanny dance on in their own gay way until Keats stops and lies in the grass catching his breath. He looks up and sees the AUTUMN TREE TOPS.

142 **INT. MRS BRAWNE'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 142

Fanny is arranging Keats's CLOTHES in his TRUNK. Keats is at the LITTLE DESK writing in the front piece of his RED BOUND POETRY BOOKS.

Fanny sits back and watches him, drinking up the last moments of his presence as if he were the sun setting. Fanny moves across and gently strokes Keats's head and he, like a cat plays up to the stroking, moving his head under her palm.

143 **INT. BRAWNE DINING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 143

The family are eating a roast goose together. The plates are still full, but no-one except Samuel is eating. Fanny starts to gather the plates up. Keats brings from the SIDEBOARD his RED BOUND POETRY BOOKS and puts one beside each family member. Mrs Brawne is looking at hers.

MRS BRAWNE

Oh my mad boy, it is so beautiful. Was it a success?

KEATS

There are two highly positive reviews, by friends, six mainly positive and four hostile. I don't know, is that successful?

FANNY

Yes! Extremely so...

MRS BRAWNE

So they are selling well?

FANNY

Why must you harp on about selling when the poems themselves are the point and they are so beautiful!

Margaret and Samuel each give Keats a GIFT, Margaret a HANDKERCHIEF she has sewn.

MRS BRAWNE

Yes of course they are, come back and live with us, marry our Fanny, I will miss you as a son.

MARGARET (HUGGING KEATS)

I love you.

She gives Keats a tearful, clinging hug.

Fanny puts the HAT she has been sewing on Keats's head.

FANNY

It's your old travel cap. I have sewn a silk lining to keep you warm.

144

INT. MRS BRAWNE'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

144

Fanny clips a LOCK of Keats's hair and carefully folds it into a piece of TISSUE PAPER. Keats picks up the SCISSORS.

FANNY

Is this really happening? Are we really to separate?

Keats selects a DARK CURL from Fanny and cuts it. He puts it between the pages of his POETRY BOOK.

KEATS

I sha'nt be able to speak tomorrow, I suspect I will break down. Let us say our goodbyes now.

FANNY

I want to come to Italy with you.

KEATS

And then...?

FANNY

Be together.

KEATS

For how long?

FANNY

As long as we have.

Keats sighs. Fanny begins to cry.

FANNY (cont'd)

Shall we awake and find all this is a dream? Is there another life? There must be, we cannot be created for this kind of suffering.

Keats puts his arms around Fanny's neck and draws her head to him. Keats soothes her while he talks.

KEATS

I doubt we shall see each other again on this earth.

FANNY

Then why are you leaving? Why must you go?

KEATS

Because my friends insist on torturing me with a hope they can ill afford but have already financed. It is a hopeless hope, but how do I refuse?

FANNY

Say you are too ill.

KEATS

***"More happy love! More happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting and for ever young."***

We have woven a web you and I, attached to the world but a new world of our own invention. We must cut the threads Fanny.

Fanny shakes her head.

FANNY

No. I can't, I never will.

Keats moves away, hitting his head with his palm.

KEATS

Who do I fool? Do I wish you free? NO! NO! My still unravished bride, I should have bed you while I was well enough, why not? It could have been us with child not Brown with his bastard.

FANNY

You know I would do anything...

KEATS (BITTERLY)

I have a conscience!

Keats is walking to calm himself in his agony.

KEATS (cont'd)

Then let us pretend I am returning in Spring?

Fanny looks up slowly.

FANNY

You will return, I know it.

KEATS

Will we live in the country?

FANNY

Yes, close to Maman.

KEATS

Our bedroom will look out on an apple orchard and beyond that a mountain. I am most partial to a mountain in a mist.

FANNY

I will make a garden where every sort of wild flower grows. We can take our breakfast there on a little table.

KEATS

We will go to bed while the sun is still high.

FANNY

Then it will get dark and the moon will shine through the shutters.

KEATS

And I will hold you close and kiss your breasts, your waist, your arms.

FANNY

Everywhere.

Keats kisses Fanny's breasts, waist and her arms, then runs his hands along her hands until their fingers touch.

KEATS

Touch has a memory.

FANNY

I know it...

Outside is the sound of FOOTSTEPS.

KEATS

Your mother?

FANNY

She won't come in.

MRS BRAWNE

Fanny. I am going to bed.

FANNY

I am just joining you.

KEATS

And we will never separate.

FANNY

Never. Not for one night.

Fanny and Keats hold tightly on to each other.

145 **INT. MRS BRAWNE'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - MORNING** 145

Keats stands dressed, ready to leave. The trunk has gone. But still he stays, looking for the last time at the room in which he has enjoyed some happiness. The will to go seems impossible to summon, but finally a rattling cough breaks his reverie. Fanny comes to fetch him.

KEATS

Not a word.

Fanny nods.

146 **EXT. WENTWORTH HOUSE/LANE - MORNING** 146

Fanny and Keats leave the house silently.

Margaret runs after them. Fanny turns and desperately shakes her head dissuading her from coming further. Margaret falls back.

147 **EXT. STREETS AND LANES OF HAMPSTEAD - DAY** 147

Fanny and Keats arm in arm keep stride down the narrow lanes towards the Pond Street Coach Depot. Fanny looks towards Keats but does not speak. Mr Hunt walks a little apart anxiously aware of the young couples ordeal.

148 **EXT. POND ST COACH DEPOT - DAY** 148

Amidst the SMALL CROWD at the COACH DEPOT, STABLE HANDS, CLEANERS, OTHER TRAVELLERS arriving and PARCELS and PRODUCE being unpacked and stacked, Keats and Fanny remain poised. Finally without speaking Keats disengages his arm and squeezes Fanny's hand. He swiftly boards the COACH. Fanny watches as he is seated then turns and leaves. Keats looks out at the last of Fanny's figure walking away. Mr Hunt climbs in beside Keats.

149 **INT. WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 149

Fanny bursts through the door of Wentworth House. She runs up the stairs into her room. Fanny opens the LITERARY POCKET BOOK Keats gave her and writes, "MR KEATS LEFT HAMPSTEAD."

150 **EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAY** 150

The TREES on the Heath are almost bare and the sky is a DARK GREY. PILES OF AUTUMN LEAVES are BURNING, smoking the trees.

151 **INT/EXT. BRAWNE DINING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 151

A SINGLE BLACK THREAD noses it's way through the eye of a NEEDLE. The needle threads in and out of the BLACK MATERIAL Fanny is sewing. Mrs Brawne sits nearby mending.

Margaret is running across the drawing room windows as Mr Brown followed by Abigail their BABY and their LUGGAGE arrive back at Wentworth House.

MARGARET

The baby! Abigail's baby! Oh God it has red hair!

152 **INT. BRAWNE DINING/LIVING ROOMS WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY** 152

Abigail now Mrs Brown, is taking tea in the dining room and happily showing off her baby boy to Mrs Brawne and Margaret.

In the connecting sitting room Mr Brown stands at the window, shuffling through his LETTERS from Keats, making an effort to engage with Fanny who is clearly resistant. Fanny is sewing a length of BLACK RIBBON onto the black material, one neat small black stitch after another.

MR BROWN

You saw the baby? Looks like Abigail...John's reached Naples. They quarantined his ship. He wrote that he made more puns in two weeks out of desperation than he had in any other year of his life. I should have liked to have heard them.

FANNY

You could have, had you gone - I was certain you would.

MR BROWN

I'm planning daily but I fear I have left it too late.

FANNY

Why not leave now, travel overland?

Abigail walks smilingly into the room holding out the crying baby to show Fanny. Mr Brown waves Abigail and the baby away.

MR BROWN

It's not simple with the baby and my funds reduced, then there's the snows...

FANNY (SAYS IT OR SILENTLY GIVES THIS IMPRESSION)

And lack of will.

MR BROWN

Should I say it aloud? Will that satisfy you?
I have failed John Keats - I have failed him.
And I pay a price daily - I did not know till
now how tightly he had wound himself about my
heart.

FANNY

What heart? You abandon your ill friend,
never replying or enquiring.

MR BROWN

Fortunately in my absence he was not short of
care, his letter was full of your family's
kindness...

FANNY

And my love.

Mr Brown is a little stunned, moved despite himself by her
open confession.

MR BROWN (LEAVING)

He asked me to offer whatever comfort can be
given to you.

153

INT. BRAWNE DINING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

153

Fanny sews a seam in BLACK THREAD. Outside it is SNOWING.
The DOOR BELL RINGS. Margaret answers. It is a LETTER. She
puts it on the other end of the table.

MARGARET

For you Maman, it's from Italy.

Fanny stops sewing, alarmed. Mrs Brawne slowly rises and
walks to the letter. She glances at Fanny who is waiting
fearfully. Mrs Brawne opens the letter.

MRS BRAWNE

It's from Keats in Naples. He says it looks
like a dream.

Mrs Brawne stops reading and looks at Fanny who shakes her
head with relief and disappointment.

FANNY

Why doesn't he write to me?

Fanny looks out into the garden where a bowed Brown reads a
letter.

154

INT/EXT. BROWN'S LIVING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

154

Mr Brown stands at his window, looking out onto a dreary BARE
WINTER GARDEN.

He watches as Margaret and Samuel kick a BALL between them and beyond them the gaunt, upright figure of Fanny slowly comes into view. A mirror match in mood to himself, she paces ghostlike in the snow. Fanny and Brown lock eyes then each look away.

155

INT. BROWN'S DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAY

155

Fanny knocks at Mr Brown's garden door. Mr Brown is surprised to see her, he stands.

FANNY

You once said you would offer what comfort you could.

MR BROWN

Yes, of course, come in.

FANNY

Is there something, anything at all you can read me from his letters? I am disappointed to have none of my own. Any sort of news, even the painful, brings me closer.

MR BROWN

The latest letters are all from Severn. Keats I'm afraid, is in a deplorable state.

Mr Brown sorts through his correspondence.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

I have some older ones from Keats.

FANNY

Please.

MR BROWN

"I can bear to die - I cannot bear to leave her. Oh, God! God! God! Every thing I have in my trunks that reminds me of her goes through me like a spear."

Mr Brown looks up to judge Fanny's reaction. She is not shocked but transported.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

"The silk lining she put in my travelling cap scalds my head. My imagination is horribly vivid about her - I see her - I hear her. O that I could be buried near where she lives! I am afraid to write to her - to receive a letter from her - to see her hand writing would break my heart. My dear Brown, what am I to do? Where can I look for consolation or ease? I have coals of fire in my breast. It surprised me that the human heart is capable of containing and bearing so much misery."

(MORE)

MR BROWN (cont'd)

Was I born for this end? God bless her, and her mother."

The letter is to me but it is all about you - keep it.

Fanny shakes her head. They look at each other with something like peace, like compassion, for what they both had and for what they must soon bear.

Fanny turns and Mr Brown watches as Fanny's ghostlike figure disappears down the hall.

156 **EXT. APPROACH TO WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 156

In the last of the light, Brown walks through the MUD SPLATTERED SNOW towards home.

157 **EXT/INT. BRAWNE DRAWING ROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - EVENING** 157

Fanny and her mother sew while Samuel practices his VIOLIN and Margaret plays happily with the CAT on the couch.

The FRONT DOOR OPENING and CLOSING, then FOOTSTEPS in the hall outside attracts Fanny's attention. She turns towards the door, poised. Mrs Brawne notices and watches the door anxiously. Samuel stops playing as a sombre Mr Brown enters the room.

Fanny observes Mr Brown sinkingly, her breath suspended.

MR BROWN

It is cold out. How are you all?

Fanny notices a letter from Mr Severn in Mr Brown's hand.

MRS BRAWNE

We are all quite well enough. But how is Mr Keats?

MR BROWN

It is as unbearable to me as I know it is to you. Mr Keats has died at only 25 years. Mr Severn sent me an account, I have copied it for you Miss Brawne - shall I read it?

Fanny nods.

MR BROWN (cont'd)

Friday 23rd February.

"At four in the afternoon, Keats called me "Severn - Severn - lift me up for I am dying - I shall die easy - don't be frightened, thank God it has come." At one point a cold, heavy sweat broke out over his whole body and he whispered "Don't breathe on me it comes like ice." Keats died imperceptibly...

FANNY

No more.

Mr Brown stops reading.

Fanny makes her way shakily from the room. Mrs Brawne follows. Fanny collapses on the staircase.

FANNY (cont'd)

I should have been with him. I should have held him - it should have been me with him. Oh my God I am finished. He is gone. Oh Maman help me, please help me.

Mr Brown and Samuel listen stricken. Margaret sits on the couch, tears dropping onto her frock.

158 **OMITTED** 158

159 **EXT. SPANISH STEPS ROME - DAWN** 159

A small funeral procession of TWO COACHES waits by the PIETRO BERNINI FOUNTAIN at the bottom of the SPANISH STEPS. Keats's COFFIN is loaded into a BLACK FUNERAL COACH. The small procession clatters through Rome's still sleeping streets.

KEATS (V.O.)

*"'Lamia!' he cried - and no soft-toned reply.
The many heard, and the loud revelry
Grew hush; the stately music no more breathes;
The myrtle sicken'd in a thousand wreaths.
By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure
ceased;
A deadly silence step by step increased
Until it seem'd a horrid presence there,
And not a man but felt the terror in his
hair."*

160 **INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAWN** 160

In the DIM FIRST LIGHT an exhausted Fanny is sewing her BLACK FROCK. She makes a KNOT and CUTS the thread. Across the bed are strewn KEATS'S POETRY BOOKS and his LETTERS. In the next bed sleeps Margaret, her arms about her mother's neck who sleeps fully dressed. Fanny pulls the BLACK FROCK over her head, one sleeve yet unmade and the hem unfinished.

161 **INT. FANNY'S BEDROOM WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAWN** 161

With three chops of her big PINKING SHEARS Fanny cuts her hair short. Her BLACK HAIR falls in a circle about her feet. She takes her RED BOUND BOOK of Keats's poems 1820, her copy of ENDYMION and quietly leaves the room with her BONNET and BLACK BOOTS in her hand. Mrs Brawne rises as she leaves.

MRS BRAWNE

Samuel! Sammy!

162 **INT/EXT. BRAWNE FRONT DOOR WENTWORTH HOUSE - DAWN** 162

Fanny draws on her COAT and BLACK GLOVES. She opens the front door and steps into the chilled and misty air.

163 **EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - DAWN** 163

Out on the Heath Fanny walks briskly through the winter MIST followed at a respectful distance by a hurriedly dressed Samuel. Fanny, the landscape, the trees, Samuel APPEARING and VANISHING in the FOG. Clutching her precious KEATS BOOKS against her chest, Fanny makes her way up the side of the HILL where she and the landscape completely disappear, only her VOICE continues steadily reciting, learning by heart the poem BRIGHT STAR dedicated to her.

FANNY (V.O.)

*"Bright Star, would I were stedfast as thou
art -
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
(devotee)
The moving waters at their priest like task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen masque
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors.
No - yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel forever its soft swell and fall,
Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever - or else swoon to death."*

Fanny now alone, walks on the Heath until in the dark she pauses beside the POND. Overhead the STARS GLITTER and are REFLECTED again at her feet.

FADE TO BLACK.

WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK

For three years Fanny Brawne continued to walk Hampstead Heath, often far into the night.

Keats died imagining himself forgotten. Yet generation after generation of poets have been inspired by him, and his fame continues to grow.

CREDITS