

# BROOKLYN

by

Nick Hornby

**YELLOW SCRIPT**

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Adapted from the novel by Colm Toibin

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1

EXT. STREET. PRE-DAWN

1

A quiet, working-class residential street in Ireland, early 1950s. It's morning, but it's still dark. One of the front doors opens, and out slips EILIS - early twenties, open-faced pretty without knowing it. She closes the door quietly behind her and walks quickly up the street.

There is a hissed call from behind her. She turns, and her sister ROSE - thirty, attractive, slender, pale - is running after her, in nightdress and bare feet, holding out a piece of bread and jam. Eilis takes it from her, makes a face to show how grateful she is.

EILIS  
(mouthing)  
Go back to bed.

Rose nods, tiptoes back to the house.

CREDITS

2

INT. CHURCH. DAY

2

It's the early mass, and the church has only a smattering of worshippers. Eilis is kneeling and praying with two other women: MISS KELLY, fifties, thick glasses, a constant look of disapproval on her face, and MARY, the same age as Eilis, but large and simple-minded - her mouth is usually open, indicating her lack of comprehension at more or less any given moment. Eilis yawns. Miss Kelly shoots her a look. Chastened, Eilis stifles the yawn and looks fixedly ahead.

3

EXT. KELLY SHOP STREET. DAY

3

Finally, there is weak daylight. Mary and Eilis wait while Miss Kelly finds her keys and opens the side-door to her shop. This is clearly not a normal morning for Eilis - she has something on her mind. She watches Miss Kelly carefully, trying to judge the right moment to speak to her. The door opens, Mary walks into the shop, leaving Miss Kelly and Eilis bringing up the rear.

EILIS  
(suddenly)  
Miss Kelly, might I talk to you  
later?

MISS KELLY  
Not if what you're going to say  
will cause trouble for me in some  
way or another.

End of conversation. Eilis closes her eyes for a moment, fearful of the confrontation to come.

4

INT. KELLY SHOP. DAY

4

Miss Kelly turns on the light, and we see the shop for the first time. It's a well-stocked, and well-kept, grocery store, but it almost certainly hasn't changed since the 1920s. Eilis walks to the back of the shop to collect the bread, which has obviously been there since the previous day, and places it on the counter. While Miss Kelly takes a piece of long, yellow paper out of its packet, Mary places a ladder carefully under the old piece, which is stuck to the ceiling and covered with the bodies of dead flies.

Later. A male customer is buying a single cigarette from Eilis. Miss Kelly is peering through the shop window from an angle.

MISS KELLY

The nine o'clock mass is over,  
girls. Here they come.

Later. The shop is packed - customers standing three or four deep at the counter. Eilis and Mary are coping as best they can; Miss Kelly is directing them, in a way designed to cause maximum resentment. Miss Kelly spies a well-dressed woman standing well back, and smiles at her.

MISS KELLY

Mrs Brady, what would you like this  
morning?

MRS BRADY

Half-a-dozen rashers, please.

MISS KELLY

Of course. Eilis will get that for  
you now.

Eilis is about to serve a shabbier woman standing right in front of the counter. Eilis looks at her helplessly.

SHABBY WOMAN

(aggrieved)

I was next.

MISS KELLY

And you still are. Mary, if you  
serve Mr O'Leary back there, will  
you make a mess of it? I suppose  
you will. Let's see.

Mary is stung by the barb. Miss Kelly doesn't notice and doesn't care anyway.

MARY

Mr O'Leary?

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED:

4

Mr O'Leary, like Mrs Brady, is well towards the back of the scrum. Miss Kelly's favouritism seems designed to cause resentment and frustration, but the customers seem used to her arbitrary treatment of them, and there are no outward signs of dissent. Miss Kelly turns her attention to a timid-looking woman standing right in front of her.

MISS KELLY

Yes?

TIMID WOMAN

(quietly)

I need some shoe polish.

MISS KELLY

Shoe polish? Ah, but that's not really a Sunday item, now, is it? These people need things for their dinner or their tea. Why couldn't you have remembered yesterday?

Miss Kelly leans over the counter to stare at the timid woman's shoes. The timid woman stares at the counter, humiliated.

MISS KELLY

Because it looks like you needed it yesterday.

TIMID WOMAN

I'm sorry.

Miss Kelly sighs deeply, shakes her head, and goes to find the offending item.

5

INT. KELLY SHOP. LATE AFTERNOON

5

Miss Kelly locks the door of the shop behind the last customer. Eilis stops tidying up and waits until the door is locked before speaking.

EILIS

Miss Kelly...

MISS KELLY

(tetchy)

I hadn't forgotten. Spit it out, whatever it is.

EILIS

I'm..I'm away to America.

Miss Kelly likes to think she knows everything, but this gives her pause. She soon recovers.

(CONTINUED)

MISS KELLY  
(scornful)  
Whose idea was that?

EILIS  
Father Flood in New York arranged  
it. Rose used to play golf with  
him, when he lived here. He  
sponsored me. He... he found me a  
job, and got me a visa, and..

MISS KELLY  
Well, we won't be needing you back  
here.

EILIS  
I don't sail for a month. I could  
work every Sunday until I go.

MISS KELLY  
I shall want to train a new girl up  
straight away.

EILIS  
But I could help.

MISS KELLY  
No, thank you.

She starts to turn her back on Eilis, but she has one last  
thing to say.

MISS KELLY  
Your poor sister.

EILIS  
(surprised)  
My sister?

MISS KELLY  
Oh, mothers are always being left  
behind in this country. But  
Rose...That's the end for her,  
isn't it? She'll be looking after  
your mother for the rest of her  
life.

This time she does turn her back and walk away.

Eilis is knocking at the door of a house not dissimilar to  
her own. She scarcely has time to complete a second knock,  
and the door flies open.

6

CONTINUED:

6

Her friend NANCY, already wearing her coat, smiles at Eilis, pulls the door shut behind her, and starts walking off down the street with Eilis trailing in her wake.

7

EXT. STREET. NIGHT

7

Nancy and Eilis walking arm-in-arm down the street. Now we can get a chance to look at Nancy properly: she's staggeringly pretty, film-star pretty. It helps that she's dressed up and made up to go out - Eilis looks a little wan by comparison, even though she's made an effort too - but even so, she's a stunner.

EILIS

You look beautiful, Nancy.

NANCY

Thank you.

EILIS

You look so beautiful it makes me despair of this place.

Nancy laughs.

NANCY

Why?

EILIS

You're the prettiest girl in County Wexford. You should be able to choose any man you want. And we're hoping that George Sheridan from the rugby club looks your way.

The scornful way she emphasises the social institution suggests that she doesn't think he's much of a catch.

NANCY

(sufficiently excited to miss the point)

Do you think he might?

EILIS

Of course he will. I know you like him, Nancy, but he's not Gary Cooper, is he? And those boys, with their hair-oil and their blazers..

She shudders her distaste.

NANCY

He has beautiful eyes.

(CONTINUED)

EILIS

And he's going to come into a  
beautiful shop in the Market  
Square.

NANCY

(changing the subject)  
Why didn't you wear your blue  
dress?

Now it is Eilis's turn to look a little discomfited.

EILIS

Are you asking why I didn't make  
more of an effort?

7

CONTINUED:

7

They have reached the small hall where the dance they are attending is taking place. They join a small queue to get in - all girls.

NANCY

What if one of the boys from the rugby club asked you to dance? Wouldn't you like the pleasure of telling him it's too late?

They laugh.

8

INT. DANCE HALL. NIGHT

8

Nancy and Eilis are leaning against the wall sipping lemonades. There aren't many men this early in the evening, and the dance-floor is almost deserted. Suddenly there is a buzz from the girls scattered around the place. Eilis's eyes are drawn to the same place as everyone else's: to the door. A group of young men, dressed almost identically, and just as Eilis described - blazers and hair-oil - are coming in. One of them is JIM, who we will meet much later.

These young men exude a confidence bordering on arrogance - they're hard to like *en masse* - and consequently the uniform looks slightly sinister. They ignore everyone in the room and make their way to the soft drinks bar. Eilis rolls her eyes. Nancy is blushing.

Later. Nancy and Eilis are still waiting. Eilis is watching the rugby club boys, Nancy is looking anywhere but. The camera picks out George, who is tall, confident, as oily as his friends - and no Gary Cooper.

EILIS

He's looked over here twice already.

NANCY

He hasn't!

EILIS

He's walking over here now.

NANCY

(still looking the other way)  
He's not!

He is. We see him. Nancy, however, still has her back to him.

EILIS

(impatient)  
Why would I keep lying to you about what George Sheridan's doing?

(CONTINUED)



George arrives. He nods at Nancy.

GEORGE

Would you like to dance?

Nancy is almost too nervous to nod her head.

Moments later. George and Nancy on the dance floor. Over their shoulders the camera picks up Eilis, making her way towards the door, holding her coat. A couple of the rugby clubbers whisper and snigger as they watch her leave.

It's Eilis's last night at home. Eilis, her mother MARY and her sister Rose, are eating, initially in silence. The sound of cutlery hitting crockery only serves to emphasise the tension and the sadness of the evening. Eilis keeps sneaking glances at the rest of her family, trying to gauge how unhappy they are.

There's no outward trace. Rose and her mother are both concentrating on their food, determined to give nothing away. Eventually Eilis has to say what is on her mind.

EILIS

(quietly)

I wish I had written to Father  
Flood about you, Rose.

ROSE

Me? I have a job. You had a couple  
of hours on a Sunday working for  
Nettles Kelly.

MARY

(mildly disapproving)

You shouldn't call her that.

ROSE

I think it's quite a kind name.  
Considering she's actually a  
terrible old witch.

Mary makes a scandalised face.

EILIS

I don't want to spend my last  
evening talking about her.

ROSE

Good.

But nobody knows what they do want to talk about.

MARY

They say it's hotter there in the summer, and colder in the winter.

Mary puts her knife and fork down despairingly.

MARY

(with deep but clearly displaced anxiety)

What in Heaven's name will she do about clothes?

ROSE

She'll buy them, mother.

MARY

She doesn't want to be wasting her money on clothes.

ROSE

She won't have much choice. She'll be there...

She stops herself from finishing the sentence. An even deeper and unhappier silence falls on the table.

Close on an old and very large suitcase. It's about two-thirds full of Eilis's things. Pull back to show Rose and Eilis peering into it.

EILIS

(wry)

There. It wasn't so hard to decide after all.

ROSE

Is that really everything you own? Oh, Eilis. I should have looked after you better. I should have taken you shopping twice a year, summer and winter.

EILIS

You've bought most of the clothes in this case. That's one of the reasons I'm going, because I can't buy my own.

ROSE

If it was just that, I'd spend every penny I had on you, gladly. But I can't buy you a future. I can't buy you the kind of life you need.

EILIS

(whispers)

I know. (Beat) But you'll come to see me there one day?

ROSE

Yes.

EILIS

And you'll look after yourself?

ROSE

You don't have to worry about me.

EILIS

And I'll come home to visit, won't I? Because I couldn't bear it if...

Rose has to stop this, because she can't bear it either.

ROSE

You haven't packed your shoes yet. They'll take up a bit of room.

Eilis is wedged at the deck-rail of a large passenger liner, along with a lot of other emigres, her large suitcase in front of her. Among the crowd on the dock below her are Rose and Mary. There are a lot of tears, from passengers and the people they are leaving behind. Rose and Mary, however, like Eilis, are keeping everything in. The ship blasts its horn to announce its imminent departure; everyone jumps and laughs nervously, and the waving becomes more frantic. Rose and Mary, however, suddenly turn away from the boat and push through the crowd. Rose looks back helplessly and blows Eilis a kiss. Eilis watches the backs of the two of them until they disappear out of sight.

Eilis bumps her case down the narrow steps deep in the bowels of the boat. She reaches a corridor and examines the sign on the wall directing passengers to their berths. She has to descend still deeper into the boat.

Eilis's cabin is tiny and windowless, and she has to share it with someone: there are two bunk beds. She wedges her suitcase into an available space.

She opens the bathroom door. The bathroom is tiny. It contains a toilet and a sink.

There is another door, apparently leading into the next cabin. A sign on the door says 'UNLOCK WHEN NOT IN USE'. Eilis pushes it open and sees two middle-aged women unpacking.

EILIS

Sorry.

She shuts it again quickly. She doesn't know what to do, so lies down on the bottom bunk with her hands behind her head, staring. She closes her eyes, but suddenly the cabin door bursts open and a glamorous blonde, late thirties, bustles in to the room with a large trunk. This is GEORGINA, her cabin-mate.

GEORGINA

Off!

Eilis sits up and stares at her, uncomprehending. Georgina waves a ticket at her.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

Number one. Bottom bunk. That's mine. You're on the top.

Eilis scrambles up the ladder to her bed. She can't sit up - the ceiling is too low - so she has to lie down, and is therefore unable to make eye-contact with Georgina throughout the scene.

GEORGINA

This is hell. Never again.

EILIS

(trying to be friendly)  
Never again to America?

GEORGINA

The mistake was coming home from America in the first place. I'd do anything to get out of this horrible cabin, and I mean anything. Let's go for a smoke.

EILIS

I don't.

Georgina rolls her eyes.

GEORGINA

Suit yourself. I'll see you later. Unless I find a nice man in First to smoke with.

She bustles out.

14

INT. DINING ROOM. NIGHT

14

Eilis is on her own in the Third Class dining room. She is eating a plate of very brown and very unappetising-looking mutton stew. She eats as much as she can, although a lot of the meat is gristle, which she has to extract from her mouth with a napkin, as discreetly as possible.

(CONTINUED)

She finishes, dabs her mouth with the napkin. The under-employed waiter comes over immediately to clear away her plate.

WAITER

It's good to see that not everybody's put off their dinner by the weather forecast.

Eilis looks at him blankly.

WAITER (CONT'D)

(cheerful)

It's supposed to be a rough one tonight, so none of the other passengers are eating. A few spoonfuls of soup, maybe, but not the mutton stew.

Comprehension dawns. Eilis looks stricken.

Eilis is standing in her nightgown, clutching her toothbrush and toothpaste. She is waiting outside the locked bathroom. She taps on the door. Nothing. She waits a few moments. She puts her ear to the door, but the only noise comes from the ships engines - in Third Class, a loud, deep constant. She grimaces suddenly, and closes her eyes. She's sweating. She knocks on the bathroom door again.

EILIS

(to the door)

Oh, please unlock it.

She can't wait any longer. She stumbles out into the corridor looking for a toilet...

...Nothing. She tries to go upstairs to the Second Class cabins, but the door at the bottom of the stairs is locked. She's desperate now. In an alcove of the corridor, she sees a mop and bucket. She picks up the bucket, ready to throw up in it - but as soon as she does so, she realises that her problems are at the other end. She puts the bucket on the floor, squats over it. She looks around desperately for something to wipe herself with, but there is only the mop. She hates herself, and everything that has led to her being here. She starts to throw up.

17 INT. CABIN. NIGHT

17

Eilis comes back in, holding the mop and the bucket. She knocks on the bathroom door again. No answer, but this time she hears the sound of retching. She pukes into the bucket. For a moment there is a little contrapuntal symphony of retching.

18 INT. CABIN. DAY

18

Eilis is asleep on the bottom bunk. Close on her face - green-tinged, sweaty. A hand touches her face, and Eilis opens her eyes. It's Georgina.

EILIS

I'm so sorry about the smell. And the bucket.

GEORGINA

(gently)

Oh, don't worry. The whole boat stinks. Even First Class. I've just been thrown out of there, by the way, so you'll have me throwing up in here too.

EILIS

The bathroom door was locked all night.

GEORGINA

(angry on Eilis's behalf)

Oh, those bastards. That's what people do. They keep the bathroom for themselves on rough nights. We'll fix them.

She fishes in a handbag and finds a nail-file. Deftly, she unlocks the bathroom door. There's nobody in there. Quickly, she pulls her trunk into the bathroom and jams it against the door on the other side. There is now no room in front of the toilet.

GEORGINA

It won't be very comfortable. But at least it's ours now.

They smile at each other. Almost immediately there is a furious knocking on the bathroom door. Georgina hurls herself against the door with a fury.

GEORGINA

Fuck off! Do you hear me? Fuck off! If you'd been nice last night, we would have played fair.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

18

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

But now you've got no toilet for five days, you bastards.

Eilis laughs, and then winces.

GEORGINA

Go on, you can use it. I'm going to get us some water. That's all you're allowed. You'll bring it all up again, but you won't feel so bad. And you'll be right as rain after a night's sleep.

19

INT. CABIN. DAY

19

Georgina comes into the cabin. Eilis emerges from the shower, drying herself. She's looking better.

GEORGINA

(mock-dramatic)

We have a peace treaty.

EILIS

With next door?

GEORGINA

Yes. They have given their solemn word never to lock the bathroom door when they're not using it. They know they're out of their depth with me.

The women smile at each other.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

Are you going to America to live?

EILIS

Yes.

GEORGINA

You have papers and everything?

EILIS

Yes. And a job.

GEORGINA

You have family there?

EILIS

No.

A beat.

(CONTINUED)



19

CONTINUED:

19

GEORGINA

Well. You'll make friends easy  
enough. Where will you be staying?

EILIS

In Brooklyn. New York.

Georgina smiles wryly.

GEORGINA

Ah. Well, try and remember that  
sometimes it's nice to meet people  
who don't know your auntie. Just  
every now and again.

20

EXT. DECK. DAY

20

Eilis and Georgina are leaning on the rails of the third-  
class deck, looking out to sea.

EILIS

I haven't been sick for hours.

GEORGINA

It's nice, isn't it?

EILIS

I'm very hungry.

GEORGINA

That's why you haven't been sick  
for hours. We can eat soon. Maybe  
tomorrow.

21

INT. CANTEEN. NIGHT

21

Georgina and Eilis eating in the canteen. The journey is  
nearly over, so there are more diners now. Both women look  
tired and pale. Georgina studies Eilis.

GEORGINA

Oh, dear. We'll have to do  
something with you. They'll put you  
in quarantine or something if you  
try to enter the country looking  
like that.

22

INT. CABIN. NIGHT

22

Georgina is pulling clothes out of Eilis's case.

GEORGINA

Nothing fancy. You mustn't look  
like a tart.

(CONTINUED)

22

CONTINUED:

22

She carries on pulling the plain-looking clothes out of the case.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

Oh. Well. Looking like a tart isn't going to be a problem.

She finds a white dress with a red floral pattern.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

That's not too bad.

EILIS

My sister gave me that.

GEORGINA

Wear it with this...

She finds a plain cardigan.

GEORGINA (CONT'D)

And this.

She pulls out a plain scarf.

23

INT. IMMIGRATION CENTRE. DAY

23

Eilis is in the queue to get in to the immigration centre, looking anxiously ahead of her. Her compatriots, men and women and children, are all around her. She is wearing make-up, and she looks very different - much less naive.

Over her shoulder, we see A VISTA OF THE MANHATTAN SKYLINE. Eilis stares at it for a little while, wide-eyed.

GEORGINA (V.O.)

Don't look too innocent. I'll put some rouge and mascara on you. And perhaps some eye-liner.

24

INT. IMMIGRATION CENTRE. DAY

24

Eilis inside, approaching the officials. We watch with her as a family is in the process of being turned away: a man, his wife, a toddler and a baby. The woman (and baby) are crying, the man distraught. They are clearly poor: the man's boots have holes in them.

GEORGINA (V.O.)

Polish your shoes, and don't cough, whatever you do. And stand up straight.

Eilis remembers to stand tall. She's looking at all the people around her, and the hard-luck stories they represent.

(CONTINUED)

24

CONTINUED:

24

A few minutes later. Eilis is showing her papers to the official.

GEORGINA (V.O.)

Don't be rude, or pushy, but don't look nervous.

It's as if Eilis remembers the advice even as we're hearing it: she suddenly lifts her eyes from the official's shoulders towards a point ahead of him - towards America.

GEORGINA (V.O.)

Think like an American. You have to know where you're going.

The official hands Eilis her papers back and ushers her through. She walks towards the light on the other side, and suddenly the sun blanches out everything; we just see a silhouette, walking into nowhere.

25

EXT. MRS. KEHOE'S STREET. EARLY EVENING

25

Eilis is struggling with her suitcase down a dimly-lit Brooklyn residential street.

26

INT. DINING ROOM, MRS. KEHOE'S HOUSE. EVENING

26

Round a dining table in a basement kitchen are five girls, including Eilis, and a middle-aged lady. This is the impeccably-dressed landlady of Eilis's lodging-house in Brooklyn, MRS KEHOE. The girls are standing and holding hands, while Mrs Kehoe says grace, so we get a good look at them.

Two of the girls - PATTY and DIANA - are young and attractive. Patty is the only native American in the house - the rest are Irish. Patty and Diana are a double-act, firm friends and quick to defend each other. SHEILA is older, glamorous in a femme fatale way, with a chequered history. There is constant tension between Patty and Diana on one side and Sheila on the other. MISS MCADAM is prim, plain, bespectacled, severe-looking and from Belfast.

MRS KEHOE

Bless us, oh Lord, and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty through Christ our Lord, Amen.

MISS MCADAM

Amen.

Patty and Diana exchange glances and try not to laugh at Miss McAdam's piety. Everyone sits down to eat.

(CONTINUED)

MRS KEHOE

I saw you had a letter today,  
Diana. Any news?

DIANA

Mr de Valera has had another  
operation on his eyes, she says.  
He's been in Holland.

MRS KEHOE

(dismissively)

I don't want news I can read in a  
newspaper.

SHEILA

(artfully)

Anyway, we would describe Mr de  
Valera as "politics", would we not,  
Mrs Kehoe? And we do not like  
politics at the dinner table.

Her firmness is parodic - she's making fun of Mrs Kehoe, who  
seems not to notice.

MRS KEHOE

We don't.

DIANA

(aggrieved)

It's not politics, to talk about  
eye operations.

MRS KEHOE

It is if the eyes belong to a  
politician. And I don't like to  
talk about hospitals very much,  
either. Patty, have you had any  
luck with that cold cream?

PATTY

No, Mrs Kehoe. It still hasn't come  
in. I asked Miss Tyler in  
Cosmetics. And I showed her the  
advertisement.

MRS KEHOE

I don't want to have to travel all  
the way to Manhattan for a jar of  
cold cream. Maybe you could have a  
look in Bartocci's for me, Eilis?

EILIS

Yes, Mrs Kehoe.

SHEILA

Oh, Bartocci's is bound to have it.

(CONTINUED)

Patty rolls her eyes.

DIANA

She doesn't know for sure, Mrs Kehoe. She's saying that Bartocci's is a better store than Webster's, just to get at Patty.

MRS KEHOE

They're both very good, and you girls are lucky to be working there. Eilis, from the look of you, you have greasy skin, is that right? What do you do about that?

EILIS

(embarrassed)

Just...Well, I wash it, Mrs Kehoe. With soap.

MISS MCADAM

There's nothing wrong with soap. Soap was good enough for Our Lord. I expect.

MRS KEHOE

And which brand did he use, Miss McAdam? Does the Bible tell you that?

DIANA

And our Lord was a man, anyway. He didn't care about greasy skin.

Mrs Kehoe shakes her head in disbelief.

MRS KEHOE

(sternly)

Ladies. No more talk about Our Lord's complexion at dinner, please. (Beat) Girls, you will help Eilis find something suitable, won't you?

There are enthusiastic murmurings of consent. Eilis tries to look pleased.

Eilis in the dark in her small bedroom, trying to sleep. It's hot, and the house is alive with noise, even late at night. There are footsteps on the ceiling above her, and the sound of a lavatory chain flushing through the wall. Down the hallway, there is the sound of a whispered conversation between two of the girls. Eilis gives up on sleep, opens her eyes properly and stares at the ceiling.

28 EXT. MRS KEHOE'S STREET. DAY 28

Early morning. Eilis shutting the door of Mrs Kehoe's brownstone behind her. She walks up the quiet street.

29 EXT. FULTON STREET. DAY 29

The camera picks Eilis out in the bustle of people. She's waiting to cross the road; on the other side is Bartocci's, the department store where she works.

30 INT. STAFF ROOM, BARTOCCI'S. DAY 30

Eilis takes her clock card from the holder in the wall, puts it in the machine, waits for the heavy thud of the punch, puts the card back in the holder. She walks to her locker, puts on the blue uniform that all the female shop assistants wear. As she changes, a colleague, DOROTHY - the same age as Eilis, but chattier, - and cattier - starts to change at the locker next to hers.

DOROTHY

Hi.

EILIS

Good morning.

They change in silence for a couple of moments.

DOROTHY

Did you go out last night?

Eilis looks at her blankly. Dorothy laughs.

DOROTHY

Out. The opposite of in.

EILIS

No.

DOROTHY

I went to see a movie with my boyfriend.

Eilis carries on changing. Dorothy becomes exasperated by Eilis's lack of engagement, and embarks on both sides of the conversation.

DOROTHY

"What did you see, Dorothy?" "I saw 'The Quiet Man', Eilis. They filmed it in Ireland." "Oh, I'm from Ireland." "I know you are. That's why I thought you might be interested."

(CONTINUED)

30

CONTINUED:

30

EILIS  
(sincerely)  
Thank you.

Eilis finishes changing and walks out of the room. Dorothy watches her go.

31

OMITTED

31

32

INT. BARTOCCI'S. DAY

32

Close on a small metal case with a hinged door on one end. We see Eilis's hand putting cash and a docket into the holder, and closing the door. Eilis pushes the holder firmly into a tube, and it whizzes up to the ceiling.

The camera follows the tube system a little way and then pulls back, to reveal the women's department of a beautiful 1950s department store in all its quiet, dignified splendour - lots of dark wood, lots of lovingly-arranged items of clothing. Very few of us have ever seen, or can remember properly, a store like this, but we ache for its loss anyway.

Eilis is standing behind the counter, smiling pleasantly at a customer, a middle-aged white woman.

EILIS  
Shouldn't be a moment.

They wait in silence. A few yards away, and unnoticed by Eilis initially, stands Eilis's supervisor MISS FORTINI - thirtysomething, utterly devoted to the store. She's watching Eilis carefully.

Finally Eilis spots her. Miss Fortini clearly makes her uncomfortable. Eilis tries to make herself look busy. She puts the stocking that the woman has bought into a bag, and then starts to write something down on a docket. Unseen by the customer, Miss Fortini tells Eilis in mime to speak and to smile. Eilis freezes even more. Miss Fortini steps towards her.

EILIS  
(in a rush)  
Is it still hot out there? I haven't been outside since this morning but I can tell that it might be. Very. It just..looks it.

She ends this awkward little speech with a forced smile, but it's enough to ward off Miss Fortini, who switches her attention elsewhere for a moment, to Eilis's visible relief.

CUSTOMER  
It's warm, yes.

(CONTINUED)

The metal tube returns with a whoosh and a clank. Eilis extracts the change and the docket, and hands both to the customer. The moment she has gone, Miss Fortini returns.

MISS FORTINI

Remember: if people like it here,  
they'll come back.

Eilis nods, as if Miss Fortini has said something deep, or interesting.

MISS FORTINI

So you treat every customer as if  
she's a new friend. Is that a deal?

EILIS

I'll try.

MISS FORTINI

(gently)

It's not a matter of trying. It's  
what you have to do. (Beat) Do you  
try to wear panties every day?

The analogy is slightly off, inappropriate, and Eilis is thrown for a moment.

EILIS

No. I mean, I don't try. I..I just  
put them on.

MISS FORTINI

You see what I'm saying?

EILIS

Yes.

MISS FORTINI

Good.

Lunch time. While Eilis eats her grilled cheese sandwich at the counter, she watches her fellow diners - male colleagues smoking and joking, girlfriends talking animatedly, people on their own reading the newspaper. Everyone seems to know what they're doing there except Eilis - everyone seems comfortable in their own skin, absorbed in their environment. Eilis looks anxious and uncomfortable and lost. She finishes her sandwich, swallows as quickly as she can, catches the eye of the young, handsome waiter.

EILIS

Could I have the bill please?



WAITER

I hope that when I go through the pearly gates, the first sound I hear is you asking me for the bill in that lovely Irish brogue.

Eilis smiles nervously. She leaves some money on the counter and stands up to leave.

WAITER

See you tomorrow, sweetheart.

Eilis gives a quick, thin smile and walks out.

EXT. STREET. DAY

Eilis comes out of the lunch joint and exhales.

INT. DINING ROOM, MRS. KEHOE'S HOUSE. EVENING.

The girls and Mrs Kehoe are eating dinner, in exactly the same formation as the first time we saw them.

MRS KEHOE

Have they told you a date for the nylon sale yet, Eilis? We've never had a Bartocci's girl living here. (She taps her nose) We may get some inside information.

EILIS

I haven't been told anything.

PATTY

I'll bet you wouldn't let on if you had.

DIANA

She's that sort. More loyal to her bosses than to her friends.

PATTY

Like a Red spy.

Eilis is flustered.

SHEILA

(wearily)  
Oh, dear God.

MRS KEHOE

I'll thank you to keep His name out of a conversation about nylons, thank you very much.

(MORE)

35

CONTINUED:

35

MRS KEHOE (CONT'D)  
He might be everywhere, but He's  
not in Bartocci's on sale day.

SHEILA  
I'm sorry, Mrs Kehoe.

They all settle back down.

MRS KEHOE  
I was glad to see you finally got  
some letters from home today,  
Eilis.

Eilis looks up from her plate as if electrocuted.

EILIS  
Did I? I..I forgot to check.

She half-stands - she can't wait.

MRS KEHOE  
They'll still be there after  
dinner.

EILIS  
Oh. Yes. I'm sorry.

36

INT. BEDROOM. EVENING

36

The door bursts open and Eilis comes rushing in, clutching her letters. She sits down on the bed, and tears the first one open. As soon as she starts reading she begins to weep uncontrollably. We hear ROSE's voice.

ROSE (V.O)  
The big news here is that since you  
left, Mummy has stopped shopping at  
Nettles Kelly's.

36A

INT. OFFICE. DAY.

36A

Rose is at her desk, writing to Eilis.

ROSE (V.O.)  
As you know, her bread wasn't  
always fresh, and she overcharged  
for everything. And she's awful.

36B

INT. BEDROOM. EVENING.

36B

Rose's voice fades out. Eilis's crying reaches a new level - she has to stop reading because she can no longer see. The banal domestic details of her old life intensify her homesickness to an agonising pitch.

37 INT. DINING ROOM, MRS. KEHOE'S HOUSE, DAY 37

The girls are eating their breakfast and ignoring Eilis, who is still reading and re-reading her letters. She's not crying, but she's pale and unhappy-looking.

MARY (V.O.)

I haven't told her to her face.  
There's no need. She knows that she  
overcharges and her bread's not  
fresh.

38 INT. DINER. DAY 38

Eilis at what is obviously her usual position in the diner. Her sandwich and glass of milk are untouched in front of her. She's reading the letters again.

ROSE (V.O.)

We talk about you every evening, of  
course. We want to know everything.  
I'm sure you're busy, but even if  
your letters were two hundred  
pages, they wouldn't be long enough  
for your mother. Take care of  
yourself. Love.

39 INT. BARTOCCI'S. DAY 39

Eilis at her counter. Her customary look of timidity has been replaced by something altogether more despairing, and as she serves a customer, she is quite clearly struggling for composure. Miss Fortini watches from a distance. The customer takes her purchase and leaves. Miss Fortini walks up to her.

MISS FORTINI

Is it your time of the month?

Eilis shakes her head.

MISS FORTINI (CONT'D)

So what is it?

Eilis cannot stop the tears. She shakes her head again.

MISS FORTINI (CONT'D)

You cannot carry on like this. You  
must either cheer up, or pretend to  
cheer up. Take some time off now.  
Go and sit in the staff room.

40

INT. STAFF ROOM. DAY

40

Eilis sitting on her own in the large, shabby staff room, full of overflowing ashtrays and coffee-cups with lipstick rings on them. She's still holding her glass of water. Dorothy, her colleague, comes in.

DOROTHY

I forgot something.

She rummages, in a desultory fashion, through a pile of newspapers and magazines on a table.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)

I heard you pulled a stunt. Nice work if you can get it, sitting on a chair in the staff room sipping a glass of water.

The door opens, and Miss Fortini comes into the room with FATHER FLOOD. Father Flood is bearded, pleasant-looking, clearly trustworthy. He smiles warmly at Eilis.

FATHER FLOOD

I'm so sorry, Eilis. This is all my fault.

Eilis looks at him, surprised. Father Flood is about to continue, but he looks at Dorothy first.

FATHER FLOOD (CONT'D)

Would you give us a moment? Thank you.

Dorothy leaves, throwing Eilis a look. Miss Fortini notes it.

FATHER FLOOD (CONT'D)

I'd been led to believe that you didn't need looking after. Franco Bartocci said you were doing great here. Ma Kehoe said you were the nicest lodger she'd ever had...

Eilis smiles.

FATHER FLOOD

What?

EILIS

Ma Kehoe!

Miss Fortini, observing the slight uplift in Eilis's mood, slips out of the room.

FATHER FLOOD

Don't ever call her that to her face.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLOOD (CONT'D)

But I'd forgotten just how bad it feels to be away from home. Do you spend every second thinking about giving up here and going back?

Eilis nods vehemently.

FATHER FLOOD (CONT'D)

But at the same time, you know you can't, because there's nothing there. It would be the end of you.

She says nothing.

FATHER FLOOD (CONT'D)

I have enrolled you in a night class. For book-keeping. Brooklyn College, the best there is. It will be three nights a week, but you'll get a good qualification at the end of it. And I've paid your tuition for the first semester.

Eilis looks at him wonderingly.

EILIS

Why?

Father Flood smiles.

FATHER FLOOD

"Why?" Not, "Thank you"?

Eilis looks stricken.

EILIS

I'm sorry. Thank you. But...Why?

Father Flood thinks for a moment.

FATHER FLOOD

I was amazed that someone as clever as you couldn't find proper work. I have been here too long: I forget what it's like in Ireland. So when your sister wrote to me about you, I said that the Church would try to help. Anyway, we need Irish girls in Brooklyn.

EILIS

I wish I could stop feeling that I want to be an Irish girl in Ireland.

40

CONTINUED:

40

FATHER FLOOD

All I can say is that it will pass.  
Homesickness is like most  
sicknesses. It will make you feel  
wretched, and then it will move on  
to somebody else.

Eilis thinks about this, and nods decisively.

41

INT. BROOKLYN COLLEGE. NIGHT

41

Eilis listening to a lecture in her night class. She's absorbed, anxious, furiously taking notes. She is the only woman in the class; the men are all either Jewish or Italian. The lecturer, MR ROSENBLUM, is in his forties, bespectacled, and wearing a skull-cap. He's animated by his subject, but it's clear that most of the class are despairingly perplexed.

MR ROSENBLUM

Now, Taylor versus Standard Gas Co  
is one of the most important  
corporate cases decided in the  
Supreme Court in the last twenty  
years. This was the case  
responsible for the Deep Rock  
doctrine, so it's maybe the biggest  
milestone in parent-subsidary law.  
In public utility integration  
proceedings alone...

He stops, looks at his students, to emphasise the point he is making.

MR ROSENBLUM (CONT'D)

.. literally thousands of investors  
may be affected by its application.

We see a close-up of Eilis's pad: she's underlining the words 'literally thousands'.

42

INT. BROOKLYN COLLEGE - CORRIDOR. NIGHT

42

Eilis is sitting outside the lecture room on a wooden bench, while the other students stretch their limbs and yawn. She's eating a sandwich. A young Jewish man is sitting a few feet away from her, doing the same thing. He looks at her.

YOUNG MAN

Did you understand any of that? I  
mean, a single word?

Eilis, eating, shakes her head, covers her mouth with her hands, laughs.

(CONTINUED)

EILIS

He's not even reading from a book.  
He just knows all this.

He stands up.

YOUNG MAN

Let's hope the next hour is easier.

He smiles at her and goes back into the hall as Eilis crams the last remaining crust into her mouth.

Dinner time, all the girls and their landlady, the usual formation. Miss McAdam, the battle-axe from Belfast, is holding forth.

MISS MCADAM

One of the things that ruins  
Christmas in America is the turkey.  
It all tastes of sawdust.

MRS KEHOE

So that's one cheese sandwich for  
Miss McAdam, and extra turkey for  
everyone else.

The girls snigger; Diana brays.

MRS KEHOE (CONT'D)

Ladies, please. Eilis, Father Flood  
told me about your Christmas plans.

DIANA

Oh, you're not serving lunch to the  
old fellas who've got nowhere to  
go, are you? He asks us every year,  
and we always say no.

SHEILA

You're a saint, Eilis. They smell  
awful.

PATTY

Sheila knows how they smell because  
that's where she goes husband-  
hunting.

Diana brays again.

MRS KEHOE

As I cannot stand to hear Diana  
laugh again, I would appreciate it  
if you kept your witticisms to  
yourself, Patty.

(MORE)

43

CONTINUED:

43

MRS KEHOE (CONT'D)

It's a marvellous thing you're doing, Eilis. A Christian thing. I wish there were more like you. I'll be doing some of the cooking myself.

Silence falls around the table. The other girls look at Eilis, some pityingly, some clearly irritated.

44

EXT. STREET. DAY

44

It's a bright, cold Christmas morning. Mrs Kehoe and Eilis are on their way to Father Flood's lunch. They're both carrying big bags of potatoes.

MRS KEHOE

I know how you're feeling, Eilis. The first Christmas away is hard for all my girls, but there's nothing I can do. All I can say is that the next one won't be as bad.

Eilis cannot afford to think that far ahead, and in any case there is little consolation in Mrs Kehoe's words.

EILIS

(quiet)

No. I suppose not.

45

INT. PARISH HALL. DAY

45

The hall is old, and shabby, but it has been decorated with paper streamers, and it looks cheery and welcoming. There are several long trestle tables, each the length of the hall. Eilis and many other women, including Mrs Kehoe, all wearing paper hats, are laying the tables. Father Flood looks on anxiously.

FATHER FLOOD

I think we will have to open the doors, ready or not. Maureen?

A woman standing near the large double doors unbolts them and opens them. Immediately, old, shabby, tubercular men start to pour through the door in an apparently never-ending stream. It is a haunting, moving sight: the lost, the lonely and the defeated. Eilis forgets herself and stares at them.

EILIS

(to Father Flood)

How many are we expecting?

FATHER FLOOD

There were two hundred last year. There may be more this.

(CONTINUED)



Eilis and Father Flood watch as the men are chivvied along to one of the long trestle tables. Almost immediately they are served with soup and stout.

FATHER FLOOD (CONT'D)

All Irish. And all Irish men, more or less. The occasional couple, when the woman is too old to cook.

EILIS

Why don't they go home?

FATHER FLOOD

If there's nothing at home for a young clever girl such as yourself, there's nothing at home for men like these. Some of them have been here nearly fifty years and have lost touch with everyone. These are the men who built the tunnels and the bridges and the highways. God alone knows what they live on now.

Eilis becomes fixated by one particular man. He is wearing an old brown coat and a scarf, and his cap almost obscures his face. She looks as though she's seen a ghost. She puts her hand to her mouth in shock.

FATHER FLOOD (CONT'D)

Don't tell me you know someone here.

Eilis can't speak for a moment.

EILIS

My da.

FATHER FLOOD

I was told that your father had passed away.

Eilis recovers herself.

EILIS

Yes. He did. Four years ago. I'm sorry.

FATHER FLOOD

I understand. Christmas lunch in the Parish Hall... It's like seeing faces in the fire. It's happened to me. I have seen men from my childhood who must have been dead thirty years or more. Which one?

Eilis points at the man in the brown coat.

FATHER FLOOD (CONT'D)

Ah. Frankie Doran. He's not your father.

EILIS

Do you know everyone here?

FATHER FLOOD

No. But I know him. You'll see why later.

Later. The room is filled with smoke and conversation and laughter. The tables are being cleared away, and bottles in brown carrier bags are being passed around. In a corner of the room, two men are playing fiddles and another a small accordion. Father Flood pulls out a chair, stands on it and clears his throat. Slowly, the room falls silent.

FATHER FLOOD

I don't want to interrupt the proceedings, but I'm sure you'd like to show your appreciation to all the ladies here for their hard day's work.

Father Flood leads the applause. Some of the men are applauding in Eilis's direction - she's the youngest helper in the room - and she blushes, smiles, looks down at her feet.

FATHER FLOOD

And by way of a thank you present... As many of you know, there's a great singer in the room today, and perhaps he can be persuaded to entertain us all. Frankie?

The man in the brown coat gets to his feet and starts to sing in Irish. The musicians in the corner join in, tentatively at first, but then with confidence and sympathy. He sings the slow, mournful ballad beautifully, and the smoke and squalor of the room, the poverty of the diners, become beautiful too. The haunting music carries on over the following montage:

Two men, both in their sixties, are swinging punches at each other. Some of the men watch on amused; Father Flood and a couple of the others try to separate them.

47 INT. PARISH HALL. DAY 47

The room is nearly empty. Father Flood, Eilis and the other ladies are trying to rouse some of the casualties of the lunch; it's like a battlefield. One or two of the men are lying in pools of their own urine.

48 EXT. PARISH HALL. DUSK 48

Eilis steps out into a blizzard. There is a man sitting against the wall, asleep.

49 EXT. BROOKLYN. DUSK 49

Eilis making her way through the deserted streets, alone, the wind and snow cutting through her.

Montage and music end.

50 INT. HALLWAY, MRS. KEHOE'S HOUSE. NIGHT 50

Eilis enters Mrs Kehoe's house, shakes herself off, takes off her coat. We can hear, from upstairs, the peals of laughter and tipsy shrieks of the other lodgers. Mrs Kehoe emerges from the front room.

MRS KEHOE

Would you like to come into the front room for a glass of something? You've earned it.

EILIS

Thank you.

51 INT. FRONT ROOM, MRS KEHOE'S HOUSE. NIGHT 51

The room is large, and surprisingly well-furnished: old rugs, heavy, comfortable-looking furniture, dark pictures in gold frames. There is an old gramophone and a wireless in one corner of the room, and a roaring fire in the hearth. Eilis takes it all in while Mrs Kehoe pours her a glass of sherry.

MRS KEHOE

You survived.

EILIS

Oh, it wasn't so bad.

Mrs Kehoe gives her the sherry and they sit down.

EILIS (CONT'D)

Happy Christmas.

(CONTINUED)

MRS KEHOE

Cheers.

They sip their drinks ruminatively.

MRS KEHOE (CONT'D)

Miss McAdam is leaving us. She is going to live with her sister in Manhattan.

EILIS

Ah.

MRS KEHOE

She has the best room in the house. The basement. It's the biggest and the warmest and the quietest and the best-appointed, and it has its own entrance.

Eilis doesn't say anything, but she knows what's coming.

MRS KEHOE

I can only let a certain kind of girl stay there, do you see?

Eilis nods, while suppressing a smile. Mrs Kehoe notices her amusement.

MRS KEHOE

Oh, and I'm not talking about looks, here. (Beat) Although I will admit that God gave Miss McAdam an advantage, when I had to think about who I could trust to live down there. You're a pretty girl, Eilis, but you're sensible. So. You're having the room and that's that. If you're working tomorrow, you can pack tonight, and I'll have your things moved in the morning.

EILIS

Will the other girls not mind?

MRS KEHOE

(with satisfaction)

Oh, I expect so. What don't they mind?

She drains her sherry.

MRS KEHOE (CONT'D)

It's been a long day.

Eilis realises this is her cue to leave.

(CONTINUED)

51

CONTINUED:

51

EILIS

Thank you, Mrs Kehoe.

She puts her sherry down and leaves the room, leaving Mrs Kehoe staring into the fire.

52

INT. DINING ROOM, MRS. KEHOE'S HOUSE. EVENING

52

There has been a significant change at the dinner table: DOLORES, an Irish country girl - red hair, freckles, slow on the uptake - has replaced Miss McAdam. There is an atmosphere around the table that is new - the teasing and occasional outbreaks of bitchiness have been replaced by a sullen and resentful silence. It becomes clear that the ill-will is directed at the newcomer.

Mrs Kehoe attempts to change the atmosphere.

MRS KEHOE

Girls, you'll take Dolores to the dance with you on Saturday night, won't you?

DOLORES

(delighted)

There's a dance?

MRS KEHOE

Down at the parish hall. Father Flood doesn't think there's enough for you girls to do at the weekends.

DIANA

Oh, there's plenty for us to do. He just doesn't want us doing it.

Laughter around the table.

MRS KEHOE

There'll be no alcohol, but you can have fun without it.

DIANA

(with obvious insincerity)

Oh, Patty and I aren't going this week. We're... going to see a movie instead.

Eilis watches the dynamic carefully. She doesn't want to get involved.

MRS KEHOE

Well, I'm sure Dolores would enjoy a movie just as well.

(CONTINUED)

DOLORES

I would, very much. There are so many more movies here in New York than in Cavan.

SHEILA

Yes, it's surprising, isn't it? You'd think it would be the other way around.

Patty sniggers. Diana gives one of her awful laughs. The dynamic of the group has clearly changed, with the advent of Dolores: the relationship between Patty/Diana and Sheila is less adversarial.

PATTY

Of course, you'd be welcome to join us, Dolores. So long as you don't mind being a gooseberry.

MRS KEHOE

Ah, so you both miraculously found boyfriends over the last couple of days, did you? Well, I hope you have more luck with these than you did with the last few.

Sheila cannot resist a smile of satisfaction.

MRS KEHOE

Will you be going, Eilis?

EILIS

Yes, Mrs Kehoe.

MRS KEHOE

Well, you can look after Dolores, then.

EILIS

Of course.

Eilis is writing a letter in her new bedroom. It is so much bigger and nicer than her previous room - it has a fire, a rocking chair, rugs on the floor, and a desk, at which she is sitting. She has photographs of Rose and her mother up on the mantelpiece. Suddenly there is a knock on the door. Eilis walks over and opens it - Patty and Diana are standing there.

DIANA

(whispering)

We need to talk to you.

EILIS

What is it now?

She pointedly doesn't ask them in.

PATTY

It's that Dolores. She's a scrubber.

Diana starts to laugh, and Patty claps a hand over her mouth.

PATTY

It's true. She cleans houses. We can't have her at the table with us. We're shopgirls and stenographers, not scrubbers.

EILIS

I'm trying to study.

She begins to close the door in their faces.

DIANA

A scrubber, from Cavan, living under...

Eilis closes the door.

DIANA (O.S.)

...our roof?

Dolores and Eilis are queueing to get into the dance. We've seen this before, back in Ireland, with Eilis and Nancy. But Dolores is no Nancy. She has made a huge and grotesquely misplaced effort for the dance. She's wearing a cheap leather jacket, a frilly white blouse and white skirt, black stockings and garish bright red lipstick. Eilis's discomfort is acute.

And the surroundings are different, too. A group of African American men are sitting on steps nearby, playing a game with dice; two men wearing yarmulkes walk through the queue.

Inside, however, Ireland has been successfully recreated: there's the non-alcoholic bar, the nearly empty dance-floor, the Irish musicians. Eilis is sitting next to Dolores on a wooden bench, watching the dancing. Eilis looks bored and unhappy.

DOLORES

God, there's nobody here. How are we supposed to get a fella if there's nobody here?

EILIS

I expect most people will come after nine.

DOLORES

People? Or fellas?

EILIS

Some of the people will be fellas.

DOLORES

I'd love to meet a fella.

Eilis closes her eyes despairingly.

DOLORES

Have you had an American fella? Are they different?

Eilis ignores her.

DOLORES

(twittering, in a rush)

My aunt went with an American fella once, in London, after the war. She said he was different. I've always wondered what she meant. I wish she'd told me.

EILIS

(dry)

I don't suppose it was anything terribly complicated.

Eilis shuffles down the bench a little way. Suddenly the doors burst open and a group of people come in - mostly young women, but a couple of young men, too. Patty and Diana, dressed up to the nines, are among them. Immediately the atmosphere in the hall changes. More people start to dance, there's more laughter and enjoyment.

DOLORES

They came! The liars!

Eilis ignores her again. Dolores shuffles up to her on the bench.



DOLORES

Did you see? What a pair of  
bitches. That's what the old woman  
called them. She said they were all  
bitches, apart from you.

Eilis has had enough. She has had enough of Dolores; she has  
had enough of being the kind of person who will look after  
Dolores. She hesitates for a moment, then stands up and goes  
to talk to Patty and Diana.

PATTY

(recognising the symbolism  
of the moment, and  
amused)  
Well, hello.

EILIS

Hello. It's good to see you.

PATTY

I can see why. I don't know what  
you looked like, sitting there, but  
you sure didn't look like you were  
having a good time.

Patty appraises her.

PATTY

Come with me.

We see the reflection of the girls in the mirror as Patty  
fiddles with Eilis's hair.

PATTY

I know.

She rummages around in her handbag and pulls out a couple of  
hair-grips. She uses them to put Eilis's hair up for her.

PATTY

There. That's better. Now you don't  
look like you've just come in from  
milking the cows.

EILIS

Is that what I looked like?

PATTY

Just a bit. Nice clean cows. Let's  
go.

57

INT. PARISH HALL. NIGHT

57

Eilis is standing with Patty and a group of her friends, including a young man with heavily oiled hair who is teaching Eilis the steps to the dance that is currently happening on the dance floor. She is slightly distracted by a young man staring at her and smiling, a little distance away. This is TONY - dark, attractive, white teeth, muscular. She ignores him and carries on with her lesson. When she looks back, he's still staring, still smiling.

YOUNG MAN WITH OILY HAIR  
(shouting over the music)  
Maybe we could have a dance later?

EILIS  
I'm sorry?

YOUNG MAN WITH OILY HAIR  
A dance? Later?

EILIS  
Oh. Sure.

He smiles and leads Patty onto the dance-floor, flirtatiously enough to suggest that it was Patty he was interested in all the time. The moment he's gone, Tony makes a move.

TONY  
Are you here with that guy? The one  
who was teaching you to dance?

Unlike just about every other man at the dance, Tony is American.

EILIS  
No.

TONY  
So would you dance with me?

EILIS  
I'm not sure he taught me anything.

TONY  
Doesn't matter. The secret is to  
look as though you know what you're  
doing.

EILIS  
Ah. I wish someone had told me that  
years ago.

He leads her into the middle of the other dancing couples, and they start trying to pick up the steps. It is apparent that Tony can dance, but he doesn't want to show Eilis up, so he assumes her levels of incompetence and uncertainty.

(CONTINUED)

Later. Tony and Eilis are dancing cheek-to-cheek - not smooching, but clearly relaxed in each other's company. Over Tony's shoulder, Eilis catches Patty's eye. Patty makes a so-so face. Eilis ignores her.

TONY

Where do you live?

Eilis pauses, and then decides it's OK to tell him.

EILIS

Clinton Street.

TONY

Yeah? That's on my way home. Can I walk you?

EILIS

I'm going to say yes, then I'm going to tell you why.

He laughs.

TONY

So I don't get the wrong idea?

Eilis pauses again. It wouldn't be the wrong idea. It just wouldn't be the only idea.

EILIS

I suppose so. Is there a girl in a leather jacket sitting on her own on the bench over there?

Tony moves so that he can look discreetly. The camera picks out Dolores, sitting on her own, picking at her fingernails.

TONY

(incredulously)  
You don't know her?

EILIS

I do. She lives in my boarding house, and she's awful. If I leave with you, I'm sure she'd understand. You'd be rescuing me.

TONY

I get it.

Tony smiles a lot, winningly and unaffectedly.

EILIS

She'll be OK, won't she?

TONY

Sure she will.

58

EXT. STREET. NIGHT

58

Eilis and Tony walking through the dark streets of Brooklyn, huddled against each other for warmth. They walk in silence, and then Tony blurts out

TONY

I'm not Irish.

EILIS

You don't sound Irish.

TONY

I need to make this clear: no part of me is Irish. I don't have Irish parents or grandparents or anything. I'm Italian. My parents are, anyway.

EILIS

So what were you doing at an Irish dance? Don't the Italians have dances?

TONY

Yeah. And I wouldn't want to take you to one. They behave like Italians all night.

EILIS

And what does that mean?

TONY

Oh, you know.

EILIS

No.

TONY

(mumbly)  
Hands.

EILIS

Too many of them?

TONY

I think it could seem that way, if you were a girl. Listen, I want everything to be out in the open. I came to the Irish dance because I really like Irish girls.

EILIS

And I was the only one that would dance with you?

(CONTINUED)

TONY

Oh, no, it wasn't...

EILIS

Oh, so you danced with loads of others?

Eilis is teasing him, and Tony knows it, but he's not as quick as she is. He tries to formulate a response, gives up, grins again.

They arrive at Mrs Kehoe's house.

EILIS

This is me.

TONY

Can I take you next week? Maybe get something to eat first?

EILIS

I'd like that. Good night.

She smiles warmly at him, and goes into the house without kissing him.

Eilis and Tony getting something to eat first, before the dance. They are eating in a cheap diner, with formica-topped tables. They're waiting for their food.

TONY (O.S.)

So...What do you do when you're not working?

She thinks.

EILIS

Well. There's school. Just, you know..Brooklyn College. I'm studying book-keeping.

TONY (O.S.)

You want to be a book-keeper?

EILIS

I want to be an accountant one day. But, yes, book-keeping first.

TONY (O.S.)

Wow. Is it difficult?

EILIS

I'm talking too much. Tell me about plumbing.

TONY

You know enough about plumbing already.

EILIS

I don't know anything.

TONY

You know that taps drip and toilets get blocked and that's all you need to know. I don't know anything about book-keeping.

Suddenly it is as if Eilis has been switched on, and the following comes out in an unstoppable, unbroken stream.

EILIS

There's a lot to it. There's all the maths, of course, but that's not so complicated. The double-entry system, that takes a while to get used to. And we study company law, too, and that terrifies me. (Fades) So we had to read about an insurance company that went bankrupt in the 1930s, and all the, the legal issues that...

Later. Tony is finishing off his food and listening. Eilis's food goes untouched, although several times her loaded fork almost makes it to her mouth.

EILIS

(her voice fading in)

...she plays golf, and she's really good at it. And if she'd been at the dance last Saturday, then I don't think you'd have looked at me twice, because Rose is beautiful.

Tony has finished - his plate is clean.

TONY (O.S.)

I'm worried you haven't eaten anything.

EILIS

(smiling)

Too busy talking.

The girls eating their supper in a mysterious silence. Patty, Diana and Sheila are finding it hard not to giggle. Mrs Kehoe puts down her knife and fork in disgust.

MRS KEHOE

What is the matter with you girls now?

PATTY

Nothing the matter with us, Mrs Kehoe.

She looks steadily at Eilis.

MRS KEHOE

Is this all because Eilis has found herself a young man?

DIANA

(mock-surprised)

Eilis's got herself a young man? We didn't know. She won't say anything about him.

MRS KEHOE

And why should she, to you awful gossip-mongers? Anyway, I met him on Saturday night when he called for Eilis, and he's a gentleman.

PATTY

Well, will you tell us what you know about him, Mrs Kehoe? We're starving here. We know that he's quite nice-looking.

SHEILA

I didn't like his shoes much.

EILIS

What on earth is wrong with his shoes?

SHEILA

They were a funny colour.

MRS KEHOE

I'll tell you this much: I am going to ask Father Flood to preach a sermon on the dangers of giddiness. I now see that giddiness is the eighth deadly sin. A giddy girl is every bit as evil as a slothful man, and the noise she makes is a lot worse. Now, enough.

The shop is quiet. Dorothy and Eilis are unpacking boxes and putting garments out on shelves.

DOROTHY

You know what I hate about the end of winter? Now it all starts again with the swimsuits. We're gonna spend hours and hours talking about one stupid item of clothing with a woman who's so afraid of what she looks like. But in the winter she'll splash thirty-five dollars on a coat in the blink...

Dorothy is staring into a box she has just opened.

DOROTHY

I don't believe it.

Eilis looks at her quizzically.

DOROTHY

I'm gonna talk to Miss Fortini about this.

She marches off. Eilis peers into the box. It contains Red Fox stockings. She takes a packet out and examines it.

Later. Miss Fortini comes over to speak to Eilis. She's angry.

MISS FORTINI

Eilis, I want you to know that Dorothy has left our employment.

Eilis looks at her wonderingly.

MISS FORTINI

As of today. She's clearing her locker. (Beat) Listen. Brooklyn is changing, and we have to change with it.

Eilis nods, even though she is mystified by the series of apparent non-sequiturs - the stockings, Dorothy, the speech.

MISS FORTINI

Our old customers are moving out to Long Island and we can't follow them, so we need new customers every week. Which means we welcome every single person who comes into this store. They all have money to spend. Remember that.

EILIS

I will.

Eilis shows Miss Fortini the Red Fox stockings.



EILIS

Should I put these out on the shelves?

MISS FORTINI

Yes. Of course. Do you understand anything I've been saying?

Beat.

EILIS

No, Miss Fortini.

MISS FORTINI

(sighing)

Red Fox stockings are specially designed for Negro customers. Dorothy was unhappy about us selling them. I asked her to leave. Are you unhappy?

EILIS

No, Miss Fortini.

MISS FORTINI

Good. Quickly, now.

Miss Fortini walks off. Eilis immediately turns her attention to the stockings.

Eilis comes out of her classroom with a couple of other students, books under her arm, and begins to walk down the stairs. In the entrance hall she can see Tony, looking around anxiously, clearly worried about missing her. She stops - she clearly isn't expecting to see him. She watches him for a moment - he doesn't see her - and she takes in his open face, his vulnerability... He sees her and his face breaks out into a radiant and relieved smile. She smiles back, and walks down the remaining steps towards him.

TONY

All I want to do is travel home with you. No drink, no food, no nothing. I know you have to study, and get some sleep. I'll take you to your house and then say goodnight. Otherwise it's too long to wait.

He says this with such unaffected simplicity that it's impossible not to love him. Eilis smiles her assent.

64 INT. TROLLEY-CAR. NIGHT

64

Eilis and Tony sitting side-by-side on the half empty trolley-car.

TONY

I want to ask you something. And you're gonna say, oh, it's too soon, I don't really know him well enough, we've only been out a couple times...

Eilis pantomimes alarm.

TONY

Oh, it's nothing so bad. But it is something that most guys...

EILIS

(laughing)

Please just ask. You're beginning to terrify me.

TONY

Oh. Sure. Will you come for dinner and meet my family sometime?

EILIS

(laughing)

That's it? I'd love to.

TONY

You like Italian food?

EILIS

I don't know. I've never eaten it.

TONY

Really? They don't have it in Ireland?

EILIS

Maybe in Dublin. Not in my town.

TONY

It's the best food in the world.

EILIS

Well, why would I not like it?

TONY

You're in a good mood, right?

She looks at him.

EILIS

Yes. Why?

(CONTINUED)

TONY

It's just... I like how you're being, I don't know the word. When you go along with everything.

EILIS

Amenable?

TONY

(delighted with this addition to his vocabulary)

Yeah. Amenable. OK, so while you're being amenable..Can we go see a movie this week? When you're not at night classes? And if the date goes well, can we see a movie next week, too?

EILIS

I'll sign up for two movies.

TONY

Really?

EILIS

Yes. Even if the first date is a disaster, I'll give it another chance.

Tony's smile couldn't be any broader.

Eilis, in her uniform, serving a customer. Off to the side, Miss Fortini is watching her at work. We've seen this before - but this time, Eilis is unaware of Miss Fortini's scrutiny. She's absorbed in her work, chatting to the customer, a young woman in her thirties.

EILIS

It certainly feels like it, but this is my first year, so I don't know how to judge.

CUSTOMER

Well, congratulations. You survived your first New York winter.

EILIS

Oh, it wasn't so bad.

CUSTOMER

Really? It's colder in Ireland?

EILIS

Oh, no. It's colder here.

CUSTOMER

(laughs)

Over here, that's how we judge the winter. On how cold it is.

The cylindrical tube shoots back to Eilis's counter, and she takes out the receipt and the change and hands it to the customer.

EILIS

But you have heating. Heating everywhere. You're only cold outside.

CUSTOMER

I guess that's true. Thanks for your help.

The customer walks away, and Miss Fortini comes over.

MISS FORTINI

Eilis! You're like a different person! Where did that miserable little mouse go?

Eilis smiles and shrugs.

MISS FORTINI

The homesickness has gone?

Eilis looks startled, as if she has only just realised.

EILIS

Yes.

MISS FORTINI

How did you do it? Maybe I can pass some advice on to the next poor girl who feels that way.

Eilis's face lights up.

EILIS

I...I met somebody. An Italian fella.

MISS FORTINI

(mock despondent)

Oh, no. Well, I'm not passing that on. I'd rather have them homesick than heartbroken. Does he talk about baseball all the time? Or his mother?

65

CONTINUED:

65

EILIS

No.

MISS FORTINI

Then keep him. There isn't another Italian man like him in New York.

She smiles at Eilis and moves on.

66

INT. DINING ROOM, MRS KEHOE'S HOUSE. NIGHT

66

Eilis is sitting at the kitchen table with a bowl of spaghetti in front of her. There is a fork and spoon on either side of the bowl. Opposite her are Patty and Diana. Eilis goes to pick up the cutlery. Diana gestures at her to stop.

DIANA

Hold it. Remember You're getting off easy, because we haven't got sauce.

PATTY

Yeah. You have to remember that the sauce flies everywhere, so take it slowly.

DIANA

I'm gonna say "Splash" every time I see problems.

PATTY

Good idea.

EILIS

(smiling)  
Can I start now?

PATTY

Go.

DIANA

Yep.

They watch intently as Eilis grapples with the twirling. All three girls are staring at the spaghetti, lost in concentration. Eilis allows the spaghetti to fall off the fork and back into the plate.

DIANA

(loudly)  
SPLASH!

Eilis and Patty jump and then giggle nervously.

DIANA

You just splashed his mother, and his father, and the walls...

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED:

66

Eilis makes a despairing face.

PATTY

Let's go again.

67

EXT. RIVERBANK. DAY

67

A spring day in Ireland. Rose is sitting by the river, reading one of Eilis's letters and eating an apple.

EILIS (V.O.)

I suppose the most important news is that I have a boyfriend. He isn't as important as Bartocci's and my night classes, I know that. But I want to tell you everything that's going on. Please don't mention it to Mummy, though. You know what she's like.

68

EXT. CINEMA. NIGHT

68

Eilis and Tony have just been to see 'Singin' In The Rain'. They emerge from the cinema radiant; Tony in particular has clearly loved the film.

69

EXT. STREET. NIGHT

69

Tony is earnestly trying out some of Gene Kelly's dance moves while Eilis watches.

EILIS (V.O.)

He's decent and kind, and he has a job, and he works hard. We go to the cinema on Wednesdays and he takes me to Father Flood's dance on Saturdays.

69A

EXT. RIVERBANK. - DAY

69A

Rose reading avidly.

EILIS (V.O.)

I think of you and Mother every single day. But Tony has helped me to feel that I have a life here. I didn't have, before I met him. My body was here, but my life was back in Ireland, with you. Now it is halfway across the sea. So, that's something, isn't it?

70 OMITTED 70

71 INT. STAIRWELL. EVENING 71

Eilis and Tony are climbing the stairs to Tony's apartment..  
Tony is talking animatedly and a little nervously.

TONY

Oh and I'd better warn you about  
Frankie.

EILIS

He's the little one.

TONY

Yeah. He's eight going on eighteen.  
He's nice and he's smart, but he's  
been talking and talking about all  
the things he's going to say to  
you.

EILIS

What sort of things?

TONY

We don't know. Could be anything.  
I tried to pay him money to go out  
and play ball with his friends, and  
my dad has threatened him, but I  
think he's looking forward to  
causing trouble so much that he'll  
happily take a beating. This is us  
here.

TONY

Ready?

Eilis nods. He's making her nervous.

72 INT. TONY'S APARTMENT. NIGHT 72

Tony's apartment is tiny, and Eilis appears somewhat wedged  
in around the dinner table. Tony has two older brothers,  
Laurenzio and Maurizio, as well as kid brother Frankie. His  
mother and father are young - much younger than Eilis's  
mother.

The atmosphere around the table is polite and warm. It's not  
a question of Eilis having to impress the Fiorello family -  
they want to impress her, too, or at least the adults do.  
They understand that she is important to Tony, and Tony is  
important to them.

Eilis is doing her best with her spaghetti, which is covered  
in a rich, deep red sauce.

(CONTINUED)

MRS FIORELLO

Hey, how did you learn to eat spaghetti like that?

Eilis pauses before confessing.

EILIS

I've been taking lessons.

The family look at her, delighted.

LAURENZIO

Lessons? Like, in a class? You can do that? Maybe I could teach it.

EILIS

No, no. Diana, who lives in the boarding house with me... She cooked me some spaghetti and made me try and eat it without making a mess.

MR FIORELLO

What do you eat in Ireland? Just Irish stew?

EILIS

Not just. We...

FRANKIE

So first of all I should say that we don't like Irish people.

There are general cries of outrage around the table. Maurizio, who is sitting next to him, cuffs him on the top of his head.

FRANKIE

(outraged)

We don't! That is a well known fact! A big gang of Irish beat Maurizio up and he had to have stitches. And because all the cops round here are Irish, nobody did anything about it.

Eilis looks at Maurizio for confirmation. He looks embarrassed.

MAURIZIO

There are probably two sides to it. I might have said something I shouldn't, I can't remember now.

FRANKIE

No, because they beat you up.



MAURIZIO

Anyway, they probably weren't all Irish.

FRANKIE

They just had red hair and big legs.

Mr Fiorello stands up and leads Frankie away from the table and out the door by his ear.

TONY

All I can say in his defence is that he's the only one of us who'll get a college education.

LAURENZIO

If he keeps his mouth shut.

MRS FIORELLO

Tony tells me you go to college.

EILIS

Oh, just night classes. I want to be a book-keeper. I like working in the shop well enough, but I don't want to be there forever.

Frankie re-enters the room, with his father right behind.

FRANKIE

(parrot-fashion)

I'm sorry, Eilis. I'm an idiot. Oh, I'm a rude idiot.

His brothers applaud and laugh. Frankie makes a face at them and sits down at the table.

Later. They are eating scallopini, on their own, with no vegetables, Italian-style.

MAURIZIO

So has Tony offered to take you to Ebbett's Field when the season starts?

EILIS

(to Tony)

You like baseball?

More laughter around the table.

MAURIZIO

(incredulous)

He never mentioned the Dodgers? Not even once?

FRANKIE

You know why? Too much of this.

He makes a lewd kissing noise. Tony rolls his eyes. Eilis has the good grace to laugh.

LAURENZIO

Anyway, you'll have to go to Ebbett's Field if you want to see him in the summer.

EILIS

They're that important to you?

TONY

Put it this way. If our kids end up supporting the Yankees or the Giants, it would break my heart.

The family laughs, but Eilis can only manage a small smile. "Our kids"? Suddenly Eilis sees that their future is all mapped out, as far as Tony and his family are concerned. Frankie is watching her complicated reaction.

FRANKIE

She's not laughing, Tony. I think it's too late. She's a Yanks fan.

More laughter. But Tony is watching her carefully.

Tony and Eilis outside Mrs Kehoe's. Tony comes in close to Eilis, holds her, kisses her cheek. Eilis is stiff, a little afraid.

TONY

(softly)

I love you.

Eilis stays in the embrace a moment longer, then pulls away.

EILIS

I..Thank you for the evening. It was lovely.

She walks down the path towards her house, leaving Tony staring wistfully after her.

Eilis in the bathroom in her dressing gown, cleaning her teeth. She stops, and looks at herself in the mirror - maybe trying to imagine herself older, married, a mother, an American. The bathroom door rattles.

SHEILA (O.S.)

Sorry!

Eilis is pulled out of the reverie and opens the door.

EILIS

I'd finished. (Beat, and then, tentatively) Sheila... Can I ask you something? Why aren't you married?

SHEILA

Because my husband met somebody else and left me.

EILIS

Oh. I'm sorry.

Sheila shrugs.

EILIS

And...Well, would you get married again?

SHEILA

Has someone asked you?

EILIS

No. Not really.

SHEILA

I won't ask what that means. Would I get married again? No. I want to be waiting outside the bathroom of my boarding-house forever.

Eilis doesn't know how to take this.

SHEILA

Of course I do. That's why I go to that wretched dance every week. I want to be waiting outside my own bathroom. (Beat) While some bad-tempered fella with hair growing out of his ears reads the newspaper on the toilet. And then I'll wish I was back here, talking to you.

She laughs despairingly, and shrugs.

Eilis emerges from her class, starts to walk down the stairs and stops, scanning the entrance hall. Tony isn't there. She walks down the stairs slowly, still looking around. She stops in the entrance hall and waits for a moment.

76

EXT. BROOKLYN COLLEGE. NIGHT

76

Eilis stands waiting outside, looking up and down the street for Tony. No sign. She gives up and starts to walk up the street.

TONY (O.S.)

Eilis!

She looks around. Tony is on the other side of the street, breathless and smiling. Eilis smiles broadly back, with visible relief.

TONY

I'm sorry.

EILIS

I thought you weren't coming.

TONY

Yeah. I thought you'd think that. That's why I wanted to be here no matter what.

EILIS

I need to say something to you.

Tony's face falls. He thinks he knows what's coming.

TONY

Can you... Can we talk about something else until we get to Mrs Kehoe's?

EILIS

It's not...

TONY

Please?

They start to walk along the street together.

TONY

So. Ten minutes before I'm supposed to meet you and I'm standing ankle-deep in sewage that's pouring through this old lady's ceiling.

Eilis looks at his shoes, reflexively.

TONY

Yeah. Even if you were thinking of inviting me in for a coffee, I'd have to say no, for your sake.

(CONTINUED)

EILIS

So how did you fix it in ten minutes?

TONY

I didn't. I spent the whole ten minutes explaining to the old lady that I had to be somewhere and I'd be back. She didn't want to let me go.

EILIS

So the sewage is still pouring through the ceiling?

Tony shrugs.

TONY

Oh, what's the difference between six inches of sewage and a foot?

Eilis laughs. Tony looks at her anxiously - is she really going to break off their relationship? Eilis stops.

EILIS

Let me say what I want to say. I think... I think you'll... I don't think you'll mind.

Tony takes a deep breath.

TONY

Okay.

EILIS

You remember that after I had dinner at your house, you told me that you loved me.

Tony nods, sombre and nervous.

EILIS

Well, I didn't really know what to say. But I know what to say now. I have thought about you and I like you, and I like seeing you, and maybe I feel the same way. So the next time you tell me you love me, if there is a next time, I'll..I'll say I love you too.

TONY

(excited)  
Are you serious?

EILIS

Yes.

TONY

Holy shit! Excuse my language, but I thought we were going to have a different kind of talk. You mean it?

EILIS

I mean it.

TONY

So why aren't you smiling?

She flashes him a quick, forced smile.

EILIS

Can I go home now?

TONY

You love me?

EILIS

Yes. But don't ask me anything else, and don't talk about our kids being Dodgers fans.

TONY

(laughing)

You want kids who like the Yankees?

EILIS

Tony, please don't push me.

TONY

(suddenly sober)

All right. I'm sorry.

They walk on.

Eilis is walking down a Brooklyn street on an early summer evening, holding an envelope. The trees are green, children are playing in the street, the last of the daylight is glinting off the roofs. Eilis takes it all in; she's happy.

She reaches Father Flood's parish house and knocks on the door.

Father Flood is scanning the letter contained in the envelope while Eilis watches him intently. He hands it back to her thoughtfully.

FATHER FLOOD

Well. You're marvellous. That's all I have to say. And it looks to me as though you didn't just pass those exams. You, you flew through them.

Eilis smiles shyly.

FATHER FLOOD

Most people who come and visit me without notice are in trouble, of some kind or another. I can't remember the last time anyone came here with good news.

EILIS

I have saved some money. I'll be able to pay next year's tuition and pay you back for last year.

FATHER FLOOD

One of my parishioners paid. He needed to do something for mankind, and I won't tell you why. He's not out of the woods yet, either, so he can cough up for next year, too.

EILIS

I'd love to know what sort of woods he's in.

FATHER FLOOD

Yes, well you won't hear it from me. How's Tony?

Eilis looks at him, surprised to be asked.

EILIS

He's well. Thank you for asking.

FATHER FLOOD

He's a solid man. Qualifications and a boyfriend, Eilis. You're not the miserable young girl who wanted to go home last winter.

EILIS

That seems like years ago.

The girls and Mrs Kehoe at the end of their evening meal. They are collecting plates and putting crockery by the sink ready for washing up.

Eilis puts fresh bowls and spoons down on the table. Mrs Kehoe comes to the table with a large pie on a plate.

MRS KEHOE

I think this is the first time that any girl of mine has passed an exam while living here, so I bought us a treat.

There are murmurs of appreciation. Mrs Kehoe sits down at the table and starts cutting the pie into slices and putting the slices into bowls.

PATTY

Have you told Tony, Eilis?

EILIS

Of course.

SHEILA

And is he taking you out to celebrate?

EILIS

We're going to Coney Island at the weekend.

DIANA

(drily)  
Oh, boy.

EILIS

What does that mean?

DIANA

You have a bathing costume?

EILIS

No. I was going to get one at...

PATTY

Do you have sunglasses?

EILIS

(increasingly alarmed)  
No.

SHEILA

You need sunglasses. I read that if you don't have them on the beach this year people will talk about you.

MRS KEHOE

(witheringly)  
And what will they say, exactly, Sheila?



Sheila blushes.

DOLORES

(seriously)

That's the thing, Mrs Kehoe. You'd never know, because they'd never say it to your face.

Mrs Kehoe rolls her eyes.

MRS KEHOE

Diana's right, though, Eilis. You need to think carefully about your costume. It's the most Tony will ever have seen of you. You don't want to put him off.

Eilis in her lunch hour, choosing a one-piece bathing suit from the racks in front of her. She picks out a black one and a pink one, and goes off towards the dressing-rooms. As if from nowhere, Miss Fortini appears.

MISS FORTINI

Are you going to the beach?

EILIS

Yes, Miss Fortini. To Coney Island. With Tony.

MISS FORTINI

Well, I know he's a saint, this Tony, but every Italian man cares about how his girlfriend looks in her bathing suit. I'd better help you.

EILIS

Thank you.

Eilis walks into one of the cubicles, but before she can pull the curtain across, Miss Fortini is in the cubicle with her. There's hardly room for the two of them. Eilis starts to get undressed, as modestly as she can in the peculiar circumstances. Miss Fortini watches her, matter-of-factly.

Later. Eilis is wearing the black suit. Miss Fortini looks at her thoughtfully, and then reaches forward to pull down the fabric at the top of Eilis's thigh.

81

CONTINUED:

81

MISS FORTINI

You'll have to shave down here.  
I'll give you a razor that will do  
the trick.

She then reaches round to cup Eilis's bottom. Eilis is too shocked to say anything.

MISS FORTINI

You're all right there for the  
moment. And most Italian men  
appreciate the fuller figure. But  
watch yourself, over the summer.

She steps back as far as she can and looks at her.

MISS FORTINI

The black's too dark, for your pale  
skin. Let's see you in the green.

Eilis hesitates.

MISS FORTINI

Quickly now.

82

OMITTED

82

83

OMITTED

83

84

EXT. CONEY ISLAND. DAY

84

Tony and Eilis on the boardwalk at Coney Island. It's a bright, beautiful day; Eilis is, after all, wearing fashionable sunglasses and a headscarf. They're both eating cotton candy. They stop and look for a space on the packed beach.

TONY

I can see a spot down there that's  
probably big enough for one. If we  
can wedge ourselves in, maybe we  
can eventually create enough space  
for two.

(CONTINUED)

84

CONTINUED:

84

We watch as Tony and Eilis make their way down onto the beach to become a small and anonymous part of the New York summer.

85

EXT. BEACH. DAY

85

Tony is holding a towel round Eilis as she struggles in to her bathing costume. He's looking away, presumably at her request.

EILIS

Why didn't you tell me to put my costume on underneath my clothes?

TONY

I thought you'd know.

She's finished struggling.

EILIS

I'm ready.

He drops the towel. Eilis stands there in her costume, a little embarrassed. Tony gives a loud and lascivious wolf-whistle. Eilis giggles with embarrassment and pleasure.

86

EXT. SEA. DAY

86

Eilis and Tony in the sea. Eilis swims away from Tony - she's a good swimmer - but he swims after her, catches her and draws him to her. He picks her up as she tries to wriggle away, laughing. He pulls her to him and kisses her. She freezes a little and pushes him away.

TONY

(smiling)

I'm sorry. What's a guy supposed to do?

She looks at him, and then kisses him deeply.

FADE OUT.

87

INT. BARTOCCI'S. DAY

87

Eilis at her counter, serving a customer. Music, something ominously melancholic that undercuts the banal pleasantries of Eilis's letter.

EILIS (V.O.)

Dear Rose. Thanks for your letter. I was happy to hear about your golf tournament. You must have been really pleased.

88 INT. EILIS'S HOME IN IRELAND. DAY 88

We see Mary knocking on the door of Rose's bedroom anxiously.

EILIS (V.O.)  
I still miss you and mother, and I  
think about you every day.

89 INT. ROSE'S BEDROOM. DAY 89

Mary enters the bedroom. Rose is sprawled half out of the bed, her head nearly touching the floor; Mary rushes over to her, touches her cheek, starts to weep.

EILIS (V.O.)  
But I think I can say that for the  
first time since I've been in  
America, I'm really happy.

90 EXT. EILIS'S HOME. STREET. DAY 90

Mary, consoled by a neighbour, watches as Rose's body, covered by a shroud, is taken to a waiting ambulance.

EILIS (V.O.)  
This is a lot to do with Tony. He's  
kind and seems to care about me.  
And we have fun, too.

91 INT. DINING ROOM, EILIS'S HOME. DAY 91

Mary sitting on an armchair in her parlour, gripping a handkerchief tightly. The room is filling up with sombre, concerned people who are queuing up to speak to her.

EILIS (V.O.)  
At the weekend he took me to see  
the Brooklyn Dodgers, the baseball  
team he loves. They lost, so he was  
annoyed.

92 INT. CHURCH. EVENING 92

Mary on her knees in church, while she prays at mass.

EILIS (V.O.)  
But I've also started to look for  
office work, too. I had an  
interview this week at a textile  
firm here in Brooklyn.

93 INT. BARTOCCI'S. DAY

93

Eilis looks up, startled, as Miss Fortini and Father Flood approach her counter.

EILIS (V.O.)

Who'd have thought that there would  
be two book-keepers in the family?  
I'll soon be able to afford to...

Her voice trails off. We can't hear what Father Flood is saying to her, but she looks stricken. The music fades.

94 INT. STAFF ROOM. DAY

94

Father Flood and Eilis are sitting on two chairs in the middle, knees almost touching. Eilis is staring at the floor, in shock; Father Flood is watching her with enormous tenderness and concern.

FATHER FLOOD

It was sudden. I think perhaps she  
was ill, and she knew she was ill,  
and she didn't tell anybody.

EILIS

What will happen?

FATHER FLOOD

(softly)  
What can happen?

EILIS

When will they bury her?

FATHER FLOOD

Tomorrow.

EILIS

Without me.

FATHER FLOOD

Without you. You're too far away,  
Eilis.

Eilis starts to cry, and becomes almost hysterical.

EILIS

Why did I ever come here? Why did I  
ever come here?

FATHER FLOOD

Rose wanted a better life for you.  
She loved how well you were doing.

(CONTINUED)

EILIS

And now I will never see her again.

Father Flood doesn't say anything.

EILIS

That's right, isn't it, Father? I will never see her again.

FATHER FLOOD

You know that I think you will. And she will be watching over you, every day, for the rest of your life.

EILIS

I wish I had never left. I wish I had never come over here.

Tony and Eilis are sitting in the diner that they use before the Saturday night dances. They have coffee cups in front of them, but they're not drinking. Tony is quiet, grief-stricken for a woman he's never met.

TONY

I keep thinking about what it would be like if one of my brothers died. I'm sorry if that sounds selfish. But it means I can feel what you're feeling.

EILIS

I think about it and think about it, and then I forget about it for a moment, and when I remember again it's as though I've just been told. I can't bear it, Tony.

TONY

I wish I could stay with you tonight.

EILIS

But I'll see you in the morning. It's very nice of your family, to come to Mass with me.

TONY

They wouldn't miss it for anything. I don't mean that like it sounds. I just mean...

EILIS

I know. Thank you.

TONY

You want to go home, I guess.

EILIS

Yes. But I don't know if I can.

TONY

If it's money, then we can all help. I mean, the whole family.

Eilis blinks back more tears.

EILIS

And how would it be for you if I did go home?

Tony shrugs, and then says, simply and sincerely

TONY

I'd be afraid, every single day.

EILIS

Afraid that I wouldn't come back?

TONY

Yeah. Home is home.

EILIS

I'm not sure I have a home any more.

Tony thinks.

TONY

You're not going to work tomorrow, are you?

EILIS

No.

TONY

After the mass, can I take you somewhere?

Tony and Eilis are standing on a piece of utterly featureless and undeveloped land. The wind is blowing, and we can hear seagulls, although there is no view of the sea.

TONY

This is it.

He gestures around him.

TONY

We're going to build five houses here, if we can. Mom and Dad will have one, because Mom has always wanted a house with a back yard. And we'll sell three. And the other one...My brothers asked me if I wanted it, and I said I did.

Tony studies her face intently.

TONY

So I guess what I'm saying is, would you like to live here on Long Island? I know it doesn't look like much right now, but all the land around here has been sold, so we wouldn't be on our own. And there'd be, there'd be telephone cables and electricity and everything.

Eilis laughs.

EILIS

I would hope so.

TONY

We're going to set up a company, a building company, the three of us, and I'm gonna do the plumbing, and Laurence will do the carpentry, and..

Eilis looks around her, trying to imagine the future that Tony sees. It's not so hard to do.

TONY

Don't go quiet on me. At least tell me you'll think about it.

EILIS

I don't need to think about it.

She holds out her hands, and Tony takes them, and she pulls him towards her. The camera pulls back and back until we see two tiny figures, on their own, standing in the middle of their own future, of a part of America that doesn't even exist yet.

Eilis is sitting in a chair in Father Flood's office. She's nervous and pale. Father Flood is pacing around. They are both watching the telephone.



FATHER FLOOD

I'm sure she won't be long.

EILIS

I'm not sure she even knows where the parish house is.

FATHER FLOOD

Oh, Father Quaid has a car. He was going to collect her and drive her up.

EILIS

Part of me doesn't even want to talk to her. My own mother!

FATHER FLOOD

It's a difficult conversation to be having, Eilis. You wouldn't be human if you were looking forward to it.

The telephone rings. Both of them stare at it for a second, and then Father Flood gestures at Eilis to pick it up.

EILIS

Hello? Mummy?

She sounds noticeably more Irish throughout the conversation.

EILIS

I can't really hear you.

Mary is in the same situation - in an unfamiliar ecclesiastical office, with a priest watching her with concern. Mary looks so much older than the last time we saw her, and completely defeated. What comes out of her mouth cannot reflect the depth of her pain.

MARY

Well, the rain held off, anyway.

Intercut phone conversation.

EILIS

That's good.

MARY

And the whole of her golf club came. Every single one of them. We had a real houseful afterwards.

Eilis doesn't say anything.

MARY

Are you still there?

EILIS

Yes.

MARY

People really loved her, Eilis. Her friends from work, the neighbours, everybody.

Eilis is weeping.

EILIS

I know.

MARY

Nobody knew what to say to me.

Finally, her words reflect how she is feeling.

MARY

When your daddy died, I said to myself that I shouldn't grieve too much because I had you two. And when you went to America, I told myself the same thing because she was here with me. But everyone's gone, Eilis. I have nobody.

Eilis is weeping so hard that she can't speak. Father Flood comes up behind her and puts his hand on her shoulders.

FADE OUT

Eilis lying on her bed, staring at the ceiling. She's still wearing her coat. She gets up and leaves the room.

Eilis knocks on Tony's door. It's late, and the house is dark. Tony opens the door wearing a T-shirt and undershorts. He's clearly been asleep.

TONY

Come in for a second. I'll get dressed.

Tony and Eilis walking through the quiet, late night streets. Tony holds Eilis to him as close as he can.

(CONTINUED)

TONY  
(resigned, sad)  
I knew it.

EILIS  
Just for a month or so. I know it  
would make her feel a little  
better.

Tony doesn't say anything.

EILIS  
Please speak.

TONY  
Will you marry me before you leave?

EILIS  
You don't trust me to come back?

TONY  
Marry me. Marry me. We don't have  
to tell anyone. We can do it  
quickly, and it will just be  
between us.

EILIS  
But why do you want to do it?

TONY  
(agonised)  
Because if we don't, I'll go crazy.

EILIS  
Would a promise not be the same?

TONY  
If you can promise, then you can  
easily do this.

Eilis sighs, nods, smiles weakly.

TONY  
(heartfelt)  
Thank you.

They have arrived at Eilis's lodgings. They stand on the  
sidewalk outside the dark, quiet house and kiss.

EILIS  
Come inside.

TONY  
Really?

102

CONTINUED:

102

She leads him down the little path to her private entrance in the basement and unlocks the door.

103

INT. EILIS'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

103

Eilis and Tony enter the basement room. Eilis takes off her coat, and Tony stands there awkwardly.

TONY

So this is it? This is where you live?

EILIS

Yes, and if you make one tiny noise she'll evict me.

Shyly, she walks towards him and kisses him gently. The kiss becomes more passionate. Eilis pulls his shirt out from his trousers and runs her hands up and down his back. They move towards the single bed without speaking. Tony lifts Eilis's skirt and undoes his trousers and lies down on top of her. All the time, there is a sense that Tony is taking his cue from her, that he would stop the moment Eilis expressed any doubt or fear. But she moves out from underneath him and discreetly removes her panties. Tony pulls his trousers off and takes off his boxer shorts.

They make love. Eilis tries hard not to panic at the feeling of Tony inside her, but she's clearly shocked by the sensation; meanwhile Tony is much noisier than she would want him to be, and that panics her further. Eventually he is still, and he lies on top of her for a moment.

A floorboard creaks above their heads. Tony looks up, looks at Eilis.

EILIS

Oh, there's no point in worrying now. Stay with me.

Tony gets off her, stands up, takes the rest of his clothes off and gets into bed. Eilis hesitates, then starts to unstrap her bra.

104

EXT. MRS KEHOE'S HOUSE. DAY

104

Eilis comes home from work. She pushes at the gate to the basement, but it has been padlocked.

105

INT. DINING ROOM, MRS. KEHOE'S HOUSE. EVENING.

105

Eilis is making herself some scrambled eggs in the kitchen for her tea.

(CONTINUED)

105

CONTINUED:

105

Mrs Kehoe is sitting at the kitchen table reading the newspaper. There is a frosty silence. Patty comes in and fills the kettle.

MRS KEHOE

Patty, I've put a lock on the basement gate. Just for peace of mind. You never know who might try to get in there.

She folds the paper, stands up and leaves the room.

PATTY

As God is my witness, I heard nothing last night. Nothing at all. But it sounded lovely.

Eilis looks away, embarrassed.

106

EXT. CITY HALL. DAY

106

Eilis and Tony walking in to City Hall, hand-in-hand. Both have bought new suits for the occasion, but they are on their own.

107

INT. CITY HALL. DAY

107

Eilis and Tony are in the waiting room in City Hall; there are a couple of other parties waiting to get married, but they really are parties, with friends and parents and siblings. The group sitting nearest to them contains an eight or nine year-old boy, Frankie's age, who is bored, and getting into trouble with his parents. Tony leaves Eilis sitting on a chair and starts fooling around with the boy: they play bat and ball with a rolled-up newspaper and a light plastic ball that the kid has been playing catch with. The boy's father comes over.

BOY'S FATHER

Is he annoying you? Because he was annoying me.

The father is Irish.

TONY

No, no. I got a brother the exact same age. Hey, are you Irish?

BOY'S FATHER

(grinning)

Is it so obvious?

(CONTINUED)

TONY

I'm just about to marry an Irish girl, so I guess I notice it more. There are a lot of you in Brooklyn.

BOY'S FATHER

Sometimes it seems as though there can't be anybody left at home. Where's your girl from?

TONY

Enniscorthy, in County Wexford. Have you heard of it?

Tony throws the kid a gentle pitch with the ball.

BOY'S FATHER

I think my wife has family there, but she's got family everywhere.

TONY

It's the same thing with my family. If you believe anything my dad says, the Fiorellos own most of Italy. I don't understand why we ever left.

The other man chuckles. Tony calls over to Eilis.

TONY

Hey, Eilis. Come here a second.

An official from County Hall emerges from an office and addresses the waiting room.

OFFICIAL

Anthony Fiorello and Eilis Lacey.

TONY

Maybe another time.

BOY'S FATHER

Good luck.

Eilis takes his arm. Tony kisses her on her cheek and they walk off to get married.

Tony and Eilis are kissing outside Mrs Kehoe's. Eilis breaks off and looks at him.

EILIS

Will we ever tell our children we did this?

TONY

Maybe we'll save it for some anniversary.

EILIS

I wonder what they'll think of it?

TONY

They'll believe that we saw a movie and ate hot dogs. They won't believe that on our wedding night I dropped you off at Ma Kehoe's and went home.

Eilis smiles and kisses him again. The camera pans back to show the married couple, kissing in the dark with nowhere to go.

FADE TO BLACK

A sunny Sunday morning. Eilis is emerging from Mass arm-in-arm with Mary. Suddenly we see what we haven't been able to notice before: Eilis has come back from America a different person. She's older, and more sophisticated, her clothes are better and brighter than those of anyone else from her town, her hair-style classier, her skin a different colour. Mary, meanwhile, has been aged very quickly by grief and loneliness.

Eilis's emergence into the Sunday morning light is complicated. People are excited to see her, but at the same time they know they have to be respectful of her recent loss. Her friend NANCY - Eilis's age, pretty, bubbly - is, however, just overwhelmed with excitement, and pushes through the emerging congregation to greet her. Eilis breaks into a broad smile.

EILIS

Nancy!

In a modern age, or a less buttoned-up culture, they would fall into each other's arms and squeal. There is that level of excitement, but they channel it through the clasping of hands.

NANCY

You look so glamorous!

MARY

(sourly)

I told you so.

Eilis rolls her eyes at Nancy.

(CONTINUED)

NANCY

I'm so sorry about Rose.

EILIS

Thank you.

NANCY

It was a beautiful funeral, Mrs Lacey.

EILIS

How are you?

Nancy wiggles her fingers, and Eilis sees the engagement ring on her finger.

EILIS

(excited)

No!

MARY

I knew. But I wanted to let Nancy tell you herself.

NANCY

I'm so glad you can come to the wedding.

EILIS

Can I?

NANCY

Your mother accepted the invitation on your behalf.

EILIS

When is it?

NANCY

The 27th of August.

Eilis's smile freezes perceptibly.

NANCY

Will you come out with George and me tomorrow night? Annette wants to see you, too.

Eilis looks at Mary for permission.

MARY

Oh, I don't mind. I'll have to find you a key. I don't want you getting me out of bed.



NANCY

We all want to hear what life in  
New York is like.

EILIS

I'll try and think of something to  
say.

Nancy rejoins her parents, who are standing a little way  
away, waiting for her.

EILIS

I'm booked to go back to New York  
on the twenty-first.

MARY

(blithe)

Oh, you can wait an extra week to  
see your best friend married.

Eilis walking down a path in her local church in Ireland.  
She's holding a wreath. Close on her hands - she takes her  
wedding ring out of her pocket, slips it on.

She arrives at Rose's grave. She kneels, places the wreath on  
the grave, stands up. She's sombre, near tears, but together.

EILIS

I've come home. Just for...

An elderly lady is coming down the path. Eilis stops, self-  
conscious, and waits until she's walked past.

EILIS

Just for a month or so. I know  
mother needed me home. There's so  
much to do. Mother wants me to go  
through all your clothes, and take  
what I want. I can't bear to take  
anything. (Beat) Rose, I got  
married. I married Tony. Just  
before I left. Nobody knows, not  
even Mother. Only you, now. We were  
married at City Hall, and when I go  
back we'll get married properly.  
I'll tell people then. I can't  
believe I'm married to someone you  
will never know. But you'd like  
him. I know you would. He's sweet,  
and funny, and he has these  
wonderful eyes that..

She stops and sighs heavily.

EILIS

I wish..Oh, I wish everything were different. (Beat) It's so strange, being in the house without you. Every time I hear even the slightest noise I think it's you. I pray for you every day. I hope you pray for us.

She closes her eyes, momentarily, and then walks away.

INT. DINING ROOM, EILIS'S HOUSE. DAY

Eilis and Mary, sitting at the table in the front room, plodding through the pile of letters that have to be written.

MARY

So now.

She picks up the next one in the pile.

MARY

Mrs O'Toole from Cush.

EILIS

Do we really have to do this? Getting a letter of condolence isn't like getting a birthday present, is it? What if Mrs O'Toole from Cush writes back to thank you for your thank you?

MARY

Then I'll thank her.

EILIS

And you'd be happy to spend the rest of your life like that?

MARY

It's not as if I have anything else to do. Nor anybody else to talk to. It might as well be Mrs O'Toole from Cush.

EILIS

(wearily)

What do you want me to say?

Just at that moment there is the sound of a car horn - two beeps, a cheery greeting.

EILIS

That'll be Nancy and George and Annette.

111

CONTINUED:

111

MARY

Off you go. Enjoy yourself.

112

EXT. EILIS'S HOUSE. EVENING

112

Waiting outside in the gleaming four-door saloon car are Nancy, GEORGE, her fiancée, and his friend JIM. Both men are sporting the Rugby Club trademark blazers and Brylcreem. There is no sign of Annette. The men are in the front seats - it's George's car - and Nancy is in the back. Eilis pauses momentarily when she sees Jim. She smiles thinly and gets in.

113

INT. GEORGE'S CAR. EVENING

113

Eilis settles herself in and George starts the car.

NANCY

Eilis, this is Jim Farrell.

EILIS

(cool)

Hello.

Jim turns around and shakes Eilis's hand. He's confident, direct, sincere, manly. If he didn't come with rugby-club baggage, he might even be described as extremely attractive.

JIM

It's a great pleasure to meet you.

Eilis nods. When Jim has turned around again, Eilis makes a why-didn't you-tell-me? face at Nancy.

JIM

(to George)

We could try the Connaught Hotel bar. There may be a few of the fellas from the rugby club there.

Eilis looks at Nancy, wanting her to say something; Nancy doesn't even know there's something to say.

EILIS

(tartly)

Do you have to be with other fellas from the rugby club all the time?

Jim turns around again. He's amused.

JIM

No. But Nancy told us that we wouldn't be allowed to talk to you, because you had too much to say to each other. So we're looking for company.

(CONTINUED)

EILIS  
(embarrassed)  
Oh. Well.

She should probably apologise, but she doesn't.

GEORGE  
Do you not like the fellas from the  
rugby club, Eilis?

He tries to catch Jim's eye, but Jim doesn't want to get  
involved in this.

EILIS  
I don't, particularly, George.

Nancy nudges her and makes a pleading face. Eilis ignores  
her.

EILIS  
When I first went to America, I  
missed every single thing about  
Enniscorthy except one.

JIM  
We're not all the same.

EILIS  
You all look the same. It's the  
blazer and the hair-oil.

Jim and George look at each other and laugh with recognition.

They get out of the car. Jim and George walk ahead - Eilis  
hangs back deliberately so that she can talk to Nancy.

EILIS  
Why has he come? And where's  
Annette?

NANCY  
He saw you at Mass on Sunday  
morning, and he asked George if we  
could arrange a drink, just the  
four of us. And I knew you wouldn't  
come if I told you. He's very nice,  
so don't be too hard on him.

EILIS  
Is this the same Jim Farrell that  
was engaged to Cathleen Cassidy?  
What happened to her?

NANCY

He broke it off. He didn't think she was serious about him. He was very upset for a while, but he's over her now.

EILIS

Nancy, I'm..

She hesitates.

EILIS

I'm going back.

NANCY

He knows that. But you can have a bit of fun while you're here, can't you?

George and Jim wait for the girls to catch them up. George and Nancy then walk ahead. Jim slows his pace so that he can talk to Eilis privately.

JIM

How is your mother?

EILIS

Oh, she's...Well, she's sad. (Beat) And she's got much older, very quickly.

JIM

(sincerely)

It was a terrible thing. We all went to the funeral Mass. My mother and father and myself.

EILIS

I, I didn't know that.

JIM

My mother played golf with her, you know. She was very fond of her. It was... It was the saddest thing to happen in the town that I can remember.

Jim is so pained and so genuine that Eilis can only look at him with gratitude. She can't speak, and she's close to tears.

EILIS

Thank you.

115 INT. CONNAUGHT HOTEL BAR. EVENING

115

Eilis, Nancy and George watch as Jim pays for the round of drinks at the bar: pints for the men, gin and bitter lemons for the girls.

JIM

We can stand at the bar, George,  
can't we? And the ladies can have  
their gossip over there.

He gestures towards a quiet table in the corner of the room. After the conversation she had with Jim on the way in, Eilis feels awkward.

EILIS

Oh, we're not going to talk about  
anything terribly exciting.

NANCY

(disappointed)  
Oh, really? You've got nothing to  
tell me?

JIM

I'd love to hear something about  
New York. If I promise not to say  
anything, can I listen?

Later. Jim, George and Nancy are listening to Eilis talking about her new life.

EILIS

Ah, but that's Manhattan. I live in  
Brooklyn, and I work in Brooklyn,  
and if I go out, I go out in  
Brooklyn, and the skyscrapers are  
across the river. I don't even  
think about them, very often.

NANCY

But you've made friends?

EILIS

Oh, the girls in the house aren't  
so bad, once you get used to them.

NANCY

You don't make it sound very  
glamorous.

EILIS

It's not, really.

NANCY

Not even..what do you call it? The  
department store where you work?

(CONTINUED)

EILIS

Bartocci's? It sells lovely things.  
But I can't afford many of them,  
and I don't like the work.

JIM

What would you like to do?

EILIS

I want to do what Rose did. I want  
to work in an office, and deal with  
numbers. That's why I've been  
studying so hard.

JIM

You should call in at Davis's. They  
haven't managed to replace Rose,  
you know. We do business with them,  
and they've been looking, but they  
can't find anyone who's reliable  
and qualified.

EILIS

I'll be going back to New York  
straight after the wedding.

JIM

But you might want to earn a little  
money in the meantime. I'm sure  
they'd be glad to have you.

GEORGE

(teasing)

Oh, you just want her to stay.

JIM

I'm only thinking of Eilis.

He says this ambiguously, and with a smile. He doesn't mind  
being teased, and he certainly doesn't mind being teased on  
this particular subject.

GEORGE

D'you hear that, Eilis? He's only  
thinking of you.

Eilis blushes. She makes eye contact with Jim, and she looks  
away first.

Eilis emerges from George's car, amid laughter. The evening  
has clearly gone well. She walks towards her house and  
notices that the light in the front room is still on.

117 INT. DINING ROOM, EILIS'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

117

Eilis comes in to the front room. Mary is reading the newspaper in an armchair.

MARY

How was your evening?

EILIS

It was very nice, thank you.

MARY

Was that Jim Farrell I saw in the car with them?

EILIS

It was.

Mary raises her eyebrows quizzically. Eilis isn't biting.

MARY

His parents are moving, you know. They're retiring to the country. He'll be in that big house on his own.

EILIS

Is that right?

MARY

He's a catch for someone. (Beat) Did you see the air-mail letter that came for you?

EILIS

No. Thank you.

She's embarrassed by something. Mary studies her.

MARY

One of your new friends in America, I suppose.

EILIS

I expect so. Goodnight, Mummy.

118 INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

118

Eilis rushes into the bedroom, sits on the bed, tears open her letter and reads it voraciously. We have seen something like this before - when she was in Brooklyn, devouring letters from Ireland.



119 EXT. TOWN. DAY 119

Eilis walking through the streets of Enniscorthy, carrying grocery shopping. She smiles and says hello to a couple of people.

120 INT. HOUSE. DAY 120

Eilis comes in through the front door with the shopping. Mary bustles out of the front room into the hall.

MARY

Oh, thank goodness you're back.

EILIS

(alarmed)

What's the matter?

MARY

A lad from Davis's came round. They have a problem in their accounts department and they need you up there straight away.

EILIS

(relieved)

Is that all? I'll just put the shopping away.

MARY

No, no, leave it. Straight away, the young fella said.

EILIS

It doesn't matter what he said, Mother. I'm not an employee. I'd be doing them a favour.

MARY

Please, let me do the shopping.

She blocks Eilis's way, takes the bags off her impatiently. Eilis sighs, turns around, goes out of the door.

121 INT. OFFICE. DAY 121

MARIA, a woman in her mid-thirties, ushers Eilis through a large outer office where several people are working into a smaller office. On the desk there is a framed photograph of Eilis. She sees it immediately, but doesn't say anything.

MARIA

The problem is that it's our busy season, so all the drivers and mill-workers did overtime last week.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARIA (CONT'D)

Well, they've all filled out their overtime slips, which are here...

She picks a pile of slips up off the desk.

MARIA

But there's been nobody to work it all out and add it to their wage slips, and some of the men have started to complain. And I can't blame them. As you can see, it's all a terrible mess.

EILIS

If you leave me for a couple of hours, I can work out a system so that whoever comes in after me won't have any trouble. I'll come and find you if I have any questions.

MARIA

You're sure you don't need me in here?

EILIS

I'm sure.

Later. Eilis is completely absorbed in her work - this, after all, is what she has always wanted to do.

At the end of the day, the office is in impeccable shape - Eilis has tidied up all the overtime slips, and has wage packets lined up in alphabetical order in a box. Just as she is standing up to go, there is a perfunctory knock on the door and MR BROWN, owner of Davis's, walks in.

MR BROWN

Hello, Eilis. Maria has been telling me that you've done the most marvellous job here. We should have known you would, of course. You're Rose's sister, after all.

EILIS

Thank you.

MR BROWN

I'm told you have a certificate in book-keeping. Is it American book-keeping?

EILIS

I got the certificate in America, but the two systems are very similar.

MR BROWN

Well, we'll certainly need someone to deal with wages and so on during the busy season, so I'd like you to continue on a part-time basis. Let's see how that goes, and then we'll speak again.

EILIS

I will be going back to the United States soon.

MR BROWN

As I say. Let's you and I speak again before we make any firm decisions one way or the other.

Eilis hesitates for a moment.

EILIS

Yes, Mr. Brown. Of course. Thank you.

MR BROWN

Now, if you go and see Maria, she'll have your money for today.

A gorgeous, sunny, windy August day. Nancy, George, Eilis and Jim stand on the cliffs looking out to sea. They are carrying towels and bathing suits. Down beneath them is a gloriously empty sandy beach.

EILIS

(wonderingly)  
I'd forgotten.

NANCY

What?

EILIS

This.

JIM

Do you have beaches in Brooklyn?

Eilis smiles, remembering her day with Tony at Coney Island.

EILIS

Yes. But..they're different. The one I've been to is, anyway.

JIM

Stones?

EILIS  
(confused)  
Stones?

JIM  
Are the beaches stony?

EILIS  
Oh. It's not that. They're very  
crowded.

JIM  
There will probably be quite a few  
walkers here later.

EILIS  
(smiles)  
Yes, I'm sure. It's still not the  
same.

JIM  
I'm sure it's not. (Sadly) We  
don't really know anything of the  
rest of the world. We must seem  
very backward to you now.

EILIS  
Of course not. You seem calm, and  
civilized. And charming.

To her own amazement, Eilis is flirting.

The four make their way down the path to the beach. George holds Nancy's hand as she jumps down the last big step; Jim offers his hand to Eilis. She hesitates, and then takes it. There is a moment between them as she reaches the sand.

Jim and Eilis walk behind Nancy and George along the beach.

JIM  
My mother wanted you to know that  
the golf club is inaugurating a  
prize in Rose's name. A special  
trophy, for the best score by a  
lady newcomer at the club. She was  
always very nice to the newcomers,  
my mother says.

Eilis stops, a little overcome.

JIM

I hope you're pleased.

EILIS

Yes. Of course. (Beat) So every year, somebody will win the Rose Lacey Trophy?

JIM

Every year. As long as there's a golf club.

Eilis starts to walk again, lost in thought.

JIM

I think my mother would like you to come along and present it to the first winner. Oh, and she'd like to meet you, by the way. I'm supposed to arrange a time when you can come for tea.

EILIS

Thank you. I'd like that. (Beat) I wish it had been like this before I went. Before Rose died.

JIM

Like what?

EILIS

There was no place for me here before. And now...I have a job, and

She makes a vague gesture, which seems to include Jim, and trails off.

NANCY

(off in the distance)  
Here?

She dumps the towels where she is standing.

Later. Nancy, George and Jim are engaged in the age-old and inelegant struggle between towels and immodesty, as they try to put their bathing costumes on. They hop on one leg, curse and giggle. Eilis takes off her blouse and skirt to reveal the bathing costume (and more of the tan) that she got in America. Nancy and George are impressed with the simplicity of the idea; Jim is just impressed generally.

NANCY

Is that an American trick?

EILIS

Yes. It's a good one, isn't it?

NANCY

It's depressing, though, that we don't think of things like that, isn't it? I mean, how long have they known about it? A hundred years, probably.

JIM

(reverently)

I don't think they had bathing suits like that a hundred years ago. And we still don't have them now.

Nancy and George exchange knowing, smiling glances.

NANCY

Come on.

The four of them skip down the sand into the sea.

Frankie, Tony's little brother, is lying on his bed in his pyjamas, reading. Tony comes in.

TONY

You want to go see the Dodgers on Saturday?

Frankie sits bolt upright.

FRANKIE

Sure.

TONY

OK, will you do something for me?

FRANKIE

What?

Tony closes the bedroom door behind him.

TONY

So if you laugh, or say anything about this to anyone else in the family, you don't get to see the Dodgers on Saturday. Or any other day of the season. Also, you get a beating.

FRANKIE

Maybe it's just better if I don't get involved.

TONY

I really need your help.

FRANKIE

So stop telling me you're going to beat me up. I like the Dodgers, but I could listen on the radio.

Tony produces a letter from his pocket. It's crumpled, and a little grubby.

TONY

You know you're the best writer and reader in the family?

FRANKIE

(cocky)

Yeah.

TONY

I'm trying to write to Eilis, and I want it to be, I dunno...

FRANKIE

You wrote before already. About five times.

TONY

Yeah, but... They're no good, Frankie. And she's only written back once. She's never read my writing before. I'm worried I'm putting her off me.

FRANKIE

I'm eight years old. I don't know anything about kissing.

TONY

You don't need to know anything about kissing. You need to know about spelling and, and sentences.

FRANKIE

Grammar.

TONY

Yeah. Will you look?

He hands Frankie the letter hopefully, and a little desperately.

126 EXT. BEACH. DAY

126

Eilis, Jim, Nancy and George in the sea. Nancy and George are physically intimate with each other, in the way that Tony and Eilis were at Coney Island; Eilis and Jim are further apart, of course, but by no means distant, and playful with each other. Music - the score at this point is wistful, regretful, heartbreaking.

TONY (V.O.)  
(in a halting, unconfident  
monotone)

Dear Eilis, I hope that you are doing well in Ireland. I hope that your mother is feeling less sad. It will not be long before your friend gets married and you can come home.

127 INT. OFFICE. DAY

127

Eilis back at Davis's, in her one-woman accounts department. She's animated, confident, her intelligence alive in her face. She's tallying up a row of figures in a ledger. On the desk, there is a framed photograph of Rose. A driver knocks on the door, she smiles, hands him a wage packet.

TONY (V.O.)  
This week it is like the whole world's basements are flooding. I have fixed three. I have been working hard. I have been saving money.

TONY (V.O.)  
Everybody asks me about you all the time.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
You missed out an 'e' I think. It's "everybody".

128 OMITTED

128

129 EXT. BEACH. EVENING

129

A different beach. Jim and Eilis, walking along the water's edge, carrying their shoes.

TONY (V.O.)  
Anyway, I think that is all my news. Mom and Dad and my brothers all say hello.



130 INT. KITCHEN, EILIS'S HOUSE. NIGHT 130

Mary gets up from her armchair, pulls back the curtains. She sees Jim's car parked outside on the street.

TONY (V.O.)

I think about you most minutes of most days. Even when I go to see the Dodgers I do not concentrate on the games. (To Frankie) I guess I got "concentrate" wrong, right?

Mary peers intently into the darkness. She, like us, can see Eilis and Jim kissing chastely.

TONY (V.O.)

With love, your Tony. (Beat) So how should I change it?

Mary smiles.

131 INT. EILIS'S HOUSE. DAY 131

Eilis comes in from work. On the hall table there is an airmail letter. She picks it up. She is about to open it there and then, but she decides not to.

132 INT. BEDROOM. DAY 132

Eilis sits down on the bed with the letter. She stares at the crude but neat handwriting. She goes to open it again - and again, she can't bring herself to do it.

Close on the top drawer of the chest of drawers by Eilis's bed. Her hand opens the drawer, puts the letter on top of several other identical letters, all apparently unopened.

132A INT. CONNAUGHT HOTEL. EVENING 132A

Jim and Eilis are eating at the Connaught. Jim is wearing a blazer, and he's nervous. Eilis recognises his nerves and his vulnerability, and she's grateful for them.

EILIS

No hair oil. And that's not a blazer, it's a sports jacket. Have you come out in disguise, Jim Farrell? Are you trying to trick me?

Jim laughs self-deprecatingly, blushes, and smooths his hair, embarrassed.

(CONTINUED)

JIM

I knew what you meant, when you said we're all the same. And it made me think that my life must seem very easy to you. I'm going to run my father's bar, and I'm going to live in my parents' house. I can see what that must look like from the outside. But it doesn't feel like that.

EILIS

What does it feel like?

Jim thinks.

Later. Eilis is eating a roast dinner. Jim doesn't seem to have touched the food on his plate. He is in full flow.

JIM

And I've never been anywhere. I have never even been to England. I'd like to see London, and Paris, and Rome. And New York. It frightens me, the thought of dying without ever leaving Ireland. And there are other things, too...

Later. They are drinking coffee.

JIM

I'm sorry. I wanted to ask you a thousand things and all I've done is talked.

EILIS

I'm glad.

JIM

Really?

EILIS

Yes.

It's the day of Nancy and George's wedding. Jim, Eilis and Mary, all dressed in Sunday best, are walking towards the church, Mary on Eilis's arm.

MARY

I don't want to be sitting right at the back.

JIM

Oh, we'll make sure you get the  
best seats in the house.

MARY

(alarmed)

Oh, it wouldn't feel right, sitting up there with Nancy and George.

JIM

(smiling)

We'll find the second-best seats in the house, then. Would you like me to run ahead and save a couple of places, Mrs Lacey?

MARY

Would you mind, Jim? That would be grand.

Jim walks briskly ahead.

MARY

He's a real gentleman, isn't he?

EILIS

(neutral)

He is.

MARY

He came along at just the right time for us.

Eilis says nothing.

MARY

Is he why you changed your ticket again?

EILIS

Oh, no. They need me at Davis's too much for me to think about going for a week or two, that's all.

Nancy and George getting married. Nancy is looking into George's eyes and reciting her vows.

NANCY

I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honour you all the days of my life.

We see Jim, Eilis and Mary in the congregation. Jim tries to steal a sideways glance at Eilis, but she won't catch his eye, and, to Jim at least, her expression is unreadable - certainly she's not smiling. If anything, she looks afraid.

135 EXT. CHURCHYARD. DAY

135

As Nancy and George get into the car that will take them to the church and the reception, Eilis has been caught by one of Mary's friends, Mrs Byrne.

MRS BYRNE  
(knowingly)  
Your mother tells me you things are working out for you very well in Enniscorthy, Eilis.

Eilis doesn't know what to say.

EILIS  
It was a lovely service.

MRS BYRNE  
And Mr and Mrs Farrell are moving out to Glenbrien, so Jim will...

EILIS  
(abrupt)  
Yes, I know. (Beat) Jim and I promised my mother we'd take her back to the car. She says she can't remember where we parked it.

MRS BYRNE  
Oh, do you hear that? "Jim and I! Jim and I!". It won't be long now, by the sound of it, and your mother will have a wonderful day out.

Eilis smiles thinly.

EILIS  
Will you excuse me?

136 INT. WEDDING RECEPTION. NIGHT

136

Jim and Eilis are slow-dancing to the band, along with several other couples, in the ballroom of the hotel. It's clearly the fag-end of the evening, and many of the older people have gone home, apart from those too incapable of stirring themselves.

JIM  
Can we talk?

Eilis pulls her face away, looks at him.

EILIS  
What about?

(CONTINUED)

JIM

About...Well, the future.

Eilis takes a breath. She can guess what's coming.

EILIS

Yes.

JIM

I can't just let you go back to America without saying anything. I'd regret it for the rest of my life. So: I don't want you to go. I want you to stay here, with me.

Eilis stiffens perceptibly.

JIM

And that means asking you another question, I know that, but I don't want to bombard you. I'll save that one for later.

He looks at her expectantly. She shrugs helplessly.

EILIS

Thank you. (Beat) I'm...I'm grateful. And I'm flattered.

JIM

But that's all?

EILIS

No. No, of course not. It's just...I had imagined a different life for myself.

JIM

I understand. But your life here could be just as good. Better, even, maybe.

136

CONTINUED:

136

Eilis returns to her previous position: she holds Jim close to her, and puts her head on his shoulder. That way she can demonstrate how she feels without having to say any more.

137

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

137

Eilis is sitting on her bed surrounded by Tony's letters. She has an air-mail pad on her knee and a pen is poised above the paper. She starts to write.

EILIS (V.O.)

Dear Tony,

She stops again. There's a pause.

EILIS (V.O.)

Thank you for your letters.

Another pause.

I want you to know that...

She stops again.

EILIS

(out loud, agonised) I don't know what I want you to know.

138

EXT. THE FARRELL HOUSE. DAY

138

Jim lives on the edge of Enniscorthy, in a pretty detached house set back from the road. It's not big, but it's bigger than her mother's house. His car turns into the gravel drive. He jumps out, runs round, opens the door for Eilis, who is wearing Sunday best, a nicely-cut dress that she couldn't have bought in Ireland.

139

EXT. GARDEN. DAY

139

Mrs Farrell, a large, homely, pleasant woman is pouring tea for Eilis in the small back garden of the house. Jim and Eilis are sitting on chairs at the garden table; Jim's father is sitting away from them, smoking a pipe on a bench at the end of the garden. It's a hot day, but there is plenty of shade.

MRS FARRELL

(to her husband)

Will you finish that wretched pipe and sit with us?

MR FARRELL

I can hear perfectly well from where I am.

(CONTINUED)

MRS FARRELL

We're not here to provide you with entertainment.

MR FARRELL

Oh, don't you worry. I found that out many years ago.

Jim rolls his eyes at Eilis. She smiles.

MRS FARRELL

(provocatively quiet)

Just ignore him, Eilis. It's as well Jim takes after me, not him.

MR FARRELL

(shouting)

Speak up!

EILIS

(a little louder than necessary)

Are you looking forward to your move?

MRS FARRELL

(still quiet)

Ah, we'll miss Enniscorthy. But it's lovely and quiet in Glenbrien.

Over on the bench, Mr Farrell puts down his pipe in irritation and stomps over to join them.

JIM

Mother's worried about leaving me here on my own. She thinks I'll destroy the place.

MRS FARRELL

(carefully)

I'm hoping you won't be on your own forever.

EILIS

I'm sure he won't.

Almost before the words are out of her mouth, Eilis can see that she's said more than she meant to, and we can see she feels panicky. She tries to clarify her position.

EILIS

I mean..

But she can't find words with the necessary ambiguity - unsurprisingly, given that she doesn't know what she feels. Mrs Farrell looks at Jim meaningfully.



139

CONTINUED:

139

It's clear that Eilis has her approval. Jim smiles. He looks happy and proud - and, to us, vulnerable.

140

EXT. CEMETERY. DAY

140

Eilis standing at Rose's grave. She has just left fresh flowers by the headstone.

EILIS

You're the only person I can talk to, Rose. There's nobody else. Not Tony, my husband. My husband! Not Jim. Not mother. Oh, Rose. Can you imagine if I told mummy that I was going to marry Jim? That would be everything she wanted. She wouldn't be alone. And I could be happy, I know I could. I'd be happy with Jim here, at home. And I could be happy with Tony in America. I know that, too... I wish I could do nothing. I wish I could float above it all, watching. Like you.

141

EXT. EILIS'S HOUSE, STREET. DAY

141

Eilis has just returned from visiting Rose's grave. She is about to walk down the path into her house when she sees Mary, Miss Kelly's shop assistant, walking towards her briskly.

EILIS

Mary!

MARY

I was just coming to fetch you.

EILIS

(amused)

To fetch me? I haven't worked for Miss Kelly for a long time, Mary. I may call in to see her soon, if that's what she wants.

MARY

(anxious)

Please come, Eilis. She told me not to come back without you. You know what she's like.

142

EXT. KELLY SHOP, STREET. DAY

142

Miss Kelly is waiting at the door of the shop where Eilis used to work as Eilis and Mary approach.

(CONTINUED)

MISS KELLY

You look after things for five minutes while I'm upstairs with Eilis, please, Mary. There are no customers in there at the moment, so I don't think you can make too much of a mess of things.

She leads Eilis round the side of the shop, where there is an entrance to Miss Kelly's home above the shop. She opens the door without saying anything, and Eilis follows her inside.

A dingy room, full of old furniture and dust and no colour. We see the dust motes in the afternoon sunlight. Eilis and Miss Kelly enter the room, and Miss Kelly sits down in an armchair. She gestures at Eilis to sit on a smaller armchair facing her. Eilis perches on it, unwilling to relax.

MISS KELLY

So. How have you been getting on?

EILIS

Very well, thanks, Miss Kelly.

MISS KELLY

I heard that you're working over at Davis's? In the accounts department?

EILIS

That's right.

MISS KELLY

And there's lots of talk about you and young Jim Farrell.

EILIS

Ah, well. You know what people are like. They love to talk.

Miss Kelly smiles to herself.

MISS KELLY

Yes. Do you remember Mrs Brady?

Eilis thinks, or pretends to.

MISS KELLY

She usually comes into the shop on Sunday morning for her rashers.

This hasn't helped. Eilis still looks blank.

MISS KELLY

No? Well, you have a very busy life now. What with one thing and another.

Miss Kelly pauses for a moment. She's enjoying unsettling Eilis.

MISS KELLY

Anyway, Mrs Brady has a niece living in Brooklyn.

Eilis is now beginning to feel uneasy - we can almost see the chill that is beginning to run through her.

MISS KELLY

The world is a small place, isn't it? She had a letter from her a couple of weeks back.

EILIS

And what did it say?

MISS KELLY

Oh, only that she'd been to a wedding at the registry office, and her husband had bumped into a girl from Enniscorthy who was getting married there.

EILIS

I'm not sure what you're telling me, Miss Kelly. He didn't bump into me.

This has only the virtue of being literally true. Eilis is visibly shaking. Miss Kelly is loving this. There is unambiguous pleasure on her face.

MISS KELLY

Oh, you can't fool me, Miss Lacey. Although I'm not sure that's your name any longer, is it? He couldn't remember. Something Italian, he thought.

Suddenly, Eilis finds the will to resist her.

EILIS

(quietly)  
I'd forgotten.

MISS KELLY

(snorting disbelief)  
You'd forgotten! What a thing for-

EILIS

I'd forgotten what this town is like. What were you planning to do, Miss Kelly? Keep me away from Jim? Stop me from going back to America? Perhaps you didn't even know. Perhaps it was enough for you to know that you could ruin me.

She stands up.

EILIS

My name is Eilis Fiorello.

She meets Miss Kelly's stare and then leaves the room.

EXT. KELLY SHOP, STREET. DAY

Eilis comes out of Miss Kelly's flat and closes the door. She stops for a moment, closes her eyes, then walks on.

EXT. POST OFFICE. DAY

We see Eilis walking in to the local post office.

INT. POST OFFICE. DAY

Minutes later. Eilis is leaning against the wall in a telephone kiosk, shaken by her encounter. The telephone rings. She answers it immediately.

EILIS

Thank you.... Hello? I would like to make a reservation for the next available sailing from Cobh to New York....

INT. DINING ROOM, EILIS'S HOUSE. EVENING

Eilis and Mary, eating their dinner. Eilis is drawn, distracted; Mary is content and chatty. We join her in mid-flow.

MARY

I think people even spend more money after a wedding. Nancy's mother must have been in every shop in the town. She was buying firelighters in Broom's. Firelighters! In August!

Close on Eilis. She can hardly bear to listen to this. She begins to weep silently.

MARY

But she'd seen Mrs Stapleton in there, and she hadn't had a chance to go through the whole day in detail with her, so...

Finally Mary notices her tears.

MARY

Eilis, what's the matter? Has something happened with Jim?

EILIS

Mummy, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I'm married. I got married in Brooklyn before I came home. I should have told you. I should have told you the minute I got back.

Mary puts down her knife and fork. She holds on to the table, as if to steady herself.

MARY

And you kept it from me all this time?

Eilis closes her eyes. She cannot bear the pain she is causing her mother.

MARY

So you're going back?

Eilis nods.

EILIS

Yes. Tomorrow.

A very brief expression of shock appears on her mother's face.

EILIS

I want to be with him. I want to be with my husband.

MARY

Of course. Is he nice?

EILIS

Yes.

MARY

(softly, heartbroken)  
He would have to be nice, if you married him. The letters that came... I didn't want to ask.

Eilis is crying again.

EILIS

I know you didn't. And I didn't  
want to tell you.

Mary stands up.

MARY

Are you on the early train?

Eilis nods.

MARY

I'm going to bed.

EILIS

Oh, mummy...It's not even eight  
o'clock. You don't have to..

MARY

I'm very tired. And I'd rather say  
goodbye now, and only once.

Eilis stands up and they embrace.

MARY

If you weren't married, would you  
still be going back?

EILIS

(helplessly)  
Yes.

And then, recognising that this admission causes fresh  
pain...

EILIS

I don't know.

MARY

Perhaps you'll write to me about  
him when you get back?

EILIS

I will.

MARY

Thank you. Have a safe journey.  
Goodnight, Eilis.

She walks out of the room, dignified, determined, broken.  
Eilis sits back down at the dinner table and puts her head in  
her hands.

Montage:

147A INT. EILIS'S HOUSE - ROSE'S BEDROOM. DAY 147A  
Eilis is standing in the doorway looking at the empty room.

148 EXT. STREET. NIGHT 148  
Eilis standing outside a large house a little way out of the town. She hesitates, walks down the path and puts a letter through the letter-box.

149 INT. TRAIN. MORNING 149  
Eilis sitting in a train carriage, looking out of the window.

150 INT. HOUSE. DAY 150  
Jim, dressed for work, stoops to pick up an envelope on the mat in the hallway. He opens it, starts to read the letter it contains.

151 EXT. SHIP. DAY. 151  
Eilis, standing with a few other passengers on the deck of a passenger ship looking back at the dock as it disappears. A young-looking teenage girl standing a few feet away is watching too. She turns to Eilis.

GIRL ON DECK

So are you away to live in America?

Eilis doesn't turn towards the voice.

EILIS

No.

GIRL ON DECK

Just visiting?

EILIS

No. I live there already.

GIRL ON DECK

Really? What's it like?

Eilis smiles wearily.

EILIS

It's a big place.

GIRL ON DECK

I'm going to live in Brooklyn, New York. Do you know it?

(CONTINUED)



EILIS

Yes.

GIRL ON DECK

People say that there's so many  
Irish people there, it's like home.  
Is that right?

Finally, Eilis turns to study the girl - takes in her youth,  
and her innocence, and her fear.

EILIS

Yes, it's just like home.

The girl smiles gratefully. Eilis turns away. Suddenly she  
thinks better of her unfriendliness, and turns back to the  
girl.

EILIS

You're not to eat.

GIRL ON DECK

Oh. Right. (Beat) But I might be  
there years.

Eilis smiles.

EILIS

No, you can eat when you get there.  
But don't eat on the boat. It'll  
stop you getting so sick. Do you  
promise me?

GIRL ON DECK

I promise.

EILIS

And in a moment, I want you to go  
straight down to your cabin and  
lock the bathroom door on your  
side. When next door starts  
hammering, you can negotiate....  
When you get to Immigration, keep  
your eyes wide open, and look as if  
you know where you're going. You  
have to think like an American.

We see the girl joining the back of a dispiritingly long  
queue - the same desperation and poverty ahead of her that  
Eilis had to deal with when she arrived in New York. Eilis  
walks past her quickly down a different path - she gives the  
girl on the deck a nod and a smile of encouragement. She  
joins a tiny queue over which hangs a sign saying US  
CITIZENS ONLY.

152

CONTINUED:

152

EILIS (V.O.)

You'll feel so homesick that you'll want to die, and there's nothing you can do about it apart from endure it. But you will, and it won't kill you. And one day the sun will come out...

153

EXT. HOUSE IN BROOKLYN. DAY

153

Eilis is leaning against a wall opposite a three-story brownstone in Brooklyn. She has her eyes closed as she soaks up the last of a late-summer sunny day. The front door of the brownstone opens, and two men, dressed in overalls and carrying tools, come out chatting. One of them is Tony. Eilis sees him before he sees her, and the camera stays on him for a moment - we notice his openness, his good humour, his innocence.

EILIS (V.O.)

And you'll realise that this is where your life is.

Tony sees her. He stops in his tracks, smiles broadly, runs across the road. For a moment he's worried about the reception he's getting. Eilis's expression is difficult to read, and for a moment he looks at her anxiously, but she opens her arms to him. Freeze on their embrace.

THE END