

HOWARDS END

Based on the novel by

E.M. Forster

Screenplay by

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Merchant-Ivory Productions
46 Lexington St.
London, W. 1

1. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

A view of Howards End, a house in Hertfordshire. It is neither mansion with any pretensions to being a "stately home," nor a farmhouse, but rather, something in-between - the house of a long dead country squire, or local gentleman, built of brick somewhere between 1650 and 1750. It is handsome and well kept up, with lawns and trees, some of which are now in flower. Meadows and cultivated fields come up close, so that after only a few paces one is knee-deep in tall grass.

MRS. WILCOX, the owner of the house, in her late forties, tall and stately, is trailing through this grass in her long Edwardian dress. She takes immense pleasure in her surroundings, breathing in odours, plucking a hedge flower here, a wisp of hay there. There is something about her that merges with the place - or it in her - in perfect harmony. She seems to waft along on the breezes of spring. Together with the mad twittering of mating birds, there are loud cheery human voices, and when MRS. WILCOX turns a corner, she sees:

A game of croquet in progress. The players are HENRY WILCOX, her husband: athletic, comfortable, and entirely at ease with himself and the world; his son CHARLES, in his late twenties, a younger, trimmer, and perhaps stupider version of his father; a second son PAUL, in his turn a younger version of his brother; and HELEN SCHLEGEL, a very attractive, intelligent, and vivacious girl of about 22 or 23. The men are perfectly attired for being in the country - the year is 1908 - but HELEN has a less conventional look about her. Her dress and hair suggest there is something of the new emancipated woman about her, that she is something of a Shavian heroine.

MR. WILCOX and CHARLES are serious players, intent on winning; PAUL would be the same but is just now taken up with HELEN and trying to help her game. HELEN is talking volubly with no interest in - or apparently knowledge of - the game at all, which in fact she is disrupting. CHARLES frowns with displeasure, but MR. WILCOX humours her by sometimes entering into her discussion:

MR. WILCOX

No sensible woman needs the vote for she already rules the world quite adequately through her husband.

HELEN pretends exasperation, but she is really amused and pleased with her opponents.

HELEN

(calling to MRS. WILCOX) Mrs. Wilcox, do help me with these men!

But MRS. WILCOX only smiles in a wise and loving way and continues in the direction of the house. HELEN calls to EVIE, the Wilcox daughter, about 17 years old, more like her brothers than her mother. She is engrossed in doing her calisthenics on a machine she has fixed to a tree.

HELEN

Mr. Shaw has advised us to start a revolution - to shoot, kill, maim, destroy until we're made equal citizens! I wouldn't go so far myself - but I appreciate his point -

On this last, she puts all her considerable energy into hitting her croquet ball - and does so with such success that it goes spinning through the hoop, knocking aside both MR. WILCOX'S and CHARLES'.

2. EXT. HOWARDS END. EVENING.

MRS. WILCOX is still enjoying her garden, still trailing over the grass, though now in full evening dress. The windows of the house are lit up. Through one window, PARLOURMAIDS can be seen to clear the table after dinner. Through another, a card game is in progress. The players are MR. WILCOX, CHARLES, PAUL, EVIE, and HELEN. The Wilcox family is in evening clothes, as perfectly correct as was their sports attire. They are also as earnest and intense about this game as they were about their croquet, though it is a very simple childish game like "Donkey" or "Old Maid."

HELEN, amused by their seriousness, throws down her cards. She gets up and goes out into the garden. PAUL follows her. MRS. WILCOX watches HELEN and PAUL turn to each other under the wych-elm tree, which stands between grounds and meadow. HELEN is the less inhibited, but PAUL is not slow to respond: they embrace passionately.

3. EXT. WICKHAM PLACE: SCHLEGEL HOUSE. DAY.

A narrow Victorian house in a London street. It has the air of a quiet backwater - but already threatened with change, for a new block of expensive flats has sprung up opposite, and more flats are in process of building where the old houses have been torn down.

4. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE IN WICKHAM PLACE. DAY.

A very different atmosphere from the Wilcox house - somewhat shabby with use though very comfortable, somewhat untidy with far too many books lying about. There are pictures, statuary, bookcases, family mementoes: the place is simultaneously intellectual and home-like. But - a different note - a sword hangs on the wall.

MARGARET SCHLEGEL is sitting at the breakfast table with her AUNT JULEY. Her brother TIBBY is lying on a sofa. MARGARET is about 28, thin and already a bit spinsterish, with a bright intelligent face. AUNT JULEY is stout and matronly. TIBBY is a skinny intellectual oldish 18-year-old.

MARGARET has just handed AUNT JULEY a letter - we might start off with CU of letter:

"Dearest, dearest Meg, I don't know what you will say: Paul Wilcox and I are in love - the younger son - we are engaged - "

AUNT JULEY

(breaking off in astonishment and indignation) Well. You Schlegel girls. (accusingly) Margaret - if I may ask - what on earth is going on?

MARGARET

(defending herself) I can tell you nothing, Aunt Juley. I know no more than you do. We only met the Wilcoxes last spring.

AUNT JULEY

In that case, it is far too sudden.

MARGARET

Who knows, Aunt Juley, who knows?

AUNT JULEY

But, Margaret dear, it is too sudden!

MARGARET

(in desperation) Who knows!

TIBBY

(plaintively) Isn't it time for my medicine?

MARGARET

Thank you for reminding me, Tibby dear.

She gets up, and while taking the bottle of medicine over to him, pouring it out, etc., she goes on talking:

MARGARET

We met them while we were hiking in Germany last year. We were all trapped in Speyer: Helen and I had got it into our heads that there was a grand old cathedral - you told us, Tibby.

TIBBY

The Archbishop of Speyer was one of the seven Electors. Speyer, Mainz and Köln - ugh. (at the taste of the medicine)

MARGARET

The cathedral has been ruined, absolutely ruined by restoration; not an inch left of the original structure. (She pops a toffee into TIBBY's mouth) We wasted a whole day, and came across the Wilcoxes while we were eating our sandwiches in the public garden. (another indignant sound from AUNT JULEY at such an introduction) We liked them and they must have liked us and that is how Helen came to be at Howards End -

AUNT JULEY

Obviously, someone has to go down to this Howards House to make inquiries - no, Margaret, inquiries are necessary. What do we know about these Wilcoxes? Are they our sort? Are they likely people?

MARGARET

But, Aunt Juley, what does it matter? Helen's in love - and all the rest isn't worth a straw.

AUNT JULEY

(standing up resolutely) Get me the train timetable.

MARGARET does so, but protesting -

MARGARET

Really, really, I should go myself. Don't you see - at such a moment I have to be with Helen.

AUNT JULEY

Now, I'm going to be rude. You would say the wrong thing. You would ask one of your odd questions -

MARGARET

I would ask no questions. I have it in Helen's writing that she and a man are in love. I would ask no questions if she had written the same about the boy who delivers the groceries - although in his case, I must admit, I should want it to be a very long engagement indeed.

AUNT JULEY

(after staring at her open-mouthed, and shutting the door so that the MAID shouldn't hear) Just imagine if you had said anything of that sort to the Wilcoxes. I understand you, of course, but those people would think you were mad.

5. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

HELEN and PAUL emerge simultaneously out of their bedroom doors. She starts forward gladly, but he, murmuring a shamefaced "Morning," dashes downstairs and into the dining room. She follows him in amazement. She stands in the dining room door and looks at him absorbed in the bosom of his family at the breakfast table. He is desperately avoiding her eye. She notices that his hand shakes as he takes the cup MRS. WILCOX hands to him.

6. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

HELEN watches CHARLES and MR. WILCOX leaving in the motor. When she turns around, PAUL approaches her:

PAUL

About last night -

HELEN

Nothing happened.

PAUL

I'm afraid I lost my head rather -

HELEN

Yes, we both did rather. It must have been the moonlight; except there was no moon. Well, that's quite all right.

PAUL

You see, I have no money of my own and I still have to make my way in Nigeria. (an uneasy pause) ...It's beastly out there for a white woman - the climate and the natives and all that...I say, I do think you're a ripping girl -

HELEN

That's quite all right. No one knows about it. (But then she remembers with a shock:) Meg! I wrote to my sister!

PAUL is panic-stricken. They decide they must send a telegram at once. But Charles has taken the car. It ends with PAUL bicycling to Hilton to send the telegram.

7. INT./EXT. HILTON RAILWAY STATION. DAY.

AUNT JULEY, descending from a train, beckons to a PORTER. She asks for Howards House.

PORTER

Mr. Wilcox! The lady wants Howards End!

CHARLES comes forward.

AUNT JULEY

Excuse me asking - but are you the younger Mr. Wilcox or the elder?

CHARLES

The younger.

AUNT JULEY

Ah.

She regards him with arch interest. He excuses himself, rushes into the parcel office, shouting, "Hi, you there! Are you going to keep me waiting all day? Parcel for Wilcox, Howards End - just look sharp!" When he rejoins AUNT JULEY:

CHARLES

This station's abominably organized; if I had my way, the whole lot of 'em should get the sack. (at the same time he is tipping the PORTER)

AUNT JULEY

(still rather arch) I ought to introduce myself, oughtn't I? (over-significantly) I'm Miss Schlegel's aunt.

CHARLES

(coolly) Oh rather; Miss Schlegel is stopping with us. Did you want to see her? I'll run you up in the motor.

He takes her to the motor, settles her in -

AUNT JULEY

This is very good of you. Very good indeed ...It is just what I should have wished.

She speaks even more significantly, but he is busy pouring in petrol, starting his engine, etc.

As the engine starts up, AUNT JULEY bounces up and down with its motion as she says -

AUNT JULEY
You see, we heard from Helen this morning...

CHARLES continues too busy to listen -

AUNT JULEY
Margaret would have come herself but she could not because of her brother's hay-fever. The poor boy suffers terribly...

CHARLES is putting on his goggles and motoring cap, preparatory to climbing in beside her.

8. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE. DAY.

MARGARET has just read a telegram. She says "Oh no."
TIBBY stretches out his hand for it:

TIBBY
(reading) "All over. Wish I had never written. Tell no one..." (He takes out and consults his watch) Aunt Juley would be just half way between Kings Cross and Hilton junction.

MARGARET
We must telegraph at once to warn Helen.

TIBBY
We appear to have entered a world of telegrams. What are we doing there?

9. INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT. DAY.

AUNT JULIE, alert and expectant, is seated looking out of the window of the train.

From her window we see, going in the opposite direction, a TELEGRAPH BOY on a bicycle.

9a. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

The TELEGRAPH BOY we have just seen arrives on his bicycle. He is about to hand his telegram to MRS. WILCOX, who is in the garden. PAUL comes dashing up and takes the telegram, in spite of her protests that it is for Miss Schlegel. Saying that he will give it to her, he hurries away with it. MRS. WILCOX thoughtfully continues gardening.

10. EXT. MOTOR ON COUNTRY ROADS/VILLAGE STREETS. DAY.

Seated beside CHARLES, outlandish in his goggles and motoring cap, AUNT JULEY has to shout against the wind:

AUNT JULEY
...You can imagine that the news was a great shock to us!

She has to repeat this to make him hear, and when he catches on -

CHARLES

What news?

AUNT JULEY

Margaret has told me everything - I have seen Helen's letter!

CHARLES

I beg your pardon: I didn't catch?

They draw up outside a draper's shop - CHARLES calls some command into the shop -

AUNT JULEY

I come in no spirit of interference but I'm here to have a good talk. Helen is a very exceptional person.

CHARLES

I'm sorry to be so dense. But I still haven't quite understood.

A SHOP ASSISTANT comes running out with a roll of oilcloth. As they start off again, AUNT JULEY has to continue shouting against the wind:

AUNT JULEY

All the Schlegels are exceptional! They are of course British to the backbone, but their father was German and that is why they care for Literature and Art -

CHARLES gives her a look of incomprehension.

AUNT JULEY

Yes, Literature and Art! I'm here to represent the family -

They draw up outside another shop -

AUNT JULEY

- and to talk to you. About Helen, Mr. Wilcox - my niece and you.

CHARLES

(pushing up his goggles to stare at her)
Miss Schlegel and myself?

AUNT JULEY

Mr. Wilcox, Helen wrote to us. She has told us everything - (in face of his growing horror) - that you and she - about your engagement -

A pause. CHARLES shouts into the shop that he hasn't got all day.

AUNT JULEY

(beginning to quaver) ...I trust there has been no misunderstanding.

CHARLES

A most extraordinary misunderstanding... Mrs. - eh -

AUNT JULEY

Munt.

CHARLES

Mrs. Munt, it is true that I am engaged to be married, but to another young lady. (definite and grim) Not to Miss Schlegel.

As another SHOP ASSISTANT deposits another parcel, they both sit tight-lipped, restraining themselves from saying anything untoward before the lower classes.

CHARLES starts off again with another jolt, thereby endangering the SHOP ASSISTANT who hardly has time to get out of the way -

CHARLES

Oh good God! It's some foolery of Paul's!

AUNT JULEY

But you are Paul!

CHARLES

I'm not.

AUNT JULEY

Then why did you say so at the station?

CHARLES

I said nothing of the sort.

AUNT JULEY

I beg your pardon, you did.

CHARLES

I beg your pardon, I did not. My name is Charles... (comprehension dawning) Do you
(MORE)

CHARLES (contd)
 mean to tell me that Paul and your niece -
 oh, the idiot! The damned fool!...I warn
 you: Paul hasn't a penny; it's useless.

AUNT JULEY
 (spluttering with indignation) No need
 to warn us! The warning is all the other
 way.

CHARLES
 Why hasn't he told us? Of course he's
 ashamed. Whereas your niece has lost no
 time in publishing the news -

AUNT JULEY
 If I were a man, Mr. Wilcox, for that
 last remark I'd box your ears. You're
 not fit to sit in the same room as my
 niece -

CHARLES
 All I know she's spread the thing and he
 hasn't -

AUNT JULEY
 - or to clean her boots!

CHARLES
 Might I finish my sentence, please?

AUNT JULEY
 No! I decline to argue with such a person!
 Let me out of your car! This instant!
 Stop!

CHARLES
 Don't try and stand up!

They continue screaming at each other -

The car disappears in a cloud of dust.

11. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

As the car drives up, HELEN, holding her telegram, comes
 rushing out of the house. MRS. WILCOX is still among
 her roses.

AUNT JULEY gets out of the car as soon as she can - and
 collapses weeping in HELEN's arms.

CHARLES is standing up in the motor, pulling off his
 gloves and shouting imperiously for PAUL who comes running
 out.

MRS. WILCOX takes charge:

MRS. WILCOX

Miss Schlegel, would you take your aunt up to your room or to my room, whichever you think best. Paul, do find Evie and tell her lunch for six, but I'm not sure whether we shall all be downstairs for it.

Then she turns her attention to CHARLES, still standing up in the motor. She beckons to him.

CHARLES

Mother, are you aware that Paul has been playing the fool again?

MRS. WILCOX

It's all right, dear. They have broken off the engagement.

She fixes the rose she is holding in his lapel while he repeats, "Engagement - ?"

MRS. WILCOX

They are no longer in love, if you prefer to put it that way... (She admires her rose on him) The perfect bridegroom.

She kisses his cheek. He calms down, looking at the flower she has given him.

12. INT. WICKHAM PLACE: WILCOX LONDON FLAT. EVENING.

From her window opposite, MARGARET sees the interior of their drawing room framed and lit up:

CHARLES is now really a bridegroom, with DOLLY as his bride. A wedding reception is in progress, and they are receiving congratulations. The whole Wilcox family is there.

MARGARET drops the curtain and turns back into her own drawing room -

13. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE. EVENING.

Turning from the window, MARGARET addresses TIBBY who is very meticulously making tea -

MARGARET

...What astonishing bad luck: that in the whole of London they could find no flat to rent except the one bottled right up against our drawing room window.

TIBBY
(engrossed in his task) Who could find
no flat?

MARGARET
Oh, Tibby. The Wilcoxes. (at his look
of incomprehension) Surely even you
remember that business last summer with
Helen and Paul Wilcox -

TIBBY
Oh yes - Paul Wilcox. The one I was
expected to thrash within an inch of his
life. (with a mock dramatic cry) Sir,
you have insulted my sister! Take that!
(dropping a spoonful of tea in the pot)
And that! (another spoonful)

MARGARET can't help smiling for a moment, but almost at
once becomes grave again -

MARGARET
Yes - but what about Helen?

She lifts the curtain again and stares at the bright
picture opposite of the WILCOXES and their WEDDING PARTY.

14. INT. LECTURE HALL. EVENING.

A lofty, draughty, ornate, late-Victorian hall. A musical
lecture-demonstration is in progress. The LECTURER -
long-haired, artistic - is expounding Beethoven's Fifth
Symphony. He demonstrates on the piano and is backed
up by a stout LADY CELLIST.

HELEN is in the audience. A depressed young clerk - this
is LEONARD BAST - sits next to her. (They are strangers
to each other.)

LADY CELLIST demonstrates transitional passage -

LECTURER
And here Beethoven gives those goblins
of the third movement a little push -
from major into minor - and then he blows
with his mouth - (piano and cello demon-
stration) - and they are scattered! Gusts
of splendour! Magnificent victory!

A member of the AUDIENCE rises to ask a question - "But
what exactly is the connection between the heroes of
the first movement and the goblins of the third?"

HELEN gets herself ready to leave. Everyone in the row has to stand up to let her pass. The LECTURER is demonstrating how the Andante forms the connection. Looking after HELEN, LEONARD to his dismay sees that she has taken his umbrella. He tries to call to her - but then has to get up and follow her. Everyone has to stand up again, while question and answer continue. One LADY shouts out her question just as LEONARD is passing her:

LADY

But why is the transitional passage specifically on the drum?

LEONARD is frozen for a moment. The LECTURER mistakes him for the questioner and asks him to repeat. LEONARD bolts while the LADY repeats: "Why the drum?"

15. EXT. LECTURE HALL. EVENING.

There is a board with the title of the lecture: Music and Meaning. LEONARD emerges in time to see HELEN striding down the street with his umbrella. He goes in pursuit. It is raining and he has to dodge his way between people under umbrellas. He is getting wet.

(A Note on LEONARD's appearance: At first sight, he is a depressed clerk - but he is very young, about 20, and good-looking in a frail, pale, poetic way; not at all robust.)

16. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE. EVENING.

MARGARET, still at the window, sees HELEN arriving home and runs to warn her. They meet at the foot of the stairs, and after one look at MARGARET's face:

HELEN

What is it, dearest? Is Tibby all right?

MARGARET

Tibby is making tea.

HELEN

Oh, if it's nothing worse than that.

They go up the stairs and into the drawing room.

MARGARET

Now you mustn't mind this, Helen dear - promise me you won't mind... (Here they arrive in the drawing room) It's the Wilcoxes: they have taken the flat opposite for the wedding of their son - the other son - you do mind.

For HELEN has blushed, in spite of herself. She tries to laugh it off. ("Do I bow - or do I cut them dead?")

TIBBY

We have an excellent view of the proceedings - the best seats in the house, you might say.

Although MARGARET tries to prevent her, HELEN goes to draw aside the curtain. She sees the WILCOX PARTY opposite - But then her attention goes from them to LEONARD who is hovering undecidedly outside -

HELEN

Is that young man for us, do you suppose?

LEONARD looks up, recognizes her, and makes signs to her -

HELEN

He is for us.

She goes out and runs down the stairs to open the door to him. MARGARET follows, watching from above.

LEONARD

If you'll pardon me, Miss - you took my umbrella - quite inadvertently, I'm sure. (as HELEN looks puzzled) At the Ethical Hall: Music and Meaning.

(A Note on LEONARD's accent: When he is on his best behaviour, as here, he speaks in a "genteel" way; but when he is himself, he has an attractive provincial accent.)

HELEN

Oh, I'm so sorry! I do nothing but steal umbrellas!

She invites him to choose any one he likes from the umbrella stand.

HELEN

(opening an umbrella) No, it's all gone along the seams. It's an appalling umbrella. It must be .

But LEONARD shamefacedly claims it as his.

HELEN

I am so very sorry.

By this time MARGARET has joined them and also apologizes. ("My sister is an incorrigible thief.")

HELEN

Don't you talk, Meg! (to LEONARD) She stole an old gentleman's silk top-hat, mistaking it for her muff...I say, do stay for tea, Mr. -

LEONARD

Bast.

HELEN

Mr. Bast. Won't you stay for tea?

MARGARET warmly endorses the invitation. Between them they are irresistible and get him up the stairs and into the drawing room where they introduce TIBBY.

LEONARD is utterly bewildered - he is clutching his umbrella and his coat too as though afraid of having both snatched away. They chatter without stop while TIBBY sips tea.

HELEN

What did you think of the lecture? I don't agree about the goblins, do you, but I do about the heroes and shipwreck - (explaining to MARGARET) "Music and Meaning."

MARGARET

Does music have meaning - of the literary kind, I mean?

TIBBY

That's pure slush.

MARGARET

(to LEONARD) Won't you take off your coat -

HELEN

- and trust us with your umbrella and sit down? (to TIBBY) How boring it would be if it were only the score -

MARGARET

(to LEONARD) - and have some tea?

TIBBY

(sipping) China tea. (replying to HELEN) "Only" the score - what an insidious "only"...

MARGARET

(to LEONARD) We have the other kind of tea, if you prefer.

LEONARD
Well - thank you - but -

HELEN
And here are some scones that Tibby
hasn't yet consumed.

MARGARET realizes how desperate LEONARD is to escape, so she helps him.

MARGARET
We are really very sorry to have put you
to this inconvenience. I hope you will
come another day? Would you? We should
be so glad. Do take our card.

LEONARD takes it, thanks her, and makes his escape.
HELEN goes after him with the plate of scones, pursuing
him right to the front door.

MARGARET
I'm afraid we have put him to flight.
He looked so miserable. (to TIBBY) You
ought to have made him welcome, instead
of letting him be swamped by screaming
women.

TIBBY
If you don't drink it now, you'll lose
the aroma.

The curtain is still open, revealing the WILCOX wedding
party. They are just having their photograph taken, with
MR. WILCOX, CHARLES and PAUL forming a solid phalanx.
MARGARET shuts the curtain.

17. INT. HELEN'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

HELEN is thoughtfully smoking in bed when MARGARET enters
and sits beside her. After saying she hopes Helen is not
going to set the bed on fire again -

MARGARET
...You must tell me whether this thing
worries you...The Wilcoxes.

HELEN
You mean that Paul might point at our
house and say: "There lives the girl who
tried to catch me."

MARGARET
Ridiculous.

She gets up, wanders to the window. The lighted windows of the flats opposite can be seen, a storey above the Wilcoxes.

MARGARET

...They have only taken the flat for a few weeks, the porter said.

HELEN

...Ugh! but it was a disgusting business. All those telegrams; all that anger.

MARGARET

I've often thought about it, Helen. The truth is, there is a great outer world where telegrams and anger count; where love means marriage settlements; death, death duties; and what we care about - nothing at all.

HELEN

I hate and despise it.

MARGARET

Yes, it's obviously horrid, but - it is solid, somehow. Manly...

HELEN makes a face. (She might say, "And desperately dull.") MARGARET comes to sit on the side of the bed again.

MARGARET

...All the same, darling, I wish you would take up Cousin Frieda's invitation and go to Hamburg for these few weeks.

After a pause:

HELEN

I think I shall...Thank Heaven one has money and can choose where to be, and not in continuous danger of bumping into Wilcoxes.

MARGARET

Yes, we do stand safe and dry on our six hundred a year.

HELEN

By the way - not really by the way: that poor young man. Mr. Bast.

MARGARET

What could his first name be? George? Cecil - oh no! Richard; Dick...

HELEN

How dreadful it must be to love music and culture and things and yet to have to worry about losing one's umbrella...

MARGARET

(sudden and very forthright) Helen, are you sure - absolutely sure - that you no longer care for Paul Wilcox?

HELEN

(laughing) Meg, Meg, I don't love that young genterman!... (serious) Not only Paul: I have finished with all Wilcoxes for ever and ever, amen. But I'll go to Hamburg all the same.

MARGARET

I'll send Cousin Frieda a telegram first thing in the morning. No, no, no more telegrams - a letter will be much nicer.

They kiss, they say goodnight; MARGARET extinguishes HELEN's cigarette for her.

18. EXT./INT. MAGNOLIA ROAD. NIGHT.

A row of run-down terrace houses in a shabby London street. LEONARD BAST walks down some area steps and lets himself into his flat.

19. INT. BAST FLAT. NIGHT.

It is a basement flat, so that passers-by can be seen through the window on the level of one's head. It has been rented "furnished" - that is, with a few second-hand pieces of shoddy furniture; the only personal items are some mantelpiece ornaments of the type won at fun-fairs and some framed photographs. But there is also a reproduction of a Constable landscape torn out of a magazine, as well as a tattered little collection of current classic books in standard editions (Ruskin, Carlyle, Landor, Meredith).

JACKY is reclining drowsily in a chair: she is two or three years older than LEONARD, and although dressed in a soiled frilly wrapper, she is hung about with jangling ornaments, her face is painted, and she wears a frizzy coiffure all in bits and pieces and dyed beyond her natural gold. She half rouses herself when she hears him enter:

JACKY

That you, Len?...Where've you been?

LEONARD

(taking off his coat, etc.) I told you I was going to a lecture. (with some satisfaction) "Music and Meaning."
(She yawns and scratches) ...I lost my umbrella. It's all right, I got it back.

He smiles in a secretive way, which makes her give him a suspicious glance.

JACKY

You had your tea? I kept your bit of tongue and jelly.

Not interested in tongue and jelly, he takes a book from his collection and begins to read. (It is Meredith: The Ordeal of Richard Feverel.) He pretends to be engrossed but is really watching JACKY to make sure she is not watching him. She is busy taking her hair to pieces; also nibbling at the tongue he has rejected. He gropes for a card in his pocket, looks at it for a moment - it is Margaret's card - then slips it secretly between the pages of his book.

Nibbling at the tongue, she does a little dance around the room, humming to herself in accompaniment, finally landing on the arm of his chair.

JACKY

Len?...Coming to bed, ducky?

LEONARD

I'll just finish this chapter.

JACKY

(playing with his hair) ...Len?...You love your Jacky?...Do you?...Len?

LEONARD

(in humorous exasperation) Will you let me read!

JACKY

...Len?... (more playing with hair) Are you going to make it all right, Len?

LEONARD

(now truly exasperated, he lowers his book) You're not starting on that again.

She looks at him with sad but loving, pleading eyes.

LEONARD

I've told you a hundred times if I've told you once: we'll get married the day
(MORE)

LEONARD (contd)

I'm 21. I'd do it before if it weren't for my brother'd come and put a stop to it... (getting enraged, almost in soliloquy) What's it to him? What's he ever done for me?

JACKY

That's right. It's just you and me, isn't it?

LEONARD

That's right.

They kiss - with ardour on her part, a sort of affectionate gratitude on his.

LEONARD

Now go to bed.

JACKY

You come too. Come on...

Playfully, she snatches his book away. The card falls out. He tries to retrieve it but she is quicker than he is.

JACKY

(holding it away from him and spelling it out, rather laboriously as one who doesn't read too well) "Margaret Schlegel" ...And who is Margaret Sch - when she's at home?

LEONARD

Just a lady I met.

JACKY

Oh. A lady. Da-di-da.

LEONARD

Come off it, Jacky. She's a hundred years old.

JACKY

Says you.

She prances into the bedroom where she gets out of her dress. She is voluptuous and sexy, and it is not at all surprising that Leonard, or any young man, should be powerfully attracted to her. He tries to concentrate on his reading:

LEONARD (V.O.)

"The moon was surpassingly bright: the summer air heavy and still. He left the high road and pierced into the forest. His walk was rapid: the leaves on the trees brushed his cheeks; the dead leaves heaped in the dells noised to his feet..."

But his thoughts stray to JACKY undressing in the next room. Replacing the book carefully, he goes into the bedroom. At first she pretends to be angry with him - tells him to go to his hundred-year-old lady friend - but when he nears the bed, she pulls him down and soon her arms are tight around his neck.

CUT TO:

JACKY and LEONARD asleep in bed. Her arm is flung across him, but he is having a dream of his own:

20. EXT. ENGLISH DREAM-LANDSCAPE: LEONARD'S DREAM DAY.

A wonderful English landscape, and LEONARD himself is wandering around in it with a knapsack on a stick. He drinks from a brook and sees his own reflection in the water - not as a worried young clerk but a fresh-faced young yeoman amid these hills and meadows.

21. INT. WILCOX LONDON FLAT. DAY.

MRS. WILCOX is reclining in a wing chair, propped up by pillows; she is writing letters on an invalid table. The light from the fire, the light from the window, and the light from a candle-lamp, which throws a quivering halo around her, combine to create a strange atmosphere of dissolution.

A PARLOURMAID comes to draw the curtains.

22. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE. DAY.

MARGARET observes the above scene from her window, just a moment before the PARLOURMAID has drawn the curtains on it.

Suddenly, on impulse, MARGARET dashes for her hat and shawl and runs across the street -

23. INT. WILCOX LONDON FLAT. DAY.

MRS. WILCOX, having taken Margaret's card from the PARLOURMAID, asks to have her shown in. MARGARET dashes in on the same impulse that drove her from the house.

MRS. WILCOX
Why, Miss Schlegel, how very kind of you
to call.

MARGARET
I've wanted to for ever so long -

MRS. WILCOX
(smiling) We haven't been here "ever so
long" -

MARGARET
Mrs. Wilcox - you see - all that business
at Howards End last summer - no, it goes
further than that - since we met at Speyer,
you remember the "restored" cathedral that
we all hated so -

MRS. WILCOX
What I remember principally about Speyer
is the pleasure of meeting you, Miss
Schlegel.

She speaks formally but with absolute sincerity and
MARGARET blushes with pleasure. Then she blurts out:

MARGARET
Helen's gone to Germany.

MRS. WILCOX
And Paul has sailed for Nigeria.

They look at each other - MRS. WILCOX smiles and MARGARET
laughs:

MARGARET
So now you and I can meet because they
can't. It's no use beating about the bush
- what happened in the summer was unfort-
unate for both of them because - don't you
think? I'm sure you feel the same - because
they should not meet.

MRS. WILCOX
(In contrast to MARGARET, she speaks
very slowly) ...Yes, I feel that.

MARGARET
Because they belong to types that can fall
in love but can't live together. I'm afraid
that in nine cases out of ten Nature pulls
one way and human nature another.

MRS. WILCOX
You put it so well.

MARGARET

But friendship now - friendship is all human nature and nothing else tugging the other way. It might even be a higher function than love between men and women - the friendship between two women -

MRS. WILCOX regards her smilingly. MARGARET smiles back.

MARGARET

I do rattle on. I'm afraid I shall tire you out in no time.

MRS. WILCOX

It's true that I'm not particularly well just today -

A pause. Somehow in that moment there is the realization that MRS. WILCOX is a very sick woman. This impression might be partly conveyed by the dim atmosphere of the room - that air of dissolution.

MRS. WILCOX

- but I'm so very grateful for your visit. You see, I am quite alone. My husband and daughter are motoring in Yorkshire and the young couple are on their honeymoon - Charles and Dolly -

MARGARET picks up their wedding picture and studies it -

MRS. WILCOX

They have gone to Naples. I can hardly imagine my Charles in Naples.

MARGARET

Doesn't he like travelling?

MRS. WILCOX

He likes travel, but he does see through foreigners so. What he would have enjoyed most is a motor tour in England...Charles takes after me, Miss Schlegel: he truly loves England...Of course I don't mean London, we none of us love London: one feels so unstable, impermanent, with houses being torn down on all sides -

MARGARET

Including, in the foreseeable future, ours.

MRS. WILCOX regards her in utter consternation.

MRS. WILCOX

Are you having to leave Wickham Place?

MARGARET

Yes, in two or three years, when the lease expires.

MRS. WILCOX

Have you been there long?

MARGARET

All our lives.

MRS. WILCOX

(vehemently) It is monstrous, Miss Schlegel! I do pity you from the bottom of my heart. I had no idea that this was hanging over you - oh, poor girls!

MARGARET is astonished (for once) into speechlessness by this over-reaction. She also fears that MRS. WILCOX is getting too excited for an invalid, so she tries to take a light tone:

MARGARET

Well, of course we're fond of the house but - it is an ordinary London house. We shall easily find another.

MRS. WILCOX

(still vehement) Not the house you were born in: you will never find that again, not in this world...Howards End was nearly pulled down once. It would have killed me ...It is my house, you know - left to me when my brother was killed out in India. I love it so much that I even resisted when Henry - my husband - wanted to make changes to improve the property. Of course Henry knew best - we even have a garage now, to the west of the house, not far from the wych-elm in what used to be the paddock for the pony.

MARGARET

Where's the pony gone?

MRS. WILCOX

The pony? Oh, dead, ever so long ago...

Smiling, she stares into a dreamy distance. The apparently dissolving room now really does dissolve -

24. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

A PONY - a ghost, a memory - is galloping around alone in the meadow.

25. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE. DAY.

A luncheon party is in progress. It is in honour of MRS. WILCOX, but she looks strangely anomalous among MARGARET's bright, chattering, somewhat androgynous FRIENDS. Calm, dignified, but dreamy, she appears like some rooted tree while they dip and swirl around her in conversational swoops.

FRIEND 1

...The vice of the pan-German mind is that it cares only for the things it can use -

FRIEND 2

It is the vice of the imperial mind -

MARGARET

It is the vice of the vulgar mind, English or German - and I can speak impartially, being divided down the middle. Oh, but Mrs. Wilcox - my father was a German of the old school: a philosopher, an idealist. The countryman of Hegel and Kant.

FRIEND 3

But isn't that his sword you have up there?

MARGARET

Oh yes, he was a soldier too when he had to be. Although victory turned sour on him when he saw the dyed moustaches of Napoleon at Sedan...

MRS. WILCOX

My idea has always been that if the mothers of the various nations could meet, there would be no more wars.

Some exchanges of glances - which MRS. WILCOX would be too aloof and superior to notice.

MARGARET

(after murmuring polite agreement) ...Do have another cutlet, Mrs. Wilcox.

MRS. WILCOX

Thank you. They are delicious. You are fortunate in your cook. We have found it difficult to get reliable servants in London.

FRIEND 2

Our servants have become infected by the general restlessness. Rightly so: after all, one can hardly expect them to listen

(MORE)

FRIEND 2 (contd)
to the conversation at the luncheon table
(he glances at the MAID who is serving
him - but her face remains impassive)
to our radical discussions -

MRS. WILCOX
We never discuss at Howards End.

MARGARET
But discussion keeps a house alive! It
cannot stand by bricks and mortar alone.

MRS. WILCOX
It cannot stand without them. I sometimes
think - no, you will smile at my old-
fashioned ideas -

FRIENDS
Do say!

MRS. WILCOX
...I sometimes think that it is wiser to
leave action and discussion to men.

An awkward little pause.

FRIEND 2
But then where would we be on the suffrage?

MRS. WILCOX
I'm only too thankful not to have a vote
myself.

Another awkward little pause, then - led by MARGARET -
they all start speaking together rather frantically, as
though to cover up for her. But MRS. WILCOX doesn't need
covering up for: she continues eating - placid, self-
contained, but also somehow vaguely above or beyond them
all.

FRIEND 1
Don't you find "L'Après Midi D'un Faun"
exactly like the pictures of Monet?

FRIEND 2
That's absurd! What is the good if music
and painting are interchangable? If Monet's
really Debussy, and Debussy'r really Monet,
neither gentleman is worth his salt. The
real villain is Wagner. He has done more
than any man in the nineteenth century to
muddle the arts. Every now and then there
do come these terrible geniuses who stir
(MCRE)

FRIEND 2 (contd)
 up all the wells of thought at once.
 For a moment it's splendid. Such a splash
 as never was. But afterwards - such a lot
 of mud, and the wells - they communicate
 with each other too easily now, and not one
 of them will run quite clear. That's what
 Wagner's done.

Somewhere in the middle of all this, MRS. WILCOX comments
 with absentminded benevolence:

MRS. WILCOX
 What interesting lives you all lead.

FRIEND 2 is still chattering away as above, but MARGARET's
 mood changes abruptly:

MARGARET
 No, we don't.

26. INT. A BROUGHAM. DAY.

MARGARET is sitting beside MRS. WILCOX, pencil and pad
 efficiently poised:

MARGARET
 Now, this is the scientific approach to
 Christmas shopping: a list.

MRS. WILCOX
 (vaguely) A list. What a good idea.
 (MARGARET sits waiting, expectantly
 smiling) Well - please write your own
 name at the top of the page.

MARGARET
 Oh, hooray! How very kind of you to start
 with me. Now, next? Should I write Mr.
 Wilcox?

CUT TO:

27. EXT. LONDON STREET. DAY.

The brougham is going along a fashionable street full of
 traffic and Christmas SHOPPERS.

28. INT. HARRODS FOOD HALL. DAY.

MRS. WILCOX and MARGARET are inspecting glazed fruits.
 MARGARET has taken complete charge of their choice of
 purchases. In between they have the following conver-
 sation:

MRS. WILCOX

...I can't thank you enough. You are wonderfully efficient. But your name still remains at the top of the list... I would like to give you something worth your acquaintance, Miss Schlegel.

MARGARET

Thank you, but I really need no more things. I need more people, not things.

MRS. WILCOX

Couldn't you get it renewed?

MARGARET

I beg your pardon?

MRS. WILCOX

The lease. The lease on your house.

MARGARET

Oh, have you been thinking of that? How very kind of you!

MRS. WILCOX

Surely something could be done.

MARGARET

No; values have risen too enormously. They mean to pull down Wickham Place, and build flats like yours.

MRS. WILCOX

But how horrible!

MARGARET

Landlords are horrible.

MARGARET, choosing some other gift, shows it to MRS. WILCOX for her approval - which is given at once. MARGARET hands it to a SALESMAN in a tail-coat.

29. INT. WILCOX FLAT. DAY.

MRS. WILCOX is utterly exhausted. Abandoning the parcels, MARGARET helps the MAID settle her in the wing chair. After the MAID leaves:

MARGARET

...I'm so very sorry. We should not have done this today.

MRS. WILCOX

No...no...It had to be done before -

MARGARET

Before?

MRS. WILCOX

Before my operation. (after a pause)
I have not yet told my family, Miss
Schlegel...Everyone hates illnesses...
That is as it should be.

Again she shuts her eyes. MARGARET hovers, settles the cushions, prepares to depart. But then MRS. WILCOX opens her eyes.

MRS. WILCOX

There is a wych-elm at Howards End. It has pig's teeth stuck in the trunk, about four feet from the ground. (smiling)
Yes, pig's teeth. The country people put them in long ago, and they think that if they chew a piece of the bark, it will cure the toothache.

MARGARET

I love folklore and old superstitions. But isn't it curious that unlike Greece England has no true mythology - all we have are witches and fairies -

MRS. WILCOX

Would you come with me to Howards End?

MARGARET

Oh, I would so much like to -

MRS. WILCOX

Now. Come with me now. (as MARGARET begins to protest that how is it possible, Mrs. Wilcox must rest, etc.) I want you to see it.

MARGARET

And I want to see it. It sounds such a glorious place - so redolent -

MRS. WILCOX

Yes. I lived there long, long before I was married.

MARGARET

...Might I come some other day?

MRS. WILCOX

(turning her face in disappointment, somewhat sulkily) Yes. Some other day...

(MORE)

MRS. WILCOX (contd)
 (then, in brisk and rather snubbing dismissal) Well, a thousand thanks, Miss Schlegel, for all your help. It is such a comfort to get the presents off my mind - the Christmas cards especially. I do admire your choice.

30. INT./EXT. WILCOX BLOCK OF FLATS. DAY.

From her window MARGARET sees MRS. WILCOX get into a brougham and the PORTER handing her a portmanteau.

MARGARET hurries into the street and hails a hansom -

31. EXT. KING'S CROSS STATION. DAY.

Arriving in her hansom at the station, MARGARET goes to the ticket office to buy a ticket to Hilton. She is told the train leaves in five minutes. As she turns to hurry to the platform -

MRS. WILCOX

Miss Schlegel!

MARGARET

(laughing nervously) I will come if I still may.

MRS. WILCOX

(joyfully) You are coming to stop the night, dear. It is in the morning that my house is most beautiful. I can't show you my meadow properly except at sunrise...

But as they hurry along, arm in arm, they are suddenly hailed by EVIE and MR. WILCOX. There are exclamations of, "Mother, what are you doing here?" "Henry dear, why aren't you in Yorkshire?" Explanation of an accident at Ripon, etc., etc.

But then MRS. WILCOX turns back to MARGARET, and drawing her forward, tells MR. WILCOX how very kind she has been to her in his absence. MR. WILCOX thanks MARGARET sincerely.

MRS. WILCOX

Miss Schlegel, our little outing will be for another day.

MR. WILCOX

There is a German expression - you would know it, Miss Schlegel -

MARGARET
Aufgeschoben ist nicht aufgehoben.

MR. WILCOX
Not cancelled but postponed.

He shepherds his entourage of ladies out of the station.

DISSOLVE TO:

32. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

An idealized vision of the meadow in the early morning -

DISSOLVE TO:

33. INT. NURSING HOME. DAY.

The vision of Howards End dissolves into MARGARET bending over MRS. WILCOX, very pale and weak in bed:

MRS. WILCOX
...I've been thinking of you...And our
outing...

MARGARET
The day you are strong enough, I shall
hold you to your promise.

The MATRON enters. MARGARET says goodbye. She walks out of the room, down the corridor.

MARGARET sees MR. WILCOX waiting outside, bowed in sorrow. There is nothing to say; there is no hope. MARGARET lays her hand on his shoulder; her true, deep sympathy brings tears to his eyes.

Inside the room, the MATRON is helping MRS. WILCOX who has gathered the last of her strength to write a note. She only manages to scribble a line before she sinks back, exhausted -

DISSOLVE TO:

34. EXT. GRAVEYARD. DAY.

A WOODCUTTER pollarding a graveyard elm has a bird's-eye view of the surrounding countryside and of the graveyard. He sees carriages of MOURNERS rolling away. GRAVEDIGGERS are filling up a newly-dug grave and piling it with wreaths and crosses. The bough falls beneath the WOODCUTTER's saw.

35. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

DOLLY, wearing mourning, is running from the house to the garage, calling for CHARLES. When he appears at the garage door (he is wearing a black arm-band) -

DOLLY
(in the utmost agitation) Charles,
something too awful has happened!

With a last sharp admonition to the CHAUFFEUR, CHARLES draws DOLLY out of earshot -

DOLLY
It's that Miss Schlegel - she wants
Howards End!

CHARLES
Howards End?... (calling back to CHAUFFEUR)
If it happens again, out you go!

DOLLY
We all have to move out so she can move in.

CHARLES
What the dickens are you talking about?

DOLLY
Howards End! Miss Schlegel's got it!

EVIE appears out of the house, gesticulating wildly. CHARLES and DOLLY run toward her. MR. WILCOX also appears, much upset:

MR. WILCOX
Come in, all three of you!...Dolly, why
have you disobeyed me?...Into the dining
room, every one of you!

CUT TO:

36. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

A family conference around the dining table, still scattered with the remains of breakfast. At one point the MAID comes in to clear away but is shooed out. All are in shock and almost hysterical. A letter lies before them.

EVIE
Mother never wrote that!

CHARLES
No date, no signature!

DOLLY

Of course it's a forgery!

MR. WILCOX pulls himself together and assumes his personality of chairman of the board, attempting to deal with the matter in a logical, unemotional way. He picks up the letter:

MR. WILCOX

Now we have here, forwarded by the matron of that nursing home, sealed and addressed to me, a note purporting to be in your mother's handwriting. Inside: (reading) "I would like Miss Schlegel [Margaret] to have Howards End."

An awful silence. Then MR. WILCOX again attempts to be unemotional:

MR. WILCOX

The house was, of course, your mother's to leave to whom she wished -

CHARLES

That is, to you.

MR. WILCOX

And after me, to you. That was what was expected.

DOLLY asks to see the note. CHARLES looks at MR. WILCOX for permission, who says, "Give it to her."

DOLLY

(seizing it and exclaiming immediately) Why, it's only in pencil! Pencil never counts.

MR. WILCOX

We know that it is not legally binding, Dolly. We are aware of that. Of course, my dear, we consider you as one of the family, but it will be better if you don't interfere with what you don't understand.

CHARLES, vexed with both his father and his wife, clears a space between plates and knives to draw patterns on the tablecloth:

CHARLES

The question is, whether during the fortnight in which this Miss Schlegel managed to "befriend" my mother -

MR. WILCOX
 (cutting him short) I don't think that
 it's a case of undue influence. No, to
 my mind the question is the - eh - the
 invalid's condition when the note was
 written -

CHARLES
 My dear father, consult an expert if you
 wish, but I don't admit it is my mother's
 writing.

DOLLY
 You just said it was!

CHARLES
 Never mind if I did. And hold your
 tongue.

DOLLY colours and draws out a handkerchief to shed a few
 tears. EVIE scowls like an angry boy. MR. WILCOX again
 assumes charge:

MR. WILCOX
 We are all agreed that, legally, I should
 be fully justified in tearing this up and
 throwing it into the fire.

A pause. Evidently this is what he wants to do and what
 they all want him to do. But first they have to satisfy
 their own consciences:

CHARLES
 And all else aside, how is this "gift"
 to be conveyed to Miss Schlegel? Is
 she to have a life interest in it or to
 own it absolutely?

DOLLY
 She may be on her way down this very
 minute to turn us all out.

CHARLES
 I wish she would. Then I could deal
 with her. These Schlegels -

MR. WILCOX
 (again interrupting) I don't believe
 Miss Schlegel knows anything about
 this... "whim" -

CHARLES
 (darkly) That time will prove... Yes, and
 what about the garage we have put in and
 all the other improvements we made,
 (MORE)

CHARLES (contd)
 assuming the house to be ours? Is there
 to be no compensation for that?

Now the chorus of self-justification begins:

EVIE
 Mother couldn't have meant it.

MR. WILCOX
 No, my girl, of course not.

EVIE
 Mother believed so in ancestors - she
 would never have left anything to an
 outsider -

MR. WILCOX
 If Miss Schlegel had been poor and had
 wanted a house - but she has a house.
 Why should she want another?

DOLLY
 My great-uncle Stanley - who was quite
 batty - tried to leave all his money to
 his horse.

CHARLES
 Mother was simply not herself.

EVIE
 She wouldn't have wanted us to even see
 this thing.

MR. WILCOX
 No, your poor mother would not have
 wanted it.

They are now more than justified in tearing up the note
 and throwing it in the fire. We see it burning there.

37. EXT. NIGHT SKY OVER OXFORD COLLEGES. NIGHT.

TIBBY is identifying the spires of various colleges to
 MARGARET and HELEN. HELEN looks beyond them, guessing
 at the constellations. Then MARGARET breaks the mood -

MARGARET
 ...Yes, but where are we going to live
 now that Wickham Place is going?

TIBBY and HELEN groan - HELEN continues to identify the
 constellations.

MARGARET

I wish you would enter into it a little,
children. What about the furniture?
Father's books? Mother's chiffonier?

TIBBY

Furniture alone endures while men and
houses perish. In the end the world will
be a desert of chairs and sofas rolling
through infinity with no one to sit upon
them.

Now all three study the constellations - and reflect that
nothing resembles its name because the position of many
stars must have changed since the Greeks named them at
least 2,500 years ago.

38. EXT. NIGHT SKY OVER LONDON. NIGHT.

The same night sky but now over London roofs.

39. EXT. BACKYARD OUTSIDE BAST FLAT. NIGHT.

LEONARD is looking up to study the stars. JACKY comes
out of the privy behind him. She lays her hands over his
eyes; there is now a wedding ring on her finger. In spite
of his protests, she continues laughingly to block out the
stars from his view.

40. INT. INSURANCE OFFICE. DAY.

On a glass door: Porphyriion Fire Insurance.

CLERKS are at high desks writing in ledgers. LEONARD is
one of them. Instead of writing, he has a celestial atlas
spread out before him. He manages to push it out of
sight before the SUPERVISOR hands him another policy to
copy.

LEONARD (V.O.)

"...An oppressive slumber hung about
the forest-branches. The breathless
silence was significant..."

41. EXT. SUBURBAN STATION. EVENING.

LEONARD is leaving the station.

LEONARD (V.O.)

"...Yonder in a space of moonlight on
lush grass, the beams were as white fire
to sight and feeling. The valleys were
clear, defined to the shadows of their
verges..."

42. EXT. END OF ROAD. EVENING.

Leaving the last of the suburban houses behind him, LEONARD gets to a wood. He looks at the sky - he looks at the trees - he takes off his hat (which is too big for him and presses down his ears) - and becomes transformed from a depressed clerk into an eager youth. He plunges into the wood.

LEONARD (V.O.)

"...Sprinkled at his feet were emerald lights: hundreds of glow-worms studded the dark dry ground. Now and then a large white night-moth flitted through the dusk of the forest. Something of a religious joy - a strange sacred pleasure - was in him..."

43. INT. BAST FLAT. DAY.

JACKY wakes up. The other half of the bed has remained empty. She goes into the living room and finds the food she has left out untouched. Frowning, she remembers something: She shakes out Leonard's books till Margaret's card falls out of one of them; out of the tattered copy of The Ordeal of Richard Feverel.

44. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE. DAY.

MARGARET is sewing. HELEN is rehearsing a speech ("The difference between marriage and prostitution is the difference between Trade Unionism and unorganized casual labour"). TIBBY is as usual prone with a book.

MARGARET

(to TIBBY) ...I'm only your sister and have no authority over you - but I do believe that you must choose some sort of career.

TIBBY turns a page, very much hoping to be left alone.

HELEN

Even for women - this is what my speech is about - "not to work" will soon become as shocking as "not to be married."

TIBBY

I desire to work about as much as you two evidently desire to marry.

The MAID comes in, looking puzzled.

MAID

There's a woman asking for you, ma'am.

TIBBY
A woman and not a lady, Annie?

MAID
She won't give her name.

MARGARET
Well, ask her to come up.

MAID
She says she won't come up.

MARGARET and HELEN look at each other -

MARGARET
Then we shall have to go down.

They descend the stairs - looking down at JACKY who looks up at them. JACKY is dressed up in her best - which is pretty dreadful - and is hiding the timidity which overwhelms her in these surroundings and before these women under an aggressive stance. She answers their polite greeting with -

JACKY
I'm looking for my husband.

HELEN
Here?

JACKY
I have my reasons to believe that he is here.

These words float up to TIBBY. He goes out to spy on the scene from the top of the banisters, and it is from his point of view that we see the three women in the hall below:

HELEN
You are welcome to search for him, certainly.

MARGARET
I'm sorry - your husband's name -

JACKY
Leonard Bast, as I'm sure you're aware of.

HELEN
Margaret, are we concealing a Mr. Leonard Bast?

TIBBY is amused by all this.

45. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE. NIGHT.

TIBBY, MARGARET, AND HELEN are at dinner. The MAID announces "A Mr. Leonard Bast," and TIBBY hardly has time to say "Cheers! The missing husband," before LEONARD is in the room.

They receive him very courteously - he is asked to sit down and join them at dinner - he says he has had his tea, but he sits down, placing his hat at his feet. They regard him in smiling expectation. He produces a tattered card:

LEONARD

You wouldn't remember giving me this?

MARGARET takes her own visiting card from him -

LEONARD

Well, that was how it happened, you see.

HELEN

Where did we meet, Mr. Bast? For the moment I don't remember.

LEONARD

It was two years ago, at the Ethical Society. The lecture was on Music and Meaning. If I may say so, you took away my umbrella, inadvertently of course.

HELEN

Did you get it back?

LEONARD

Yes, thank you.

MARGARET

The mistake arose out of my card, did it?...The lady who called here yesterday thought you were calling too, and that she would find you?

LEONARD gratefully clutches at this. The following is like a rehearsed speech, got through as fast as possible and in his most genteel accent:

LEONARD

I said to my wife - I said to Mrs. Bast, "I have to pay a call on some friends, but while I was gone Mrs. Bast wanted me on important business and thought I had come here, owing to the card, and I
(MORE)

LEONARD (contd)
beg to tender my apologies, and hers
too, for any inconvenience we may have
caused you.

In the middle of this, they move from the dining room
to coffee in the drawing room. LEONARD forgets his hat
and has to run back for it. When they are settled for
coffee:

HELEN
I still don't understand: when did you
say you paid this call? This afternoon
call?

LEONARD
In the afternoon, of course! (looking
pleased at his ready repartee)

TIBBY
Saturday afternoon or Sunday?

LEONARD
Saturday.

HELEN
Really? And you were still calling on
Sunday when your wife came here? A long
visit.

LEONARD flushes and looks angry. MARGARET quickly
intercedes:

MARGARET
It was good of you to come and explain.
The rest is naturally no concern of ours.

LEONARD
(to HELEN) It's not what you think...
I was - I left my office and walked.
Right out of London. I was walking all
night.

His provincial accent has broken through his genteel one.

HELEN
All night? In the dark?

LEONARD
It got so dark I couldn't see my own
hand.

MARGARET
Mr. Bast, you must be a born explorer!

HELEN

No professional "explorer" would dare to walk in the dark without lantern and compasses.

LEONARD

I tried to steer by the Pole Star but once out of doors everything gets so mixed and I lost it.

He is getting excited - at his own adventure and their interest in it. MARGARET and HELEN are pleased to see him open up. He has shaken off his clerk aspect and is an eager romantic youth. Only TIBBY is bored and slips out of the room while his sisters encourage their visitor to talk:

HELEN

...But why? Why did you do it?

LEONARD

...I wanted to - just walk - just get out - I've been reading The Ordeal of Richard Feverel -

HELEN

I remember! There's that chapter where Richard walks all night -

LEONARD

In a forest by moonlight -

HELEN

Wait! I'll get it!

She dashes to the bookshelves to find their volumes of Meredith. While she is doing this -

MARGARET

(to LEONARD) Where do your people come from?

LEONARD

Sheffield. (slightly on his guard again)

MARGARET

But before that? I mean - they didn't always live in a town?

LEONARD

No, they came from around Shropshire. They worked on the land. (somewhat defiantly) They were agricultural labourers.

MARGARET

Ah there, you see: it was ancestral voices calling you.

They are all rather pleased with this explanation. HELEN has returned with Meredith (a fine leather-bound volume - very different from Leonard's own tattered copy).

He tells her the chapter is called "Nature Speaks" - she finds it immediately (her own book-mark was already in it) and begins to read:

HELEN

"...Richard was walking hurriedly. A pale grey light on the skirts of the flying tempest displayed the dawn - "
(to LEONARD) Did you see the dawn?

LEONARD

Yes, suddenly it got light -

HELEN

And was it wonderful?

LEONARD

No.

They all laugh, including LEONARD who is entirely relaxed now.

LEONARD

It was only grey - and anyway by that time I was so tired and so hungry - I didn't know when you're walking you want a breakfast and lunch and tea during the night as well, and all I had was a packet of Woodbines...

While he is talking -

DISSOLVE TO:

46. EXT. IN A WOOD. NIGHT.

LEONARD walking alone in the wood.

47. INT. CHELSEA DRAWING ROOM. NIGHT.

A light and lightly furnished modern room where the period of Augustus John is replacing that of Sargent. Its occupants are emancipated YOUNG WOMEN, smoking, drinking coffee and lounging in elegantly bohemian clothes. MARGARET and HELEN are among them.

YOUNG WOMAN 1

...What a young man like your Leonard Bast needs is museums and free libraries where he can educate himself -

YOUNG WOMAN 2

Your Leonard Bast wouldn't know what to do if you just gave him money.

MARGARET

(rather shrill) Oh, would he not! Everyone knows what to do with money. Money is very educational - more so than the things it buys.

There are protests -

YOUNG WOMAN 3

Such crass materialism out of your mouth, Margaret -

MARGARET

(overriding the protests) Don't just give people poetry books and theatre tickets -

HELEN

Give them money: let us give Mr. Bast money.

YOUNG WOMAN 4

What would it profit him if he gained the whole world and lost his own soul?

MARGARET

Nothing, but he won't gain his soul until he has a little money to do it with. I say money is the - second most important thing in the world -

YOUNG WOMAN 1

What's the first?

Everyone starts talking together - giving their idea of what the first is.

CUT TO:

48. EXT. CHELSEA EMBANKMENT. NIGHT.

The houses along the embankment are lit up as festively as an opera house. It is a fine balmy night and PEOPLE in evening dress are strolling out of their houses after dinner, like an audience at intermission, to sit on the

benches by the river. MR. WILCOX, smoking a cigar, is there with a group of his GUESTS in evening dress. The door of another house opens and the emancipated YOUNG WOMEN emerge, calling goodnight, etc., to each other. They disperse, and MARGARET and HELEN stroll along the embankment, continuing the discussion:

HELEN

...What do you think is the most important thing in the world?

MARGARET

I suppose it is whatever matters to you most.

HELEN

Love, for instance?

Here they pass MR. WILCOX who looks up, recognizes them, and excusing himself from his GUESTS, follows and calls to them. They stop - there are greetings -

MR. WILCOX

I heard two young ladies talking of love -

MARGARET

(laughing) We were continuing a serious discussion. We belong to a kind of club which meets once a week to discuss different topics. And how are you? I would have thought you would be down at Howards End -

MR. WILCOX

Howards End is let. (a sound of disappointment from MARGARET) I have bought a house here - (gestures behind him)

HELEN

(interrupting, still full of her topic)
Mr. Wilcox, supposing you were a millionaire - but I expect you are one -

He laughs, with easy complacency. He certainly looks like one.

MARGARET

We have met a young man who is very poor and we think sensitive and intelligent, and we wondered if one was a millionaire how one could help him.

MR. WILCOX

What's his profession?

HELEN

He's a clerk in - what was it, Margaret?

MARGARET

The Porphyrion Fire Insurance Company.

MR. WILCOX

Ah, Miss Schlegel, then the way I would help him would be to tell him to clear out of the Porphyrion with all possible speed...

MARGARET and HELEN are alarmed.

MR. WILCOX

(with lowered voice) This is between friends. The Porphyrion is insufficiently reinsured. It'll be in the Receiver's hands before Christmas. (even lower voice) It'll smash.

MARGARET

(in her usual shrill voice) Helen, did you hear that? The Porphyrion will smash!

She is making MR. WILCOX nervous.

HELEN

We must warn Mr. Bast - he will have to get another place -

MR. WILCOX

Let him get one now.

MARGARET

Rather than wait, to make sure?

MR. WILCOX

Decidedly. The man who's in a situation when he applies naturally stands a better chance. I know for myself - this is letting you into State secrets - it affects an employer greatly. Human nature, I'm afraid.

MARGARET

Our human nature appears to be the other way round. We employ people because they're unemployed. The boot man, for instance.

MR. WILCOX

And how does he clean the boots?

MARGARET

Not well...

MR. WILCOX

There you are!

He laughs in an affectionately patronizing way. He likes her air of not knowing how to deal with the world, of female frailty. He would like to continue talking to her but HELEN breaks in with:

HELEN

Mr. Wilcox, is it very difficult nowadays for a clerk to get a situation?

MR. WILCOX

Yes, extremely.

HELEN is about to continue her line of inquiry when MARGARET suddenly says:

MARGARET

I'm sorry about Howards End.

MR. WILCOX, startled, looks at her - but she is her usual interested, disinterested self. She continues:

MARGARET

I mean, that you are not living there but...wandering around in long-haired Chelsea. I think I have some idea how much her house meant to Mrs. Wilcox.

MR. WILCOX

Yes, but for us it has endless drawbacks. I don't think you have ever seen the place?

Before MARGARET can reply -

HELEN

Would you be able to help?...Our friend: to help him to a new situation?

MR. WILCOX

I'm afraid we seldom have a vacancy, and when we do, there are always hundreds of applicants for it. Well, it has been a great pleasure -

HELEN

But couldn't you -

MR. WILCOX

At present we have no post vacant.

He concludes his goodbye and turns to go. MARGARET and HELEN continue walking -

HELEN

What a prosperous vulgarian he is.

MR. WILCOX, walking back to his GUESTS, turns to look after them in a thoughtful, even disturbed mood.

49. INT. WILCOX LONDON HOUSE. DAY.

MR. WILCOX is searching through a box full of feminine trinkets. He comes up with a silver pomander. He holds it in the palm of his hand and regards it in the same mood as above.

50. INT. SCHLEGEL HOUSE. DAY.

MARGARET and HELEN have invited LEONARD to tea. He is asking about the pictures on their walls, and the sword, when MARGARET plunges straight into their business with him:

MARGARET

Mr. Bast, how do you like your work?

Reluctantly he withdraws his attention from the pictures -

MARGARET

Your company is the Porphyrion, isn't it? Would you call it a solid concern?

LEONARD

(rather shiftily) It depends what you mean by solid.

HELEN

Cake? This big one - or one of these little deadlies?... (blurting out) We were told the Porphyrion's no go.

MARGARET

A friend of ours did think that it's insufficiently reinsured -

He has put down his cup with a change of mood.

HELEN

And advised you to clear out of it.

LEONARD

You can tell your friend that he's wrong.

LEONARD, who is touchy and quick-tempered, flushes angrily. He feels disappointed, put-upon -

LEONARD

And to - to - mind his own business -

But they don't hear this last rather insolent challenge for the MAID comes to announce visitors, and just behind her MR. WILCOX and EVIE enter, with two little PUPPIES. At once there is a change of atmosphere - HELEN flings herself on the floor to play with the PUPPIES.

HELEN

Oh, Evie, how too impossibly sweet!

EVIE

I bred 'em myself.

While HELEN is screaming over the PUPPIES, also inviting LEONARD to admire them, MARGARET introduces him to MR. WILCOX who looks at him - through him - with a shrewd glance. LEONARD drops his eyes. Meanwhile, however, the PUPPIES - with canine class-consciousness - begin to yap at his ankles. LEONARD longs to kick them and gets more and more flustered and indignant.

HELEN

(laughing) They want to play with you!
Do be nice to them!

LEONARD

(retreating) I've got to be going.

MARGARET

Must you really?

HELEN

(from the floor) Come again.

LEONARD

No, I shan't; I shan't come again.

His tone is sharp and angry. Everyone stares at him - MARGARET and HELEN in surprise, MR. WILCOX with a brow of thunder.

HELEN

(getting up to face him) I call that a very rude remark. What do you want to turn on me like that for?

LEONARD

I thought you invited me as a - for a friendly chat - instead it turns out you want to pick my brains about my place of business. "Oh yes, send for him. Cross-question him. Pick his brains."

MARGARET begins protesting, "No, oh no no!" MR. WILCOX lays his hand on her sleeve: "Let me deal with this." The PUPPIES yap louder and louder (EVIE can't stop giggling though pretending to call them to heel) and they close in on LEONARD who retreats and exits with all the dignity he can muster, though rather swiftly.

MR. WILCOX

(to MARGARET) May I have one quiet word with him in the hall?

MARGARET

(shakes her head vehemently) Helen, go after him -

But HELEN has already done so -

51. INT. STAIRS/HALL. DAY.

HELEN is bounding after LEONARD who refuses to stop. But she corners him in the hall where he is retrieving his hat and umbrella.

HELEN

What was all that about?

LEONARD

I knew I shouldn't have come...It was all right last time - but things like that always get spoiled.

HELEN

Things do, but people don't...Don't you understand! We really did want to warn you about the Porphyron - we were worried about you -

LEONARD

Why should you worry about me?

HELEN

Because we like you! That's why!

Her sincerity gets through to him and he is beginning to relax so she smiles and adds:

HELEN

You noodle.

He half smiles back though he pretends to keep up his surly tone:

LEONARD

There's no cause to call a person names.

HELEN

Oh yes there is, when a person is being tremendously stupid. Listen, this is serious: our friend said that you should be looking around for another post now, before anything happens. Will you?

LEONARD

(still half sulky) I'll think about it.

HELEN

No, you must do more than think - you must search for another post while you still have one. Now promise you will do that at least. Please?

LEONARD

All right... (almost mollified) Thank you, Miss Schlegel.

HELEN

Come and tell us when you've found another place. Or just come anyway...Now don't say no! Don't dare to say no!...And don't forget your umbrella or you'll say we've pinched it.

Now completely mollified, he smiles and says goodbye - ready to depart, though not without a last regretful look at this (to him) luxuriously cultured interior, and at her.

52. INT. SCHLEGEL DRAWING ROOM. DAY.

MR. WILCOX, EVIE, and MARGARET have sat down, the PUPPIES have calmed down. But MR. WILCOX continues to look grave:

MR. WILCOX

You ought to be more careful, Miss Schlegel. Your servants ought to have orders not to let such people in.

MARGARET

But we invited him!...We wanted to see him again! And talk to him - maybe help him, and not only in a practical way...

MR. WILCOX

Miss Schlegel, you are too kind. (EVIE agrees, somewhat contemptuously) You behave much too well to people, and then they impose on you. I know the world and that type of man -

MARGARET

Oh, but Mr. Wilcox, he is not a type!
He is, I think, a quite unusual young
man - and he has something in him - I
don't know what it is - except that he
wants something better than he's got.
Yes, he has a sort of romantic ambition...

A strange displeased expression comes over MR. WILCOX's
face. Could it be jealousy?

MR. WILCOX

(sourly) It's your view of him that is
romantic...And what does your brother
say about all this?

MARGARET

Tibby? (She laughs at the thought of
him as the protector) Anyway, he's up
at Oxford.

EVIE

He's very clever, isn't he? (again rather
contemptuous)

MR. WILCOX signals to EVIE, who opens her reticule and
takes out a little packet which she gives to MARGARET.

While MARGARET is opening it -

MR. WILCOX

...We want you to have something to
remember - eh - Mrs. Wilcox by: in return
for your kindness to her in those days -

The pomander has emerged from the packet. MARGARET
exclaims over it in extravagant gratitude which pleases
him though he disclaims it. MARGARET says it's too
generous - all they ever spoke of was a little Christmas
present, and a visit to Howards End. EVIE hides her face
and feelings by playing furiously with her PUPPIES.

53. INT. SIMPSON'S RESTAURANT. DAY.

EVIE and her fiancé, PERCY CAHILL - an army type without
actually being in the army - are waiting in the entrance.

PERCY

What does she look like?

EVIE

...Oh, sort of an old maid type...Goodness
knows why Father wanted me to ask her.
She talks and talks - (Here EVIE tries to
give an imitation of Margaret talking by
twisting her face about) - Here she is.

MARGARET comes up to them. She is much more cordial than EVIE who introduces her to PERCY - "my fiancé" - rather coolly, then turns to lead the way.

By the time they reach the dining room, MARGARET is feeling oppressed and depressed - but as they enter, MR. WILCOX rises from one of the tables and advances to greet MARGARET in a way that makes her expression change to one of relief and pleasure.

MR. WILCOX

Evie told me of her little plot, so I just slipped in and secured a table. Always secure a table first. Evie, don't pretend you want to sit by your old father, because you don't. Miss Schlegel, come in on my side, out of pity...I hope you're hungry.

The CARVER has come up.

MARGARET

Famished. I want to eat heaps.

MR. WILCOX

Good! What'll you have?

MARGARET

(glancing at the menu) Fish pie.

MR. WILCOX

Fish pie! Fancy coming for fish pie to Simpson's. It's not a bit the thing to go for here.

MARGARET

(drawing off her gloves) Go for something for me then.

MR. WILCOX

Saddle of mutton, and cider to drink. That's the type of thing. I like this place, for a joke, once in a way: it's so thoroughly Old English.

MARGARET

(who doesn't agree and can't help saying) As Old English as the works of Kipling...Oh, but I'm so tired of looking at houses! I think I've seen a hundred already.

MR. WILCOX

Why are you looking at houses?

MARGARET

Didn't I tell you? We have to move.
Our lease has expired. The worst is
what to do with our furniture - chairs,
tables, pictures, books -

Meanwhile, the CARVER has been cutting the meat under
MR. WILCOX's direction. EVIE and PERCY are mostly absorbed
in one another, in the way of engaged couples, but as
MARGARET carries on talking in her voluble way, EVIE finds
it hard to stifle her giggles, recalling her own earlier
imitation of Margaret talking.

MARGARET

- The feudal ownership of land brought
dignity, but the modern ownership of
movables is reducing us again to a
nomadic horde. We are reverting to
the civilisation of luggage -

MR. WILCOX

It's a golden rule to tip the carver.
(having done so) Tip everywhere's my
motto.

MARGARET

Perhaps it does make life more human.

MR. WILCOX

Then the fellows know one again.
Especially in the East -

MARGARET

Have you been in the East?

MR. WILCOX

I used to go out for sport and business
to Cyprus. A few piastres properly
distributed help to keep one's memory
green.

MARGARET

(smiling) How shockingly cynical.

MR. WILCOX

Not a bit. Simply realistic.

There is something intimate about this exchange between
them. They appear to be taking as much pleasure in each
other's company as the engaged couple is in theirs. In
fact, there is a distinct air of two separate, separately
absorbed couples seated at the table.

CUT FORWARD TO:

The cheese tray is being presented:

MR. WILCOX
Gruyere or Stilton?

MARGARET
Gruyere, please.

MR. WILCOX
Better have Stilton.

MARGARET
Stilton. Oh, Mr. Wilcox, can you not help us to a house? What's the point of being practical if you can't find two distressed females a house?

MR. WILCOX
(amused and pleased) Evie, I like that! Miss Schlegel expects me to turn house agent for her!

MARGARET
I want a new home in September, and someone must find it. I can't.

EVIE
Percy, do you know of anything?

PERCY
I can't say I do.

EVIE
You're never any good.

PERCY
Never any good! Just listen to her!

EVIE
Well, you aren't. Miss Schlegel, is he?

MARGARET
I wish you would give us Howards End.

A moment's strange silence in which EVIE darts a look at MR. WILCOX.

MR. WILCOX
(evenly) Howards End, I'm afraid, is let.

MARGARET
Can't you turn out your tenant and let it to us? We're nearly demented. Mr. Wilcox, I am demented.

MR. WILCOX

(pleased and amused by this feminine ineptitude) One bit of advice: fix your district, then fix your price, and then don't budge. Well, I'll try and look around a bit for you.

MARGARET

Oh, would you? Would you really? Although I warn you: the house has not been built that would suit the Schlegel family. It's no fun trying to help us.

MR. WILCOX

(in a lowered, almost tender voice)
Fun? No, but a pleasure and a privilege to do whatever I can for Miss Margaret Schlegel.

His tone embarrasses but also thrills her. She looks down, she murmurs thanks and appreciation of his kindness. EVIE and PERCY continue engrossed in their "Yes you did," "No I didn't" conversation.

54. EXT. DORSET. DAY.

A magnificent sweep over valley and sea -

55. INT. AUNT JULEY'S HOUSE. DAY.

The above view is seen from the bay window where AUNT JULEY, MARGARET, HELEN, and TIBBY are seated at breakfast. MARGARET has just read to them from a letter which has perturbed them all.

AUNT JULEY

...But to interrupt your holiday, Margaret dear, and before we have undertaken any of our excursions! You haven't even been to Nine Barrows Down...

MARGARET

Let me just go up to town today, take the house if it's the least possible -

TIBBY

I still don't understand: whose house is this?

MARGARET

It's Mr. Wilcox's, Tibby. He wants to wait - (reading) "Owing to changed circumstances" - he means Evie getting married - "I no longer need a London house of this size and am willing to let it on a yearly tenancy."

TIBBY

Who is Mr. Wilcox? I don't see where he comes in.

HELEN

Yes, who is he that he should write to you here?

MARGARET darts her a look and blushes slightly -

MARGARET

...I asked him to help us find a house.

HELEN

Out of all our hotel acquaintances, Mr. Wilcox is the only one who has stuck and yet we have met far more interesting people.

MARGARET

Interesting people don't get one houses.

AUNT JULEY

And when I think of that terrible experience three years ago -

Now HELEN blushes and laughs -

HELEN

I thought we had all mercifully forgotten.

AUNT JULEY

I shall never forget that dreadful motor drive with that perfectly dreadful Charles, and my one consolation is that for once I could be useful to you girls.

MARGARET

Thank you, Aunt Juley, and now it is my turn to be useful. Should I go up to town? Should I say yes or should I say no?

TIBBY

It all depends what meaning you attach to the word -

MARGARET

It depends on nothing of the sort. Say yes.

HELEN

Say no...Well, anyway, remember one has to be careful in dealing with Wilcoxes.

AUNT JULEY nods as one who has had experience of dealing with Wilcoxes.

56. INT. WILCOX LONDON HOUSE. DAY.

MR. WILCOX is showing MARGARET around the house. It is heavy, rich, masculine, and impersonally overfurnished. MR. WILCOX comments: "Here we fellows smoke." "This is the Dutch Bible Charles brought back from the Boer War," while MARGARET chatters in her usual way: ("Aren't you ever amused at the solemnity with which we middle classes approach the subject of houses?") MR. WILCOX is more tender and intimate than a prospective landlord needs to be; while MARGARET is nervous, apprehensive, excited.

MARGARET

(sinking into a huge armchair) Oh, jolly!

MR. WILCOX

(looking into her upturned face) You do like it? (gesturing to indicate the house)

MARGARET

Oh, rather, yes. Even I know a good thing when I see it.

MR. WILCOX

(sighing as he opens his heart to her)
...But nowadays, with Evie always out with her fiance - I tell you, when I come home in the evening, I can't stand the house.

MARGARET

It would be very lonely for you.

She gets up, wanders on; he pursues her closely.

MR. WILCOX

Do you ever feel lonely?

MARGARET

I soon shall - horribly. It's heartbreaking to leave one's old home...How big is this room?

MR. WILCOX

Thirty by fifteen. No, wait a minute. Fifteen-and-a-half.

Then he changes his tone:

MR. WILCOX
Miss Schlegel, I have had you up on false pretences. I want to speak about a much more serious matter than a house.

MARGARET faces him frankly. This throws him off for a moment - he had expected bashfulness.

MR. WILCOX
Could you be induced to share my - is it probable -

MARGARET
Oh yes. I see.

MR. WILCOX
Miss Schlegel - Margaret - you don't understand.

MARGARET
(anxious to save him from his uncharacteristic embarrassment) Oh yes! Indeed, yes!

MR. WILCOX
I am asking you to be my wife.

MARGARET
Yes, I know; I know.

She sits down. He is by her side, close to her, in a moment.

MR. WILCOX
You aren't offended?

MARGARET
How could I be?

MR. WILCOX
I wish I had written instead. Ought I to have written?

She shakes her head. She touches his face so close to hers; he is looking at her with a tender, boyish, hopeful expression. She is suddenly tremulous, overwhelmed by his presence, overwhelmed perhaps by happiness. She gets up and moves further away from him. He follows her, suddenly corners and kisses her - but in a furtive, clumsy, almost shamefaced way, like a schoolboy. Whereupon she takes his face between her hands and kisses him firmly on the mouth. Now it is his turn to be overwhelmed, or at least surprised: but very pleased.

57. EXT. PURBECK HILLS. DAY.

A view over hills and valleys, with villages, churches, fields, and brooks, and the sea swirling in the distance: England at her best.

HELEN is impatiently watching the ascent of a pony cart. At last she runs down to meet it - and before MARGARET has descended -

HELEN
Have you got the house?

MARGARET
Wait one minute.

Her tone and manner fill HELEN with a sudden foreboding. As MARGARET gets down and the pony cart goes off -

HELEN
What has happened?

MARGARET
Mr. Wilcox has asked me to marry him.

HELEN
What cheek! Isn't that just like a widower!

But then she sees the expression on MARGARET's face -

HELEN
You haven't - you couldn't -

In response to MARGARET's affirmative silence -

HELEN
(bursting into tears) Don't! Don't, Meg, don't!

MARGARET
What's happened to you?

HELEN breaks away from her - MARGARET catches up with her:

MARGARET
But it's stupid. (Her eyes also fill with tears) ...I don't know what's happened to either of us.

She wipes her tears away; so does HELEN hers. They both laugh a little.

HELEN
Sit down.

MARGARET

All right; I will if you do.

They both sit on the ground.

MARGARET

There. (one kiss) Now, what ever, what ever is the matter?

HELEN

I do mean what I said. Don't.

MARGARET

Oh, Helen, stop saying don't! It's ignorant...What do you have against him? No, you must say.

HELEN

You know that I detest that type - the Wilcox type -

MARGARET

(rather sharply) Let me remind you if it were not for the Wilcox type, you and I and all the other "literary" people couldn't sit here at our ease without having our throats cut. There wouldn't even be trains to bring us here, nor ships -

HELEN

Are you now against "us literary people" and all for the - the Wilcox people?

MARGARET

I'm not for or against anyone. I think that both are needed to keep the world going, and the secret is to connect them. Only connect.

HELEN

(slightly smiling) And are you, Margaret Schlegel, divinely appointed to effect this connection?... (with a sudden but completely natural switch into intimacy) Do you love him?

MARGARET

I don't know. I think I do...It's wonderful to know that a real man cares for you...I'm almost certain I do. And I'm completely certain that I love you.

She kisses her. They continue to sit with their arms around each other - two small figures in that great sweep of English scenery.

58. EXT. CHARLES' HILTON HOUSE. DAY.

CHARLES, DOLLY, and EVIE are in the garden of this typically semi-suburban stockbroker-type Hertfordshire villa. A motorcar stands outside their garage. DOLLY is soothing a BABY in a pram; she is pregnant again. They are in garden chairs and in a state of indignation.

CHARLES

(to EVIE) Of course it's your fault, going around hobnobbing with those Schlegel girls -

EVIE

Girls! They're hardly girls...I never dreamt of such a thing. Dad took me to call and then made me ask her to Simpson's, that's all. Well, I'm altogether off Dad.

DOLLY

You've woken the baby. I knew you would. (croons "Rumty-too, rackety-tackety Tompkins")

CHARLES

Now Miss Schlegel has fairly got us on toast. She always meant to get hold of Howards End and, thanks to you, she's got it.

EVIE

I call that most unfair!

DOLLY desperately shushes them, croons some more, then says:

DOLLY

Evie, why don't you pretend to break off your engagement and then perhaps your father will also quarrel with Miss Schlegel.

CHARLES

Stop talking nonsense, Dolly.

CHARLES tries to help DOLLY shush the BABY.

EVIE

I'm jolly well going to get married as soon as possible - in fact, next month, I'll tell Dad. Then he can do what he likes.

CHARLES

Taking my mother's place! The idea!

DOLLY

I could simply scratch that woman's eyes out...Tootle, tootle, playing on the pootle.

CHARLES has by now picked up the BABY and is tenderly cradling him in his arms.

CHARLES

It's no use talking. We're in a bad hole and must make the best of it. I'll keep my eye on those Schegels -

We leave them sitting in their garden chairs, with their pram, their motor, their air of family council - a domestic suburban view, which, however, is swallowed up within the larger landscape.

CHARLES (V.O.)

- and if I find them giving themselves airs with their artistic beastliness, I intend to put my foot down, yes, firmly. (At the same time he is crooning to the BABY)

59. INT. AUNT JULEY'S HOUSE. DAY.

AUNT JULEY is admiring MARGARET's engagement ring. MR. WILCOX is frowning over a letter. When MARGARET asks him solicitously what the matter is -

MR. WILCOX

(in annoyance) The tenant has decamped from Howards End, and worse, is trying to sublet the house.

MARGARET, making sympathetic sounds, sees HELEN through the window - a lone figure, reading a letter.

MARGARET

Henry, you haven't had time for a talk with Helen yet, I suppose?...Do, before you go. I'm so anxious you two should be friends.

MR. WILCOX

(absently) Your sister and I have always hit it off...There was no clause in the agreement to allow subletting.

60. EXT. GARDEN OVERLOOKING BAY. DAY.

HELEN is reading her letter. When she sees MARGARET emerge from the house, she runs to meet her, waving the letter.

HELEN

Margaret! Such nice news from Mr. Bast!

MR. WILCOX joining them, MARGARET puts one hand on his shoulder, the other on HELEN's:

MARGARET

Here we all are.

But both of them are engrossed in their own business.

HELEN

Mr. Bast is now with Dempster's Bank. That's his news. (to MR. WILCOX) Thanks to your hint, he cleared out of the Porphyryion.

MR. WILCOX

(negligently) Not a bad business, that Porphyryion. (to MARGARET) I shall have to go down to Howards End and take charge and I would like you to come with me.

HELEN

Not a bad business!

MARGARET

(to MR. WILCOX, avoiding HELEN's accusing look) I should like that very much.

MR. WILCOX

Good. What about tomorrow?

MARGARET

Tomorrow? No, I couldn't well do that.

HELEN

You told us the Porphyryion would smash before Christmas.

MR. WILCOX

Did I? It was still outside the Tariff Ring and had to take rotten policies. Lately it came in - safe as houses now. (to MARGARET) What's wrong with tomorrow?

MARGARET

Aunt Juley would be so disappointed if I left now.

HELEN

(attacking MARGARET frontally) Didn't Mr. Wilcox clearly tell us -

MARGARET

Let's talk about it later, shall we.
 (To MR. WILCOX) Aunt Juley regards this visit as a high solemnity and she turns the house upside down for us -

HELEN

(overriding everything) And now it turns out that it's "safe as houses" and Mr. Bast need never have left and taken another post at a greatly reduced salary. (waving the letter)

MR. WILCOX

(pooch-pooching the whole thing) My dear Helen, it's all part of the battle of life.

HELEN

The battle of life! A man who had little money has less, owing to us.

MR. WILCOX

Oh come, come! You're not to blame. No one's to blame.

HELEN

No one? Is no one to blame for anything?

MR. WILCOX

You're taking it far too seriously. A word of advice -

HELEN

I require no more advice.

She is quivering with indignation, but he doesn't notice and gives his advice:

MR. WILCOX

Don't take up a sentimental attitude over the poor. See that she doesn't, Margaret. The poor are poor, and one's sorry for them, but there it is.

As AUNT JULEY heaves into sight -

MR. WILCOX

(reassuringly to MARGARET) I'll have a word with her about tomorrow. Don't you bother.

He joins AUNT JULEY.

HELEN is about to break out to MARGARET who pulls her up short:

MARGARET
I'm very sorry about Mr. Bast, Helen,
but you must be civil to Henry.

HELEN
You yourself were a witness on Chelsea
Embankment -

MARGARET
There may be more than one side to this
question (brooking no interruption) but
Henry is my future husband and I must be
on his side. (with that sudden effortless
drop into intimacy which is so character-
istic of their relationship) ...Why are
you so bitter, dearie?

HELEN
Because I'm an old maid...

She goes off into the house, still holding her letter.

AUNT JULEY
(calling to MARGARET) Margaret! Magsy!
It isn't true, surely, what Mr. Wilcox
says, that you want to go away tomorrow?

MR. WILCOX
I have business at Howards End, and my
business is now also, fortunately, my
Margaret's...

He draws MARGARET's arm into his with an affection that
silences AUNT JULEY, her dismay giving way to a sentimental
smile.

61. INT. AUNT JULEY'S HOUSE. DAY.

From the bay window HELEN is watching MARGARET and
MR. WILCOX strolling arm in arm against the magnificent
view. She leans her head against the window - at first
sadly but then, as she again glances over the letter she
is holding, her mood changes to rage and tears.

62. EXT. GARDEN OVERLOOKING BAY. DAY.

MR. WILCOX and MARGARET strolling arm in arm -

MR. WILCOX
When there is a sublet, I find that
damage -

MARGARET

Do excuse me, Henry - but about the Porphyrion. Our friend writes that he has followed our advice to clear out -

MR. WILCOX

A clerk who clears out of his job without securing another one first is a fool, and I've no pity for him.

MARGARET

He has not done that. He's going into a branch of Dempster's Bank - is that all right?

MR. WILCOX

Dempster! My goodness me, yes.

MARGARET

More right than the Porphyrion?

MR. WILCOX

Yes, yes, yes; safe as houses.

MARGARET

But what about his reduced salary?

MR. WILCOX

(impatiently) That's all in the day's work; it'll come out right in the end if the fellow's any good... (getting back to what really interests him) You see, my dear, with a sublet you don't have the same control...

Their voices float away over the Bay - to be picked up again over the next scene.

63. INT. THE IMPERIAL AND WEST AFRICAN RUBBER COMPANY.
DAY.

Apart from a map of Africa on the wall, it is, in spite of its exotic name, exactly like any other opulent office.

CHARLES in his office can hear MR. WILCOX and MARGARET talk in the adjoining office:

MARGARET (V.O.)

...I had expected something more African - spears and animal skins, that sort of thing - but I suppose this is the imperial part of the establishment...

MR. WILCOX (V.O.)

We still haven't settled what to do about the London house.

MARGARET (V.O.)

(in her usual high, cheerful voice)
It all depends, doesn't it? When do you want to marry me?

At this point CHARLES' patience snaps and he goes in to join them (just as MR. WILCOX is laughingly saying to MARGARET, "Heavens! How you do fly around! My head's in a whirl"). CHARLES manages a civil greeting to MARGARET who greets him very cordially.

CHARLES

I hope that my wife - how do you do? - will give you a decent lunch after you have had a look at Howards End.

MARGARET

I can hardly wait to see it. Although I almost feel I have.

CHARLES

(drily) I don't know in what state you will find it. The tenant decamped without even arranging for a charwoman to clear up after him.

MR. WILCOX

I've more than a little bone to pick with that tenant... (to MARGARET) Here's an idea: we could use Howards End to store your furniture from Wickham Place until you decide what to do with it.

CU CHARLES who does not care for this idea at all.

MARGARET

Really, would you be so kind? (Aware of CHARLES' reaction, she turns to him)
If you would not mind - only until Helen and Tibby are settled, of course...

CHARLES

I hope you won't be disappointed - it is quite a measly little place. It never really suited us.

MR. WILCOX

Heavens, no!...

CUT TO:

64. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

Motor driven by CHAUFFEUR and containing MR. WILCOX, DOLLY, and MARGARET drives in. MARGARET is gazing out eagerly - it is her first view of Howards End - but MR. WILCOX drones on in continuation of the theme above:

MR. WILCOX

...It's unlucky that money wasn't put into it fifty years ago when it still had a lot of land. One could have made something of it then. I did what I could - but no getting away from the fact that it's just an old farmhouse...

MR. WILCOX's motor stops. MR. WILCOX, DOLLY, and MARGARET emerge. It appears DOLLY has forgotten the key and they have to drive back for it to the farm, leaving MARGARET to wait on the porch.

After gazing around with pleasure, she pushes against the front door. It is open.

65. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

MARGARET wanders around the house. It is empty and dirty, but she delights in its proportions, going from room to room. There is a sudden sound - she calls "Henry?" No answer, but the sound becomes louder -

MARGARET

Is that you, Henry?

The sound becomes louder and louder - who is it? what is it? MARGARET flings open another door - this one leads to a staircase: MISS AVERY is descending - she is an old woman, tall, gaunt, and upright - but there is some resemblance to MRS. WILCOX and MARGARET is somewhat shaken. MISS AVERY also seems surprised by MARGARET and she stares at her long and hard:

MISS AVERY

...I took you for Ruth Wilcox.

MARGARET

(stammering) I - like Mrs. Wilcox...?

MISS AVERY

You have her way of walking.

She walks out - actually, it is she who has MRS. WILCOX's way of walking and could from a distance be mistaken for her.

66. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

The motor has returned with MR. WILCOX and DOLLY. They find MARGARET gazing in amazement after MISS AVERY.

MR. WILCOX

(amused) Did she give you a fright? Poor Margaret! None of you girls has any nerve.

DOLLY

Silly old Miss Avery. She's very odd. She carries on as if she owned Howards End.

MR. WILCOX is pointing out the improvements he has made all through the following:

MARGARET

So Miss Avery has always lived on the place?

DOLLY

Oh yes, she grew up there on the farm - like ...Mrs. Wilcox. Weren't she and Mrs. Wilcox friends when Howards End too was a farm?

MR. WILCOX waves away the word "friends," continuing his guided tour. DOLLY rattles on:

DOLLY

...And they do say that Mrs. Wilcox had a brother - or was it an uncle - anyhow, he popped the question, and Miss Avery, she said, "No." Just imagine, if she'd said "Yes" she would have been Charles' aunt. Oh, I say, that's rather good - "Charlie's Aunt"! I must chaff him about that...

MISS AVERY is watching them walk around.

When we return to them -

MARGARET

I like it very much. It is perfect.

MR. WILCOX

Not perfect to live in, I assure you, my dear.

DOLLY

Oh goodness, no! Charles always says he wouldn't touch it with tongs - oh -

She claps her hand before her mouth, realizing she has said something indiscreet. But MARGARET has not heard her -

MARGARET

Is that the wych-elm? Is it? Oh yes - and there are the teeth! Pigs' teeth!

MR. WILCOX and DOLLY have no idea what she is talking about.

MARGARET

Yes, you chew the bark for toothache.

MR. WILCOX

What a rum notion! Of course not!

But the teeth are there, to their amazement and MARGARET's joy.

MR. WILCOX

Who told you about them?

MISS AVERY, who has been following them, now steps forward:

MISS AVERY

Everyone who belongs in this place knows about those teeth. Ruth Wilcox knew.

67. EXT. DREAM LANDSCAPE. DAY.

LEONARD is walking through a landscape in brilliant sunshine. Two WOMEN are seen approaching him. At first they look like MARGARET and HELEN, but as they come closer, they turn into some monstrous engine bearing down on him. His eyes are dazzled by a light. He tries to flee, but cannot. When he is about to be run down, he screams and wakes up -

68. INT. BAST FLAT. NIGHT.

JACKY and LEONARD are in bed. He is crying out and she is leaning over him. She soothes him and he goes back to sleep in her arms.

69. EXT. THREE MOTORS OUTSIDE SHREWSBURY STATION. DAY.

A great flurry of people and luggage as the wedding party, just disembarked from the London train, gets into the waiting motors. CHARLES has come to receive them and is in charge of the operation. He has something of the brisk young officer marshalling his raggedy troops, which is not unattractive. He is ably assisted by two other male relatives - also of the officer class - indeed, they are officers, COLONEL FUSSELL and his son ALBERT. Besides MARGARET, there are four other LADIES, and a LITTLE GIRL. There is a multitude of dressing-cases and hat-boxes to be disposed of, and the LADIES have to get into their

dust-cloaks. The three MEN herding them along temper their soldierly efficiency with a deft but manly gallantry.

70. INT./EXT. MOTOR CAR/ROAD. DAY.

MARGARET is with two LADIES, both of them empire-building types. Their voices are confident and loud enough to be heard above the wind and the noise of the motor - they speak of Tariff Reform ("Miss Schlegel, you'll undertake to keep Henry sound about Tariff Reform?") but MARGARET's retort ("I would be interested to hear your objections to Free Trade") is also, in its different way, ringing and audible. They enjoy the passing landscape, especially MARGARET. But then, outside a cottage facing the road, there is a sudden jolt. The motor behind them draws up and CHARLES jumps out of it:

CHARLES

Get out the women at once.

Amid their cries of "What is it?" MARGARET and the LADIES are hustled into CHARLES' car. A GIRL has come out of the cottage and is screaming wildly at them.

CHARLES drives away with his passengers, and when they have got out of sight of the cottage -

CHARLES

It's all right. Your car just touched a dog.

He drives on steadily, though MARGARET implores him to stop. CHARLES says the dog was not hurt, which reassures the other LADIES, but not MARGARET, who stands up in the car and demands to be let out. The other LADIES have to hold on to her knees to steady her. She gesticulates and looks wild and demented, while CHARLES drives on, manly, competent, and unperturbed:

MARGARET

Do please stop! I want to go back!

LADY 1

We've left Colonel Fussell behind and Albert and the two chauffeurs -

MARGARET

Yes, but no woman!

LADY 2

I expect a little of - (scratching her palm)
- will do more than any of us.

CHARLES

The insurance company sees to that, and Albert will do the talking.

LADY 1
The men will see to it.

MARGARET
Why only the men? Oh, this is ridiculous!
Charles, I ask you to stop!

But CHARLES doesn't and MARGARET jumps straight out of the car.

Amid cries of alarm, CHARLES slams on the brakes, jumps out and runs back to her.

MARGARET has fallen on her knees, cut her glove, shaken her hat over her ears.

CHARLES
(looking down at her in dismay) You've hurt yourself.

MARGARET
(looking up at him in defiance) Of course I've hurt myself.

CHARLES
Your hand's bleeding...I'm in for a frightful row from the pater.

MARGARET
You should have thought of that sooner, Charles.

CHARLES is speechless for a moment - taken aback by this woman in revolt.

The other car has caught up with them and stops and ALBERT gets out -

ALBERT
It's all right! It wasn't a dog, it was a cat.

CHARLES
There! It's only a rotten old cat.

Unassisted by him, MARGARET gets up and starts hobbling away in the direction of the cottage. CHARLES and ALBERT exchange looks. The third car arrives and stops.

CHAUFFEUR
It is all right, madam.

MARGARET
What's all right? The cat?

CHAUFFEUR

The girl was very rude.

MARGARET

Wouldn't you have been rude if it was your cat was killed?

CHARLES

(coldly) The girl will of course receive compensation. Now may we proceed, please. We are late as it is.

MARGARET allows him and ALBERT to help her back into the car where she is received with pitying cries by the LADIES who begin to bind up her hand.

They drive on, deeper into the hills - until they see spread beneath them:

71. EXT. OVERALL VIEW OF ONITON GRANGE. DAY.

It is on a river-girt peninsula and has a ruined castle in its grounds. A solid grey early 19th century mansion, it is not very distinguished but looks superb in its setting.

72. EXT. ONITON GRANGE. NIGHT.

The Grange is lit up, its windows pouring light and laughter. But CHARLES, walking outside with a very pregnant DOLLY, is in a depressed mood.

DOLLY

It wasn't your fault if she got hysterical.

CHARLES

I wish the pater would see it that way... (looking enviously at the house) Now I suppose she'll get her hands on this place as well as Howards End.

DOLLY

It's only their furniture is to go there.

CHARLES

That's the thin edge of the wedge...I don't know what's to happen to us, Dolly. Three children to bring up -

DOLLY

But you're pleased about baby, aren't you, Charles?

CHARLES

(tenderly kissing her) Pleased as Punch, my sweet...But it's not going to be easy.

(MORE)

CHARLES (contd)

The pater wants to be fair, but money
isn't elastic. What if Evie has a family?
Or the pater himself -

DOLLY shushes him -

MARGARET has come out from the terrace. They watch her
climb up the mound and stumble about among the rubble of
the ruined castle. Aware of their presence, though
unable to see them, she calls out:

MARGARET

Who's there?

They hold their breath. CHARLES stubs out his cigar.

MARGARET

(laughing into the darkness) Saxon or Celt?

She is not perturbed when she receives no answer. She
stumbles on, catching her long dress amid brambles and
burrs. She looks at the house and its surroundings with
joy.

But CHARLES and DOLLY watch her without joy. When she is
sufficiently out of earshot -

CHARLES

I tell you, Dolly, that woman means mischief.

MARGARET stands silhouetted against the house and sky.

73. INT. ENGLISH LANDSCAPE ROOM IN PICTURE GALLERY. DAY.

CU Paintings of Constable, Turner, etc.

HELEN is looking at them. So is LEONARD - but when he
sees her, he steals away. He looks distinctly shabbier
than he used to.

HELEN, turning around, sees him - she calls to him, and
when he pretends not to hear, she catches up with him in
the next gallery, also full of English landscapes.

HELEN

I thought it was you! How d'you do?
Isn't it a glorious exhibition? What do
you think of (mentions one of the
landscapes and makes her own idiosyncratic
comment on it) But why have you never
come to see us again? You promised, you
know: you distinctly promised. (He mutters
in embarrassment) I suppose you've been

(MORE)

HELEN (contd)
 frightfully busy in your bank. I say,
 I am awfully glad you cleared out of the
 Porphyriion and got yourself fixed up with
 Dempsey's. What a surprise to meet you
 here - is it your lunch hour? - not
 really a surprise because I know how you
 love pictures and landscapes. I remember
 your walk at night in the Surrey hills.

She smiles, but LEONARD doesn't. He is shifty, mumbling,
 not at all himself as she likes to remember him.

LEONARD
 That's all very well when you have work
 and money to live on.

HELEN
 But you have work! You're with Dempster's
 Bank -

LEONARD
 I lost it.

HELEN
 Oh, Mr. Bast! Whatever happened?

When moved, she talks like Margaret in a loud voice and
 is not at all embarrassed - doesn't notice - that other
 SPECTATORS are looking at her and LEONARD. It is he who
 is embarrassed.

HELEN
 (insistently) You have to tell me, you
 must - Mr. Bast, I feel very responsible
 - of course I am, for making you leave
 the Porphyriion -

LEONARD
 (mainly to keep her quiet) It's just that
 Dempster's Bank cut down on their staff
 and the last to join, like me, were the
 first to be let go.

HELEN
 But of course we're responsible! I and my
 sister and Mr. Wilcox - who is at this very
 moment celebrating his daughter's wedding
 in style - it is absolutely our fault -

LEONARD is only anxious to get away from her and the
 curious glances of the other SPECTATORS. But when he
 excuses himself and tries to leave, she insists on
 going with him. They leave the gallery together - an odd
 pair: she all fire and fury; he depressed, abject, shabby;
 an out-of-work clerk.

74. EXT. ONITON GRANGE. DAY.

MR. WILCOX, with superb efficiency, is supervising the preparations for the wedding. MARGARET joins him, asking him to approve her dress, which he absentmindedly but good-naturedly does. She is still wearing her bandage and says ruefully she hopes it doesn't spoil the effect. He shakes his head at those "famous feminine nerves."

MARGARET

(following him around as he gives his orders) Your poor Meg went such a flop... (She looks around) What nice houses you have all over the place - I like this one too.

MR. WILCOX

Oniton Grange? I'm just waiting to get it off my hands. (at her cry of dismay) What's one to do here? The shooting's bad, the fishing is worse, and anyway it's in the wrong part of Shropshire. It's always damp on this detestable little river. Feel the cellar walls, look up under the eaves.

By the river, CHARLES, ALBERT, and some other YOUNG MEN are having their morning dip. MR. WILCOX and MARGARET approach -

MARGARET

I had hoped that we'd be married from here too.

MR. WILCOX

Much easier in London. We put everything in the hands of Harrod's or Whiteley's or even go to some hotel -

CHARLES and the other YOUNG MEN have emerged in their bathing costumes on to the bank, but seeing MARGARET approach they quickly dive back again.

MR. WILCOX, seeing them, steers MARGARET away from them though she is very interested in the bathing arrangements -

MR. WILCOX

The Alexandrina isn't bad.

MARGARET

The Alexandrina? (looking toward the river) How jolly it would be to have a dip.

MR. WILCOX
(turning her away) It's off Curzon Street.

MARGARET
(bravely) Let's be married off Curzon Street.

CUT TO:

75. INT. ONITON GRANGE. DAY.

MR. WILCOX is going down into the cellar with MARGARET following him:

MR. WILCOX
Charles, as the elder son, will some day have Howards End; but I'm anxious not to be unjust to the others.

MARGARET
Of course not. You mean money.

MR. WILCOX
(taken aback) Yes. Money. Since you put it so frankly. Here, feel these walls.

He takes her hand and lays it on the wall to demonstrate its dampness.

All this among the bustle of wedding activities - passing SERVANTS, regular ones and temporary hired hands, members of the BAND drinking beer in the still-room, MR. WILCOX giving orders, etc.

MARGARET
...How much have you got?...How much have you got a year? I've six hundred.

MR. WILCOX
(in amazement) My income?

MARGARET
We must begin with how much you have, before we can settle how much you can give to Charles, Evie, and Paul...Don't you know your income? Or don't you want to tell it me?

MR. WILCOX
(laughing a little and patting her arm)
I must say, you're a downright young woman.

They have arrived at the wine cellar where mysterious doors are unlocked - MARGARET gasps at the array of bottles.

MARGARET

Do it this way: If you were to divide your income into ten parts - how many parts would you give to Evie, how many to Charles, how many to Paul? Go ahead - give away all you can. Be generous.

76. EXT. ONITON GRANGE. EVENING.

The wedding is over - EVIE and PERCY drive off, amid yells of laughter and showers of rice.

The GUESTS begin to disperse - MR. WILCOX sees them off - so does MARGARET, who is very alert and gracious.

CUT TO:

MARGARET wanders around among the remains of the wedding feast laid out on tables in the garden. MR. WILCOX joins her, tender and grateful.

MARGARET

Everything went like clockwork - "quite like a Durbar," Lady Edser said.

MR. WILCOX

...You certainly did your bit. I was very proud of you.

She flushes with pleasure. They are close together, deep in affection - but draw apart as they see figures approaching them from the house -

MR. WILCOX

(exclaiming in annoyance) Who are these people?

MARGARET

Oh dear. Perhaps they're town people come to see the wedding presents - if you'll gracefully vanish, I'll try and deal with them.

He thanks her - and disappears around the corner of the house. Assuming the hostess smile she has worn all day, she starts forward to greet the visitors. But they turn out to be: HELEN - with LEONARD and JACKY in tow.

MARGARET

(with a frightened cry) What is it? Oh, what's wrong? Is Tibby ill?

HELEN says something to LEONARD and JACKY who fall back while she herself advances, excited to the point of hysteria:

HELEN
They're starving! I found them starving!

MARGARET
Who is starving?

HELEN
The Basts!

MARGARET
(with a moan) Oh, Helen! What ever have you done now?

HELEN
(even more wound-up, on the point of screaming) He has lost his place. He has been turned out of his bank. Yes, thanks to us, he's done for. We've ruined him.

MARGARET
Helen, are you mad?

HELEN
Yes - if you like, I'm mad. But I'll stand for this no longer. Two people starving and meanwhile all this vulgar show -

MARGARET
(interrupting) Have you actually brought two starving people from London to Shropshire, Helen?

HELEN is checked, her hysteria abates.

HELEN
(more on the defensive than the offensive now) There was a restaurant car on the train.

MARGARET
Don't be absurd...I won't have such theatrical nonsense. How dare you!

HELEN is about to speak again but MARGARET'S anger rises and she overrides her:

MARGARET
Yes, how dare you! Bursting into Evie's wedding in this way - my goodness! but you've a perverted notion of philanthropy. Look -

She indicates the house where curious SERVANTS hover and some GUESTS are at the windows to see what the disturbance is -

MARGARET

They think it's some vulgar scandal and I must explain, "Oh no, it's only my sister screaming, and only two hangers-on of ours, whom she has brought here for no conceivable reason."

HELEN

(ominously calm) Kindly take back that word "hangers-on."

MARGARET restrains her anger, anxious to avoid a real quarrel -

MARGARET

Very well. I, too, am sorry about them, but it beats me why you've brought them here, or why you're here yourself when you so emphatically refused the invitation.

HELEN

We want to see Mr. Wilcox.

MARGARET stiffens, determined to protect him. Instead of answering, she moves toward LEONARD and JACKY:

MARGARET

(trying to control her voice) How do you do, Mr. Bast? This is an odd business - what view do you take of it?

HELEN

There is Mrs. Bast too.

MARGARET shakes hands with JACKY too.

HELEN

She's not well. She fainted on the train.

MARGARET

I'm very sorry. Won't you sit down for a minute?

JACKY gratefully sinks down on one of the garden chairs, while MARGARET turns her attention to LEONARD.

LEONARD

I'm sure we don't want to intrude - but you have been so kind in the past - you and your sister -

HELEN)
 (interrupting protectively) I brought)
 them! I did it all!)

MARGARET) (overlapping)
 My sister has put you in a false)
 position -)

HELEN)
 It's work he wants, can't you see?)

LEONARD
 Jacky, let's go. We're more bother than
 we're worth.

MARGARET looks at their two miserable figures and cannot
 help her pity for them.

MARGARET
 Helen, offer them something. Mrs. Bast -
 please - won't you have something to eat?

She leads them toward the buffet tables which are still
 laden, and some SERVANTS still standing there. JACKY
 cheers up a bit at the sight and whispers to LEONARD.
 While MARGARET continues to urge them, JACKY shyly points
 out what she would like to LEONARD. While they are
 engaged in this, MARGARET draws HELEN aside:

MARGARET
 Now, Helen, I would like to do something
 for them because I agree we're in some
 way responsible -

HELEN
 Via Mr. Wilcox.

MARGARET
 Let me tell you once and for all that if
 you take up that attitude I'll do nothing.
 So choose.

HELEN stares in stubborn silence into the distance.

MARGARET
 If you promise to take them quietly to
 the hotel - as my guests - I will speak
 to Henry about finding work for Mr. Bast
 - in my own way, mind; there is to be
 no more of this absurd screaming. Well?

HELEN
 ...All right. I promise.

MARGARET

Take them off to the George, then, and I'll try...But, Helen: you have been most self-indulgent. You have less restraint rather than more as you get older. Think it over and alter yourself, or we shan't have happy lives. (looking at BASTS)
Poor things! But they look tired.

Actually, JACKY has considerably perked up and is excited to be drinking champagne.

While MARGARET goes into the house, HELEN goes back to LEONARD. JACKY doesn't want to leave, so they decide to come back for her after making the hotel arrangements. LEONARD looks doubtful but JACKY happily settles down. She holds out her champagne glass for a SERVANT to refill.

77. INT. ONITON GRANGE. EVENING.

Walking through the house, MARGARET comes to where MR. WILCOX is sitting resting in an armchair. She crouches by him, putting her face on his hand, and he strokes her head.

MARGARET

...You will never believe this: it was Helen.

MR. WILCOX

What? Helen here? But she refused the invitation. I thought she despised weddings.

He makes to get up to welcome her but MARGARET restrains him:

MARGARET

No, she's gone now. I've bundled her off to the George.

Inherently hospitable, he begins to protest -

MARGARET

She has two of her protégés with her -

MR. WILCOX

Let 'em all come.

MARGARET shakes her head; she strokes his hand:

MARGARET

...But later on I want to talk to you about them.

MR. WILCOX
Why later on? Tell me now. No time like
the present.

MARGARET
(still stroking his hand) Shall I?

MR. WILCOX
If it isn't a long story.

MARGARET
Oh, not five minutes; but there's a sting
at the end of it, for I want you to find
the man some work in your office.

A pause. MR. WILCOX assumes the characteristic expression
of a businessman being asked a favour. His tone is
correspondingly brisk:

MR. WILCOX
What are his qualifications?

MARGARET
He's a clerk, I think.

MR. WILCOX
Where was he before?

MARGARET
Dempster's Bank.

MR. WILCOX
Why did he leave?

MARGARET
They reduced their staff.

Another pause.

MR. WILCOX
All right; I'll do what I can.
(interrupting her thanks) But, Margaret,
this can't be taken as a precedent: I
can't fit in your protégés every day.

MARGARET
Of course not; but he's - he's rather
a special case.

MR. WILCOX
Protégés always are.

Again she puts her face on his hand, in gratitude.

78. EXT. ONITON GRANGE. EVENING.

JACKY is still comfortably seated, eating the wedding food, and has by now had more champagne than is good for her. MR. WILCOX and MARGARET can be seen approaching from the house. When they reach her and she hears their voices (MARGARET says, "Oh, Mrs. Bast, are you still here?") she looks up. Her vision blurred with alcohol, she stares into MR. WILCOX's face.

JACKY

Why, if it isn't Henry!... (She hears their voices, her hearing as blurred as her vision - MARGARET: "She is overtired." MR. WILCOX: "She is drunk.") Hallo, Henry! Fancy seeing you here! (Again their voices, indistinct to her) Don't you remember Jacky? Henry! Aren't you going to say hallo? (Hearing MARGARET say, "Does she know you?" she laughs rather drunkenly) Know Henry? Who doesn't know Henry! We've had some gay old times, haven't we, Hen?

MR. WILCOX strides away. MARGARET follows him. In the distance GUESTS can still be seen leaving, packing themselves into motorcars, looking expectantly toward their host and hostess.

MR. WILCOX

(stops still to face MARGARET in a cold fury) Are you satisfied? I must say, you've made a fine plan to trap me - (She exclaims, "Trap you!") I congratulate you. Of course, I have the honour to release you from your engagement.

The departing GUESTS walk toward them. MARGARET turns to look at JACKY, then looks at MR. WILCOX - comprehension dawns on her. He appears confused and even stumbles a little on the grass. MARGARET begins to say, "You do know her," but as the GUESTS call their farewell and thanks, she collects herself more quickly than MR. WILCOX. Saying, "Oh, is everybody going?" she goes into the house to help them.

79. INT. ONITON GRANGE. EVENING.

COLONEL FUSSELL is putting on his coat in the hall. Over his protests, MARGARET helps him - then MR. WILCOX follows:

MR. WILCOX

No, let me do that.

MARGARET
(involuntarily speaking aloud) So
that's it -

COLONEL FUSSELL
That is what?...Thank you, dear chap.

MARGARET
Oh, Henry and I were just having the
fiercest argument - all my fault, but
I think he has forgiven me.

COLONEL FUSSELL
(gallantly) I don't expect there is
much to forgive.

80. EXT. ONITON GRANGE. EVENING.

They follow him out to where the other GUESTS are
departing amid farewell and thanks. When the final car
has left with COLONEL FUSSELL, MARGARET, without a further
word to MR. WILCOX, goes back inside and ascends the stairs.
He remains looking after her.

81. INT. ONITON GRANGE : MARGARET'S BEDROOM. EVENING.

MARGARET is leaning her head thoughtfully against the
window. She can see the lonely figure of JACKY on the
lawn.

82. EXT. ONITON GRANGE. EVENING.

LEONARD arrives and finds JACKY alone and in tears. She
sobs, "It was the shock, seeing him." He doesn't know
what she is talking about but leads her away protectively.

83. INT. ONITON GRANGE : MARGARET'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

MARGARET is writing a note, but soon tears it up.
She sits turning her engagement ring around her
finger. She is perplexed; she doesn't know what to do.
She lays her head in her arms on the table. A wind has
sprung up and is rattling the window. The curtains blow
into the room.

84. INT. ONITON GRANGE. NIGHT.

The wind is rattling the pictures against the wall.
HENRY straightens a picture. He hears sounds from above
- Margaret's door opening - but does not dare look up. She
comes down to him.

MARGARET
Henry, look at me... (but he doesn't,
can't) So you have been intimate with
that woman?

MR. WILCOX

You put it with your usual delicacy.

MARGARET

When?... (he doesn't answer and she insists) When, please?

MR. WILCOX

Ten years ago.

He leaves her. He goes to sit in an armchair, slumping there disconsolately. She regards him for a while, saddened to see him in this uncharacteristic state. Then she makes up her mind. She knows what to do. She goes up to him:

MARGARET

...Henry dear, it's not going to trouble us.

He gets up, moves away from her.

MR. WILCOX

I thank you for your unselfishness - (tragically) Little as my thanks are worth... (He paces in agitation) I'm a bad lot and must be left at that. I have released you from your engagement. (more pacing) ...Margaret, I've known cases of other men...I despised them once, I always thought I'm different...

He comes to sit near her again; he rather likes to talk now that he has started:

MR. WILCOX

We fellows all come to grief once in our time. Will you believe that?

MARGARET

I do believe it.

But he doesn't want her to believe too easily - he wants to finish the work of self-justification now that it has begun:

MR. WILCOX

You with your refined pursuits and your books - what can you guess of a man's life and his temptations...That's enough; I've said too much already.

MARGARET

Yes, that's enough, dear.

But not for him -

MR. WILCOX

It was out in Cyprus...I was very, very lonely and longed for a woman's voice...

She is embarrassed by his unctuousness. She wants this scene to stop and everything to revert to normal as soon as possible.

MR. WILCOX

(histrionically) You can never forgive me.

MARGARET

I have forgiven you, Henry.

MR. WILCOX

(shaking his head - how is it possible?)
I could find excuses but I won't...And yet - what do you suppose happens to thousands of young fellows overseas? Isolated. No one near. (working himself up) ...Margaret, I have been through hell.

MARGARET

Let us speak no more about it, dear. It is all behind us.

MR. WILCOX

And you can really bring yourself to... forgive me?

For answer, she kisses him.

He presses her to his heart. His brisk manner begins to return.

MR. WILCOX

You've learned that I'm far from a saint - in fact, the reverse - no, the reverse... Where are those people now?

MARGARET

Helen has taken them to The George.

He is entirely his practical self again:

MR. WILCOX

There must be no gossip at The George. Clearly they must leave first thing in the morning, and Helen must be here with us, not stopping in a hotel with those rag-tags. You will kindly write a note to that effect to her and I shall have it sent round at once.

He taps a little gong.

MARGARET
 (sitting down at his writing desk) You
 must make more noise than that if you
 want them to hear.

He strides to the door, opens it, hears shouts of laughter
 from the servants' hall:

MR. WILCOX
 Far too much screaming there! Burton! I
 need you up here!

He returns to MARGARET, stands behind her, looking down
 at the note she is writing. He bends down gratefully to
 kiss the top of her head, murmuring, "My Margaret."

MARGARET (V.O.)
 "...The Basts are not at all the type we
 should trouble about. Henry found the
 woman drunk on the lawn..."

85. INT. THE GEORGE : LOUNGE. NIGHT.

LEONARD is with HELEN who is reading Margaret's note -

MARGARET (V.O.)
 "...Please see that they leave first thing
 in the morning and come here yourself..."

HELEN crumples the note. For a moment she is speechless
 with indignation. Then:

HELEN
 He made her write it. This is not
 Margaret...

LEONARD
 (bitterly) You'd better let us be, Miss
 Schlegel; you don't want to get mixed up
 in this.

HELEN
 Mixed up in what?

The expression on his face and the vague, hopeless gesture
 he makes tell her that there is something she does not
 know -

HELEN
 What is it?...You must trust me that far
 at least.

A pause. Finally he forces himself to bring it out:

LEONARD

Mr. Wilcox met Jacky before. Out in Cyprus when she was sixteen... (at her cry of revulsion) I told you you didn't want to know about it.

But she encourages him to talk about it, saying, "Go on," or "Why was she in Cyprus?"

LEONARD

Her father was a clerk in some export business, so after her mother died she'd gone out to be with him. Then he died - accidentally drowned, because he couldn't swim. Jacky was left having to shift for herself, till she managed to get back home.

86. INT. THE GEORGE : BEDROOM. NIGHT.

JACKY is standing by the window. Dully, she sees the figures of HELEN and LEONARD in the street below. But she is too miserable to care, too overwhelmed by everything that has happened to her in the last 24 hours to call to them.

87. EXT. ON THE RIVER. NIGHT.

LEONARD and HELEN have come to the river's edge where there are a number of small boats.

LEONARD

(bitterly bursting out) I didn't have to marry her, but I did. My family won't have anything to do with us - they tried to stop me, but I married her all the same. Because I promised. Yes, and if I hadn't where would she be today, after the Mr. Wilcoxes of this world had finished with her?

HELEN is speechless for a moment - then:

HELEN

It would never - never - not in a thousand years enter that man's mind that he'd done anything wrong. Because he has nothing here (striking head) and nothing here. (striking heart)

She pauses, then continues in a different, almost tender voice:

HELEN

And you're the opposite. You believe in personal responsibility. And personal everything -

LEONARD

(interrupting) Very nice, but what good am I to myself or to Jacky - marrying her only to pull her down with me so we can starve together.

HELEN

You'll find another position somewhere, surely you will -

LEONARD

(again interrupting, quite harshly) You don't know what you're talking about. If rich people fail at one profession, they can try another. But with us - once a man over 20 loses his own particular job, he's done for.

His tone of utter despair - her feeling of responsibility - her revulsion against Mr. Wilcox and the way the world runs according to his will: all this overwhelms her. But all she can do is to murmur miserably:

HELEN

I'd do anything in the world to help you.

On an impulse, she gets into one of the boats and encourages him to follow her. LEONARD hesitates: he doesn't know how to row, the boat is "private property." HELEN reassures him, he follows her, and they are soon out on the moonlit water. They drift for a while with the current.

LEONARD

...You're the one person who ever has helped me.

HELEN

(cynically) You mean by passing on false information to make you give up your job -

LEONARD

I mean by being the sort of person you are.

This is a new note between them, and for once HELEN is silent - shy and excited and waiting for him to say more.

LEONARD

I didn't think people like you existed except in books. And books aren't real -

HELEN

More real than anything! When people fail you, there's still (with a faint reminiscent smile) "Music and Meaning" -

LEONARD

That's for rich people, to make them
feel good after their dinner.

HELEN

Everything's got spoiled for you, hasn't it.

The boat has drifted under a tree. She touches his yearning face, and he seizes her hand and gratefully, respectfully kisses it. But she makes a further move, which he cannot resist. They become locked together in an embrace and kisses.

The landscape is reminiscent of romantic paintings by the English "Master of the Moonlight," William Pether: an expanse of moonlit water, dark trees, a ruined castle or monastery on a height, and silver-edged, broken clouds.

DISSOLVE TO:

88. INT. TIBBY'S COLLEGE ROOMS. DAY.

A cosy little fire in the grate by which TIBBY is warming a bottle of claret. HELEN is sitting disconsolately at the table which is set out with a tasty lunch. She looks pathetic yet dignified - the look of a sailor who has lost everything at sea. TIBBY pours the claret - "Who's for claret?" - and continues to eat his lunch. HELEN puts down her fork:

HELEN

I don't know what's to be done, Tibby,
or what to say to Meg.

TIBBY

You mean Mr. Wilcox and the woman you say
he seduced in between growing currants
in Cyprus?

HELEN

You take everything so lightly.

TIBBY

Perhaps it is a reaction to growing up at
Wickham Place where nothing was ever taken
lightly.

For answer, she bursts into tears. He looks at her helplessly, then offers:

TIBBY

Shall I lock the door?

She nods, he gets up to do so -

HELEN

Thank you, Tibbikins. You're being very good to me.

He returns to his lunch, she tries to collect herself:

HELEN

Give Meg my love and tell her - (She checks her tears) I'm going away to Germany.

TIBBY

I dare say you're wise. (He sighs) I wish I could also escape from Meg's wedding -

HELEN

(bursting out) Is she really going to go through with it? How is it possible for our Meg to be a Wilcox?

TIBBY

You had much better go away to Germany. (a knock at the door) There is Martlett with the apple charlotte - do you mind if I just take it from him? It spoils with waiting.

He goes to the door, unlocks it, and takes the dish from MARTLETT with much pleasure.

When he returns, HELEN has again managed to pull herself together.

HELEN

I feel - no, I know - that we owe the Basts some compensation -

TIBBY

The Basts? Oh, those people again.

HELEN

Yes, those people again...I don't see who is to pay if I don't - (ignoring his look of surprise) I'm placing what I consider is a minimum amount to your account, and when I'm in Germany you will pay it over for me. I shall never forget your kindness, Tibbikins, if you do this.

TIBBY

What is the sum?

HELEN

Five thousand.

TIBBY
 (stirred enough to put down his pudding
 fork and spoon) Good God alive! But it's
 half what you have.

HELEN
 Not nearly half - and it's useless just
 giving out dribbles of charity, just
 shillings and blankets. No doubt people
 will think me mad.

TIBBY
 I don't care a damn what people think!...
 But I do care that you should ruin yourself
 for some quixotic reason of your own.

HELEN
 I didn't expect you to understand me.

TIBBY
 I? I understand nobody.

HELEN
 But you'll do it?

TIBBY
 Apparently.

She puts out her hand to press his in gratitude. He looks
 at her: the expression on her face is haunting, and he has
 to look away at the mellow view of elms nodding over the
 parapet.

89. INT. BAST FLAT. DAY.

It is more run-down and derelict than when we first saw it.
 So are LEONARD and JACKY. She is snivelling - maybe she
 has a cold; or boils, or both; maybe she wears a dirty
 bandage round her neck. She is watching LEONARD who is
 writing a letter:

JACKY
 Are you writing to your brother?...He
 could send us another ten.

LEONARD
 Yes, and a long lecture to go with it.

After a pause:

JACKY
 Your sister could afford a fiver.

LEONARD
 Oh, leave me alone!

JACKY

All right, ducky...Why are you taking it out on me?

LEONARD

(irritated yet sorry) You can see I'm busy, can't you?

Carefully hiding its contents from her, he folds his letter into the envelope which he begins to address -

90. INT. TIBBY'S COLLEGE ROOM. DAY.

TIBBY is reading the letter addressed to him:

LEONARD (V.O.)

... very grateful for your concern but having no immediate necessity, I have the honour to return your cheque here-with...

TIBBY looks at the enclosed cheque -

CU CHEQUE for Five Thousand Pounds made out to Leonard Bast, Esq.

91. INT./EXT. WICKHAM PLACE. DAY.

Furniture is packed into packing cases - and carried out to a moving van.

92. INT. REGISTRAR'S OFFICE. DAY.

MARGARET and MR. WILCOX in a somewhat dry official wedding ceremony.

CU CHARLES, who is one of the witnesses - very disciplined and visibly controlling his feelings.

CU TIBBY, who is the other witness - being very short-sighted, he has to bend down close to sign the marriage certificate.

93. EXT./INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

The packing cases from Wickham Place are being carried inside. MISS AVERY takes a proprietary interest in the proceedings -

DISSOLVE TO:

A succession of PICTURE POSTCARDS from Helen from the Continent. We see the recipients:

TIBBY is handed one by the PORTER of his Oxford college. It is of a picture gallery in Dresden, showing its exterior. There are only a couple of lines signed "Helen" scrawled on it -

MARGARET finds hers among the post handed to her as she sits writing thank-you notes for her wedding presents. Hers comes from the Tyrol and shows a snow scene. It too is very brief.

TIBBY and MARGARET are together. She hands him another postcard, just as terse, which is merely a train station and an ugly Bahnhofplatz at Ulm with some trolleycars. TIBBY and MARGARET exchange a worried look.

Intercut with these shots are ones of Howards End, with MISS AVERY unpacking the Schlegels' cases, taking out their possessions, opening their books, putting these on shelves, etc.

94. INT. WILCOX LONDON HOUSE. DAY.

Another POSTCARD from Helen, of a Gothic Madonna carved in wood from an altar-piece, holding the Baby Jesus. The card is lying on a table, among other mail. BUILDING PLANS descend on these, blotting them all out.

MR. WILCOX is explaining the plans to MARGARET, who admires and approves:

MARGARET

...If only it would hurry up and get itself built.

MR. WILCOX

It is now what? March. We shall be in there by next autumn, or winter at the latest.

MARGARET

(wistfully sighing) I'm getting tired of living in London. I can't be as young as I was, for I'm perfectly happy to do without all the new plays and the discussion societies...What I miss are trees and meadows and mountains. (with a change of tone) I also miss my own things.

MR. WILCOX

Safe enough at Howards End.

MARGARET

And of course I'm most grateful to have them there - but I would so like to see everything in our own home. At least

(MORE)

MARGARET (contd)

my share - goodness only knows what
- Tibby intends to do with his; or Helen...

At the mention of her name, an uneasy cloud passes over MR. WILCOX's face; and over MARGARET much more than unease.

MARGARET

...There has been another postcard from her: still the same poste restante address in Bavaria, but now she speaks of going to Italy...

MR. WILCOX

Is she never coming back to England?
She has been away now - what is it?

MARGARET

It will be six months and three weeks on Tuesday.

She is deeply worried but MR. WILCOX is quite cheerful -

MR. WILCOX

Your sister is odd, always has been, no getting away from it. (picking up her book) What's it been reading? Theo - theo how much?

MARGARET

Theosophy.

MR. WILCOX

What a clever little woman it is. You see, that's what I mean. Helen reads these things and her mind gets addled. But my Margaret keeps her facts straight.

MARGARET

(amused) What facts are those, dear?

MR. WILCOX

(also amused, bending down to kiss her)
About men and women and that sort of thing.

He kisses her.

MR. WILCOS

Who is who and what is what.

She kisses him back. They have the air of a deeply contented married couple.

95. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

MISS AVERY draws Mr. Schlegel's sword out of its scabbard and hangs it above the mantelpiece, just as it was at Wickham Place.

96. EXT. DORSET : GARDEN VIEW OVER BAY. DAY.

TELEGRAPH BOY, toiling up the hill, hands a telegram to TIBBY.

97. INT. AUNT JULEY'S BEDROOM. DAY.

AUNT JULEY, very weak and ill, is lying in bed. MARGARET is with her.

AUNT JULEY

...If only you had a companion to take your walks with.

MARGARET

I have Tibby, dear Aunt Juley, and very soon you yourself will be up and about.

AUNT JULEY

When is Helen coming?

MARGARET

Very soon, dear. She will already have reached London.

AUNT JULEY

...You and Helen must take the Lulworth...

She is too exhausted to say more and seems to drop off to sleep. TIBBY enters with the telegram, and to MARGARET's anxious look of inquiry -

TIBBY

She's got to London all right.

MARGARET

(full of apprehension) ...But?

Making sure AUNT JULEY is asleep, she slips outside the door to talk to TIBBY.

TIBBY

She says to telegraph if Aunt Juley is better. Obviously we must wire that she is not better. (as MARGARET vehemently shakes her head) If you want to see Helen.

MARGARET
 We can't start lying to each other.
 But Helen wouldn't - she couldn't stay
 away at such a time.

CU AUNT JULEY on her sickbed.

DISSOLVE TO:

98. INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE. DAY.

TELEGRAPH OPERATOR tapping out this message:
 AUNT JULEY BETTER AND EAGERLY EXPECTING YOU

DISSOLVE TO:

Another OPERATOR tapping out another message:
 MUST RETURN GERMANY AT ONCE TELEGRAPH TO BANK WHEREABOUTS
 OUR BOOKS AND FURNITURE HELEN

DISSOLVE TO:

99. INT. AUNT JULEY'S BEDROOM. DAY.

AUNT JULEY is sitting up in bed, much better, but
 querulous. MARGARET and a NURSE are trying to soothe her.

AUNT JULEY
 ...Why should she have to go back to
 Germany?

MARGARET
 I'll explain it all to you after your
 nap, dear.

AUNT JULEY, still grumbling about Helen being very odd,
 allows the NURSE to settle her. Just as MARGARET is
 about to go out, she calls her back:

AUNT JULEY
 Is Cook doing the kippers the way Tibby
 likes them? I know how his whole day is
 spoiled if his breakfast isn't right.

MARGARET reassures her.

100. EXT. GARDEN VIEW OVER BAY. DAY.

MARGARET and TIBBY are arguing:

TIBBY
 We have to face the fact that she does
 not want to see us, for reasons of her
 own.

MARGARET

She has no "reasons of her own." (As TIBBY turns away, not wanting to speak, she speaks for him:) Don't tell me it is still that business over Henry and the woman, Mrs. Bast. How morbid: his wife forgives him, and his sister-in-law cannot bear to look upon his face...I don't believe it: no, not even of Helen.

TIBBY

Unfortunately we all know to what extremes Helen goes - we have all suffered under her temperament.

MARGARET

This is different. It is not temperament but - madness. As if she were mad.

A shocked silence; then TIBBY says:

TIBBY

It could be.

MARGARET

It could not be.

TIBBY

Her behaviour in these last seven months has not been, to put it mildly, rational.

MARGARET

We must instantly send another telegram to meet us in London tomorrow...How dreadful all these telegrams - and to Helen; to Helen...

The view shimmers through her tears.

DISSOLVE TO:

101. EXT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. DAY.

LEONARD, pale, worn, down-at-heel, is walking up the steps.

102. INT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. DAY.

LEONARD, wandering inside the cathedral, suddenly catches sight of MARGARET and TIBBY. He quickly turns away to hide from them. When we come up to MARGARET and TIBBY, we see that they are grave and worried:

MARGARET

...Tibby love, what next?

TIBBY
It is extraordinary...

MARGARET
Wherever shall we find her?

After a pause:

TIBBY
Why don't you tell Mr. Wilcox?

MARGARET
About Helen - oh no...

TIBBY
You know best. But he is practical, which
is more than can be said for us.

LEONARD, meanwhile, has sat down, ill and exhausted.
He lays his head on the book-rest in front.

DISSOLVE TO:

103. EXT. ON THE RIVER. NIGHT.

A flashback vision of HELEN in the boat with LEONARD -

DISSOLVE TO:

104. INT. ST. PAUL'S. DAY.

LEONARD starts up from his vision and hurriedly goes back
to where he saw Margaret and Tibby. But they have gone.

105. INT. MR. WILCOX'S OFFICE. DAY.

MARGARET and TIBBY have come to lay their trouble before
MR. WILCOX, who takes it very easily -

MR. WILCOX
It is just like Helen to lead her
relatives a dance.

MARGARET
That is what we all say: just like Helen.
But why? Why should she be like that?

MR. WILCOX
Don't ask me. Margaret, you've got black
marks again under your eyes. You know
that's strictly forbidden. I can't have
my girl looking as old as her husband.

TIBBY
You have not quite seen our point.

MR. WILCOX, leaning back to look at this odd brother and sister -

MR. WILCOX

(laughing) No - I don't suppose I ever shall.

TIBBY

(pedantic but lucid) Our point is this: our sister may be mad.

CU CHARLES, working in the inner room. He looks around, and MARGARET addresses him:

MARGARET

Come in, Charles. Could you help us at all? We are again in trouble.

CHARLES

(joining them, cool but correct) I'm afraid I cannot. What are the facts? We are all mad more or less, you know, in these days.

TIBBY

The facts are that our sister has been in England for three days and will not see us. She has forbidden the bankers to give us her address. She refuses to answer questions. All we have is these telegrams.

He indicates them where they lie before MR. WILCOX.

MR. WILCOX

She has never behaved like this before?

MARGARET in sharp and sudden irritation, which makes CHARLES look at her in his stupid but attentive way:

MARGARET

Of course not!... (She continues in her usual even way) When she behaved oddly in the past, it was always because she cared for someone, or wanted to help them. But never, never like this. That is why I'm sure she is - not well.

MR. WILCOX

(in his quick decisive way) You want to get hold of her, is that it?...It's perfectly easy. Leave it to me. We'll send her down to Howards End.

MARGARET

How will you do that?

No one notices CHARLES' reaction, which is however marked.

MR. WILCOX

(indicating telegram) She wants her books. Send her after them to Howards End - and when she's there, you'll just stroll in. If nothing is wrong with her, so much the better. But there'll be the motor round the corner, and we can run her up to a specialist in no time -

MARGARET

(shocked, vehemently interrupting) That's impossible.

MR. WILCOX

And why is it "impossible"?

MARGARET

Because Helen and I - we don't talk that particular language...if you see my meaning. It's the ethics of the wolf-pack. Tibby... (appealing to him)

TIBBY

Helen won't talk at all. That's our whole difficulty. She won't talk your particular language.

MARGARET

(still shaking her head) No, Henry; it's sweet of you but I couldn't.

MR. WILCOX

You have scruples. And scruples are all very well. I'm as scrupulous as any man alive, I hope. But when it's a case like this - when there is a question of madness -

MARGARET

I deny it's madness.

MR. WILCOX

You said yourself -

MARGARET

It's madness when I say it, but not when you say it.

CHARLES speaks up suddenly:

CHARLES
Pater, we may as well keep Howards End
out of it.

A silence. They all look at him:

MR. WILCOX
Why, Charles?

CHARLES
(crossly) The whole house is at sixes
and sevens. We don't want any more mess.

MR. WILCOX
Who's "we"? My boy, pray, who is "we"?

CHARLES
I beg your pardon, I'm sure. I seem
always to be intruding.

MARGARET begins to reassure and to thank CHARLES for his interest, but MR. WILCOX has now decided on action. He gets up, makes MARGARET and TIBBY get up, calls for a CLERK to have a telegram sent, and amid the flurry of his energetic activity they all go out, leaving CHARLES -

CHARLES returns to his desk and sits there thoughtfully, with a dull brooding look.

CUT TO:

MR. WILCOX comes in to CHARLES -

MR. WILCOX
I can't have this sort of behaviour, my
boy. Margaret's too sweet-natured to mind,
but I mind for her.

CHARLES remains sullenly silent.

MR. WILCOX
Is anything wrong with you, Charles,
this afternoon?

CHARLES
No, pater; but you may be taking on a
bigger business than you reckon.

MR. WILCOS
How?

CHARLES
Don't ask me.

CU CHARLES with the same dull brooding look.

106. INT. PORPHYRION OFFICE. DAY.

LEONARD has come to ask for his old job back. The SUPERVISOR, sitting facing the CLERKS at their desks as in a schoolroom, shakes his head: No Vacancies.

LEONARD walks back along the rows of desks. The CLERKS are writing away busily. Only some furtively glance at LEONARD, their former colleague, shuffling off disappointed and ashamed.

107. EXT. LECTURE HALL. DAY.

LEONARD, an out-of-work clerk with nothing to do, is loitering outside the hall where he first met Helen. PEOPLE are going in - another lecture is announced on the board outside, this one is called "Vigour and Vegetarianism."

CUT TO:

108. EXT. WICKHAM PLACE. DAY.

LEONARD has come to look at the house - and finds that it has been torn down.

109. EXT. WILCOX LONDON HOUSE. DAY.

A PARLOURMAID has opened the door to LEONARD. At first she is answering his questions suspiciously -

PARLOUDDMAID

Miss Schlegel?...Why, she's been abroad these many months. Who should I say has called?

LEONARD

Is Mrs. Wilcox in?...When will she be back?...Won't you tell me when she'll be back?

Something in his demeanour touches her. She looks at him with more sympathy. (After all, he is young and handsome.)

PARLOURMAID

I'm sure I don't know...She's down at Howards End. It's their place near Hilton ...Are you all right?... (looking at him searchingly, for he does look ill) Should I get you a drink of water?

He shakes his head, thanks her, tries to smile. As he walks away with slow, rather dragging steps, she looks after him.

110. EXT. HILTON : OUTSIDE LIVERY STABLES. DAY.

MR. WILCOX is making inquiries from the OWNER.

He returns to MARGARET, waiting in the car:

MR. WILCOX
(with satisfaction) She's here, all right
...A lady came on the London train and took
the fly to Howards End.

MARGARET is by no means as satisfied by this news as he is. She looks guilty and upset. He reassures her:

MR. WILCOX
Leave everything to me.

She presses his hand in gratitude but continues to look upset.

111. INT. CHARLES HILTON HOUSE. DAY.

DOLLY is with MR. WILCOX and MARGARET.

DOLLY
(her eyes dancing with excitement) Should
I come with you? Of course I don't know
Helen very well, but it's good to have
another girl there, don't you think - if I
can still be called a girl which I suppose
I can't -

MR. WILCOX silences her with a look as MARGARET, feeling worse and worse, puts her hands to her eyes.

MR. WILCOX
(very gently) Let me go alone. I know
exactly what to do.

MARGARET quickly takes her hands from her eyes and begins to protest and explain -

MARGARET
...It's only that I'm so frightfully
worried. I can't feel that Helen's really
alive. Her postcards and telegrams seem
to have come from someone else. They're
not Helen. I wish I had never mentioned
it. I know that Charles is vexed. Yes,
he is -

She seizes DOLLY's hand and kisses it.

MARGARET

There, Dolly will forgive me. Now we'll be off.

They go to the front door, MR. WILCOX regarding her closely.

MR. WILCOX

Don't you want to tidy yourself?

MARGARET

Have I time?

MR. WILCOX

Yes, plenty.

MARGARET goes into the lavatory by the front door. As soon as the bolt has slipped, MR. WILCOX says quietly:

MR. WILCOX

Dolly, I'm going without her.

DOLLY gasps and nods. She loves this conspiracy. She follows him out -

112. EXT. CHARLES' HOUSE. DAY.

MR. WILCOX gets into the waiting motor and it starts. But a BABY, playing in the garden, chooses this moment to sit down in the middle of the path. DOLLY screams - the motor swerves into a flowerbed -

MARGARET rushes out, hatless, and is in time to jump on the footboard of the escaping motor.

Although she does not reproach him for his treachery, when the car starts off again with her inside it, he defends himself:

MR. WILCOX

I still think you are not fit for it...

MARGARET

Just lend me your scarf, will you. The wind takes one's hair so.

MR. WILCOX

Certainly, dear girl. Are you all right now?...And have quite forgiven me? Then listen. A certain gentleman (glancing at CHAUFFEUR's back) - won't drive in - we don't want a scene before servants -

The motor rolls on - and on the way stops outside the DOCTOR's house. He joins them inside the car which

proceeds onward - and when we come in on them again, MR. WILCOX is still talking, now to the DOCTOR:

MR. WILCOX

...Our main object is not to frighten Miss Schlegel. The trouble is evidently nervous - wouldn't you say so, Margaret?

MARGARET doesn't answer, but the DOCTOR leans forward eagerly:

DOCTOR

Would you say she was - normal?

MR. WILCOX

She always was highly strung...Musical, literary, artistic, but I should say normal - a very charming girl.

The discussion continues between DOCTOR and MR. WILCOX - "Anything congenital?" "Anything hereditary?" "Any differences within the family?" etc. MARGARET takes no part in this discussion of her sister. She hates every moment of it. She averts her face from them. She clenches and unclenches her hands, on edge and nervous, partly in distaste at their dispassionate, patronizing voices, partly worrying what lies before her? what will she find at Howards End?

113. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

MISS AVERY is standing by the gate like a sentinel. MR. WILCOX leans out to ask if anyone has come in a cab. She nods and opens the first gate.

The car approaches the house, running silently like a beast of prey.

HELEN is sitting on the porch, with her back to the road. Only her head and shoulders are visible. She sits framed in the vine, one of her hands playing with the buds. The wind ruffles her hair which is shining gold in the sun.

MARGARET, seated next to the door, slips out of the car. She runs to the garden gate and opens it - but when MR. WILCOX tries to follow, she pushes it shut in his face. He stands amazed.

The noise alarms HELEN, who rises heavily -

MARGARET rushes into the porch and sees at once that HELEN is pregnant.

MARGARET

Oh, my darling.

MR. WILCOX
(calling from outside the gate) Is the
truant all right?

MARGARET opens the front door and thrusts HELEN inside the house before Mr. Wilcox can see her. Then she shuts the door, and stands with her back to it.

MARGARET
(calling to MR. WILCOX) Yes, all right!

Outside the gate, CHAUFFEUR and FLY-MAN, standing beside their respective vehicles, are whispering together as the DOCTOR approaches them and addresses the FLY-MAN -

DOCTOR
Tell me, this lady whom you brought here:
did she seem in any way sick or strange?

FLY-MAN
No, sir. Nothing like that - very well,
I'd have said - considering -

DOCTOR
Considering what?

FLY-MAN
(embarrassed) ...I'd say she was near her
time.

DOCTOR looks toward MR. WILCOX and MARGARET arguing by the door, MR. WILCOX wanting to be let in, MARGARET refusing. The DOCTOR approaches them and whispers to MR. WILCOX - who, sincerely horrified, stands gazing at the earth. MARGARET, still guarding the door, watches them.

DOCTOR
Mrs. Wilcox, we are here to help your
sister.

MARGARET
My sister does not need your help, Doctor,
for she is not yet near her confinement.

MR. WILCOX
Margaret, Margaret!

MARGARET
Henry, send your doctor away. What possible
use is he now?

DOCTOR
Could you go in and persuade your sister
to come out?

MARGARET

No. You would trouble her for no reason.
I will not permit it. I'll stand here all
the day sooner.

And she looks determined enough to do so. After some more hesitation, MR. WILCOX whispers to the DOCTOR, "Perhaps not now." He also makes a sign to the CHAUFFEUR, who returns to the car. MARGARET has a sense of the pack breaking up. She speaks more gently, though without relaxing her defensive stance:

MARGARET

...And you, Henry dear. I shall surely need your advice later, but now I must be alone with Helen...Please, my dear kind Henry.

He hesitates - shakes his head - then he too turns away -

All this is watched by MISS AVERY -

114. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

The house is now fully furnished with all the furniture from Wickham Place. MISS AVERY has let herself in by the back door. She hears HELEN's and MARGARET's voices and moves toward them, affectionately touching various pieces of furniture as though they belonged to her and the house. She enters just as they are saying:

HELEN

But why all our furniture?

MARGARET

There has been a mistake.

MISS AVERY

(with satisfaction) ...How well the carpet fits.

MARGARET

I'm afraid this is not what we meant, Miss Avery. Mr. Wilcox and I never intended the things to be unpacked.

MISS AVERY

I've not finished here yet. There's still a deal to do. The farmhands will carry your wardrobes upstairs - there's no need to go into expense at Hilton.

HELEN and MARGARET are too overwhelmed by the sight of their furniture - as well as by their meeting - to be

their usual voluble selves, so MISS AVERY is more or less in charge. HELEN is also still smouldering at having been trapped in this way.

MISS AVERY

I'll be sending round some milk and we should be ordering coals.

MARGARET

It's been a mistake, Miss Avery. You've been very kind, but our furniture does not belong here. It is not our house.

MISS AVERY

The house is Mrs. Wilcox's and she would not desire it to stand empty any longer.

HELEN

(to MARGARET) You are Mrs. Wilcox.

MARGARET

(to MISS AVERY) It's a misunderstanding: we are not going to live at Howards End.

MISS AVERY

...You'll be needing some eggs too.

She turns her back on them and goes out the way she came. When she has gone, MARGARET smiles weakly:

MARGARET

I think she may be a little - touched -

HELEN

She seems right enough to me. And it's certainly very convenient: I've found all my books that I want.

MARGARET

I'm sorry, Helen: I ought not to have -

HELEN

(taking her up coolly and vigorously)
No, you ought not to have tricked me this way.

MARGARET

We thought you were ill - but even then, I have not behaved worthily.

HELEN

As you see, I'm not ill, but I am expecting a child in June.

MARGARET

But why didn't you tell me, dearest?

HELEN

I don't wish to trouble anyone -

MARGARET

Anyone!...You've not forgiven me for my treachery or you couldn't talk to me like that.

HELEN

You haven't understood yet, Meg. This is a shock to you, but it is not to me who have had to plan for many months... (wanting to change the subject, but also genuinely curious) Who lives in this house?

MARGARET

No one.

HELEN

I suppose you are letting it, though.

She speaks with light indifference, as though to a stranger, so that MARGARET bursts out:

MARGARET

Look here, I can't go on like this - Helen, why are you so miserably unkind to me, simply because you hate Henry?

HELEN

I don't hate him. I've stopped being a schoolgirl, you know.

A pause.

HELEN

(with a cool and measured kindness)
Tell me about yourself.

MARGARET

There's nothing to tell.

HELEN

You don't want to talk.

MARGARET

Not that, but I can't.

HELEN nods, feeling the same herself.

HELEN

...Is the coast clear? I must leave. I'm going back to Germany in the morning. Give my love to Aunt Juley and to Tibby... It's curious, isn't it, that the carpet fits.

MARGARET
The sword looks right too.

HELEN
(admiring it) Someone has polished it.

Although the door is open and her fly waiting outside, HELEN cannot tear herself away from the house, but walks through it, lovingly touching the furniture. MARGARET follows her. They don't like the way the dining room chairs have been arranged and rearrange them together.

HELEN
...Wickham Place faced north, didn't it?
It's thirty years since any of those
chairs faced the sun. Feel. Their
little backs are quite warm.

MARGARET
Look where Tibby spilt the coffee.

HELEN
Soup. Surely he was too young for coffee.

MARGARET
It was coffee and he threw it on purpose
on one of Aunt Juley's visits - there was
that awful rhyme she said to him every
morning at breakfast. Tea - tea - coffee
- something -

HELEN
(looking up at the ceiling) I don't like
this match-boarding. The beam would have
been so beautiful.

MARGARET
Yes, it's a room men have spoilt trying
to make it nice for women. Men don't
know what we want -

HELEN
And never will.

MARGARET
In 2000 years they will.

HELEN
"Tea, tea, coffee, tea,
Or chocularitee."

They both laugh and repeat the rhyme in chorus -

HELEN
Every morning for three weeks. No wonder
Tibby was wild.

There is a knock on the back door. They look at each other in consternation.

HELEN

Perhaps the Wilcoxes are beginning their siege.

MARGARET

What nonsense.

But she is smiling.

When they open the back door, they see TOM, a little boy with a tin can.

HELEN

Little boy, what do you want?

TOM

Please, I am the milk.

MARGARET

(rather sharply) Did Miss Avery send you?

TOM

Yes, please.

MARGARET

Then take it back and say we require no milk.

HELEN

But I like milk!

MARGARET

Do you? Oh, very well. But we've nothing to put it in, and he wants the can.

TOM

Please, I'm to call in the morning for the can.

MARGARET

The house will be locked up then.

TOM

In the morning, would I bring eggs too?

HELEN

Nice little boy. I say, what's your name? Mine's Helen.

TOM

Tom.

HELEN
Tom, this is Margaret.

He walks away and they turn back into the house. HELEN pours some milk. She gives one glass to MARGARET. They both drink, clinking glasses first, looking at each other.

HELEN
(smiling, entirely in her old way) It's still Meg.

Their arms slung around each other, they continue their tour of the house and their furniture - including Tibby's old bassinet.

They lean out of a window, looking into the garden. Suddenly HELEN comes out with:

HELEN
...Couldn't you and I camp out in this house for the night?

As MARGARET hesitates -

HELEN
Tomorrow I leave - goodness knows when we shall see each other again - just this one night, Meg -

MARGARET
It would be lovely.

HELEN
Oh, Meg, my pet, do let's!

MARGARET
...But, Helen, we can't very well without getting Henry's leave. Of course, he would give it...only I feel Charles wouldn't like it...

HELEN
What difference will it make if they say, (in a mock Wilcox voice) "And she even spent the night at Howards End." They're not going to see me again -

MARGARET
How do you know that? We've thought that twice before.

HELEN
Because my plans -

MARGARET
Which you change in a moment -

HELEN
(flashing out in her old way) Then
because we deserve the house and they
don't!

They laugh -

MARGARET
There you go! Always the same Helen.
Again they look at each other with delight.

MARGARET
Shall I go down to Hilton now and get
leave?

HELEN
(in her old selfish careless way) Oh,
we don't want leave.

MARGARET
(kissing her tenderly) Expect me back
before dark. It is like you to have
thought of such a beautiful thing.

115. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

MARGARET turns to wave to HELEN who stands, gloriously
pregnant, on the porch. MARGARET passes TOM playing.
The fly is still waiting.

116. EXT. HILTON : CHARLES' HOUSE. DAY.

DOLLY, pushing a perambulator to and fro, is avidly trying
to listen to MR. WILCOX and MARGARET in converse on the
lawn (against the background of Hertfordshire scenery).
The BABY is crying and DOLLY desperately tries to shush
him because he is drowning out their voices. MR. WILCOX
tells her to wheel the perambulator somewhere else, and
though she protests - "But the diddums can't listen" -
she has to go. When she is out of earshot:

MR. WILCOX
...Dear girl, I must ask you: was your
sister wearing a wedding ring?

When MARGARET stammers "no," an appalled silence falls.
Then she speaks:

MARGARET
...Henry, I really came to ask a favour
about Howards End.

MR. WILCOX

One point at a time. I must now ask for the name of her seducer.

Now it is MARGARET's turn to be appalled. After a pause:

MARGARET

I never even asked her who "seduced" her.

MR. WILCOX

(full of sympathy) Naturally. My poor little wife...But I have often noticed your insight, dear - I only wish my own was as good...You may have some inkling: the slightest hint would help us.

MARGARET

Us? Who is "us"?

MR. WILCOX

I thought it best to ring up Charles.

MARGARET

(trying to keep calm) That was unnecessary.

MR. WILCOX

My dear, my son and I, as gentlemen, wish to act in your sister's interest: it is still not too late to save her name.

MARGARET

Are we to make her "seducer" marry her?... But, Henry, suppose he turned out to be married already? One has heard of such cases.

MR. WILCOX

(with grim rectitude and without catching her meaning) In that case, he must pay heavily for his misconduct.

MARGARET turns from him for a moment, as if giving up on him. But then she recollects and controls herself. She sits down. She changes the subject and her tone:

MARGARET

May I ask you my question now?

MR. WILCOX

Certainly, my dear.

MARGARET

Tomorrow Helen goes to Germany - tonight, with your permission, she would like to sleep at Howards End.

MR. WILCOX

Why Howards End?

MARGARET

It is an odd request - but you know what women in her state are -

He frowns at this reminder and glosses it over quickly:

MR. WILCOX

I could understand it if it were her old home - associations and so on - but Helen has no associations with Howards End. I don't see why she wants to stay the night there. She will only catch cold.

MARGARET

(struggling to retain her self-control)
Call it fancy - but she wants to.

After a moment's reflection, with a businessman's shrewdness:

MR. WILCOX

...If she wants to sleep one night, she may want to sleep two. We shall never get her out of the house.

MARGARET

(flashing out) Would that matter so very much?... (But then she retreats) No, Henry, we will only trouble Howards End for this one night. I shall stay with her -

MR. WILCOX

You? That's quite impossible! Madness. You must be here to meet Charles.

MARGARET

What has this to do with Charles?

MR. WILCOX

(judiciously arching his fingers) As the future owner of Howards End, it has everything to do with Charles.

MARGARET

In what way? Will Helen's condition depreciate the property?

MR. WILCOX

My dear, you are forgetting yourself.

Both are amazed at and afraid of the hostility that has suddenly sprung up between them, like an abyss opening at their feet. He is the first to attempt to save or at least relieve the situation:

MR. WILCOX

As your husband, I shall do all I can for your sister, but I cannot treat her as if nothing has happened. I should be false to my position in society if I did.

MARGARET

(controlled but adamant) Tomorrow she will go to Germany, and trouble society no longer. Tonight she asks to sleep in your empty house. May she? (less controlled) Will you give my sister leave? Will you forgive her - as you yourself have been forgiven -

MR. WILCOX

As I myself have been - ?

MARGARET

Please answer my question.

After the slightest pause:

MR. WILCOX

...As a man of the world, I know how one thing leads to another. I'm afraid that your sister had better sleep at the hotel. I have my children and the memory of my dear wife to consider.

MARGARET

You have mentioned Mrs. Wilcox. In reply, may I mention Mrs. Bast.

MR. WILCOX gets up. His face is like a rock against which all emotion, including his own, can dash itself to pieces.

MR. WILCOX

You have not been yourself all day.

MARGARET too gets up, springing to her feet. She seizes his hands. She is transfigured.

MARGARET

You shall see the connection, Henry, if it kills you! You have had a mistress - I forgave you. My sister has a lover - you drive her from the house. Don't you

(MORE)

MARGARET (contd)
 see the connection? Why can you not be
 honest for once and say to yourself:
 "What Helen has done, I've done."

MR. WILCOX is only shaken for a moment. Then, in command
 of himself and the situation:

MR. WILCOX
 I repeat what I said before: I do not
 give your sister leave to sleep at
 Howards End.

MARGARET lets go of his hands. He goes into the house,
 wiping first one hand, then the other.

117. INT. OXFORD : TIBBY'S ROOMS. DAY.

CHARLES is with TIBBY. They are a strongly contrasted
 pair - TIBBY relaxed in his chair as though he had no
 spine, CHARLES full of energy and anger, pacing around
 like a wild animal. In fact, TIBBY might have the
 impression that he is locked up with such an animal.

CHARLES
 ...I suppose you realize that you are
 your sister's protector?

TIBBY
 In what sense?

CHARLES
 If a man played about with my sister,
 I'd send a bullet through him!

Here he upsets some little table and TIBBY winces at this
 violence, this unrestrained emotion. CHARLES looks as if
 he would like to give the table an additional kick, but
 he refrains. His pacing has brought him to the window
 where he can see the usual Oxford college view, and this
 seems to enrage him further.

CHARLES
 Perhaps you are sunk too deep in books
 and rubbish to mind what happens to
 your sister.

TIBBY
 As a matter of fact, I mind very much
 what happens to my sister, but I have a
 different way of expressing it from yours;
 not to speak of different manners.

CHARLES

By Jove, I'm glad of my way. And glad that my father never sent me to the 'varsity if this is what they teach you here.

Impatient with idle talk, he wheels around on TIBBY in direct attack:

CHARLES

You must know something of your sister's life - do you know of anyone? Who do you suspect?

TIBBY blushes, put off for a moment from his usual languid indifference, and CHARLES pushes his advantage:

CHARLES

Did she mention anyone's name? Yes or no! You're hiding something: speak up, man!

He shouts and bangs his fist, so that TIBBY, completely unused to this sort of behaviour, is further shaken out of his passive superiority:

TIBBY

She did mention some friend called Leonard Bast -

CHARLES

Leonard Bast, eh? Do you know him? Have you had any dealings with him?

TIBBY remains silent. CHARLES seems to take this for assent:

CHARLES

Oh, what a family! What a family! God help the poor pater!

This brings TIBBY to his feet and to himself again:

TIBBY

Look here: I don't care for your bearish tactics -

CHARLES

You don't?

He catches hold of TIBBY by his lapels. But TIBBY stands his ground. They glare at each other till CHARLES lets go of TIBBY, contemptuously.

MR. WILCOX
 (linking his arm in CHARLES') But to my mind this question is connected with something far greater: the rights of property itself. The house is mine - and, Charles, it will be yours. When I say no one is to live there, I mean that no one is to live there.

CHARLES
 Then at eight tomorrow I may go up in the car?

MR. WILCOX
 Say that you are acting as my representative and that they must clear out of the house at once. Go to bed now, my boy, I have kept you up too late.

CHARLES
 ...Can I do anything for you, sir?

MR. WILCOX
 Not tonight, my boy. Thank you.

Arm in arm, they are walking toward the moonlit house to enter it.

DISSOLVE TO:

122. EXT. LONDON ROOFTOPS. DAY.

A dawn sky over London -

123. INT. BAST FLAT. DAY.

LEONARD, fully dressed, bends over JACKY asleep in bed:

LEONARD
 (whispering to her) Jacky - I'm going out for a bit.

JACKY
 (half asleep) Hullo, Len! What ho, Len!

LEONARD
 What ho, Jacky! See you again later.

She makes kissing noises in his direction and goes back to sleep.

124. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

Dawn over the house -

MISS AVERY is gathering eggs -

Sleepy TOM goes to the door with a basket of eggs -

CHARLES

I'll deal with this - and all of you
Schlegels once and for all -

He makes for the door, but before he can open it, it is flung open by an UNDERGRADUATE holding a score and loudly singing from it - the last movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony which he announces to be "the most sublime noise that has ever penetrated into the ears of man." CHARLES pushes past him. The UNDERGRADUATE looks after him in mild surprise - then, in greater surprise, he stares at TIBBY, who is not his usual unruffled self.

118. EXT. HOWARDS END. NIGHT.

Moonlight pours over the wych-elm, with the pigs' teeth gleaming in it. MISS AVERY crosses the lawn, looking at the house, which is faintly lit; and, faintly lit, she sees the figures of HELEN and MARGARET -

119. EXT. DREAM LANDSCAPE. DAY.

LEONARD is having a repetition of the nightmare where first MARGARET and HELEN, then a huge engine approach and descend on him. Again the bright light blinds him. But this time the locomotive actually bears down on him -

120. INT. EAST FLAT. NIGHT.

LEONARD, in bed with JACKY, cries out and wakes up.

JACKY

(frightened) ... You got that pain again?
Len?

He tells her to go back to sleep. He goes to the window and looks out at the same moon that shines over Howards End. JACKY watches him anxiously.

121. EXT. CHARLES' HOUSE. NIGHT.

The moon streams over the lawn where MR. WILCOX and CHARLES are strolling in their dressing gowns.

MR. WILCOX

...I don't want you to conclude that my wife and I have had anything like a quarrel. She was overwrought, as who would not be. Naturally.

CHARLES

Naturally.

125. EXT. HILTON STATION. DAY.

LEONARD asks the PORTER for directions to Howards End and is pointed in the right direction.

126. EXT. ROAD TO HOWARDS END. DAY.

LEONARD is trudging along the road - not in the vigorous way in which we once saw him walk in the Surrey hills, but in extreme weariness. Exhausted, he sits by a chalk pit to rest. Is he tired - hungry - or in pain?

A motor drives past him, with CHARLES at the wheel. In goggles and motoring cap, he looks determined and angry - just the way he was when we saw him driving Aunt Juley.

The motor leaves LEONARD and the surrounding countryside shrouded in a cloud of dust.

127. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

LEONARD is approaching the house where the motor now stands parked empty outside.

128. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

LEONARD has entered the house. He stands in the hall: through an open doorway he sees CHARLES and MARGARET; HELEN is out of sight, CHARLES has his back to LEONARD. MARGARET glances in LEONARD's direction - and comes out to him at once.

LEONARD

Miss Schlegel - (correcting himself)
Mrs. Wilcox, you'll have forgotten me.

CHARLES turns around and looks at LEONARD.

MARGARET

No, Mr. Bast, I have not forgotten you.

LEONARD

I only want to know where your sister
is. Where Helen is -

He follows the direction of MARGARET's eyes to the open doorway. By this time HELEN has come into view.

CHARLES

(always slow to catch on) Who is this
now?

HELEN turns around. LEONARD sees her hugely pregnant. In amazement, she calls out his name.

CHARLES
 (rushing out) So that's who! The scoundrel dares to enter my mother's house! Get me a stick! I'll thrash him within an inch of his life!

He rushes out into the hall and grabs for the sword hung on the wall. MARGARET and HELEN cry out and try to prevent him. But he easily gets it down and shakes them off and turns with it on LEONARD.

CU LEONARD as the flat of the sword descends on his shoulder. He grabs the bookcase - a shower of books descends on him as he falls. He lies still, apparently unconscious.

CHARLES
 He's shamming, of course. Here, carry him out into the air.

CHARLES picks up LEONARD's limp body by the shoulders, while MARGARET lifts his feet. They carry him outside.

129. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

They lay LEONARD's body on the grass. HELEN finds some water and throws it on his face.

CHARLES
 (to HELEN) That's enough.

MISS AVERY comes out of the house with the sword.

MISS AVERY
 Yes, murder's enough.

130. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

LEONARD's body, now covered, is being removed in an ambulance. There are cars, POLICEMEN, and a little crowd of SPECTATORS outside the gate. Howards End now presents a very different view from the usual idyllic one.

MR. WILCOX, DOCTOR, CHARLES, and POLICE INSPECTOR are standing in a cluster.

MR. WILCOX
 (to DOCTOR) ...It is your opinion then that he was in the last stages of heart disease.

DOCTOR
 It would not be professional to say so before an autopsy, but in private I should certainly hazard such a diagnosis.

CHARLES
Obviously he was in the last stage
because the moment I touched him with
the sword, he simply crumpled up.

POLICE INSPECTOR
Excuse me, sir, what sword would that
have been?

CHARLES
(a trifle impatiently) You have it
right there - their father's old German
sword. Of course I only touched him
with the flat of it.

POLICE INSPECTOR
Just once?

CHARLES
(still impatiently) Once, or perhaps
twice.

MR. WILCOX has been listening carefully. He notices the
POLICE INSPECTOR making a sign to a POLICEMAN to take
charge of the sword.

POLICE INSPECTOR
(to MR. WILCOX) You'll be staying in
Hilton, I presume, Mr. Wilcox, sir?

MR. WILCOX
I shall be available as long as necessary.

POLICE INSPECTOR
And Mr. Charles Wilcox...

POLICE INSPECTOR and MR. WILCOX look toward CHARLES.

POLICE INSPECTOR
We shall be requiring your presence at
the inquest, sir.

CHARLES
I expected that. I shall naturally be
the most important witness.

He sounds calm and confident. But MR. WILCOX, looking
most anxious, leads the POLICE INSPECTOR aside for a
private talk.

131. EXT. HOWARDS END. EVENING.

All is quiet again. MR. WILCOX stands half-hidden behind
the wych-elm. He sees MISS AVERY and HELEN go down to
the farm. Then MARGARET comes out of the house and locks

the door. He comes up to the porch and calls to her in a gentle voice.

MARGARET

(quite brisk and cool) Ah, Henry.
Good. I was going to come up to Hilton
to give you these. (the keys)

MR. WILCOX

(in the same gentle voice) ...I have
something to tell you.

MARGARET

Never mind, Henry. I don't need to hear
it. I'm leaving you, you know. My life
is with Helen now.

MR. WILCOX

(plaintively cross in an elderly way)
I'm extremely tired. Can't we sit down
for a moment.

MARGARET

Oh, very well. For a moment. We'll have
to sit here on the grass then.

They sit down.

MARGARET

Here are your keys. We shall be staying
with Miss Avery at the farm till we can
leave.

She tosses them toward him. He does not pick them up.
The keys lie between them.

MR. WILCOX

Where are you going?

MARGARET

To Germany. We start as soon as possible
after the inquest.

MR. WILCOX

After the inquest?

MARGARET

If Helen is well enough.

After a pause -

MR. WILCOX

Have you realized what the verdict at
the inquest will be?

MARGARET
Yes, heart disease.

MR. WILCOX
No, my dear; manslaughter - if not worse.

In the ensuing silence, MARGARET, for the first time, really looks at MR. WILCOX. Now she sees that he appears changed - a broken man.

MR. WILCOX
Charles may go to prison. I dare not tell him. I don't know what to do - what to do.

He covers his eyes with his hands. MARGARET's expression changes as she looks at him. She gently touches him.

132. INT./EXT. HILTON STATION PLATFORM. DAY.

A train is waiting. PEOPLE on the platform are all straining to look in one particular direction. So are the PORTER and a RAILWAY CLERK (both of whom we have met before at the station).

PORTER
Three years in Reading Jail will be tough on a gent like him.

CLERK
He always did have an awful temper.

PORTER
Was a decent tipper though.

CU CHARLES. He is in prison garb, handcuffed, his head shaved; but he is upright, eyes front - an officer on parade.

His POLICE ESCORT get him on to the train. The train starts off -

The train disappearing into the distance - maybe CHARLES' face framed at the window as the countryside goes by.

DISSOLVE TO:

133. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

The last time we saw Howards End, it was spring. Now it is full summer of the next year. The grass in the meadow is being cut, and all through this and the following scenes, we hear the sound of the whirring blades.

HELEN is outside with her BABY, now about 13 months old. TOM is with them - he holds out his arms for the BABY, and after some admonition, HELEN lets him take him. TOM holds him proudly.

134. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

Inside it is, by comparison, cool and dark. The Schlegel furniture is still in place. A family conference is in progress: the participants are MR. WILCOX; EVIE, holding his hand in rather ostentatious solicitude; PAUL, sunburnt and colonial; DOLLY, faded and worn, as though she had shed many tears. MARGARET sits a little apart, with her sewing, and wearing a pince-nez.

MR. WILCOX

Is this going to suit everyone? Because I don't want you all coming here later on and complaining that I have been unfair.

PAUL

It's apparently got to suit us.

MR. WILCOX

I beg your pardon, my boy. You have only to speak, and I leave the house to you instead.

PAUL

...No, since I have to be at the business all week, I'll find something that suits me better. This place is not really the country, and it's not the town.

MR. WILCOX

Does my arrangement suit you, Evie?

EVIE

Of course, Father.

MR. WILCOX

And you, Dolly?

DOLLY

I thought Charles wanted it for the boys, but last time I saw him he said no, because we can't possibly live in this part of England again. Charles even says we ought to change our name, but I can't think what to, for Wilcox just suits Charles and me, and I can't think of any other name...

She trails off and looks around nervously, as though fearing they think she had chattered too much. (They do.)

After a silence -

MR. WILCOX

Then I leave Howards End to my wife absolutely.

MARGARET goes on sewing. PAUL glances at her, and then out of the window. He sees:

HELEN, TOM, and BABY playing in the hay.

Over this, MR. WILCOX continues:

MR. WILCOX (V.O.)

In consequence, I leave my wife no money. That is her own wish, and all my other assets are to be divided among you. The house - Howards End - she intends at her death to leave to her - to her nephew.

PAUL turns back into the room with a scowl.

135. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

HELEN, TOM, and BABY continue to play in the hay.

136. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

All except MR. WILCOX have got up. They are saying goodbye. When it is DOLLY's turn to say goodbye to MR. WILCOX, she adds:

DOLLY

It does seem curious that Mrs. Wilcox should have left Margaret Howards End and now she gets it after all.

EVIE throws a quick look at MARGARET, then gets DOLLY out of the room as fast as possible. Outside, DOLLY clasps her hand before her mouth - "Have I put my foot in it again?"

137. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

PAUL helps EVIE and DOLLY into the waiting car. Before getting in himself, he throws a last unfriendly look toward HELEN and her BABY. DOLLY comments, quite sweetly, "It's a pretty child, all the same. Rather like my Diddums was at that age."

138. INT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

MARGARET and MR. WILCOX are going outside. On their way -

MARGARET
 ...What did Dolly mean - about Howards
 End?

MR. WILCOX
 (without hesitation or embarrassment)
 Oh yes, my poor Ruth, in her last days,
 had scribbled something on a piece of
 paper, but knowing her to be...not
 herself, I set it aside...I didn't do
 wrong, did I?

MARGARET is straightening a picture in a housewifely way
 as she passes it.

MARGARET
 You didn't, darling. Nothing has been
 done wrong.

They go out together.

139. EXT. HOWARDS END. DAY.

Seeing MR. WILCOX and MARGARET come out of the house,
 HELEN runs toward them, waving and calling with all her
 old vigour and enthusiasm.

HELEN
 We'll have such a crop of hay as never!

The BABY crows with delight as TOM turns somersaults to
 entertain him. End on BABY and TOM.