

HEAVENLY CREATURES

Screenplay by

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Illustrated by

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PROLOGUE:

Newsreel footage of Christchurch circa 1954.

EXT. VICTORIA PARK/BUSHY TRACK - LATE AFTERNOON CAMERA CRASHES out of bush and races up a dark bushy track.

CLOSE ON . . . two pairs of feet running up the track, slipping in the mud . . . desperate.

WIDE SHOT . . . reveals TWO GIRLS running up the track, distraught.

JULIET HULME: nearly 16 - tall, blond and willowy,  
and

PAULINE RIEPER: 16 - dark-haired, shorter and stockier than Juliet.

It is 1954. Both girls are dressed in overcoats on a chilly winter day. They slip and stumble on the dirt track that winds up the steep Victoria Park hillside. Thick vegetation and overhanging trees give the path a tunnel-like feeling.

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEANLINER'S DECK - DAYBLACK & WHITE . . .

Pauline and Juliet running . . . this time they are happy, in holiday clothing, weaving around OTHER PASSENGERS as they race along the deck of an oceanliner.

INTERCUT BETWEEN:

EXT. VICTORIA PARK/BUSHY TRACK - LATE AFTERNOON Pauline and Juliet desperately scrambling up the track.

AND

EXT. OCEANLINER S DECK - DAYBLACK & WHITE . . .

Pauline and Juliet happily bounding along the ships deck.

They push past a group of PASSENGERS. Juliet waves and calls out.

JULIET  
Mummy!

The PACE of the INTERCUTTING between TRACK and SHIP, COLOUR and BLACK & WHITE, increases in rhythm.

Pauline and Juliet run up toward a MAN and WOMAN (HENRY and HILDA) on the deck.

JULIET  
Mummy!

PAULINE  
Mummy!

CAMERA RUSHES toward Hilda and Henry (not seen clearly) as they turn to greet the two girls:

CRASH CUT:

EXT. VICTORIA PARK/TEAROOMS - DAYAGNES RITCHIE, proprietor of the tearooms at the top of Victoria Park, comes rushing down the steps toward CAMERA . . . her face alarmed.

PAULINE  
(O.S.) (Panicked) It's Mummy!

Pauline and Juliet rush into CLOSE-UP . . . panting heavily. For the first time we realise their clothes, and Pauline's face, are splattered with blood.

PAULINE  
(Panicked) She's terribly hurt . . .

JULIET  
(Hysterical) Somebody's got to help us!

CUT TO:

SUPERTITLES ON BLACK:

During 1953 and 1954 Pauline Yvonne Parker kept diaries recording her friendship with Juliet Marion Hulme. This is their story. All diary entries are in Pauline's own words.

INT. CHRISTCHURCH GIRLS' HIGH - FOYER - MORNING MUSIC: "Just a Closer Walk With Thee," sung by a HUNDRED SCHOOLGIRLS.

The school crest "Sapienta et Veritas" embossed in the lino just inside the entrance.

Lisle-stockinged schoolgirl legs carefully walk around the crest . . . TRACK along with the schoolgirl legs.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL BUILDING/CRANMER SQUARE - MORNING HYMN CONTINUES  
OVER:TRACKING . . . with a row of schoolgirl legs, marching in a crocodile line across Cranmer Square.

CRANE UP . . . to reveal CHRISTCHURCH GIRLS' HIGH.

SUPER: "Christchurch Girls' High, 1952"

CREDITS BEGIN . . . GROUPS OF GIRLS, in heavy, pleated, over-the-knee school uniforms, wearing hats, gloves and blazers, flock through the school grounds.

MISS STEWART, the headmistress, stands by the rear entrance, scanning girls' uniforms as they enter.

EXT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/BACK GARDEN - MORNINGCLOSE ON . . . Pauline Rieper's legs as she tries to hitch up her baggy stockings. She hops over a fence and hurries toward the school, which backs onto the Riepers' garden.

She carries a boy's-style school bag on her shoulder and walks with a slight limp.

EXT. CHRISTCHURCH STREETS - MORNINGTRACKING . . . LOW ANGLE with the Hulme car coming toward CAMERA.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MORNINGTRACKING . . . with Pauline's striding feet down a crowded school corridor. CRANE UP . . . as she walks toward CAMERA. In contrast to the other girls, she is introspective and gruffly acknowledges her classmates.

CUT TO

INT. SCHOOL ASSEMBLY HALL - MORNINGThe ornate wooden ceiling of the assembly hall. TILT DOWN . . . to a sea of schoolgirls singing the last verse of the hymn. Miss Stewart and the STAFF are standing on the stage, singing.

LONG LENS into the crowd . . . Pauline is not participating in the hymn. Her eyes look about uninterestedly.

ZOOM IN . . . on Miss Stewart glaring straight at CAMERA.

Pauline mouths the last couple of words.

The hymn finishes.

MISS STEWART  
Sit!

Everybody sits.

EXT. CHRISTCHURCH GIRLS' HIGH/CRANMER SQUARE - MORNINGThe Hulmes' car pulls up outside the school.

CREDITS END

WIDE SHOT . . . Juliet Hulme gets out of the car, followed by her father, HENRY. They walk into the school.

CUT TO INT.

SCHOOL FRENCH CLASS - MORNING Class 3A are in the midst of a French lesson. All the class have name cards hanging around their necks denoting their chosen "French name." MISS WALLER gestures at a screech of subjugated verbs scrawled on the blackboard.

MISS WALLER The imperfect subjunctive, like the imperfect indicative, indicates action in the past. "II voulait qu'elle lui donnât de l'argent." Translate, somebody . . . quickly!

A SCHOOLGIRL - LAURA - blurts out from the front of the class.

LAURA

"He wanted her to give him some money."

MISS WALLER

(Angry) Put your hand up! I will not have girls talking out of turn in my class!

The door opens and Miss Stewart brings Juliet into the room.

The presence of the headmistress causes the class to stand up.

MISS STEWART

Good morning, gels.

CLASS (In Unison) Good morning, Miss Stewart.

The class sit.

MISS STEWART

Miss Waller . . . class . . . this is Juliet Hulme. Juliet is joining us from St. Margaret's, and prior to that she spent some time at Queenswood in the Hawkes Bay.

Juliet looks at Miss Stewart haughtily.

JULIET

I am actually from England, Miss Stewart.

MISS STEWART

Of course . . . Juliet's father is Dr. Hulme, the Rector of the University.

Miss Waller looks impressed. Pauline is quietly drawing horses at the back of the class.

MISS STEWART

Juliet's travelled all over the world, and I'm sure she'll be very eager to share her impressions of exotic lands across the seas with the gels of 3A. I'll leave you to it, Miss Waller. Juliet.

Miss Stewart leaves. Miss Waller smiles at Juliet.

MISS WALLER

You can sit over here, Juliet.

Miss Waller gestures to a desk at the front. She gives Juliet a cardboard name card.

MISS WALLER

We use French names in this class. You can choose your own.

Miss Waller returns to the blackboard and starts writing.

MISS WALLER

Now, irregular verbs in the present subjunctive. . . "qu'il vienne". . .

JULIET

Excuse me, Miss Waller . . . you've made a mistake.

Miss Waller turns to Juliet-who now has the name "Antoinette" hanging around her neck.

JULIET

"Je doutais qu'il vienne" is in fact the spoken subjunctive.

MISS WALLER

It is customary to stand when addressing a teacher. . . "Antoinette."

Juliet stands.

JULIET

You should have written "vint."

Miss Waller frowns, glances at the board, and hastily rubs out the offending word.

MISS WALLER

(Embarrassed mumble) Oh! I must have copied it incorrectly from my notes.

Juliet stands again.

JULIET

You don't have to apologise, Miss Waller. I found it frightfully difficult myself . . . until I got the hang of it.

Miss Waller turns to Juliet, her face clouded with anger. The class looks terrified.

MISS WALLER

(Icily) Thank you, Juliet. Open your text-book to page 17.

Pauline is smirking.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL ART CLASS - DAY

The teacher, MRS. COLLINS, comes in, carrying a pile of paper and a box of paints. She starts to distribute them around the tables.

MRS. COLLINS

Right, I thought we'd do some life drawing today. Pair off into twos and decide who wants to model and who wants to draw.

The girls around Juliet turn to each other, seemingly eager not to be partnered with her. They pair off and Juliet is left alone.

MRS. COLLINS

Oh, Juliet. . . you haven't got a partner.

JULIET

That's all right, Mrs. Collins. I'm sure I can manage without one.

Mrs. Collins scans the class.

MRS. COLLINS

Pauline . . . are you with anybody?

Pauline shakes her head.

MRS. COLLINS

Good! You can come here and pair up with Juliet.

Pauline reluctantly comes up to Juliet's table.

SERIES of SHOTS showing VARIOUS GIRLS sketching their partners. Most of the posing girls are seated in contrived positions with rigid grins on their faces. Mrs. Collins patrols the class, commenting to different girls.

MRS. COLLINS

You might want to change the colour- make it a bit darker . . . that's very nice, Joan.

PULL BACK. . . to reveal Pauline's "pose" . . . slumped in the chair, arms crossed, a sullen look on her face. She stares intently at Juliet, who is drawing furiously . . . but doesn't refer to Pauline at all.

MRS. COLLINS

Good heavens, Juliet! What on earth is this???

Mrs. Collins picks up Juliet's drawing. It features an armoured knight on horseback, fighting a dragon.

JULIET

St. George and the Dragon.

Mrs. Collins studies the detail in the drawing.

MRS. COLLINS

Where's Pauline?

JULIET

Oh, I haven't gotten around to drawing her yet. I was going to pop her on a rock, but I seem to have run out room.

Juliet glances at Pauline.

JULIET

Sorry! I don't know if you've noticed, Mrs. Collin but I've actually drawn St. George in the likeness of world's greatest tenor-Mario Lanza!

MRS. COLLINS

Yes, I know it's very clever, Juliet, but when I set you a topic, I expect you to follow it. Now put that down and start again!

Mrs. Collins moves on. Juliet looks up at Pauline rather grumpily. Pauline leans forward, an intense look on face . . .

PAULINE

(Whispers) I think your drawing's fantastic!

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN - EVENINGCLOSE-UP . . . a newspaper is unwrapped, revealing couple of fresh fish.

HONORA RIEPER is standing at her sink bench. She is 43 years old. Dark hair, going gray. A middle-aged woman with a kind face.

Her husband, HERBERT, has just arrived home and is taking off his coat, looking at the mail, etc. He is nearly 60 . . . 15 years older than Honora.

The Riepers' house is clean and tidy. They are a low middle-class family on a modest income.

HONORA

Oh! . . . Mackerel. We'll have them for lunch tomorrow.

Herbert comes up behind Honora, gives her a peck on cheek and puts his hand on her bum.

HERBERT

Let's have 'em now, while they're fresh, eh, Nora?

HONORA

playfully shoves his hand away.

HONORA

I'll think you'll find our Mr. Bayliss is not keen on seafood. I've got lamb chops in the 'frigerator.

HERBERT

sighs as HONORA puts the frying pan on the stove.

young student boarder, STEVE BAYLISS, appears in doorway, nervously clutching a record.

STEVE

Excuse me . . . would you mind if I put my long-playing record on?

HERBERT

You're partial to a nice bit of mackerel, aren't you, STEVE?

STEVE

Well . . . actually, I'm not much of a fish man, Mr. Rieper.

HONORA

glances at his album.

HONORA

You have been splashing out!

STEVE

Oh! . . . I've got my board money . . .

STEVE

starts fishing in his pockets.

At this moment . . . Pauline comes into the kitchen, through back door. She strides past Honora, HERBERT and STEVE

.

PAULINE

(Brightly) Hello!

HONORA

Well? Tell us! How'd it go?

Pauline disappears into the lounge.

PAULINE

(O.S.) (Calling) Got an A, Mum!

HONORA

glows with pride. STEVE is emptying his pockets on the bench. HONORA pats STEVE's hand.

HONORA

Don't worry about it now. We'll sort it out after dinner. You go put your record on.

HERBERT

Doris Day!

STEVE

I think she's very talented!

INT. RIEPERS'HOUSE/LOUNGE - EVENINGCLOSE-UP. . . gramophone needle drops onto a record.

FAST PULL-BACK . . . from the speaker as the opening notes of "Be My Love" by Mario Lanza burst out. Records from the cabinet lie scattered on the floor. Pauline is clutching a Mario Lanza album.

STEVE backs toward the hallway door, holding his Doris Day album forlornly.

HERBERT chuckles at him through the kitchen doorway.

HERBERT



(Laughing) Ya gotta be quick in this house, mate!

Pauline stares misty-eyed at the album cover. HERBERT calls out.

HERBERT

(O.S.) (Tongue in cheek) Hey! Isn't it that Irish singer . . . Murray O' Lanza?

PAULINE

(annoyed) He's Italian, Dad! The world's greatest tenor!

Mario Lanza starts singing . . . HERBERT comes into the lounge, miming the song with a limp fish. He gesticulates a grand operatic fashion.

PAULINE

Stop it! You're spoiling it! Go away!

She pushes HERBERT out of the room, into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

It is the Phys Ed period and the 31 other girls of 3A are lying on their backs in the quad doing leg stretches to tinny music. MRS. ZWARTZ, the teacher, is patrolling the rows of flexing bodies.

MRS. ZWARTZ Left, right . . . Left, right . . . one and two and one and . . .

Pauline and Juliet are sidelined on a bench. Pauline is writing in a textbook. She notices Juliet glancing at her leg. Juliet moves closer.

JULIET

Can I have another look?

Pauline purses her lips and quickly pushes her left stocking down . . . She has a large ugly scar running up her left shin, from ankle to knee.

JULIET

That's so impressive!

Pauline does not look convinced.

JULIET

(Conspiratorial) I've got scars . . . they're on my lungs.

Pauline looks surprised.

JULIET

I was in bed for months during the war, ravaged by respiratory illness.

CUT TO:

INSERT:

INT. ENGLISH HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT Little 5-YEAR-OLD JULIET, alone in

her hospital bed, coughing and looking miserable.

JULIET

(V.0.) Mummy and Daddy sent me to the Bahamas to recuperate. I didn't see them for five years-but we're together now and Mummy's promised they'll never leave me again.

INSERT:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHTPULL BACK from little 5-YEAR-OLD PAULINE. She is lying in bed with a younger HERBERT and HONORA standing over her, looking very concerned.

PAULINE

(V.0.) I spent ages in hospital, too . . . with my leg. I had to have all these operations.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

PAULINE

Osteomyelitus turns your bones to chalk. It took them two years to drain all the muck out.

Pauline looks despondently at her leg.

JULIET

Cheer up! All the best people have bad chests and bone diseases! It's all frightfully romantic!

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAYPauline is furiously pedalling her bicycle along a country road.

EXT. ILAM/DRIVEWAY - DAYLOW ANGLE . . . a tree-lined driveway.

Pauline rides her bicycle up the drive. She pauses, wide-eyed.

PAN TO . . . ILAM - a large stately house, set amongst beautiful gardens . . .

Pauline puts her bike on its stand. She pulls the Mario Lanza album out of her bicycle bag.

Pauline is about to approach the house when she glances across the garden, and is transfixed by an enchanting sight:

Juliet on a sunlit bridge that spans the Ilam stream. She is wearing a shredded chiffon dress, with a Christmas tinsel crown and a necklace made from tinfoil. Sunlight filters through the trees, lending Juliet a magical quality. She's casting flowers onto the water. Pauline stands transfixed. Juliet sees her and smiles.

JULIET

Hi, Paul!

SUDDENLY! . . . an 8-year-old boy - JONATHON HULME - comes charging out of the bushes and lays into Juliet with a wooden sword. He is dressed in a "prince's" costume.

JULIET  
Owww!

Jonathon runs away. Juliet gives chase, yelling to Pauline.

JULIET  
The evil Prince Runnymede is escaping! Get him, Paul!

Pauline joins in the chase after Jonathon, careening through garden and bushes.

Juliet and Pauline lose sight of Jonathon. They pause in a clearing, catching their breath.

JULIET  
The blighter's gone to ground!

JONATHON Yaaaa!

Jonathon drops from a tree, onto Pauline, sending her sprawling. He whacks her on the bottom with his wooden sword.

JULIET  
God! Jonty! Jonty-stop it! Go away! We're not playing anymore . . . go on, bugger off!

Jonathon pokes his tongue at Juliet, turns and runs away.

Juliet offers her hand and pulls Pauline up. She pauses, a look of shock on her face . . .

The Mario Lanza record lies broken on the ground. Pauline looks distraught.

JULIET  
Oh, God . . . I'm so sorry!

PAULINE  
(Upset) It doesn't matter.

JULIET  
Of course it matters! It's Mario!

I NT. ILAM/LOUNGE - DAYCLOSE ON . . . HENRY HULME - a 44-year-old bespectacled academic. He is sniffing, with a disdainful look on his face. He pulls a packet of mouldy sandwiches his jacket pocket.

HENRY What on earth are these?

HILDA HULME, elegant, 36 years old, is setting down a tray of tea on a small table.

HILDA They're egg and salmon sandwiches . . . I gave them to you

several days ago.

HENRY I thought I could smell sulphur.

HILDA God, Henry! You're hopeless! You can't be trusted with something as simple as lunch.

JULIET  
(O.S.) Mother!

Hilda looks up as Juliet bursts into the room from the garden, followed by Pauline. Hilda smiles at Pauline.

HILDA Hello . . .

JULIET  
Jonty broke Paul's record!

HILDA Oh, dear!

JULIET  
We must buy her another one!

Juliet drops to the floor, hauling records out of the radiogram cabinet.

Pauline looks around, taking in the sumptuousness of her surroundings: ornate fireplace, paintings, antique furniture.

HILDA Would you like a cup of tea . . . Paul?

PAULINE  
No, thank you.

HILDA Well, Juliet's told us all about you. I hear you're fond of opera.

Before Pauline can reply, Juliet fans Mario Lanza albums across the floor.

JULIET  
Which one shall we play?

Pauline shrugs awkwardly. Henry looks up from his papers, rather annoyed at this intrusion. Pauline notices a row of beautifully sculpted Plasticine horses adorning the mantelpiece.

Juliet puts a record on the turntable.

HILDA Juliet . . . your father's trying to study.

JULIET  
Daddy can study while we're playing records!

HENRY Why don't you go back outside, mmm? I'll be finished soon.

The record drops on the turntable. The arm swings across.

Henry and Hilda glance at each other. Henry silently gathers up his papers and leaves the room.

The needle drops and Mario Lanza's rendition of "The Donkey Serenade" booms into the room.

SWIRLING CAMERA as Juliet takes Pauline's hand and whirls her around, leading her into . . .

INT. ILAM HALLWAY - DAY. . . the hallway, laughing and singing. Pauline stares wide-eyed as the wood paneling, carved sideboard and curved staircase flash past her eyes.

The Donkey Serenade continues over a MUSICAL SEQUENCE:

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAYCAMERA RUSHES around a netball court as the class run about in the middle of a game.

FAST TRACK IN toward Pauline and Juliet sitting on the sidelines, reading. Juliet laughs as Pauline reads to her from a Biggles book.

EXT. ILAM/GROUNDS - DAYPauline and Juliet cavorting around bushes and shrubs, arms outstretched, acting like dogfighting aeroplanes.

INT. ILAM/DINING ROOM - NIGHTCAMERA MOVES around Hilda, Henry, Jonathon, Pauline and Juliet at the table, having an evening meal. They are all sipping soup. Silver glistens, crystal sparkles.

Pauline watches Hilda out of the corner of her eye. She cocks her little finger in the same fashion as Hilda, and she spoons her soup up.

INT. ILAM/JULIET'S BEDROOM - DAYPauline and Juliet kneading and shaping Plasticine with their fingers . . .

PULL BACK to reveal sculpted horses, knights and dragons on the table top.

EXT. ILAM GARDENS - DAYHenry is showing TWO DISTINGUISHED GUESTS (a MAN and WOMAN) around the Ilam gardens, when Pauline and Juliet come bursting out of the bushes and run between them, dressed in medieval clothing. They vanish into the bushes again.

EXT. CINEMA/STREET - DAYPauline and Juliet rush out of the cinema in a state of high excitement . . .

. . . FAST TRACK as they bound down the street, pirouetting and dancing as they pass bewildered PEDESTRIANS.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAYFAST TRACK - CLOSE-UP . . . bicycle wheel spinning.

Pauline and Juliet are pedalling their bicycles like mad down a narrow, tree-lined lane.

The "Donkey Serenade" continues . . .

They have a near-miss with an angrily tooting car.

Pauline wobbles out of control! . . . She goes flying into a bush.

The Donkey Serenade finishes abruptly in mid-verse.

Pauline is lying on her back.

Pauline's POV . . . looking straight up into treetops and blue sky.  
Juliet's face looms over, looking concerned.

JULIET

(Worried) Paul? Oh, God! Paul . . . are you all right?

Pauline's eyes are shut. She speaks with great effort.

PAULINE

(Gasping) I think I'm dying . . .

JULIET

(Upset) Don't . . . please! Please, don't!

Dying breath escapes from Pauline's mouth . . . she goes limp.

Juliet shrieks!

JULIET

(Crying) Paul!!!

Juliet collapses over Pauline's body, crying.

Pauline's eyes flick open! She sniffs and pulls a face.

PAULINE

Urrrgh! You've been eating onions.

Before Juliet has time to react, Pauline pushes her off, giggling maniacally. She leaps to her feet and attempts to run. Juliet grabs Pauline's cardigan, pulling her backwards.

JULIET

You toad!

Pauline sheds the cardigan and runs through the bushes, with Juliet in hot pursuit!

RRRRIP! . . . Juliet tugs at Pauline's blouse and the buttons pop off. Pauline is laughing too hard to run anymore. She pulls off her skirt and waves it around her head as she dances around the bushes, singing "The Donkey Serenade."

PAULINE

(Singing) "There's a light in her eye, Though she may try to hide it,  
She cannot deny, There's a light in her eye."

Now Juliet is cracking up at the sight of Pauline spinning around in her underwear, shoes and socks.

Pauline circles around and around Juliet, singing. Juliet hurriedly starts undressing down to her underwear.

Juliet giggles and starts jumping up and down.

Pauline suddenly breaks into a run and races through the bushes. Juliet follows.

Both girls are screaming and hooting loudly. Pauline and Juliet burst out of the bushes and . . .

PAULINE  
& JULIET  
(Singing) "Her face is a dream, like an angel I saw . . .

. . . into a field. They find themselves face to face with a FARMER, mending a fence.

without missing a beat, they continue singing . . .

PAULINE  
& JULIET  
(Singing) "But all that my darling can scream . . ."

. . . then break down into convulsive laughter. They turn and flee back into the bushes.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK . . . Mario Lanza picks up "The Donkey Serenade" at the point that Pauline and Juliet stopped. The song builds to a rousing final chorus as . . .

Pauline and Juliet collapse on the ground, rolling and tumbling in an embrace.

As Mario sings the last exhilarating notes . . .

CAMERA RISES UP VERTICALLY . . . up through the foliage . . . past the branches of a tree which abruptly BLOCK CAMERA.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS - NIGHTThe final "OLE!" from "The Donkey Serenade" resounds over a SHOT of Pauline cycling furiously through dark Christchurch streets.

EXT. ILAM - NIGHTTRACKING . . . down the drive as the dark shape of the Ilam house looms ahead.

EXT. ILAM/SHRINE - NIGHTA corner of the garden . . . Moonlight glistens off the slow-moving stream.

Three candles illuminate a little shrine, nestled flower bed in a remote corner of the Ilam garden.

Bricks have been stacked to form a miniature temple, decorated with flowers and tinsel.

Pauline and Juliet are kneeling on the ground, clipping pictures from film magazines. Clipped-out photos lie scattered about.

Pauline holds James Mason's photo.

PAULINE

(Enraptured) I wish James would do a religious picture . . . he'd be perfect as Jesus!

JULIET

Daddy says the Bible's a load of bunkum!

Pauline reacts with a degree of shock.

PAULINE

But, we're all going to Heaven!

JULIET

I'm not! I'm going to the Fourth World! It's like Heaven, only better because there aren't any Christians.

Pauline giggles.

JULIET

It's an absolute Paradise of music, art and enjoyment.

Pauline is entranced. Juliet plucks up some photos.

JULIET

James will be there . . . and Mario! Only they'll be saints.

PAULINE

(Giggling) Saint Mario!

Juliet places Mario Lanza's photo in the shrine.

JULIET

To be known as He!

PAULINE

He . . .

Juliet places James Mason's photo in the shrine.

JULIET

Him.

PAULINE

Him . . .

Juliet picks up a photo of Mel Ferrer and places it in the shrine.

JULIET

This.



PAULINE  
This . . .

Juliet places Jussi Bjoerling's photo in the shrine.

JULIET  
That.

PAULINE  
That . . .

Pauline places the last photo in the shrine . . . Orson Welles.

PAULINE  
It.

Juliet screws her face up and throws the photo into the stream.

JULIET  
Absolutely not! Orson Welles! The most hideous man alive!

Juliet dramatically sweeps her hand over the photos in the shrine and bows her head.

JULIET  
We give praise to . . . the saints!

Candlelight flickers on Pauline's enraptured face.

The crumpled photo of Orson Welles floats down the stream. With a sudden violent burst of sound, it is sucked into the weir.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/LOUNGE - CHRISTMAS DAY, 1952

CLOSE-UP . . . a Christmas present is torn open . . . followed by several more, in QUICK CUTS. Typical 1952 presents.

A Christmas tree adorns the Riepers' lounge. Some simple streamers and ornaments decorate the room.

SUPER: "Christmas, 1952"

Honora, Herbert, WENDY and Pauline are sitting on the floor, amid presents and discarded wrapping paper, GRANDMA PARKER is sitting in a chair.

Pauline unwraps her present . . . a diary. Her eyes light up. HERBERT leans over.

HERBERT  
Hope it's all right. It's from Whitcomb and Tombs . . .

Pauline opens the diary . . .

CUT TO IN1: RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - DAYCLOSE-UP of the Jan. 1st page. Pauline's pen starts to write . . .

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I decided that my New Year's resolution is to be more lenient with others.

CUT TO:

INT: RIEPERS' HOUSE/DINING ROOM - DAYThe table is laid with plates of sausage rolls and sandwiches. Pauline is laying napkins out. STEVE Bayliss wanders in.

STEVE

Pikelets! Yum!

PAULINE

(Appalled) Aren't you going out?

STEVE

Not till two-thirty . . .

He reaches for a pikelet-Pauline pushes him away from the table.

PAULINE

This is a private function! Go away!

STEVE

retreats, hurt and confused. HONORA brings in a plate of scones.

The doorbell rings.

HONORA

Come on! Sausage rolls.

HERBERT

(O.S.) Come on through.

HONORA

and Pauline hurriedly work together, setting out plates and cutlery.

HERBERT

Look who I've found!

HONORA

whips off her pinny as HERBERT leads Juliet into the dining room.

HONORA

Hello, Juliet.

JULIET

Hello, Mrs. Rieper . . . it's so nice to meet you.

Juliet shakes hands with Honora.

CUT TO:

LATER IN THE LUNCH:

Herbert, Honora, Pauline and Juliet are sitting at the table, in the middle of lunch.

JULIET

And so, in a blazing fury, Charles runs Lancelot Trelawney through with his sword . . . leaving Deborah free to accept Charles's proposal of marriage!

HONORA

and HERBERT  
exchange a glance. HONORA  
smiles at Juliet.

HONORA

I've heard your mother on 3YA. The Woman's Session has lots of lively debate.

JULIET

Well, actually, Mummy's left that programme now . . she's far too busy with The Marriage Guidance Council.

HERBERT

They sound like a queer mob!

PAULINE

Dad!

HONORA

I wouldn't want my private business being discussed with a complete stranger!

JULIET

Oh, no . . . Mummy's awfully good at it.

INSERT SCENE

INT. MARRIAGE GUIDANCE - DAYSEVERAL QUICK SHOTS . . . of Hilda chatting to UNHAPPY COUPLES as Juliet's V.O. continues . . .

JULIET

(V.O.) She has deep discussions with unhappy couples and persuades them to have another go at it. In two years, she's only had four divorces. She should really be working for the U.N.!

WALTER PERRY is now sitting across the table from Hilda. He is ruggedly handsome, in his mid-40s

WALTER My wife's blaming me . . . says it's all my fault.

HILDA And how do you feel about that, Mr. Perry?

WALTER Please . . . call me Bill. I don't know what went wrong. My wife feels . . .

HILDA No . . . no . . . let's talk about your feelings . . . Bill.

The air is crackling with subtext.

JULIET

(V.O.) Mummy has a special technique called "Deep Therapy."

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/DINING ROOM - DAY (CONT.)

HERBERT

What's that?

JULIET

I'm not sure . . . but it's proving to be very popular!

HONORA

and HERBERT  
exchange a glance.

DING DONG! . . . doorbell rings. HONORA  
gets up.

HONORA

Eat up, Yvonne.

She leaves the room. Juliet raises her eyebrows at Pauline, who looks  
embarrassed.

PAULINE

(Quietly) It's my middle name.

HERBERT

smiles at Juliet.

HERBERT

Yvonne tells us you're good at making models.

JULIET

I adore anything to do with the arts.

HERBERT

We're pretty handy with model making, too, eh?

Pauline looks down, cheeks burning.

HERBERT

I've never cottoned on to Plasticine like you girls, but I enjoy making  
things out of wood.

JULIET

Are you a carpenter, Mr. Rieper? HERBERT  
shakes his head.

HERBERT

I work at Dennis Brothers Fish Supply.

Muffled voices from the hallway.

PAULINE  
He's the manager!

HONORA  
leads a young man-JOHN-into the dining room.

HONORA  
(O.S.) This is the dining room . . .

She smiles at Juliet.

HONORA  
Do excuse us.

She leads John into the hallway.

HONORA  
(O.S.) Breakfast is between seven and nine . . . the bedroom's small,  
but it's very clean and comfortable.

Pauline scowls.

HERBERT  
This story of yours-maybe the school newspaper will print it when it's  
finished.

JULIET  
Actually, Mr. Rieper . . . it's a novel, and we'll be sending it to New  
York. That's where all the big publishing houses are based.

HERBERT  
(Laughs) Is that a fact! You'd better put me name down for an advance  
copy!

HERBERT  
chuckles. Pauline and Juliet look at each with knowing smiles.

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O.) We have decided how sad it is for other people that they  
cannot appreciate our genius . . .

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAYTRACKING ALONG . . . past trees - with sunlight  
streaming through the branches.

Pauline's V.O. continues . . .

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O.) . . . but we hope the book will help them to do so a  
little, though no one could fully appreciate us.

The Hulmes' car is driving along a narrow, winding road on the way to  
Port Levy.

EXT. WHARF - DAY SUPER: "Port Levy, Easter 1953"

Juliet, in her swimming costume, runs to the end of the jetty and teeters nervously on the edge. Pauline fearlessly barrels past her and jumps in.

SERIES of BLACK & WHITE "HOLIDAY SNAPS":

Girls splashing in the water; Jonathon with ice cream smeared over his face; Henry paddling with trousers and rolled up; Hilda on deck chair.

EXT. PORT LEVY BEACH - DAY Pauline and Juliet are in the middle of building an elaborate sand castle. Juliet is working on a tower.

LOW ANGLE . . . TRACKING IN TOWARD the castle gateway.

JULIET

Charles clutches his wounded shoulder as he gallops into the courtyard.

ANGLE . . . from inside tower as Pauline looks in through the window.

PAULINE

Deborah awaits his return in their private boudoir at the very top of the tower.

TRACKING from sand castle courtyard, up steps into tower.

JULIET

He smells her scent from 50 paces and urges his steed onward!

CAMERA rushes into . . . tower bedroom . . . PANS from Pauline's to Juliet's face, peering in through windows.

PAULINE

He flings open the door and launches himself at the bed, ravishing her!

JULIET

God, yes!

Juliet starts to giggle at a private thought.

JULIET

(Giggling) I bet she gets up the duff on their first night together!

Pauline guffaws with delight. Jonathon is sitting nearby, digging a hole in the sand.

JONATHON What's "up the duff"?

JULIET

Something you wouldn't understand.

Jonathon launches himself at Juliet, and they roll on the sand, grappling.

JONATHON Tell me! I'm almost 10!

JULIET

You're eight and a half and incredibly stupid!

Pauline is laughing happily.

EXT. COTTAGE - DAY Hilda sits on a deck chair in front of the cottage, brushing Pauline's hair. Henry is seated at a table, writing a letter.

Juliet is lying on a towel, making notes in an exercise book.

JULIET

Mummy . . . Pauline and I have decided the Charles and Deborah are going to have a baby. An heir to the throne of Borovnia.

HILDA What a splendid idea!

JULIET

We're calling him Diello.

HILDA That's a good, dramatic name!

JULIET

Paul thought it up.

Pauline beams.

HILDA Aren't you clever! There, all done.

Pauline stands. Juliet touches Pauline's hair. Hilda laughs.

Henry is rifling through his briefcase.

HENRY Hilda! I can't find that letter from the High Commission. They want our passport numbers.

JULIET

(Surprised) Are you going abroad, Daddy?

Hilda scowls at Henry.

HILDA Your father's attending a university conference in England, darling.

HENRY We'll only be away for a few weeks.

Juliet looks at Hilda, a trace of panic across her face.

JULIET

(Worried) You're not going, are you, Mummy?

Hilda hesitates.

HILDA Well . . . I thought I might. It's a long time for your father and I to be apart.

JULIET

But I should go, too!

HILDA Darling, you've got school. You've only just settled in.

JULIET

But- Hilda suddenly stands.

HILDA Who's coming to the shops? I need some cigarettes.

Jonathon barrels out of the cottage.

JONATHON Me! I'm coming.

HILDA (O.S.) Put on your shoes, Jonathon!

CAMERA MOVES IN . . . to Juliet's distraught face.

EXT. PORT LEVY HILLSIDE - EARLY EVENING Clouds swirling about the sky.

A grassy hillside overlooking Port Levy bay. An island sits in the bay, bathed in the last rays of sunlight.

Juliet is a tiny figure against the vast landscape. She runs blindly toward the edge of the hill.

Pauline appears over the brow . . . the hillside is empty! She panics, running, calling out.

PAULINE

(Worried) Julie! Julie!

Pauline finds Juliet curled up in a little ball. She is motionless. Pauline gently takes Juliet in her arms. Juliet is breathing heavily . . . she squeezes her eyes shut, concentrating hard-a look of desperation on her face.

JULIET

Look, Paul!

Pauline looks about, but can see nothing but a scrubby hillside. She looks mystified.

PAULINE

What?

JULIET

It's so beautiful!

PAULINE

What???

Golden light streams on Pauline and Juliet. Pauline look up as the clouds above them open. Juliet stands as if in trance. She offers her hand to Pauline.

JULIET

Come with me.



Juliet pulls Pauline up and hugs her as they walk forward. The barren landscape around Pauline and Juliet morphs into a beautiful garden . . . the Fourth World!

EXT. FOURTH WORLD - DAY Pauline and Juliet are amazed! . . . They stand, holding each other's hand tightly. The world around them take on a new form.

The grass beneath their feet has become a well-kept lawn. They are surrounded by fountains and waterfalls. Unicorns graze on the hillside . . . gigantic butterflies hover in the air.

Pauline and Juliet walk about in wonderment.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Today Juliet and I discovered the key to the Fourth World. We have had it in our possession for about six months, but we only realised it on the day of the Death of Christ. We saw a gateway through the clouds. Everything was full of peace and bliss. We then realised we had the key . . .

CUT TO:

INT. HULMES' CAR/COUNTRYSIDE - DAY As Pauline's V.O. continues . . . CAMERA TRACKS IN SLOWLY, past Henry and Hilda, to a SHOT of Pauline and Juliet sitting quietly, staring ahead, blissfully.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) We have an extra part of our brain which can appreciate the Fourth World. Only about 10 people have it. On two days every year we may use the key and look into that beautiful world which we have been lucky enough to be allowed to know of . . .

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY WIDE SHOT . . . the Hulmes' car, a small speck at the BOTTOM OF FRAME, winding over the hills.

Above . . . billowing cumulus clouds fill the sky.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) . . . on this Day of Finding the Key to the Way through the Clouds.

CUT TO:

INT. ILAM/JULIET'S BEDROOM - DAY CLOSE-UP . . . Juliet's face twisted with pain. She gasps as if in labour. Short, harsh panting. Pauline look panic-stricken.

PAULINE

Push! . . . Breathe! . . . It's coming! . . . Oh, God!

PULL OUT . . . to reveal Juliet lying on her bed, in childbirth pose. Her pregnant stomach is pushing at the seams of her school dress.

Juliet wails . . . Pauline pulls out a pillow from between Juliet's legs, her face a mixture of surprise and elation.

PAULINE

It's a boy! Deborah . . . we've got a son and heir!

Pauline hands Juliet the pillow. She cradles it in her arms.

JULIET

I shall call him Diello.

PAULINE

You're such an incredible woman.

JULIET

I couldn't have done it without you, Charles.

INT. SCHOOL/ENGLISH CLASS - DAY "THE ROLE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY TODAY" -  
written on the blackboard. Mrs. STEVE  
ns is presiding over Form 4A.

Juliet is standing at the front of the class, reading from an essay.

JULIET

. . . the Empress Deborah has the difficulty fending off her husband,  
who tries his way with her morning, noon and night . . .

The class titters . . . they clearly want to I STEVE  
ns s glare deters them.

Pauline sits at the back, smirking.

MRS. STEVE

NS (Icy) Thank you, Juliet!

JULIET

. . . However, the Queen's biggest problem is her renegade child,  
Diello. He has proven to be an uncontrollable little brighter, who  
slaughters his nannies whenever the fancy takes him . . .

MRS. STEVE

NS That's enough, Juliet!

Juliet stops and stands quietly. Mrs. STEVE  
ns rips the essay out of her hand and waves it under her nose.

MRS. STEVE

NS I suppose this is your idea of a joke?

JULIET

No, Mrs. STEVE

ns.

MRS. STEVE

NS I suppose you think it's witty and clever to mock the Royal Family .  
. . to poke fun a the Empire, with this . . . rubbish!

Pauline leaps to her feet.

PAULINE

It's not rubbish!

MRS. STEVE  
NS Sit down, Pauline!

JULIET  
I really don't understand why you are upset, Mrs. STEVE  
n. I merely wrote an essay on the Royal Family as requested.

Pauline points at the blackboard.

PAULINE  
It doesn't say it has to be the Windsors!

MRS. STEVE  
NS (Yelling) Sit down!

Pauline sits down, looking victorious.

MRS. STEVE  
NS (To Juliet) A girl like you should be setting an example! To your seat!

Juliet starts coughing. Mrs. STEVE  
ns's face darkens.

MRS. STEVE  
NS Stop it, Juliet!

Juliet continues coughing. She sits heavily. Pauline snorts, trying not to laugh.

Juliet slumps over her desk, coughing . . . globules of blood splatter her exercise book.

Pauline's smile vanishes.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/HALLWAY - NIGHT  
Pauline is standing in the hallway, holding the phone to her ear. She slowly lowers it, her face shocked.

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O.) Mrs. Hulme told me they had found out today that Juliet has tuberculosis on one lung. Poor Julietta. I nearly fainted when I heard. I had a terrible job not to cry.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S SLEEPOUT - MORNING  
Pauline is lying in her bed looking depressed. She writes her diary.

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O.) I spent a wretched night. It would be wonderful if I could get tuberculosis, too.

HONORA

comes in with a breakfast tray: bacon and eggs, tea and toast.

HONORA

Come on, sit up.

PAULINE

I'm not hungry.

HONORA

You've got to eat, Yvonne. You hardly touched our dinner. I'm not having you falling ill.

PAULINE

I just want to be on my own for a while.

HONORA

starts to cut up a slice of bacon and offers it to Pauline.

HONORA

You may have forgotten that you were once a very sick little girl, but I haven't!

HONORA

holds up a loaded fork. Pauline reluctantly takes it.

PAULINE

Do you think Juliet could stay here while her parents are away?

HONORA

Juliet's infectious . . . she'll be going to hospital.

PAULINE

But she'll have no one to look after her!

HONORA

Her parents won't be going overseas now . . . they'll have to cancel their trip. Don't worry about Juliet.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. CASHMERE SANATORIUM/JULIET'S ROOM - DAY  
The back of Hilda's head rises through SHOT, revealing Juliet lying in a hospital bed, looking weak. Hilda has just kissed her on the forehead. Juliet is upset.

HILDA It's not too late to cancel our travel arrangements . . . if that's what you want?

Juliet tearfully shakes her head. Henry is standing at the foot of the bed, hands behind his back.

HENRY I'm sure you'll like it here . . . it's very tranquil.

HILDA I've spoken to the Matron, and she promises to take special care of you.

HENRY And you can carry on with your studies while you convalesce.

Hilda touches Juliet's hand, and leans forward . . . a concerned look on her face.

HILDA It's for the good of your health, darling.

Juliet looks at her mother, eyes filling with tears. Henry pats her feet.

HENRY Cheer up, old thing . . . four months will fly by in no time.

CUT TO:

INT. SANATORIUM/CORRIDOR - DAYHenry and Hilda walk up the corridor past sick patients in wheelchairs.

EXT. SANATORIUM - DAYJuliet's POV through the window . . . as her parents' car disappears down the road.

INT. SANATORIUM/ JULIET'S ROOM - DAYJuliet watches them drive away, tears streaming down her face.

HONORA

(V.O.) Juliet won't be allowed visitors for at least a couple of months.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/DINING ROOM - NIGHTPauline is unenthusiastically picking at her dinner.

HONORA

I've booked you in for a chest X-ray . . . just to be on the safe side.

HONORA

pops a couple more potatoes on Pauline's plate. HERBERT glances at Pauline.

HERBERT

Thought I'd have a go at building the birdhouse on Saturday . . . anyone want to give me a hand?

Pauline remains silent.

HONORA

You used to love making things with Dad, Yvonne.

MOVE IN . . . on Pauline, who has not been listening.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) This evening I had a brainwave: that Juliet and I should write to each other as Charles and Deborah.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S SLEEPOUT - NIGHTPauline is lying on her bed, furiously writing a letter.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I wrote a six-page letter as Charles and a two-page letter as Paul.

INT. SANATORIUM - DAY Juliet lies on her bed, writing to Pauline.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) She has entered into the spirit of the thing greatly!

As we listen to Juliet's V.O., we see SCENES of TB hospital life . . . the meals brought around . . . the dayroom . . . the DOCTORS.

JULIET

(Letter V.O.) My dear Charles, I miss you and adore you in equal amounts and long for the day we will be reunited, but as I languish here, in this house of disease and decrepitude, my mind turns-with increasing frequency- to the problem of our son . . .

INT. SANATORIUM/JULIET'S ROOM - DAY Juliet sits at a desk. sculpting and painting a Plasticine figure of Diello.

As her V.O. continues . . . TRACK INTO a CLOSE-UP of Diello's fierce little face . . .

JULIET

(Letter V.O.) Although only 10, Diello has thus far killed 57 people and shows no desire to stop . . . it worries me, Charles.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN, LOUNGE - DAY CLOSE-UP of Pauline's hand, writing a letter to Juliet.

PAULINE

(Letter V.O.) My dearest darling Deborah. Affairs of state continue to occupy my time.

Pauline washes a pile of dishes in the kitchen.

PAULINE

(Letter V.O.) I have to report that the lower classes are terrifically dull.

Pauline is sitting in the lounge, looking very boring during a game of Lexicon with Herbert, John and a ROSS. Pauline is waiting for her turn, unaware that John is studying her from across the table. Her

word PUTRID spelled out.

PAULINE

(Letter V.O.) Only yesterday I was compelled to execute several peasants just to alleviate the boredom . . .

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL/ART CLASS - DAY Pauline is hunched over a painting in the art class, daubing great strokes of red paint onto a violent medieval carnage.

PAULINE

(Letter V.O.) . . . Diello insisted on coming along . . . in fact, he

made such a fuss that I had to let him yield the ax himself. Heads did roll! Not just the prisoners, but the royal guard, my valet and several unfortunate copped it as well . . .

IMAGES of Pauline's painting: people being run through with swords, heads coming off, etc.

CUT TO:

INT. SANATORIUM/DAYROOM - DAY Juliet is sitting, writing in the sunny dayroom.

JULIET

(Letter V.O.) Oh, Charles . . . I am despair enough to put Diello in the hands of the Cardinal, in hope that a good dose of religion will set the young chap on the right path.

REVEREND NORRIS Hello again . . .

Juliet peers up at a DOG-COLLARED VICAR. She eyes him coldly.

REVEREND NORRIS How are you getting along? It must be awfully hard being away from your school chums . . . I've got something here you might just like to have a look at.

He hands Juliet a leaflet featuring a thin, withered figure in a great deal of pain. "JESUS LOVES YOU" is printed across the top.

Juliet's face hardens.

REVEREND NORRIS Unfortunately, modern medicine can only go so far in combatting an illness like TB. And that's why I'm here . . . because with the power of God, miracles can happen. The Lord has said that those who have faith will be saved! Reach out, Juliet! Reach out for Jesus!

During Reverend Norris's speech . . . CAMERA closes in to BIG CLOSE-UP of Juliet's face. Reverend Norris's voice fades away. . .

SUDDENLY!!!

A silhouetted figure rises up behind Reverend Norris . . . a lumpy hand closes around his throat!

REVEREND NORRIS Aaaaarghhh!!!

Diello - the Plasticine figurine, now life-size - drags Reverend Norris off his feet and across the room.

Reverend Norris kicks and struggles as Diello hauls him through the doorway onto . . .

EXT. BOROVNIA CASTLE COURTYARD - DAY. . . a scaffold in the town square of Borovnia. A medieval fantasy kingdom. NICHOLAS watches from a street corner.

Reverend Norris is grabbed by two BURLY PLASTICINE GUARDS. They hold

him down, his neck on a chopping block. Diello grabs a huge ax, swings it up above his head, and brings it crashing down onto . . .

REVEREND NORRIS'S NECK!!!

CHOP TO:

INT. SANATORIUM/CORRIDOR - DAYCRASH! . . . swing doors burst open. Pauline hurries into the hospital corridor. HONORA follows behind her. Within sight of the dayroom, Pauline breaks into a run, nearly bowling a NURSE over.

HONORA  
Yvonne!

INT. SANATORIUM/DAY ROOM - DAYPauline rushes over to Juliet, who is seated by a window, knitting. They hug tightly.

JULIET  
I'm so happy to see you!

HONORA  
hurries over.

HONORA  
It's best not to get too close. Juliet's still not a hundred percent. Hello, Juliet! We've bought you some fruit.

JULIET  
Thank you so much!

Juliet sits back in her chair. She holds Pauline's hand. HONORA admires Juliet's knitting-a red cardigan.

HONORA  
That's coming along well!

JULIET  
(Pleased) I'm the Matron's favourite patient and she's shown me her special stitch!

PAULINE  
I love the colour!

Juliet smiles at Pauline.

JULIET  
It's for you.

Pauline squeezes Juliet's hand.

INT.JULIET'S ROOM - DAYHONORA is looking at some mail on a small table. Pauline is sitting at Juliet's bedside.

HONORA  
Goodness me! What a lot of letters. Are your parents enjoying their



trip? Oh . . . there's a couple of unopened ones, dear.

JULIET

(Sarcastically) I'm saving them for a rainy day.

HONORA

gives her a sympathetic look.

HONORA

I know it's hard for you being in here, but it is for the good of your health.

JULIET

(Bitterly) They sent me off to the Bahamas "for the good of my health." They sent me to the Bay of bloody Islands "for the good of my health."

HONORA

looks startled at the outburst.

JULIET

I'm sorry, Mrs. Rieper. I'm feeling quite fatigued.

HONORA

We don't want to tire you out, dear.

HONORA

stands and picks up her handbag. Pauline stands and Juliet grabs her hand.

JULIET

Can't you stay a bit longer, Paul?

Pauline looks at Honora.

HONORA

We've got a tram to catch, Yvonne.

Pauline hugs Juliet and reluctantly takes her leave.

CUTTO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S SLEEPOUT - EVENINGCLOSE-UP . . .

Plasticine figure of Nicholas. John's hand comes into SHOT and picks the model up. Pauline looks on anxiously . . . the face of Nicholas bears more than a passing resemblance to John, but he doesn't seem to notice.

JOHN This is quite something . . . you're damn clever.

Pauline beams.

JOHN So . . . Deborah is married to Charles, and this chap Nicholas . . . is her tennis instructor?

PAULINE

Yes, but there's nothing between them. Deborah would never go for a commoner. Nicholas has got his eye on Gina, an amazingly beautiful

gypsy.

She gestures to a Plasticine GINA figure that is sitting on the shelf.

JOHN Looks like you, Yvonne.

Pauline beams.

PAULINE  
Juliet made it!

John smiles.

JOHN This is really quite incredible. I bet you girls know the entire royal lineage for the last five centuries.

PAULINE  
Oh, yes! It's all worked out!

John returns Nicholas to the shelf, placing him amidst whole family of beautifully sculpted Plasticine figures. Pauline self-consciously returns to her sculpting, aware that John is watching her keenly.

EXT. SANATORIUM/GARDEN - DAY Pauline is sitting cross-legged at the foot of Juliet's bed.

PAULINE  
(Whispers) You'll never guess what's happened!!

JULIET  
What??

PAULINE  
John has fallen in love with me!

JULIET  
That idiot boarder?

Pauline beams.

JULIET  
How do you know? Did he tell you?

PAULINE  
Well . . . no. But it's so obvious.

Pauline giggles. Juliet turns away.

JULIET  
(Sullen) Is that why you haven't replied to my last letter?

Pauline's smile disappears.

PAULINE  
No, silly. I'm just teasing. He's only a stupid boy!

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S SLEEPOUT - NIGHT  
Pauline is lying in bed asleep. Her door opens and John stands tentatively in the door way. He is wearing stripey pyjamas.

JOHN (Loud whisper) Yvonne!

Pauline sits up, groggily flicking on a bedside light.

PAULINE  
Whaddya want?

John puts his fingers to his lips to shush her.

JOHN (Whispers) I can't sleep . . . can I borrow a book?

PAULINE  
(Whispers) Shut the door.

John tiptoes across to the bookshelf He pulls a book out . . . "Girls' Own Annual 1951."

JOHN This looks interesting.

Pauline gives him a dubious look from her bed.

John stands shivering, flicking through the annual.

JOHN These knitting patterns look damn complicated. Have you tried the tea cosy?

Pauline shakes her head and looks on as John continues to thumb awkwardly through the book, his shivers increasing.

He glances at Pauline nervously.

JOHN It's damn cold, isn't it? Do you think I could hop into bed for a moment . . . just to warm up? My feet are like iceblocks.

PAULINE  
You should have worn your slippers.

JOHN Come on, Yvonne, I'll catch me death!

Pauline rolls to one side.

PAULINE  
Just for a minute.

John climbs into bed beside Pauline and pulls the blankets up around his chin.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIEPERS' HOUSE - NIGHT  
Midnight at 31 Gloucester St. All the lights are off.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) To think that so much could happen in so little time, caused by so few. A terrible tragedy has occurred . . .

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S SLEEPOUT - NIGHT  
Pauline is lying in bed. The lights are off.

PAULINE

(Theatrical voice) "Now, gels . . . it isn't ooo, it's eee," and she goes . . . "eeeeee" as if someone is jabbing a pin into her! Silly old trout!

PULL OUT during Pauline's V.O.... to reveal John lying in bed beside her. He cuddles up to her.

JOHN I love you, Yvonne.

Pauline continues, oblivious to his attentions.

PAULINE

And then in history, we've got this senile old bat, who goes . . . (Squawky voice) "And Charles the Second met Nell Gwynn aboard a boat and he was a prince and she was a pretty young thing and these thing do happen . . ." (Normal voice) God! It's no wonder I don't excel in history!

JOHN Do you love me as much as I love you?

PAULINE

Of course, my darling Nicholas.

John can't contain himself . . . he starts pressing himself against her body.

JOHN (Panting) My . . . my name's John.

Pauline lies on her back, not responding to his caresses.

PAULINE

I like Nicholas much better!

John climbs on top of Pauline.

JOHN You can call me anything you like . . .

John fumbles around beneath the sheets.

PAULINE

What are you doing?

JOHN Nothing . . .

SUDDENLY!

The outside light flicks on. Sound of footsteps stomping down the path.

THE DOOR OPENS!

PAULINE  
Bloody hell!

John desperately tries to conceal himself beneath the bedcovers as . . .  
.

The light flicks on . . . HERBERT  
stands in the doorway. He surveys the situation with a grim expression.

John rolls out of bed and staggers toward the door fumbling with his  
pyjama cord.

HERBERT  
Go to the house.

John scuttles out of the sleepout. Pauline lies still in bed, peering  
at her father.

HERBERT  
(Upset) You have broken my heart, Yvonne.

HERBERT  
turns and leaves the room. Pauline stares at the ceiling.

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O.) I lay there mesmerised. It was just too frightful to  
believe . . .

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/DINING ROOM - MORNING BREAKFAST . . .A plate of  
Weetbix bangs down on the table in front of Pauline. Milk sloshes over  
the side of the bowl. HONORA  
looks thunderous and stomps off.

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O.) When I got up I found Father had told Mother . . .

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal STEVE  
, Ross, a new boarder, LAURIE, and HERBERT  
seated around the table. The boarders are clearly oblivious to the  
tense family vibes.

LAURIE Coming to Lancaster Park on Saturday, Mr. Rieper?

HERBERT  
shakes his head, sullenly.

Wendy hurries into the room, grabs a piece of toast, pulling on a coat.

WENDY Where's John? He said he'd walk with me.

HONORA  
stands in the doorway.

HONORA

John's no longer staying here.

Wendy looks surprised.

LAURIE Shot through, this morning . . . said his old Mum had taken sick.

INT. RIEPFERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN - MORNING  
Pauline is washing dishes, up to her elbows in soapy water. Behind her HONORA tidies up, glowering at her daughter.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I had a nasty foreboding feeling at first, but now I realise my crime was too frightful for an ordinary lecture.

HONORA

(Angry) From now on, you're sleeping in the house, where we can keep an eye on you.

Pauline bangs a dish into the rack.

HONORA

(Angry) If you think for one minute that your father and I will tolerate this sort of behaviour, you've got another thing coming! You're only 14!!! You're a child! What on earth's the matter with you, Yvonne? You know what can happen with boys . . . Don't you have any self-respect?

HONORA

sighs.

PAULINE

Can I go now?

HONORA

grabs Pauline by the shoulders.

HONORA

You think you're such a clever little madam! You had your father in tears last night!

Pauline flinches.

HONORA

My God, what a disgrace you are! You shame me, you shame the family. You're nothing but a cheap little tart!

PAULINE

Well, I guess I take after you then!

HONORA

whirls around and slaps Pauline on the cheek.

PAULINE

You ran off with Dad when you were only 17! Nana Parker told me!

HONORA

steps back.

HONORA

(Softly) You're going to be late.

Pauline triumphantly walks past her mother. HONORA barely reacts as Pauline hurries out.

CUT TO: EXT. RIEPERS' HOUSE - NIGHTMidnight at 31 Gloucester St. All lights are off.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I am terribly cut up. I miss Nicholas terrifically. Mother thinks I will have nothing more to do with him, but little she knows . . .

The front door quietly opens and Pauline sneaks out.

Pauline pedals her bicycle furiously along dark streets.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHTPauline climbs up a fire escape.

John comes out onto the balcony and hugs her.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Nicholas was pleased that I was so early.

John and Pauline disappear into his room . . .

WIDE SHOT of the house, as Pauline's V.O. continues . . .

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) We sat around and talked for an hour and then went to bed. I declined the invitation at first, but he became very masterful and I had no option. I discovered that I had not lost my virginity on Thursday night. However, there is no doubt whatsoever that I have now . . .

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHTPauline is lying on the bed, with John thrusting away on top of her. John grunts and groans . . . Pauline remains unmoved and uninvolved.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BOROVNIA - DAYThe noonday sun glows in the sky.

Pauline opens her eyes . . . she is lying in a field of the most amazingly colourful flowers.

She stands and looks around her with amazement. She smiles happily.

On one side are fantasy cottages with crooked chimneys and thatched roofs . . . on the other tower the walls of Borovnia Castle.

Music comes wafting out of the castle gates . . . Mario Lanza singing

"Funiculi, Funicula."

Pauline walks through the gates, beneath the portcullis, and into...

EXT. BOROVNIA CASTLE COURTYARD - DAY. . . the courtyard. A fête is in progress. The courtyard is full of PLASTICINE PEOPLE, laughing and singing amidst stalls and sideshows.

Pauline pushes her way through the crowd. A Plasticine finger taps her shoulder . . . she spins around and gasps!

PAULINE  
Charles!

The PLASTICINE KING smiles.

CHARLES (James Mason voice) Hello, Gina . . . great to see you here!

He turns away. Pauline scans the crowd. She gets a fleeting glimpse of the back of a ROBED WOMAN.

PAULINE  
(Calling) Deborah!

Deborah does not hear, and Pauline desperately pushes between Plasticine people to try and reach her.

A blur of Plasticine faces slide past . . .

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/JOHN'S BEDROOM

CLOSE-UP . . . John's sweaty face, still grunting furiously.

CRASH CUT TO:

EXT. BOROVNIA CASTLE COURTYARD - DAY Pauline finds herself pulled into the arms of a fierce-looking PLASTICINE KNIGHT.

PAULINE  
(Breathless) Diello!

DIELLO (Orson Welles voice) Careful, Gina. . . we almost lost you!

Diello suddenly steps back, draws his sword and expertly runs a passing PEASANT through.

He sweeps his hat off and bows at Pauline.

DIELLO (Orson Welles voice) For you, my lady!

Pauline beams. Her eye is again caught by Deborah's Plasticine figure across the crowd . . . her back is still turned.

PAULINE  
Deborah!



Deborah slowly turns around . . . she has a human face-Juliet!

Tears of joy trickle down Pauline's cheeks.

Juliet is laughing and smiling, looking beautiful.

Diello gently wipes Pauline's tears.

DIELLO (Orson Welles voice) You're crying, Gina . . . don't be sad.

Another Plasticine arm tugs at Pauline's shoulder . . . she turns and looks straight at the figure of . . .

NICHOLAS!

NICHOLAS (John s voice) Yvonne!

QUICK CUTS . . .

Nicholas's Plasticine face . . .

John's face in the bedroom . . .

Nicholas . . .

John . . .

Nicholas . . .

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/JOHN'S ROOM - NIGHTCLOSE-UP . . . John's face looming over Pauline.

JOHN Yvonne!

Pauline is lying on the bed beneath him. She looks at him with glazed eyes.

She pushes John away and sits up in bed.

JOHN (Worried) I didn't hurt you, did I?

Pauline jumps out of bed and starts to dress.

PAULINE

I've got to go home.

John jumps out of bed and wraps his arms around her.

JOHN I love you so much.

MOVE IN . . . on Pauline's emotionless face.

CUT TO:

INT. SANATORIUM/CORRIDOR - DAY Pauline is hurrying down the sanatorium corridor . . . she breaks into a run.

INT. SANATORIUM/JULIET'S ROOM - DAY Juliet is sitting by her bed, fully clothed. Her suitcases are packed and lie on the bed.

Pauline runs into the room. Juliet stands and they embrace hugging each other tightly.

Henry enters the room and frowns at the sight of the girls hugging. Juliet reaches out for Henry and pulls him into the embrace. He looks decidedly ill at ease as Pauline's black hair nuzzles against his neck.

EXT. STREETS - DAY TRACKING BACK . . . as the Hulmes' car drives toward CAMERA.

Pauline's V.O. starts, reading her poem "The Ones That I Worship":

PAULINE  
(Poem V.O.) There are living among two dutiful daughters.

INT. HULMES' CAR - DAY Pauline and Juliet are sitting together in the back seat.

PAULINE  
(Poem V.O.) Of a man who possesses two beautiful daughters,

Henry adjusts the rearview mirror and catches sight of their clasped hands.

PAULINE  
(Poem V.O.) You cannot know nor yet try to guess, / The sweet soothingness of their caress,

Henry's steely gaze in the rearview mirror.

The poem continues over a visual montage:

EXT. ILAM DRIVEWAY - DAY The Hulmes' car pulls up outside Ilam.

PAULINE  
(Poem V.O.) The outstanding genius of this pair is understood by few, / They are so rare. . .

Hilda emerges out of the house. Juliet gives her a big hug.

JULIET  
Mummy!

HILDA Darling! Welcome home!

EXT. STREET - DAY Pauline and Juliet sitting in a tram as it crawls along slowly.

John is running alongside, waving and calling, trying to get Pauline's attention. He is clearly pleading with her, but to no avail.

JOHN Yvonne! Stop! I still love you!

PAULINE

(Poem V.O.) Compared with these two, every man is a fool,/The world is most honoured that they should deign to rule,/And I worship the power of these lovely two,/ With that adoring love known to so few . . .

Pauline looks knowingly at Juliet, then down to John, hurrying along the street.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. BOROVNIA CASTLE GATES - DAYThe Plasticine figure of Nicholas, hurrying down the passage toward the castle gates.

In an alcove beside the gate, the Plasticine figure of Diello is lurking in the shadows, dagger in hand. Beside him is the rope winch that operates the portcullis.

Footsteps approach . . .

Diello presses himself back into the corner . . .

Nicholas walks briskly. As he nears the portcullis, he espies something twinkling on the ground.

LOW ANGLE . . . Nicholas stops, looks down. Directly above him are the jagged teeth of the portcullis.

He reaches down . . . for a silver ring, set with a small pink stone. It is lying on the ground, as if dropped by somebody.

SUDDENLY!

Diello slashes the rope with his dagger. Before Nicholas can react, the portcullis crashes down on him. His Plasticine body is crushed.

Nicholas's twitching fingers release the brooch. It falls to the ground and breaks. The pink stone pops out of its setting, rolls down the path and comes to rest by Pauline's and Juliet's feet.

Juliet picks up the pink stone. She holds it up and it twinkles in the sunlight.

PAULINE

(Poem V.O.) 'Tis indeed a miracle, one must feel, That two such heavenly creatures are real,

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ILAM/BATH ROOM - NIGHTCLOSE-UP . . . Pauline's face, staring intently ahead.

PAULINE

(Poem V.O.) Hatred burning bright in the brown eyes with enemies for fuel,

CLOSE-UP . . . Juliet's face, staring intently ahead.

PAULINE

(Poem V.O.) Icy scorn glitters in the gray eyes, contemptuous and cruel, Why are men such fools they will not realise,

PULL OUT . . . to show Pauline and Juliet lying in opposite ends of a hot, steaming bath, staring at each other.

PAULINE

(Poem V.O.) The wisdom that is hidden behind those strange eyes.

INT. ILAM/ JULIET'S BEDROOM - NIGHTPOEM CONTINUES AS . . .

Pauline and Juliet . . . sleeping in each other's arms in bed.

PAULINE

(Poem V.O.) And these wonderful people are you and I.

FAST TRACK IN . . . to the bedroom door.

Henry is silently observing the two sleeping girls, his face stoney.

Sound of a distant thunderclap . . .

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS'HOUSE/HALLWAY - NIGHTHenry is standing on the Riepers' doorstep. Lightning flashes light up his face like something out of a gothic horror.

HENRY Mrs. Rieper . . . may I come in?

HONORA

is standing, holding the door open, looking rather surprised at the unexpected visitor.

HONORA

(Surprised) Yes, of course.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/LOUNGE - NIGHTHenry and HONORA are sitting in the lounge. Henry looking rather uncomfortable on the edge of a shabby armchair. HERBERT is at a drinks cabinet unscrewing the top off a bottle.

HENRY Your daughter's . . . an imaginative and a spirited girl- HONORA If she's spending too much time at your house, you only need to say. All those nights she spends over-she's assured us that you don't mind . . .

HENRY It's rather more complicated than that. Since Mrs. Hulme and I have returned home, Juliet has been behaving in a rather disturbed manner . . . surliness, short temper . . . general irritability-most uncharacteristic.

HERBERT

is pouring a drink.

HERBERT

Sure I can't tempt you to a nice sherry, Dr. Hulme?

HENRY No, thank you. The thing is . . .

HONORA

Yvonne hasn't been herself, either. Locking herself away in her room . . . endlessly writing.

HERBERT

sits down next to Honora, glass of sherry in hand.

HENRY My wife and I feel the friendship is . . . unhealthy.

HERBERT

No arguments there, Dr. Hulme! All that time inside working on those novels of theirs. They don't get fresh air or exercise!

HONORA

frowns at Henry.

HONORA

(Concerned) I'm not sure what you mean, Dr. Hulme.

Henry pauses for a moment.

HENRY Your daughter appears to have formed a rather . . . unwholesome attachment to Juliet.

HONORA

(Worried) What's she done???

HENRY She hasn't done anything . . . it's the intensity of the friendship that concerns me. I think we should avert trouble before it starts.

Henry hands a business card to Honora.

HENRY Dr. Bennett is a very good friend. He's a general physician, but has some expertise in child psychology. If Pauline is indeed developing in a rather . . . er . . . wayward fashion, Dr. Bennett is the ideal man to set her back on track.

CUT TO:

INT. DR. BENNETT'S SURGERY - DAY Pauline is slouched in a chair, looking very sullen.

DR. BENNETT (O.S.) What about your studies . . . are you enjoying school?

DR. BENNETT is seated behind his desk. Pauline is silent. She looks at the ceiling. HONORA is sitting next to Pauline.

DR. BENNETT Are you happy at home? Pauline is silent.

HONORA  
Answer Dr. Bennett, Yvonne.

Pauline remains silent.

HONORA  
(Annoyed) Yvonne!

DR. BENNETT Mrs. Rieper . . . perhaps you wouldn't mind waiting outside.

HONORA  
leaves the room.

DR. BENNETT Do you like your mother?

Pauline hesitates for a moment.

PAULINE  
No.

DR. BENNETT And why is that?

PAULINE  
She nags me.

DR. BENNETT And that's why you like to stay with the Hulmes?

Pauline looks wary. She doesn't answer.

DR. BENNETT Or is it because you want to be with Juliet?

No answer.

DR. BENNETT Do you . . . like girls?

PAULINE  
No.

DR. BENNETT Why not?

PAULINE  
They're silly.

DR. BENNETT But Juliet's not silly?

PAULINE  
(Emphatic) No!

DR. BENNETT Yvonne . . . there's nothing wrong with having a close friend, but sometimes things can get . . . too friendly. Such associations can lead to trouble. It isn't good to have just one friend . . . my wife and I have several friend and we enjoy seeing them on a regular basis, and it's all perfectly healthy. Perhaps you could think about spending time with . . . boys- Dr. Bennett stops in mid-sentence, a look of surprise face. He looks down at his chest . . .

A red bloodstain is slowly spreading across his shirt. Dr. Bennett twitches slightly as the blade of a sword work its way out of his chest!

Pauline's face lights up as . . .

Diello rises up behind Dr. Bennett.

DIELLO (Orson Welles voice) Bloody fool!

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. DR. BENNETT'S WAITING ROOM - DAYThe surgery door opens and Pauline steps out, looking elated.

HONORA  
looks up from her chair.

Dr. Bennett appears in the doorway behind Pauline. He casts a wary glance in her direction.

DR. BENNETT Mrs. Rieper . . .

HONORA  
bustles in, and Dr. Bennett closes the door. Pauline sits down, folds her arms and stares blankly at a COUPLE OF SICK PATIENTS.

INT. DR. BENNETT'S SURGERY - DAYCLOSE-UP . . . Dr. Bennett's mouth.

DR. BENNETT Homosexuality . . .

HONORA  
looks horrified.

DR. BENNETT I agree, Mrs. Rieper, it's not a pleasant word. But let us not panic unduly. This condition is often a passing phase with girls of Yvonne's age.

HONORA  
But she's always been such a normal, happy child.

DR. BENNETT It can strike at any time, and adolescent are particularly vulnerable.

HONORA  
But what about the vomiting? She's lost a lot of weight . . .

Dr. Bennett shrugs.

DR. BENNETT Physically, I can find nothing wrong. I've checked for TB and she's clear. I can only attribute her weight loss to her mental disorder.

HONORA  
(Shocked) Oh . . .

DR. BENNETT Look, Mrs. Rieper . . . try not to worry too much. Yvonne's young and strong, and she's got a loving family behind her. Chances are she'll grow out of it. If not . . . well, medical science is progressing in leaps and bounds. There could be a breakthrough at any time!

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/HALLWAY - NIGHTSLOW TRACKING . . . down the hallway corridor. As the CAMERA passes doorways, we see the Riepers' family routine . . . HONORA in the kitchen. HERBERT wanders by and goes through the adjoining door into the lounge. He sits down and opens the paper. Wendy is attempting to t the fire. The family are chatting to each other, but we do not hear their conversation because . . .

. . . we are listening to Pauline's V.O.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Mother woke me this morning and started lecturing me before I was properly awake, which I thought was somewhat unfair. She has brought up the worst possible threat now. She said that if my health did not prove I could never see the Hulmes again. The thought is too dreadful. Life would be unbearable without Deborah . . .

CAMERA CRANES UP . . . through the ceiling and into . . .

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT. . . Pauline's bedroom. The room is filled with the sad strains of "E Lucevan le Stelle," an aria from Puccini's Tosca that is booming out from Pauline's portable record player.

CAMERA CRANES UP past the foot of the bed to reveal Pauline lying on her back, looking very morose.

TRACK IN TO her intense face as her V.O. continues . . .

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I wish I could die. This is not an idle or temporary impulse. I have decided over the last two or three weeks that it would be the best thing that could happen together, and the thought of death is not fearsome.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/LOUNGE - CHRISTMAS DAY 1953CLOSE-UP . . . a Christmas present is torn open . . . followed by several more, in quick cuts. Typical 1953 presents.

Honora, Herbert, Wendy and Pauline are sitting on the floor, amidst presents and discarded wrapping paper. Grandma Parker is sitting in a chair.

HERBERT

waves a pair of new socks around. The family laughing and talking. Pauline is not participating. She is leaning back, looking morose.

HONORA

looks at her with concern.



HONORA

(Concerned) Is it hurting, dear?

Pauline looks blank.

HONORA

Your leg . . . have you got pain?

Pauline shakes her head. She rips open a present . . . a new diary.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHTCLOSE-UP of the Jan. 1st page. Pauline's pen starts to write . . .

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) My New Year's resolution is a far more selfish one than last year, so there is more probability of my keeping it. It is to make my motto: "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you may be dead."

Pauline looks up from her diary as the CAMERA RUSHES IN toward her face.

I NT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MORNING

TRACKING with Pauline as she walks down the corridor past classmates, head down, shoulders hunched.

EXT. CRANMER SQUARE/SCHOOL - DAYA PHOTOGRAPHER is peering through his camera in Cranmer Square.

The 33 girls of 4A are posing for their class photo. They are giggling and joking. Pauline is perched in the top right corner and is sullen.

PHOTOGRAPHER Ready . . . smile!

Pauline bows her head.

CLICK!

CUT TO:

THE BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPH. PULL OUT from Pauline's bowed head to the full shot of the smiling class.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - DAYPauline strolls into her bedroom and drops her school bag down. She plucks out an opera record to play on her radiogram.

HONORA

walks in, waving a letter.

HONORA

This arrived today, Yvonne . . .

Pauline looks at her mother with distaste.

PAULINE  
My name is Gina!

HONORA  
It's a letter from the school . . . from Miss Stewart.

PAULINE  
What does old Stew want?

HONORA  
She says the standard of your work is slipping. At this rate she doesn't think you'll get School Certificate.

PAULINE  
Who cares!

HONORA  
I care . . . your father cares . . . we want you to have a good education.

PAULINE  
I'm educating myself!

HONORA  
You're failing English . . . you used to be top of the class- PAULINE  
I'm doing my own writing!

HONORA  
snatches up an exercise book from a large pile.

HONORA  
These stories are not going to get you School Certificate! You don't seriously think anyone's going to publish them?

PAULINE  
(Scornful) What do you know? You wouldn't know the first thing about writing. You're the most ignorant person I've ever met!

HONORA  
is very angry.

HONORA  
You're rude . . . rude and insolent! I don't see why I should keep a horrid child like you at school a minute longer.

PAULINE  
(Shouting) I don't wanna be in bloody school!

HONORA  
(Shouting) All right! You go out there and get a job and you damn well pay your own way!

HONORA  
storms out of the room and slams the door.

INT. DIGBY'S TYPING SCHOOL - DAY  
OPEN ON . . . SIGN ON DOOR:

Digby's Commercial College

Pauline sits amongst rows of young ladies, typing. MISS DIGBY patrols the aisles. Pauline looks bored and morose as she stabs dejectedly at the keys.

INT. ILAM BATHROOM - NIGHT  
Pauline and Juliet are lying in a steaming bath - facing each other from opposite ends. Pauline is very upset.

PAULINE  
I think I'm going crazy.

JULIET  
No, you're not, Gina-it's everybody else who is bonkers!

PAULINE  
Let's go overseas . . .

JULIET  
You mean travel by ourselves?

Pauline nods.

JULIET  
Where shall we go? Not the Bahamas; it's bloody awful!

A few moments of silence as the girls contemplate.

JULIET  
(Excited) Of course! It's so obvious!

CUT TO:

INT. ILAM/CORRIDOR - NIGHT  
Henry is walking down the corridor in his dressing gown, carrying a glass of milk.

He pauses as he overhears giggles and splashes coming from the bathroom. He puts his ear to the door . . .

JULIET  
(O.S.) I know . . . I'll lean back and put my hair on my shoulders-then I'll look just like Veronica Lake!

Sound of a camera clicking.

PAULINE  
(O.S.) Stay still or they'll be blurry . . .

JULIET  
(O.S.) Hurry up! I'm freezing!

PAULINE  
(O.S.) Just a couple more . . .

JULIET  
(O.S.) I know, I'll lean forward and show more cleavage!

Henry frowns. Sounds of a camera clicking.

INT. ILAM/HILDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT  
Hilda is preparing for bed.

Henry opens the door and enters.

HENRY Those girls are up to something in the bathroom! I think they're taking photographs of each other!

HILDA Just leave them alone, Henry.

HENRY I'm prepared to tolerate that Rieper girl's presence but I will not stand for any . . . hanky-panky.

HILDA I'm sure it's all perfectly innocent.

INT. ILAM/LOUNGE - NIGHT  
TRACKING ALONG . . . a mantelpiece of knickknacks. Juliet's hand grabs three pieces.

Pauline and Juliet hurry around the darkened lounge, lifting various bits of silver and china. They are dressed their nighties.

PAULINE

(Whispers) I'm sure they'll notice things missing.

JULIET

(Whispers) They'll blame the bloody housekeeper. She nicks stuff all the times!

INT. ILAM/JULIET'S BEDROOM - NIGHT  
Pauline and Juliet are lying in Juliet's bed, their booty spread around them.

JULIET

This lot's got to be worth 50 quid!

PAULINE

I can try my father's safe. I'm sure I can get the keys to his office.

JULIET

That's great! We'll have the fare in no time!

RIEPERS' HOUSE - DAWN  
Sunrise over 31 Gloucester St.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN/DINING ROOM/LAUNDRY - MORNING  
SERIES OF VERY QUICK SHOTS . . .

Pauline doing housework: sweeping floors, ironing, hanging washing, folding, dusting, cleaning bath . . .

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I rose at 5:30 this morning and did housework before 8 o'clock, including taking Wendy her breakfast in bed. I feel very pleased with myself on the whole and also the future.

Pauline spins around and stares straight into the CAMERA.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) We are so brilliantly clever.

ILAM GROUNDS - DAYWHACK! A tennis ball is hit by a racquet.

Hilda and Walter Perry are playing mixed doubles on the court laid out in the Ilam grounds, behind the house.

SUPER: "Two Weeks Later"

It's a sunny, festive afternoon. Picnic blankets are laid out around the tennis court. Tables of food and colourful awnings have been erected around the lawn.

Henry is chatting to some friends beside the tennis courts.

Thirty cars are filling the drive in front of the house. People are wandering around, admiring the gardens.

Dr. Bennett and his wife, PEARL, are strolling along the edge of the river. SUDDENLY . . .

SPLASH!!! . . . Dr. Bennett and Pearl are drenched in a shower of water as a large rock lands in the river beside them.

CUT TO:

Pauline and Juliet in the bushes across the river from the Bennetts. Juliet is peering through the foliage. Pauline has just clearly hurled the rock.

JULIET

Direct hit! Gave his trousers a good soaking! Everyone will think he's peed himself!

They dissolve into giggles.

CUT BACK:

To the Bennetts . . . and some other GUESTS as they hear the sound of giggling and rustling leaves.

CUT TO:

Pauline and Juliet strolling through the thick undergrowth, eating bunches of grapes and drinking straight from a sherry decanter.

JULIET

(Mouth full) Bloody Bill's sniffing around Mummy something chronic.

They pause by a tree, with a clear view across the river to Hilda and Walter playing tennis.

PAULINE

I thought he was supposed to be terribly ill.

JULIET

(Sarcastic) That was what we were led to believe . . .

INSERT SCENE:

INT. ILAM/DINING ROOM - NIGHT Henry, Hilda, Jonathon and Juliet are having an evening meal.

HILDA Henry . . . I'm terribly worried about Bill Perry. He's just had a spell in hospital and has nowhere to convalesce.

HENRY No?

HILDA I've offered him the flat . . . he really shouldn't be left by himself . . . not in his condition.

Juliet is eating, quietly watching her parents.

JULIET

(V.O.) I was looking forward to the ambulance arriving . . .

CUT TO:

EXT. ILAM DRIVEWAY - DAY An ambulance is parked outside the house, light flashing.

Walter Perry is lifted out on a stretcher, looking terribly ill . . . croaking and gasping.

JULIET

(V.O.) There's something desperately exciting about bodies on stretchers . . . (Regretfully) But it wasn't like that at all!

CUT TO:

SAME SCENE - BUT: No ambulance or stretchers . . . Walter hops out of a cab, looking fit and healthy. Hilda steps out of the house, followed by Juliet.

HILDA Bill! I hope the trip didn't tire you.

WALTER Not in the least! (To Juliet) Hello! (Looks at house) What a splendid place!

INT. ILAM/WALTER'S FLAT - DAY Hilda and Walter stroll into the flat.

HILDA It used to be the servants' quarters, but it's very comfortable.

WALTER Oh, corker!

Hilda and Walter wander into another room . . . Henry struggles through the front door carrying Walter's cases.

CUT TO: EXT. ILAM GROUNDS - DAY (SCENE CONTINUES) Pauline and Juliet are finishing their grapes as they watch Hilda and Walter on the tennis court.

JULIET

Poor Mother was completely taken in.

PAULINE

Do you think Bloody Bill's trying to get into her draws?

JULIET

Too right . . . but he doesn't have a show! Nobody gets into Mother's draws except Daddy!

They watch as Henry scampers across the lawn after the tennis ball.

PAULINE

(Quietly) Poor Father . . .

JULIET

(Comforting) Don't worry, Gina! Mummy and Daddy love each other.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' MOUSE/BATHROOM NIGHT

Pauline is lying in the bath, writing in her exercise book

She turns the page and calls out.

PAULINE

Just washing my hair now, Laurie. Won't be a moment.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/CORRIDOR NIGHT

Laurie is seated outside the bathroom door. He is dressed in a bathrobe, and has a new change of clothes on his lap.

HONORA

is walking past with an armful of washing.

HONORA

Is she still in there?

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/BATHROOM NIGHT There is knocking at the door . . .

HONORA

(O.S.) Pauline . . . Come on, you've had enough time.

Pauline sighs.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/CORRIDOR - NIGHT HONORA

knocks harder.

PAULINE

(O.S.) (Facetious) Yes, yes, yes!

HONORA

(Angry) You open up this door right now!

Sound of Pauline getting out of the bathwater.

PAULINE

(O.S.) (Angry) I'm bloody dressing as fast as I can, for God's sake!

HONORA

(Angry) Open this door!

The door opens and Pauline strolls out, a towel around her. HONORA starts berating her. However, we only hear Pauline's V.O. as HONORA follows her down the corridor.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Mother gave me a fearful along the usual strain.

Pauline pauses by her bedroom door as HONORA continues talking to her.

CLOSE UP . . . HONORA

talking to Pauline, soundlessly.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I rang Deborah immediately as I had to tell someone sympathetic how I loathed Mother.

EXT. ILAM HOUSE - NIGHT Ilam at night. All the lights are off.

INT. ILAM/CORRIDOR NIGHT

CREEPING POV . . . down the CORRIDOR.

TILT UP to reveal . . . Juliet, listening intently to coming from behind a bedroom door.

SUPER: "23rd April 1954"

Juliet's hand reaches for the door handle.

INT. ILAM/WALTER PERRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT The bedroom door flies open . . . Juliet quickly flicks on the light.

ZIP PAN AROUND TO . . . Hilda and Walter sitting bolt upright in bed! A tray of tea sits on a bedside table.

JULIET

The balloon has gone up!

HILDA What on Earth are you talking about? Mr. Perry is ill . . . I've brought him a cup of tea.

WALTER Would you like one, Juliet?

JULIET

Don't try and fob me off! It's going to cost you a hundred pounds, or I'm blabbing to Daddy!

Hilda looks at Walter, appalled. She looks Juliet square in the eye.

HILDA Mr. Perry and I are in love, Juliet.



Juliet's eyes widen at this unexpected confession.

WALTER Hilda!

HILDA Your father knows about us. Until other arrangements can be made, we've decided to live as a threesome.

Juliet looks confused. Tears spring to her eyes.

JULIET

(Angry) I don't care what you do! Pauline and I are going to Hollywood. They're desperately keen to sign us up. We're going to be film stars!

HILDA What are you talking about?

JULIET

(Yelling) It's all arranged . . . we don't need your bloody hundred pounds anyway, so stick it up your bottom!

Juliet turns and leaves, slamming the door.

Hilda puts her head in her hands.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - MORNINGTRACKING BACK . . . Pauline is furiously cycling through rain and wind.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Deborah told me the stupendous news! I'm going out to Ilam as we have much to talk over.

INT. ILAM/HALLWAY - MORNINGPauline pushes the front door open and steps inside. All is quiet in the house.

Rain is pelting down outside.

PAULINE

(Calling out) Hello?

No reply . . . Pauline goes up the stairs.

INT. ILAM/JULIET'S BEDROOM - MORNINGPauline enters the bedroom . . . Juliet is lying in bed, looking pale and upset.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Deborah was still in bed when I arrived.

Pauline rushes over to the bed. Juliet grabs her and hugs tightly.

WHIZ PAN AROUND and FAST TRACK IN TO . . . Henry standing in the doorway.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Dr. Hulme asked us to come into the lounge to have a talk with him.

INT. ILAM/HALLWAY - MORNING Juliet is wrapped in a blanket. Pauline has an arm around her shoulders as they walk toward the lounge.

Hilda walks past and Juliet glares hatefully at her.

INT. ILAM/LOUNGE - MORNING TRACK IN . . . to a CLOSE-UP of Henry, sitting in a big leather chair.

HENRY Your mother and I are getting divorced.

Juliet is in shock. She clutches Pauline's hand.

MOVE IN . . . to CLOSE-UP of Pauline.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) The shock is too great to have penetrated my mind. It is so incredible. Poor Father. Dr. Hulme was absolutely kind and understanding . . .

Pauline's V.O. continues over . . .

A conversation between Henry and the two girls. The large lounge at Ilam is dark and cold. The mood is bleak.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) He said we must tell him everything about our going to America. He was both hope-giving and depressing. We talked for a long time and Deborah and I were near tears by the time it was over.

INT. ILAM/HALLWAY - MORN I NG Pauline's V.O. continues over . . .

Henry ushers Pauline and Juliet out of the lounge. He walks Pauline toward the front door.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) What is to be the future now? We may all be going to Italy and dozens of other places, or not all. We none of us know where we are and a good deal depends on chance.

EXT. ILAM/DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Pauline's V.O. continues over . . .

Pauline rides her bicycle down the drive in the rain.

Dr. Hulme is standing at the door, watching her go . . . a stoney expression on his face.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Dr. Hulme is the noblest and most wonderful person I have ever known of.

Henry shuts the door.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT Pauline's V.O. continues over . . .

Pauline is lying in bed, writing in her diary.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) One thing Deborah and I are sticking to: through everything, we sink or swim together.

INT. ILAM/JULIET'S BEDROOM - NIGHT Juliet is propped up in bed, looking sick and pale. Hilda is sitting by the side of the bed. Henry stands at the foot of the bed, hands behind his back.

HENRY Your mother and I have talked things over and we've made some decisions . . . I am resigning from the university and will be taking up a position back in England.

Juliet looks horrified.

JULIET

(Vehemently) But Daddy, you can't just leave me with Mother!

Hilda looks hurt.

HILDA We thought it best that you accompany your father. . .

JULIET

(Worried) Is Gina coming, too?

HENRY (Annoyed) Of course not!

JULIET

(Angry) I'm not going to England without Gina!

Hilda and Henry exchange an awkward glance.

HILDA You're not going to England, darling.

Juliet looks confused.

HENRY I'm leaving you in South Africa with Auntie Ina.

Juliet starts to tremble.

HILDA That chest of yours isn't getting any better. The warmer climate is just what you need . . .

HENRY For the good of your health.

Juliet opens her mouth and screams.

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT Pauline is crouched on her bed, hugging her knees. She stares intensely ahead.

PAULINE

(Intense) The Hulmes will look after me. They want me to live with them!

HONORA

Don't be so ridiculous. You're our daughter, you belong here with us.

PAULINE

I belong with Deborah! We're going to South Africa!

HONORA

You're not going anywhere. You're 15 years old!!

PAULINE

(Intense) You have to let me go!

HONORA

stands and walks toward the door.

HONORA

We'll talk about this when you've calmed down.

HONORA

pauses at the door. Pauline is slowly rocking on the bed, staring at the wall.

CLOSE-UP . . . Pauline's face as we hear her diary V.O.:

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I felt thoroughly depressed and even quite seriously considered committing suicide. Life seems so much not worth the living, death such an easy way out.

HONORA

Love, you can still write to each other.

HONORA

softly touches Pauline's cheek. Pauline winces, averting her face.

MOVE IN . . . to EXTREME CLOSE-UP of Pauline's eyes.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Anger against Mother boiled up inside me as it is she who is one of the main obstacle in my path. Suddenly a means of ridding myself of this obstacle occurred to me. If she were to die . . .

CUT TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY HALL - DAYCLOSE-UP . . . a cloth is whipped away revealing a portrait of Henry painted by Rudi Gopez.

Henry is on stage for the unveiling. He shakes hands with PROFESSOR 2. Hilda is sitting amongst various dignitaries on the stage.

PROFESSOR 1 is at the podium.

PROFESSOR 1 I can not begin to attempt to measure the inestimable value of Dr. Hulme's contributions to Canterbury College, both social and official. We wish both him and Mrs. Hulme all the best for the future.

On sound of large audience clapping:

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/HALLWAY - DAYCLOSE ON . . . black & white newspaper photo of large audience in the hall.

PULL OUT . . . to reveal newspaper story entitled "Canterbury College Bids Farewell to Rector Today."

PULL OUT FURTHER . . . as the CAMERA rises vertically above Pauline. She is slumped on the hall floor, holding the phone to her ear. The newspaper lies open beside her.

JULIET

(O.S.) (Through phone) Everything's going to be okay, Gina. Mr. Perry's promised to give me 50 pounds for my horse . . .

INT. ILAM/HALLWAY - DAYJuliet is in the Ilam hallway, talking into the phone . . . Walter and Hilda are visible in the lounge beyond.

JULIET

(Hushed) That's a hundred and twenty! It's another 30 pounds and we've got the fare!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/HALLWAY - DAYPauline looks very upset.

PAULINE

(Upset) It's no bloody good . . . I went to the passport office today. They won't give me one till I'm 20.

CUT between Pauline and Juliet . . .

JULIET

But that's not true! I've got one.

PAULINE

(Choked up) I need my sodding parents' consent.

Tears well in Juliet's eyes.

JULIET

(Sobbing) Don't cry, Gina . . . We're not going to be separated. They can't make us . . . they can't!

Hilda quietly looms up behind Juliet. She gently takes the phone out of Juliet's hand and puts it back on the receiver. Juliet struggles in Hilda's arms, pushing her mother away, screaming.

Pauline stands holding the dead phone.

HONORA

Yvonne.

Pauline turns and faces her mother.

HONORA

Please don't be like this, love.

Pauline gives HONORA

a cursory glance and walks past her, up the stairs. HONORA looks after her, a hurt expression on her face.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I did not tell Deborah of my plans for removing Mother. I have made no decision yet as the last fate I wish to meet is one in a borstal. I am trying to think of some way.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIEPERS' BACK GARDEN - DAY  
THWACK! . . . An ax chops into a log, splitting it in two.

HERBERT

is chopping firewood in the back garden. HONORA approaches him.

HONORA

I've just had Hilda Hulme on the phone.

HERBERT

What now?

HONORA

She says Juliet's in a terrible state . . .

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/LOUNGE - DAY  
HONORA and HERBERT are sitting with Hilda in the lounge.

HILDA She's uncontrollable. I've told her that Pauline is not going to South Africa, but she refuses to accept it.

HERBERT

and HONORA exchange a glance.

HILDA I expect you've heard the same from your own daughter.

HONORA

shakes her head.

HONORA

(Upset) Yvonne hasn't spoken to me for nearly two weeks.

HILDA Yes . . . well, it hasn't been an easy time for any of us, Mrs. Rieper.

HERBERT

She's cut us out of her life . . . it's been causing her mother and I a

lot of worry.

HILDA What I'm suggesting is that we let the girls spend these last three weeks together. We'd like Pauline to come and stay with Juliet, until she leaves.

HERBERT  
Is that a good idea?

HERBERT  
looks at HONORA  
. . . tears are running down her cheeks. He stands and ushers Hilda toward the door.

HERBERT  
Why don't I telephone you tonight, Mrs. Hulme?

HILDA Yes, of course.

HERBERT  
accompanies Hilda into the hallway.

HONORA  
breaks down into heavy sobs.

CUT TO:

INT. ILAM/HALLWAY - DAY  
The front door swings open. Pauline is standing on the step, framed by the doorway, suitcase in hand.

SUPER: "11th June 1954"

Mario Lanza's "The Loveliest Night of the Year" begins and continues over the next few scenes.

Pauline walks into the empty hallway . . . SUDDENLY!

Juliet sweeps down the stairs in a rush of sparkling light. She is dressed in her mother's glittering ballgown.

Juliet takes Pauline's hand, and together they sweep into . . .

INT. ILAM/LOUNGE - DAY . . . . . the LOUNGE.

Pauline's drab clothes transform into a ballgown as she passes through the doorway.

The song soars as they waltz into the middle of the ballroom . . .  
Pauline spins . . . in a blur she sees decorations and faces all around.

Pauline gasps as Diello takes her by the waist and waltzes around the room. Characters from Borovnia fill the room. Juliet dances with Charles.

A man in a dark suit turns around . . . MARIO! He launches into the second verse!

Pauline laughs happily as she is swept around and around.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) We realised why Deborah and I have such extraordinary telepathy and why people treat us and look at us the way they do. It is because we are MAD. We are both stark raving MAD!

They are no longer in the lounge - at some point the waltz has dissolved into . . .

EXT. BOROVNIA CASTLE COURTYARD - NIGHT. . . the courtyard in Borovnia Castle.

The crowds continue dancing to "The Loveliest Night of the Year."

A doorway in the courtyard . . . Henry Hulme is lurking in the shadows, peering out. He is dressed like a jester with cap and bells. The CAMERA PUSHES IN . . . to a distorted FISHEYE SHOT of Henry.

Pauline's V.O. continues, building in intensity . . .

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) Dr. Hulme is MAD, as MAD as a March hare!

At the conclusion of the song . . . TWO BURLY BOROVNIAN EXECUTIONERS swing their axes down, chopping a couple of ropes. A huge banner unfurls down the side of the castle tower. In embroidered letters three stories tall is the word . . .

MAD!

INT. CINEMA - NIGHTBANG! . . . a gunshot! CLOSE ON . . . Pauline's face flinching at the sound, a flash of light.

BANG! . . . CLOSE ON . . . Juliet flinching.

Black & white image of Orson Welles shooting a pistol from The Third Man.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) It was the first time I had ever seen It. Deborah had always told me how hideous he was!

Pauline and Juliet are sitting in the cinema, absorbed in the film.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) It is appalling. He is dreadful. I have never in my life seen anything in the same category of hideousness . . . but I adore him!

CUT TO:

EXT. CHRISTCHURCH STREETS - NIGHT Pauline and Juliet run along dark, damp, atmospheric streets.

Orson Welles steps out of the shadowy alley into the light. He leers at



them. The girls scream! They turn to run, but Orson looms out of another alley.

Pauline and Juliet squeal and run about. PASSERSBY observe their antics with some alarm.

INT. ILAM/HALLWAY - NIGHTThe front door bursts open. Pauline and Juliet run in, still in a state of high excitement.

They charge up the stairs.

INT. ILAM/JULIET'S BEDROOM - NIGHTPauline and Juliet tumble into the bedroom, only to find Orson lurking behind the door! They scream and flee along the balcony only to be greeted by Orson at the other end! They run back into the bedroom and collapse onto the bed, screaming and giggling.

PUSH IN . . . to Pauline's exalted face.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) We talked for some time about It, getting ourselves more and more excited.

A huge shadow of a figure, dressed in hat and cape, rises on the bedroom wall behind the girls, threatening to engulf them.

MUSIC SWELLS UP . . .

Pauline comes down on top of Juliet, kissing her on the lips . . . Pauline's hands slipping Juliet's blouse off her shoulders.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) We enacted how each saint would make love in bed.

Juliet heaves on the bed, Pauline leans over and . . . MORPHS into Orson Welles!

CUT TO INT. BOROVNIA CASTLE - NIGHTDiello thrusts and grunts, as if making love. He steps back holding a bloody sword. A slain peasant drops at his feet.

CLOSE-UP . . . Pauline moaning and thrashing.

CLOSE-UP . . . Diello swinging from side to side as he hacks a peasant to pieces.

INTERCUT WITH SHOTS of Pauline and Juliet intertwined with Orson and Diello. Pauline and Juliet sometimes change into their Plasticine counterparts, Deborah and Gina.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) We spent a hectic night going through the saints. It was wonderful! Heavenly! Beautiful! And ours! We felt satisfied indeed. We have now learned the peace of the thing called Bliss, the joy of the thing called Sin.

INT. ILAM/BATHROOM - NIGHTBATHWATER

Pauline and Juliet are soaking in opposite ends of a steaming bathtub.

A few moments silence. Juliet looks blankly at Pauline. A tear rolls down her cheek.

PAULINE  
I'm coming with you.

JULIET  
Yes . . .

PAULINE  
I know what to do about mother.

Juliet's eyes narrow.

PAULINE  
We don't want to go to too much trouble . . . some sort of accident.

A moment of silence.

PAULINE  
People die every day.

CLOSE ON . . . Juliet's face.

Silence.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. ILAM/GROUNDS - DAY  
CLOSE ON . . . Pauline and Juliet clasping hands.

PULL OUT . . . they are standing in the beautiful sunny gardens, holding hands. Both girls are dressed in pretty summer frocks.

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O.) Our main idea for the day was to moider mother.

REVERSE ANGLE . . . Pauline and Juliet walk toward the house. Unicorns are grazing in the Ilam garden. Fairies dance in the air. Large dragonflies hover around the girls.

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O.) This notion is not a new one but this time it is a definite plan which we intend to carry out. We have worked it out carefully and are both thrilled by the idea. Naturally we feel a trifle nervous, but the pleasure of anticipation is great.

EXT. ILAM GROUNDS - NIGHT  
CLOSE-UP . . . James Mason's photo lands in a roaring fire and is immediately consumed by the flames. Photos of Mel Ferrer, Michael Rennie and Orson Welles follow.

Pauline and Juliet are standing by a roaring fire in the Ilam grounds. They throw Mario records onto the flames. The black vinyl curls and melts. Their Plasticine figures are next. Globbs of melted Plasticine

drip amidst the burning debris.

It is clearly a strange, ritualistic burning. Pauline and Juliet watch the fire, enraptured.

JULIET

Only the best people fight against all obstacles . . .

Juliet squeezes Pauline's hand.

JULIET

. . . in pursuit of happiness.

WIDE SHOT of the fire.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) We both spent last night having a simply wonderful time in every possible way.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. RIEPERS' CAR/EXT. STREETS - DAYFADE IN . . . CLOSE-UP of Pauline's face. SLOWLY PULL OUT . . . to reveal HONORA and HERBERT sitting in the front of the car. They are driving home.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I was picked up at 2:00 P.M. I have been very sweet and good. I have worked out a little more of our plan. Peculiarly enough I have no qualms of conscience.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE - DAYHONORA

is bustling about the house, working. Every time she bends down, or leans over, Pauline is revealed behind her. She is helping, but the mood is one of a hunter closing in on its prey.

PAULINE

(Diary V.O.) I rose late and helped Mother vigorously this morning. Deborah rang and we decided to use a rock in a stocking rather than a sandbag. We discussed the moider fully. I feel very keyed up as though I were planning a surprise party. Mother has fallen in with everything beautifully and the happy event is to take place tomorrow afternoon. So next time I write in this diary Mother will be dead. How odd-yet how pleasing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ILAM/JULIET'S BALCONY - DAYJuliet is singing a haunting aria. Tears are welling in her eyes. The aria continues over . . .

EXT. OCEANLINER'S DECK - DAY BLACK & WHITE . . .Pauline and Juliet are happily bounding along the decks, pushing past OTHER PASSENGERS. They are wearing holiday clothes.

We see a repeat of the same OCEANLINER SHOTS that opened the film.

They run toward a MAN and a WOMAN.

JULIET  
Mummy!

PAULINE  
Mummy!

CAMERA MOVES toward . . . Henry and Hilda as they turn and happily greet the two girls. Hilda kisses Juliet, then Pauline on the cheek. Henry and Hilda hug the girls and stand together as a tight group.

MOVE IN ON . . . Pauline, looking radiantly happy. Pauline hugs Hilda tightly. Tears well in her eyes. She gazes at Juliet. Slowly their faces come together in profile, filling the screen. They kiss.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - MORNING Pauline opens her eyes and sits up in bed.

INT. ILAM/JULIET'S BEDROOM - MORNING Juliet opens her eyes and sits up in bed.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - MORNING CLOSE-UP . . . Pauline's bedside clock. . . 6:37 A.M.

Pauline is sitting in bed, writing in her diary. CLOSE-UP . . . Pauline's pen writing:

The . . . Day . . . of . . . the . . . Happy . . . Event.

PAULINE  
(Diary V.O..) I am writing a little of this up on the morning before the death. I felt very excited and the night-before-Christmas-ish last night. I am about to rise.

CUT TO:

EXT. ILAM/GROUNDS - MORNING LOW ANGLE . . . bricks, piled up beside the garage.

Juliet takes one . . . weighs it in her hands, then takes a smaller half-brick.

HENRY (O.S.) (Calling) Juliet!

Juliet quickly wraps the brick in newspaper and puts it in her satchel.

CUT TO:

Henry standing by the car.

HENRY Thought I'd lost you.

Juliet hurries from behind the garage. Hilda appears at the front door. She makes eye contact with Juliet and turns away.

Juliet hesitates and then rushes over to her mother.

JULIET  
Mummy!

HILDA You've got roses in your cheeks . . . I haven't seen that in such a long time. Have a lovely time, darling.

JULIET  
I will . . . I'm so looking forward to it!

Juliet gives Hilda a hug. Hilda smiles at her daughter.

HILDA Bye.

Juliet beams, turns and skips toward the car. Henry arches an eyebrow and shrugs at Hilda. He starts the car up.

CLOSE-UP . . . Henry's wristwatch . . . 10:33.

EXT. STREET - MORNINGTRACKING with Henry's black car as it cruises along.

INT. HULMES' CAR - MORNINGJuliet is sitting next to Henry . . . sunlight flickers on her face. She sits back smiling, eyes shut, looking radiantly happy.

EXT. STREET - MORNINGThe black car glides to a halt outside some shops. Juliet hops out.

JULIET  
Bye, Daddy . . . see you tonight.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN - MORNINGHONORA is mixing up some pikelet batter. Pauline is buttering bread . . . a great pile.

HONORA  
Whoa . . . there s enough there to feed an army!

The front door opens and Juliet comes into the kitchen.

JULIET  
Hello!

HONORA  
Hello, Juliet. Juliet take off her jacket.

HONORA  
Oh-what a nice outfit!

JULIET  
Thank you. I bought it especially, Mrs. Rieper.

MOVE IN . . . to clock . . . 11:05.

Juliet puts her bags on the table. Her satchel drops with a clunk. Pauline's eyes flick to the satchel, then up to Juliet.

HONORA

is bending down, pulling a tray of sausage rolls into the oven. Both girls look at HONORA silently.

HONORA

turns around and Juliet presents her with a brown paper bag.

JULIET

Fruit.

HONORA

Oh! I'll pop them in a bowl.

HONORA

picks up the satchel. Pauline and Juliet tense up . . . as HONORA puts the satchel on a chair.

PAULINE

Let's go upstairs, Deborah. I wrote the last 10 pages of my opera last night.

JULIET

(Vacantly) All right, then.

Juliet follows Pauline out of the room. Pauline has to nip back and grab the satchel.

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/PAULINE'S BEDROOM - DAYCLOSE-UP . . . The newspaper is unwrapped to reveal the half-brick.

Pauline is sitting on her bed looking at the brick.

Juliet stands beside her. She tugs at her collar.

JULIET

Do you feel sweaty? I feel sweaty.

Pauline opens a draw and pulls out a stocking.

PAULINE

It's a three-act story with a tragic end.

JULIET

Your mother is a rather miserable woman . . . isn't she?

PAULINE

I thought for hours about whether Carmelita should accept Bernard's marriage proposal . . .

JULIET

I think she knows what's going to happen . . . she doesn't appear to bear us any grudge!

Pauline puts the brick in the stocking and ties a knot in the foot.

PAULINE

. . . but in the end I decided against it. I thought it would spoil all their fun.

Pauline puts the brick in her shoulder bag.

JULIET

(Bitterly) Affairs are much more exciting than marriages . . . as Mummy can testify!

They both laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/DINING ROOM - DAYClock on wall . . . 12:16.

Pauline and Juliet are laughing loudly.

PULL OUT . . . across the table to reveal Honora, Herbert, Wendy, Pauline and Juliet in the middle of lunch.

PAULINE

It's true! He was spotted in the lingerie department, eh, Wendy?

WENDY There's nothing wrong with Sir Edmund Hillary buying underwear for his wife. He was a very nice man!

JULIET

I bet it was thermal underwear!

Pauline roars with laughter.

PAULINE

I bet he pitches a tent in the middle of their bedroom, and they have to pretend to be on some mountain!

HONORA

That's enough, Yvonne!

Juliet roars with laughter. The others don't laugh.

HERBERT

That man's a credit to the nation.

Pauline and Juliet dissolve into giggles.

HONORA

Right . . . who's going to help me clear away?

WENDY I will, Mum . . . anything to get away from Laurel and Hardy!

INT. RIEPERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAYPauline and Juliet are putting dishes away.

HERBERT  
I'd better be getting back. Bye, love.

HERBERT  
pulls his coat on. HONORA  
gives him a peck cheek.

HONORA  
Bye.

HERBERT  
Have a nice outing, you lot.

PAULINE  
Bye, Dad.

JULIET  
Goodbye, Mr. Rieper.

HERBERT  
wanders out. HONORA  
turns to Pauline and Juliet.

HONORA  
Well . . . I better make myself a bit more presentable.

CLOSE-UP . . . kitchen clock . . . 1:13.

INT. BUS - DAYCLOSE-UP . . . clock on bus dashboard . . . 2:23.

HONORA  
is sitting at the back with Pauline and Juliet bus winds its way toward  
the Cashmere Hills.

EXT. BUS TERMINUS/VICTORIA PARK - DAYBus destination sign rushes up to  
CAMERA and stop . . . "Victoria Park."

The doors open and Honora, Pauline and Juliet climb out. Pauline  
carries her shoulder bag.

VICTORIA PARK . . . a very bushy, tree-clad hillside.

JULIET  
Isn't it beautiful!

PAULINE  
Let's go for a walk down here . . . come on, Mummy!

HONORA  
spots a tea kiosk.

HONORA  
I'd like a cuppa tea first! Come on!

HONORA  
heads toward the kiosk.



Pauline hoists the bag back up on her shoulder.

CUT TO:

INT. TEA KIOSK - DAY Tray of tea and scones covered in jam and cream.

Pauline and Juliet are scoffing scones as HONORA drains her cup of tea. Pauline notices HONORA glancing at the last remaining scone.

PAULINE  
(Gently) You have it.

HONORA  
Oh, no. I'm watching my figure.

JULIET  
But you're not fat, Mrs. Rieper!

HONORA  
I put on a lot of weight over Christmas.

CLOSE-UP . . . clock on wall . . . 3:02.

LOUD TICKING . . .

Pauline pushes the plate to Honora.

PAULINE  
Go on, Mum, treat yourself.

Honora's will weakens. She picks up the scone and takes a big bite.

CUT TO:

EXT. VICTORIA PARK/BUSHY TRACK - DAY Puccini's "Humming Chorus" plays over:

Honora, Pauline and Juliet walking down a narrow, bushy track.

Pauline leads, with HONORA behind her. Juliet lags further behind.

They walk over a small bridge. Pauline glances back at Juliet. Juliet hesitates and then drops something on the path.

Several yards beyond the bridge, HONORA stops. She looks at her wristwatch . . . 3:17.

The music ends.

HONORA  
Yvonne, love, we should be going back . . . we don't want to miss the bus.

HONORA  
turns around.

HONORA

Juliet . . . button up your coat, dear. You'll get a chill.

Juliet slowly starts to button her overcoat, as she turns around and walks back toward the bridge.

Pauline is walking right behind Honora. She slips the bag off her shoulder.

They walk on.

Pauline stops . . . points at the ground.

PAULINE

Look, Mother!

HONORA

looks down at the ground in front of her.

STEP-PRINTED SLOW MOTION SEQUENCE . . .

MOVE I N . . . to a small pink stone lying on the ground.

MOVE I N . . . to Honora's puzzled face.

She starts to bend down.

Juliet turns around.

Pauline reaches into the shoulder bag.

Honora's fingers reach the pink stone.

Back of Honora's head.

The brick emerges from the bag.

Honora's hand picks up the pink stone.

Pauline swings the brick down toward Honora's head.

SOUND OF THE IMPACT . . . Honora's fingers release the pink stone.

HONORA

falls to her knees . . . raising a hand to her head . . . starts to turn . . .

LOW ANGLE . . . Pauline, hesitating . . . the reality of her actions have flooded in. She looks distraught, then, with renewed resolve, she suddenly swings the brick down toward CAMERA.

SOUND OF IMPACT.

INTERCUT WITH

EXT. WHARF/OCEANLINER - DAYBLACK & WHITE . . .

SHIP'S FUNNEL BELLOWS. Streamers float from ship to shore. Crowds frantically waving on the wharf as the liner prepares for departure.

Pauline pushes desperately through the THRONG OF PEOPLE on the wharf, trying to reach the ship.

She stumbles . . .

EXT. VICTORIA PARK/BUSHY TRACK - DAY

HONORA  
falls to the ground . . . blood trickling down her face. She's panting heavily.

Pauline swings the brick down again.

EXT. WHARF/OCEANLINER - DAYBLACK & WHITE . . .

SOUND OF IMPACT.

Gangplank hauled up. Docking ropes thrown off.

Pauline is frantic . . . she's going to miss the ship. She cries out . . .

EXT. VICTORIA PARK/BUSHY TRACK - DAYPauline swings the brick down.

SOUND OF IMPACT.

Honora's fingers scratch at the stoney ground. Juliet's feet are walking toward CAMERA in b.g.

TILT UP . . . Juliet looms over.

HIGH ANGLE . . . HONORA  
looking up at Juliet, her face imploring.

EXT. WHARF/OCEANLINER - DAYBLACK & WHITE . . .

Juliet, looking very upset.

PULL OUT . . . she is leaning over the rail on the liner's deck.

Pauline on the wharf, unable to reach the ship. She reaches out forJuliet.

Juliet reaches out . . .

EXT. VICTORIA PARK/BUSHY TRACK - DAYJuliet's hand . . . takes hold of the stocking. . .

Pauline's hands grab Honora's neck and push her down, into the mud.

Juliet swings the brick down.

EXT. WHARF/OCEANLINER - DAYBLACK & WHITE . . .

Pauline . . . screaming hysterically.

Juliet on the liner . . . tears streaming down her face.

WIDE SHOT . . . liner steams away from the dock.

CLOSE-UP . . . Pauline, sobbing on the wharf.

CLOSE-UP . . . Juliet, tearful. She slowly raises her hand and waves goodbye to Pauline.

JULIET

(Whispers) I'm sorry.

PULL OUT . . . Henry and Hilda are standing on either side of Juliet. They both put a comforting arm around their distraught daughter's shoulders.

CLOSE-UP . . . Pauline looking devastated.

SLOWLY PULL OUT from Pauline's face . . . she stands alone, sobbing.

FADE TO BLACK

PAULINE

(V.O.) (Anguished) No!

SONG FADES UP. . .

Mario Lanza singing "You'll Never Walk Alone."

A SERIES OF CARDS explains what happened subsequently:

In the hours following Honora's murder, a police search of the Rieper house unearthed Pauline's dairies. This resulted in her immediate arrest for the murder her mother.

Juliet was arrested and charged with murder the following day.

After Pauline's arrest it was discovered that Honor, HERBERT Rieper had never married. Pauline was therefore charged under her mother's maiden name of Parker.

In August 1954, a plea of insanity was rejected by the jury in the Christchurch Supreme Court trial and Pauline Parker and Juliet Hulme were found guilty of murder.

Too young for the death penalty, they were sent to separate prisons to be 'Detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure.'

Juliet was released in November 1959 and immediately left New Zealand to join her mother overseas.

Pauline was released two weeks later, but remain New Zealand on parole until 1965.

It was a condition of their release that they never again.

THE END

Heavenly Creatures

Release date: November 16, 1995

Directed by Peter Jackson

Produced by Jim Booth

Executive Producer: Hanno Huth

Co-Producer: Peter Jackson

A Miramax Films release of a Wingnut Films production co-produced with Fontana Film Productions GmbH in association with the New Zealand Film Commission.

PRINCIPAL CAST

Pauline Parker: Melanie Lynskey

Juliet Hulme: Kate Winslet

HONORA

Parker: Sarah Peirse

Hilda Hulme: Diana Kent

Henry Hulme: Clive Merrison

HERBERT

Rieper: Simon O'Connor

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Writing and Directing Heavenly Creatures

A Talk with Frances Walsh and Peter Jackson

Peter Jackson and Frances Walsh were both born and raised in Wellington, New Zealand. Jackson's first film, *Bad Taste* (1988), was made by the director over a period of several years while he was working as a photo apprentice at a local newspaper. Jackson's two following films, *Meet the Feebles* (1990) and *Braindead* (1992), were co-written with Walsh and Stephen Sinclair; the latter was a hit on the film festival circuit, winning 16 international prizes including a best

picture award from the

Academy of Fantasy, Science Fiction and Horror.

Jackson and Walsh (who had previously written for episodic television in New Zealand) co-authored the screenplay for Heavenly Creatures, which went on to garner nominations for both an Academy Award and a Writers Guild Award. Their latest collaboration is The Frighteners, executive-produced

by Robert Zemeckis and starring Michael J. Fox; it will be released in 1996. Jackson and Walsh live in Wellington with their son, Billy.

The version of Heavenly Creatures published here is a final draft, completed in March 1993. The screenplay was 107 pages long.

Fran, my understanding is that you were the first to become interested in the Parker/Hulme murder case as a film subject. It seems to be a popular topic in New Zealand.

Frances Walsh: Well, popular topic-I'm not sure about that. But it's certainly a piece of New Zealand criminal history that has entered into the realm of myth. And as a young girl growing up, I knew about it, and had read lurid newspaper accounts- "Lesbian killers' rampage"?

FW: Yes, yes. And I also got my hands on a novel called Obsession, which I read when I was about 14. I thought at the time that it was extremely good. [laughs] It takes a very damning view of the girls-it's written by two English journalists who came out here to cover the trial. It was something of a hack job that set out to sensationalize the case.

And there was also a play, wasn't there?

FW: Yeah, there's been a play, and there have been nonfiction books written about it. There's also been a great deal of coverage over the years in newspapers and magazines, so it's always had a profile here.

Since it had already been treated in all of these different ways, what compelled you both to explore the subject again?

Peter Jackson: Well, we didn't really think it had been treated that well. Nothing that we had read did we particularly like. And also, the other various treatments all seemed to have a specific agenda, which attempted to make political statements about the murder. What interested us was to show these two 15-year-old girls with no other agenda than to be as accurate as we possibly could, and to somehow imagine what was going on inside their minds.

I know that all of Pauline's voiceovers from the film are from actual diary entries. You made an interesting comment awhile back about how they actually informed the structure of the film. Could you elaborate on that?

PJ: Well, the structure was fairly apparent once we started to do research. It wasn't just the diaries themselves, it was the general research. We read as much of the diaries as we could-we haven't

actually ever seen the full, unedited diary-but we gathered as many of the excerpts that were released at the time of the trial as we could, which amounted to quite a few pages. And we read the newspapers, and interviewed people, and then the three acts sort of materialized quite neatly. You know, act one is when the two girls meet and become friends, and the turning point is at the end of the first act when you realize that they are now bonded.

FW: It's when they have their first delusional experience together at Port Levy, where they go into the Fourth World. You know these two girls have an imagination that's going to lead to something interesting happening. The second turning point comes with the decision to murder Mother, which tips

the story into the third act.

Whom did you interview to cull together all of this information?

PJ: Well, we went through about 35 or 40 people. We wanted to interview as many people as we could find. Several refused. We talk to about 15 or 16 of their classmates, which was experience. These were 55-year-old women spread out around the country, and they all had changed their names because they'd gotten married. It was quite a detective job to find them.

I read somewhere that the school was not particularly enthusiastic about this; did they help you locate the ex-students?

PJ: No, the school didn't want anything to do with it. Christchurch Girls' School had erased these two girls from their history. The yearbook that had the class photograph with Pauline is no longer available. If you go to the school library, they have all the yearbooks available apart from 1953's, which has her photo in it. It sort of cleansing of the books. The school didn't recognize what it was we were trying to do, which was to redress the issue. Why wipe these girls off the school records? I mean, they were human beings.

FW: Peter and Jim Booth, the producer of the movie, went to see the headmistress of the school, and after they explained what we wanted to do, and allowed her to read the script, her only comment was, "Why can't you make a film about pupils of whom we are proud?"

PJ: We also heard from several sources we interviewed that on the day after the murder happened, the headmistress at the time stood up in front of the assembly and said, "No girl is to discuss a certain matter." This was, like, the day after two of their pupils had murdered somebody, and they couldn't even refer to it directly. Forty years later, we got the sense that the school was exactly the same. And that really gave us all the more reason to make the movie, because we felt that these people were still

living in the 1950s. We found that with a lot of the people we interviewed-that even though 40 years had gone by, they were still presenting attitudes of the '50s: this was some dark, sordid little thing that was best kept quiet and should never be mentioned. Many times we got, "Why on earth would you want to make a film about this?" We should just forget about it, and hope it will somehow disappear."

And we actually thought about doing that. But within 20 or 30 years most of the people connected with it will be dead, and at that point in time we'll never know anything about it. We felt it was a good time now, while there were still quite a few people alive, to do the interviews and try to get something accurate, for the record. We were also aware of the responsibility we had, because film is such a persuasive medium, and we knew that, unlike any other medium—the newspaper accounts, the play—it can give an audience visual images, which, in a way, almost replace the real event, especially if you weren't born at that time. So we thought if we made a film now, perhaps people in New Zealand would look upon this case in a different way. That was a responsibility we felt that we didn't want to take lightly.

Pertaining to that quest for accuracy, how does one go about reconstructing, for instance, conversations between Pauline and her mother, or other scenes for which there is no direct documentation?

FW: Well, all you can do is attempt to find out as much as you can about the people involved—the type of people they were, their class background, etc. So to that degree, we spoke to people who knew the Riepers, for example, who had good knowledge of the girls.

Did you interview any of the boarders in the Rieper house?

PJ: Yeah, I did, very briefly. We found one of the boarders, who spoke to me on the telephone. I did the interview, and then the following day I called him back to ask him some more questions and he clammed up; he didn't want to talk to me anymore. He'd obviously gone home to his wife, and she'd

wounded him up about the whole thing and told him he shouldn't be involved with it.

FW: I think our understanding when we set out to write this was that we would never be able to re-create the right interiors, with characters who precisely reflect the people who were really there. Our intention was to be true to what we understood of the girls' friendship, and the nature of that

friendship and the nature of those families from which those two girls came. It was never an attempt to re-create reality. We could never do that, obviously. So we went into those things with the spirit of trying to reflect the situation, rather than reality.

PJ: The Hulme family were a lot easier to research than Pauline's family, because the Hulmes were public figures at the time. Henry Hulme being the rector of the local university, there were obviously a lot of university people we could talk to professors, students—who worked with him. Hilda Hulme was also quite a public figure. They were, in some respects, the royalty of Christchurch, because the English class system was and still does exist down there, and they all take these things quite seriously. There used to be garden and tennis parties at Ilam, and there were a lot of people who had social contact with the parents and Juliet at the time.

The research actually carried on through the shooting of the film. I



remember when we were in England, auditioning actresses for the part of Juliet before we found Kate Winslet, and we found out that [the late] Anthony Quayle, the English actor, had actually visited the Hulmes in Christchurch in the '50s, so we tracked down his wife and spoke with her. The research just kept on going all the time. We had trips to Christchurch to do our research, but once we started working on the film, we moved there

for nearly five months, so it was an ideal opportunity to find others. We'd hear things about this person who had sat next to Pauline in typing class, and we'd rush around to see them.

I'm sure the production got a certain amount of notice in the local media, so people probably approached you.

PJ: To an extent, but not as much as what we had hoped. Pauline's people were actually quite difficult to research, because they just weren't public; they were quite private people.

FW: We have heard, subsequently, that Pauline's sister, Wendy, has seen the film. She still lives in Christchurch. Her comments were that the film managed to capture the atmosphere of her home at that time, but her criticism was that the family was "better" than that, we had portrayed them in too shabby a light. And that really touched me.

PJ: She thought that the portrayal of the tension between Pauline and her mother was very accurate. It was nice, because Wendy is one of the few key people alive who refuses to talk about it. She absolutely refuses to have anything to do with journalists, with anyone, so it was actually very sweet of her to get the message back to us. It was quite amazing to us that she had even gone to see this film. She thought it was good, but incredibly difficult to watch.

In gathering all of this material, I'm sure there were certain things that didn't "fit" dramatically. Was there anything you were tempted to use but didn't, because it was either too sensationalistic or too ethically questionable?

PJ: There was one area we deliberately steered clear of that we felt ultimately didn't have a relation to what we were wanting to tell, and that was that in the Rieper household there was actually a younger sister, named Rosemary, who had Down's syndrome, who is still alive; Wendy still looks after her. At the time of the murder, Rosemary was only 8 years old. This made Honora's life all the more difficult: the daughter lived in a special home, and would come home on the weekends. Pauline writes about Rosemary a lot in her diaries; she was very fond of her. But it was one area where we felt that we were being too invasive into the privacy of this family.

As you say, there was quite a bit of stuff we had to leave out for structural reasons. Pauline's diaries are very, very funny. We ended up using a lot of the more dramatic material in the movie, in the scenes in which she's talking about murder and suicide, but unfortunately we had to leave a lot of the funny things out. She records hilarious conversations that she and Juliet had, and it's all very witty.

Sometimes we used diary entries and just dramatized them, as opposed to

using a voiceover. Like the sequence where they go into the Fourth World, where the hilltop changes into a magical landscape. That is described in detail in the diary. So it was a case of having to be very selective, and at the end of the day, it was the more dramatic selections that made it through to the movie rather than the funnier stuff.

The girls' sense of humor does manage to come through in the film, though. I'm thinking, for instance, of the last scene in the Rieper house, when the family is having lunch with Juliet before the two girls and HONORA

go to Victoria Park. Were their snide comments about Sir Edmund Hillary in the diary, or were they invented by the two of you?

FW: That was out of our imagination. We were told that they were extremely jolly at that last meal-it was actually in the court records-and that they were cracking jokes, and saying silly, outrageous things, on a sort of giggly high. And we knew that Wendy had worked at Farmer's, the local department store, and also what had been very big in the news that year was Sir Edmund Hillary, a New Zealander, climbing Mt. Everest. He had been knighted, and became a huge national hero; he still is. Because he'd also spent time in Christchurch, we felt that this was an appropriate thing for

them to send up, because whatever they did, they were terribly irreverent. If the Queen was visiting, for example, they wouldn't bother to go out unless it was to take note of the decorations, the pomp and ceremony, to enrich one of their own royal celebrations. They really had no respect for the icons of the day; their interior world was much more important to them.

The film critic for Time, Richard Corliss, likened you to a "physician who assumes a patient's fever in order to understand her illness." At what point did you two decide that this was going to have to be presented from the girls' point of view?

PJ: I think from the beginning. That was one of the motivations for doing it. None of the accounts we came across were from the girls' point of view. Like we'd said before, they all had other agendas, so we felt that telling the girls' story was important. It did take us a long time to be able to do that, because it took us a long time to learn who they were, and what was driving them. We were a bit confused-there was a bit of mystery at the beginning-but the more we read, the more we talked to people, we gradually began to formulate who these people were. Ultimately, there was a lot of Pauline that I could recognize in myself, which was very useful.

You, too, Fran?

FW: I felt that the diary offered the first insight into the friendship, and into Pauline in particular. It was an extremely interesting account of her life, documenting both dramatic and mundane events with a great deal of literary flair. She was a very imaginative, funny and clever young woman who had some quite pretentious ideas, as teenagers do, and I warmed toward her immediately. Reading the diary made me wonder about the huge discrepancies between this young woman and the monster who was portrayed in the newspaper accounts and

everything else. And I thought it would be great to take that journey to find out who she was. Because no diary of Juliet's survived-we have heard from people that she did keep a diary, but it was destroyed-I thought it would be harder to get to know her, but that really wasn't the case, because she appeared to be someone who more readily shared her life with people; she was much more of a social creature than Pauline. So it was a combination of the private world that they shared and the understanding that we got from talking to their school friends, in particular, that gave us insight into the nature of these two girls and the way they appeared to the rest of the world.

I think it's fair to say that both Peter and I felt hugely sympathetic toward Pauline and Juliet, and we did start to identify and empathize with them, all the while trying to keep in balance the knowledge of this terrible act. It was that dynamic, of really liking them, but feeling abhorrence at what they'd done, that kept the thing alive for so long in our minds, and gave the film inner life.

Peter, your camera work, in all of the films you've directed, is extremely dynamic. In 'Heavenly Creatures,' the almost hyperactive camera seems to have an organic relationship to the girls' euphoric state. I've noticed in this script that a lot of these camera directions are written in, with more detail than most other screenplays I've read. Do all of your scripts read like this?

PJ: In this particular screenplay, camera movement came quite readily during the writing stages. At the end of the day, the script is not the document we want to go out and sell; it's the document that the cast and crew have to read. When we write a script intended for me to direct, it's right from the beginning a shooting script; a document for technicians to use. You know, the grips put a circle around the word "DOLLY" so they remember on that particular day of shooting they're going to have to have it on the truck. With this movie, probably more than any other I've done, the camera moves were integral to the scriptwriting. I'll tell you where that came from: the music. We read very early in our research that Pauline and Juliet were both obsessed with Mario Lanza. Neither of us were familiar with his music, so we went out and got some of his records, and before we started writing we played through them and came across several songs that we really liked. One of the very first ones we heard was "The Donkey

Serenade"- FW: Well, we knew that was important to them because Pauline had named one of her novels "The Donkey Serenade."

PJ: When we heard it, just the life and vitality in the song immediately indicated Steadicam. [laughs] It immediately told you you had to have a moving camera. We chose all the songs that were in the movie, and, in the case of "The Donkey Serenade," wrote scenes around them. I found it a great visual tool. It's never happened before in anything I've done-I mean, I've never had the music in advance. We had these songs playing while we were working to get ourselves psyched up to write a scene. At the same time, the music helped me visualize, so that visualization ended up going down on the page. Of course, once you actually arrive on the set, and you have the actors and the camera people there, things can change. I don't regard anything that's written into a script in terms of a camera direction as being locked in stone.

How long did it take the two of you to finish a first draft?

PJ: Not really long. I think the first draft was written in probably 10 or 12 weeks. But we didn't start to write until we'd uncovered several months' worth of research.

And the draft we're publishing is the shooting script?

PJ: Yeah. I think that's about draft number five. We did an interesting thing. We did a certain amount of research first, while we were still working on *Braindead* [*Dead Alive in U.S.*], and then we wrote the first

draft from the position where we felt we knew some of the facts, but there were a lot of gaps. We thought if we wrote a draft we would know where the holes were, and we would know what we had to pursue in terms of research. For instance, Fran and I had never been down to Christchurch when we wrote this first draft, and Christchurch is such an integral part of the story. Then we made the trip down there before the second draft and were able to modify a lot of things, interview lot more people. We actually did that on purpose, because we wanted to nail the story before overlaying it with a lot of historical detail.

How do the two of you handle writing collaboratively?

PJ: Well, it depends. You know, if Fran's working on some re-writes while we're shooting, and I'm on the set, she'll show me some work that she's done when I come home and we'll revise it together, but generally, when we're actually writing the initial drafts of the script, it's always together.

I think that we both have a good understanding of structure, which helps, and I'm obviously very visually oriented, and Fran is very good on dialogue and character, so we complement each other quite well. I think the best advantage that we have in writing scripts together is that we write a script that I go and make, which is, I think, a wonderful thing. It would be a strange experience for us to write a script that someone else was going to make, because we've never actually experienced that loss of control that so many other writers have. So right from the very beginning, it's a movie. It's not a piece of writing that's going to go out to the marketplace and may or may not sell.

Just one little thing. Even though *Heavenly Creatures* was very much written by the two of us, my favorite scene in the movie was written by Fran by herself.

Which one is that?

PJ: Well, it was late one night, and we were hoping to finish the first draft of the script-it was, like, ten o'clock already-and we had arrived at the sequence in the tearooms where they're having their last cup of tea before they walk down the track. We sat there wondering how on earth we were going to write this scene. We knew they'd actually gone there to have tea because we'd spoken to this very elderly woman who had served them. She said they were talking quite calmly to one another. But what dialogue do you put in their mouths at this particular moment, when this woman's about to be murdered? Well, the

phone rang, and I got up to answer it and ended up stuck on this call for about 45 minutes, and I came back and Fran had written something. She asked me to check it out, and it was never revised: it's where she slides the plate with the last cake over to Honora, and says, "Go on, Mother, treat yourself." It was perfect.

I know you found Kate Winslet at an audition in England. How did you come across Melanie Lynskey, who played Pauline? I understand she was not a professional actress.

PJ: Well, it's one of those stories that sounds like it's not true. We wanted to cast someone in New Zealand, and we'd auditioned a lot of people-five or six hundred-who were either videotaped or photographed. I wanted to find someone who was young, around 15 or 16 years old; I didn't want a 23-year-old in a school uniform. And we wanted someone who was physically very much like the original Pauline; I have a thing about being as accurate as possible. So we quickly exhausted the professional actors in New Zealand who happened to look like Pauline-there's only about one or two. [laughs] We knew we were looking for someone with no experience, but we just had to find them. We kept saying, "Somewhere in New Zealand there's somebody who's perfect for this role." We were actually about four weeks away from beginning shooting, and we had one or two people on the shortlist, neither of whom we were happy with, but we were coming under enormous pressure to cast one of them, because, you know, the wardrobe department needed to make costumes, and so

on, and Fran said to me, "You're not really happy with the choices, are you?" And I said, "No." And she said, "This is crazy; we've spent all this time and energy on this film and we haven't found Pauline. This is something close to a major tragedy." I was in Christchurch, so Fran decided to drive with a casting person around the lower half of the North Island of New Zealand-she was prepared to drive as far as she had to. They'd visit every small town, go to the local school, visit the principal's office and show a photo of Pauline Parker. She'd say, "We're making a movie about Pauline Parker; do you have any pupils in your school who resemble her who might be interested in this?"

FW: We were in a rusting Ford Cortina, and we had no official I.D. We'd roll up to these provincial schools, and we'd be greeted by some curious teacher. Although no one ever once questioned our authenticity, we would always get asked about the car: "If you're in films, why aren't you driving

a Porsche?" [both laugh] So then I would pitch the story to the entire classroom, scanning the room the whole time, looking for sullen, brooding school girls, all the while thinking, "What would she look like with her hair dyed black?"

PJ: I guess that went on for about a week. Every night I'd get a call from Fran. Anyone that was vaguely appropriate was videotaped, and I got a couple of tapes in Christchurch, and it was a bit depressing. Finally, Fran called from a small town called New Plymouth, and said, "I think I've found someone very interesting. ' And this was Mel. We flew her down to Christchurch and gave her an audition and a screen test, and we cast her two weeks before the film started shooting. I called her mother up on a Friday night and said, "I'd really like

Melanie to do the film." And she said, "When does she have to start?" And I said, "Well, she's got to come down here on Sunday." The poor girl didn't even get a chance to go back to school to clean out her locker.

Do you think there was any correspondence between the two actresses and their backgrounds and those of the characters they were playing?

PJ: One of the things that we knew about Pauline was that she was incredibly witty and intelligent, and Melanie was very similar-she was the top student in her province in many subjects. And we knew if we cast an intelligent person, then they were going to hit it. Melanie's also very enigmatic. The character of Pauline doesn't have an enormous amount of dialogue. In a sense, the real Pauline Parker speaks for her, through the diaries. So what we were looking for was an actress who has that kind of aspect to her that's a real movie-star thing: where you can film somebody sitting in a room, doing nothing, and they're still fascinating to watch. We found that in Mel.

I've read that you used actual locations for some of this.

PJ: As much as we could. The only location we couldn't use was Pauline's house, which had been torn down. Fortunately, the school is now a community center; the actual school moved to a different location, so they no longer had control over the buildings; otherwise we'd have definitely been refused

permission. The school buildings are now owned by the Christchurch City Council, which has done nothing to them; they're as they were 40 years ago. They just rent out the various rooms to community groups. We found out what classroom Pauline and Juliet actually were in, and it was the Canterbury

Women's Embroidery Guild-it sounds like something out of Monty Python-and we went into the room and right down one length of the wall was this huge tapestry that had been stretched out on this massive frame. I thought they would never want to take it down, but we managed to get them to do it. So that was the actual classroom where they were, down to the seating. The Ilam house, where Juliet lived, is still there. It's owned by the university, and they were very happy for us to use it. As for the doctor's surgery, where Pauline is interviewed by the doctor, we found out the address, and-you know, this is 40 years later, so you have no idea what to expect-it was just, like, a suburban house. We thought that was strange, in that it didn't seem like a doctor's office. Anyway, we knocked on the door, and the woman who answered happened to be the doctor's daughter-the doctor's long since dead-and we asked her where her father's office had been, and she said, "Oh, he had rooms out the back of the house here; we've never really touched them." We went into this doctor's surgery which was almost exactly the same as it had been 40 years before. So we ended up filming those sequences in the actual room where Pauline was interviewed by the doctor. We also spoke to the woman who was working at the tearooms at Victoria Park and found out exactly where they sitting, and filmed that scene there. Actually, about two months later, that building was demolished.

And what about the murder scene?

PJ: Well, we went to the murder site, and we just felt uncomfortable about filming there. It was very strange, and maybe it was just our imagination, but it was very quiet, very tranquil. I mean, all the way down the path you hear the wind and the birds, and suddenly, when you arrive at the spot, you hear nothing. So we filmed the murder scene at Victoria Park, but it was on a different track, about a hundred yards away.

There is one sequence of scenes in this script which didn't appear in the film. It begins with the tennis party at Ilam, in which Pauline and Juliet are watching from behind some shrubbery as Walter Perry and Hilda Hulme play tennis.

PJ: Well, that sequence was actually shot, and exists in the version of the film that was screened here in New Zealand. When Miramax released the film in the U.S., they had screenings and felt that the film was too long. We had final control over the film, but they pleaded with us to take out about 10 minutes' worth of footage, convinced that it would be tighter. We looked at it, and we actually, ultimately, agreed with them in a funny sort of way. That sequence slows the momentum down. It's quite a fun one to

read-and it's fun in the film as well-but it does slow things down at a point where we didn't think things should be slowing down. Although we've had control over the film's release all over the world, we've requested that the sequence be cut out of the versions screened in every other country. When you're writing a script, a part of you thinks, "Oh, this is perfect, we mustn't change a word of it," but once it's finished it takes a life of its own. We felt that the sequence wasn't telling us anything we didn't already know about the characters, and at a time where the tension in Pauline's house was really growing, going over to Juliet's house to watch a tennis game was not necessary.

FW: I think when we wrote the script we felt it was very much Pauline and Juliet's story. After the edit, however, it became very evident to us that it was Pauline's story which was the through line and the audience's focal point. Whenever we veered too much into telling the Hulme story and Pauline wasn't on the screen, the pace started to flag. That was something we had to look at after the first assembly-we had to trim and cut Hulme scenes because they weren't as fundamentally interesting as the Rieper scenes.

Although this film is very different from Braindead, both take place in the New Zealand of the 1950s. I'm not that familiar with your country, but from watching these two films I would have to assume that it was, at least in that period, a fairly repressive kind of society, acting almost as a breeding ground for transgression, for explosive kinds of behavior.

PJ: Well, the script for Braindead was set in the modern day up until the very last minute. I was worried going into the movie that the hero of the film, named Lionel, acted in a fairly nerdy kind of way-he doesn't socialize, he takes care of his mother-and yet we wanted him to be the empathetic character in the film. I was afraid that if it was set in the modern day, the audience-especially a young audience-would really jeer at this character, and not be able to relate to him at all.

If we set it in the '50s, people might actually feel more sympathy for him, because they would think, "Well, that sort of thing happened then." With *Heavenly Creatures*, it was really just a coincidence that the actual event had taken place then.

FW: But that repression is still very much in evidence here: we're not expressive, we're not demonstrative, we're scared of showing, saying too much. When you go to New York, for instance, and people are yelling and the horns are blaring-if that happened here, someone would get out of their car, rip open your door and bash you up. There's a level of violence, a subtext of violence, running through New Zealand society that comes out in our movies. We have a veneer of being easygoing, but underneath, we're full of rage. It's an interesting social dynamic. and it makes for interesting art, but it's not so pleasant to actually live in it. It's very much to do with a link with England- PJ: Christchurch in particular.

FW: Christchurch suffers from it more than any other city in New Zealand. It's always been described as "a little piece England"; it's considered to be more English than England. It's always aspired to be that, and it still is in some ways.

PJ: The thing with this murder, too, is that the sense you get when you talk to the older generation in Christchurch is that it was an embarrassment to the city, that it was somehow shameful and somehow humiliating. Which is ridiculous, because the story is ultimately a family tragedy.

FW: It's been said that Christchurch was more appalled by revelation that Pauline's parents were not married than by the murder itself. And some uncharitable souls even suggested that one sinful act led on to the other.

Speaking generally about your films, you both seem to have a certain love of campiness, which is apparent in the use of caricatures for many characters, as well as in an overall sort of extremism reminiscent of the work of someone like John Waters here in the U.S. What's interesting about *Heavenly Creatures* is that while it remains a fundamentally "realistic" docudrama, some of the figures of authority, like the doctor, the vicar and the headmistress, are hilariously overplayed.

PJ: Well, I like movies to be entertaining, to be a little larger than life. With something like *Braindead*, obviously there's no problem doing that. But with *'Heavenly Creatures,'* we were telling what we hoped would be a fairly accurate story. At the same time, however, I still wanted to make a movie; I didn't want something totally tied to real life, and totally dull. So we did have a little bit of fun with some of those characters. I guess if you were trying to justify it you could say we were presenting them from the girls' point of view, but that's not strictly true. I just think that there were really only two people who we needed to be realistic with, and they were Juliet and Pauline, both of whom were slightly larger than life anyway. That's something that came across in the interviews with their classmates. They were remembered as being sort of terrifying: Juliet was so confident and loud, and Pauline was brooding and dark. So, in a sense, the film was a perfect one for us. I don't like doing stuff that's totally



naturalistic. I just like having a little bit of fun.

The fantasy sequences are written pretty much as they appeared on film. Were you aware of how, technically, you were going to handle these special effects as you were writing?

PJ: Pretty much. We hadn't used any optical or digital effects in *Braindead*, and with *Heavenly Creatures*, I knew that if I actually wrote digital effects into the script, then it was a great excuse to go out and get this new equipment—I have my own special effects company. So right at the beginning we wrote stuff that could only be done with morphing. We got one computer and hired someone to figure out how it all worked.

What about your use of the Plasticine figures? Was that something you'd heard the girls were interested in?

PJ: Yeah, we interviewed several people who remembered that they used to model figures in Plasticine, and I think HERBERT Rieper refers to it in his court testimony. We also interviewed an old guy who had been round to the Hulme's place and had seen Juliet's Plasticine horses on the mantelpiece.

And, of course, there are endless passages in the diaries about Borovnia, and Diello, the murderous prince and all of that. When we thought it would be fun right at the beginning to go into some of these fantasy sequences, the last thing I wanted to do was dress up actors in medieval costumes and

crowns and have them looking like something out of a school play. So we decided it would be really fun to tie the Plasticine figures and Borovnia together. And we knew they'd sculpted figures like Diello, so we just thought, why not have those figures come to life, as it were.

What about the linking of certain actors to certain figures, like Orson Welles to Diello?

PJ: Well, that was something that we devised ourselves. But again, that springs from the fact that the girls used to give pet names to people. Like one of the boarders in the diary, for instance, is referred to as John for a while, and then his name changed to Nicholas.

That's referred to in the scene in Pauline's sleepout.

PJ: Yeah, and for some reason, Pauline refers to him as Nicholas in the rest of her diary. That happened with a lot of people. They were clearly using real, live people as prototypes for some of their fantasy characters. We figured that Diello had a lot of qualities that they seemed to fear in Orson Welles. He seemed to represent some sort of dark, sexual force, so we figured that giving his features to the figure of Diello was appropriate.

Could you talk about the fact that, during production, Anne Perry, the mystery writer, was "outed " as being Juliet Hulme?

FW: Well, where do you start? We knew that would be a possible outcome of making this film—that someone might try and track down either

Pauline or Juliet. Which was a very good reason not to make the movie. We had more compelling reasons to make the film, however, because if we didn't, another one was going to get made anyway. There were, at the time the film was being funded, five competing projects in various states of preparation.

Didn't Dustin Hoffman have something in the works?

FW: His company, Punch Productions, I believe, had a script written by an American writer; Peter had, in fact, been very tentatively approached to read it, that was how we found out about it. At that point we were about a week away from starting to shoot. And then someone was trying to do a film version of the play we've already spoken of, and other people were developing a very politicized lesbian version of the story. Then there'd been a screenplay written by the late English novelist, Angela Carter, that was with a production company in Auckland, and there was someone in Australia developing a screenplay. So we knew that this story was going to come to the screen, soon--there was no doubt someone was going to make it. And we felt that, in that climate, we would proceed, despite the possibility that these women might be exposed. We knew that in Pauline's case it was less likely. We'd heard a lot of rumor and gossip about Juliet, but we'd heard nothing about Pauline, and I think she has very carefully hidden her identity. Juliet went to no such trouble: she took her stepfather's name--Hilda Hulme ended up marrying Walter Perry--as a novelist, and proceeded to write a series of crime novels. You can look up any contemporary author index in any library, and there is Anne Perry, and her birthdate is the same as Juliet Hulme's, her mother's maiden name is the same, etc. There is a gap in her personal history, where she leaves out New Zealand, but it picks up again after she left the country. So it didn't take a huge amount of detective work from the journalist here in New Zealand who had heard that Anne Perry and Juliet Hulme were one and the same.

That rumor sprang from a production of the play that had gone on here a year before we started shooting, where a friend of Juliet's, who was still writing to her, confided in one of the actors that Juliet Hulme was now writing murder mysteries as Anne Perry. That rumor hew around the acting community here in New Zealand, and it reached our ears on the set, and it was something that we wanted to entirely disassociate ourselves from, because we knew it would damage the film, and we knew it would damage us. It was inevitable that we would be accused of exploiting this woman's situation in order to promote the movie. When this journalist rang Peter and asked what comment he had about the story, he just begged her not to print it. Of course that was a hopeless situation, because she was a tabloid hack who was going to go ahead and make her name, and she has dined off it ever since. We felt an enormous amount of dread, because the movie hadn't had a chance to stand on its own before this was made known, and it's now been inextricably linked with this revelation. So we've been battling that ever since. But given that it's happened, we've had to deal with it, as she has.

PJ: I mean, we were absolutely disgusted by some of the ads Miramax ran. On the day that this was released in America, I rang Miramax and said, "For heaven's sake, don't associate this film with any of this because we don't approve of this publicity." And a couple of months

later, lo and behold, we

get sent by a friend in the States clippings with these ads saying, "Murder, She Wrote," and these other references to Anne Perry that Miramax had been running, and we were just very, very angry.

Did you ever consider using the coordinates of the actual event, but changing enough of the particulars to push it into the fictional realm?

PJ: No, because the case is so well-known in New Zealand; it would be like-

FW: Fictionalizing the O.J. Simpson case.

PJ: It's unnecessary. I mean, sure, if it was just a movie for international consumption, then, yeah. But the fact is that we weren't actually making this film for an international audience. We were very much

making it to try and rectify 40 years of misunderstanding about this case within New Zealand. In a way that was our main motivation for making the film, and in doing that, we obviously had to use their real names. But having said that, "Pauline Parker" and "Juliet Hulme" ceased to exist as people in 1959, because they both took different names. In a sense, I don't think there was any moral problem with using those names, because they themselves stopped using them some 30-odd years ago.

Were there any other films you looked at as inspiration before writing this?

FW: Well, we looked at movies like Let Him Have It, which was based on the Craig/Bentley murder case in England [Bentley was an 18-year-old with a low I.Q. who was hanged for murder]. Although I think that film has quite a lot of merit, in the end it comes across as a grim, dark, true-life murder

story, and similarly Dance with a Stranger, which was about Ruth Ellis [the last woman to be hanged in England]. We felt that if there was one thing we didn't want to do, it was to make a depressing murder film. We really wanted to tell a tale of a friendship, rather than a murder story. Sure, the movie ends with a murder, but for the most part, it celebrates friendship.

PJ: We wanted to make it a lot funnier than those films. And people have said, "It's such a serious subject; why did you try to make it funny?" Well, obviously the murder wasn't funny, and we never attempted to make it funny, but the friendship was funny. Life is funny: generally, human beings

like to enjoy themselves, and there was no doubt that Pauline and Juliet had a hell of a good time, most of the time.

FW: But the other reason why it was important that we tell this as a true story is that it has a kind of universal truth for anybody growing up. When you're at that age, you become very focused on things in an extreme way. And I don't think Pauline and Juliet are so very different

from anybody else; I think several things went wrong in their lives-Juliet's parents broke up, and Pauline became very alienated from her family (she was an obsessional manic-depressive character)-and I think it was this terrible combination of things that led to this extraordinarily horrible act. But it's not something that can be precluded from anybody's experience in growing up. Adolescence is such a crazy time.

PJ: A lot of women have come up to us and said, "I was Pauline. That was me. That was my childhood." I don't think it's that unusual. I think what is unusual about the whole thing is that these aspects of Pauline's character led to the murder, and I don't think the sort of person she was was particularly unusual or freakish or weird. When we hear things like that, it's the best possible endorsement we could get.

(Tod Lippy conducted this interview over the telephone with Frances Walsh and Peter Jackson, who were at their home in Wellington, New Zealand.)