

THE NIGHT WATCH

By Sarah Waters
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Cast

1. Kay Langrish (28-34)
 2. Julia Standing (doubles as Mrs Leonard) (28-34)
 3. Horace Mundy (doubles as Mr Wilson) (40+)
 4. Duncan Pearce (17-21)
 5. Helen Giniver (20-26)
 6. Viv Pearce (22-28)
 7. Robert Fraser (doubles as Cole) (30+)
 8. Mickey (doubles as Mrs Alexander) (30+)
- Mrs Leonard
Mr Wilson
Mrs Alexander
Cole

ACT 1September.Scene 1

FX Music. KAY standing. A table with a 40's phone upon it, and one other chair is set. KAY is rolling a cigarette, stoic, solitary. She is wearing a shirt and pants. Her trousers (part of a suit) are hanging to one side on a thin wire hanger.

FX This is a small room inside a large house next to an overland train/Tube in London, the sound and lights of which occasionally illuminate the room, FX murmur of the city outside/traffic - a distance away. FX a radio playing songs from the period 1947 as audience enter. A LIGHT BULB hangs with no lampshade, the element (as in old light bulbs) clearly visible. We spend time with KAY and her solitude, watching her roll her cigarette and carefully put it behind her ear.

The rest of the cast enter and stand around the rim of the space, holding articles of KAY's clothing.

KAY And through the walls I can hear Mrs Leonard.

 And I would have put my jacket on.

KAY is helped on with her coat. KAY jacket is dusted down, gentle holding her hand on KAY's shoulder (as if to comfort her) for a moment before returning to the rim of the space. KAY does not acknowledge her.

 My trousers.

KAY is helped on with her trousers, as the jacket carrying member of the cast returns to the side. She likewise places a hand on KAY's shoulder before leaving, this might be acknowledge, as she moves away by a brushing of KAY hands against her. Though there is no eye contact.

 Combed my hair.

KAY's hair is combed and then a mirror is held up for KAY. KAY cannot look at her own reflection and pushes the mirror away, looking up at the member of the cast in desolation. (KAY's first eye contact).

Again the same movement follows, either a hand on her shoulder or a brush of hand against Kays' hand before she/he returns to the circle.

And watched Mrs Leonards patients.
Her patients coming and going.

Music.

And. I can go out.
I can do this.
Without.
I can go and see a friend.
This day I could go and see Mickey.
And I can open the door
And close the door.
I can leave this room.

MR MUNDY and DUNCAN enter. Duncan supporting MR MUNDY as they walk.

MR MUNDY And we've got some flour.

KAY And close the door.

DUNCAN I think so.

KAY And leave this room.

MR MUNDY Was there any butter left?

DUNCAN Yes, a little.

They knock. FX metal door knocker. KAY clearly responds to the sound.

MR MUNDY We could have scones then.

DUNCAN (*correcting pronunciation*) Scones.

MR MUNDY Scones.

DUNCAN Scones.

MR MUNDY Scones.

Pause.

DUNCAN Scones.

They share a laugh, which is disrupted by MRS LEONARD welcome. They then fall back into seriousness. KAY stays remains on stage.

MRS LEONARD Come in, come in.

KAY remains, (NB they occupy the same space but are clearly in the next room). KAY listens. FX background sound fades but remains a continuous quiet background to scene.

MRS LEONARD *(to Mr Mundy)* Come in, come in.
So, how have you been?

MR MUNDY Oh you know.

MRS LEONARD How's he been Duncan?

DUNCAN Not so good Mrs Leonard.

MRS LEONARD Mr Mundy?

MR MUNDY Blinking nuisance. What can you do with me, eh. Put me on the scrap-heap.

MRS LEONARD Let's make you comfortable.

MRS LEONARD and DUNCAN lower MR MUNDY into the chair.

MR MUNDY Fine chance of that.

MRS LEONARD And Duncan, how are you?

DUNCAN Very well, Mrs Leonard.

MRS LEONARD It's good of you to come with your Uncle.

MR MUNDY He's a good boy. I'd be lost without him.

MR MUNDY is now seated.

MRS LEONARD Better?

MR MUNDY grunts.

So you're not feeling too bright?

MR MUNDY No not bright at all.

MRS LEONARD The idea of pain still?

MR MUNDY Can't seem to shake it off.

MRS LEONARD I see.
Have you resorted to false remedies?

MR MUNDY (*clearly lying*) No.

MRS LEONARD No? Duncan?

DUNCAN Well, it got particularly bad Mrs Leonard.

MR MUNDY It was only a little aspirin.

MRS LEONARD False remedies and spiritual treatment at the same time? That is 'like an ass pulled by two masters that goes nowhere.'

KAY mouths this well used phrase 'like an ass pulled by two masters, that goes nowhere'.

MR MUNDY It's only so awfully sore.

MRS LEONARD Soreness – is this chair sore, because it must support your weight? Why not, since the wood from which it is made is a material as the bone and muscle of your leg is material, which you say hurts from bearing your weight? It's because no one believes that a chair may hurt. If you will only not believe in the hurt in your leg, that leg will become as negligible to you as wood is, (*Pause*) Mr Mundy?

MR MUNDY Yes of course.

MRS LEONARD Ever Stand Porter to the Gate Way of Thought,
Mr Mundy.

MR MUNDY (*Stumblingly copying*) ‘Gate way of thought’. Yes, yes so
you say.

MRS LEONARD Forever at the gate way Mr Mundy – guarding
our thinking.

MR MUNDY Yes, yes

MRS LEONARD So it is Mr Mundy, so it is. (*beat*)
What Duncan?

DUNCAN Pain is imagined. That’s what you mean isn’t it?

MRS LEONARD Yes.

DUNCAN (*sotto*) Imagined...

MRS LEONARD Let’s begin.

*MRS LEONARD puts her head back and meditates, before speaking.
DUNCAN tries to hide a laugh, catches MR MUNDY’s eye, they both
hide their laughter. MRS LEONARD catches them both.*

MRS LEONARD (*cont.*) Shut your eyes Mr Mundy, and Duncan maybe you
would too.

DUNCAN Of course Mrs Leonard.

*MRS LEONARD goes over the MR MUNDY and touches his shoulders
gently, and then begins to speak as she holds her hands away from his
body and then, still with her hands at a distance moves down to his legs
and then back up to this neck and head.*

MRS LEONARD Listen, Mr Mundy, Listen.

MR MUNDY nods. She repeats her action.

MRS LEONARD (*cont.*) Feel your pain departing, replaced by His love.

MR MUNDY nods once more.

All that you think about your arthritis is untrue. You have no arthritis. You have no pain. You are not subject to these thoughts which hold illness and pain as a law and condition of matter. (*moving closer to him – whispered*) Listen to me, you have no fear. No fear.

From this point onwards KAY mouths the words. FX MUSIC lifts the Text. Maybe Kay's theme.

There is no memory that frightens you. No memory makes you think misfortune will come to you again. You have nothing to fear. Love is with you.

KAY stops with pathos and overwhelming sadness at the end of the sentence, "Love is with you." KAY mouths to self, as MRS LEONARD pauses "love is with you". KAY crosses her arms and places both her hands where the others have rested theirs (hugging herself).

Love fills you and surrounds you because it is in the very air that you breathe and in the bread and the water. Here, ever here, in the air that is all about us, a motion away, always.

MUSIC continues.

MRS LEONARD continues but in a whisper.

Love fills you.

We are all loved. See the light that is in you, the light that surrounds you, watch the-ever-after- of-always, the infinity of his love and forgiveness. Touch it Mr Mundy, hold it close, bathe yourself clean in such love, for he is with us always and forever. Cherished. You are Cherished, Mundy.

MRS LEONARD (*cont.*) And that love, and hope, and infinity moves

inside you, melting the pain, the hurt away. Look towards that light, look towards it, always, for it holds you close and dear.

No man untouched by such love.

MR MUNDY begins to cry. MUSIC eases and quiet city murmur continues. MRS LEONARD moves away from MR MUNDY so she is standing as she was and speaks gently but no longer in a whisper. KAY reacts to his crying amplifying her own sadness and isolation.

No mind has any power over you. I
 deny the power of thoughts of disorder over you.
 Disorder does not exist. I affirm the power of
 harmony over you, over every organ of you: the arms
 of you, the legs of you, the eyes and ears of you, the
 heart of you. These organs are perfect, do you hear
 me for he lives
 amongst us in abundance and you are the very light,
 the very place of that perfection.
 Breath in his light and love.
 For you are perfect. Dear Horace, perfect.

MRS LEONARD, stands and watches. DUNCAN bites his fingernails. MRS LEONARD might smile at DUNCAN in the pause. She then touches MR MUNDY's forehead, which is the signal that the treatment is over. MR MUNDY blows his nose, sits up, and re-adjusts himself. Silence as MR MUNDY and MRS LEONARD return 'to this world' – as it were.

Better? Good.

MR MUNDY nods and with a nod from MRS LEONARD, DUNCAN helps MR MUNDY to his feet.

MR MUNDY I forgot your money, I owe you from last, Mrs Leonard.

MRS LEONARD Next time, next time. And only what you can afford.

MR MUNDY You're kind, too kind.

MRS LEONARD And tonight, I shall include you in my evening benediction. Let us say half past nine. How would that be?

MR MUNDY Yes, yes that would be very good.
Yes, yes.

MRS LEONARD And I'll expect you next week, shall I?

MR MUNDY Yes, yes. Next week.

MRS LEONARD Good, good. So it is Mr Mundy, so it is.

DUNCAN and MRS LEONARD help MR MUNDY to the exit.

And no more of that aspirin.

MR MUNDY No, no. None at all. Rest assured.

MR MUNDY and DUNCAN exit. KAY exits the space that is her room. FX MUSIC/ SOUND the street, noisy London.

MRS LEONARD Bye -bye.

MR MUNDY and DUNCAN Bye.

MRS LEONARD watches after them and then exits, stopping for a moment to listen to KAY in the room next door. She holds her hand up against the side of the wall and calls to her. KAY does not answer.

Miss Langrish, are you in? Miss Langrish?

FX factory. KAY stays in the space.

MRS ALEXANDER (posh, enthusiastic, and overwhelming) enters, followed by FRASER.

MRS ALEXANDER (*entering*) This is the factory, Mr Fraser.

MRS LEONARD (*to self*) You were in. Not now. You've gone.

MRS ALEXANDER I've the perfect employee, in fact Employee of the Year, to talk to. He's a smart young man, very bright.

MRS LEONARD Good, that you've gone out.

MRS ALEXANDER He has a way with words Mr Fraser, and well
he'll tell you all about the factory.

MRS LEONARD Good, good.

MRS ALEXANDER I'm very excited by the article. Very.

MRS LEONARD exits. Into scene 2. FX candle factory (in next room).