

Wit is a 2001 American television movie based on the 1999 Pulitzer Prize winning play by Margaret Edson.

Vivian Bearing, played by Emma Thompson, is a Professor of English literature, renowned for her intelligence and wit. Her life is turned upside down when she is diagnosed with a highly advanced and highly aggressive ovarian cancer. Admitted to isolation in hospital, she will not experience life in the outside world again.

Faced with such an advanced illness, Vivian's oncologist, Harvey Kelekian, also a man of intelligence and wit, subjects Vivian, not only to the highest level of new and experimental chemotherapy treatment, but to the highest level of medical research and critical scrutiny. Leading to Vivian becoming no more than a guinea pig for the intelligence and wit, medical research and academic advancement, both of Kelekian, and his follower, Jason Posner, a former student of Vivian.

Faced with the prospect of her death, Vivian begins to reflect on her life. A life given to the relentless pursuit of academic achievement. And an unforgiving attitude toward her students. But now the tables are turned. She is no longer in charge. She suddenly finds herself, in need of mercy. In need of compassion. In need of human kindness.

An only child, Vivian had given her entire life to her work. To her intellectually stimulating, but highly competitive, and ultimately lonely, career. In her hour of need, Vivian has no family, or friends, to visit her. She is alone, in her suffering, and in the face of death. Save for the breathtaking mercy, and

tenderness, shown her by Susie, one of the nurses. Who alone among the hospital staff sees Vivian, for who she is. Not as an object of human ideology, or advancement. But as a human being. An individual, worthy of dignity.

Facing death, Vivian receives her only visitor in hospital. From her former university mentor and professor, Evelyn Ashford, played by Eileen Atkinson. Seeing that she is close to death, Evelyn climbs into bed with Vivian, and sits alongside her, to comfort her. To console her. To reassure her. Of the life that awaits her, on the other side of this life. Of the love that is with her, wherever she is. Of the God that finds her, whenever she is lost. Of the eternal life that awaits her, beyond this mortal life.

It is this future destiny, of the individual human being, beyond the grave, that defines who we are as human beings. That bestows upon us and every human being, an unfathomable dignity. An inalienable dignity. An indefatigable dignity. A dignity that cannot be extinguished, eroded, or lost, in the face of suffering. In the face of evil. In the face of death. Because it comes to us from beyond this world of suffering, sin and death. Because it comes to us from the future. Because it comes to us, from God. From the God who says:

‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts’.

With the resurrection of Jesus, the transfiguration of this world, in the illuminating power and glory of God, has now appeared in the world. In a sin dark world, the risen Christ is a light that shines. The light, of future hope. For ourselves. For the world. A light that shines, from another shore, into a dark

world. Bringing with it, the dawn of a new day. The dawn, of hope. The dawn that already now lights up the sky. The dawn, that gives wings, to love.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Amen