

ISABELLA ON A PAGE – PLOT SUMMARY

STANZAS:	SUMMARY:	KEY QUOTE:
I-III	ISABELLA AND LORENZO ARE IN LOVE. THEIR LOVE GROWS, BUT IT CAUSES THEM A MIXTURE OF DELIGHT AND PAIN.	<i>THEY COULD NOT, SURE, BENEATH THE SAME ROOF SLEEP / BUT TO EACH OTHER DREAM, AND NIGHTLY WEEP.</i>
IV-IX	THEIR UNREQUITED LOVE SEEMS TO MAKE THEM BOTH SEEM ILL, PALE, WEAK. LORENZO STRUGGLES WITH THE IDEA OF REVEALING HIS LOVE. EVENTUALLY, HE DOES.	<i>... BROUGHT HIM TO THE WEAKNESS OF A CHILD: / ALAS! WHEN PASSION IS BOTH MEEK AND WILD!</i>
X-XIII	FOR A BRIEF PERIOD, THEY ARE HAPPY. BUT KEATS IMMEDIATELY INVOKES IMAGES AND STORIES OF TRAGIC OR THWARTED UNREQUITED LOVE.	<i>EVEN BEES, THE LITTLE ALMSMEN OF SPRING-BOWERS, / KNOW THERE IS RICHEST JUICE IN POISON-FLOWERS.</i>
XIV-XVIII	ISABELLA LIVES WITH HER BROTHERS, WHO ARE DEPICTED AS CRUEL, PROUD CAPITALISTS.	<i>HALF-IGNORANT, THEY TURNED AN EASY WHEEL, / THAT SET SHARP RACKS AT WORK TO PINCH AND PEEL.</i>
XIX-XX	KEATS INVOKES THE ITALIAN WRITER, BOCCACCIO (MUCH AS HOMER WOULD INVOKE HIS MUSE) AND ASKS FOR HIS BLESSING.	<i>THERE IS NO OTHER CRIME, NO MAD ASSAIL / TO MAKE OLD PROSE IN MODERN RHYME MORE SWEET...</i>
XXI-XXII	ISABELLA'S BROTHERS NOTICE THEIR DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIP AND ARE UNHAPPY. THEY PLAN TO MARRY HER OFF TO 'SOME HIGH NOBLE'. THEY PLAN TO KILL LORENZO.	<i>... THESE MEN OF CRUEL CLAY / CUT MERCY WITH A SHARP KNIFE TO THE BONE...</i>
XXIII -XXVI	THE BROTHERS APPROACH LORENZO AND REQUEST THAT HE ACCOMPANIES THEM ON A JOURNEY. LORENZO SAYS A FOND FAREWELL TO ISABELLA.	<i>LORENZO, COURTEOUSLY AS HE WAS WONT, / BOWED A FAIR GREETING TO THESE SERPENTS' WHINE</i>
XXVII -XXVIII	THE BROTHERS MURDER LORENZO IN A FOREST AND BURY HIM.	<i>THEY PASSED THE WATER / INTO A FOREST QUIET FOR THE SLAUGHTER.</i>
XXIX -XXXIII	THEY TELL ISABELLA THAT HE HAS GONE ABROAD ON BUSINESS. BUT WHEN HE DOESN'T RETURN, SHE PINES AWAY AND GETS SICK.	<i>SO SWEET ISABEL / BY GRADUAL DECAY FROM BEAUTY / FELL, / BECAUSE LORENZO CAME NOT.</i>
XXXIV -XLII	A VISION (A GHOST) OF LORENZO APPEARS TO ISABELLA. IT DESCRIBES THE LOCATION OF LORENZO'S BODY AND TAKES PLEASURE FROM ISABELLA'S PALENESS. LIKE THE GHOST OF HAMLET'S FATHER, IT SAYS 'ADIEU!' BEFORE DISAPPEARING.	<i>SWEET SPIRIT, THOU HAST SCHOOLED MY INFANCY...</i>
XLIII -XLV	ISABELLA TAKES AN AGED NURSE WITH HER TO FIND LORENZO'S RESTING PLACE. KEATS MUSES ON THE HUMAN TENDENCY TO BE FASCINATED BY DEATH AND DECAY.	<i>... TO SEE SKULL, COFFINED BONES, AND FUNERAL STOLE... / AND FILLING IT ONCE MORE WITH HUMAN SOUL?</i>
XLVI -XLVIII	WHEREAS BEFORE SHE WAS BLIND AND PASSIVE, NOW ISABELLA IS A VISIONARY, ACTIVE CHARACTER. SHE DIGS UNTIL SHE UNEARTHS THE BODY.	<i>UPON THE MURDEROUS SPOT SHE SEEMED TO GROW, / LIKE TO A NATIVE LILY OF THE DELL...</i>
XLIX-L	KEATS COMPARES HIS STORY TO THE 'GENTLENESS OF OLD ROMANCE'. ISABELLA CUTS OFF LORENZO'S HEAD AND KISSES IT.	<i>AH! WHEREFORE ALL THIS WORMY CIRCUMSTANCE? / WHY LINGER AT THE YAWNING TOMB SO LONG?</i>
LI-LIV	ISABELLA TAKES THE HEAD HOME AND CARES FOR IT LIKE A CHILD. SHE PUTS IT IN A POT AND PLANTS BASIL OVER IT. SHE FORGETS EVERYTHING ELSE AND WATERS THE BASIL WITH HER TEARS.	<i>...IT DREW / NURTURE BESIDES, AND LIFE, FROM / HUMAN FEARS, / FROM THE FAST MOULDERING / HEAD THERE SHUT FROM VIEW...</i>
LV-LVI	KEATS CALLS ON MELANCHOLY, ECHO (ANOTHER TRAGIC LOVER) AND MELPOMENE, THE MUSE OF TRAGEDY. THIS SIGNALS HIS TRAGIC INTENT.	<i>SHE WITHERS, LIKE A PALM / CUT BY AN INDIAN FOR ITS JUICY BALM.</i>
LVII-LX		
LXI-LXIII		