

*The Director's note to leading cast before shooting started
London, 12th march 2015*

LOVE IS THICKER THAN WATER

Ins and outs, over and beyond

Dear Al, Alex, Ellie, Henry, Jess, Johnny, Juliet, Lydia, Remy, Robert and Sharon;

We are truly grateful that you're all willing to offer your talents to LOVE IS THICKER THAN WATER. We hope it will be an enjoyable journey for you.

To inform the core cast a bit about our approach and prepare you for our method of working we've jotted down some general remarks.

The overall theme of the film is *acceptance*; acceptance of the other, and acceptance of yourself. Each character in the story represents or reflects a different side of it, and hopefully all together will help to lift the veil of human behavior.

We believe this film will succeed if the characters are believable and radiate truth. Therefore we want to create room for your performances. This means –in general—that we will make long takes and not depend on heavy editing. It also means that we often will focus on just one or two characters in scenes with many people; the presence of the others is surely noticed but not emphasized. (US stars would now grind and say 'use my double', but a hand or a shoulder or a profile can reveal a lot) All characters will in turn become the focus point in specific scenes; not always the person who's talking, because regularly someone who doesn't talk can be more interesting from a dramatic point of view.

As you know two directors will helm this film. Emily and Ate have in pre-production worked completely collaboratively and will continue to do so during the shoot. However on the set their tasks will be more defined. Ate will concentrate on the actors, and Emily on the visualization. Of course film acting is in a way a dance with the camera, and we'll make sure not to build a wall between the acting talent and the technique.

What we try to do is give the actors the freedom to perform with as little technical restrictions as we can. The camera assumes an independent position; not just registers what happens in front of the lens, but acts as a curious observer, an investigator, an intruder almost who interprets the story in a personal way.

The physical freedom will sometimes be reigned in by asking you to adhere to a pre-conceived blocking designed with the psychology in mind. (It may be hard if George for instance wants to sit in a chair while he should rest in his coffin – I kid you not an actress once refused something similar in a film I made 25 years ago)

As directors we like to stimulate spontaneity. During rehearsals we don't expect the actors to go full force. Please save your 'outburst' till the camera is running. We will not make many takes, preferably just one, perhaps two, if we need more, spontaneity will suffer and won't return till take fifteen (and our tight schedule won't allow for that). A hesitation in a sentence –if in character—is a bonus and not a flaw.

As most of you know, we are not anal about the dialogue as we see the dialogue as another form of expression, an extension of body language that should reveal subtext and not be a goal in itself. But this doesn't mean the written word has no value. It does. We encourage you to steal the character away from the pages and reflect what you feel is valuable. If you mould the words to your mouth we encourage that, as long as it respects the intention, and the position of your fellow actors. And be assured, when you change something and we don't agree, you will hear our opinion, as we want to be a mirror without veneer.

While the technique prepares under the supervision of Emily, Ate will rehearse off set – when possible and appropriate—with the actors to find the best dramatic approach so we use the available time in the best way and the actors can walk on set fully ready to deliver.

It is a relatively short shoot and we have to be in top form from day one. There will be time pressure, but we'll come to the set prepared and will try to maximize our given opportunities. The strength of this film, we think, will be in the truth of the soul of the ensemble.

Let it be an enjoyable and artistically satisfying experience.

Always

Ate and Emily