

**The Trial – conclusion (from A Screenplay of E.M.Forster's A PASSAGE TO INDIA by David Lean)**

ADELA Isn't it strange? Rather wonderful.

RONNY (practical) I thought they'd try something like this. Poor old Das.

**658** CLOSE SHOT. The BAILIFF suddenly bangs his staff on the floor in a series of hammer strokes.

**659** LONG SHOT. Everyone becomes silent. From outside the distant chant continues.

AMRITRAO (with quiet dignity) I apologize for my colleague. He is an intimate friend of our client, and his feelings have carried him away.

DAS Mr Mahmoud Ali will have to apologize in person.

AMRITRAO Exactly, sir, he must.

DAS I must repeat that as a witness Mrs Moore does not exist. Neither you Mr Amritrao, nor Mr McBryde you, have any right to surmise what that lady would have said. (with emphasis) She is not here, and consequently she can say nothing. CUT

**660** CLOSE SHOT. DAWN. MRS MOORE's body, wrapped in white canvas and secured' by rope, lies on a board at the STERN of the SHIP. On SOUND the chant continues high above the deep throb of the ship's engines. The VOICE of the CHAPLAIN comes over:

CHAPLAIN (V.O.) Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts: shut not thy merciful ears to our prayer.

CHANT Esmiss Esmoor - Esmiss Esmoor.

**661** MEDIUM CLOSE. Two SEAMEN stand at the head of the body and two at the RAIL. Two OFFICERS are present together with the BOATSWAIN, an OLD LADY PASSENGER and a small group of LASKARS who have stopped their work of swabbing down the deck.

CHAPLAIN We therefore commit her body to the deep, to be turned into corruption.

CHANT Esmiss Esmoor - Esmiss Esmoor.

The SEAMEN at the head are lifting the board slowly upwards above their shoulders. The body begins to slide:

CHAPLAIN Looking for the resurrection of the body, when the sea shall give up her dead.

**662** CLOSE SHOT. The LASKARS watch indifferently as the body goes over the side.

**663** CLOSE SHOT. The two SEAMEN lower the empty board.

**664** CLOSE SHOT. The OLD LADY steps up to the rail, raises a small floral WREATH in both her hands and throws it over.

**665** MEDIUM SHOT. The WREATH falls into the wake. The CAMERA pans up with it as it floats away, the CHAPLAIN's voice continuing: CHAPLAIN (V. O.) I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, from henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.

The CAMERA is now showing a LONG SHOT of the wake leading to the horizon, the WREATH lost to view. CUT

**666** CLOSE UP. ADELA sits in the COURT looking straight in front of her. She hears McBRYDE'S VOICE, unnaturally loud and commanding:

McBRYDE (V.O.) I now call upon Miss Quedsted!

His voice echoes a little, as if he might be in the cave. ADELA drifts to her feet in slightly dreamlike SLOW MOTION.

**667** CLOSE SHOT from her point of view. AZIZ looks down at her, a little distorted. The CAMERA moves on.

**668** CLOSE SHOT. ADELA turning away, walking across the COURT, the CAMERA tracking with her. She sees:

**669** CLOSE TRACKING. FACES staring up at her. An artificial silence except for her echoing FOOTSTEPS.

**670** CLOSE TRACKING. ADELA looks from the faces to: **671** CLOSE TRACKING. DAB looking down at her, owl-eyed.

**672** CLOSE TRACKING. The WITNESS BOX approaching, twisting across SCREEN as she goes up the steps.

**673** CLOSE SHOT. ADELA coming to a standstill in the WITNESS BOX. She looks down:

**674** CLOSE SHOT. The Indian CLERK of the court reaches up with a BIBLE which comes into unnaturally big CLOSE UP.

CLERK Put your hand on .....

**675** CLOSE SHOT. The PUNKAH swings, backwards and forwards.

**676** CLOSE UP. ADELA, her hair ruffled by the draught.

ADELA . . . and nothing but the truth.

**677** MEDIUM CLOSE. The SCREEN filled by the expectant faces of the English contingent.

**678** MEDIUM SHOT. The CLERK takes the Bible from ADELA and goes. There is a little upsurge of whispering and comment.

DAS Quiet please. Silence.

**679** CLOSE SHOT. McBRYDE arranges his notes, looks around, rises.

McBRYDE Now, Miss Quedsted, I would like. to take you back to the moment when you came out of that first cave and found Mrs Moore collapsed in her chair. Are you with me?

**680** CLOSE UP. ADELA answers steadily: ADELA Yes.

**681** MEDIUM SHOT.

McBRYDE Did she offer any explanation?

ADELA She said she was upset by the echo - and that she was tired.

McBRYDE And taking advantage of her distress and fatigue prisoner instructed the villagers and servants to remain behind and took you off alone with the guide?

ADELA Yes. But it was at Mrs Moore's suggestion.

McBRYDE I don't quite follow.

ADELA She had been worried by the crowd and the stuffiness.

McBRYDE And was concerned that you might be subjected to the same ordeal.

ADELA hesitates, not liking the. implication. ADELA No. She wanted us to enjoy ourselves - she said so. She likes Doctor Aziz.

**682** CLOSE UP. AZIZ smiles through his anxiety. A murmur of appreciation comes from the Indian onlookers.

**683** MEDIUM SHOT. McBRYDE collects himself. McBRYDE I think I understand the situation. Mr Fielding said yesterday that Mrs Moore was what he described as, "charmed", by him.

ADELA It was more than that. She liked him.

McBRYDE Nevertheless, she had only met him on two occasions before the day of the crime.

ADELA Yes.

McBRYDE So it might possibly have been a rather impetuous assessment?

ADELA Possibly. (affectionately) She's like that.

McBRYDE Now, Miss Quested, you heard this morning the slur cast on British justice by the defence. It is most important that you tell the court the absolute truth of what took place - painful as it may be.

ADELA I was brought up to tell the truth.

McBRYDE Of course -

He is about to proceed but ADELA is pouring out a glass of water. Everyone waits as she drinks and replaces the glass.

ADELA I'm sorry.

McBRYDE That's quite all right.

He pauses like a tennis player about to serve. ADELA unconsciously raises her hands and grips the rail.

McBRYDE Now, Miss Quested, you went off up the slope with the prisoner and the guide?

**684** CLOSE UP. ADELA listening to him with great attention.

ADELA Yes.

McBRYDE (V.O.) Take your time, and cast your mind back.

ADELA nods and looks down, thinking. CUT

**685** CLOSE UP. AZIZ and ADELA's hands clasped together on their way up the SLOPE. CUT

**686** CLOSE UP. ADELA in the courtroom. McBRYDE'S VOICE: McBRYDE (V.O.) Miss Quested ?

She looks up, glances at AZIZ, then back to McBRYDE.

**687** MEDIUM SHOT. McBRYDE smiles at her reassuringly.

McBRYDE We were going up the slope - (hesitates) Is something wrong?

ADELA I think it may have been partly my fault.

McBRYDE Please explain.

ADELA we had stopped to look out over the plain. It's so big I could hardly see Chandrapore -

**688** CLOSE UP. RONNY watching her uneasily.

ADELA (V.O.) - except through Mr Heaslop's binoculars.

**689** MEDIUM CLOSE. ADELA hesitates.

ADELA I asked Doctor Aziz if he loved his wife when he married her. I shouldn't have done that.

DAS leans forward and asks gently: DAS Then why did you do it? Another painful hesitation.

ADELA I was thinking of my own marriage - we had only just become engaged. Looking at Chandrapore, so far away, I realized I didn't really love him.

**690** CLOSE SHOT. RONNY looks down at the floor. The TURTONS stare at the back of his neck. A low buzz of comment. DAS calls for quiet.

**691** CLOSE SHOT. The PUNKAH-WALLAH pulling on his rope completely unaware of the tense atmosphere.

**692** CLOSE UP. ADELA raises her head to the PUNKAH as if coming up for air.

**693** CLOSE SHOT. FIELDING looking at her intently. DAS'S VOICE: DAS (V.O.) Mr McBryde -

**694** MEDIUM CLOSE. McBRYDE is drinking a glass of water. He replaces it on the table and turns to ADELA determined to get back on course.

McBRYDE Now, Miss Quested. You and the prisoner continued up to the caves.

ADELA Yes.

McBRYDE Where was the guide?

ADELA He had gone on ahead.

McBRYDE Sent on ahead?

ADELA No. He was sitting waiting for us further along the ledge.

McBRYDE But when you arrived at the caves, prisoner left you and went to speak to the guide?

ADELA I don't know if he spoke to him or not.

McBRYDE But he left you and went off in his direction.

ADELA Yes.

McBRYDE And what did you do?

ADELA I waited. CUT

**695** CLOSE SHOT. ADELA leans back against the cliff face beside the black entrance to the CAVE, exactly as we saw before, but the VOICES from the COURTROOM continue over:

DAS (V.O.) Mr McBryde is suggesting that Doctor Aziz was preparing the way for the crime of which he is accused. You understand that?

ADELA (V.O.) Yes.

DAS (V.O.) You said just now, "I think it may have been partly my fault". Why?

ADELA, standing by the entrance to the cave, turns and looks moodily in the direction of AZIZ. Her voice replies: ADELA (V.O.) I had asked him about love.

DAS (V.O.) And had thereby introduced a feeling of - intimacy?

ADELA (V.O.) That is what I meant. CUT

**696** CLOSE SHOT. FACES of the BRITISH CONTINGENT appear to be looking at her standing by the cave. They gape open-mouthed at the admission.

DAS (V.O.) Thank you, Mr McBryde -

**697** CLOSE SHOT. ADELA in the WITNESS BOX.

McBRYDE (V.O.) You waited outside the cave for several minutes. Then you went into it - alone.

ADELA Yes.

McBRYDE (V.O.) Please tell the court exactly what happened.

ADELA looks straight in front of her, concentrating. ADELA I lit a match. CUT

**698** CLOSE SHOT. ADELA in the CAVE. She lights the match, as before, and looks around as its snake-like echo chases around the walls. CUT

**699** CLOSE UP. ADELA in the COURT watching herself in the CAVE. The echo fades and she turns to McBRYDE:

ADELA As soon as the echo died away I heard him calling my name. CUT

**700 MEDIUM SHOT.** The TUNNEL and the entrance to the cave outlined against a white glare of daylight. The distant VOICE of AZIZ:

AZIZ (V.O.) Miss Quested —?

**701 CLOSE SHOT.** ADELA immediately becomes uncertain and fearful. She blows out the match.

ADELA (V.O. ) Then I heard his footsteps approaching.

The footsteps and their echo as before. The footsteps stop and she holds her breath, looking at:

**702 MEDIUM CLOSE.** The black silhouette of AZIZ framed in the entrance. He peers in and calls:

AZIZ Miss Quested — ? CUT

**703 CLOSE UP.** ADELA in the WITNESS BOX staring at her memory of AZIZ in the entrance. Standing there in the COURT she is engulfed by the echo of her name, and again she sees: CUT

**704 MEDIUM CLOSE.** AZIZ in the entrance. McBRYDE'S VOICE can just be heard above the echo:

McBRYDE (V.O.) And the prisoner followed you ? CUT

**705 BIG CLOSE UP.** ADELA in the WITNESS BOX staring at her memory of AZIZ in the entrance. McBRYDE'S VOICE, more forceful: McBRYDE (V.O.) The prisoner followed you, didn't he?

She lowers her head and closes her eyes exactly as she did in the CAVE.

**706 MEDIUM SHOT.** McBRYDE, his assistants and people in the court staring at her.

**707 CLOSE UP.** ADELA manages to raise her head and open her eyes.

ADELA May I please have a minute, before I reply to that, Mr McBryde?

McBRYDE (V.O.) Certainly.

Feeling the strength of concentration on her, ADELA looks round the COURT. She finds herself looking at:

**708 CLOSE UP.** AZIZ staring at her, his whole future in. the balance.

**709 CLOSE UP.** ADELA looking at him. Then she turns back to McBRYDE.

ADELA I am not - I am not quite sure.

**710 CLOSE UP** McBRYDE. McBRYDE I beg your pardon ?

A wave of fear passes through him. Then he says firmly: McBRYDE You are in the cave. (louder) And the prisoner followed you.

**711 CLOSE UP.** ADELA pauses for a moment. Then shakes her head.

**712 CLOSE SHOT.** FIELDING rises to his feet. On SOUND a distant rumble of thunder. He glances at McBRYDE, hears him say:

McBRYDE (V.O.) What - what do you mean please ?

**713 CLOSE SHOT.** ADELA She says flatly: ADELA No -

The CAMERA is moving imperceptibly closer. DAS' voice: DAS (V.O.) What is that - what are you saying?

ADELA I'm afraid I have made a mistake.

DAS (V.O.) What nature of mistake?

She is now in CLOSE UP. ADELA Doctor Aziz never followed me into the cave.

**714 CLOSE SHOT.** AZIZ stands quickly to his feet.

**715 MEDIUM CLOSE.** McBRYDE glances around the court. People are just beginning to appreciate what is happening.

McBRYDE Now, Miss Quested, let us go on. (seizes a document from the table) I will read you the deposition which you signed when you arrived back with Mrs Callendar -

**716 CLOSE SHOT.** DAS is leaning over his desk towards him.

DAS Mr McBryde, you cannot go on. I was speaking to the witness. And the public will be silent. (turns to Adela) Miss Quested, address your remarks to me -

**717 CLOSE SHOT.** ADELA listening to him. DAS (V .O.) And remember you speak on oath, Miss Quested.

ADELA Doctor Aziz never -

**718 CLOSE SHOT.** CALLENDAR leaps to his feet, red-faced.

CALLENDAR I stop these proceedings on medical grounds

**719 CLOSE UP.** ADELA turns in his direction. A commotion is starting.

**720 MEDIUM SHOT.** The ENGLISH are rising from their chairs, the Indians too. The noise increases.

**721 CLOSE SHOT.** DAS in sear and dread that order is about to pass out of his control.

DAS Order! Quiet - Only a slight response. He turns to Adela shouting.

DAS You withdraw the charge, Miss Quested ? Answer me -! This produces a slight lull.

**722 CLOSE SHOT** ADELA. A last effort. ADELA I withdraw everything. The noise starts again.

**723 CLOSE SHOT.** HAMIDULLAH pushes back his chair, jumps to his feet and runs towards the door. People are screaming, weeping, kissing.

**724 CLOSE UP.** DAS near the end of his strength calls above the hubbub:

DAS The prisoner is released without one stain on his character.

**725 CLOSE SHOT.** AZIZ collapses into his chair with a thump.

**726 MEDIUM CLOSE.** Outside, HAMIDULLAH runs to the top of the COURTHOUSE STEPS. He yells to the CROWD for silence. Then at the top of his voice, in Urdu: HAMIDULLAH Doctor Aziz is free - -

**727 LONG SHOT.** -The CROWD let out a triumphal roar. Then they break the POLICE CORDON.

**728 CLOSE SHOT.** ADELA in the WITNESS BOX looking around the turmoil.

**729 CLOSE SHOT.** McBRYDE steps up to her; beside himself. McBRYDE Are you mad?

**730 CLOSE UP.** ADELA looking down at him. ADELA (quietly) No.

**731 CLOSE UP.** McBRYDE stares at her, turn and goes.

**732 CLOSE SHOT.** ADELA feels suddenly drained of energy. She turns and slumps into a chair. She sits looking up at:

**733 MEDIUM CLOSE.** The SKYLIGHT in the roof. A loud crack of THUNDER.

Behind the dusty glass a great bank of billowing CLOUD.

**734 CLOSE UP.** ADELA watches as:

**735 CLOSE SHOT.** Big drops of RAIN begin to spatter the DUST and wash it away.

**736 CLOSE UP.** ADELA looking at the rain, somehow comforted by it. Then a great yelling and shouting approaches.