# A Passage to India

## INTRODUCTION

### BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF E.M. FORSTER

E. M. Forster was born into a middle-class family in London. As a child, he inherited a large sum of money from his great-aunt, and was able to live off of this and focus on writing. Forster attended King's College at Cambridge, and then became a peripheral member of the "Bloomsbury Group," a group of intellectuals and writers that included Virginia Woolf and Lytton Strachey. After university he visited Egypt, Germany, and India, and then was a conscientious objector during World War I. He returned to India in the early 1920s and worked as the private secretary of Tukojirao III, the Maharajah of Dewas (the region of India where *A Passage to India* is mostly set). *A Passage to India* made him famous, but Forster is also well-known for his novels *A Room with a View* and *Howards End*. Forster was gay (open only to his close friends) and never married. He died of a stroke at age 91.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

*A Passage to India* takes place in British-ruled colonial India before World War I. The British Raj (the name of this empire) lasted from 1858 to 1947. The subcontinent was divided into several states, and some of them were allowed to be governed by an Indian ruler, but Parliament and the British royalty maintained power over many provinces and the Raj as a whole. The British influenced and ultimately controlled India's politics and economics, and introduced Western technology and culture. Forster's novel examines the many tensions between the British expatriates and the Indians who had to live under a foreign oppressor that saw itself as being there for the Indian's own good.

### RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Forster wrote during the period of Modernism, but he avoided the experimental technical styles of his contemporaries like Virginia Woolf (author of *Mrs. Dalloway*) and T.S. Eliot (author of *The Wasteland*). Like other Modernists he was interested in the chaos and dramatic shifts of the dramatically changing world of the second and third decades of the 20th century, but he focused on portraying the chaos of the modern world through his situations and imagery rather than stylistic innovation. The title of *A Passage to India* comes from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. Ahmed Ali's novel *Twilight in Delhi* also deals with colonialism in India, and was later referenced by Forster. Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* similarly portrays the British Raj, though in a more positive light. Paul Scott's cycle of novels *The Raj Quartet* depicts the last years of the Raj and the dawn of Indian independence, but also depicts the kinds of miscommunication and misunderstanding across cultural and racial lines that were a product of colonialism.

### KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *A Passage to India*
- **When Written:** 1912-24
- **Where Written:** India and England
- **When Published:** 1924
- **Literary Period:** Modernism
- **Genre:** Historical Fiction, Psychological Fiction, Realism
- **Setting:** Chandrapore, India and Mau, India
- **Climax:** Aziz's trial
- **Point of View:** Third person omniscient

### EXTRA CREDIT

**Syed Ross Masood.** In 1906 Forster became close friends with a young Muslim Indian named Syed Ross Masood, who introduced him to more Indians and inspired him to visit India again years later. Their friendship is partly reflected in the characters of Fielding and Aziz.

**Henry and Edward.** Forster's parents originally named him "Henry Morgan," but at his baptism he was accidentally christened as "Edward Morgan," which was his father's name.

## PLOT SUMMARY

It is the early 1900s in colonial India. Aziz, a young Muslim doctor in the town of Chandrapore, discusses with his friends whether it is possible for an Englishman and an Indian to be friends. Aziz finds the English amusing but often condescending and rude.

Meanwhile Adela Quested and the elderly Mrs. Moore arrive from England. Adela plans to marry Ronny Heaslop, Mrs. Moore's son and an official in Chandrapore. The two women arrive at the English-only club and express a desire to see the "real" India. That night Mrs. Moore and Aziz meet in a local mosque and feel an instant connection.

Mr. Turton, the English collector, hosts a party at the club and invites some Indians to meet Mrs. Moore and Adela. Cyril Fielding, the principal of the government college, is impressed by Adela's friendliness to the Indians, and he invites her and Mrs. Moore to tea. Adela requests that Aziz be invited as well.

Aziz and Fielding meet before the tea party and get along very well. The Hindu Professor Godbole, Adela, and Mrs. Moore join them. The party goes well until Ronny arrives and is rude to the Indians. That evening Adela thinks more about her feelings and decides not to marry Ronny. The two break up amicably. Later their car crashes into a mysterious animal, and during the incident Adela changes her mind.

Aziz arranges a day trip to the **Marabar Caves** for Fielding's tea party group. Fielding and Professor Godbole miss the train, so Aziz goes on alone with Adela and Mrs. Moore. They ride an elephant, have a picnic, and visit some of the caves, which are ancient and seemingly unfriendly. Mrs. Moore is smothered by people and disturbed by the caves' echo, which reduces every noise to "boum." Depressed, she stays behind while Aziz, Adela, and a guide go to visit more caves.

As they walk Adela realizes that she doesn't love Ronny. She discusses marriage with Aziz, and asks if he has more than one wife. He is offended and ducks into a nearby cave to recover. When he emerges, Adela is gone. He finds Adela's broken field-glasses and then sees her at the bottom of the hill. Aziz heads back down to the picnic site, where Fielding has arrived. Adela has hurried back to Chandrapore by car. The others take the train back, but when they arrive Aziz is arrested and charged with assaulting Adela in a cave.

The English draw together, feeling patriotic and anti-Indian. Fielding believes Aziz to be innocent, and he angers the English by joining Aziz's defense. Mrs. Moore continues to be haunted by the cave's echo, and she grows irritable and apathetic. Adela also hears the echo. Ronny is angered by Mrs. Moore's attitude, and he arranges for her to return to England early. Mrs. Moore dies on the journey.

Aziz's trial is tense and chaotic. When Adela is questioned, she declares that she was mistaken—Aziz did not attack her in the cave. Aziz is released, the Indians celebrate wildly, and Fielding escorts Adela to the college. Adela stays there for weeks, and Fielding comes to respect her bravery. Ronny breaks off the engagement, and Adela returns to England.

Aziz feels betrayed, and his friendship with Fielding cools. Fielding sails to England, and Aziz suspects that he will marry Adela there.

Two years later, Aziz lives in Mau, a Hindu area. He has grown more anti-British and patriotic about a united and independent India. He assumes that Fielding married Adela. Fielding visits Mau with his wife and brother-in-law. Aziz encounters them and is surprised to learn that Fielding actually married Stella Moore, Mrs. Moore's daughter. Meanwhile an important Hindu festival takes place in town.

Aziz finds himself drawn to Stella's brother (Fielding's brother-in-law), Ralph Moore, and takes him on the lake to see the festival. Aziz's boat crashes into Fielding's at the height of the ceremonies, and after the incident Aziz and Fielding are reconciled. The two men go for a final ride together. Aziz declares that once the English leave India then he and Fielding can be friends. They want to be friends now, but the sky and earth seem to separate them and say "Not yet."

## CHARACTERS

### MAJOR CHARACTERS

**Dr. Aziz** – A young Muslim doctor in Chandrapore who is a widower with three children. Aziz is skilled at his job but his real passion is for poetry. He is emotional and effusive, and befriends Fielding, Mrs. Moore, and Adela, growing especially close with Fielding and admiring Mrs. Moore. Later he is accused of assaulting Adela, but is ultimately cleared. After the incident Aziz grows hardened against the British and declares that India should become a united nation. Even when he eventually reconciles with Fielding, he recognizes that there can be no true friendship between them until the British no longer control India and they can interact as equals.

**Cyril Fielding** – The English principal of the government college. Fielding is an independent, open-minded man who likes to "travel light." He believes in educating the Indians and treats them like his peers, which separates him from the other British expats who tend to be more condescending to the Indians. Fielding befriends Aziz and later, after Aziz has been accused of attacking Adela, joins his defense team. In doing so, Fielding renounces his English compatriots. Fielding goes on to marry Stella Moore.

**Adela Quested** – A young, honest Englishwoman who comes to India to decide whether or not to marry Ronny. Adela is intrigued by India and desires to see the "real" India and befriend the locals. Later she has a horrifying experience at the **Marabar Caves** and accuses Aziz of assaulting her. However, at the trial she goes against her peers' influence and admits that she was mistaken. She returns to England soon afterward.

**Mrs. Moore** – An elderly Englishwoman who is Ronny, Ralph, and Stella's mother. She travels to India with Adela and is intrigued by the country. Mrs. Moore meets Aziz and feels an instant connection, and they become friends. Mrs. Moore is almost a mystical figure, associated with Hinduism and spirituality. She is disturbed by the echoes in the **Marabar Caves**, and later grows irritable, depressed, and apathetic about all life. She goes back to England early but dies on the journey. Her memory is so beloved that she is turned into a sort of Hindu demi-god, "Esmiss Esmoor," by some of the Indians in Chandrapore.

**Ronny Heaslop** – Mrs. Moore's son and the magistrate at Chandrapore. Though likable and sympathetic at first, Ronny is influenced by his Anglo-Indian peers and becomes more prejudiced and unkind to Indians over the course of the novel. He believes in "toeing the line" and following his compatriots.

Ronny is briefly engaged to Adela, but he breaks it off after Aziz's trial.

**Miss Derek** – A young Englishwoman who works for an Indian Maharani. She is outgoing and carefree, regularly "borrows" her employer's car, and is considered unseemly by many of the English in Chandrapore. Miss Derek is the person who consoles and drives Adela home after the events at the Marabar Caves. She is also carrying on a clandestine affair with the chief of police.

**Mr. McBryde** – The superintendent of police, who has his own theory that India's climate makes Indians behave criminally. He is generally more tolerant than most of the English at Chandrapore, but still generally assumes the superiority of the English and isn't much inclined to investigate the case against Aziz, instead assuming there isn't any way that Aziz won't be found guilty. Later, McBryde is caught having an affair with Miss Derek.

## MINOR CHARACTERS

**Professor Godbole** – A Brahman Hindu professor at Fielding's college. Godbole is mysterious and spiritual, a figure associated with universal oneness. He later experiences religious ecstasy at the Hindu festival in Mau.

**Mr. Turton** – The English collector, or chief British official, who governs Chandrapore. He has been in India for two decades and is very set in his ways. Turton is stern, official, and patriotic, and though he feels an underlying hatred for most Indians he still acts tactfully when needed.

**Mrs. Turton** – Mr. Turton's wife, who is outspoken in her hatred of Indians and her sense of snobbish superiority.

**Major Callendar** – The British civil surgeon and Aziz's superior, though an inferior doctor. Callendar is especially prejudiced, condescending, and hateful towards Indians. He boasts about possibly torturing Nureddin at his hospital.

**Hamidullah** – Aziz's uncle and friend. Hamidullah was educated at Cambridge and became close friends with an English couple there, though he believes such friendship is almost impossible in India. He is also one of Fielding's close friends until Fielding's falling-out with Aziz.

**Mahmoud Ali** – Aziz's friend, a lawyer who is dramatic, emotional, and passionately anti-English, especially after Aziz's trial.

**Mohammed Latif** – A distant cousin of Hamidullah's who lives off of his money and plays the fool for his others' entertainment. He is part of the expedition to the **Marabar Caves**.

**The Nawab Bahadur (Mr. Zulfiqar)** – A prominent Indian and English Loyalist, meaning that despite being Indian he is strongly supportive of British rule of the Raj. He is wealthy, benevolent, and beloved by the community. However, he renounces his English title after Aziz's trial.

**Nureddin** – The Nawab Bahadur's grandson, supposedly tortured by Callendar at the hospital.

**The Soldier** – A subaltern who plays polo with Aziz early in the novel, and then drunkenly insults Fielding and the Indians after Adela's attack.

**Dr. Panna Lal** – A low-born Hindu doctor, whom Aziz scorns. Lal hates Aziz and offers to testify for the English at his trial.

**The guide** – An unknown Indian who leads Aziz and Adela through the **Marabar Caves**. He is possibly Adela's attacker, but he runs away soon afterward and is never found.

**The Rajah** – The ruler of an Indian province including Mau. He is old and sick and attended to by Aziz, but he dies during the Hindu festival.

**Ralph Moore** – Mrs. Moore's son, a sensitive young man who travels with Fielding to Mau. Aziz is instantly drawn to him, and Ralph seems to share his mother's mysterious spiritual power.

**Stella Moore** – Mrs. Moore's daughter who marries Fielding. She shares her mother's concerns regarding spirituality.

**Amritrao** – A famous anti-British lawyer who defends Aziz at his trial.

**Das** – Ronny's subordinate, an Indian official who judges Aziz's trial. Despite being Hindu, he befriends Aziz afterward.

**Mr. Graysford** – An English missionary who lives outside town.

**Mr. Sorley** – A young English missionary who feels that monkeys and other mammals might be allowed into heaven.

**Mr. and Mrs. Bhattacharya** – A friendly couple whom Adela meets at the Bridge Party.

**Hassan** – Aziz's slow-witted servant.

**Rafi** – A young man who likes to spread rumors and cause trouble.

**Mrs. Blakiston** – An English woman who is usually snubbed but becomes idealized after Adela's attack.

**Lady Mellanby** – The wife of the province's lieutenant-governor, who lets Mrs. Moore travel in her cabin back to England.

**Antony** – Adela and Mrs. Moore's rude servant.

**Syed Mohammed** – An engineer and Aziz's friend, Rafi's uncle.

**Jemila, Ahmed, and Karim** – Aziz's three children who live with their grandparents and then with Aziz at Mau.

## THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in

black and white.

## COLONIALISM

On one level, *A Passage to India* is an in-depth description of daily life in India under British rule. The British "Raj" (its colonial empire in India) lasted from 1858 to 1947. The prevailing attitude behind colonialism was that of the "white man's burden" (in Rudyard Kipling's phrase)—that it was the moral duty of Europeans to "civilize" other nations. Thus the British saw their colonial rule over India as being for the Indians' own good. Forster himself was British, but in the novel he is very critical of colonialism. He never goes so far as to advocate outright Indian rebellion, but he does show how the colonial system is inherently flawed. Forster portrays most of the British men working in India as at least well-meaning, although condescending and unoriginal, but their positions in the colonial system almost always push them towards becoming racist and harmful figures. This is played out most explicitly in the development of Ronny's character. The British women, apart from Mrs. Moore and Adela, often seem less sympathetic than the men, to the point that even Turton blames their presence for the tensions with the Indians. The women don't have the daily labor and interactions with Indians that the men do, but they are generally more racially hateful and condescending (and perhaps this is because they are usually so isolated from actual Indian society).

Forster also shows how the colonial system makes the Indians hate and sometimes condescend to the British. The colonialists are by necessity in the role of "oppressor," no matter how individually kind or open-minded they might be. This is best shown in the changes to Aziz's character throughout the novel, as he goes from laughing at and befriending the English to actively hating them. Although Forster ultimately offers no concrete alternative to British colonialism, his overall message is that colonialism in India is a harmful system for both the British and the Indians. Friendships like that between Aziz and Fielding are a rare exception, not the rule, and even such friendships are all but destroyed or thwarted by the problems and tensions of colonialism.

## "MUDDLES" AND MYSTERIES

Throughout the novel Forster uses the words "muddle" and "mystery" as distinctive terms to describe India. A "muddle" implies chaos and meaningless mess, while a "mystery" suggests something confusing but with an underlying purpose or mystical plan. On the English side, Fielding sees India as a muddle, though a sympathetic one, while Mrs. Moore and Adela approach the country with a sense of mystery. Forster himself often uses "orientalizing" terms to describe India, portraying it as a muddle that is unable to be understood or properly described by Westerners. For example, he describes India's architecture and natural landscape as formless and primitive, while he sees European architecture and landscape as aesthetically pleasing and comforting. In this way Forster and his British characters, as outsiders, cannot help but view India as a muddle they can never comprehend, and one that—despite Forster's critiques of colonialism—might benefit from Western "civilization" and reasoning.

But Forster also shows that even the Indians themselves are unable to describe India's essence, and they too are divided in their ideas of muddles and mysteries. The Muslim Aziz regards Hindu India as a primitive muddle of chaos, while he is comforted by the elegant mysteries of his own religion. Professor Godbole, on the other hand, is a Hindu, and the main figure standing for the view of India as mystery. Hinduism is portrayed as a muddle of many gods and strange ceremonies, but there is also a mystery and plan behind it all—the meaning is in the chaos of life itself, and the unity of all things.

These muddles and mysteries ultimately become externalized and symbolized in the scene at the **Marabar Caves**. Forster never clearly explains what happened to Adela, and so the whole incident is a kind of horrible muddle. Also in the caves, Adela and Mrs. Moore's "mysterious" India is reduced to terrifying chaos in the echoing "boum" of the caves. A similar effect, though a more positive one, is achieved in the final scene, where Aziz and Fielding's boats crash into each other near the Hindu festival. Ultimately Forster finds both muddles and mysteries necessary to properly encompass and comprehend India, as well as the universe itself.

## FRIENDSHIP

Despite its strong political overtones, *A Passage to India* is also a deep psychological portrayal of different individuals. As Forster describes his characters' inner lives and their interactions with each other, the subject of friendship becomes very important, as it is shown as the most powerful connection between two individuals apart from romantic love. This subject relates to Forster's humanistic philosophy—which says that friendship, interpersonal kindness, and respect can be the greatest forces for good in the world—but in the novel, friendship must always struggle with cultural divides and the imbalance in power enforced by the colonial system. The book begins and ends with the subject of friendship between an Englishman and an Indian, and in both cases it concludes that such a friendship is almost impossible. Forster shows all the obstacles—race, culture, class, religion, and language—that stand in the way of meaningful friendships between Indians and the English, no matter an individual's best intentions. The English view the Indians as inferior, while the Indians (including Aziz) view the English as both cruel oppressors and foolish foreigners.

Towards the middle of the novel, however, Aziz's growing friendships with both Mrs. Moore and Fielding seem to be an

example of successful humanism, implying that if both parties can treat each other with respect, kindness, and openmindedness, then even Englishmen and Indians can be friends, and British colonialism could become a beneficial system. After the experience in the **Marabar Caves**, however, Mrs. Moore ends up going mad and dying, and Fielding and Aziz's friendship starts to fall apart. After Aziz's trial, each man ends up returning to his own cultural circle. Fielding feels sympathetic to Adela, while Aziz lets his suspicions harden into a hatred of all the English. In the novel's final scene the two men become reconciled just as they are about to part forever. They embrace while riding together, but then their horses separate and they are divided by the landscape itself, which seems to say "not yet." Such friendship might be possible once India is free, but not yet in the colonial system. Thus Forster doesn't let go of his humanistic ideals, but he does show how such ideals can be hindered by social systems and cultural divides.

## DIVISION VS. UNITY

Ideas of division and unity are important in *A Passage to India* in both a social and spiritual sense. The social and cultural divisions between English and Indians are clear, but India itself is also internally divided. The phrase "a hundred Indias" is used several times to describe the "muddle" of the country, where Hindus and Muslims are divided against each other and even among themselves. The best hope Forster proposes for this chaotic division lies in the idea of unity, particularly of the spiritual kind. Most of the novel's main characters are Muslims or Christians, but the book's final section focuses on the Hindu side of India, as introduced by the character of Professor Godbole.

Hinduism has many gods and rituals, but certain aspects of it incline towards pantheism, which is the belief that all things are essentially one, and of a divine nature. Forster shows this sense of spiritual unity in several places, like the "liberal" Christians willing to accept monkeys into heaven, and Hindus like Godbole who try to accept even a **wasp** as divine. Mrs. Moore starts to feel dissatisfied with the "small-mindedness" of Christianity when she reaches India, and her character leans towards a Hindu kind of unity as she too feels connected to a wasp in her room. This kind of empathy and unity between living things is a positive force for Forster, and he implies that it may be the best hope for both friendship between individuals and peace between cultures. But he also shows how this oneness can be terrifying. This is best represented by the "boum" of the **Marabar Caves**. All sounds, whether spoken language or not, are reduced to "boum" in the caves' echo. This lack of distinction between things terrifies Adela and ultimately drives Mrs. Moore mad, and even Godbole is unable to accept non-living things (like a stone) into his vision of universal oneness. The perfect realization of unity may be the chaos and void of the Marabar Caves, or it may be the love of God as in Hinduism—but either way Forster advocates for the constant striving for greater unity and empathy.

## RACE AND CULTURE

Many observations about race and culture in colonial India are threaded throughout the novel. *A Passage to India* is in some ways a sort of ethnography, or an examination of the customs of different cultures. On the English side, many cultural forces affect the characters. Ronny is naturally goodhearted and sympathetic, but his "public school mindset" and the influence of his English peers compel him to become hardened and unkind to Indians. The other English expatriates view Adela as naïve for sympathizing with the Indians, and they even admit that they too felt the same at first before realizing the "truth." Overall the pervading culture of the English in India is that one must adopt a racist, patronizing attitude to survive and thrive, and that one's very Englishness makes one superior to the Indians. Forster also examines the English tendency to be rational without emotion, and what is perceived as the English lack of imagination.

Forster gives equal time to analyzing Indian culture. On one level he portrays the many religions and cultures of the country, which are part of the reason India remains so internally divided. On the individual level, Aziz is the best-developed Indian character, and he too (like the English) is subject to cultural norms. Forster portrays the Indians as generally more emotional and imaginative than the English, with a tendency to let stray notions harden into solid beliefs without evidence. This "ethnography" then informs the novel's other themes of division, friendship, and colonialism. Overall Forster shows that race and culture are forces that cannot be altogether avoided, no matter a person's individual intentions. Forster gives the greatest importance to interpersonal human interaction and friendship, but he also recognizes the pervasive influence of larger social forces.

# SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

## THE MARABAR CAVES

The Marabar Caves are a central aspect of the novel—a presence in the distance during the first section, the setting of the second section, and the shadow that looms over the third section. The caves represent an ancient, inhuman void, the more terrifying aspect of the universal oneness embraced by Hinduism. The caves themselves are domelike and pitch-black, with nothing beautiful or romantic about them. Inside, any sound—whether human speech or a

fingernail scratching the wall—is reduced to a single echo that sounds like "boum." This echo captures the essence of the Marabar Caves, as it shows the emptiness behind all human action. This is a kind of "unity" like that found in Hinduism, but it is a unity of chaos instead of one of love, as the caves seem almost alien and malicious, unfriendly to humans. Even the Indians of Chandrapore cannot act as real "guides" to them or explain them.

While in the caves, Adela and Mrs. Moore both experience some frightening aspect of life that they had not considered before. Mrs. Moore sees the smallness and hollowness of her Christian faith, and succumbs to a kind of irritable apathy after seeing the void the caves represent. Adela, meanwhile, is confronted with the reality of her lack of feelings for Ronny and then the horror of her assault. The attack is never fully explained, so it almost becomes an embodiment of the darkness of the caves.

## WASPS

Wasps are mentioned occasionally throughout the novel, and their appearance signifies the theme of the oneness of all living things, especially in the Hindu vision of pantheism. The wasp associates Mrs. Moore with Hinduism for the first time when she watches one in her room and feels an appreciation and love for it. Years later, Professor Godbole thinks of both Mrs. Moore and the wasp when filled with religious ecstasy and love for all living things. The wasp generally represents the "lowest" of creatures that can be incorporated into the vision of oneness—Godbole tries to include a stone in his universal love, but cannot. Thus the wasp is also symbolic of the limits of the idea of unity, which is not a perfect solution, but still a hopeful one for India politically and for the characters' internal struggles.

## QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Harcourt Brace Jovanovich edition of *A Passage to India* published in 1984.

### Part 1, Chapter 2 Quotes

"You understand me, you know what others feel. Oh, if others resembled you!"
Rather surprised, she replied: "I don't think I understand people very well. I only know whether I like or dislike them."
"Then you are an Oriental."

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz, Mrs. Moore (speaker)

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 21

**Explanation and Analysis**

Forster sets in motion the cultural politics that drive the entire novel. Mrs. Moore, an elderly visitor from England, has come to India. In this scene she steps into a mosque at night, and makes the accidental acquaintance of a young Indian man named Dr. Aziz. Aziz and Mrs. Moore feel an immediate connection. Interestingly, their connection flowers when Mrs. Moore admits that she doesn't feel like she belongs among her English friends: she says that she judges people instinctively and automatically. Aziz claims that doing so makes Moore "an Oriental."

What's going on here? Aziz's pronouncement suggests that there's a fundamental difference between English and Eastern cultures: the English are analytical and reasonable, while the Indians are instinctive, imaginative, and receptive to their own "guts." Of course, one could argue that such a distinction is just Forster's own biased opinion: Aziz's pronouncement sounds more like what a English person would *think* about the Indians that what an Indian person might say about himself. The word "Oriental," which has come to be rather offensive in the century since Forster's death, adds another layer to the passage's potential bias.

### Part 1, Chapter 4 Quotes

...young Mr. Sorley, who was advanced, said Yes; he saw no reason why monkeys should not have their collateral share of bliss, and he had sympathetic discussions about them with his Hindu friends... And the wasps? He became uneasy during the descent to wasps, and was apt to change the conversation. And oranges, cactuses, crystals, and mud? And the bacteria inside Mr. Sorley? No, no, this is going too far. We must exclude someone from our gathering, or we shall be left with nothing.

**Related Characters:** Mr. Sorley

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 38

**Explanation and Analysis**

Forster's novel is all about the differences and commonalities between the Indians and the English. In this passage, we're introduced to Mr. Sorley, a missionary who

only appears in this scene, and who makes an interesting point about the resemblances between his own culture and India's. Sorley notes that his model of religion argues that only good human souls can make it to Heaven. In India, Sorley has learned, some Hindus believe that all beings, whether they're germs or plants or animals, can attain a measure of Heaven after they die. Mr. Sorleywants to exclude such life forms from Heaven--he believes that the stability of the very idea of Heaven depends on excluding certain kinds of people or beings from privilege. And yet even Sorley is a very "liberal" Christian--he goes so far as to suggest that intelligent animals like monkeys might be able to have their own share of "bliss." It is when the animal world descends to the level of wasps, however--the novel's symbol of this kind of unity or exclusion--that Sorley grows uncomfortable.

Sorley is a liberal, openminded Christian, but he still sees the world in relatively exclusive terms: he thinks that only some people should be rewarded for their behaviors--Heaven can't be for everyone. The irony is that Indian society itself is even more exclusive than English society, it could be argued: due to the caste system (which was still in place at the time), there was essentially no social mobility in Indian society. Indians and the English seem to have exactly one thing in common: their societies depend upon dividing and excluding certain kinds of people from certain kinds of places.

## Part 1, Chapter 5 Quotes

❝ "You're superior to them, anyway. Don't forget that. You're superior to every one in India except one or two of the Ranis, and they're on an equality."

**Related Characters:** Mrs. Turton (speaker), Adela Quested, Mrs. Moore

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 42

### Explanation and Analysis

The racism of the English towards the Indians--indeed, towards all non-English people--is clear in this passage. At a party, Mr. Turton, the political officer of the area in which the novel is set, has invited some Indian and English guests. Mrs. Turton, his wife, shows her guests Adela and Mrs. Moore through the party, noting that some Indian women are there. Turton assures Adela that she's superior to the Indians.

Why is Mrs. Turton so sure that Adela is "superior?" It's safe to assume that Mrs. Turton believes that nearly all Englishwomen are superior to the Indian people--because the English themselves are better than the Indians. Mrs. Turton embodies the worst kind of racism of the English people--a form of racism that can actually come across as a form of politeness in some situations. (Here, for instance, Mrs. Turton *is* complimenting her guests; it's just that her compliment hinges on certain offensive premises.) While Forster shows how the English men actually wield the power of colonialism and can make destructive decisions that affect multitudes of people, he generally portrays the English women as even worse in their casual racism--and Mrs. Turton is a prime example of this.

❝ I'm going to argue, and indeed dictate," she said, clinking her rings. "The English *are* out here to be pleasant."
"How do you make that out, mother?" he asked, speaking gently again, for he was ashamed of his irritability.
"Because India is part of the earth. And God has put us on earth in order to be pleasant to each other. God... is... love." She hesitated, seeing how much he disliked the argument, but something made her go on. "God has put us on earth to love our neighbors and to show it, and he is omnipresent, even in India, to see how we are succeeding."

**Related Characters:** Mrs. Moore, Ronny Heaslop (speaker)

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 53

### Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Mrs. Moore suggests that she's one of the most tolerant and open-minded English people in the novel. Mrs. Moore is upset by what she sees as her peers' racism and cruelty to their Indian neighbors. Moore, still a Christian at this point, insists that English people owe it to themselves and their faith to be polite and loving to all people, Indian and otherwise.

Mrs. Moore's tolerance and ideas of universal unity come as welcome alternatives to the other guests' racism. And yet her form of tolerance is essentially a-cultural--she sees the world in pleasant yet bland terms of love, acceptance, and friendship; at this point she seems to have no real knowledge of India.

## Part 1, Chapter 6 Quotes

Concentrated on the ball, they somehow became fond of one another, and smiled when they drew rein to rest. Aziz liked soldiers – they either accepted you or swore at you, which was preferable to the civilian's hauteur – and the subaltern liked anyone who could ride...
They reined up again, the fire of good fellowship in their eyes. But it cooled with their bodies, for athletics can only raise a temporary glow. Nationality was returning, but before it could exert its poison they parted, saluting each other. "If only they were all like that," each thought.

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz, The Soldier

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 60

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this passage, Aziz plays polo with a British soldier. To their mutual surprise, Aziz and the soldier seem to get along well--in spite of the fact that the soldier is a representative of English aggression against India, and despite the fact that they're playing a physical, potentially violent game, Aziz and the soldier come to genuinely respect one another over the course of the match.

The passage is a kind of metaphor for the relationship between India and Britain--or at least what it could be. Aziz and the soldier maintain their cultural identities, and yet they get along while continuing to respect each other's differences. Their relationship is amicable, and yet very different from the utopian "God loves" philosophy outlined by Mrs. Moore in the previous chapter--here, it is culture (English culture!) that facilitates the friendship between Aziz and the soldier. Notice, too, that the friendship is only temporary--national differences can be suspended, but only briefly. (And Forster will later highlight the irony of this by having the same soldier viciously condemn Aziz, contrasting him with the "good" Indian he played polo with--who was, unbeknownst to him, Aziz himself.)

## Part 1, Chapter 7 Quotes

The world, he believed, is a globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of goodwill plus culture and intelligence – a creed ill suited to Chandrapore, but he had come out too late to lose it. He had no racial feeling; not because he was superior to his brother civilians, but because he had matured in a different atmosphere, where the herd instinct does not flourish.

**Related Characters:** Cyril Fielding

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 65

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this chapter, we're introduced to one of the most sympathetic characters in the novel, Cyril Fielding. Cyril is unique among the English character insofar as he seems not to think in racial terms--he doesn't look down on his Indian neighbors in any way, since he wasn't brought up to be a competitive, nationalistic person. Cyril is an educator, and his emphasis on education leads him to see Indians as the equals of Englishmen.In a harsh, militaristic state, dominated by the English military presence, Cyril's character is an anomaly, suggesting that the world of education, international experience, and individual friendship is gentler and more equitable than the world of colonialism. England is an intensely proud, competitive country, but there are ways to be English and avoid racism. In general, Fielding is presented as Forster's stand-in: an Englishman with an open mind and good intentions, but who is nonetheless trapped within the evils of the colonial system and the cultural differences between himself and the Indians.

"I do so hate mysteries," Adela announced.
"We English do."
"I dislike them not because I'm English, but from my own personal point of view," she corrected.
"I like mysteries but I rather dislike muddles," said Mrs. Moore.
"A mystery is a muddle."
"Oh, do you think so, Mr. Fielding?"
"A mystery is only a high-sounding term for a muddle. No advantage in stirring it up, in either case. Aziz and I know well that India's a muddle."

**Related Characters:** Adela Quested, Cyril Fielding, Mrs. Moore (speaker)

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 73

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this famous passage, the characters discuss the differences between mysteries and muddles as it applies to the Indian world. Mrs. Moore seems to think of India as a mystery--that is to say, a problem with a potential solution,

or something chaotic and confusing but with an underlying meaning to it. Fielding and Aziz (and often Forster himself) see India as more of a "muddle"--something chaotic and confusing but *without* an underlying meaning. This idea of the nature of the unknown as either mystery or muddle is crucial to the book, both in its "ethnographic" aspect (how to define and describe a place as vast and diverse as India) and in its dealings with spirituality, psychology, and the human experience.

## Part 1, Chapter 9 Quotes

❝ Hamidullah had called in on his way to a worrying committee of notables, nationalist in tendency, where Hindus, Moslems, two Sikhs, two Parsis, a Jain, and a Native Christian tried to like one another more than came natural to them. As long as someone abused the English all went well, but nothing constructive had been achieved, and if the English were to leave India the committee would vanish also.

**Related Characters:** Hamidullah

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 114-115

### Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Aziz's uncle Hamidullah is on his way to a meeting of local Indian leaders. The meeting comprises an incredible breadth of races and backgrounds--there are Jains, Muslims, etc. All these different kinds of people are united together by one thing: the fact that they're not English. The non-English people of India, who--it's implied--may have fought among each other before the English arrived, have joined together in solidarity. Ironically, English presence in India is unifying, not divisive for the Indian people, because at least they have a common enemy in the English.

The passage has been criticized for its ahistorical view of Indian racial relations. English presence in India didn't unite the different religious and races together--rather, the English *aimed* to stir up racial differences, knowing full-well that doing so would make it easier for them to claim power. Forster's observation about India's relationship with England, then, might be intended affectionately, and true in some senses (it is easier for people to unite against a common enemy), but it also gets some history wrong.

## Part 1, Chapter 11 Quotes

❝ But they were friends, brothers. That part was settled, their compact had been subscribed by the photograph, they trusted one another, affection had triumphed for once in a way.

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz, Cyril Fielding

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 132

### Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, from the end of Part One of the novel, the characters make an important breakthrough. Much of the book is concerned with how individuals can become friends and achieve a sincere connection even across divides of culture and oppression. This idea is explored most potently in the two protagonists, Aziz and Fielding. At this point in the novel, it seems that an Englishman and an Indian *can* be true friends--after this meeting and exchange of trust and affection, Fielding and Aziz feel like "brothers." But as Forster comments rather ominously, this is an exception, not a rule, and even in this seemingly idyllic new friendship affection has only triumphed over division "for once" and only "in a way."

## Part 2, Chapter 14 Quotes

❝ How can the mind take hold of such a country? Generations of invaders have tried, but they remain in exile. The important towns they build are only retreats, their quarrels a malaise of men who cannot find their way home. India knows of their trouble. She knows of the whole world's trouble, to its uttermost depth. She calls "Come" through her hundred mouths, through objects ridiculous and august. But come to what? She has never defined. She is not a promise, only an appeal.

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 150

### Explanation and Analysis

In this important passage, Forster characterizes the country of India as the home of the "sublime." Forster argues that it's impossible for any one person to "take in" India as a whole--it's just too vast and mysterious for that. The mind can *try* to understand India, but such attempts at understanding will always come short of the real thing. The concept of the sublime, a staple of philosophy and theology, hinges on the

idea that there are certain objects and phenomena that are too vast to be comprehended--India, it would seem, is one of these phenomena. This also connects again to the idea of muddles and mysteries--India is vast and confusing, but is there a meaning behind this vastness, or is it all just a "muddle"? The fact that India offers only "an appeal" rather than a clear answer suggests that Forster doesn't have an answer either. It's exactly this kind of mystery that he presents throughout the book, both in his descriptions of India and colonialism and in his portraits of individual experience.

❝ The echo in a Marabar cave is not like these, it is entirely devoid of distinction. Whatever is said, the same monotonous noise replies, and quivers up and down the walls until it is absorbed into the roof. "Boum" is the sound as far as the human alphabet can express it, or "bou-oum," or "ou-boum" – utterly dull. Hope, politeness, the blowing of a nose, the squeal of a boot, all produce "boum."

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 163

**Explanation and Analysis**

One of the most famous passages in the novel is the description of the Marabar Caves. The caves (based on a real place, but mostly invented by Forster), located near Chandrapore, are mysterious and sublime objects that confound all reasonable explanations. When people walk into the caves, their speech echoes until it's been reduced to the same sound, "boum." The caves, then, are a symbol for the meaningless of life--the void of meaning and understanding. If the English are analytical, intellectual people, then their attempts at analysis and intelligence fall short in the caves: they're reminded that some things in life cannot be understood by any means. By the same token, Forster implies that the people of India are somehow more in touch with the "void" of life--and yet even the Indians he portrays cannot explain or define the caves. Only Professor Godbole, with his intimate relationship with the "mystery" of pantheism and unity, comes close.

While Forster will go on to focus more on ideas of universal unity as related to Hinduism, the Marabar Caves offer the darker side of "unity." In Hinduism, unity is connected to divine love and acceptance, but in the Marabar unity is chaos, meaninglessness, and even malevolence. Good and bad, individuality and meaning, all are reduced to "boum." It is this foreboding "muddle" of existence that leads to the central acts of the book, which take place in the caves--Mrs. Moore's loss of faith, and Adela's confusing, unknowable experience of assault.

## Part 2, Chapter 17 Quotes

❝ He had not gone mad at the phrase "an English girl fresh from England," he had not rallied to the banner of race. He was still after facts, though the herd had decided on emotion. Nothing enrages Anglo-India more than the lantern of reason if it is exhibited for one moment after its extinction is decreed. All over Chandrapore that day the Europeans were putting aside their normal personalities and sinking themselves in their community. Pity, wrath, heroism, filled them, but the power of putting two and two together was annihilated.

**Related Characters:** Cyril Fielding

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 183

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this passage, Adela has been supposedly attacked while in the Marabar Caves, and Aziz has been accused of assaulting her. The incident is a political and racial one: the Indians support Aziz, and the English people support Adela. The incident brings out the worst in some people--Turton, for example, who's previously been shown to be a racist, intolerant person, treats the incident as a chance to express some of his strong anti-Indian sentiments to Fielding. Turton is annoyed that Fielding refuses to play along with the rest of the English. Instead of allowing his nationalistic sympathies to run away with him, Fielding remains calm and factual with the case. The majority of Englishmen, however, ignore the facts--and temporarily lose their ability to even *process* facts--in their sudden rush of nationalistic, paternalistic, racist sentiment.

## Part 2, Chapter 22 Quotes

❝ "Why can't this be done and that be done in my way and they be done and I at peace? Why has anything to be done, I cannot see. Why all this marriage, marriage?... The human race would have become a single person centuries ago if marriage was any use. And all this rubbish about love, love in a church, love in a cave, as if there is the least difference, and I held up from my business over such trifles!"

**Related Characters:** Mrs. Moore (speaker)

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 224

**Explanation and Analysis**

Mrs. Moore has become irritable and disaffected after her experience in the Marabar Caves. She has seemingly lost her Christian faith, but also the belief that there is any real meaning to anything at all--life is a "muddle," not a mystery, and is a hellish sort of muddle at that.

Here Mrs. Moore suggests that love in a church (Ronny and Adela's future marriage) is no different from love in a cave (Adela's assault at the Marabar)--because no thing is really different from any other thing. This is the dark, terrifying side of Forster's theme of "universal unity." Unity can mean love and togetherness, but it can also mean chaos and fear, a state in which "civilized," consensual love is no different from a sexual assault in the darkness. While Mrs. Moore started the novel as an optimistic figure, an example of an Englishwoman who respected Indians and seemed to understand something crucial about India itself, her descent into apathy and disaffection shows just how difficult it is to remain hopeful and connected in the face of the realities of life.

## Part 2, Chapter 24 Quotes

"This is no way to defend your case," counselled the Magistrate.
"I am not defending a case, nor are you trying one. We are both of us slaves."
"Mr. Mahmoud Ali, I have already warned you, and unless you sit down I shall exercise my authority."
"Do so; this trial is a farce, I am going." And he handed his papers to Amritrao and left, calling from the door histrionically yet with intense passion: "Aziz, Aziz – farewell for ever." The tumult increased, the invocation of Mrs. Moore continued, and people who did not know what the syllables meant repeated them like a charm. They became Indianized into Esmiss Esmoor, they were taken up in the street outside.

**Related Characters:** Das, Mahmoud Ali (speaker)

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 249-250

**Explanation and Analysis**

In the trial scene, the lawyer Mahmoud Ali dramatically defends Aziz from charges of sexual assault. Ali is Aziz's friend, and is supposed to be acting as his lawyer (along with the famous lawyer Amritrao), but here he seems more interested in making a spectacle of prosecuting English justice itself. He claims (pretty reasonably) that the English court system in India is so stacked against the Indians that any Indian put on trial is presumed guilty until proven innocent, instead of vice versa. Even though the judge of the case, Mr. Das, is an Indian, Ali says that Das too is a "slave," and neither of them really have any freedom within the colonial system. Ali is portrayed as over-dramatic and "histrionic," and he's possibly hurting Aziz's case with this (probably pre-planned) exit, but he also has a point. Impartial justice, like interpersonal connection across cultures, is almost impossible to achieve within the corrupt colonial system.

The other important part of this passage is the way that Mrs. Moore's name becomes a kind of charm or invocation for the crowds outside the courthouse. She has by now been sent away from India by Ronnie, and after the Marabar Caves visit she had grown apathetic and irritable, not bothering to defend Aziz or even visit him, but she is still elevated in Aziz's mind as his "greatest friend," and Mahmoud Ali's invocation of her name makes her become something larger than herself. She is not present, and probably wouldn't have even attended the trial if she was still in India, but her name and the *idea* of her--an Englishwoman sympathetic to and understanding of India--makes her into an almost religious figure in the heat of the moment. Her name is "Indianized" and chanted by crowds of people who have no idea who she is--they just know that this name is somehow sacred and friendly to them. Thus Mrs. Moore is again associated with Hinduism and spirituality, despite the depressing reality of her personal fate.

## Part 2, Chapter 26 Quotes

For Miss Quested had not appealed to Hamidullah. If she had shown emotion in court, broke down, beat her breast, and invoked the name of God, she would have summoned forth his imagination and generosity – he had plenty of both. But while relieving the Oriental mind, she had chilled it, with the result that he could scarcely believe she was sincere, and indeed from his standpoint she was not. For her behaviour rested on cold justice and honesty; she had felt, while she recanted, no passion of love for those whom she had wronged... And the girl's sacrifice – so creditable according to Western notions – was rightly rejected, because, although it came from her heart, it did not include her heart.

**Related Characters:** Adela Quested, Hamidullah

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 272

### Explanation and Analysis

Adela has told the court the truth: she hallucinated (she now believes) her sexual assault in the Marabar Caves. By suddenly admitting this in court, Adela clears Aziz of all charges. And yet the racial tensions in the courtroom persist long afterwards; the English believe that Adela was raped, and the Indians believe that she spitefully made everything up to hurt Aziz.

Hamidullah's response to Adela's testimony in court illustrates the attitude that the Indians have toward her, and reinforces Forster's larger "ethnographic" descriptions of the English and the Indians. Hamidullah was upset that Adela was so calm and cold when she admitted that she hadn't been telling the truth. If Adela had just been more tearful and passionate when she admitted her mistake, Hamidullah would have been more forgiving to her. Instead, Adela seemed cool and calm, suggesting to the Indians (who are supposedly more emotional and imaginative) that her "heart" wasn't really in her confession. She has done the thing that was technically right, but she hasn't done it out of love or compassion--and Forster seems to agree that the Indians, not the English, take the right interpretation of the trial for now, as shown by the authorial interjection of the word "rightly" before the description of how Hamidullah rejects Adela's confession.

## Part 2, Chapter 29 Quotes

"Our letter is a failure for a simple reason which we had better face: you have no real affection for Aziz, or Indians generally." She assented. "The first time I saw you, you were wanting to see India, not Indians, and it occurred to me: Ah, that won't take us far. Indians know whether they are liked or not – they cannot be fooled here. Justice never satisfies them, and that is why the British Empire rests on sand."

**Related Characters:** Cyril Fielding (speaker), Adela Quested, Dr. Aziz

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 288-289

### Explanation and Analysis

Adela feels terrible for what she's done to Aziz: by accusing him of assault, she risked his life. Adela tries to apologize to Aziz by writing a letter to him--and yet when she reads her own letter, she decides that it seems flat and insincere. Fielding explains why Adela's writing seems to insincere: it is. This reinforces the idea of the previous passage--that Adela is technically doing the right thing, but she isn't doing out of love or compassion. She doesn't genuinely love Aziz, or any other Indian for that matter--they remain strange and foreign to her, perhaps not totally human, even though in her mind she is trying to be just towards them.

Fielding shows himself to be a keen observer of Indian culture (at least according to Forster's similar observations): he recognizes that Indian people are more honest and open with each other--unlike the English, they don't go through the motions of pretending to be polite to one another; if they don't like each other, they say so. Fielding hints that there will always be a void between India and England because the English think that a formal code of right and wrong can replace the Indians' more instinctive, automatic modes of morality and communication. Neither worldview is inherently better or worse--they're just different--but the problem arises when one system of morality and humanity is externally forced upon the other, as is the case in the colonial system.

Perhaps life is a mystery, not a muddle; they could not tell. Perhaps the hundred Indias which fuss and squabble so tiresomely are one, and the universe they mirror is one.

**Related Characters:** Adela Quested, Cyril Fielding

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 293

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this critical passage, Adela and Cyril discuss the mysteries of India and the universe, reiterating a conversation they had earlier. Both characters are atheists, and yet they *want* to believe that there is some kind of higher purpose in life--they can't be satisfied with the belief that all of life is random and chaotic (a muddle, rather than a mystery).

If life is just a muddle, then it has no higher purpose. If, however, it is a mystery, then it has a solution and therefore a meaning. Adela has been deeply disturbed by the events of the trial--they've reminded her how deep the divisions in English and Indian society go. Adela wants to believe that Indians and Englishmen have something in common; by the same token, she wants to believe that all people (and perhaps all living things) are united together beneath the muddle of their lives.

## Part 2, Chapter 30 Quotes

❝ The poem for Mr. Bhattacharya never got written, but it had an effect. It led him towards the vague and bulky figure of a motherland. He was without natural affection for the land of his birth, but the Marabar Hills drove him to it. Half closing his eyes he attempted to love India.

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 298

**Explanation and Analysis**

After the trial, Forster tells us, Indian Hindus and Muslims start getting along better in Chandrapore--united by a common enemy and a common experience. Mr. Das, the Hindu judge of Aziz's trial, has visited Aziz to ask for a prescription and for Aziz to contribute a poem to a predominantly Hindu magazine. This is a big deal, Forster explains, because usually such a thing would be unheard of, and Aziz usually just writes poems about Islam. When given this opportunity, Aziz contemplates writing a political poem, designed to unite together the Hindus and Muslims in India. While Aziz never writes such a poem, the prompt gets him thinking about the possibilities of a utopian India in which there are no English people in charge, and the internal divisions of India are united under the idea of a common "motherland."

In a strange way, Aziz's traumatic experience in the caves and during the trial inspires him to think about his country in more hopeful, loyal terms: Aziz wants to make sure that the court systems in English are never biased against innocent people, as they were in his situation. The irony, then, is that the Marabar Caves, seemingly symbols of randomness and meaninglessness, are actually "productively" empty--their horrifying lack of meaning ends up inspiring Aziz to seek meaning and unity within his own community and country.

## Part 2, Chapter 32 Quotes

❝ He had forgotten the beauty of form among idol temples and lumpy hills; indeed, without form, how can there be beauty? Form stammered here and there in a mosque, became rigid through nervousness even; but oh these Italian churches! ...something more precious than mosaics and marbles was offered to him now: the harmony between the works of man and the earth that upholds them, the civilization that has escaped muddle, the spirit in a reasonable form, with flesh and blood subsisting.

**Related Characters:** Cyril Fielding

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 313-314

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this chapter, Fielding travels back to Europe, where he marvels at the beauty of Venetian churches and other buildings. Fielding has been out of Europe for a long time, but when he returns he's immediately struck by the order and control of European society--an order that Indian society might lack. In Fielding's view, India lacks structure and "form" altogether.

What does Forster mean by form, exactly? Fielding is looking at architecture, but Forster is talking about the land itself as well, and about the vague structure of society. Part of Forster's description of India as "muddle" or "mystery" includes the assumption that India is inherently confusing, chaotic, and formless. The buildings lack symmetry and design, and even the land itself is somehow inhuman and "muddled" (one thinks of the elaborate descriptions of the meaningless, somehow horrifying Marabar Hills). In Europe, however, the geography is easier for the human mind to comprehend, and the architecture reflects that--it has

meaning and design, and is comforting or inspiring to behold.

Forster here betrays a Eurocentric prejudice, something he usually tries to avoid. He isn't saying that Europeans are superior to Indians, but he does suggest that an entire aspect of geography, architecture, and society is more beautiful and "human" in Europe than in India. Structure is better than formlessness--harmony is better than discord. And Forster sees structure and harmony as more present in Europe than in India, whatever the sins or virtues of the people themselves.

## Part 3, Chapter 33 Quotes

❝ Thus Godbole, though she was not important to him, remembered an old woman he had met in Chandrapore days. Chance brought her into his mind while it was in this heated state, he did not select her, she happened to occur among the throng of soliciting images, a tiny splinter, and he impelled her by his spiritual force to that place where completeness can be found. Completeness, not reconstruction. His sense grew thinner, he remembered a wasp seen he forgot where, perhaps on a stone. He loved the wasp equally, he impelled it likewise, he was imitating God. And the stone where the wasp clung – could he… no, he could not, he had been wrong to attempt the stone…

**Related Characters:** Mrs. Moore, Professor Godbole

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 321

### Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, years after Aziz's trial, we see Professor Godbole as he contemplates the order of the universe in his Hindu theology. Godbole thinks of religion as a promise of unity and Heaven for all beings, from Mrs. Moore to the tiniest wasp. Godbole's vision of the universe could be considered utopian or universalist--every being, no matter what, has the opportunity to achieve glory, because every being has some intrinsic beauty and wonder. His sudden memory of Mrs. Moore at this moment also reinforces her as a kind spiritual being associated with Hinduism and universal unity--Godbole, the other character most associated with these ideas, shares a subconscious connection to Mrs. Moore, even though they barely met.

And yet there's a limit even to Godbole's vision of the world--he can't quite bring himself to embrace *everything* in his utopia. He is willing to accept a wasp--which appears again as a symbol for the "lowest" of the animal world--but not the stone that the wasp clings to. This is subtly compared to the earlier description of the openminded Christian Mr. Sorley, who was willing to accept monkeys into Heaven, but not wasps. (And the connection of the wasp to Mrs. Moore also recalls her introduction to the novel, in which she watched a wasp and tried to love it.)

One could thus argue that all systems of thought, in order to remain coherent, must exclude something, whether it's certain species, certain objects, certain ideologies, certain races, certain genders, etc. There is no total unity, even for a Hindi: an idea that will be important as we come to the novel's partially, but not totally, happy ending.

## Part 3, Chapter 35 Quotes

❝ "I do not want you, I do not want one of you in my private life, with my dying breath I say it. Yes, yes, I made a foolish blunder; despise me and feel cold. I thought you married my enemy. I never read your letter. Mahmoud Ali deceived me… I forgive Mahmoud Ali all things, because he loved me." Then pausing, while the rain exploded like pistols, he said: "My heart is for my own people henceforward."

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz (speaker), Mahmoud Ali, Cyril Fielding

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 339

### Explanation and Analysis

In this dramatic passage, Aziz reunites with his old friend Fielding. Years have passed, and the two have grown apart. Now, Aziz is angry with Fielding--Aziz long ago turned his back on English culture altogether. In this scene, Aziz learns that Fielding is *not*, as Aziz had assumed, married to Adela; Aziz's "friend" Mahmoud Ali had lied about the truth to Aziz in order to ensure that Aziz didn't reconcile with either Adela or Fielding.

In spite of his mistake, Aziz refuses to embrace Englishmen once again. Instead of being angry with Ali for lying to him for so long, Aziz insists that he forgives his friend and recognizes that Mahmoud Ali lied out of love more than anything else. Aziz has brushed with the English too many times before--from now on, he's going to stay with his own Indian people. Thus Forster again portrays the complications of humanism, psychology, and culture--Aziz's

new sense of nationalism is vital, and in many ways healthy for him, but it also stands in the way of one of his most important friendships, and the central relationship of the novel: the bond between Aziz and Fielding.

## Part 3, Chapter 36 Quotes

"Can you always tell whether a stranger is your friend?"
"Yes."
"Then you are an Oriental." He unclasped as he spoke, with a little shudder. Those words – he had said them to Mrs. Moore in the mosque in the beginning of the cycle, from which, after so much suffering, he had got free. Never to be friends with the English! Mosque, caves, mosque, caves.

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz, Ralph Moore (speaker), Mrs. Moore

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 349

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this passage, Aziz encounters with Ralph Moore, the son of Mrs. Moore. Aziz points out that Ralph is an "Oriental" because he has a natural gift for telling which people are going to be his friends. Aziz then realizes that he said these exact words to Mrs. Moore, years ago--setting in motion a series of events that led up to his being accused of assault in the Marabar Caves. Aziz has the idea that he's been locked in an eternal cycle of friendship (with an English person), followed by disillusionment. He has tried to avoid this by staying away from the English altogether, but now his past has returned, and Aziz feels another inexplicable bond to another Moore. Thus the passage is suspenseful; will Aziz give into his natural friendship with Ralph, and again embrace the possibility of connecting with an Englishman, or will he back away, frightened that accepting Ralph (and Fielding) will only lead to another ugly incident?

"Yes, your mother was my best friend in all the world." He was silent, puzzled by his own great gratitude. What did this eternal goodness of Mrs. Moore amount to? To nothing, if brought to the test of thought. She had not borne witness in his favour, nor visited him in the prison, yet she had stolen to the depth of his heart, and he always adored her.

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz (speaker), Mrs. Moore, Ralph Moore

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 350

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this passage, Aziz tells Ralph the truth about Mrs. Moore--he adored her, and continues to idealize in his mind. Aziz himself admits that Mrs. Moore never did anything concrete for Aziz, but she projected calmness, kindness, and understanding, which Aziz always responded to with joy and appreciation. It's not clear if Moore really deserves Aziz's appreciation--there are even some signs that she doesn't at all. (She left India instead of testifying at the trial; she never visited him in prison, etc.) And yet Aziz--an Eastern man (as Forster describes it) through and through--doesn't have much conscious control over who he likes and doesn't like. Instead of basing his feelings for Moore on concrete action, he feels an immediate, instinctual liking and empathy for her, which he is unable to reverse--and this feeling is arguably more powerful and lasting than other kinds of friendships (for example, Aziz's faded friendship with Fielding).

## Part 3, Chapter 37 Quotes

"Clear out, all you Turtons and Burtons. We wanted to know you ten years back – now it's too late. If we see you and sit on your committees it's for political reasons, don't you make any mistake." His horse did rear. "Clear out, clear out, I say. Why are we put to so much suffering? We used to blame you, now we blame ourselves, we grow wiser. Until England is in difficulties we keep silent, but in the next European war – aha, aha! Then is our time."

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz (speaker), Cyril Fielding, Mr. Turton, Mrs. Turton

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 360

**Explanation and Analysis**

In this passage, Aziz predicts that one day, India will rise and claim independence for itself. Much as Ireland rebelled against the U.K. during World War One, Aziz predicts that India will seize a moment of international crisis to stand up for its own independence; then, it will drive out all the

Englishmen in the country and take control of its government.

Aziz's remarks (and thus Forster's as well) predict the future. In 1947, more than 20 years after *A Passage to India*'s publication,India would rise up against the British Empire, using the crisis of World War II as an opportunity to fight for freedom. Aziz's remarks seem both selfless and self-absorbed--even though he's making a great speech about the future of his country, and rhetorically throwing off the yoke of colonialism, he's also clearly using politics as a way of lashing out against all the individual English people who have caused him pain and misery over the course of the novel. In doing so, he is again trying to reject Fielding and his offers of friendship.

"…yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then" – he rode against him furiously – "and then," he concluded, half kissing him, "you and I shall be friends."
"Why can't we be friends now?" said the other, holding him affectionately. "It's want I want. It's what you want."
But the horses didn't want it – they swerved apart; the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single file; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House… they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices: "No, not yet," and the sky said: "No, not there."

**Related Characters:** Dr. Aziz, Cyril Fielding (speaker)

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 362

**Explanation and Analysis**

The novel ends on a cautiously optimistic note. Aziz cannot be true friends with Fielding in the present, despite the fact that they both like (and even love) each other, and have always had a strong bond. True friendship, Forster suggests, never exists in a vacuum, and the specter of colonialism (and cultural differences) still stands in the way of Aziz and Fielding's personal admiration for each other. Put another way, Aziz cannot be friends with Cyril until there's a more equitable relationship between England and India--until both men feel free, and one is not inherently connected to the oppressor, and the other to the oppressed. Only then can the two men get along without all the political baggage of their respective countries.

Forster believes in the *possibility* of humanistic cooperation between people of different nations, and indeed feels that individual friendship is crucial to overcoming racism, prejudice, and injustice in general (friendship is the most important kind of human connection in the novel, and is central to Forster's humanistic views). Yet Forster also tempers any kind of idealized optimism with an acceptance of the realities of politics and culture, tabling such personal cooperation until the day that two nations themselves can get along and exist as equals. Cyril and Aziz are representatives of their countries, proving that no man can be truly free of his culture and nation. The tragedy of the novel is that friendship has its limits: even when they're trying to be friendly and kind, people find themselves bound to and divided by their own societies--and even their geographies and natural surroundings. Even the horses, birds, and sky--not just the human elements of culture and society--divide Aziz and Fielding in this scene. One day, Englishmen and Indians will be able to get along, but not yet.

# SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

## PART 1, CHAPTER 1

The narrator describes the city of Chandrapore, India. Other than the **Marabar Caves**, which are twenty miles away, the city is "nothing extraordinary." It is a small, dirty, ugly city next to the Ganges River. Everything, including the inhabitants, seems to be made of mud. Slightly inland, however, there is a settlement of British expatriates. These buildings are elevated above Chandrapore, and lie next to the railway station. There is a hospital, houses, and a civil station there.

*Forster immediately introduces the idea of India as a "muddle": a mess of confusion and chaos. This idea is present in his initial description of Chandrapore as dirty, formless, and seemingly made of mud. The British buildings are literally elevated above the Indian town, in a clear representation of the British colonialists as rulers separated from the people they rule.*

From the viewpoint of these buildings, Chandrapore looks like a romantic, beautiful "city of gardens." Its ugliness is covered by vegetation. British newcomers to Chandrapore think it looks romantic and charming, and they can only lose their illusions by being driven down into the city itself.

*This visual description of Chandrapore shows another problem with the English perception of India: if they aren't disgusted with the "inferior" natives, then they are romanticizing and exoticizing them.*

The British buildings and the rest of Chandrapore share nothing in common except for the wide sky. The sky is the ruler of the whole landscape, deciding when the heat will come, and when the rain will come. There are no mountains in the distance to challenge the sky. The only interruptions in the horizon are the "fingers" of the Marabar Hills, which contain the "extraordinary **caves**."

*In this first chapter Forster doesn't need to introduce any characters to already point to his themes. The English are divided and elevated above the Indians, everything is an oppressive muddle, and the Marabar Caves are constantly in the distance, foreshadowing mystery and future conflict.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 2

Dr. Aziz, a young Muslim Indian, rides his bike and arrives late to his friend Hamidullah's house. Hamidullah and another man, Mahmoud Ali, are discussing whether or not it's possible for an Indian to be friends with an Englishman. Mahmoud Ali argues that it is impossible. Hamidullah, who once studied at Cambridge, says that it is possible, but only in England.

*Forster focuses first on Indian characters, undercutting the typical British novel. Here he also introduces the important theme of friendship, particularly friendship between an Englishman and an Indian. The novel addresses the political tensions between England and India, but also personal relations like the ones portrayed here. Note that the friendship between an Indian and the English is seen as being impossible only in India, where the power dynamics of British colonialism come into play, where the British are the rulers and they see the Indians not as individuals but as a population to be ruled.*

Mahmoud Ali points to the example of the "red-nosed boy" who was once kind to him but has now become racist and insulting. Hamidullah says that no matter how they friendly are when they arrive in India, all the English end up becoming intolerable. He says it takes six months for this to happen to the men, and six weeks for the women.

*Hamidullah's statement that an Indian/English friendship is impossible in India shows that the colonial system is partly to blame for corrupting English people, rather than the individuals themselves. The "red-nosed boy" will later be revealed as Ronny Heaslop.*

Hamidullah describes his old English friends from his Cambridge days, the Bannisters, and says that he would like to go meet their son, who is in India now, but he fears that "the other Anglo-Indians will have got hold of him long ago" and corrupted him. Aziz says he prefers to ignore the English altogether. The other men then remember some small kindnesses from English women, but overall they have found the English women rude and cruel.

*This gives a good overall summary of Forster's portrayal of the English in India—even if they start out with good intentions, they eventually become prejudiced and condescending, and the women are even worse than the men. Aziz is still naïve and thinks he can avoid the English, but they will forcefully intrude upon his life later.*

Aziz wanders about in the garden, thinking of Persian poetry, as the other men continue to argue. When he returns, Hamidullah takes Aziz behind the purdah (a screen that separates women from public interaction with men) to talk to his wife, Hamidullah Begum, who is Aziz's distant relative. Hamidullah Begum asks Aziz why he hasn't remarried after the death of his wife. Aziz brushes off her questions. He is happy having married only once, and he often visits his three children at his mother-in-law's house.

*Aziz is a skilled doctor, but his true love is poetry, which more accurately reflects his emotional and imaginative character. The issue of the purdah—a practice of some Muslim Indian women of living their lives hidden from men other than their husbands and family—will come up several times in the novel.*

The men sit down to eat along with Mohammed Latif, a distant cousin of Hamidullah's who has never worked and lives entirely by mooching off of Hamidullah. Aziz recites some poetry, mostly romantic verse about the "decay of Islam and the brevity of love." The men listen gladly, for poetry is a public event in India, not a private one like it is in England. For a moment they feel like India is united.

*Forster gives hints like this of the potential for a united India, usually through something intangible like poetry or the universal oneness of Hinduism, while at the same time showing the myriad ways that India and its people are so divided. Forster contrasts small details of Indian culture with English culture, and reveals that it is only in their anger at the English that the various Indian groups do share common ground.*

A servant interrupts to tell Aziz that his superior, the civil surgeon Major Callendar, wants to see him at his bungalow. The major doesn't give a reason for the summons. Aziz is annoyed and thinks that Callendar is doing this just to prove his power over him, but he knows he must go anyway. Aziz gets on his bike and rides furiously off.

*Callendar will later prove to be a violently racist and hateful character, but we are first introduced to him (and the English in general) through this annoying display of power and condescension—making Aziz leave his friends' dinner without saying why.*

Aziz's bike tire soon goes flat and then he hires a tonga (a small horse-drawn vehicle) to go the rest of the way. As he rides he is depressed by all the streets, which are named after British generals, and he feels that Great Britain has thrown a net over India. He finally arrives at Major Callendar's house and finds that the civil surgeon has gone out without leaving a message.

*Aziz tries to ignore the English or laugh at them, but he is unable to escape their presence everywhere as an oppressive force. Aziz's troubles traveling through town are a small glimpse of Forster's "muddle" of India. Callendar is rude again just because he can be, and likely because of his racist attitude toward Indians.*

While Aziz argues with the servant at the door, Mrs. Callendar and her friend Mrs. Lesley come out and rudely take Aziz's tonga for their own use without acknowledging him. Aziz irritatedly recognizes that this is "inevitable snub" the English always give to the Indians. He leaves a terse message for Callendar and decides to walk home.

*This is the first actual appearance of English characters, and we see the rudeness and racism that is so notably common in Forster's English women characters. Aziz is now truly irritated, contrary to his usual stance of happily ignoring the English.*

Aziz walks a while but the ground itself seems "hostile," and he is soon tired. He stops in at one of his favorite mosques to rest. He admires the elegance and beauty of the architecture, and the empty moonlit mosque makes him feel romantic about the truth of his religion. He listens to the sounds of the English and Hindus nearby, but feels at home in his haven of Islam. He imagines building his own mosque someday, with a poetic inscription on his tomb addressing "those who have secretly understood my heart."

*Forster often personifies the Indian landscape itself as somehow unfriendly to humans, which will later be important regarding the Marabar Caves. Contrary to the "muddle" Forster and the English find in India, Aziz takes comfort in the "mysteries" of Islam—what he feels is an elegant simplicity behind all life, and a divine plan for everything. We see more of Aziz's romantic and imaginative nature as he daydreams.*

Aziz then notices that there is an Englishwoman in the mosque. He is angered by her presence and yells at her for intruding in a holy place for Muslims. She tells him that she has already taken off her shoes, because she could tell that "God is here." Aziz is surprised and impressed by her humility. She introduces herself as Mrs. Moore, and when she steps into the light he sees that she is old.

*Mrs. Moore appears as both a sympathetic English character—one who respects Aziz's religion and treats him as an equal—but also as a sort of mystical figure who is able to immediately sense that "God is here" in the mosque, even though she herself is a Christian.*

Aziz offers Mrs. Moore his friendship and service to make up for scolding her. He can tell that she is newly arrived in India because she speaks to him with respect. Mrs. Moore says that she has just come from the English-only club, where they are putting on a performance of *Cousin Kate*. She says that she is in India visiting her son, Ronny Heaslop, who is the City Magistrate in Chandrapore.

*It is this encounter that gives the book's first section its title: "Mosque." The meeting at the mosque represents the initial possibility of friendship between Indians and English. At this point true friendship still seems plausible if both parties will be kind, respectful, and openminded in the way Aziz and Mrs. Moore are.*

Mrs. Moore reveals that her first husband died, and Aziz says that he is in a similar situation. They discover that they each have two sons and a daughter, and they feel an immediate bond. Aziz likes Mrs. Moore even more when she criticizes Mrs. Callendar. Aziz is excited by Mrs. Moore's sympathy, and he tells her how Mrs. Callendar took his tonga and lists her many other unkindnesses to him and other Indians.

*This is only a fleeting encounter, but both Aziz and Mrs. Moore have a deep sense of intuition, and after this meeting they will consider themselves to be close friends. Because of the power dynamics at play in an India controlled by the British, Aziz would never be able to criticize one Englishwoman to another normally, but he feels a strong instinctive trust for Mrs. Moore.*

Mrs. Moore brushes aside Aziz's compliments about her understanding, saying that she doesn't understand people well – she only knows whether she likes them or not. Aziz says that this makes her an "Oriental." Aziz then escorts her back to the club, which is for English people only.

*Aziz's comment that Mrs. Moore is an "Oriental" sets in motion the cycle that plays out throughout the novel. "Oriental" is today considered an offensive term, but in Forster's time this is how Aziz identifies himself – and he sees being "Oriental" as involving different character traits than being "English," an emphasis on feeling – and so he is essentially declaring that he and Mrs. Moore are equals and can be friends.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 3

Mrs. Moore enters the club, where the play *Cousin Kate* is in its third act. The play room is very hot, so she goes to the billiard room instead. Adela Quested, a young woman who traveled with Mrs. Moore from England, is there saying "I want to see the *real* India." Mrs. Moore escorted Adela at Ronny's request. Adela and Ronny might become engaged soon.

*Forster now shifts to portraying the English of Chandrapore at their exclusive club. Adela's desire to see the "real India" is on the one hand admirable in the sense that the other English characters feel no desire to connect with India at all. On the other hand, her desire leads to trouble later on, and is based on the naïve and condescending idea that India can somehow be comprehended as a whole—an idea that Forster will continually disprove.*

Adela and Mrs. Moore are both slightly disappointed by their visit so far, as they have mostly stayed in the English settlement and haven't seen what they imagine as the "real India." Mr. Turton, the district collector (the chief administrative officer) of Chandrapore, enters and orders drinks for them. He praises Ronny as a dignified young man and "one of us." Mrs. Moore is surprised and not entirely pleased to hear this.

*Mr. Turton is essentially the governor of the town of Chandrapore. Ronny has basically become one of the typical Anglo-Indians, meaning that he has been corrupted by the colonial system such that he has become racist and conformist, suffering the fate that Aziz and Hamidullah were lamenting earlier.*

The play ends and a band plays the English National Anthem. All conversation stops as it plays, and everyone is reminded that they are English, part of an Empire occupying a foreign land. After the song Adela again asks to see the "real India." Cyril Fielding, the principal of the Government College, passes through the room and suggests that Adela should try meeting some Indians.

*Forster brings up the curious fact that the English in India are often more patriotic and nationalistic than those actually living in England. They have a greater tendency to idealize their homeland and contrast it to their current "savage" circumstances. Just as the different Indian groups are united in their feelings against the English, the English feel* more *English because of their contrast to the Indians. Fielding suggests that rather than "see India" Adela meet actual Indians – that she interact with real people rather than a romanticized idea.*

The ladies of the club, including Mrs. Turton and Mrs. Callendar, are amused by Adela's desire to see Indians. They assure her that it's best to avoid them, as all the Indians are creepy and disrespectful. Mr. Turton wants to please Adela, however, so he promises to hold a "Bridge Party" for both Indians and English. Mr. and Mrs. Turton then leave the club, with Mrs. Turton thinking that she doesn't like Adela or Mr. Fielding, because they aren't "pukka" (respectable) enough.

*More examples of the English women showing their disgust and dislike for the Indians. Forster will later draw attention to the difference between Adela's desire to see the "real India" but not necessarily "real Indians." Mrs. Turton is one of the most racist and negative characters, and her disapproval of Fielding predicts his sympathetic nature.*

As distant extensions of the British monarchy, the Turtons are like royalty in Chandrapore, and when they leave the party breaks up. Ronny is excited that Mr. Turton was so friendly to his guests. Ronny says that he's been learning how to deal with the Indians properly. He mentions Mahmoud Ali, whom Ronny felt he had to snub in court to avoid being taken advantage of.

*We now see that Ronny is the "red-nosed boy" who used to be friendly to Mahmoud Ali, but now purposefully snubs him to show his superiority and detachment. Ronny's character is the prime example of the colonial system's power to corrupt even originally well-meaning English individuals.*

Mrs. Moore goes outside and feels a sudden sense of unity with the moon and stars. She, Ronny, and Adela ride home, and on the way Mrs. Moore points out the mosque she stopped at. She mentions the "nice young man" she met there, and Ronny assumes from the tone of her voice that she is talking about an Englishman. When he learns that she's talking about an Indian he is surprised and angry, and starts accusing Aziz of impudence.

*Mrs. Moore again seems almost mystical as she feels a sense of oneness with the sky, foreshadowing the novel's later emphasis on Hindu pantheism. Ronny is instinctively angry when his mother goes against his attempts to be "one of us" and fit in with the mindset of the English club members.*

They stop momentarily and admire the Ganges, and then return to their bungalow. Adela goes to bed and Ronny starts interrogating his mother about Aziz. He uses phrases he has learned from his superiors to discuss Indians, and he interprets Mrs. Moore's words to sound like Aziz was being insubordinate. Mrs. Moore scolds her son, saying that Ronny "never used to judge people like this at home." Ronny responds that "India isn't home."

*We see more evidence of Ronny's change in character, and how the colonial system in India has made him more narrow-minded, judgmental, and unkind. Because of the inherent power the English hold over the Indians, it is easy for Ronny to twist a friendly encounter into a seeming show of insubordination.*

Ronny feels obligated to tell Major Callendar about Aziz being impudent, but Mrs. Moore makes him promise not to. In exchange Ronny asks his mother to not tell Adela about Aziz. Ronny is afraid that Adela will start worrying about whether the English treat the "natives" properly. Mrs. Moore reminds him that Adela has come to India to observe how Ronny is when he's at work.

*Ronny is clearly not "one of us" all the way yet, as he worries that the English are actually unfair to the Indians, and that Adela will notice and dislike him for it. Here we also start to see the complex, confusing system of gossip and rumors in both the English and Indian societies of Chandrapore.*

Mrs. Moore goes into her bedroom, and as she hangs up her cloak she sees that there is a small **wasp** on her coat hook. The narrator says that "no Indian animal has any sense of the interior," as all human architecture is just a "normal growth of the eternal jungle." Mrs. Moore calls the wasp "pretty dear" as it continues to sleep.

*In the novel the wasp generally represents the "lowliest" of living things, and as a symbol it always appears alongside either Mrs. Moore or Hinduism. Here Mrs. Moore expresses a natural feeling of love and kinship with the wasp, again associating her with a mystical idea of unity across not only people but all living things. Forster associates Indian architecture with the formless and primitive jungle.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 4

Mr. Turton keeps his promise, and the next day he invites several Indian gentlemen to his "Bridge Party," adding that Mrs. Turton will entertain any ladies they might bring. The Indians are surprised and excited by this event. Mahmoud Ali suspects that the lieutenant governor is making Turton throw the party, as the higher-ups seem more sympathetic to the Indians than are the officials the Indians deal with every day.

*The Bridge Party immediately turns into a political event filled with distrust and division. The lieutenant general will appear later as a more "liberal" figure who is more open to and less racist toward the Indians, although he is also totally detached from daily life in India (and his liberalism is described as being a product of that detachment). Mahmoud Ali is generally more suspicious of the English than his friends.*

The Nawab Bahadur, the leading Muslim landowner and Loyalist of the area, says that it is "easy to sympathize at a distance," and he appreciates Turton's invitation. He announces that he will attend. One man accuses the Nawab Bahadur of cheapening himself with this, but in general the Nawab is highly respected in the community and many other Indians decide to attend if he will.

*The Nawab Bahadur is a Loyalist, meaning he is an Indian who sympathizes and works with the English. He is a similar figure to Turton (on the English side), as both men strive to "bridge" the two cultures for political reasons, and often have to repress their true feelings for the sake of their work.*

Outside the room where the Nawab Bahadur is speaking (which is near the Courts) lower-class Indians wait outside and sit in the dirt. These people received no invitation from Mr. Turton. Farther out are even lower classes, castes of Indians who live in total poverty and receive no kind of "invitation" to anything at all.

*One important theme of the novel is the attempt to describe India as either a "muddle" or a "mystery." Scenes like this one contribute to the view that India is a muddle—an incomprehensible, chaotic place—as the scene expands to masses of nameless people.*

Still musing on invitations, the narrator then describes Mr. Graysford and Mr. Sorley, two missionaries who live on the outskirts of the city and never enter the English club. They both agree that in heaven there will be room for all people, no matter their race or class. Mr. Sorley, who is young and "advanced" feels that there might even be a place in heaven for monkeys or other mammals. He has discussed this with his Hindu friends, but he is unwilling to consider allowing **wasps**, plants, bacteria, or mud into heaven. Mr. Sorley feels that "we must exclude someone from our gathering, or we shall be left with nothing."

*These characters never reappear, but they begin an important discussion about universal oneness in a spiritual sense. They are both Christian, but the "advanced" Mr. Sorley leans towards a more Hindu vision of heaven, where some creatures other than humans might be included. In the novel's discussion of religion Christianity is often portrayed as too exclusive or narrow-minded to contain the vastness of all life. The wasp reappears, representing a lowly living thing. Yet these discussions also suggest the way that ultimately people feel important through the exclusion of others. In Sorley's case, he excludes the wasp. In the India of the novel, the English exclude the Indians, and the Indians of different backgrounds exclude each other.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 5

The Bridge Party is awkward and unsuccessful. The Indian guests gather together on one side of the tennis lawn, while the English stand at the other. Mrs. Moore and Adela watch the segregation sadly. Mrs. Turton and Ronny discuss the guests, saying that "no one who's here matters" and making fun of the Indians wearing European clothing.

*The party is supposed to make the two societies mingle, but it only ends up highlighting the divisions between the English and the Indians. The English are quite rude and inhospitable, treating their "guests" with condescension.*

Some English women arrive and join the English group. They discuss the production of *Cousin Kate*, and which play they will put on next year. Any kind of art is considered "bad form" to the "Public School attitude" of the expatriates. Mrs. Moore notices how bland and conventional Ronny's opinions have become. Years earlier he had hated *Cousin Kate*, but now he praises it in order to not offend anyone.

*We see more of Ronny's negative character development, as in India he has learned to suppress any imagination or unique opinion that might differ from the crowd. The colonial system causes the Anglo-Indians—as an "outpost of Empire" among a somewhat hostile population—to huddle together as a kind of herd.*

Mr. Turton arrives and makes his wife go meet the group of gathering Indian women. Mr. Turton looks over the group of men and assumes the various self-serving reasons why each has come to the party. Mrs. Turton takes Adela and Mrs. Moore to visit the Indian women. Mrs. Turton assures the two that they are "superior to every one in India." She shakes hands with everyone and says a few words in crude Urdu, and then asks Mrs. Moore and Adela if they're satisfied.

*Just as Mahmoud Ali assumed Turton threw the party for political reasons, so Turton attributes to all his guests selfish reasons for coming. Both sides remain suspicious. Mrs. Turton makes her racism explicit, telling Adela that she is superior to the Indians simply because she is English. Mrs. Turton also makes no efforts to understand the people she scorns.*

One of the Indian women speaks up in English, and Mrs. Turton is surprised that they know the language. Adela is excited, and tries to have a conversation with the women, but they are too polite and shy to be drawn in. As they are about to leave, Mrs. Moore impulsively asks one of the women, Mrs. Bhattacharya, if she and Adela can visit her at her home. Mrs. Bhattacharya agrees, and they decide to come on Thursday. Mr. Bhattacharya promises to send a carriage for them. It seems possible that the Bhattacharyas are delaying a planned trip to Calcutta for the sake of the visit, but they insist.

*This seems to be a successful cross-cultural interaction like the one with Aziz and Mrs. Moore, but it will later lead to confusion and a "muddle." Mrs. Turton is so unfamiliar with the Indians she hates that she doesn't even realize that many speak English. Mrs. Moore and Adela stand out from the crowd simply by being hospitable hosts and making an effort to talk to their guests like equals.*

Meanwhile Mr. Turton makes his rounds, shaking hands and telling a few jokes, but then he returns to the English side of the lawn. On the Indian side, most of the men are grateful to be invited, but for different reasons. Cyril Fielding is at the party, and he wanders about socializing with the Indians. He even stays on the Indian side of the lawn to eat. He hears about Adela and Mrs. Moore's friendliness to the Indians and is pleased by it.

*Fielding now appears as a more important character. He is the only one to have truly successful interactions with both the Indians and the English, but in doing so he sacrifices the herd mentality of the English and neglects to segregate himself with them. He senses that Mrs. Moore and Adela might be sympathetic allies.*

Mr. Fielding finds Adela and tells her that the Indians appreciated her kindness. He invites Adela and Mrs. Moore to tea, and Adela gladly accepts. She says that the whole "Bridge Party" has made her ashamed, as almost all the English have been very rude to the Indians. Fielding offers to invite an old Indian professor at the College to tea as well, as he might sing something. Adela mentions Dr. Aziz, and Fielding says he will invite him too.

*The main characters of the novel now start to come together. Adela's friendliness to the Indians is less intimate and natural than that of Mrs. Moore or Fielding, as she is still trying to "study life" and see the "real India." She objects to English racism, but not out of any emotional attachment or love for Indians – she is interested in the "idea" of India.*

Adela looks out at the Marabar Hills and suddenly starts to dread her future married life with Ronny. She doesn't want to become like the other English expatriates at the club, socializing only with each other "while the true India slid by unnoticed."

*Adela is basically concerned with herself and her own experience, though she is very honest and just. Marriage becomes an important subject in the novel, as it is a traditional sign of true intimacy between two people—an ideal of humanism.*

After the party Adela, Ronny, and Mrs. Moore go to dinner with Miss Derek (an English employee of a local Indian ruler) and the McBrydes (the superintendent of police and his wife). They eat traditional English food, "the food of exiles." During the meal Adela thinks of the other young expatriates like herself who eventually become as conventional and insensitive as all the rest. She promises herself that she will "never get like that," but she recognizes that this will be almost impossible unless she has allies. She thinks sympathetically of someone like Fielding. Miss Derek, the dinner guest, works for a Maharaja, a native Indian ruler who is allowed by England to govern his own province.

*Miss Derek is looked down upon by many of the English because she works for an Indian Maharaja, which is seen as "cheapening" herself. The English try to recreate their homeland in India through food, performances of traditional plays, and an exclusive club—trying to avoid India itself. Adela, however, wants to experience India as it is, although her idea of the "real India" is still romanticized and exoticized, and doesn't include friendship with Indians.*

After the guests leave and Adela goes to bed, Ronny asks Mrs. Moore about Adela. Mrs. Moore says they've mostly just talked about India, and she suggests that Ronny should spend more time alone with Adela. Ronny protests that people would gossip. He explains that it's different in the English community in India – everyone must strictly follow conventions or else they will be gossiped about and ostracized as not "quite their sort."

*Again Forster shows how the English community in India is very different from the one in England itself. The Anglo-Indians huddle together and try to shut out India, but in their closeness there is also lots of gossip and intrigue. The Indians' social system often seems like a "muddle," but the English foster similar complexities and suspicions.*

Mrs. Moore says that Adela feels that the English are not pleasant to the Indians. Ronny dismisses this as a "side-issue," saying that the English are here to uphold peace and justice, not to be pleasant. Mrs. Moore says that the English seem to be posing as gods with this attitude. Ronny then goes on a rant about the difficulties of his position, and how the British have a very hard job to do in India that has no room for pleasantness. The narrator explains that Ronny *does* have a difficult job, which he does without any expectation of gratitude, and that his intentions are good.

*Here Forster starts to illustrate some of the cultural and racial differences he finds between Indians and the English. The English (according to him) value fairness and practicality, but lack imagination or deep emotion. The Indians are imaginative and emotional, but sometimes overly so, to the detriment of fairness or getting things done. Ronny seems harsh in his treatment of the Indians, but Forster grants Ronny the dignity of giving Ronny's side of the situation.*

Mrs. Moore disagrees with Ronny, saying that the English *are* in India to be pleasant to the Indians, as God demands pleasantness and love between all the peoples of the world. Ronny waits until she has finished talking about religion and decides to forgive her arguments because she is getting old. Ronny approves of religion only "as long as it endorsed the National Anthem." He goes off to bed. Mrs. Moore regrets bringing God into the conversation, for her Christian God has seemed less powerful to her ever since she came to India.

*Mrs. Moore takes the "Indian" side here, valuing kindness over fairness. Mrs. Moore is again associated with religion and unity. She begins as a Christian, but, as part of the novel's continuing trend, she finds her religion too small to encompass the muddles and mysteries of India. Part of the Anglo-Indian mentality is to avoid any discussion of the supernatural, and to never question the value of the British presence in India.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 6

Aziz did not go to the Bridge Party. First he was distracted by surgical cases he had to attend to. Major Callendar, his superior, disrespects him because he is an Indian, though Callendar knows that Aziz is a better surgeon than he is. Callendar also is upset with Aziz for being late the night before when Callendar summoned him. He ignores Aziz's valid excuses and accuses him of laziness. Aziz generally views the English as comic figures, and he "enjoyed being misunderstood by them," so he decides not to be angry at Callendar.

*Callendar again appears in a very negative light, and his working relationship with Aziz is an example of the potential for English corruption and prejudice. Aziz is still trying to ignore the English or laugh them off, as he has yet to experience the true face of colonialism. Aziz knows that no matter what he says or does, Callendar has already made up his mind about him. But he has found ways to not be bothered by Callendar.*

The day of the Bridge Party is the anniversary of Aziz's wife's death, so he decides not to go. Aziz's marriage was an arranged one, and he had not loved his wife at first. But he fell in love with her after the birth of their first child. She then died giving birth to their third child. After her death Aziz felt that no woman could ever replace her, so he never remarried, and sometimes he becomes deeply depressed. On the anniversary of her death he takes out his wife's picture and weeps, suddenly repulsed by the idea of mingling with the insensitive British.

*Forster develops Aziz's character more and we see his emotional, passionate nature. He mourns his wife deeply at times, but then forgets about her for long periods as well. This swell of emotion in him makes the English seem especially unattractive to him—as Aziz, like Forster, views the English as repressed and insensitive.*

Aziz then borrows Hamidullah's pony and goes riding to cheer himself up. He plays polo on the town green with an English soldier he has never met. The two men feel an immediate comradeship and they play for a while. When they depart they both think to themselves "if only they were all like that." Aziz then returns home, and on the way he has an awkward encounter with Dr. Panna Lal, a lower-class Hindu who had planned on going to the Bridge Party with Aziz. He impolitely insists on understanding why Aziz failed to attend.

*Aziz's mood then quickly swings from despair to happiness as he plays polo. His encounter with the soldier will serve an ironic point later, but for now it shows another example of a successful (though brief) cross-cultural relationship based on kindness and mutual respect. Aziz's awkward interaction with Lal then highlights again the tensions* within *India, between Indians of different class and religion.*

Aziz insults Dr. Panna Lal and then leaves, feeling defiant, but by the time he reaches home he worries that he will be in trouble with the English for not attending the party. He finds a letter with a British government stamp waiting for him, and he is afraid of what it might say. He is pleased to find that it is an invitation to tea from Mr. Fielding. Aziz is especially pleased because Fielding has overlooked the fact that Aziz had forgotten another invitation from him a month earlier. Aziz is excited to meet the principal, and writes a reply accepting the invitation.

*One of Aziz's greatest flaws is his snobbery, which especially shows against Hindus and lower-class Indians. This is ironic, because snobbery is also an especially English kind of sin. Immediately after scorning Dr. Lal, Aziz is delighted to hear from Fielding, whom he automatically feels drawn to because of the Englishman's politeness and friendliness.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 7

Cyril Fielding didn't come to India until he was forty. He has traveled to many places and had many experiences, so he has a broader worldview than the other Englishmen in India. He has always been an educator, and was promoted to principal of the college at Chandrapore. He likes his job, but notices a wide "gulf" between his countrymen and himself. He gets along well with both the English and the Indians, but is slightly distrusted by his countrymen for educating the Indians as equal individuals.

*The novel will now begin to shift its focus until Fielding becomes one of the main protagonists. He is a sort of stand-in for Forster himself, as an Englishman who feels out of place among his countrymen (as Forster did because of his homosexuality) and finds himself sympathetic to the Indians, making many Indian friends.*

Fielding has no "racial feeling," and believes that the people of all countries are just "trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of goodwill plus culture and intelligence." He once distressed the Englishmen at the club by remarking that "whites" are actually "pinko-grey." Despite this, the English men tolerate and respect him. It is the women who dislike him. Fielding doesn't mind this, as he finds that he cannot be friends with the English women as long as he has Indian friends.

*Fielding's worldview is essentially Forster's humanist ideal—that true friendship can overcome racial and cultural boundaries—although Forster will later prove pessimistic about this possibility. For the Anglo-Indians, "white" signifies superior culture, religion, and morality, and justifies their colonial rule. If "white" is just a color, then there is no real difference between the English and the Indians, and so no reason for one country to rule the other.*

Aziz arrives at Fielding's house for tea as Fielding is still getting dressed. Fielding invites Aziz to "make himself at home," which delights Aziz. The two men have never met, but they have heard a lot about each other, and they speak informally and cordially. Fielding breaks the collar stud for his shirt, and Aziz discreetly removes his own and gives it to Fielding, pretending that he has a spare. Aziz is pleased by the untidiness of Fielding's room, as he finds most Englishmen to be coldly organized.

*The two men feel an instant connection, and Aziz is delighted to find that Fielding lacks the qualities that most repel him about the English—unlike his compatriots, Fielding is messy, informal, and friendly. The effusive Aziz immediately makes an offer of friendship through an act of generosity: by lending his collar stud.*

Fielding tells Aziz that Mrs. Moore and Adela are coming to tea as well, and Aziz remembers his encounter with Mrs. Moore at the mosque. He is disappointed that there will be other guests, as he wants to be alone with Fielding. Fielding and Aziz's rapport does sour briefly when Aziz misinterprets a disparaging comment Fielding makes about Post-Impressionism and thinks that Fielding is implying that knowledge of painting is reserved for "the Ruling Race," but then he feels Fielding's "fundamental goodwill" and grows cheerful again. Aziz is very sensitive and emotional.

*The relationship between Aziz and Fielding brings up the important tension between practical truth and emotional truth—a great source of cultural miscommunication in colonial India. Forster portrays the Indians as being especially perceptive of the "truth of mood." They judge the intention behind one's words, and often say something different than what they mean. The English, however, take things more at face value. Fielding gets along well with Aziz because he is better able to perceive this "truth of mood."*

Mrs. Moore and Adela arrive and Aziz is pleased to find that he is still able to be informal around them. The fact that Mrs. Moore is old and Adela is unattractive makes him feel comfortable addressing them like men. The ladies are disappointed because the Bhattacharyas never sent their carriage that morning as they had said they would. They fear that they have unwittingly offended the Bhattacharyas and are responsible for the misunderstanding. Aziz accuses the Bhattacharyas of being lazy Hindus, and says that they probably were ashamed of their house.

*We see here that Aziz is also quite snobbish regarding beauty, as he treats Adela entirely differently because he finds her unattractive. The Englishwomen's interaction with the Bhattacharyas ended up in cross-cultural miscommunication—perhaps because of the English tendency to take things at face value. Aziz is quick to disparage Hindus, showing an important division within India itself.*

Adela pronounces the situation a mystery, and says "I do so hate mysteries." Mrs. Moore says that she likes mysteries, but dislikes "muddles." Fielding responds that all of India is a muddle. Aziz doesn't comment, but invites the ladies to his house. He is then horrified when they accept his invitation, for he is ashamed of his small, ugly residence. He tries to change the subject by commenting on the Indian architecture of the room.

*This exchange helps clarify the important theme of "muddles" and "mysteries." Fielding (and often Forster himself) views India as a muddle of confusion and chaos, while Mrs. Moore is associated with the view of India as a "mystery," or confusion with an underlying purpose or meaning. Aziz intends to convey a* feeling *of hospitality with his invitation—he is not actually inviting the women to his home—but the literal-minded English accept.*

Aziz starts getting emotional talking about justice and kindness, and he waxes poetic about architecture. Fielding knows that some of Aziz's facts are wrong, but unlike someone like Ronny or Turton, he doesn't correct him. He recognizes that the "truth of mood" is more important in that moment than factual truth. Adela is fascinated by Aziz, and considers him an encapsulation of the "real India."

*Fielding proves himself unique among the English with this "Indian" quality of recognizing the intention behind words as much as the words themselves. Adela still wants to see India as a kind of cultural experience for herself.*

Fielding's fourth guest arrives: Professor Godbole, a Hindu Brahman. Professor Godbole is quiet and elderly, and takes his tea at a little distance from the others, as he is of the highest Hindu caste. Aziz asks Adela if she plans to stay in India, and she spontaneously answers that she cannot do that. She then realizes that she has basically told strangers that she won't marry Ronny, without discussing it with Ronny himself first. Mrs. Moore seems flustered, probably by Adela's admission.

*Professor Godbole appears as an important character somewhat similar to Mrs. Moore. He is mysterious and mystical, and represents the Hindu India that has not yet been shown in the novel. Adela is suddenly carried away by this exposure to what she sees as the "real India," and she spontaneously decides not to marry Ronny.*

Mrs. Moore asks to see the college grounds, and Fielding takes her for a tour. Aziz, Adela, and Professor Godbole remain. Adela mentions coming to Aziz's house again, but Aziz deflects the subject by inviting her to the **Marabar Caves** instead. Adela is curious about the caves, which are the most famous landmark of the area. Aziz tries to describe them, but it soon becomes clear that he has never been to the caves either.

*To escape the awkwardness of the English again coming to his house, Aziz lets himself be lured into Adela's desire to see India, and he sets himself up as a tour guide—which places him into the "helper" role that fits into the power dynamic of English control at play in India. The Marabar Caves finally enter the story, and immediately they seem indescribable, famous for some reason that cannot be expressed. That Aziz is now serving as a tour guide who has never seen the destination hints at the underlying tensions that will ultimately mar this tourist trip to the unfathomable caves.*

Professor Godbole teases Aziz for never having been to the **Marabar Caves**, but when he then tries to describe them he is unable to explain what makes them so extraordinary. Aziz senses that Godbole is withholding some information about the caves. In discussing the caves, Aziz's orderly Muslim worldview starts to come up against something mysterious and indescribable, an "Ancient Night."

*Aziz shows his sensitivity to the intention behind words as he can tell that Godbole is withholding something about the caves. Aziz's Islam, like Mrs. Moore's Christianity, is unable to encapsulate the "Ancient Night"—the meaningless void of existence—that the caves will come to represent.*

Ronny suddenly arrives, hoping to take Adela and Mrs. Moore to a polo match at the English club. He ignores the Indians and speaks only to Adela, surprised at finding her alone with two Indian men. Ronny only knows how to deal with Indians in an official capacity, so he is ruder than he intends to be. Aziz is unwilling to be ignored, and tries to provoke Ronny to a reaction with his tone. Aziz grows even more excitable and talkative, and everyone in the room is uncomfortable or angry by the time Fielding returns with Mrs. Moore.

*Ronny's appearance disrupts the cordial tea party, but he only aggravates tensions that were already there to start with. Aziz becomes overly familiar and confrontational, intoxicated by his new closeness to Fielding and Mrs. Moore. Ronny overreacts to such familiar Indian/English relations, as he has learned from his superiors, and treats the Indians as inferior.*

Ronny takes Fielding aside and scolds him for leaving Adela alone with the Indians. Fielding doesn't see anything wrong with it, but Ronny is uncomfortable because it's an unconventional situation. The group starts to break up, with everyone feeling irritated, as if "irritation exuded from the very soil." Professor Godbole alone remains unflustered. Just as the ladies are about leave, Godbole decides to sing a Hindu song. His song sounds strange and haunting to the Western listeners, often without rhythm or melody.

*Ronny's fear of being gossiped about or ostracized by the club leads him to be especially rude and prejudiced. We see the inherent fear many Englishmen hold regarding Indian men and English women—regarding one as "savage" and the other as "pure," and seeing the pure women as needing to be protected. Godbole's song is the first intrusion of the "mystery" of Hinduism in the novel.*

When the song is over Fielding asks for an explanation of the song. Professor Godbole responds that in the song the singer takes on the role of a milkmaiden who asks the god Krishna to come to her. Krishna refuses. The milkmaiden then asks Krishna to multiply himself and come to everyone at once, but the god still refuses. Mrs. Moore asks if Krishna ever comes in another song, but Godbole explains that the god never comes.

*Godbole's song deepens the mystery Forster sees in Hinduism, where God is called but does not come. This unexplainable quality feels more true to him than the more rigid systems of Christianity or Islam. The song will profoundly affect Mrs. Moore, who continues to feel dissatisfied with Christianity while in India.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 8

Adela knew Ronny in England before, but she now finds his "self-complacency" and "lack of subtlety" off-putting. As they ride away from Fielding's, she grows more and more irritated at him for his rudeness to the Indians. She mentions Aziz's invitation to the **Marabar Caves**, and in response Ronny calls attention to Aziz's unpinned collar, using it as an example of Indians' inattention to detail, "the fundamental slackness that reveals the race."

*Ronny sets himself up as an expert on Indians with his comment about Aziz's collar, but we can see the irony of the situation—Aziz actually gave Fielding his collar stud as an act of generosity and friendship. This is a small example of cultural miscommunication, but such occasions add up.*

Mrs. Moore asks to be dropped off at the bungalow, and Adela asks to go along, suddenly having no desire to watch polo or bicker more with Ronny. Ronny forbids the women from going to the **Marabar Caves**, unless it is with other Englishmen. Mrs. Moore scolds the two for arguing, and Adela and Ronny feel ashamed. They drop her off and then go on to the polo match.

*The novel now briefly focuses on Adela and Ronny and the nature of their relationship. Ronny's new official persona is especially unattractive to Adela, who longs to have new and unique experiences. Mrs. Moore is already impatient with trivial matters, a perspective that will become even more pronounced later.*

Adela feels guilty about telling strangers that she intends to leave India. After the polo match she sits down with Ronny and asks him to have a "thorough talk." She tells him that she has decided not to marry him. Ronny is hurt by this, but he is polite and they agree to remain friends. Adela wants to discuss the matter further, but Ronny feels that there is no need.

*The issue of marriage is approached similarly to that of friendship, as there is no passionate romantic love present in the novel whatsoever. The couple behaves very "Britishly"—polite and without any outbursts of emotion.*

Adela is surprised at how calmly and "Britishly" they've handled the matter. She and Ronny sit together and start to feel lonely and useless in their strange surroundings. Comparing themselves with the other people around them, they feel like they have more similarities than differences. Adela notices a green bird above them as they talk, and asks Ronny what kind of bird it is. Ronny can't identify it, and Adela is convinced that "nothing in India is identifiable."

*After this decision, it is as if India itself begins to change the nature of the couple's relationship. The two feel a sense of unity among the strange "muddle" of India, where, like the bird, nothing can be properly labelled or named. Cultural influences strongly affect personal decisions here, as the two English people draw closer together in a foreign land.*

The Nawab Bahadur passes by and interrupts Ronny and Adela's conversation. He offers them a ride in his car, and Ronny accepts, despite Adela's hesitation. They sit in the back seat, with the Nawab Bahadur in the front and chauffeur driving. They drive down the Marabar road, and Ronny and Adela are disappointed by the landscape. It gets darker and Adela feels closer to Ronny in the dimness, as they both feel small and alone in the vast jungle. Ronny and Adela's hands accidentally touch, and they feel a thrill of animal excitement. The moment feels very important because of the all-encompassing darkness.

*The intrusion of Indians upon the couple's moment serves to draw them even closer together. The dark sky and jungle then seem to represent the vastness of India, or even the unified chaos of all life, and Ronny and Adela feel like animals asserting their individuality through their relationship. Forster shows how even subtle shifts in mood and setting can affect important, lifelong decisions.*

The car suddenly seems to strike something and breaks down. They all climb out, wondering what caused the accident. Adela says that she saw them hit a hairy animal, and eventually they decide that it must have been a hyena. Adela and Ronny examine the car, feeling adventurous and forgetting their relationship troubles. Miss Derek drives past them soon afterward and offers them a ride back to Chandrapore.

*More strange events conspire to bring the couple closer together, as they feel isolated in a totally foreign world. There is no mention of romantic love in their decision about marriage, but only the closeness or distance between two people when faced with some outside force.*

As she drives, Miss Derek jokes about her employer, the Maharaja, and boasts about having stolen his car for her own personal use. Ronny laughs politely but doesn't approve of the English working for Indians or of Miss Derek's disparaging joking. Adela shares Ronny's disapproval of Miss Derek's rude manner, and their hands touch again in the back seat. The Nawab Bahadur starts making long-winded speeches to cover the fact that he is feeling anxious and embarrassed about the night's events.

*Ronny and Adela again feel bonded by their aversion to both the rude Miss Derek and the long-winded Nawab Bahadur. The English look down on Miss Derek for working for an Indian ruler and basically ignoring their colonial hierarchy for the sake of her own personal gain.*

When they finally reach the bungalow, Adela tells Ronny that she will marry him after all. Ronny agrees, but Adela immediately feels disappointed, feeling that there should have been a more dramatic scene accompanying this decision. She feels that "unlike the green bird or the hairy animal, she was labelled now." They go inside and tell Mrs. Moore about their decision. Mrs. Moore feels that her job is done now, and she is ready to leave India.

*Adela and Ronny earlier felt alone in the muddled, "unlabelled" world around them, and so they drew closer together, but now Adela is disappointed by the fact that she will be labelled as a "colonial wife" from now on. Again they have behaved very "Britishly," without much emotion or imagination.*

The three have dinner and Ronny discusses his day of work. There have been conflicts between the Muslims and Hindus over an upcoming holiday, and the British officials have had to work to keep the peace. Ronny feels satisfied with his work because it seems to prove that the British are necessary in India. Ronny and Adela describe their car accident to Mrs. Moore, who shivers and says that they must have hit "a ghost." Afterward Ronny goes off to deal with some business, and Adela and Mrs. Moore play a card game.

*The question of whether England is justified in colonizing India is rarely addressed directly in the novel, and Forster never advocates a complete overthrow of the British Raj, despite his criticism of the colonial system. Mrs. Moore is most attuned to the mystical and spiritual world, and she immediately has the sense that something supernatural was involved in the car wreck.*

Down in Chandrapore, the Nawab Bahadur describes the car accident to a group of listeners. The accident took place near where the Nawab Bahadur ran over and killed a drunk man nine years earlier. The Nawab Bahadur was not at fault in the accident, but he thinks that the ghost of the dead man is constantly waiting for him. He insists that it is the ghost who caused the accident, and he regrets putting his English guests in danger.

*The Nawab Bahadur is now shown as a parallel to Mrs. Moore, as he too believes that a ghost was involved in the car accident. This shows that Mrs. Moore does indeed have some special kind of knowledge, or is especially receptive to the more mystical aspects of her surroundings.*

Most of his listeners shudder at the Nawab Bahadur's story, but Aziz, who is among them, remains aloof. He says that Muslims should get rid of superstitions like this, or else "India will never advance." He makes the Nawab Bahadur's grandson Nureddin promise him that he won't believe in evil spirits in the future.

*Aziz is sensitive of his own modern, Westernized values, and so he is embarrassed by his superstitious compatriots. He (like Fielding and Adela) does not have the spiritual capacities of Mrs. Moore or Professor Godbole. Forster, in contrast, as the author of the novel, does see value in Godbole and Mrs. Moore's spirituality.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 9

Aziz gets slightly sick three days after the tea party. He pretends to be more ill than he actually is, and stays in bed musing about life and the nature of Indians. He longs to see Fielding again, but would be ashamed if Fielding were to see his shabby home. Aziz finds himself longing for a women, and he considers going to Calcutta to find a brothel. He knows that Major Callendar and the other Englishmen would be horrified by this idea, as they like to pretend that men are "made of ice."

*Aziz contemplates the rigid officiality of the British, who would never dare bring up sexuality in "polite society." We will later see that this kind of repression leads to hypocrisy, which Forster describes as the Englishman's special curse or "demon."*

Aziz suddenly notices that his ceiling is covered with flies, and he calls in his servant Hassan to deal with them. Hassan is confused and ineffective, but goes off to try and solve the problem. Aziz goes on thinking about women. He is very practical concerning sex, but he knows that he mustn't cause a scandal with the English or bring shame to his children. Unlike an Englishman, Aziz doesn't consider the conventions of society as necessarily moral, but only as conventional. So he sees no problem with visiting a brothel – he just knows that he must do it secretly.

*Forster draws an important distinction here—Aziz, an Indian, can recognize that society's rules don't encompass all of morality, whereas someone like Ronny, an Englishman of the "public school" mindset, holds social convention as the highest good and never questions them. The greatest sin for Ronny would then be stepping out of line with the crowd, not something objectively immoral.*

Hamidullah enters Aziz's house to inquire about his health. With him are Syed Mohammed (an engineer), Haq (a policeman), and Rafi, Syed Mohammed's young nephew. Rafi says that Professor Godbole has also gotten sick after having tea with Fielding, and all the visitors briefly consider the possibility that Fielding poisoned them. They then grow suspicious that the sickness is cholera, and Mr. Haq says that "all illness proceeds from Hindus," blaming Professor Godbole if an epidemic should break out.

*Forster is generally less critical of the Indians than the British, but here he begins to show the divisions and prejudice that are still present in Indian society. Aziz and his upper-class Muslim friends look down on Hindus and use racist language similar to that which the English apply to all Indians.*

Aziz grows sentimental hearing Hinduism criticized and Islam praised, and he interrupts the conversation to recite a poem. The beauty of the words makes all their squabbling seem petty, and for a moment the men feel that India is united as a Muslim country. Only Hamidullah has any understanding of poetry, but the other men are at least reminded of something larger and more beautiful than themselves.

*Again Forster shows that emotion and imagination are present and important in Indian culture—no one would ever spontaneously recite poetry at the English club. Aziz's initial dream of a united, Muslim India is naïve and unrealistic considering the vast and muddled country Forster has portrayed.*

Hamidullah is on his way to a nationalist committee of Indian notables, which will meet later that day. The committee contains Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, a Jain, and a Native Christian. Hamidullah sadly reflects on the fact that the committee is only peaceful and constructive when they are disparaging the English. Hamidullah thinks nostalgically of his friendship with the Bannisters in England, where there was no need for politics. He is glad that his friend Aziz also takes no interest in politics, "which ruin the character and career, yet nothing can be achieved without them."

*Here Forster specifically addresses the many divisions within India itself. Hamidullah seems to deliver Forster's view that England is still necessary as an outside force to hold India together, and that without British colonialism India would fall apart. Aziz is still living a privileged life and has no need for politics yet, as the politics of colonialism has not affected his life very strongly yet.*

The visitors affectionately wish Aziz better health and announce that they are leaving, but they remain seated. Dr. Panna Lal arrives to check on Aziz. He is a Hindu, and is nervous about entering the room full of devout Muslims, but he is under Major Callendar's orders. Dr. Lal dislikes Aziz, and recognizes that Aziz is exaggerating his illness when he takes Aziz's temperature, but Lal decides to cover for his colleague in case he should want a day in bed himself in the future.

*The division between Hindus and Muslims is immediately exhibited here, but so is the uniting force of British oppression—Dr. Lal hates Aziz and would like to report him, but he knows that they both have the same British superior, and so Lal allies himself with his enemy (Aziz) against the greater enemy (Callendar).*

The men question Dr. Panna Lal about Professor Godbole's condition, and he finally admits that it is nothing serious. The men then scold Rafi for spreading rumors of cholera. Ram Chand, Dr. Lal's argumentative driver who came in with Dr. Lal, takes advantage of this to insult Syed Muhammed, who is Rafi's uncle, and the two men soon start yelling at each other. Fielding enters the room unnoticed in the middle of the argument. When the Indian men realize he is there, everyone is ashamed.

*The division and squabbling becomes clearly evident in this scene. Aziz and his educated Muslim friends stir up suspicions about Hindus, and then the Hindu Ram Chand insults the Muslims. Forster uses this scene as an example of what he imagines India would become without a British presence there.*

Aziz is embarrassed of his company and his dirty room, but he also tries to make sure Rafi is still comfortable after being scolded. The men soon start talking familiarly with Fielding, and they discuss religion. They are shocked to hear that Fielding doesn't believe in God. Hamidullah asks if there are many atheists in England, and Fielding admits that there are, and then goes on to say that morality has probably declined as a result. Hamidullah then asks why England is justified in ruling India, if England is the less moral country. Fielding admits that he is unsure if England is justified. He says that he personally is in India because he needed a job.

*Once again Fielding appears as the only Englishman willing to speak familiarly with the Indians, and they are grateful for his friendliness. Fielding's philosophy of "traveling light" doesn't bother itself with justifying the British Raj, but only his own place within the system. This view is similar to Forster's—Forster harshly criticizes colonialism, but doesn't advocate its abolition. Instead he focuses on the power of personal relationships within the colonial system.*

The Indians enjoy being familiar with Fielding, and Fielding is intoxicated with his own candor and honesty in speaking to them. He is unwilling to give the traditional answer that Englishmen always give – "England holds India for her good." He is only willing to say that he is happy to be in India, however unfair that might be in the larger moral scheme of things. The Indians are shocked by Fielding's frankness, even though they don't disagree with him. They are used to saying something different from what they mean.

*Forster restates his opinion about the Indian quality of focusing on the idea or emotion behind one's words, rather than the words themselves. They are surprised that Fielding does not give the traditional English defense for colonialism, even though he clearly finds it a problematic system.*

The group finally breaks up, as Dr. Panna Lal has other appointments. All the visitors file out. Fielding is slightly disappointed by his visit, and he is reminded of how the Englishmen at the club view him – that he is "making himself cheap" by associating with Indians as friends.

*Fielding becomes more of a major character now, and again we see him as an Englishman who stands apart from the crowd, although the price of this is the loss of his compatriots' respect.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 10

The heat of the day grows oppressive. The narrator notes that the "inarticulate" animal world of India cares nothing about the lives of humans. There is this same animal world in England as well, but in India it seems closer at hand. The men emerge from Aziz's bungalow and feel that the heat is almost a physical burden that they must bear. They each return to their own homes, "to recover their self-esteem and the qualities that distinguished them from each other." All over India people begin to retreat into their homes, as the sun becomes like a cruel tyrant ruling over the land, and the hot season approaches.

*Forster often presents the Indian natural environment as an oppressive force, swallowing up human attempts at meaning or justice. The "muddle" of undifferentiated reality suffocates everything with the heat, and people are forced to retreat inside to reassert their individuality. It is not only divisive politics working against India's development, but also this wild and unfriendly environment.*

## PART 1, CHAPTER 11

Fielding stands on the porch and prepares to leave, but the servant won't bring him his horse. Aziz then calls Fielding back into the house. Aziz is self-deprecating about his poor, dirty home, while Fielding says little. Aziz then shows Fielding a photo of his late wife, which Aziz keeps in a locked drawer. He says that Fielding is the first Englishman to have seen her. Fielding is surprised by this sudden intimacy, and he thanks Aziz. Aziz says that he would show his wife to any man who acted like his brother, which Fielding has.

*As Fielding draws away from his English peers, he grows closer to Aziz. This growing friendship between Fielding and Aziz seems like a positive answer to the question of whether Englishmen and Indians can be friends. When Aziz shares the photo of his wife, it is an act of intimacy and trust—essentially saying that Fielding is family, and so would even be able to see Aziz's wife behind the purdah.*

Aziz says that he admires Fielding because Fielding treats all men like brothers, which is beyond the character of most people. Aziz says that what India needs is kindness, and Fielding agrees – the English government began "at the wrong end," with institutions and rulership instead of friendship and kindness. Fielding sits down and starts to feel depressed, as he cannot share in Aziz's waves of emotion, and he has no secret to share with Aziz in return for seeing the photograph.

*Yet even at the height of this intimacy between the two men there is still a cultural divide, as Fielding lacks Aziz's "Indian" emotional spectrum. Aziz's theory about kindness echoes Forster's own—Aziz does not advocate an Indian revolution, but rather suggests that the British show kindness and have better personal relations with the Indians.*

Fielding seems to accept that he will never be intimate with anyone, and decides that he will go on traveling through life, helping people, and then moving on. He asks Aziz what he thinks of English women, and Aziz will only say that he has heard that they're nicer in England. Fielding agrees. Aziz asks Fielding why he is unmarried, and Fielding says that he was engaged once, but now has no desire for marriage or children.

*Aziz and Fielding discuss women, but there is no heterosexual romantic love in the novel, and the pinnacle of human relations is presented as a close friendship like that between the two men. Once again the English women are portrayed as more cruel than the men.*

Aziz half-jokingly suggests that Fielding should marry Adela, but Fielding is horrified by the idea, and calls her a "prig." He says that she seems to be trying to learn about India and life as if they were lectures at school. He then feels ashamed of his outburst, and adds that Adela is engaged to Ronny Heaslop anyway. Aziz is pleased to hear of this, as he assumes it exempts him from his promised trip to the **Marabar Caves**. Adela will now be a "regular Anglo-Indian" with no need of Indian entertainment.

*Fielding is right about Adela—she is trying to "study life" without becoming intimate with other people or allowing herself to be studied as well. Aziz invited the Englishwomen to the Marabar just like he invited them to his house—as a show of generosity and hospitality, but not intending a literal invitation. Aziz also recognizes that Adela will be "labelled" now.*

Aziz agrees that Adela is not right for Fielding, but he mostly disapproves of her for her lack of beauty. He then remembers his planned trip to Calcutta to find a prostitute. Aziz suddenly feels protective towards Fielding, and warns him to be careful in front of other Indians, as there are always spies reporting to the English. Aziz is worried that Fielding might lose his job for being too frank and saying the wrong thing.

*Aziz's sexual snobbery becomes apparent mostly in his thoughts about Adela. The planned trip to Calcutta will come back to haunt him later. Aziz recognizes the complex muddle of rumors and eavesdroppers in both the Indian and English societies of Chandrapore, but it's ironic that he worries about how it will affect Fielding and can't sense how it will soon envelope him.*

Fielding admits that his frankness has gotten him into trouble before, but he doesn't really mind. He likes to "travel light," which is why he doesn't get married and have children. Aziz is amazed by this worldview, which is so different from his own, but Fielding points out the many Indian mystics who also "travel light." Fielding says that he isn't worried about losing his job, because his real job is Education, and he can do that anywhere.

*With this mentality Fielding is very divided from his countrymen in India. He purposefully rejects the English "herd" as an arm of the British Empire. Instead he acts as an independent individual, and moreover treats the Indians as independent individuals, rather than as a mass to be governed or even to be "seen" as Adela wants to see them.*

Fielding prepares to leave again, and Aziz admits to him that he had given his servant orders not to bring the horse for any Englishman. Fielding rides off. Aziz is no longer in awe of Fielding, because Fielding has nothing to hide and seems to act unwisely sometimes. Aziz confirms to himself that they are friends and brothers now. Their bond was sealed by the photograph. Aziz drifts off to sleep, dreaming of a Muslim paradise.

*An important part of the two men's friendship is that Aziz shakes off his ingrained idealization of the Englishman. Even though the British are the oppressors, everything in colonial culture points to whiteness-equaling-superiority, to the extent that even the Indians start to believe it and feel inferior.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 12

The narrator describes the geography of India, explaining that the Ganges River and the Himalayan Mountains are relatively new in geological terms. But there are also parts of India older than anything else on earth – the **Marabar Hills**, which the narrator describes as slowly sinking back into the ground. These hills are like nothing else on earth, and are so old and strange that they defy description.

*As with the first part of the novel, the "Caves" section of the novel opens with a description of the landscape itself, but now the vision of Chandrapore extends to the Marabar Hills in the distance. In describing the hills and caves Forster uses language suggesting something primitive, chaotic, and inhuman.*

The **Marabar Caves** are within the hills. Each cave has a manmade entrance tunnel, which opens into a large circular chamber. There are many caves, and they are all similar. They seem to be the embodiment of nothingness itself. There is no human language to describe them. Their reputation as "extraordinary" seems spread more by the surrounding wildlife than by word of mouth.

*The caves are a very important symbol in the novel. They come to represent the more terrifying aspects of both the "muddle" of existence and the possibility of the universal oneness—the fact that if everything is the same, then there is no real individuality or meaning in life (it is precisely this oneness across all life that Sorley isn't able to accept when he excludes the wasp near the end of Chapter 4)*

Each **Marabar cave** is pitch-black inside, and if a match is lit inside, its reflection can be seen in the polished stone wall of the cave. Because of the curving walls, the match and its reflection can never meet. No one knows how many caves there are, or what chambers lie inside without a tunnel to access them. On the highest hill there is a precarious boulder, which is rumored to be hollowed with a cave chamber, and to sway in the wind. The name of this hill and boulder is Kawa Dol.

*The Marabar Caves are not a typical tourist attraction for curious visitors like Adela to admire, but are instead something entirely unconcerned with humanity. The darkness of the caves is the "Ancient Night" Forster brought up at the tea party scene. This sinister description of Kawa Dol sets the scene for the action to follow.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 13

From a great distance the **Marabar Hills** look romantic, and at the English club Adela remarks to Miss Derek that she would have liked to have visited them with Aziz. Adela says that she has observed that Indians are "rather forgetful" about appointments like this. A servant overhears her saying this and reports it to Mahmoud Ali. Aziz soon hears the exaggerated report that the ladies are deeply offended by him. He decides that he must make good on his offer.

*As with the town of Chandrapore itself, the Marabar Caves look romantic and charming from a distance, but are quite different in reality. Once again the English take an invitation literally when it was not meant to be so, and so the whole outing begins with a misunderstanding, as neither Aziz nor the women really want to visit the Marabar.*

Aziz goes through a great amount of trouble inviting Mrs. Moore, Adela, Fielding, and Professor Godbole – as he wants to recreate the company of the tea party. Ronny allows Adela to go as long as Fielding takes responsibility for her. Aziz is forced to accommodate everyone's unique dietary restrictions (Muslims cannot eat pork, Brahmans cannot eat beef, the English are picky), but finally the trip is planned.

*The roundabout and confusing steps Aziz is forced to take to organize the expedition is an example of the "muddle" of India, but for the Indians who simply accept the muddle it is possible to work through it and get things done. Cows are usually sacred in Hinduism, and so they are not eaten.*

The train for the **Marabar Caves** leaves before dawn, so Aziz, Mohammed Latif, and some servants spend the night at the train station to keep from being late. Mrs. Moore, Adela, and their servant Antony arrive first. Antony is arrogant and sneering, and stands apart from the other servants. Aziz suggests that Adela send him away, and she tries to. Ronny has commanded Antony to stay with Adela, however. Antony only leaves once Mohammed Latif bribes him. Mohammed Latif is Aziz's old cousin, who will be overseeing the railway carriage, and Aziz treats him as comic relief for the guests.

*All this seeming muddle and confusion will later look suspicious and conspire against Aziz during his trial. Aziz is still excited and honored to be a tour guide for the English, as he has not grown disillusioned with them yet, and he still subconsciously has the colonized mindset that the English are more "civilized." Mohammed Latif was the relative who mooches off of Hamidullah's money.*

Aziz and Mohammed Latif discuss how everyone should be treated on the trip, but then the train suddenly starts – before Fielding and Professor Godbole have arrived. They appear in their car and run towards the train. Fielding shouts that Godbole's long prayer made him late. Fielding tries to catch Aziz's hand and jump aboard, but he misses both the hand and the train. Aziz panics and worries that the whole trip will be ruined.

*There is more confusion to disrupt Aziz's carefully planned outing. Aziz is now essentially alone in charge of the two Englishwomen, and he suddenly bears the burden of proving to the English that an Indian can be a responsible host. Fielding, instead of being a "responsible Englishman," is the late one. Godbole is so spiritual that he pays no attention to practical things, like being on time.*

Mrs. Moore reassures Aziz, saying that "we shall all be Moslems together now," and Aziz is overcome with fondness for her. Adela also comforts him, and he feels that they are both "wonderful ladies," though Mrs. Moore is entirely perfect. Aziz is suddenly optimistic, and intends to prove with the trip that Indians are capable of handling responsibility and entertaining English guests.

*Aziz and Mrs. Moore continue to feel a strong connection and intimacy, despite having few actual interactions. Mrs. Moore calmly accepts the muddle and seems to transform it into a "mystery"—or confusion with some purpose behind it.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 14

Two weeks have passed since Godbole sang his strange Hindu song, and Adela and Mrs. Moore feel like they're living "inside cocoons," unable to feel any strong emotion whatsoever. Mrs. Moore accepts her apathy, but Adela resents hers and blames herself for being unenthusiastic. She feels like she should be excited because she is in India and also engaged to be married. But now she has lost her longing to see the "real India," and she can't make herself excited about Aziz's trip.

*Godbole's song foreshadows the echo of the Marabar Caves, and begins the spiral of spiritual horror for Adela and Mrs. Moore. The song, which calls for a God who does not come, awakens a sense of emptiness and dissatisfaction in the women. The image of them living in "cocoons" shows how they are growing more isolated from each other and from the world.*

As the train ride continues, Adela talks with Mrs. Moore about her future plans, and considers firing her rude servant, Antony. Adela discusses the hot season, which is approaching, and assures herself that she won't abandon Ronny and go to the mountains with the other women. She chatters on about her marriage and future plans, but Mrs. Moore grows impatient. She feels that marriage has been given too much value by society, and that despite it "man is no nearer to understanding man." On this particular day she feels especially repulsed by the idea of marriage.

*In the "Mosque" section of the novel personal relationships were established, but in the "Caves" section they now begin to break down. Mrs. Moore and Adela are disconnected from each other even as they speak, and Mrs. Moore starts to feel the futility of all human connection—even after centuries of the institution of marriage, which is supposedly the height of intimacy, she realizes that humans are no better at understanding each other.*

The train hurries on, and the narrator muses on the vastness of India, wondering "how can the mind take hold of such a country?" The spirit of India is always beckoning "come," but never saying come to what. The narrator says "she is not a promise, only an appeal."

*The landscape echoes the strange sense of emptiness. Forster again emphasizes how India is too vast and muddled to be fully comprehended, but here he also brings up a kind of dissatisfaction inherent in the land—another kind of beckoning for a God who never comes.*

Adela keeps discussing her plans until she notices that Mrs. Moore has fallen asleep. Mrs. Moore has not been feeling well, and probably isn't healthy enough for this trip. She wakes up as the train approaches the **Marabar Hills**. Adela exaggerates her excitement at seeing them, and looks forward to watching the sunrise. She and Mrs. Moore wait for the "miracle" of dawn, but the sun rises without fanfare or beauty, behind dull clouds. The women agree that England has better sunrises than India, and they remember the landscape of England, which is smaller but easier to comprehend, seemingly "from a kindlier planet" than India.

*Mrs. Moore falls asleep while Adela is still talking, showing just how disconnected from each other and the world the women feel right now. The landscape seems especially muddled and alien near the Marabar, and almost unfriendly to humans. In comparison, Forster later describes England's landscape as "park-like"—sometimes wild or beautiful, but always small and familiar enough to be easily grasped by the human mind.*

Aziz calls down the train to the ladies, advising them to cover their heads against the sun. The train seems to go past the hills, but then it stops next to an elephant. Adela and Mrs. Moore pretend to be enthusiastic about this surprise, and Aziz is proud and greatly relieved, for he went through a lot of trouble procuring the elephant for his picnic. Aziz announces his plan for the brief outing, and then they all climb up onto the elephant.

*Ironically, Aziz has gone to great lengths to procure an elephant to impress the Englishwomen, but they consider an elephant ride to represent an "inauthentic" India—the very thing they disparaged about the Turtons' tours. Once again a misunderstanding causes both parties to expend effort over something they don't actually care about.*

A group of villagers gathers around the elephant as it starts to walk. The pale sunlight makes everything seem colorless, and there is a strange "spiritual" silence. Adela mistakes a tree branch for a snake, and Aziz and the villagers agree that it is a black cobra. Adela then sees that she was mistaken, but the villagers contradict her – they are now sure it was a snake. The narrator says "nothing was explained, but there was no romance."

*The mood of strangeness and illusion thickens with this scene, where more misunderstandings (the snake that is really a stick) lead to more confusion and dissatisfaction. Everything seems muddled and inauthentic as the party approaches the caves.*

The elephant reaches the **Marabar Hills** and stops at Kawa Dol. Mrs. Moore and Adela are somewhat disappointed by the area, and Aziz doesn't know the area or understand "this particular aspect of India" enough to explain it. He, like the English women, is lost without Professor Godbole's guidance. The servants immediately prepare tea for the women, as Aziz has been warned that English people must be constantly fed.

*The irony deepens with the fact that the only person who actually knows the area—Professor Godbole—isn't even present, so Aziz is actually just as much a "tourist" here as the Englishwomen. Once again any attempt to reach the "real" India falls hopelessly flat, because there is no single, simple "real" India.*

Aziz thinks to himself that the outing is a success so far, and he grows emotional with thoughts of hospitality. He considers Mrs. Moore (and the absent Fielding) his closest friends, and is proud to have earned their friendship. He starts to speak with Mrs. Moore about her other children until Adela interrupts. In his feelings of magnanimous hospitality Aziz compares himself to the Mughal Emperor Babur, who always showed hospitality even at his poorest, and never betrayed a friend.

*Aziz and Mrs. Moore start to have a conversation and return to their former intimacy, but they are interrupted by Adela. Every incident on the outing feels isolating, a misunderstanding between disconnected individuals. Aziz remains his usual effusive and generous self even in the strange environment.*

The women enjoy themselves more when Aziz talks like this about subjects he likes, and they ask him about another Mughal emperor: Akbar. Aziz says that Hamidullah believes Akbar was the greatest emperor of all, but Aziz himself scorns him. Akbar tried to use a new religion to unite all of India, which Aziz says cannot be done, as "nothing embraces the whole of India, nothing." Adela says that she hopes there is something universal in India – not necessarily religion, but something like the "universal brotherhood" Aziz rhapsodizes about.

*There are some brief moments of connection here when Aziz returns to subjects he is familiar with. Akbar tried to unite his empire by creating a religion called "Din-i-Ilahi," a mixture of Islam and Hinduism with Christian, Zoroastrian, and Jain elements. He failed, adding an ancient example to the novel's theme of failed attempts to unify India. Adela's wish for "universal brotherhood" is a hope for the success of humanism.*

Adela reminds Aziz that she is marrying Ronny, and that this will make her an "Anglo-Indian." She says that she hopes to avoid the Anglo-Indian mentality of the other expatriate women, but she knows that the only way to keep herself from becoming snobby and prejudiced will be something universal in India, like a common religion. Aziz assures her that she will never become like the others, but Adela reminds him that "we all get rude after a year," which wounds Aziz because it is true.

*Adela recognizes that she will be a colonial wife now, and she wants to avoid succumbing to the typical Anglo-Indian mentality. Aziz does not mean what he says, as is often the case, and he also has no answer for how Adela can avoid becoming "rude." He knows that it is nearly impossible to escape the pressure of the colonial system.*

Aziz ends the conversation, feeling that their sense of fellowship has been broken, and he leads the women into the first **Marabar Cave**. They enter through a black tunnel and are swallowed up by darkness. All the servants and the villagers who have followed along enter as well, and the cave becomes crowded and airless. Mrs. Moore feels faint, and when something strikes her face she starts to panic. She is also terrified by the cave's echo, which takes all distinct sounds or words and reduces them to the noise "boum."

*Mrs. Moore's immediate impression of the cave is not the spiritual horror she feels later, but rather a claustrophobia and fear of being smothered. The "boum" echo of the caves encapsulates all that they represent: any sound, whether poetry, music, or an animal's cry, is reduced to the same echo of "boum." The darkness of the Marabar Caves is the void where everything is swallowed up.*

Mrs. Moore finds her way out of the **cave** and the rest of the group follows. She realizes that the thing that struck her face was just a baby being carried by one of the villagers, and that there was "nothing evil" in the cave, but she still disliked the experience and doesn't want to repeat it. She declines the invitation to visit another cave, but encourages Adela to go on with Aziz to avoid disappointing him. Mrs. Moore suggests to Aziz that he not let all the villagers enter the next cave, and he takes her advice, forbidding anyone but himself, Adela, and one guide to go. The three leave to find the next cave.

*Outside of the cave things become distinct once more, and Mrs. Moore sees that it was only a baby who touched her. The cave's darkness, like the oppressive sun of India's hot season, robs everything and everyone of individuality unless they can take refuge somewhere else. The spiritually-sensitive Mrs. Moore is deeply disturbed by the sense of indistinctness and meaninglessness in the cave.*

Mrs. Moore rests and tries to write a letter to Stella and Ralph, her other children back in England, but she is tormented by the echo of the **Marabar cave**. The "boum" sound seems to reduce her entire world to nothing, declaring that "Everything exists, nothing has value." Curses and poetry, misery and joy – all just end up as "boum." Mrs. Moore thinks of Christianity, and even the sacred words of the Bible seem to fade away into "boum." She becomes paralyzed with horror and apathy, and no longer desires to communicate with anyone or anything.

*The darkness and echo of the cave is like the void where everything becomes unified and undifferentiated. This is the terrifying side to the idea of universal oneness, which is the peak of holiness and love in some parts of Hinduism. If everything is the same, good and evil, Christianity and Hinduism, then everything is also robbed of any meaning or distinctness. There is no point in communicating with other humans if they too are nothing but a "boum." This is the ultimate "muddle" of existence.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 15

Aziz, Adela, and the guide visit several smaller **caves**, all of which are disappointing. Aziz is distracted by thoughts of the breakfast for his guests, while Adela is preoccupied with her own upcoming marriage. She starts planning out her future with Ronny, and then suddenly she stops, realizing that she and Ronny don't actually love each other. She is appalled that she hasn't even thought of this until now, but she decides that she can't break off the engagement, as it would "cause so much trouble to others."

*The lead-up to the cave incident is one of disconnection, inner turmoil, and a kind of romantic embarrassment. In all her thoughts about marrying Ronny, Adela neglected even to consider romantic love, and once again she is disappointed by her own "British" practicality and prosaicness.*

Adela asks Aziz if he is married, and if he has children. He says he does, and doesn't bother to say that is wife is dead. Thinking she is being inclusive, Adela then asks Aziz if he has more than one wife. Aziz is shocked by the question, which is both sensitive and offensive to his modern values, and he goes into a **cave** to recover his composure, thinking to himself "Damn the English even at their best." Adela follows him in soon after, unaware that she has offended him.

*Aziz is then included in Adela's feelings of shame when she diverts her self-questioning with an insensitive remark. Aziz is especially touchy about this issue because it implies that he is somehow uncivilized or inferior, and so he slips into a cave to recover. Adela, we will learn later, also entered a cave, perhaps to recover after her realization about Ronny. Thus they are both isolated in their separate caves, and Forster never shows us what actually happens to Adela.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 16

Aziz waits inside the cave for a moment, and when he comes out he finds that the guide is alone. They hear the sound of an automobile at the bottom of the hill. Aziz tries to find Adela, but the guide says that she went into a cave. Aziz reprimands him for not keeping their guest in sight. Aziz starts to panic, and he and the guide shout for Adela. There is no answer, and Aziz slaps the guide's face in frustration. The guide runs away. Aziz worries that his career is over because of this disaster.

*The defining incident has occurred, but we never actually see it. Thus the climactic action of the book is itself a muddle, an inexplicable occurrence that unleashes trouble in all directions, but can never be truly described. The guide disappears for the rest of the novel, and with him goes the only chance of an explanation of what happened in the cave.*

Aziz is then relieved to see that Adela is down at the bottom of the hill, talking to another lady near the car. Aziz sees Adela's field glasses lying broken at the entrance to one of the caves. He puts them in his pocket. Aziz returns to the camp, and is delighted to see that Fielding is there, having arrived in Miss Derek's car. Aziz gets Fielding a drink, and they toast to India and England.

*Ironically Aziz is overjoyed that his outing was a success and that he can now spend time with Fielding, even though the aftermath of the incident has already begun without his knowing. Their toast to India and England is ironically feeble considering all the racial tensions about to erupt.*

Aziz sends some servants to escort Miss Derek from her car, but they find that Miss Derek and Adela have already left to drive back to Chandrapore. Aziz is disappointed but still happy about the picnic. Fielding, however, senses that something has gone wrong, and guesses that Adela has requested to drive back immediately. Mrs. Moore is sulky and argumentative, but she and Fielding try to bond over their fondness for Aziz. They feel awkward about "being drawn together by an Indian."

*Aziz remains happy despite Adela's sudden departure, but everyone else has been negatively affected by the day. Mrs. Moore now feels that nothing has meaning, and she grows petty and argumentative. Fielding worries that something is wrong and that Adela will cause trouble for Aziz. And still no one is able to properly communicate.*

Aziz tries to avoid the memory of Adela's question about multiple wives, so he changes the facts in his mind, editing the story of the past hour without even realizing that he is being untruthful. He tells Fielding that he was with Adela when she saw Miss Derek's car and decided to run down to her, escorted by the guide. Fielding is vaguely angry at the women for ruining Aziz's picnic, and questions Aziz about the details of what happened. Mrs. Moore is vaguely angry at Fielding, but is too apathetic to feel much.

*We know that Aziz is innocent, but he unwittingly acts guilty by making up a false story about the outing, even though he is just trying to preserve his "truth of mood." Everything is still a muddle and the characters feel isolated and unhappy, except for Aziz, who still feels like a successful host.*

Fielding worries that Aziz has been insulted by the women, but Aziz is still ecstatic about the success of the outing, and feels like a hospitable Mughal emperor. On the elephant ride back to the train, Fielding asks about the cost of the whole day, and Aziz admits that it will add up to hundreds of rupees. He knows he has been swindled out of lots of extra money, but he feels that it was worth it to please his English guests.

*Fielding can sense that trouble is brewing, and he also seems disapproving of Aziz's extravagance in providing the outing. The whole situation is a good example of what Fielding sees as the muddle of India.*

The group boards the train and travels back to Chandrapore, the "nasty little cosmos" of the **Marabar Caves** retreating into the romantic shapes of the distant Marabar hills. When the train arrives, Mr. Haq, the inspector of police, opens their carriage door and informs Aziz that he is under arrest. Aziz panics and tries to run out a different door, sobbing. Fielding catches him and tries to calm him down, warning him to not "act the criminal." Aziz breaks down, worried about the shame this will bring on his name. The two men step onto the platform together, where Mr. Turton calls Fielding aside and Aziz goes on to prison alone.

*At first it seems like everything is back to normal, but the horrifying world of the Marabar has now been unleashed upon Chandrapore, and the chaos and suffering spreads. Once again Aziz acts like he is guilty by fleeing. He is wrongfully accused, but his actions are still somehow disappointing and contribute to the trouble that follows. Turton calls Fielding aside so that he won't be seen associating with not just a "criminal" but an Indian criminal. Turton is protecting Fielding, but also the image of all Anglo-Indians.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 17

Mr. Turton calls Fielding into a waiting room, where he informs him that Adela has been "insulted" (probably sexually assaulted) in one of the **Marabar Caves**. Turton looks brave and almost godlike as he speaks. Fielding feels that "a mass of madness had arisen and tried to overwhelm them all," and he panics. Turton doesn't notice, and informs Fielding that Adela herself has lodged the complaint against Aziz. Fielding immediately defends Aziz, calling Adela crazy, and Turton grows furious.

*We now see the aftermath of the incident from Fielding's point of view, and so can observe the immediate English reaction. Turton is usually a practical man, but he is overcome with self-righteousness at the thought of an Indian assaulting a white woman. Fielding can sense that the madness of the Marabar has begun to expand.*

Fielding withdraws his remark about Adela, but continues to protest that Aziz must be innocent. Turton, still enraged, lectures him that this is why Indians and Englishmen cannot be friends. Turton breaks down with emotion, overwhelmed at the thought of the innocent Adela, "fresh from England," being taken advantage of by an Indian. Fielding recognizes that Turton wants to "avenge the girl," while Fielding is concerned with saving Aziz.

*If the first "Mosque" section of the novel seemed to show that cross-cultural friendship is possible in India, then "Caves" breaks apart that optimism. Turton himself states that this attack is the result of English people trying to befriend Indians. None of the English liked Adela originally, but they now begin to idealize her as the innocent victim. Only Fielding doesn't partake in the Anglo-Indian circling of the wagons.*

Turton tells Fielding that there is to be an informal meeting at the English club that night to discuss the situation. Fielding says that he will come, and asks about Adela's health. Turton says that she is ill. He is angry that Fielding hasn't become enraged at the phrase "English girl fresh from England," and joined with the English and white race in rallying against the Indians. All over Chandrapore, the English are letting their emotions take over, feeling especially patriotic, angry, and brave.

*Adela's attack allows the English to feel justified in whatever stereotypes or dislike they had held against the Indians. Adela's attack was an individual incident involving individuals, but it immediately highlights the racial tensions throughout the area. The English almost seem pleased to have a cause to rally behind, one that allows them to feel superior and hate the Indians.*

Turton leaves and is disgusted by the confusion of the Indians on the train platform. Many are looting some of the Englishwomen's belongings. Turton coldly puts a stop to it, though inside he is still "insane with rage." He drives back to his bungalow, and on the way he lets his hatred focus on each Indian he passes, promising to himself that he will "make them squeal."

*The Indians are on the "right" side in the matter, but they too act disappointingly, looting the Englishwomen's belongings. Turton now feels justified in letting whatever hatred he had suppressed now run wild. The Indian muddle seems especially repulsive to him.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 18

Mr. McBryde, the superintendent of police in Chandrapore, is more educated and open-minded than his colleagues, and he is polite and reassuring to Aziz when he arrives at the jail. Aziz is weeping, and McBryde is surprised at the doctor's sudden downfall, but he has a theory that the Indians are "criminals at heart" because of the hot climate, so their behavior isn't really their fault. McBryde is a contradiction of his own theory, however, because he was born in India.

*McBryde's pet theories are an example of the kind of pseudoscience and stereotype that allow racism to persist. Further, these theories are illogical and based on evidence that only makes sense to someone who already has an ingrained feeling of superiority. McBryde will later be caught in an immoral act, further invalidating his idea that only the Indians are "criminals at heart."*

Fielding arrives and McBryde gives him all the details of the case. Adela claimed that Aziz followed her into a cave and "made insulting advances." She hit him with her field glasses, and he broke the strap, allowing her to flee. McBryde produces the broken glasses, stating that they were found in Aziz's pocket. Fielding despairs, as the evidence against Aziz seems damning. McBryde says that Adela was also frightened by an echo in one of the **Marabar Caves**.

*McBryde is generally more open-minded than most of the Anglo-Indians, but he too rallies to the banner of the English's righteous anger. Adela had clearly mentioned the cave's echo, implying that she had a similar experience of horror to Mrs. Moore, but Adela's came as an assault, whether imagined or not.*

McBryde says that Miss Derek has also given her account – she was looking for the picnic spot when she saw Adela running down the side of the steep hill of Kawa Dol, alone. Miss Derek found her "flinging herself about" in some cactuses, and helped her to the car. Adela was terrified of the Indian driver, which alerted Miss Derek to the nature of the problem.

*McBryde and Miss Derek both appear as immediate supports for Adela against Aziz. Ironically these two are later caught having an affair with each other—an example of what Forster calls the Englishman's "demon" of hypocrisy. But hypocrisy is almost inevitable when one sets oneself up as righteous and superior.*

Fielding asks to see Adela, but McBryde says she is too upset and sick. Fielding states his theory that Adela is somehow deluded and Aziz is innocent, and McBryde is surprised. Fielding comments that it seems unlikely that Aziz would pocket the field glasses after trying to assault Adela, but McBryde assures him that Indian criminals have different psychology from English criminals. McBryde says that Aziz is far from innocent – he has gone through the letters in Aziz's bag and found one from a brothel in Calcutta. Fielding says that he himself visited brothels when he was young, and though McBryde did too, he doesn't admit it.

*Once again Fielding goes against the English grain by seeing things practically and naming them for what they are. The English avoid speaking directly about the crime, or even naming Adela and Aziz, and so they allow it to become something huge and all-encompassing, a symbol of what they see as the Indian danger to English innocence. Fielding is thus a threat to the Anglo-Indians for daring to look at the incident objectively, and for choosing friendship over patriotism.*

Fielding desperately tries to see Adela again, hoping to clear things up before the situation gets out of control, but McBryde says that the decision is up to Major Callendar. He calls Callendar, who automatically refuses to let Fielding see Adela, saying that she is very sick. Meanwhile Mahmoud Ali and Hamidullah have arrived to visit Aziz in his cell. Fielding continues to protest Aziz's innocence, and McBryde wonders why he is bothering to mix himself up in the whole mess, whether Aziz is guilty or not.

*Callendar, who was merely an annoyance to Aziz before, suddenly is placed in a position of power and able to stop Fielding's attempt to make things right. McBryde seemingly cannot even conceive that an Englishman could be close friends with an Indian, as he wonders why Fielding is going to such trouble to help Aziz.*

McBryde tries to reach out to Fielding, warning him to "toe the line" and not let his "personal views" separate him from the other English. Fielding asks to see Aziz, saying that Turton called him away immediately instead of letting him follow Aziz to prison. McBryde recognizes that he will be in trouble with Turton if he allows it, so he refuses Fielding's request. At that moment more "evidence" arrives: a drawer from Aziz's room with pictures of women in it. Fielding explains that the photos are of Aziz's deceased wife, but McBryde doesn't believe him.

*Here McBryde makes explicit the English position in India, especially in this time of racial crisis: solidarity is more important than moral correctness, and patriotism more important than individual opinion. Thus even if Aziz is proven innocent, Fielding will have "betrayed" his countrymen. Even the most innocent parts of Aziz's life are easily twisted to look suspicious or criminal.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 19

Hamidullah is waiting outside McBryde's office, and Fielding runs into him as he exits. Fielding is emotional about the case, but Hamidullah remains calm and deferential, knowing that he must pander to the English in this situation. Fielding is disappointed with the Indians' actions even as he decides that he has joined their side, and he realizes "the profundity of the gulf that divided him from them."

*Aziz's friends rally to his defense, but even though they are in the right in this case, they lack the feelings of moral superiority and righteous anger that the English savor so much. They know that the English hold all the power over Aziz's fate, and so they must focus on practicalities.*

Hamidullah describes his plans for Aziz's defense, which includes bringing in a famous anti-British lawyer named Amritrao. Fielding wants to avoid making the situation even more tense, and Hamidullah remarks that the English are good at dealing with crises. Fielding assures him that he is on "their" side, though he wishes he didn't have to take sides at all. Fielding had hoped to "slink through India unlabelled," and knows that he will now be seen as unpatriotic. He foresees that the situation will be a tragedy, but also a "muddle."

*Fielding is automatically on the Indian side, as the British don't want anyone who won't "toe the line." Forster's realistic and psychological style emphasizes the muddle of such events, where everyone misunderstands each other, and there is rarely a clear right or wrong. With Amritrao's appearance the trial becomes more explicitly about something much larger than Aziz's personal conduct.*

Fielding returns to the college, where Professor Godbole approaches him about unrelated college matters. Finally Godbole brings up the **Marabar Caves**, but doesn't mention Aziz. Fielding is confused, as Godbole refers to the expedition as "successful," and asks if Godbole has heard the bad news. Godbole says that he has, but that he cannot pass judgment on how "successful" or not anything was. Godbole then changes the subject to a matter of naming a future school where he is going to teach.

*Godbole is the only person who seems to remain disconnected and unconcerned with all the controversy. He avoids speaking of the incident specifically, or indeed of anything specifically. Godbole, like Mrs. Moore, has a sense of the meaninglessness of individual action, but instead of this knowledge making him irritable and depressed, it seems to give him peace.*

Fielding is astounded, and says that he can think about nothing but Aziz at the moment. Godbole continues on his tangent until Fielding asks him outright whether he thinks Aziz is innocent or guilty. Godbole explains that this is a complicated question for him. According to his Hindu philosophy, an individual cannot commit any good or evil action – such actions exist, but they are committed by everyone or no one. Godbole admits that something evil happened at the **Marabar Caves**, but he states that that evil was committed equally by Aziz, the guide, Fielding, Godbole, and even Adela herself. Every action is an expression of the entire universe.

*Godbole's explanation is a kind of thesis statement for the idea that the chaos of existence is a mystery, not a muddle. There is no individual action, as all living things are essentially the same, but actions of good or evil still take place. This is essentially the same as the universally-reducing echo of the Marabar, but Godbole finds his "echo" comforting. His expansive and peaceful worldview supports a sense of unity through goodwill, not evil or chaos.*

Fielding is frustrated by this answer, as he needs "solid ground" to stand on. He accuses Godbole of saying that good and evil are the same. Godbole explains further, saying that good and evil are different, but both are aspects of the same God, who is present in everything and everyone. Godbole then abruptly switches topics from the metaphysical to the mundane, asking Fielding trivial questions about the Marabar area. He goes on to tell an unrelated story, which culminates in someone finding a cow.

*Fielding, like Aziz and Adela, is of a practical and almost narrow mindset, and so cannot comprehend the mystical worldviews of Professor Godbole and Mrs. Moore. Godbole's philosophy is not representative of all of Hinduism, but is a philosophy Forster has selected and consolidated from many Hindu beliefs, as part of his theme of universal unity.*

Fielding gains permission to see Aziz that afternoon, but when he visits Aziz is miserable and accuses Fielding of abandoning him. Fielding leaves and writes a letter to Adela, though he doesn't expect it to reach her. He is still confused about the whole incident, as he thinks Adela to be sensible and "the last person in Chandrapore to wrongfully accuse an Indian."

*Everyone seems to react disappointingly from Fielding's perspective, and the muddle continues to grow with no possibility of a clear explanation. The passionate Aziz is caught up in the strong emotions of the whole incident, and so is rendered incoherent by misery.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 20

The English all gather at the club, feeling especially patriotic and selfless towards Adela, even though most of them hadn't liked her before. The women especially feel a "sisterhood" with her, and even the stern Mrs. Turton cries to think of how she was mean to Adela before. At the sight of Mrs. Turton's tears all the women regret not being kinder to Adela.

*Forster is bitingly ironic in his description of the English reaction to Adela's attack. Many of the English disliked Adela beforehand, but now they suddenly feel overwhelming compassion for her.*

More Englishmen arrive, and as they look out at the scenery they recognize again that everything is foreign and strange to them. More people than usual are at the club, including some families with children. Mrs. Blakiston, the wife of an unimportant official, is usually snubbed by her compatriots, but on this evening she seems symbolic of English innocence. Mrs. Turton stands next to her and resolves to "not be such a snob" in the future.

*The incident becomes universal for the English, and they feel like it is an attack by India on the British Empire itself. Because the crime is a sexual one, no one speaks specifically of it, and so it takes on a larger significance—as well as making all the English women seem like potential victims.*

Major Callendar addresses the women and warns them to remain calm, but not to go into the city or talk in front of their servants. Callendar then dismisses them, and as they leave they are reminded that they are "an outpost of Empire." Once the women are gone, Turton addresses the men. He tries to restrain his anger at Fielding and his hatred of the Indians, and he doesn't want to have to call in military reinforcements. There is only one soldier in the room, and he is drunk. Turton longs for "the good old days" when the English didn't have to compromise with Indians, but he knows he must be moderate and peaceful in this situation.

*The English reaction to this single crime is almost comically extravagant. Everyone at the club assumes that the English women are in danger, and that English "purity" itself is under attack. Everyone is suddenly conscious that they are in a foreign land, and they feel both endangered and brave. Forster portrays this rush of emotions as genuine but ultimately selfish, having to do more with the English's own beliefs and self-righteousness than with Adela herself.*

The men are all filled with emotion, imagining that their women and children are in danger. The drunk soldier recommends that the military should come in. Turton addresses them and cautions them to stay calm, and "assume every Indian is an angel." The soldier recalls having played polo with one friendly Indian, and muses that the natives are "all right" when they're alone.

*Forster uses dramatic irony here to pierce through the English hypocrisy. Only we as readers know that the Indian the soldier played polo with was actually Aziz himself, the Indian he is now demonizing from afar. The reaction of fear and hatred grows even more extravagant.*

Major Callendar enters to inform them that Adela is recovering. He seems angry at the sight of Fielding, and tries to bait him by criticizing Aziz and the "Englishman" who accompanied the expedition. Callendar then converses with the soldier, gossiping that Aziz bribed Adela's servant to stay outside of the **Marabar Cave**, and that Godbole was bribed to make Fielding late to the train. He goes on, saying that Aziz also paid the villagers to smother Mrs. Moore in the cave. Callendar ends his speech by advocating that troops be called in.

*Callendar now shows his true colors as one of the most vicious and petty racists in the English club. He drags in many other Indians so that they seem collaborators to Aziz's supposed crime, and is happy to declare his former colleague Aziz to be totally depraved. Callendar purposefully baits Fielding, implying that if he doesn't "toe the line" then he will be a traitor.*

Fielding is angry that so many Indians are being insulted, but he doesn't let himself be provoked. He observes that "the evil was propagating in every direction." Meanwhile Callendar continues to cast aspersions on Fielding's character, bringing up the fact that Fielding visited Aziz in prison earlier. Callendar is then interrupted by the arrival of Ronny Heaslop. He looks pale and tragic, like a martyr. The men all stand up to honor him as he enters, but Fielding remains seated, feeling that it is finally time for him to protest.

*Forster again uses language that illustrates the cave incident as an evil yet indefinable force that expands to corrupt things far beyond the Marabar. Ronny's appearance as a "martyr" only emphasizes how the English view themselves after the attack—as brave, selfless victims, which then only intensifies their hatred of the Indians as the cause of their victimhood (and despite the fact that the English have taken control of India). Fielding takes this opportunity to divide himself from his compatriots.*

Turton welcomes Ronny and inquires about Mrs. Moore's health. The drunk soldier calls out Fielding's rudeness in staying seated, calling him a "swine." Fielding takes the opportunity to make a statement, declaring that he believes Aziz is innocent. Turton asks why he should still behave so rudely to Ronny, but Fielding doesn't answer. Fielding declares that if Aziz is convicted, then he will resign his position and leave India. He resigns from the club immediately. Turton becomes enraged, and the soldier tries to block Fielding's way, but Ronny, almost crying, tells them to let him go.

*Even though he simply acts rationally and considers Aziz innocent until proven guilty, Fielding is immediately declared traitorous by the English, who see the incident through their heightened emotions and sense of both racism and patriotism. Fielding sees that there can be no "middle ground" when the Indians and English have divided themselves so sharply, and so he rejects the English altogether.*

Fielding exits the club, wishing he hadn't been rude to Ronny, but glad that he has "muddled through" and is now open about his position regarding Aziz and the English. Fielding goes out onto the veranda and looks at the **Marabar Hills**, wondering about the frightening echo in the cave, and whether the guide has been found yet. Fielding wonders if he has been "successful as a human being," and considers that maybe he has been going about life with the wrong purpose. He feels sad.

*Even Fielding's grand moment of justice was a "muddle," as it got mixed up with his inadvertent rudeness to Ronny. The echo starts to affect even Fielding, who never heard it, making him question his value and purpose, along with the whole frightening muddle of existence.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 21

Fielding rides into Chandrapore to join "his new allies," the Indians. He hears constant drumbeats and passes some children dressing up to celebrate Mohurram, a Muslim holy month honoring Mohammed's grandson's martyrdom. Fielding spends the evening with the Nawab Bahadur, Hamidullah, Mahmoud Ali, and Aziz's other friends. They have renewed their application for Aziz's bail and sent for Amritrao, the famous anti-British lawyer. That night Fielding wants to talk with Professor Godbole about his regrets in being rude to Ronny, but Godbole is asleep. The next day Godbole quietly disappears to his new job starting a high school in another town.

*Once again Godbole avoids discussing practical real-world matters, and disappears until later in the novel, never involving himself with the confusion and tedium of the trial. He goes to Mau, the site of the novel's third section. The celebration of Mohurram provides a backdrop for all the turmoil of Aziz's trial, a constant reminder of both the spiritual world and the divisions between Hindu Indians and Muslim Indians.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 22

Adela stays bedridden at the McBrydes' bungalow for several days. She has been sunburned and had hundreds of cactus spines embedded in her skin, which Miss Derek and Mrs. McBryde had to pick out. Adela stays passively in bed, still in shock. Her mood swings between hysteria and a logical recollection of events. She remembers that she entered one of the **Marabar Caves** and scratched the wall with her fingernail to start the echo. Then a shadowy figure appeared at the cave's entrance, and she hit at him with her field glasses. He pulled her around the cave by the strap, until it broke and she escaped. The man never actually touched her.

*Forster now shows us the events from Adela's perspective. She is sheltered from the wider political turmoil surrounding her, but she personally suffers both physical and mental anguish. We immediately learn that Fielding was right—Adela did not accuse Aziz out of malice or trickery, but is genuinely confused about her recollection of the events in the cave. The Marabar's echo seems to break down Adela's logical mind as she attempts to remember what happened.*

Sometimes Adela feels that she will get over the whole incident soon, but then she breaks down the next moment. She longs for Mrs. Moore to visit her, but learns that the old lady is ill as well. Without Mrs. Moore's presence the **Marabar Cave**'s echo seems to multiply and strengthen in Adela's mind, and she feels that evil is spreading from her and infecting other people.

*Adela, like Fielding, feels that something evil has come out of the Marabar and is now spreading through the people of Chandrapore. We finally learn that Adela had a horrifying experience with the cave's echo just as Mrs. Moore did. Even later she cannot rid herself of the all-reducing "boum."*

When Adela's fever breaks and the cactus spines are all removed, Ronny fetches her from the McBrydes'. Adela learns that there was nearly a riot during the Mohurram festival, when a procession left its route and tried to enter the civil station, and a telephone line was cut. McBryde and Ronny then inform Adela of the details of the upcoming trial—Das, Ronny's Indian assistant, will preside over her case. The men are horrified that an Indian could be the judge of an English woman, but they can do nothing about it.

*Forster focuses on Adela for the lead-up to Aziz's trial, so like her we only hear about the turmoil and rioting secondhand. Despite the wishes of the English at Chandrapore, the upper echelons of the British colonial system were sometimes more liberal at this point, and so Das is the judge of Aziz's trial.*

McBryde gives Adela a letter she received from Fielding, which he has already opened. McBryde explains that Fielding has joined Aziz's side and was a "cad" to Ronny. He describes Fielding as an Englishman among savages, stirring up trouble and causing the Mohurram riot. Adela skims the letter, which suggests that she has made a mistake and says that "Dr. Aziz is innocent."

*We now see Fielding from the English perspective, and they do truly perceive him as a traitor who has taken up with "savages." They seemingly cannot believe that the Indians would be so angry about an injustice, and so they see Fielding as the source of the trouble.*

Adela says goodbye to Miss Derek and Mrs. McBryde, and Ronny drives her to his bungalow. Adela is excited to see Mrs. Moore, but Ronny warns Adela that she is "irritable." When they enter Mrs. Moore is on the couch, and she doesn't get up. Adela tries to take her hand, but Mrs. Moore pulls away. Ronny seems angry that his mother is being rude, but Mrs. Moore doesn't really pay attention to Adela (instead discussing her own return to England) until Adela mentions the echo in the **Marabar Caves**.

*The Marabar's echo has not left Mrs. Moore either, and by now it has driven her nearly mad. Now that she has perceived that everything is undifferentiated and essentially meaningless, she feels irritated and apathetic about all "mundane" matters, even seemingly important things like guilt or innocence, marriage, and love.*

Adela asks Mrs. Moore to explain the echo, but Mrs. Moore refuses to clarify. She predicts that Adela will never be free of it. She then declares that she just wants to be left alone – she will see Ronny and Adela get married, and then her other two children, and she will "retire then into a cave of my own." Ronny reminds her of Adela's trial, but Mrs. Moore says that she plans to leave India, and has no desire to testify at the trial.

*Mrs. Moore's friendship with Adela has fallen by the wayside now that the older woman sees no point in human relationships. If all people are essentially the same, then marriage or friendship are meaningless unions. Mrs. Moore wants to live in a "cave of her own," to wallow in depression without being troubled by other people.*

Ronny chides his mother, saying that she is being very unhelpful, but Mrs. Moore goes on to complain about her aged body and how sick she is of marriage. She says there is no difference between love in a church and love in a cave. Mrs. Moore leaves the room to go play "patience" (another name for the card game solitaire), and Adela starts to cry. Ronny apologizes for his mother's behavior, but Adela is suddenly concerned with the possibility that she might be mistaken, and Aziz might be innocent.

*Mrs. Moore, overwhelmed with this sense of negation and the void, basically says that Ronny and Adela's marriage is the same thing as Adela's assault in the cave—love in a church is no different from love in a cave, because nothing is really different from any other thing. Adela feels the power of the Marabar's echo too, but for her it makes her question whether she is the victim or the victimizer.*

Ronny assures her that she is just tired and upset, but Adela thinks she heard Mrs. Moore say "Doctor Aziz never did it" before she left the room. Ronny tells her that his mother said no such thing, and Adela is easily convinced. Ronny thinks that she is just remembering words from Fielding's letter. Ronny checks to make sure no Indian servants have been eavesdropping, and he warns Adela not to wonder aloud about Aziz's innocence anymore, as the Indians will use such information against the English.

*Adela is so confused by the echo and her own dim memory of the incident that she is very suggestible. All her English peers, even Ronny, begin to pressure Adela into sticking to her story, even as she starts to waver and reconsider. The two sides—Indians and English—are at a kind of stalemate at this point, but willing to use anything to support their own narrative of events.*

Mrs. Moore returns, sits down, and starts to play patience. Ronny asks her if she had mentioned Aziz's name earlier. She says that she never said anything about him, but then she declares that "of course he is innocent." Ronny gets frustrated and asks her for some evidence, but Mrs. Moore, still in a bad temper and feeling cynical and apathetic about everything, responds that she knows Aziz has good character and wouldn't do such a thing.

*Mrs. Moore intuitively knows that Aziz is innocent, but she does nothing to actively help him. In her apathy and depression even her friendship for Aziz is essentially broken down, as she sees no point in going to any trouble over something as meaningless as guilt or innocence.*

Ronny calls his mother's evidence "feeble," but Adela suddenly wishes that she could call off the trial. She immediately takes back this suggestion, however, when she realizes how much trouble and confusion it would cause for everyone else. Mrs. Moore declares that "she has started the machinery; it will work to its end," and Adela starts to cry. Ronny decides that his mother should leave India as soon as possible, and he starts planning her return journey.

*This is similar to Adela's wish to call off her marriage once she realized that she and Ronny didn't love each other—she doesn't do it because she doesn't want to cause trouble for others (although she doesn't consider the trouble for Aziz). But her encounter with Mrs. Moore verifies the power of the echo for her, and Adela will continue to waver in her recollections.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 23

Lady Mellanby, the wife of the province's lieutenant-governor, learns of the trouble in Chandrapore and offers to help Ronny by letting Mrs. Moore travel back to England with her in her cabin, as all the boats are full. Ronny is relieved at this seeming miracle, and pleased that his name will now be known to the lieutenant-governor. He feels a renewed rush of tenderness for his mother.

*Mrs. Moore now begins to exit the story, having been broken by the Marabar Caves. Her madness and death are a horrifying example of the possible failure of Forster's theme of unity, or the Hindu idea of universal oneness. Mrs. Moore will now be unable to help Aziz as well.*

Though Mrs. Moore gets everything she wished for—an escape from the trial and the marriage, and a trip back to England to see her other children—she is unable to feel enthusiasm or pleasure. She continues in her state of apathy, feeling at all times both "the horror of the universe and its smallness." She sees everything good or beautiful as pointless, and thinks of the true powers behind the universe as "something very old and very small," a malicious, petty force which was manifested in the echo of the **Marabar Caves**. She again thinks of "love in a church" and "love in a cave" as essentially the same.

*Forster further clarifies the quality of Mrs. Moore's depression and apathy. Unlike Godbole's philosophy and the Hindu idea of pantheistic love, the Marabar Caves represent existence as an unfriendly, all-encompassing darkness, something that cares nothing for love or human relationships. We hear more vague references to Mrs. Moore's other children, but Forster doesn't introduce them until the third section.*

This view of the universe as petty and selfish has left Mrs. Moore feeling selfish and irritable herself, to the point where she is even jealous of all the attention Adela gets. But when Mrs. Moore does get any attention, she rejects it irritably.

*Nothing can please Mrs. Moore anymore, and her kind and noble character has been tragically broken down by the echo of the Marabar.*

Ronny is unable to escort Mrs. Moore to Bombay and no one from Chandrapore comes along either, so she is untroubled by reminders of the past. She has a pleasant journey, and again admires the moon shining on the Ganges River. She passes by many mysterious and magnificent sights, and regrets that she has seen so little of India, or "not the right places." She arrives in Bombay, a huge city of confusion and crowds, which seems to mock her for thinking that the **Marabar Caves** represented all of India, when there are actually a "hundred Indias."

*This is the last we see of Mrs. Moore, and she leaves with the realization that her and Adela's quest to see the "real India" was naïve and hopeless. Forster uses the phrase "a hundred Indias" several times throughout the novel to illustrate the vastness of the country and the divisions among its culture, geography, and religion. Forster and Mrs. Moore ultimately conclude that India is too complex to comprehend—one can only decide whether that complexity is a "muddle" or a "mystery" and interact with the individuals within it.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 24

The hot season arrives in full force soon after Mrs. Moore's departure, and everyone hides inside, avoiding the sun. The narrator claims that beautiful myths are the result of the annual European retreat from the cold, but in India the retreat from the sun, the source of life, results only in disillusionment. Adela has recently returned to the Christianity of her earlier years, as it seems "the shortest and easiest cut to the unseen," and she asks God for a favorable verdict on the morning of Aziz's trial. The only response she seems to get is the sickening heat.

*Forster portrays the crushing heat as a similar to the echo in the Marabar Caves—an all-reducing, all-encompassing force that removes all individuality and causes apathy and depression. Adela remains a rationalist, but after the Marabar she can sense that there is some kind of supernatural or mystical reality beyond her comprehension, and so she returns to traditional Christianity to approach it.*

After Mrs. Moore left, Adela has been staying with the Turtons, who have been very kind to her, though it is "her position [as victim] not her character that moved them." Only Ronny seems concerned with Adela's personality and struggle. On the morning of Aziz's trial Adela fears that she will break down under the cross-examination, and once again she can hear the **Marabar Cave**'s echo in her ears.

*Forster makes it abundantly clear that the English value Adela only as the impetus for their nationalistic pride and conflict with the Indians. No one but Ronny seems concerned with Adela's actual suffering, which is mostly the lingering Marabar echo, not the memory of her attack or any hatred of Indians.*

The Turtons drive Adela to the courthouse with an escort of Indian police, and on the way a few children throw stones at the car. Turton thinks to himself that he doesn't really hate the Indians, for to do so would be to "condemn his own career as a bad investment." He decides that it is the English women who make life difficult in India, and he slightly resents Adela even while he feels chivalrous towards her. They arrive at the courthouse and some students jeer at the car. Rafi, Syed Mohammed's nephew, hides behind another boy and yells that the English are cowards.

*We see (again from Adela's detached perspective) more of the English-Indian conflict that has grown so heated in the lead-up to Aziz's trial. Even Turton, who is more attentive to Adela than most of the English, slightly resents the presence of Englishwomen in India for making his job harder. Turton again must play a complicated part, as he tries to avoid actively hating the Indians he is supposed to be governing and "civilizing."*

Adela and the Turtons go inside, where many English are gathered in Ronny's private room. There is news of Indian workers striking, and of Muslim women threatening to starve themselves until Aziz is acquitted. All the English in the room feel like Fielding is behind all the trouble, and they verbally abuse him as a traitor and spy. Meanwhile Adela sits quietly trying to preserve her strength, and no one notices her for a long time. When they do they are ashamed of being so loud and disturbing her.

*Forster plays up the irony here: the English seem to be obsessed with Adela's attack, but no one actually cares about Adela herself. Instead they use it as an excuse to gossip about the Indians, disparage Fielding, and stir up conflict and fear. Adela remains detached from her compatriots, lost in the world of the echo.*

Ronny assures Adela that Das, his Indian subordinate who is judging the case, is "all right," though Major Callendar protests that "not one of them's all right." Callendar goes on to declare that the whole situation is a good thing, except for Adela's suffering, as it has created an opportunity to punish the Indians. He laughs as he describes the injuries the Nawab Bahadur's grandson Nureddin recently received in a car accident, and says that "nothing's too bad for these people." Mrs. Turton loudly agrees with him, making Mr. Turton uncomfortable. She goes on to call all the English men "weak," and says that all Indians should be made to crawl in the future whenever an English woman passes by. Once again Adela is forgotten in the conversation.

*Ronny proves himself more sympathetic than most of the English, as he at least cares for Adela personally and supports Das, his Indian subordinate. Ronny, like Turton, chooses to focus on the success of English justice (which produced Das as judge) rather than dwelling on inter-racial conflict. Callendar and Mrs. Turton, on the other hand, have clearly used the attack to let their hatred run wild, as Callendar boasts about Nureddin's suffering and Mrs. Turton calls for extreme measures of punishment for all Indians.*

The case is called, and the English group has their chairs carried in before they enter, so that they look dignified and superior. The court is crowded and hot, and Adela is overwhelmed. Her attention is captured by a lowly Indian servant, an "Untouchable," who is operating the room's fan. The man is beautiful and innocent-looking, almost like a god, and he seems divinely separate from everything else happening in the courtroom. Looking at him, Adela feels that her Christian God is a "suburban Jehovah," and wonders that the English presume to claim that they are so important and civilized. She wishes she could discuss this with Mrs. Moore.

*The trial begins, but Forster foreshadows its strange anticlimax with the description of the detached Untouchable. Somehow the sight of the man who is both godlike and sits at the very bottom of the Indian social hierarchy lets Adela's mind expand so that she can view her memories with greater distance and clarity, prefiguring her confession later. She has a similar feeling to Mrs. Moore, recognizing that Christianity and English civilization is somehow too narrow to encompass all the muddles and mysteries of both life and India.*

The trial begins, and McBryde opens the case for the prosecution. He doesn't bother being eloquent, as he assumes that it is obvious that Aziz is guilty. He describes the background of the incident in detail, but then gets diverted by his own ideas about "Oriental Pathology," claiming that it is scientific fact that darker races are attracted to lighter ones, but not vice versa. An Indian in the crowd calls out that Adela is uglier than Aziz, which makes Adela upset.

*As is the English way, McBryde chooses to present everything as dry fact rather than appealing to emotion, thus making the confused events of the incident seem clear-cut and obvious. He diverges into his racist pseudoscience, which is immediately disproved by a rowdy member of the crowd.*

The English all act concerned about Adela's health, and Callendar requests that Adela be given a seat on the platform to get better air. Das allows it, but then all the English follow Adela onto the platform. Mrs. Turton and Callendar verbally express that this is a better position for them, presiding over the rest of the crowd. Das is afraid to cause trouble with the English, but he is annoyed. Meanwhile Adela looks out at the crowd and sees Aziz, and she wonders again if she has made a mistake about him.

*The English try to take a position of physical division and elevation above the Indians (like the English settlement elevated above Chandrapore) so as to feel their familiar sense of superiority. Adela sees Aziz for the first time since the day of the Marabar expedition, adding to her sense of clarity.*

Amritrao, the defense's lawyer, stands and protests ("in an Oxford voice") that the English on the platform will intimidate the witnesses. Das agrees and requests that all the English except Adela should climb back down to the floor. Ronny approves of this, though Mrs. Turton complains of the "incredible impertinence." Eventually they all climb back down, even Adela, and the news of this humiliation spreads outside the courtroom, where the crowd jeers.

*The trial becomes almost farcical here as the English are forced to give up their condescending positions and return to the floor, where they are subjects to justice as well. Ronny alone is pleased, as he sees Das's authority and fairness as an extension of himself and the success of the English colonial system.*

Despite the embarrassment for the English, Adela feels better after having seen the crowd from the platform. She tells Ronny and Mrs. Turton this, but they are "too much agitated with the defeat of British prestige to be interested." Adela then sees Fielding in the crowd, with an Indian child sitting on his knee. Das is happier and more confident now, having asserted his authority.

*Adela feels a greater sense of detachment from the conflict now, like the Indian working the fan. Once again the English are more concerned with their own pride than with Adela's well-being. From afar we see how ingrained Fielding is in the Indian community by now.*

McBryde continues with his evidence, arguing that Aziz "duped" many people beforehand, including Fielding, the servant Antony, and the Nawab Bahadur—trying to argue that the crime was premeditated, so as to merit a harsher sentence. He describes all the events as Adela had related them, culminating with the damning evidence of the field glasses found in Aziz's pocket. McBryde claims that his witnesses will prove that Aziz was leading a double life, one simultaneously "respectable" and "degenerate." As an example of this, McBryde brings up his claim that Aziz tried to smother Mrs. Moore to death in a cave.

*McBryde's prosecution case shows the English preoccupation with factual truth over emotional truth. As when Ronny reinterpreted Aziz's encounter with Mrs. Moore in the mosque, McBryde can easily twist the events of the Marabar outing to prove his point, presenting his interpretations as fact but leaving out the intention behind it all—and Aziz's true character.*

The crowd protests vehemently against this claim, and an enraged Mahmoud Ali objects that this accusation is out of line, especially since Mrs. Moore has been "smuggled" out of the country and can't speak for herself. Mahmoud Ali claims that Mrs. Moore would have proved Aziz's innocence, as "she was on our side." Das, tries to restore calm, but Mahmoud Ali is beyond reasoning. He decries the corruption of "English justice," and declares that all of them are slaves and the trial is a farce. He hands his papers to Amritrao and dramatically leaves the courtroom.

*The invocation of Mrs. Moore's name has a powerful effect on the courtroom. Mahmoud Ali makes this dramatic scene to prove a point—that "English justice" is incomplete and corrupt, and that though an Indian might be judging the case, Aziz (or any other Indian) can never escape English colonial power.*


Meanwhile the crowd outside hears the name "Mrs. Moore" and starts to repeat as if it is a charm, even those who don't know the old lady herself. The English all try to recover themselves after the scene, but Ronny is disturbed to hear his mother's name being repeated like a chant. Eventually the chant becomes "Esmiss Esmoor," as if Mrs. Moore had been transformed into a "Hindu goddess."

*In actuality Mrs. Moore grew apathetic and never tried to defend Aziz, but in her absence she becomes a powerful presence on the Indian side. In chanting her name, the crowd seems to sense that it is precisely what Mrs. Moore represented that is missing from the English trial: kindness, intuition, sympathy, and openmindedness.*


Adela prepares to go up to the witness stand, and she tells her friends that she is feeling stronger and more sure of herself. Amritrao, McBryde, and Das discuss Mahmoud Ali's departure, and soon quiet is restored to the courtroom. Adela goes up to the witness stand, feeling that her account of the incident is inexplicably tied up with her engagement to Ronny, especially because her attack was immediately preceded by her conversation about marriage with Aziz.

*Turmoil is erupting around her, but Adela remains relatively detached and caught up in her own mind. The muddle of the cave incident is still linked to her shame for her lack of love for Ronny and her insensitive question to Aziz. The moments before the attack keep re-affecting her with the echo of the Marabar Cave.*

McBryde questions Adela, and she retreads all her steps of that day, feeling like she is back at the **Marabar Caves**. She had earlier remembered the excursion as "dull," but in her memory everything seems more beautiful now. McBryde leads her along up to the moment of the incident, but when he asks if Aziz followed her into the cave, Adela falls silent, and then asks for a minute to answer the question.

*As McBryde methodically questions her, Adela experiences a kind of vision in which she recreates the expedition to the Marabar. She reaches the darkness of the cave, and the "boum" that still haunts her, but then can somehow "see" that Aziz is not in the cave with her.*

Adela visualizes the **Marabar Caves** and her own memories, and she cannot locate Aziz in the picture. She stammers that she is unsure. McBryde tries to direct her towards the assumed answer—that Aziz did indeed follow her—but then Adela gives a firm answer: no, he did not. She declares that she has made a mistake, and Aziz did not follow her. Das cuts off McBryde and questions Adela directly. Callendar tries to stop him, claiming that Adela is unwell, but she firmly states that she withdraws all the charges.

*Adela has this moment of clarity, and she chooses the truth over the wishes of her peers. McBryde tries to lead her into her answer, and all the other English are clearly counting on her testimony, but Adela has a moment of pure honesty and admits that she was mistaken. Thus even the climactic trial is essentially a nonevent, as it never even reaches a conclusion.*

The courtroom erupts into a frenzy. McBryde is enraged, while Mrs. Turton yells that no one is safe, and then screams insults at Adela. Das officially declares that Aziz should be released "without one stain on his character." Aziz faints into Hamidullah's arms, and the Indians celebrate wildly. The English flee, shielded by their servants, and eventually the courtroom is cleared. The only person left behind is the godlike Untouchable, still aloof from everything and operating the fan as if nothing has happened.

*Mrs. Turton again shows the extremes of English hypocrisy—she first snubbed Adela, then became compassionate and nurturing after Adela's attack, and now viciously turns on her when she goes against the English agenda. The godlike Indian is like Adela in her moment of dispassionate clarity. He seems above even justice, as his devotion is entirely to operating the fan.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 25

Adela is seen as having "renounced her own people," and she is pulled into a mass of Indians and carried to the courtroom's exit. She finds herself next to Fielding, who asks where she is going. She says she doesn't know, and Fielding warns her of riots, advising her to "keep to her own people." Adela feels stunned and apathetic, and lets herself be carried along by the crowds.

*Adela is now totally alone, as the English have rejected her for what they see as betrayal. The Indians saw her as an enemy, but now in their joy the crowd starts to carry her along like a hero. Fielding feels himself totally divided from the English by now.*

Concerned with her safety, Fielding reluctantly takes Adela to his carriage. He intends for her to ride off and return it later, but there are no horses. Fielding's students surround the carriage, draping him in flowers, and they convince him to get inside with Adela. The students ignore Fielding's protests and act as the "horses," pulling the carriage through town as a victorious procession. As they pass through the streets the crowds drape Adela with flowers, though some people criticize the two English people for sticking together.

*Simply by being unwilling to sacrifice Adela to the crowds, Fielding finds himself linked to her in the confusion. He wants her to "keep to her own people" while he celebrates with Aziz, but somehow the two English end up sticking together even when they are essentially enemies—showing just how strong the forces of race and culture can be despite an individual's intentions.*

The procession winds through town, unsure where to go. The students eventually take Fielding's carriage to the college, where everything is quiet, but the servants are gone and the phone lines have been cut. Fielding longs to leave Adela and go celebrate with Aziz, but his conscience won't let him leave her helpless. Fielding gives Adela a room, encourages her to lie down and rest, and then lies down himself.

*This is another kind of nonevent in place of a climax—even after Aziz's seemingly miraculous rescue we don't get to see him, but instead follow Fielding as he ends up carried away from all the action. Like the non-attack at the cave and the trial that never concluded, these anticlimaxes add to the sense of emptiness and hollowness at the heart of the book.*

Meanwhile Aziz calls out for Fielding, whom he feels has abandoned him. He takes no joy in his victory, as ever since he was arrested he has felt crushed by fate and the knowledge that "an Englishwoman's word would always outweigh his own." He tries to stop his victory procession to look for Fielding, but Mahmoud Ali urges them all on, calling out for rebellion and violence.

*Aziz has been deeply changed by his experience, particularly in his feelings towards the English. Before this they were merely an annoyance or an amusement to him, but now he has experienced the existential crisis of realizing that another human has total power over his fate simply because of their race and nationality.*

Mahmoud Ali leads the procession to the hospital, saying that they must rescue Nureddin, the Nawab Bahadur's grandson. Mahmoud Ali says that he heard Callendar boasting about torturing Nureddin. The Nawab Bahadur unsuccessfully tries to restrain the crowd, hoping that the rumors of torture are untrue. The crowd marches on the hospital intending to do harm to Callendar, but disaster is diverted by the appearance of Dr. Panna Lal.

*The crowd now seems poised to actually take action against the English. The tensions between the two cultures reach their peak here, and the dramatic Mahmoud Ali finds an opportunity to stir up a riot. The Nawab Bahadur is now conflicted about his position as a Loyalist, but he still tries to keep the peace.*

Panna Lal had offered to help the prosecution, as he hates Aziz and wanted to please the English, and he thinks the crowd has come to the hospital to punish him. Lal plays the buffoon to try and diffuse the crowd's anger, acting pathetic and making the other men feel superior. He then learns that they are looking for Nureddin, and so hurries to fetch him. Nureddin emerges with a bandaged face, and the Nawab Bahadur controls the situation by giving a grandiose speech renouncing his British-conferred title.

*The angry crowd's march on the hospital only ends in yet another anticlimax, however. The Indians are appeased by Panna Lal's groveling, and no action is really taken. The Nawab Bahadur renounces his position as a Loyalist, but all the tension and conflict of the Marabar incident ultimately leads to no real changes.*

The Nawab Bahadur announces that there will be a celebration at his house that night, and he recruits Hamidullah to find Fielding and Amritrao and invite them. Now that the crowd's rage has died out, the heat of the sun starts to stupefy everyone in Chandrapore, and almost everyone (even the frightened English) eventually falls asleep.

*Once again the Indian landscape itself smothers any attempts at positive change or even affirmations of individuality. Indians and English alike find their passions swallowed up by the all-encompassing sun, and instead of a riot everyone goes home to take a nap—a special "muddle" of tragedy.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 26

Fielding wakes up to find that he and Adela are still alone at the college. Adela wants to talk with him, but he is reluctant, and reminds her that he "belongs to the other side." He only becomes interested when she mentions the echo she keeps hearing in her head. Fielding suggests that maybe the echo contributed to a hallucination of the incident in the **Marabar Cave**.

*Fielding and Adela now have their first real encounter, as Forster chooses to focus on the potential relationship between these two characters after the trial instead of Aziz's reaction or the larger political effects in Chandrapore.*

Adela meekly accepts this possibility, and Fielding lists the options for what actually happened in the **cave**: Aziz did assault Adela (what the English think), Adela maliciously made up the charge against Aziz (what the Indians think), or else Adela somehow hallucinated the whole thing—which is what Fielding believes. Adela agrees that she had been feeling strange ever since hearing Godbole's song at the tea party. Fielding likes her more when he recognizes how honest and humble she is being.

*Fielding and Adela are both rational and unspiritual, but here they try to discuss something both muddled and mysterious, and they are uneasy about it. They both approach the mystery of Godbole's song and the Marabar logically, but recognize that there are forces at work beyond them. Fielding finds himself reluctantly bonding with his compatriot.*

Fielding explains that he thinks Adela's hallucination was dispelled in court by re-visualizing the incident—that McBryde's questioning somehow "exorcised" her. This brings up the subject of ghosts, which Fielding sharply says he doesn't believe in. Adela says that Mrs. Moore does, and she respects Mrs. Moore very much. Fielding apologizes, and also apologizes for being rude to Ronny. He says that he is trying to "resist the supernatural" as he gets older. Adela says that she too doesn't believe in anything spiritual or supernatural.

*The two feel uncomfortable using supernatural language like "exorcism" and "ghosts," so they hastily return to scientific terms like "hallucination." Once again the invocation of Mrs. Moore's name brings a supernatural feeling into the room, though Adela and Fielding both reassure themselves that they are strictly rational.*

Adela asks Fielding what Aziz has said about her. Fielding answers awkwardly, remembering how bitterly Aziz has spoken of Adela, especially her ugliness. Aziz was especially offended to be accused of a woman without beauty, as "sexually, he was a snob." Fielding cannot relate to this worldview of materialistic beauty, and it always created a barrier between him and Aziz when they discussed the matter. Fielding changes the subject by mentioning the fourth possibility of what happened in the **cave**: that the guide or some other stranger attacked Adela.

*We see some of the differences between Aziz and Fielding that will ultimately be detrimental to their friendship. It is the subject of Adela herself that breaks them apart, and now that Fielding is befriending her Aziz will feel especially betrayed. Once again Fielding and Adela look for a logical explanation of what happened in the Marabar Cave by blaming the guide.*

Hamidullah arrives, overhearing the last part of their discussion. He is displeased to see Fielding and Adela together, and he speaks only to Fielding, refusing to even look at Adela. Adela tries to apologize and explain her conduct, but Hamidullah fears she is "setting another trap." He describes how much suffering and ruin she has brought to Aziz, and he asks if the guide will be the next one to suffer. Hamidullah tells Fielding to come to the Nawab Bahadur's house for the celebration.

*After Aziz's trial the English will start to disappear from the novel (apart from Fielding), and Forster turns his critique more towards the Indians. He is never as harsh or satirical to them as he is to the English, but he does show how many of the Indian characters react to their "victory" in disappointing ways, proving themselves just as flawed and unjust as many of the British.*

Adela plans to go to the Dak Bungalow, a poor lodging place, but Fielding invites her to stay at the college while he is away. Both Hamidullah and Fielding fear that Adela might be attacked wherever she stays, but Fielding doesn't mind taking responsibility for her safety. He feels a "natural sympathy for the downtrodden," and so now finds himself taking Adela's side. Hamidullah wants to be rid of Adela, however, for her cold manner displeases him—if she had shown great emotion and kindness in her repentance, he would have forgiven her, but her "cold justice and honesty" feels false to him. None of the other Indians will forgive her either, because of this cultural divide.

*Fielding, like Forster, finds himself critiquing the Indians' aggression now that they are no longer the victims (in this particular situation). The Indian reaction to Adela shows an important cultural divide that will ultimately break apart Aziz and Fielding. Forster has shown that the English tend to be unimaginative and unemotional, while the Indians can be too much so. The Indians thus continue to dislike Adela, even though she actively saved Aziz, because they can sense that she acted without kindness or strong emotion. She was loyal to the truth, not to Aziz.*

Adela decides that she will try and return to the Turtons, but if they won't take her in she will go to the Dak Bungalow. She is determined to be as little of a nuisance as possible. Hamidullah is relieved to see that Ronny has arrived outside, disguising himself in a lower-class carriage. Ronny doesn't want to come inside, so Fielding goes out to meet him.

*The Indian response to Adela mirrors a cultural divide Forster sees between India and the British Raj itself—the English value justice and fairness of actions, while the Indians value kindness and sincerity behind actions and words.*

When Fielding returns to fetch Adela, he says that Mrs. Moore has died at sea on the voyage to England. Hamidullah says that this is Ronny's punishment for shipping away Mrs. Moore, who loved India and Aziz. Fielding protests but not forcefully, as he recognizes that there will soon be an "Esmiss Esmoor legend at Chandrapore." Both men are sad about the death, but they have no energy for outbursts of grief, as neither knew Mrs. Moore well.

*Mrs. Moore's death only strengthens the power of her memory in Chandrapore, and the spiritual forces she has come to represent. The fact that she died at sea also shows that she is a kind of otherworldly character, neither truly English nor truly Indian.*

Hamidullah and Fielding agree not to break the news to Aziz until the next day, so as not to ruin the celebration for him. Adela then comes back inside, much to Hamidullah's dismay. She is very upset about Mrs. Moore's death, and calls her "my best friend." She says that she cannot stand to be alone with Ronny right now, and asks Fielding if she can in fact stay at the college. Fielding agrees, but asks that she bring Ronny inside.

*Adela, like Aziz, adores Mrs. Moore and considers her to be her best friend, even though the older lady was actively unhelpful to her after the attack. Forster shows how the two English unexpectedly come together over cultural similarities—Fielding finds himself respecting Adela's honesty and fairness, while Hamidullah is repulsed by her.*

Ronny comes in with Adela, looking awkward. Hamidullah is rude to him, questioning him about Mrs. Moore's death, though Fielding is very polite. Ronny and Fielding decide on the details of Adela's lodgings, and then Fielding leaves with Hamidullah, hours late for the Nawab Bahadur's party. Amritrao rides with them, and on the way Hamidullah asks him how much Adela should be fined as compensation. Amritrao says twenty thousand rupees. Fielding is horrified by the amount, as now Adela might lose all her money and probably her fiancé as well.

*Mrs. Moore died at sea, presumably around the same time that the crowds started chanting "Esmiss Esmoor," furthering her role as a spiritual force and a presence in the courtroom. Hamidullah is now just as rude to Ronny and Adela as Ronny was rude to Aziz and Godbole at the tea party. Forster's critique of the Indian reaction to the trial centers around the huge sums of money Aziz will demand from Adela as reparations for her false accusation against him.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 27

It is late that same night, and most of the partiers at Aziz's victory celebration are asleep on the Nawab Bahadur's roof. Fielding and Aziz talk sleepily, lying side by side on the roof and looking at the stars. Aziz wants to travel with Fielding, and promises to pay for everything once he gets his money from Adela. Fielding starts to talk, but Aziz cuts him off, knowing what he will say—that Aziz should not make Adela pay anything more than the legal costs. Aziz says that he no longer cares what the English think of him, though, so he doesn't need to impress them by being chivalrous. He says he has become "anti-British" now.

*The naïve Aziz who was so pleased to act as a tour guide for British guests is gone. He is actively anti-British now, caring nothing for the colonists' opinion of him. The split between the two men begins with this debate over money. Fielding sees the twenty thousand rupees as unnecessarily cruel, especially now that he has come to respect Adela, while Aziz gets carried away with his victory and dislike of the unemotional, unattractive Adela.*

Aziz then changes the subject, and for a while they enjoy the "blessings of leisure," something which is unfamiliar to Western culture. Fielding is dressed in Indian clothes, but he knows he will always feel awkward and out of place in them compared to the graceful Indians. After a while Fielding presses on and does advise Aziz to not make Adela pay reparations. He says that he understands her better now, and sees that she acted bravely in going against the strong influence of her English compatriots. He requests that Aziz be merciful.

*Forster observes more cultural differences between the Indians and English as part of the ethnographical aspect of the novel. The division in leisure and gracefulness then leads into a more personal difference in terms of Fielding and Aziz's disparate reactions to Adela. Fielding recognizes Adela's bravery in choosing honesty over social pressure, while Aziz dislikes the lack of emotion in such a choice.*

Aziz says he can't be merciful until he receives an apology, and then he mocks Adela for her ugliness. Fielding cuts off the conversation, saying that Aziz's sexual snobbery is the one thing about he "can't put up with." After a long silence Aziz says that he will consult with Mrs. Moore, and then do whatever she advises regarding Adela. He praises Mrs. Moore extravagantly, again saying that she is a true "Oriental."

*The cultural divides grow between the two men in this conversation, as Aziz lets his dislike of Adela run wild while simultaneously growing expansive in his adoration for Mrs. Moore. Fielding cannot understand why Aziz would hate one woman and love the other, when one saved him and one never helped him at all.*

Fielding points out that Aziz's emotions are not "in proportion to their objects"—Aziz praises and loves Mrs. Moore, who never really did anything tangible to help him, but he hates Adela, who actually saved him. Aziz criticizes Fielding's rational approach to emotion, comparing feelings to a sack of potatoes, measuring love out by the pound. He doesn't understand Fielding's materialism, while Fielding doesn't understand Aziz's unfairness.

*This is essentially Forster's critique of what he sees as an essentially Indian quality—Aziz places too much value on his emotions and the perceived intentions of others, to the point that he is cruel to Adela, who basically sacrificed her social standing to save him, while still adoring Mrs. Moore, who did nothing to actually help him.*

Aziz's time in prison has made him less flighty and more strong-willed, and he presses on in the conversation, wanting to talk more about Mrs. Moore. Finally Fielding cannot put up with the lie anymore, and he tells Aziz that Mrs. Moore has died. Hamidullah overhears him, though, and quickly interrupts to say that Fielding is joking. Aziz believes Hamidullah. Fielding doesn't press the issue, but muses on how a person isn't truly dead until they are "felt to be dead." In this way Mrs. Moore has escaped death somehow, because her death is not really felt or believed. Eventually the men fall asleep.

*Aziz no longer panders to Englishmen, and though his friendship with Fielding is starting to splinter, at least the two men respect each other as equals by now. By escaping the factual truth about her death and living on in the emotional truth of her continued presence, Mrs. Moore becomes immortal in a way, and becomes even more of a mystical and spiritual figure in the novel.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 28

The narrator explains the circumstances of Mrs. Moore's death—she was buried at sea, even farther south than where the ship left from. The ship seemed to have bad luck afterwards, as if her ghost lingered on, but the ghost seemed to be "shaken off" when the ship reached Europe. Meanwhile in Chandrapore, a legend springs up that Ronny killed his mother because she tried to save Aziz's life. Two different tombs are reported to contain "Esmiss Esmoor," and people start to leave small offerings at them.

*Forster presents the "cult" of Esmiss Esmoor as superstitious and essentially foolish, but at its heart is a powerful truth—the memory of Mrs. Moore and what she has come to represent lingers in Chandrapore, and her actual spiritual presence seems to still exist, particularly for those who knew her. Even Godbole, who barely met her, will sense her again years later.*

Ronny knows that he treated his mother badly at the end, but he doesn't feel like repenting, so he continues to be irritated at her. He even blames her for continuing to cause trouble with her tombs and cults. He assumes that she is in heaven now, but his religion is of the "sterilized Public School brand," and he avoids thinking about anything too deep or supernatural. He plans on putting up a simple plaque in England with his half-brother and –sister, and that will be enough of a memorial.

*Adela and Fielding are nonreligious because of their personal experiences and beliefs, while Ronny is officially Christian but nonspiritual just because that's how everyone else is, and he must "toe the line." He has shifted very far from his mother by now, and is a true Anglo-Indian clinging to the English herd.*

Ronny hopes that Adela will decide to break off their engagement and leave India too. He cannot marry her now without ruining his career, but he hopes that she will take the initiative in politely backing out and leaving. She remains at Fielding's college, an embarrassment to herself and the English, as the Turtons won't take her back. Aziz is suing her for damages, and Ronny decides to save any discussion about their relationship for after a decision is made regarding the lawsuit.

*Ronny's concern is now with his career in India, and he doesn't want to be associated with Adela after she "betrayed" her people (by telling the truth) at the trial. Adela did the right thing at a difficult time, but she is ultimately rejected by both the Indians and the English.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 29

Sir Gilbert, the lieutenant-governor of the province, comes to Chandrapore to survey the results of the **Marabar Caves** trial. He has been removed from personal dealings with Indians for a long time, and holds the "enlightened opinions" of more liberal Englishmen. He congratulates Fielding for his conduct from the start of the whole incident, and tells him that many of the officials have behaved badly and are stuck in the past. He makes sure that Fielding is re-invited to the English club, and then he leaves Chandrapore, satisfied that all is well.

*Forster expands the setting beyond the narrow world of Chandrapore, and we see the wider scheme of British politics. Though Fielding was rejected by the officials in Chandrapore, he is the only one who comes out of the incident looking good. Sir Gilbert, meanwhile, from his lofty liberal perch far away from day to day events, sees a brief crisis that has been resolved, and has no idea of the complexity and muddle that remains.*

The college stays closed for a while, and Fielding eats and sleeps at Hamidullah's, so Adela continues to live at the college. Fielding comes to admire her for her humility and loyalty, and for accepting her painful, awkward position. He suggests that she write an apology to Aziz, and then dictates it for her. The letter doesn't seem sincere, though. Fielding suggests a reason, and Adela admits that it is true: though she is fair and just, Adela has no true affection for Aziz or Indians, and Indians can always tell when emotion is insincere or lacking.

*Fielding and Adela now begin to understand the cultural divide between themselves and the Indians, even as they grow closer as friends. Adela did the technically right thing, but she lacked the kindness and passion behind her action that would have won over the Indians. Fielding remains on the Indian "side," but by growing closer to Adela he is distancing himself from Aziz.*

Meanwhile many of the Indians grow aggressive in their victory, and even start inventing injustices and offences to get angry about. They have no real plan, however, as the true British power remains strong and untroubled by the trial. Fielding and Aziz argue more about plans for the future and about Aziz's suit against Adela. Aziz wants Fielding to "give in to the East" and abandon the English altogether, while Fielding wants Aziz to let off from forcing Adela to pay. They are not bitter towards each other, but there is a definite racial or cultural barrier in their disagreement.

*Forster's critique now turns more strongly towards the Indians, as they react to their victory with aggression and petty complaints. They are still the main victims of the colonial system, but Forster does not spare them his pessimistic psychological portrayals. Aziz and Fielding come up against a seemingly insurmountable cultural divide between them, one that could only be overcome by Fielding "giving in to the East" entirely, which he is unable to do.*

Fielding finally starts bringing up Mrs. Moore to shame Aziz about Adela. Aziz was very upset when he learned of Mrs. Moore's death—he wept and ordered his children to weep as well—and her name has a powerful influence over him, even though he knows Fielding is trying to make him feel guilty. Almost at random Aziz finally relents and becomes convinced that he can honor Mrs. Moore by being merciful to her son's fiancé. He asks Adela only for legal costs, but as he predicted, his generosity wins him no credit with the English. They will always believe him guilty no matter what.

*Though he is less naïve and now anti-British, Aziz retains his passionate and impulsive nature even after his ordeal. Thus his mysterious love for Mrs. Moore ultimately convinces him to be merciful to Adela. Forster shows us the depressing lack of effect the incident had on the British community—they are unchanged by Adela's actual testimony, but continue in their stereotypes and racial prejudice.*

Ronny is to be transferred to another province, and he visits Adela to break off the engagement. He then tells Fielding, and says that he has arranged for a passage back to England for Adela as well. Fielding visits her, and she says that she should have broken off the engagement herself, but she was too dazed and stuck in inertia. She feels bad that she has caused so much harm in India, but she reassures Fielding that she won't be so out of place when she gets back to England.

*Ronny now essentially disappears from the book, having succumbed to the pressure of the colonial system and become a typical Anglo-Indian official. Adela still seems detached and relatively emotionless ever since the trial. In England she will be among people who accept her, as she no longer has a place among the Indians or the Anglo-Indians.*

Adela says that she and Ronny never should have even considered marriage in the first place. Fielding agrees that the whole institution of marriage is "absurd," and based only on flimsy social conventions and religious beliefs. Fielding and Adela discuss the difficulties of love as it relates to a practical life, and Fielding asks Adela about the **Marabar Cave** incident one last time. Adela indifferently says that it was probably the guide who attacked her.

*Adela and Fielding's final conversation finds the two once again skirting the edges of things beyond the reach of their rationalism. They share the views of marriage that Forster has repeated in the novel—that marriage is not the highest form of intimacy, but often distracting from other meaningful relationships, and based mostly in social tradition and religion.*

Adela says that only Mrs. Moore knew what really happened, though she doesn't know how. Adela suggests "telepathy," but the word seems silly, and Adela retracts it. Both she and Fielding feel that they are wading out of their depth, close to something supernatural and profound that doesn't fit into their rationalistic worldviews. They wonder if "life is a mystery, not a muddle" after all, and if the "hundred Indias" are actually one united whole, just as the universe itself might be united as one.

*Again they feel uncomfortable using words that imply the supernatural. This passage is a crucial encapsulation of Forster's themes of muddles, mysteries, and unity. As atheists, Fielding and Adela see no higher meaning behind the chaos of life, but they also feel dissatisfied with this worldview, especially in the light of recent events. Forster does not draw a conclusion, but only offers the possibility, like the God who never comes, of a mysterious unity for both India and life.*

They do not discuss these questions, but instead say farewell and promise to write each other. They mention the tragedy of Mrs. Moore's death again, but both decide not to dwell on death too much, as they still have more of life they want to live. Their souls seem to be in accord with each other, but there is still a sense of something metaphysical beyond them that leaves them dissatisfied.

*Yet again Mrs. Moore's name brings up something mysterious and supernatural that leaves Adela and Fielding feeling both dissatisfied and out of their depth. They part as friends, having bonded over their mutual respect for fairness and honesty.*

Ten days later Adela leaves for England, following Mrs. Moore's route. The servant Antony accompanies her and starts a rumor among the boat's passengers that she was Fielding's mistress. Adela starts to feel better as the ship approaches Europe, and befriends an American missionary on the ship. She decides to look up Ralph and Stella, Mrs. Moore's other children, as soon as she arrives in England.

*Adela leaves the country having failed to both see the "real India" and marry Ronny. Forster will again illustrate the tendency of an English person to feel more comfortable after leaving India—returning to a less strange and "muddled" landscape and architecture. Antony's spiteful little rumor will contribute to the breakup of Aziz and Fielding's friendship.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 30

Another consequence of Aziz's trial is that the Hindus and Muslims in Chandrapore start getting along better. One day Mr. Das visits Aziz at the hospital to ask him for shingles medicine and a poem for his magazine. Only Hindus usually read the magazine, but Das is hoping that it will be for all Indians, and he believes that Aziz's contribution will help accomplish this, as Aziz is the current Indian hero of Chandrapore. Das suggests that Aziz try to limit the Muslim references in the poem, however, as Das is still practical and realistic about his hope for unity.

*Adela has left India now, but the consequences of her actions linger on. The English and the Indians are more divided than ever, but there is now a greater sense of friendship between the Hindu and Muslim communities in Chandrapore, as they feel relatively united against a common enemy.*

Aziz agrees to try, and he also writes Das a prescription. Aziz and Das shake hands warmly. Their interaction is typical of the new relationship between Hindus and Muslims—they are friendly, but still cling to stereotypes and "know too much about each other" to totally start over as friends. Aziz starts writing that evening, but he finds that he can only write sad poems about the decline of Islam, or angry, satirical poems.

*Aziz and Das still stereotype each other based on their religious communities, but they are also bound by the trial where Das acted justly and gave Aziz his freedom. Aziz's poetic imagination lingers on his old subjects, but now he has a new purpose for his writing.*

Aziz never ends up actually writing a poem for the magazine, but thinking about what might appeal to both Muslims and Hindus makes him start thinking more about a united India. He does not feel a natural affection for his homeland, but he decides that India must unite and drive out the English. One day he mentions to Hamidullah that he was mistaken earlier in considering the English as laughable figures, when in reality they have so much power and deep-seated prejudice against Indians.

*Aziz does not become a political poet, but the assignment moves him in a conscious new direction—he decides to focus on the possibility of India as a united motherland, free of British rule. As Hamidullah points out, Adela's accusation revealed the suppressed hatred that most of the English feel for the Indians. Aziz now combines his new dislike of the English with his desire for a free India.*

Aziz decides that he wants to take a job in a Hindu state, to escape British India, write poetry, and try to befriend the Hindus. Hamidullah argues that the "savages" won't pay Aziz enough, and he scolds Aziz again for not making Adela compensate him monetarily. Aziz is firm and confident in his decision, however, and intends to better himself by expressing his heart, and Hamidullah is convinced and moved.

*Despite his new convictions, Aziz doesn't become a political agitator, but he does make a decision to work towards a united India in his personal life by befriending Hindu Indians, utterly rejecting the English, and writing patriotic poetry.*

Hamidullah then passes on the rumor that Fielding was having an affair with Adela while she was staying at the college. Aziz makes a joke out of this, again mocking Adela for not being beautiful, but suddenly he has an outburst of anger and says that everyone has betrayed him. He surprises even himself with this, and quickly calms down.

*Aziz's imagination and passion start to lead him astray regarding Fielding. He exaggerates Fielding's "betrayal" of him and then grows increasingly suspicious of his friend, especially regarding Fielding's relationship with Adela.*

Hamidullah suggests that they visit the women of the house behind the purdah (the practice of some Indian Muslim women who live behind a curtain or in a separate room so as not to be seen by men or strangers). Hamidullah mentions that at the time of Aziz's trial the women had seemed to be ready to give up purdah, but they have not followed through yet. For example, they all like and respect Fielding, but none have actually met him. Even Hamidullah's wife finds an excuse to avoid Fielding when he visits. Hamidullah contrasts this with foreign missionaries' claims that Indian women are "downtrodden." He suggests that Aziz should write a poem about "the Indian lady as she is and not as she is supposed to be."

*Forster continues to shift the novel's focus away from the English and towards the Indians, now expanding to other aspects of Muslim Indian culture. Once again, with the purdah the issue is always more complex than it seems at first glance, and the "civilizing" English intruders cannot properly understand it from the outside. Aziz finds a new subject for his writing, as he moves away from nostalgia for the past and towards hope for the future.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 31

Fielding is away at a conference for several days, and while he is gone Aziz muses on the rumor that Fielding and Adela were lovers. Eventually he believes it to be true, despite having no evidence. He doesn't have a problem with extramarital affairs, but only with Adela, and with Fielding keeping secrets from him.

*By now most of the major characters have left the novel's sphere, and Forster focuses on Aziz's friendship with Fielding as a kind of personal representation of England's relationship with India. Aziz's active imagination and impulsive nature start to lead him astray.*

Aziz meets Fielding at the station when he returns, and brings up the subject by mentioning that McBryde and Miss Derek had been caught having an affair. Aziz jokes that McBryde will surely blame the hot Indian climate for his infidelity to his wife. Fielding isn't interested in discussing this scandal, however, and wants to talk about his conference.

*Forster will call hypocrisy the Englishman's special "demon," and we see it evidenced here in McBryde's affair with Miss Derek, especially after all his moralizing against Aziz during the trial and his ideas about Indians being "criminals at heart." Given his affair, one might describe McBryde as a criminal of the heart.*

Aziz finally tells Fielding the rumor about him, saying that it might injure his reputation. Fielding laughs it off, but doesn't offer the clear denial that Aziz is looking for. Aziz insists on talking about it more, and speaks as if the rumor were true. Fielding is startled that Aziz would believe the rumor, and he has an outburst of surprise and anger. Aziz feels wounded by his own mistake and by Fielding's words, but Fielding apologizes as he drops him off. Aziz reluctantly agrees to come to dinner with Fielding that night, though he says he will bring Das along.

*Even after Adela herself has left, she continues to divide the two friends. Even Fielding's denial of the rumor doesn't dispel Aziz's suspicions—he has convinced himself that Fielding is growing distant and untrustworthy, and no amount of contrary evidence will convince him otherwise. It is telling of his new patriotism that Aziz now finds himself choosing the company of a Hindu Indian over Fielding.*

Fielding is frustrated by the miscommunications between himself and Aziz. He sees Turton at the post office, and Turton orders Fielding to make an appearance at the English club at six that evening. Fielding stops by and accepts some awkward hospitality. Many of the officials and women have left or been replaced, but the new officials seem just like the old ones and the feeling in the club is unchanged. Fielding internally compares this to an "echo" of evil, which will keep going on until it all crashes down and British India fails.

*In Chandrapore the Indians have grown closer after Aziz's trial, but the English remain essentially unchanged. Most of the officials (like Ronny) have been reassigned elsewhere, but their replacements seem no different in personality and opinion. Forster uses Fielding to voice his predictions of the looming destruction of the British Raj, which did indeed happen in 1947, 23 years after the novel's release.*

Fielding then joins Aziz for dinner, and tells him that he is traveling to England soon on official business. Aziz suggests that they change the subject to poetry. Fielding says that finding a subject for Indian poets is difficult, but that he hopes that Aziz will be a religious poet. Even though Fielding is an atheist, he feels that there is something important in religion—or in Hinduism at least—that has not yet been expressed properly.

*This is the one sincere-feeling moment in the growing miscommunications between the two friends. Fielding addresses the discomfort he felt with Adela in speaking about Mrs. Moore and the Marabar incident, and implies that such mystical subjects might be most effectively explored through poetry.*

Aziz then wants to change the subject back to Fielding's trip to England, and he asks Fielding if he will visit Adela. Fielding says that he probably will, but he seems indifferent about it. Aziz suddenly says he has a headache and should go home early. Fielding apologizes again for his outburst that morning, but Aziz still feels depressed as he rides home. He soon discovers the source of his unhappiness: he can't help suspecting that Fielding is going to England to marry Adela for the sake of her money.

*Fielding has been rewarded by the lieutenant-general, and so he finds himself with more "official business" for the British. This ends up drawing him away from the Indians and back towards his own culture, to the detriment of his friendship with Aziz. The muddles and miscommunications continue, and nothing is properly stated between the two men.*

Aziz discusses the flies on the ceiling with his servant once more, and thinks more about his suspicion, which he doesn't believe to be factually true, but which still affects him strongly. The narrator says that suspicion is the Easterner's special "demon," while the Westerner's is hypocrisy. Aziz muses more on his suspicions, and soon finds himself believing that Fielding did indeed have an affair with Adela while she was at the college.

*Fielding here clarifies another important cultural observation that we have seen evidenced throughout the novel. The Indian active imagination can go too far and lead to unnecessary suspicion, while the English preoccupation with convention and rationality can lead to hiding the messier aspects of their humanity.*

The next day Aziz decides to travel with his children back to their home, so that when he returns to Chandrapore Fielding will have already left. Fielding is aware that something is wrong with their friendship, and he leaves a vague note for Aziz, which Aziz finds cold and displeasing. Soon Hamidullah and Mahmoud Ali are contributing to Aziz's suspicions about Fielding and Adela, reminding him that they are "both members of a different race." Aziz is haunted by the twenty thousand rupees he never received, and he finally convinces himself that a wedding between Fielding and Adela has already happened, as the natural result of that picnic at the **Marabar Caves**.

*Aziz and his friends have all grown hardened against the English since the trial, and this leads them to distance themselves from Fielding as well. They ultimately come to the pessimistic conclusion that it is indeed impossible for an Englishman and an Indian to be friends—the same conclusion they reached at the novel's beginning, but now with a personal application for Aziz. The evil muddle of the Marabar continues to expand and spread long after the incident itself.*

## PART 2, CHAPTER 32

Fielding enjoys his journey back to Europe, and when the ship docks at Venice, he can't help admiring the beauty of the architecture. He feels almost disloyal to India in doing so, but the buildings of Venice all seem to be "in the right place," whereas the Indian temples and even the hills themselves seem lumpy and formless. He writes post cards to his Indian friends, but feels that they will not be able to share his joy in European architecture, as they do not have proper appreciation for "civilization that has escaped muddle." Fielding finally arrives in England in the spring, and feels old romantic feelings rekindled within himself.

*This is Forster's most explicit use of architecture as an example of cultural difference. Forster, like Fielding, takes comfort in the form and beauty of Venetian architecture. For Forster, such beauty is an example of a positive result of the logic and rationality of the Western mindset, while India's architecture, by contrast, represents the worst of the country's "muddle," as it feels formless and random. Forster looks ahead to Fielding's marriage.*

## PART 3, CHAPTER 33

Two years later and hundreds of miles west of Chandrapore, in the Hindu city of Mau, Professor Godbole is involved in a Hindu ceremony awaiting the birth of the god Krishna. Mysteriously, Krishna is both eternal and being born simultaneously; "he is, was not, is not, was." Godbole is inside Mau's royal palace, and in the courtyard are huge crowds of Hindus, "whom some call the real India." There is a cacophony of drums and instruments.

*As with the "Mosque" and "Caves" sections, Part 3 of the novel opens with a chapter that describes the setting and sets the mood for the section to follow. The novel leaves Chandrapore for good, and now turns its focus towards Hinduism as a possible source of unity for a free India.*

Godbole directs a small choir in singing a hymn. The hymn doesn't even address God Himself, but only a saint. The whole ceremony would seem frustratingly indirect to an outsider, a "muddle… a frustration of reason and form." On the wall, one of many inscriptions says in English "God si Love." The narrator wonders if "God si Love" could be "the final message of India."

*Godbole returns as a significant figure now that Hinduism and universal oneness become more important to the novel's themes. The festival is confused and disorderly, the epitome of the Indian "muddle," especially represented by the nonsense or misspelled proclamation "God si Love."*

Professor Godbole and everyone in the crowd feels blissful and at one with the universe. Godbole briefly returns to the present to straighten his glasses, and he randomly remembers Mrs. Moore at that moment, including her in the endless images of things that make up the united universe for him. Godbole then thinks of a **wasp**, and he loves the wasp equally to Mrs. Moore, and then he thinks of the stone the wasp sat on, but he is unable to go so far, and he fails to include the stone in his vision of universal oneness.

*The peace and love the crowd feels somehow converts the muddle into a mystery, however—this chaotic unity has a meaning behind it, and the meaning is universal love. Mrs. Moore returns again as a figure sympathetic to Hinduism and unity, showing that her spirit still lingers in India. The wasp again symbolizes the lowest of living creatures, but even it is included in Godbole's vision. And yet the unity is not perfect—Godbole cannot include a stone. Even in Hinduism something must be excluded from heaven.*

Midnight, the hour of Krishna's "birth," approaches, and the crowd grows wilder and more joyful. The Rajah, the ruler of the state—an old, sick man—arrives carried on a litter to see the ceremony. Three minutes before midnight, some models of figures and places from the ceremony's legend are taken out—they are not idols, but instead are included in order to increase the "sacred bewilderment" of the crowd. The clock strikes midnight and the crowd cheers for the birth of Krishna, who is Infinite Love embodied. There is wild and ecstatic celebration.

*This festival will serve as a backdrop for this entire section, and because it is a celebration of the Hindu god Krishna's birth, it has some optimistic symbolism for India's re-birth as an independent nation. It is also telling that there has been no mention of the English whatsoever (except for Mrs. Moore). The "sacred bewilderment" inspired by the ceremony is a good encapsulation of muddle and mystery being united as one.*

The sick Rajah, weeping with joy, is then taken away to see Aziz, who is also living in Mau now and is the doctor attending to the Rajah. In the crowd, the ecstasy gives way to various games, practical jokes, and laughter. Unlike in the usually solemn Christianity, Hinduism sacrifices "good taste" to let there be "fun in heaven." Godbole recovers from his holy ecstasy and thinks again of Mrs. Moore and the **wasp**, feeling a kinship to the old woman. He tries to place himself in her shoes, and says to God: "Come, come, come, come."

*Hinduism is the source of the caste system, the ultimate in hierarchical divisions, but it is also the source of this undifferentiated joy and unity, in which even a ruler joins the chaotic crowd. We see that Aziz has followed through with his goals of befriending Hindus and avoiding the English. Christianity is again portrayed as too narrow to encompass all the muddle of life. Once again the mysteries of Hinduism, universal oneness, and Mrs. Moore's spirit are presented with an invocation to a God who does not come—and yet now the invocation seems more optimistic.*

## PART 3, CHAPTER 34

Aziz leaves the palace and runs into Godbole on the street. The Professor is still dancing in religious joy, but he manages to relay the news that Fielding may be at the European guest house. Fielding's visit is an official one, as he is on a tour inspecting English education in the more remote regions of India. He has married, and Aziz assumes that Adela is his wife. Aziz doesn't like thinking of Fielding, "because it disturbed his life."

*We learn that Aziz and Fielding's friendship has completely fallen apart, and the two men no longer speak. Fielding also appears to have become more of a typical English official, with a greater investment in the colonial system. Aziz has let his suspicions about Adela harden into firm belief.*

Aziz instead thinks happily about Professor Godbole, who initially got Aziz his job in Mau, and is the reason he has stayed. Aziz still has no "religious curiosity" about Hinduism, but he is very fond of Godbole now. He likes living in Mau, where the tensions are between Brahman Hindus and non-Brahman Hindus, instead of between Muslims and English. But Hinduism is just as divided as everything else in India, even though it seems so unified to outsiders. The Muslim Aziz is accepted by the community because he is so respectful.

*Forster gives more background information about Aziz's current life. He respects Hindus now and works among them with pleasure and curiosity. Once again the ideal of unity is incomplete and imperfect, as even Hinduism itself is divided into factions, but Aziz is relieved that all the divisions are at least among Indians, and the English are barely involved.*

Aziz officially works under a Hindu doctor, though he is basically the chief doctor of the Rajah's court. Aziz has been permanently scarred by his experiences with the English, and so he originally fled to Mau to avoid them, choosing escape instead of joining committees and protesting British rule. He feels that Fielding has truly betrayed him, and they no longer speak—Fielding's letters from Europe seemed "cold" to Aziz, and then he got the news (through Hamidullah and Mahmoud Ali) that Fielding was marrying "someone you know," which Aziz assumes is Adela.

*Aziz seems to be the one mostly at fault for his broken friendship with Fielding, as he has allowed his active imagination and suspicion to get the better of him. Aziz has convinced himself that Fielding betrayed him and married Adela based entirely on the perceived mood in his letters, and Aziz has not even bothered to check for the truth.*

Since then Aziz has thrown away all of Fielding's letters, and he feels that this is the end of a "foolish experiment." He sometimes feels dissatisfied, remembering their old friendship and the sacrifices Fielding once made for him, but in general Aziz avoids thinking about Fielding, hates the English, and feels like a true Indian at last.

*This "experiment" was that which the novel explores in its entirety: the question of whether an Englishman and an Indian can be true friends. Aziz has found comfort in totally rejecting the British, even if that includes Fielding as well.*

Aziz is happy in Mao, living with his children now and writing poetry. His poems generally focus on Indian women and the need to abolish the purdah, arguing that all women are necessary for India to unite and drive out the English, because "there cannot be a motherland without new homes." Aziz is still dogged by his past trial, however, as Colonel Maggs, a local English political agent, has orders to keep an eye on him as a suspected criminal.

*Aziz has taken Hamidullah's suggestion about Indian women as a poetic subject. Aziz has tried to completely avoid the English, but he still cannot escape the effects of Adela's accusation. The English continue to plague him (although now less directly) and consider him guilty.*

That night Aziz arrives home and finds a note from Fielding (passed on by Godbole) saying that Fielding, his wife, and his wife's brother have arrived. Fielding mentions some incidents of his journey, but to Aziz the note seems similar to those all English guests seem to send: requests for special treatment and questions about schedules and advice. Aziz tears up the note, thinking angrily of Adela still trying to see "native life." He worries that Fielding might linger for a few days because flooding has blocked many roads.

*Fielding now seems to have become a stereotypical Anglo-Indian official, demanding special treatment and writing detachedly to Aziz, and so we see that Aziz is not the only one at fault for their lost friendship. Aziz is still clearly very bitter about the Marabar incident, and has not let go of his suffering. Aziz, who was once so excited to spend time with Fielding, now worries that he will be forced to.*

## PART 3, CHAPTER 35

There was once a young Muslim saint who came to Mau and freed all the prisoners in the local fort before he was beheaded by the police. There are now two shrines to him in Mau, one for his head and one for his body, and both Muslims and Hindus worship at them. Islam usually scorns any kind of idol-worship, but in Mau this rule has been softened by Hindu influence. Aziz was angry at the idolatry when he first arrived, but soon he came to like the saint, associating him with his own time in prison. The shrine of the saint's body is now in Aziz's own garden.

*After showing Aziz still trapped in bitterness about the Marabar, Forster then gives us this more optimistic image of prisoners being freed. This clearly relates to Aziz's own time as a prisoner, but also suggests that he may soon be freed from the "prison" of the Marabar incident. Just as the Muslim Aziz has tried to "unite" with the Hindus of Mau, so Islam itself has begun to meld into Hinduism in the area.*

The morning after the religious ceremony, Aziz takes his three children to visit the shrine of the saint's head, which is atop a hill near their home. They explore the shrine, which is full of bees, and then the mosque next to it. The mosque seems small, lumpy, and tilted compared to the usually austere Islamic architecture. Aziz and the children then wander to the old fort where the saint freed the prisoners. They admire the view from the hill, though Aziz avoids looking at the European guest house. It is the rainy season and the water tanks are full, which is good for future crops. In the distance are hills full of temples for local Hindu gods.

*Forster has described Muslim architecture as the most logical and beautiful in India, but in Mau it has begun to dissolve into the formless "muddle" of Hinduism, as evidenced by the shrine and mosque. Each of the novel's three sections has corresponded to a season, and this section, "Temple," takes place during India's rainy season. Unlike the oppressive hot season, this is a time of optimism for new growth. The fact that Aziz is with his children now also adds a sense of hope for the future.*

Soon they pass a line of prisoners. The children ask them which one of them will be freed that night during the ceremonial Hindu procession of the Chief God. In the ceremony, the Chief God will pass through town, stop at the jail, and free one prisoner. The prisoners politely discuss their hopes with Aziz's children. The prisoner's guard asks Aziz about the Rajah's health, and Aziz says that his condition is improving, though in fact the Rajah had died the night before after overexerting himself at the celebrations. His death is being concealed until the festival is over, so as not to overshadow the religious ceremonies.

*Forster gives us more images of prisoners being freed, this time in relation to Hinduism as well as Islam, adding to the sense of optimism for both Aziz and India itself. The Rajah, like Mrs. Moore, somehow achieves a kind of immortality by not having his death acknowledged or believed.*

Aziz's children then notice that Fielding and his brother-in-law are climbing up to visit the saint's shrine. The children ask if they should throw stones at the Englishmen, and Aziz rebukes them but is proud and pleased. They watch the two Englishmen enter the shrine and then be chased out by a swarm of bees. The children laugh, and the incident puts Aziz in a sudden good mood. He addresses the Englishmen, at which point Fielding's brother-in-law says that he has been stung. Aziz approaches and pulls some bee stings out of the man's wrist.

*Aziz has clearly passed on his dislike of the English to his children. Fielding once again seems like more of a "tourist" as he visits a shrine uninvited. Aziz starts to feel extremities of emotion at the sight of Fielding, beginning with this delight in his former friend's suffering and embarrassment.*

Fielding immediately asks Aziz why he hasn't answered his letters, but he is interrupted by a sudden downpour. They hurry down to Fielding's carriage with Aziz, who bows sarcastically to the Englishmen. Aziz answers Fielding's questions curtly, and Fielding soon gives up trying to be friendly and familiar. He becomes more "official," asking why no one has met them at the guest house or answered any of their questions.

*The Indian landscape itself seems determined to divide the two men, as a sudden rainstorm cuts off Fielding's question about his letters. This leaves Aziz time to recover and put up his emotional walls against the Englishman, which Fielding responds to by again showing his "Britishness" and acting like a typical official. The two are playing out the larger tensions that separate Indians from English.*

They reach the carriage, and while helping the Englishmen inside, Aziz addresses Fielding's brother-in-law as "Mr. Quested." Fielding is shocked, for he didn't marry Adela, but instead married Mrs. Moore's daughter Stella. The brother-in-law is Ralph Moore. Fielding realizes that this is the cause of Aziz's unfriendliness, and he immediately blames Mahmoud Ali, who knew Fielding's wife's name. Mahmoud Ali had even referred to her as "Heaslop's sister" in an insolent letter written on Aziz's behalf.

*This sudden revelation is startling to both Aziz and Fielding, as they recognize the miscommunications that have marred their friendship. Clearly Mahmoud Ali and Aziz's other friends have also tried to keep him from remaining close to an Englishman.*

The name "Heaslop" enrages Aziz, who is already ashamed and angry at his own mistake. He admits that he was mistaken, but proudly says that he doesn't care—he still doesn't want Fielding to visit him while in Mau. Aziz declares that he will stick to his own people from now on, and he still feels that Fielding has betrayed him. Furthermore, Aziz says that he will forgive Mahmoud Ali anything because Mahmoud Ali loved him. Aziz gathers his children around him and says in Urdu that he doesn't want anyone English to be his friend. He returns home, feeling moved and excited, especially by the mention of Mrs. Moore's name. Aziz feels as if her spirit has returned to help him.

*This moment encapsulates Aziz's character, as his passions swing back and forth at the news. The name of Mrs. Moore inspires his love, while the name Heaslop makes him enraged. He feels angry at himself for being deceived, but still angry at Fielding for the perceived coldness and betrayal, and then excited by his own dramatic actions. Aziz states that he wants nothing more to do with Fielding, but as usual the intention behind his words is more complicated, and the feelings Mrs. Moore invokes imply that a reconciliation may soon be at hand.*

## PART 3, CHAPTER 36

The ceremony of Krishna's birth is complete, but there is still a sense of anticipation, as if God had not been born yet. The procession of the Chief God, another ceremony, is about to begin. The two possible successors to the Rajah's throne have arrived at the palace, sensing that the Rajah might have died, but they make no trouble while the festival is still going and everyone feels a universal love for one another.

*The Krishna festival is the principal backdrop for Part 3, but the death of the Rajah offers another background motif of change. The old ruler is dead and it is now time for a new one, and this turning point offers the potential for a better future, just as the presence of Aziz's children represents hope for a new generation.*

Around sunset Aziz remembers that he had promised to send ointment to the guest house for Ralph Moore's bee stings. Aziz gets some from Mohammed Latif and decides to bring it to the guest house himself. Aziz runs into Professor Godbole on the way and tells him about Fielding's wife. Godbole says that he has known for more than a year that Fielding married Stella Moore, not Adela. Aziz almost gets angry, but Godbole reminds him that he is his "true friend" and in the middle of a holy festival, and Aziz forgives him, smiling.

*Godbole is still a mysterious figure unconcerned with worldly matters, and Aziz finds himself unable to get angry at him for withholding information about Fielding. Despite just having declared that he wants nothing to do with the English visitors, Aziz impulsively decides to visit the guesthouse, presumably in the hopes of seeing Fielding again.*

Aziz continues on towards the guest house, but then spits cynically when he sees the English visitors in the guest house boat, approaching the Hindu festival to watch it. Aziz resents the English interest in "seeing India," which he now sees as another form of trying to rule it. Aziz continues on to the guest house, which is watched only by one sleeping sentry. Aziz goes inside and looks through the rooms, reading two letters he finds. One is from Ronny to Fielding, which discusses Fielding's marriage and new problems in India, which Ronny blames on "the Jews."

*Aziz now returns to his bitterness towards the English. He is especially sensitive about the colonialist tendency to "sightsee" the country they rule, as it was both the worldview that drives such desire to "sightsee" and an actual sightseeing trip this that that led to the Marabar Cave incident. We see how Ronny has devolved into further prejudice and racism in the last two years.*

The other letter Aziz reads is from Adela to Stella. He resents the intimate tone of it, and how Fielding, Adela, Stella, Ralph, and Ronny all refer to each other so familiarly, like the English all in their private club. Aziz angrily strikes the piano in front of him. The noise startles Ralph Moore, who is still in the house. Ralph comes in and Aziz is surprised to see him, but he quickly recovers and patronizingly examines Ralph's bee stings.

*Aziz has been happy avoiding the English and thoughts of Fielding, but now the messy emotions of the past return to haunt him. Once again he feels excluded from the English-only "club," but this time even Fielding is part of that club. Aziz starts to take out his anger on Ralph.*

Aziz tries to treat Ralph "as Callendar had treated Nureddin," but Ralph draws back, saying that Aziz's hands are "unkind." Aziz presses on belligerently, and Ralph asks why he is being so cruel to him and other English visitors. Aziz sarcastically brings up Adela, their "great friend," but as he starts to mention the **Marabar Caves** his words are drowned out by an outburst of guns from the festival, signaling that the prisoner has been released.

*Ralph shows an immediate intuition to the intent behind Aziz's words and actions, as he can sense that Aziz is angry at him for an unrelated reason. Symbolically, a prisoner is released at the moment Aziz brings up the bitter past that has kept him imprisoned—showing that his own release—his own freedom— is at hand.*

Aziz decides to go, and he absentmindedly puts out his hand to shake Ralph's. Ralph takes his hand, and Aziz can sense that Ralph no longer fears him. Ralph says that Aziz isn't unkind anymore, and Aziz asks if Ralph can always tell when a stranger is a friend. Ralph says yes, and Aziz says "then you are an Oriental." Aziz shivers then, recalling that he said those exact words to Mrs. Moore in the mosque years earlier. Aziz worries that he is going to be caught in the same cycle he has just escaped, the inevitable cycle that results when Indians befriend the English—the closeness of the mosque, but then also the disaster of the caves.

*In an eerie recurrence, Aziz impulsively tells Ralph the same thing he told Mrs. Moore years earlier at the novel's start. This brings him to a sudden recognition of the mysterious cycle he has been a part of, where friendship with the English ultimately leads to disaster. Aziz can now make a conscious decision about reentering that cycle, however, rather than naively being led along by his own emotions and the colonial mindset.*

Aziz says that Ralph is Mrs. Moore's son, but also Ronny's brother, and therefore "the two nations cannot be friends." Ralph responds with "I know. Not yet." Aziz is then overcome with more memories of Mrs. Moore and his lasting affection for her. He knows that she never did anything concrete to help him, but he still adores her. Aziz suddenly offers to take Ralph out on the water and show him "his country."

*Here the relationship between the two nations is explicitly represented by the relations between the novel's characters. There are many Ronnys among the English, but also a few Mrs. Moores—yet until the Ronnys are stripped of their colonial power, Indians and English cannot truly be friends. Aziz suddenly decides to do the very thing he was scorning earlier, and "sightsee" the festival.*

Aziz worries that the cycle of mosques and caves is beginning again, but he is too overcome with emotion to resist, and he impulsively embraces the cycle for Mrs. Moore's sake. Once they are on the water in a boat, Aziz suddenly finds that his old kindness and hospitality have returned. He is an effusive tour guide, pretending to understand the Hindu festival and explaining it to Ralph.

*This time Aziz makes the conscious choice to reenter the cycle, implying that it may be a new cycle altogether—Ralph is a new generation of Englishman, and this new friendship might not end in disaster. Yet, there are echoes of the past too: just as on the trip to the Marabar Caves, Aziz acts as a "guide" to something he knows nothing about.*

There is a flash of lightning and Ralph points at something, asking if it is the Rajah. Aziz rows towards a light in the distance, and sees a mysterious image of a shining king floating in the water. Aziz is unsettled and admits that he doesn't know what it is, and he tells Ralph that the Rajah is dead. He then suspects that it was an image of the old Rajah, which can only be seen from one point on the water. Ralph directed him to that point. Aziz suddenly feels like Ralph is the guide and he is the visitor.

*Unlike Adela and Mrs. Moore at the Marabar, Ralph becomes a sort of guide as well, pointing out the mysterious image of the Rajah that is almost impossible to see. This supernatural image adds to the sense of mystery behind the muddle of this penultimate scene. This time Aziz stops pretending to be a tour guide, and recognizes that he too is out of his depth.*

Ralph asks to be taken closer to the Hindu procession, and Aziz complies, asking Ralph not to share the news of the Rajah's death yet. Ralph seems in control and asks to row closer. Rockets and guns are being shot off in celebration. Suddenly the procession appears, closer than Aziz wanted to be. Godbole, who is part of the ceremony, sees the boat and waves his arms at them, but it is unclear if he is joyful or angry. The storm rages on, and the Hindus prepare for the ceremony of "throwing God" away into the storm.

*Everything is now approaching chaos, and both Aziz and Ralph are in entirely unfamiliar territory with the storm, the rockets, and the Hindu ceremony. Yet Ralph seems oddly in control, showing that he shares his mother's natural affinity for Hinduism. This mixture of weather, religion, and English intrusion aptly captures the muddle of India.*

Suddenly Fielding's boat collides with Aziz's boat just as the Hindu ceremony climaxes. Stella shrinks towards Fielding but then throws herself at Aziz, and the boats capsize. All four of the English fall into the warm, shallow water, scattering Ronny's and Adela's letters alongside the sacred props of the Procession of the God. Suddenly the festival is all over, and the crowd breaks up quietly. Something mysterious has happened, but there is no easy explanation for it.

*This is another climax that is basically a confusing nonevent. The boats crash and everything is scattered in the storm, but nothing definable takes place. Stella lunges towards Aziz rather than to her husband, symbolically reaching out to Aziz just as her brother and mother did. Everything that occurs is a muddle, yet there is a mysterious meaning behind it, as it brings reconciliation to Aziz, Fielding, and the Moores.*

## PART 3, CHAPTER 37

After the "shipwreck," Aziz and Fielding suddenly find their old friendship and harmony restored, as if the intervening years had never happened. They go for a last ride in the Mau jungles before Fielding leaves, aware that they will never see each other again. Officially, Fielding's visit has been a failure, as Godbole never actually showed him the school he came to examine. Aziz finally tells Fielding the truth: the school was converted into a granary, but Godbole didn't want to admit it to Fielding. Fielding laughs at the muddle, but "he did not travel as lightly as in the past," and he is deeply concerned about the state of education in India now.

*The two friends are now mysteriously reconciled after the climactic confusion, although they have grown apart into their own separate flaws. Aziz is now fiercely nationalistic and often unreasonable, while Fielding has become more of a typical English official, placing his trust in the colonial system. They recognize that this is the last time they will see each other, and that the humanistic "experiment" of their friendship has failed in the long term.*

Aziz and Fielding ride through beautiful jungles and fields, feeling happy. The nature they pass seems almost as "park-like" as England, but still slightly strange and unfamiliar. Aziz gives Fielding a letter for Adela, thanking her for her actions during the trial. He now realizes that she acted bravely, and he says that he will appreciate her and try to "wipe out" the **Marabar** incident forever.

*The foreign and unfriendly Indian landscape suddenly seems more familiar and comfortable, just as the two men start to understand each other again, and Aziz decides to forgive Adela. He is finally freeing himself from the prison of his bitterness.*

Fielding says that Aziz should talk to Stella or Ralph, as they have some interesting ideas about the **Marabar Caves**, and seem drawn to Hinduism since arriving in Mau. Stella and Fielding's marriage has been difficult, but Stella seems to have found "some solution of her queer troubles" in Mau. Aziz doesn't want to meet the Moores again or talk about Hinduism, saying that he still doesn't understand Hindus even after living with them.

*Aziz and Fielding have basically failed in their "experiment" of friendship, and neither of them has any interest in Hinduism, so ultimately Forster puts forward the Moores as his hope for the future of a kinder and more openminded England, just as he proposes Hinduism as a potential unifying force for India.*

They then discuss politics. Fielding and Aziz have both grown more politically "hardened" than before, and have differing views, but in their intimacy they can discuss things without anger or misunderstanding. Fielding now believes that the British Raj cannot be abolished simply because it is impolite—he uses the example of Godbole's school, saying that India "goes to seed" without an English presence.

*Even though their actual views differ more sharply now, on this last ride the two men can perceive the sincere "truth of mood" and lack the miscommunications of their former intimacy. Fielding now takes his compatriots' view of the British Raj—that justice is more important than kindness.*

Aziz, on the other hand, says all the English should "clear out," as the Indians don't need them anymore. He predicts that during the next European war, when England is in trouble again, then the Indians will take back India. Aziz stumbles when Fielding asks him for details of his plan to drive out the English and unite India, but he is still filled with confidence and excitement that India will become its own nation.

*It is now through Aziz that Forster predicts the downfall of the British Raj and the rise of a multicultural Indian nation—events that would indeed occur in 1947, after World War II. Aziz lacks evidence and a detailed plan, but he has now put his passion and imagination behind a cause of a free and independent India.*

Aziz declares that India will drive out every last Englishman, even if it must happen in his children's generation. And only then, he says, can the two men truly be friends. Aziz and Fielding embrace. Fielding asks why they can't be friends now, as both of them want it. But then their horses swerve apart, and the earth, rocks, temples, and sky seem to separate them, declaring, "No, not yet."

*The novel ends on a slightly pessimistic note, as the Indian landscape itself divides the two men from the true friendship they both desire. And yet the land's answer is not "no," but "not yet"—leaving open the potential for the success of humanism and equality and the possibility of future friendship. Aziz and Fielding, like India and England, can be true friends if the colonial system is fixed or overthrown so as to eliminate the dynamic of power between the English and Indians, and if people can come together with respect, openmindedness, and kindness, along with a belief in the unity and equality of everyone.*

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