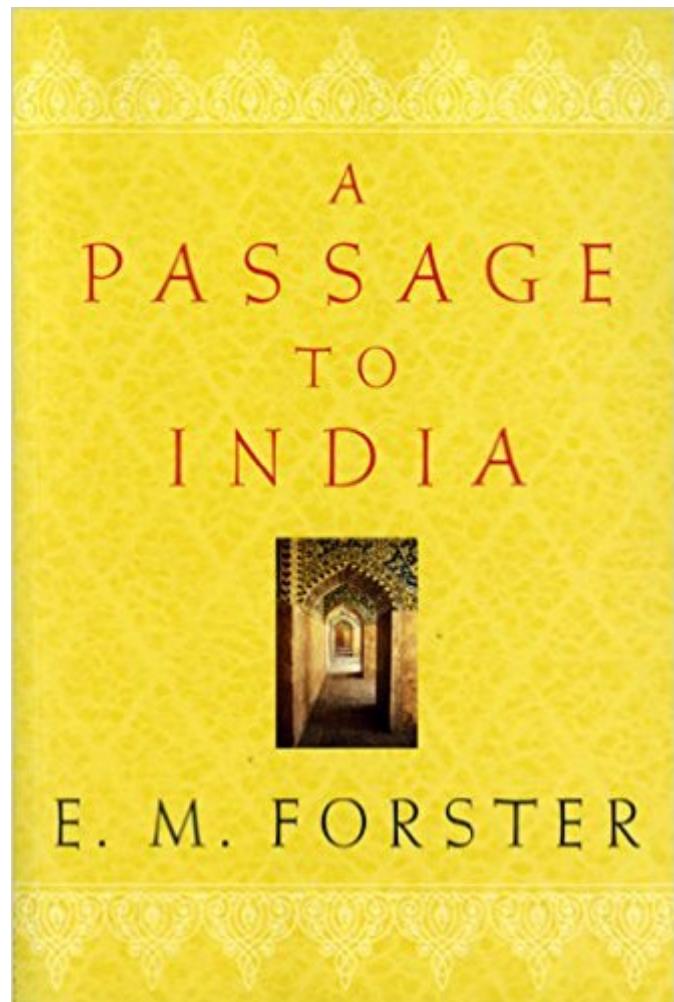


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A Passage To India



Synopsis

Among the greatest novels of the twentieth century and the basis for director David Lean's Academy Award-winning film, *A Passage to India* tells of the clash of cultures in British India after the turn of the century. In exquisite prose, Forster reveals the menace that lurks just beneath the surface of ordinary life, as a common misunderstanding erupts into a devastating affair.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

What really happened in the Marabar caves? This is the mystery at the heart of E.M. Forster's 1924 novel, *A Passage to India*, the puzzle that sets in motion events highlighting an even larger question: Can an Englishman and an Indian be friends? "It is impossible here," an Indian character tells his friend, Dr. Aziz, early in the novel. "They come out intending to be gentlemen, and are told it will not do.... Why, I remember when Turton came out first. It was in another part of the Province. You fellows will not believe me, but I have driven with Turton in his carriage--Turton! Oh yes, we were once quite intimate. He has shown me his stamp collection. "He would expect you to steal it now. Turton! But red-nosed boy will be far worse than Turton! "I do not think so. They all become exactly the same, not worse, not better. I give any Englishman two years, be he Turton or Burton. It is only the difference of a letter. And I give any Englishwoman six months. All are exactly alike."

Written while England was still firmly in control of India, Forster's novel follows the fortunes of three English newcomers to India--Miss Adela Quested, Mrs. Moore, and Cyril Fielding--and the Indian, Dr. Aziz, with whom they cross destinies. The idea of true friendship between the races was a radical one in Forster's time, and he makes it abundantly clear that it was not one that either side

welcomed. If Aziz's friend, Hamidullah, believed it impossible, the British representatives of the Raj were equally discouraging. "Why, the kindest thing one can do to a native is to let him die," said Mrs. Callendar. "How if he went to heaven?" asked Mrs. Moore, with a gentle but crooked smile. "He can go where he likes as long as he doesn't come near me. They give me the creeps." Despite their countrymen's disapproval, Miss Quested, Mrs. Moore, and Mr. Fielding are all eager to meet Indians, and in Dr. Aziz they find a perfect companion: educated, westernized, and open-minded. Slowly, the friendships ripen, especially between Aziz and Fielding. Having created the possibility of esteem based on trust and mutual affection, Forster then subjects it to the crucible of racial hatred: during a visit to the famed Marabar caves, Miss Quested accuses Dr. Aziz of sexually assaulting her, then later recants during the frenzied trial that follows. Under such circumstances, affection proves to be a very fragile commodity indeed. Arguably Forster's greatest novel, *A Passage to India* limns a troubling portrait of colonialism at its worst, and is remarkable for the complexity of its characters. Here the personal becomes the political and in the breach between Aziz and his English "friends," Forster foreshadows the eventual end of the Raj. --Alix Wilber

Grade 9 Up-By E.M. Forster. Narrated by Flo Gibson. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Avoid this publication: too many typos; it is difficult to know who's talking in the dialogues, because of the poor presentation. This edition should be withdrawn, in my opinion. I would like a refund and will buy another digital presentation.

A Passage to India, written by E. M. Forster in 1924, is on many short lists of greatest novels written in the 20th century, and deservedly so. It is a period piece, set in the British Raj of the 1920s. It is rich in imagery and symbolism, focusing on bigotry, hypocrisy and mistrust among the various nationalities and religions present within the story. Idealism, naivety and human nature also play parts. At its heart, is the friendship between the Muslim Indian professional, Dr. Aziz, and the English dowager, Mrs. Moore, who has accompanied her son's presumptive fiancée to meet him in Chandrapore. Aziz, Mrs. Moore and Mr. Fielding, a British schoolmaster, struggle to bridge the abyss existing between the British and native cultures. For their troubles, they are punished, each in distinctive ways. Having seen the movie, an excellent flick by the way, I was intimately familiar with the tale. The Victorian style of writing, however, really brought the story to life and breathed life into the characters. Some may find the writing too florid or archaic for their tastes, but I found it beneficial

in setting a mood for the story. While the driving force behind the book is the social interaction (or lack of) and the cultural divide between the British administrators and what they view as their morally and intellectually inferior native Indian subjects, a subtext is the mistrust and tension existing between the Hindu and Moslem religious communities. As Aziz becomes increasingly disenchanted with his British overlords, he begins to fall in with Indian nationalists. The question of the viability of an "Indian" state, in the presence of such a politically, ethnically and religiously fragmented populace is periodically raised. Very perceptive writing, coming as it does over twenty years prior to Indian independence, civil war and ultimately partition.

The story and writing is very good. The book ending is much more layered and complex than the movie ending but essentially the same. I like how perceptive of class and cultural differences Forster is. I also like how he writes about how each is perceiving the same conversation or events differently through their own class/cultural lens. My only complaint...not about the book, but about the 2.99 download to my kindle, I think that is what I paid...or it might have been free, it that the e-text copy was horrible. It easily had the most mistakes of any publication I've ever read. There were mistakes on almost every page. Not sure why but this happened but the mistakes were very consistent..."ii" (double i's) instead of a lower case "n". I was constantly translating which made it distracting at times. Very weird. Again though the book, plot, story etc. is very excellent.

There is at least one typo on each page. This is shameful.

This book was a slow read for me. I appreciate the forward thinking of the author to write about the blatant racism in India and therefore I wanted to finish the book. However, it was sometimes drawn out and I had to force myself to continue reading it. With that being said, I'm still glad I read this classic novel.

A young emotional English woman causes a rape charge against an Indian man, whom she has visited some caves with. The British colonial community is in uproar and quick to condemn the Indian, who's arrested and charged. At the trial it turns out that the Indian has not raped the English woman. It was all in her head, helped along by peer pressure - the British community's racially charged eagerness to condemn the Indian. Nothing like sex that can get people up and running, almost stumbling over their own feet to participate in the fray.

This is considered to be perhaps the definitive work of fiction describing colonial India. The book itself arrived in a timely manner. It is a former library book in quite good physical condition with an intact dust cover and no torn pages. It is at least as good as expected, and perhaps better.

I first read this novel in college and loved it. The power of Forster's words has not diminished over time. He gives a view of colonial life in India from the Local residents' perspective as well as the British. What do you think happened in the caves?

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