

# A detailed exploration of the ending to 'a view from a bridge' essay sample

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Alfieri's opening words on events running their 'bloody course' prepare us for a violent and tragic finale. Miller gradually raises the tension through the entire play leading up to the climactic ending; for example the boxing scene where Eddie pretends to be teaching Rodolpho how to box but we know that he is actually looking for an excuse to hit Rodolpho. In addition the scene where Eddie kisses Catherine and Rodolpho builds a lot of tension and suspense because Eddie is trying to prove to Catherine that Rodolpho is homosexual by kissing him. The Italian code of honour (which states that if anyone causes a member of your family harm then it is almost your duty to get revenge on them) is very significant as Eddie breaks the code on more than one occasion, thus losing other people's respect as he has broken the unwritten law.

The stage direction 'Marco appears outside, walking towards the door from a distant point' is incredibly powerful as Miller is trying to create tension and we know that Marco has come to kill Eddie as Rodolpho says earlier on that 'he (Marco) is praying in the church. You understand?' Also the fact that Miller makes Marco walk towards the door 'from a distant point' is significant as it gives us time to see Marco's face and determined body language. Moreover, Miller creates this image that Marco now, like Eddie, has tunnel eyes as he is focused solely on taking revenge on Eddie.

Beatrice's line 'the truth is not as bad as blood' could be interpreted in many ways. Miller could have meant the fact that Eddie has betrayed his family. In addition, Miller is again hinting at the fact that there is going to be bloodshed soon.

Miller uses a powerful stage direction to describe Eddie ' his fists clench his head as though it will burst'. This is a brilliant stage picture which can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Miller could again be hinting via the first image, that there is going to be violence. Miller could be suggesting that Eddie is fed up with listening to Beatrice or he could be referring to the fact that the truth hurts Eddie so much that his head will burst and that Eddie doesn't want to realise the truth, so Eddie is stopping it coming out with his fists.

Marco's line ' Eddie Carbone' is one of the most tense and powerful points in the play as we have been given hints to the fact that there is going to be bloodshed, but we still don't know exactly what is going to happen. Miller creates this idea that Marco doesn't think of Eddie as family anymore as Marco is using Eddie's full name. Miller could also be using it to summon Eddie to the fight. Another interpretation is that Marco has taken the good name that Eddie so desperately wants back, as we have seen in the previous scene – Eddie says ' I want my name. ... Marco's got my name'.

The next stage direction ' Eddie swerves about; all transfixed for an instant. People appear outside' present three brilliant stage pictures, by which Miller creates an amazing image that Eddie is being summoned but is panicky as he swerves around rather than turns around. Miller also creates another excellent visual symbol with ' all stand transfixed for an instant'. It is almost like time has stopped for a moment and everyone else isn't important for that split second. Miller creates a third fantastic stage picture as when the people appear outside, it's as though Eddie is being watched and that he

won't get away with anything. As Eddie broke the Code, he has to be watched to make sure he doesn't break it again as he has also betrayed the community. Miller also suggests that everyone is against Eddie and that it is like a boxing match, but with only one set of supporters.

When Eddie says 'Eddie Carbone. Eddie Carbone. Eddie Carbone' Miller uses repetition to create this idea that Eddie is taking his name back and that he wants to let Marco know who he is dealing with. It could also be interpreted, as an answer to Marco's summoning and that he is not afraid of Marco's challenge.

The lines Rodolpho (No, Marco, please! Eddie, please, he has children! You will kill a family!) and Beatrice (Go in the house! Eddie, go in the house!) are very significant underlining that the rest of the family don't want there to be any violence. There is a lot of tension and suspense especially when Rodolpho says to Eddie 'You will kill a family'. This phrase can mean that he will rip the family apart as well as the fact of not letting Marco get the money to feed his family. Miller shows that even after all Eddie has done to both Beatrice and Rodolpho, they are still willing to give him another chance.

At the start of Eddie's long speech, he says to the neighbourhood 'Maybe he (Marco) come to apologise to me'. Miller is showing here that Eddie is trying to deceive himself. Miller also creates a lot of tension, as the audience will be worried that the neighbourhood will believe Eddie. As Eddie goes on he seems crazy as 'little bits of laughter escape him ... his eyes are murderous ... he cracks his knuckles ... with a strange sort of relaxation.' As Eddie cracks his knuckles this sound effect foreshadows the fight. He is clearly

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challenging Marco and is also trying to intimidate him as well. During Eddie's little speech, he is trying to make Marco feel guilty by using phrases like 'in the bible' so he will apologise to the neighbourhood.

There is then a powerful stage direction 'he is moving now, carefully, toward Marco'. Miller creates an awful lot of tension here, as it is signalling that the fight is about to start. Miller also uses a clever stage picture by using the word 'carefully'. This suggests that Eddie is worried and knows what Marco could do to him, as he knows how strong Marco is.

Miller also uses an atmospheric sound effect with Beatrice and Catherine 'keening' which creates a horrible, eerie atmosphere. Then Eddie starts talking again which builds the tension up and then there is a key stage direction 'he lunges for Marco as a great hushed shout up from the people. Marco strikes Eddie beside the neck'. Miller creates yet another powerful stage picture as it looks like Eddie's going to land the first blow in the fight but there is a dramatic twist and it is actually Marco. This is a powerful moment in the play as Marco gets the 'first blood' and he has the upper hand. Marco then comes back with the line 'Animal! You go on your knees to me!' Miller is suggesting here that Marco doesn't think of Eddie as human any more and that Eddie has been possessed and has become like an animal.

The next stage direction says 'Eddie goes down with the blow and Marco starts to raise a foot to stomp him when Eddie springs a knife into his hand and Marco steps back'. Miller effectively uses a shocking dramatic twist when Eddie exhibits the knife. Here, Miller is suggesting that Eddie has seen

Marco's strength before so knows he can't beat him with fists so uses a knife. We also know that Eddie has been devious before – in the boxing match with Rodolpho.

The Royal Exchange Theatre Production had Eddie and Marco with a weapon – they both had grappling hooks – which are effective in underlining that they are both macho Dockers, but wrong because Eddie is the one who cheats and again breaks the code, so I think that the grappling hooks are a good idea but only Eddie should have one.

The next part when ' Louis rushes towards Eddie' and Louis says ' Eddie, for Christ's sake!' underlines that Eddie has rejected everyone in the neighbourhood, even his best friend because he also threatens Louis with the knife

When Eddie says ' you lied about me, Marco. Now say it!' Miller suggests that Eddie still believes that he has done nothing wrong and that Marco has lied about him. Marco then cries out and ' Eddie lunges with the knife. Marco grabs his arm, turning the blade inward and pressing it home as the two women, Louis and Mike rush in and separate them, and Eddie, the knife still in his hand, falls to his knees before Marco'. This is THE most tense and powerful point in the whole play, as Miller creates a brilliant stage picture that Eddie has the knife in his hand when he dies, so has in effect destroyed himself. Eddie is the reason for his own demise. When Eddie falls on his knees before Marco, it creates a sense of status, of hierarchy – Marco is now superior to Eddie. Marco also gets his wish; as a little earlier in the scene he said to Eddie ' you go down on your knees before me'.

When the two women - Catherine and Beatrice - support Eddie, Miller creates a lovely image with Catherine on one side of Eddie and Beatrice on the other side which suggests the central love tug of war, but at the end of the play Eddie finally realises who he really loves, just when it's too late. Miller makes Eddie's final words ' My B.!' which shows that even though Eddie has done some terrible things, he knows deep down that he loves Beatrice.

The next stage direction says ' He dies in her arms, and Beatrice covers him with her body'. This is very powerful as Miller creates an image that Beatrice is showing her love to Eddie and trying to protect him from the crowd.

There is then another part of the stage direction which says ' Alfieri, who is in the crowd, turns out to the audience. The lights have gone down, leaving him in a glow, while behind him the dull prayers of the people and the keening of the women continue.' Miller creates a striking image of a black tunnel of mourning with a funeral, eerie atmosphere. It is also very fitting and structurally right, that Alfieri should end the play, as he was the one who started the story and the only one who could see what was going to happen.

In Alfieri's final speech, Miller is trying to make us take a more sympathetic view on Eddie (' for that I will love him more than any other one of my sensible clients'), as he had feelings that he couldn't control and that took him over the edge. Alfieri's character is very interesting as he takes on three roles: He is a character in the play, he's a narrator who tells us what is going on and he is also a chorus figure who comments on the action as it happens.

Although some people wouldn't sympathise, I do feel a little bit sorry for Eddie as he had feelings that he couldn't control but I think he justly got what he deserved. I think Miller chose this ending rather than others he tried out, because it is right that Marco kills Eddie; in addition, the moment when Eddie has the knife in his hands is an accurate portrayal of what happens throughout the play as Eddie is responsible for his own demise. I think the most powerful, dramatic moment is when Eddie has the knife in his hand and Marco twists Eddie's hand back round to kill himself. This is because there is yet another dramatic twist and Eddie rightly gets what he deserved.