

~~twenty-five thousand handsome smackers worth of it, so help me Lord and cross my heart." Fine resolution. After months of sweating yourself dizzy and growing short on provisions and finding nothing, you come down to twenty thousand and then fifteen, until finally you say, "Lord, let me find just five thousand dollars' worth and I'll never ask anything more of you the rest of my life." Here in the Oso Negro it seems like a lot. But I tell you, if you were to make a real find, you couldn't be dragged away. Not even the threat of miserable death would stop you from trying to add ten thousand more. And when you'd reach twenty-five, you'd want to make it fifty, and at fifty, a hundred—and so on. Like at roulette . . . just one more turn . . . always one more. You lose your sense of values and your character changes entirely. Your soul stops being the same as it was before. I've dug in Alaska, and in Canada and Colorado. I was in the crowd in British Honduras where I made my boat fare back home and almost enough over to cure me of a fever I'd caught. I've dug in California and Australia . . . all over this world practically, and I know what gold does to men's souls.~~

Adam's Rib

MGM (Produced by Lawrence Weingarten), 1949

Screenplay by Ruth Gordon and Garson Kanin

Directed by George Cukor

Time: 1949

Place: Manhattan

Adam and Amanda Bonner are happily married. They are both attorneys. He is a prosecutor, and she is a prominent defense lawyer.

← INFO

As courtroom rivals, they revel in matching wits and legal skills. This trial, however, is different. The issues raised, and the legal battle waged, set their relationship—both professional and personal—comically on its ear.

Doris Attinger is on trial for the attempted murder of her husband, Warren. She has shot and wounded him after following him to the apartment of another woman, Beryl Caighn.

Amanda is convinced that there's a double standard—that if Doris were a man, the jury would acquit her, finding her assault justifiable. Society excuses jealous behavior in a man, Amanda stresses, but a woman driven to drastic action is rarely understood and is immediately and unequivocally censured.

Adam prefers to see it as a more cut-and-dried case of premeditated murder.

The following monologues are Adam's and Amanda's summations to the jury. (Note: When Adam refers to the "tenderly trimmed bonnet" worn by the defendant and says he paid for it, it is because he knows Amanda bought the bonnet with money from *their* checking account.)

Monologue One

← START

(The crowded courtroom. Up and down the sides of the room, rows of people standing. The press table is busy. AMANDA, on her feet, has reached the climax of her peroration.)

AMANDA

(to the JURORS)

—and so the question here is equality before the law—regardless of religion, color, wealth—or as in this instance—sex. Excuse me.

(She removes her jacket and takes a sip of

water. Now, in blouse and skirt, she returns to the fray.)

Law, like man, is composed of two parts. Just as a man is body and soul, so is the law letter and spirit. The law says, "Thou shalt not kill!" Yet men *have* killed and proved a reason and been set free. Self-defense—defense of others, of wife or children or home. If a thief breaks into your home and you shoot him, the law will not deal harshly with you. Nor, indeed, should it. Thus, you are asked to judge not whether or not these acts were committed, but to what extent they were justified. Now, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury, I respectfully request that you join me in a revealing experiment. I ask you all to direct your attention to the defendant, Mrs. Attinger. Now, keep looking at her. Keep watching. Listen carefully. Look at her. Look at her hard.

(hypnotically)

Now imagine her a man. Go on now. Use your imagination. Think of her as a man sitting there. Think of her as a man sitting there, accused of a like crime. Think! All right, that's enough. Now, continuing, I ask you to hold that impression. And look at *Mr.* Attinger. And suppose him a woman. Try. Try hard. All right, thank you. And now, Miss Caighn. She's the third party. She's that slick homewrecker. Picture her so. A wolf. You know the type. All right. Now you have it. Judge it so. An unwritten law stands back of a man who fights to defend his home. Apply the same to this maltreated wife and neglected mother. We ask you no more. Equality!

Monologue Two

ADAM

(good and rattled)

The purpose of a summation, as I have said, or rather as I

END

meant to say, is, as I understand it, no more or less than—
in a Court of Law, Court of Law—

(he is hopelessly muddled and bogged down now)

Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen.

(He takes a drink, glares at AMANDA, who smiles back her sweetest smile.)

Let me begin again. As a jury, you are a most fortunate body. Your decision here is simple and clear. You need only decide whether she fired her husband at the pistol at her husband, and at Beryl Caighn. She has told you that she did. What, then, is there left for you to decide? Whether or not she was attempting to kill her husband, Miss Caighn, or both. I smile. I find it difficult to proceed without bursting into laughter at the childish pimslicity of the answer. And at the puny excuse, well after the fact, that—

(his voice drips with sarcasm)

—she only meant to frighten them. Simplicity! This being the case, why not blank cartridges? Why not a cap pistol? Why any pistol at all? Why not simply appearing? That would have been frightening enough. Wouldn't it? As a citizen—a law-abiding citizen—I resent any neighbor who dares to take the law into her own hands—to create an individual interpretation for herself alone. Now as to the character of this Doris Attinger. I'm afraid we know little about it—or about Doris Attinger. We have not seen Doris Attinger here. What we have seen has been a performance complete with costume and makeup. Carefully coached by her artful counsel, she has presented a gentle facade. A sweet face, crowned by a tenderly trimmed little bonnet. I found it difficult to be taken in, ladies and gentlemen, since *I* am the one who paid for the bonnet!

(He draws a slip from his pocket and shows it to the jury.)