

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE  
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## Characters in Michelangelo Antonioni's Films

### **ANNA** (in "the Adventure") Closed

**Character** Anna is more troubled, less sunny version of her friend, Claudia. Whereas Claudia is open and joyful, Anna is closed and morose. Her turmoil over Sandro casts a shadow over her appearances in the first third of the story, before she disappears. She is querulous, short-tempered and rash.

**Distraught** Anna is troubled from the very start, long before she disappears on the cruise. That inner turmoil is evident in her first scene, when she and Claudia drive to Sandro's apartment. As soon as they get out of the car, in the street below, Anna changes her mind and says she's going to a café for a drink. Claudia is astounded. 'But you haven't seen him for a month,' she says. Anna looks at her with a pained expression. 'I don't feel like seeing him today,' she says. When asked why, she tries to explain, 'It's torture being apart, really...It's difficult keeping a relationship going, when one is here and the other is there. But then, it's easy, too. You can just think what you like when you like, do what you like. Whereas, when someone's facing you, that's all you get.' She is pacing around, nervously, attempting to articulate her feelings. She stops, stares at her friend and says, 'Understand?' It is a cry for help.

**Impulsive** Another sign that Anna is disturbed is her impulsive behaviour. She not only changes her mind suddenly but also takes rash decisions. This recklessness is illustrated in a scene on the yacht. Anna is kissing Sandro, who breaks off and suggests that they go for a swim. Someone says it's too dangerous, and the camera shows the jagged rock face of an island. Anna listens to the others chatter away about trivial matters, while Corrado names the various islands one by one. She can take it no longer. Flinging over her coat, she cries, 'How boring! All this fuss over a swim.' She dives into the water and, a moment later, cries 'shark,' prompting Sandro to swim out and rescue her. Later, when she is back onboard and alone with Claudia, she confesses that 'the whole shark thing was a joke.' When Claudia asks why, she says, 'Just because.' Anna acts without thinking and even she can find no answer afterward.

**Distant** Part of Anna's distress is her emotional distance from people, which is illustrated in an early scene. Having expressed her conflicting feelings about meeting Sandro, she makes up her mind. Turning to face Claudia, she says, 'C'mon. Let's go back.' At that moment, Sandro emerges on the balcony above them and shouts that he'll be down in a moment. Now, she rushes up the stairs and begins to undress. 'But your friend is waiting outside,' Sandro says. 'Let her wait,' is Anna's fierce reply, uttered with a wicked smile. She lies on the bed, and Sandro makes love to her. The camera focuses on her face, which registers about as much pleasure as if she were having her hair done. Anna is emotionally, even sexually, distant, long before she actually disappears.