

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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Torn Curtain (1966)

Alfred Hitchcock

OVERVIEW

Director Sir Alfred Hitchcock (1899-1980) is a household name and perhaps the best-known British filmmaker. With over 50 films to his credit, Hitchcock helped to shape the modern understanding of the thriller genre. His best-known films include *The Birds*, *Vertigo*, and *Psycho*, all of which have earned accolades, including preservation by the US Film Registry. In 1960, Hitchcock was inducted into the Hollywood Walk of Fame with two stars for his work in both film and television. He was also the first recipient of the BAFTA Academy Fellowship Award.

Film While today *Torn Curtain* enjoys some nostalgic appeal as a classic cold war spy thriller, it was heavily criticized by reviewers upon release in 1966. Despite the very loud criticism of the academy and others, the film was a minor hit, mostly riding off the laurels of Hitchcock's *Psycho*. It earned \$7 million at US box offices and a further \$6 million abroad, earning a small yet tidy profit on Universal's \$3 million budget. One of *Torn Curtain's* biggest failings was the lack of chemistry between Newman and Andrews. This aspect still comes up in today's internet reviews. Newman and Hitchcock often butted heads as well: Younger actors such as Newman were focused on method acting, and Hitchcock simply wanted the actor to follow his instructions. Julie Andrews was at the height of her fame, having released such beloved films as *Mary Poppins* and *The Sound of Music* in 1962 and 1965 respectively. Because of this, she was in high demand and shooting had to work around her schedule, leading the entire production to be rushed.

Background Hitchcock's fiftieth film was highly anticipated by moviegoers across the English-speaking world. At the time, however, *Torn Curtain* failed to deliver. Many notable critics skewered the director, saying he had "no concept of character" and the film contained "a profound ignorance of human motivation." Those involved in the film's production were disappointed that Hitchcock gave up attempting to film on or near location after his initial petition to the East German government was denied, saying that many locations in the Eastern Bloc such as Poland and Czechoslovakia would have happily provided permits if only they had been asked. Perhaps the most interesting bit of trivia to come out of the production of *Torn Curtain* was the defection of Wolfgang Kieling (who played Gromek) from West to East Germany in 1968. Because of the Universal soundstage production of *Torn Curtain*, Kieling was one of many in the film industry to witness the Watts race riots in Los Angeles at that time. The police brutality against African Americans and the immorality of the war in Vietnam led him to believe that the United States was "the most dangerous enemy of humanity in the world today," prompting his defection.

CINEMATIC NARRATION

Torn Curtain is a true mixed bag. It lacks the polish and intent of many other Hitchcock thrillers, leaning heavily on tropes and leaving holes in the plot. The motivation of many characters is unclear or paradoxical at times, leading to some confusing or dissatisfying moments. Most of these flawed moments lack the screen time to be properly explored, reducing them to two-dimensional plot devices. The on-screen violence, too, often seems out of place or escalates far too quickly. Where there are many issues in the writing and characterization, there are few in the actual cinematography. The air of suspense is impossible to ignore in *Torn Curtain*. The use of stationary cameras for some of the chase scenes and tight shots to bring the viewer into clandestine meetings is heavily influenced by film noir and helps the viewer to feel he or she is a part of the action.

SYNOPSIS

In 1965, US physicist and rocket scientist Michael Armstrong travels to a conference in Copenhagen with his assistant and fiancée, Sarah Sherman. Armstrong receives a message to contact π in case of emergency. He tells Sherman he's heading to Stockholm, but she discovers he's actually flying to East Berlin and follows him, believing he's defected.

In East Berlin, Armstrong meets a contact, a farmer, revealing his defection is a ruse to infiltrate the East German scientific community and learn about their anti-missile systems. Armstrong plans to escape back to the West through an underground network known as π . However, East German officer Hermann Gromek follows him to the farm. Realizing Armstrong is a double agent, Gromek tries to alert the authorities but is killed by Armstrong and the farmer's wife.

The next day, at Karl Marx University in Leipzig, Armstrong's interview is interrupted by security officials investigating Gromek's disappearance. Sherman, having accompanied Armstrong, is questioned about the US anti-missile program, but escapes when Armstrong secretly reveals his true mission. He goads East German scientist Gustav Lindt into divulging his anti-missile knowledge before the university alerts the police about Armstrong and Sherman. With the help of Dr. Koska, they flee to East Berlin.

Pursued by the Stasi, they join a decoy bus run by the π network. After various obstacles, including an encounter with exiled Polish countess Kuczynska, they head to a post office. The Americans are recognized at the post office, but the countess' intervention allows them to escape and seek out their next contact. They receive tickets to the ballet, which will provide cover for their escape to Sweden by hiding in the ballet costume baskets during the intermission. Spotted at the ballet, they create a distraction and are hidden in costume hampers on a freighter. After making the trip across the North Sea, a ballerina's betrayal leads the East German guards to shoot the wrong hampers, while Armstrong and Sherman jump overboard and swim to Sweden, successfully evading capture.

CHARACTERS

Professor Michael Armstrong – A nuclear physicist

Dr. Sarah Sherman – Professor Armstrong's assistant and fiancée

Professor Karl Manfred – Michael's contact with the East German government

Countess Kuczynska – A Polish noblewoman desperate to get to America

Heinrich Gerhard – The head of East German security

Hermann Gromek – A high-ranking member of the East German security forces

Professor Gustav Lindt – The brightest mind in nuclear weaponry behind the Iron Curtain

Mr. Jacobi – A major operator in the underground resistance network, π

Dr. Koska – A key contact with the underground resistance network, π

"Farmer" - An unnamed American working with π

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Michael Armstrong

Professor Armstrong is an American physicist working on anti-nuclear defenses. When his project, Gamma Five, is suspended because of a lack of funding, he takes matters into his own hands, pretending to defect to Germany. This is a ruse to put him in contact with the Soviet's leading nuclear physicist, Professor Lindt.

Risk-taker- Michael proves himself to be quite the risky operative. He has no formal training, no assistance from his government, and no proper contacts, yet he braves the Iron Curtain in search of answers to the nuclear questions he cannot solve. This behavior comes up early on in his unwillingness to speak with Sarah about his plans, causing her to investigate him and follow him to East Berlin. His risky behavior almost blows up in his face when he meets with his π contact at the farmhouse but fails to cover his tracks or make an excuse for his presence there, causing Gromek to jump to the correct

conclusion that Michael is a spy. Most of Michael's plan is a gamble rather than a strategy: He simply hopes that he can trick Lindt into giving him the formula and escape unharmed afterward. The only thing he doesn't leave to chance is the formula. To make sure he remembers it, he takes another risk, remaining in Koska's office long enough to write it down even though every person in the Karl Marx University physics department is looking for him.

Intelligent- Michael is an intelligent man. He has moved up the ranks of America's nuclear physicists quickly despite having the wrong credentials and his relatively young age. His intelligence allows him to think on his feet, often saving him from the worst situations. Despite his intelligence, he often underthinks his plans, creating many tense moments throughout the film when things don't go according to plan, such as when Sarah follows him to East Berlin. It is due to his smarts that he's able to lure Lindt into solving the equation that has eluded him for so long, and the way Lindt solves it answers even more questions. Despite his amateurish qualities, Michael is smart enough to get the information he needs and escape.

Adventurous- Michael is quite adventurous. Despite not being a trained spy or supported by his government, he throws himself headlong into espionage to save his Gamma Five project from the scrap heap. Without experience, he puts himself in situations many would panic in, and he excels under the pressure. Never once does his calm facade break in front of the East German authorities. Never once does his panic overcome him in stressful situations, such as on the bus to Berlin or at the ballet. The only time we see him falter is after he kills Gromek: having to take a life for the first time is a well-documented shock. In spite of the shock, he's able to put himself together and get back to Berlin without arousing suspicion from state security. Michael's adventurous nature continues until the end of the film as he and Sarah do everything in their power to escape from East Germany.

Dr. Sarah Sherman

Dr. Sherman is Michael's loyal assistant and fiancée. She becomes worried when his strange behavior leads her to sneak onto a plane bound for East Germany. Her crisis of faith provides the main drama of the film, as she doubts Michael's loyalty and patriotism when he defects.

Tolerant- Sarah is incredibly tolerant. In many senses, this is positive, but from a characterization standpoint, it makes her incredibly flat compared to Hitchcock's other notable leading ladies. She simply rolls over when Michael acts suspicious, going so far as to defect with him. It's only when *she* is asked to talk to East German scientists and reveal scientific secrets that she stands up for herself and her beliefs. While in other characters this trait would be of moral significance, it only seems to stifle Sarah's development as *Torn Curtain* continues, making her simply a silent onlooker when other female protagonists in Hitchcock's films would have taken the reins and moved the plot.

Observant- Sarah's observant qualities are very clear at the beginning of the film, but they seem to fade as the film moves on. Already suspicious by his initial request that she not come on the trip at all, she is quick to notice Michael's strange behavior. The way he acts about his radiogram and the book only cause her further worry. She is driven to ask about Michael's flight, learning that he is headed behind the Iron Curtain. At this point, the plot seems to drop Sarah for a moment, as Michael takes center screen. We do see this trait come up again toward the film's end, when she is the first one to notice Gerhard's appearance at the Ballet performance. When she alerts Michael, he's able to cause a panic by shouting "fire!"

Follower- Much like her tolerance, Sarah's frequent lack of initiative lessens her character development. She simply does what others tell her to do through much of the film, be it Michael, the German Authorities, or π operatives. The one time she doesn't really follow is when, ironically, she literally follows Michael to East Germany despite his not wanting her in the way of his espionage scheme. Because she doesn't take many actions on her own initiative, she seems placid and two-dimensional compared to many other female characters in Hitchcock's films.

THEMES

Deception - As a spy thriller, Deception plays a major role in *Torn Curtain*. We see this play out mostly in Michael's actions throughout the film. First, he tricks the East German government into thinking he wants to defect, setting up clandestine meetings that even his fiancée and assistant Sarah is completely unaware of. When she decides to follow him to East Germany, Michael shifts gears a bit, trying to convince her that he is defecting. We soon learn the truth, however, that Michael is playing a double agent. He hopes to find the leading nuclear scientist behind the Iron Curtain, Gustav Lindt, and trick him into giving him the mathematical information that will make the American anti-missile defense system work. When Sarah becomes uncooperative, Michael reveals this to her, maintaining his defection cover just long enough to get into a room with Lindt where he practices a unique form of mathematical deception, tricking Lindt into solving an equation that has been evading the Americans. This theme continues as Michael and Sarah attempt to escape from East Germany, dressing like German citizens and acquiring false papers from π . Despite being recognized multiple times, they manage to meet their contact and later deceive the East Germans when they stow away in the baskets of ballet costumes. In a final act of deception, their contact pretends to talk to someone inside a basket of costumes, alerting the guards and distracting them while Lindt, Michael, and Sarah jump overboard and swim to safe harbor in Sweden.

Appearance - This theme plays out alongside deception. We see it most clearly toward the end of the film when Michael and Sarah begin their escape from East Germany. They manage to slip out of sight with the aid of Dr. Koska, who leads them on a leisurely bike tour of Leipzig in order not to attract attention from the Stasi. They are then loaded onto a bus posing as the normal Leipzig to Berlin bus. Despite appearances, this bus is a key part of the underground resistance group π 's people smuggling network. It appears so normal to the authorities and soldiers they encounter along the way, that it isn't until they are in Berlin that any of the authorities notice that there are two identical buses. Because of a swift change of outerwear on the bus, Michael and Sarah blend in well with the average Berliners, allowing them to meet their contacts without too much trouble despite Michael's face being in every newspaper and on every television screen. Because they've done nothing to change his physical appearance, Michael is recognized by the ballerina. She informs her stage manager, who calls the state police, but Michael's quick thinking allows the opportunity for escape, shouting, "Fire!" and starting a panic. Their contact helps them hide in the bushels of ballet costumes for their journey across the sea, and on the other side, he makes it appear as though he is helping someone escape via the crane. This final appearance of this theme allows both Americans and their contact to swim for safety and freedom without attracting any attention from the East German security men aboard ship.

Luck - Luck comes into play time and time again in *Torn Curtain*. It's sheer luck that many events take place or that Michael goes undetected. This first occurs when Michael loses Gromek at the museum. He is able to meet with his contact, the farmer, without being seen or overheard, but Gromek eventually catches up to him somehow. While this seems like bad luck, Michael and the woman living at the farm are able to overpower and kill Gromek without detection, allowing Michael more time to reach Professor Lindt undetected. When Gromek is declared missing, Michael is initially lucky to avoid suspicion, but when there is no trace of the security man, his luck begins running out. Likewise, Michael is lucky enough to convince Manfred to allow him to speak with Sarah in private when she refuses to cooperate with the East German scientists. Luck comes into play at many points during Michael and Sarah's escape, although sometimes their luck is manufactured, as when Mr. Jacobi leans forward to offer another man a cigarette and obscures their faces from view or when the red-haired man tricks the ballerina into alerting the security forces to shoot the empty baskets in Sweden.

Love - Love is a surprisingly minor theme for what is often billed as a romantic thriller. As stated above, Michael and Sarah's on-screen chemistry is lacking, partly because of rushed production, but also because there seems to be a lack of focus on the couple's relationship after the beginning of the film. There, we see a couple in the throes of romance, giving themselves an early honeymoon before their marriage later that year. Their love is playful and even disruptive to their day-to-day lives, mirroring

romances shown to us in Hitchcock's other films, such as *Psycho* and *Stage Fright*. Trouble in paradise comes quickly, however, when Sarah begins suspecting Michael of something when he lies about the book and learns that his mysterious plane ticket is for East Berlin. This suspicion causes romantic trouble for the couple until Michael has a chance to explain himself to Sarah in private. He hadn't planned on telling her at all until after he had completed his mission to keep things simple. From there on, love and romance take a backseat to suspense as the Americans try to evade the Stasi and escape from behind the Iron Curtain.

Loyalty/Patriotism - This theme is two ideals compressed into one, as the action takes place during the height of the Cold War, when loyalty to one's country and economic ideals were paramount. Loyalty is often discussed in terms of patriotism, even the personal loyalty between Sarah and Michael. Michael puts on a convincing enough display, lulling the East Germans into a false sense of security. They believe they have just gained a new ally in the fight for global socialism. We see the loyalty of most of the East Germans to their country, although we are also introduced to a number of others who are not. Mr. Jacobi and his π operatives seem loyal only to their organization, almost consumed with their quest to help people escape from East Germany. Likewise, Countess Kuczynska is desperate to get to America, likely unhappy with how former gentry like herself are treated in the Eastern Bloc. She is almost comically patriotic about America. Similarly, the red-haired man wishes to escape East Germany, too, fleeing with Michael and Sarah to Sweden. Because of the nature of Cold War spy films, these ideals aren't explored in depth, acting more as set elements rather than moral or philosophical questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

In what ways is *Torn Curtain* like Hitchcock's other spy titles? In what ways is it different?

How does the lack of on-location filming affect *Torn Curtain*'s believability?

Did you find the romance between Sarah and Michael convincing? Why or why not?

Were there any plot holes that stuck out to you? Name at least one and explain.

PLOT

Osterfjord, Norway- A cruise liner chugs steadily through the calm seas between fjords. The wind blows loudly over its empty decks. The camera finds a lone man walking into the ship's interior. The wind tugs at his coat collar as he pulls it closer to his body, trying to keep himself warm. Inside, two ship officers speak in rapid Norwegian as the man walks toward a thermometer. It reads 0 degrees Celsius. "Are they ever going to get the heating fixed?" the man asks the officers in a German accent. "They are working at it, Professor," one of the sailors replies. "Perhaps some of you scientists would like to give us a helping hand."



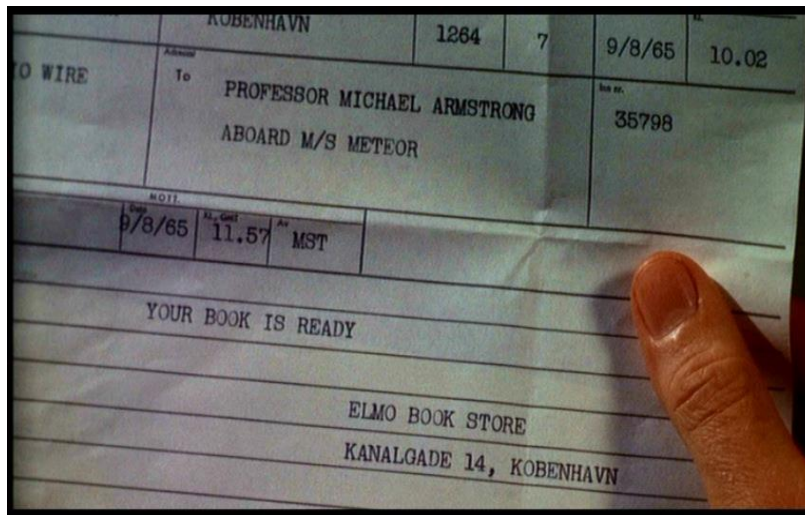
Frozen Lunch- The camera jumps to the dining room, where dozens of people sit and eat in full winter clothing. One man uses his fork to shatter the ice forming in his glass of water so he may take a drink. Each person there wears a name tag with the big letters 'ICOP' over their name and institution. A bulletin board nearby tells us the International Congress of Physicists will be meeting in Copenhagen, and this cruise serves to ferry the participants there. The man from before enters the dining room and shoots a disappointed look toward an empty table.



“Against all the evidence”- In a stateroom somewhere, a man and woman lie motionless beneath a great heap of blankets. Atop the heap are their coats. The camera zooms in to show us their name tags: Dr. Sarah Sherman and Professor Michael Armstrong of the U.S. Interspace Committee. Jaunty music plays while they begin to stir beneath the blankets. Michael begins kissing Sarah, who moans groggily before giggling playfully and returning his kisses. “What are we going to do about lunch?” asks Michael. “Haven’t had breakfast yet,” Sarah replies with a chuckle. “Why don’t we call this lunch,” Michael says, “and go upstairs for breakfast?” Sarah jokes back that he has “a very unscientific mind” because of his lack of respect for the natural order: “Breakfast comes before lunch... And marriage should come before a honeymoon cruise.” After a bit more playful teasing and goosing, Sarah mentions that Michael didn’t want her to come on this trip, and they kiss passionately as romantic music plays.



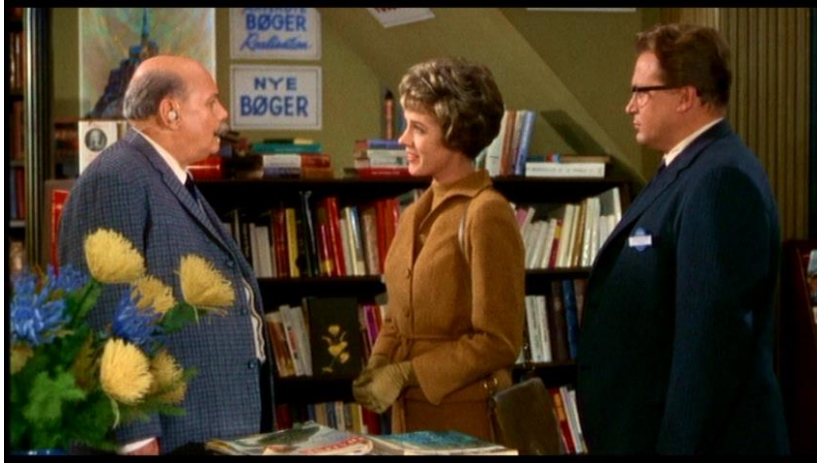
Radiogram- A knock comes on the door, and Michael quickly throws on some clothes to answer. It's an attendant with a radiogram. The document simply says "Your book is ready," listing the address of a bookstore in Copenhagen. "I'm sorry," Michael says, passing the radiogram back, "this isn't for me." The attendant tries to argue, but Michael simply tips him and sends him on his way. Sometime later, Michael descends the stairs near the radio room and is greeted by another American, who says he's glad the heat is back on. "I'll say," Michael replies before asking to see the radiogram once again at the radio desk. The German man from before approaches Michael and says he was disappointed that Dr. Sherman had missed their lunch date. Michael lies, saying Sarah had a cold. When the German man walks away, Michael reads the radiogram once more and writes out a response to be wired to the sender. "Message received," he writes before leaving a forwarding address at the Hotel D'Angleterre.



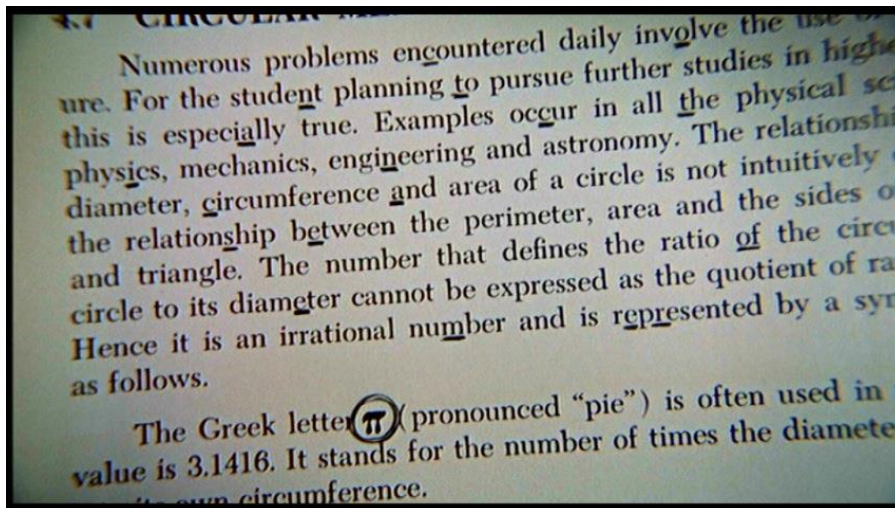
Telephone Call- Joyful music plays as we see an exterior shot of the hotel. Inside, staff and guests mill about in the typical day-to-day activity as Michael and Sarah enter. Somewhere further inside, a door opens, and Sarah enters a hotel room declaring, "Darling! We've got connecting rooms." "That's Scandinavian efficiency for you," Michael says from the shower. Sarah sits on his bed to wait for him to finish his shower when the phone rings. Sarah answers and slips right into her role as assistant, taking a message. "It's some bookshop for you," she shouts to him after covering the receiver. "Tell them I'll be there in a minute," Michael says with a bit of hesitancy in his voice. When Sarah goes to tell the caller Michael's message, the line is dead. "So much for your Scandinavian efficiency," she shouts back to Michael. "You've been cut off." She begins asking about their plans for the day, but Michael seems unwilling to talk about that, asking her to take a stroll while he finishes his shower and shaves. The phone rings again, and the bookshop owner apologizes for getting cut off before Sarah asks for the address. She then informs Michael that she's going to pick up his book for him, leaving the room just before he can shout, "No, wait!" He emerges dripping wet from the bathroom, hastily drying himself.



Bookshop- Downstairs in the hotel, Sarah runs into the German man from the ship, who asks about her health before proposing a lunch date. "Well, we have a date with Professor Hengstrom," Sarah replies. "I'm awfully sorry... Look, at dinner tonight, why don't you sit at our table." The man accepts the invitation before she turns to go outside, where a bit of comedy ensues when she tries to get a non-English-speaking waiter to give her directions, and he reads the hotel's letterhead on her note before pointing her back inside. The German professor suddenly takes the address from Sarah, saying he'll take her there. The music becomes stressful as the two walk down the canal, the German professor unable to hide his discomfort with Sarah's presence, which she takes as disappointment that she's engaged to Michael. Inside the shop, the proprietor asks why Michael didn't come himself before leading Sarah to the office of the store, where he retrieves a book wrapped in brown paper. He catches the German professor staring from the front of the store and cautions Sarah: "Take good care of it, dear heart. It's a first edition."



π- Back in the hotel, Sarah hands the book to Michael, who is standing with Professor Hengstrom. "Professor Manfred," he says to the German man with Sarah, "you know Professor Hengstrom, don't you?" Manfred says they've met before departing to allow the trio to have their luncheon. A man at a travel desk calls for Michael, and he steps away to talk to him, leaving Hengstrom and Sarah alone to chat. While she makes polite responses to Hengstrom's conversation about the hotel, she watches Michael closely, a worried expression on her face. Michael says he's going to leave the book with the concierge, but Sarah watches him walk into the bathrooms instead. Inside, Michael steps into a stall, then unwraps and opens the book. Following its written instructions, he finds the message inside: the Greek letter π circled in pencil. He jots down the letter as the name of his contact.



Lunch- The camera finds Michael and Sarah seated on the patio of the hotel. "Will you tell me before we eat or after?" Sarah asks Michael. "What are you so upset about? And what were those tickets you picked up?" After a moment's hesitation, Michael responds, "Well... I have to go to Stockholm... And I have to go this afternoon." He then tells her that he spoke with Hengstrom on the boat and that his government seemed willing to back his Gamma Five project. Sarah seems to sense his fibs, saying, "Darling, you must've known about this for a long time. Is that why you didn't want me to come on this trip?" Michael responds that he's going to work with the Swedish government on their anti-missile program, which results in an argument. But they both quickly calm down, Michael asking Sarah to take notes for him at the conference. "I'll be back in time for the wedding," he says, sipping his martini. "In two months?" Sarah asks. "Or three?" "Yeah," Michael replies softly. "You certainly know how to make a girl feel wanted," Sarah says dejectedly. She begins pitching ideas that could allow them to live and work together in Sweden, but Michael stands firm, "No. It just wouldn't work." Sarah excuses herself, walking away quickly. Michael looks at his menu with a sad face: something is going on he can't tell her about, and it weighs on him.



Next flight for New York- Sarah walks quickly through the hotel lobby, wiping away a tear as she approaches the travel desk. A man argues with the clerk about his golf clubs being checked luggage while she tries to get a flight to New York as soon as possible. The man and the clerk continue bickering about the golf clubs when Sarah interrupts them to ask about Michael's flight, and the clerk turns to pick up his log book, telling her, "It's not for Stockholm, miss. It's a 16:30 flight, Romanian Airlines, East Berlin." Sarah is shocked: "But that's behind the Iron Curtain." The scene ends with Sarah looking toward the patio with a confused look on her face.



Plane to East Germany- The camera finds Michael seated on the Romanian Airlines flight. He looks to be in deep thought. The camera dollies back, finding Sarah seated in the rear of the same flight. "Young lady," Michael says, trying to get a stewardess' attention, when he turns to see Sarah staring right at him. Slowly, he gets up and walks over to her. "What in hell's name are you doing here?" he asks Sarah, anger in his eyes. "Now you listen to me," he says. "You stay away from me. Don't talk to me. When this plane lands, you take the next one out... Anywhere! Go home! Do you understand?" With that, he returns to his seat. The scene fades out as if shot through the tears welling in Sarah's eyes. The plane soon lands, and the door slides open to reveal a crowd of journalists and photographers gathering around a makeshift stage. In the cabin, Sarah watches as a man with a thick German accent approaches Michael and tells him to wait until the rest of the passengers disembark.



Media Circus- Sarah is surprised to see Professor Manfred stand from a nearby seat, locking eyes with him. Manfred walks to Michael and says, "I thought she didn't know?" "She doesn't know," Michael says. "She can't know. She just followed me." The man who stopped Michael tells him that they're ready for him to disembark. On the steps outside the plane, an opulently dressed woman smiles for the camera, but she's waved away by the reporters. The security man explains to her that the journalists are there for the American, and she leaves with a sour look on her face because she's a world-class ballerina and thought the newspapermen were there for her. Holding back tears, Sarah watches while the press take photos and Michael is introduced to East German officials. After someone gives a speech in German and someone translates, saying loudly, "The vice minister wishes to welcome to the German Democratic Republic a distinguished American nuclear scientist, Professor Michael Armstrong. Professor Armstrong has decided to live and work for peace in the Peoples' Democracies." After the speech, Professor Manfred moves back to Sarah and explains some of the situation to her, saying she must obtain a visa or leave.



State Security- After being led to a nearby office, Michael is introduced to East Germany's security minister, Heinrich Gerhard. Gerhard then introduces Gromek, Michael's 'personal guide' and security observer. Gromek shares a couple of stories about living in the United States before Gerhard asks about Michael's "excess baggage," namely Sarah. "Isn't it a little strange?" the security minister asks. "During all your conversations with our agents in the United States, you never mentioned that you were bringing an assistant." "I didn't know she was coming," Michael responds. "I gave her that cover story about Stockholm, but I guess I must've botched it." They discuss the complexity of Michael's love life in the present situation before asking to see Sarah. "Well, Miss Sherman," Gerhard says after making the proper introductions, "what are we going to do with you?" After a bit of conversation, the men agree that "it would be nice for you both if she stayed." Unable to reach a decision quickly, Gerhard assures her that she can quickly be in a car to West Germany if she decides not to defect, asking her to "sleep on it."



Speech- Outside the office, Michael explains his reasons for defecting to a crowd of reporters. "Today, in my country, the United States, there are people in high places who do not want to see atomic war abolished. Now, because of that, a project that I was working on for six years was canceled by my government. That project is more important than the considerations of loyalty to any one country. As a result of that, I... I am offering my services to your University of Leipzig, hopefully to work with Professor Gustav Lindt, a leading authority in my field. Together with Professor Lindt, we will produce a defensive weapon that will make all offensive nuclear weapons obsolete, and thereby abolish the terror of nuclear warfare." Michael and Sarah are quickly led away from the crowding reporters and placed in a car.



“Big deal”- “How come all the English and American correspondents?” Michael asks from the rear of the car. “When we have big news, we invite all correspondents over from West Berlin,” Gromek replies before reintroducing himself when Michael asks his name. “Quite a reception, huh?” Professor Manfred says. No one responds. “Big deal,” Gromek says to himself. “You still have that expression, ‘Big deal’?” Michael says that they do. Gromek then begins musing about his time in New York City. “Some city,” he says after lighting a cigarette. “Hot dog. You still say that? Hot dog?” A trio of cars winds through the city before pulling to a halt outside the Hotel Berlin. A mass of photographers swarm the car as Michael and the others exit.



Hotel Berlin- Inside the hotel, Michael exits a room and cautiously enters another, speaking Sarah's name. Sarah stands by the window, sadly looking out over the city. Soft romantic music plays before Michael speaks again. “Well, now you know,” he says. “Sarah, you've got to get on a plane tomorrow. Just tell them you thought it over and you want to go home.” “My God, you're a cool customer,” Sarah replies. “You must've been planning this for months, Michael. How could you do it? How could you tell those lies?” “I thought it would be better if you didn't know about this,” Michael replies. Sarah says she can barely believe it's even happening before talking about her state of mind that morning: “I just knew I had to follow you. By instinct, or to protect you or something. Then, when I got on the plane, I couldn't see you at first, and I thought, ‘Thank God he hasn't come.’ And when you turned around, you looked as though you hated me.” Michael then reveals that his reasons for defecting are “deeper than patriotism,” and Sarah begs him to go home with her. “I can't,” Michael says sadly. “I can't, Sarah.” Manfred enters and announces dinner, but Sarah says she isn't hungry, staying in her room as the men leave.



Wake-up call- The next morning, there's a soft knock on Sarah's door. "It's open, Michael," she says from the bed. "It's Karl," says Professor Manfred. Sarah quickly throws on a robe and answers the door. As Manfred enters, he stoops to pick up a note from Michael. "A love letter," he says, holding it out to Sarah, "I have no doubt." Manfred presses about breakfast, but Sarah turns him down while reading the note: "Gone for a walk," it says. "GO HOME!!" "Then perhaps I might call for you in one half an hour?" Manfred asks. "There is something I would like to talk to you about."



Museen Zu Berlin- We see Michael standing in an elevator as the door slides open in the hotel lobby. The camera finds Gromek seated in a chair nearby reading a magazine. With a soft sigh, he puts down the magazine and stands, following Michael. Outside the hotel, Michael quickly jogs across the street and boards a bus. Gromek follows quickly, hopping on a nearby motorcycle. In a tourist guide, Michael turns to the page about the Berlin Museum, and the camera zooms in on its Romanesque facade. After a hard cut, we see Michael enter the same museum. Gromek pulls up and hops off his motorcycle, quickly walking after Michael. A series of similar shots show Michael walking through the museum, his footsteps echoing. We don't see Gromek, but we hear his persistent footsteps just out of sight. Michael eventually speeds up, finding a back door and hopping into a nearby taxi after showing the driver an address.



Farmhouse- The taxi pulls to a stop outside an antiquated farmhouse somewhere outside the city. Michael tells the driver to wait for him for a few minutes and walks over to the house, knocking on the door. A woman answers, and Michael covertly draws a π symbol in the dirt with his foot. The woman steps out of the house and points toward a tractor slowly chugging through a field. "Got it," says Michael as he turns and walks to the tractor. The farmer gets off his tractor and walks to meet Michael. "Well, Professor Armstrong," he says in clear American English, "how does it feel to play the part of a dirty defector?" They jump on the tractor so they can have a conversation in private. "What possessed you to bring your girl?" the farmer asks. "I didn't," Michael replies. "She followed me... There are two of us involved in the escape now. I can't get her to go home." "Does she know what you're really up to?" Michael says he doesn't before revealing that he's actually here to steal anti-nuclear defense secrets from Dr. Lindt, who has solved an equation that eludes him. Before returning to the farmhouse, the farmer gives Michael the name of his contact in Leipzig: Koska.



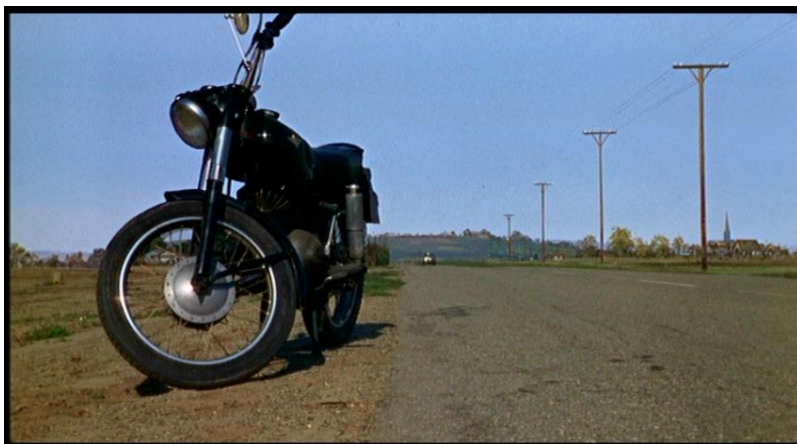
"What kind of sign?"- Michael barely holds back his panic when he sees Gromek standing next to the taxi he rode to the farmhouse in, and quickly heads inside. He then makes his way to the back door when Gromek enters, saying, "I'm gonna report you to the Minister of Culture." The woman and Michael look back, stunned. Michael tries to introduce the woman as a distant relative, but Gromek has already seen through the ruse. "Come here, Professor," he says eventually, motioning out the door. In the dirt in front of the house is the π symbol in the dirt. "Looks like a sign," Gromek says. "What kind of sign?" "I don't know," Michael replies, a poor lie for a mathematician. Gromek calls him out on this, defining π very clearly. "You're a very educated man, Mr. Gromek," Michael says calmly. "I went to night school, Professor. Special night school. And they taught us all about π : A dirty little two-bit organization for spying and escaping! Can't you do better than them, Mr. American Agent?"



Kitchen- Gromek begins dialing on the phone, planning to turn Michael and the woman in, but the woman throws a pot of food at his head, just missing. Michael jumps forward and puts the security agent in a headlock. Gromek's gun goes flying across the room. "Cut it out. Don't be stupid," Gromek says, straining. "I was trained by experts. I can take you... How do you say... One arm tied behind my back." In a painfully drawn-out process, Michael and the woman subdue and kill Gromek. First, the woman stabs Gromek, snapping off the blade of the cheap kitchen knife in his chest. Struggling harder because of his injury, Gromek slips out of Michael's grip and turns to face him, grappling for his life. Then, the woman picks up a shovel and bangs it against Gromek's legs repeatedly as he groans, eventually falling. Still, the agent manages to rise, trying to fling the window open. As Michael moves to shut the window, Gromek clamps his hands around his throat. The woman turns on her gas stove and, little by little, she and Michael move Gromek so that his head is inside the stove, holding him there until he finally suffocates and lets go of Michael's throat.



Cleanup- The woman rises and turns off the stove. Michael remains slumped against it, frozen in a bizarre mixture of shock, fear, and relief. They both catch their breath and Michael stands, revealing his jacket to be covered in Gromek's blood. The woman removes it from him, throwing it into the fireplace before instructing him to wash up, but his shock is too strong. He just stands there. She has to lead him to the sink and wash his hands for him before he finally snaps out of it. With sudden clarity, he points out Gromek's motorcycle, and the woman says she'll take care of it in German before making a digging motion with the shovel. After the hasty cleanup, Michael and the woman exit the home as the impatient taxi driver approaches. As Michael and the taxi driver return to the car, the woman hastily kicks the π symbol until it is unrecognizable. Michael looks back at her as the taxi pulls out of the farm's yard. The woman wanders into the field to find the farmer. The taxi fades into the distance while the camera sits just in front of Gromek's abandoned motorcycle by the roadside.



New life- Michael walks down the street toward the hotel when a man in a gray suit approaches him, asking, "Excuse me. Are you Professor Armstrong?" When he says he is, the man leads him to a car, telling him Gerhard wants to talk to him. Minutes later, Michael enters Gerhard's office to find Manfred and Sarah already there. "We have had quite an interesting talk with Miss Sherman," Gerhard says while walking to his desk, "and she has decided to come over to our side. Your fiancé would like to work as your assistant in Leipzig." Michael is surprised, making sure Sarah isn't being forced. "I want to be with you," she says before Gerhard begins passing out glasses of cognac in celebration. "To your new life and new country," he says, lifting his glass in a toast. Gerhard then tells the Americans that they are to head to Leipzig immediately when a security officer enters the room, speaking with Gerhard rapidly in German. "Professor," Gerhard says to Michael with some concern, "we seem to have lost Gromek."



Karl Marx University- Manfred leads Sarah and Michael past a wall-mounted bust of Karl Marx and into the university that bears his name. A handful of professors exit a room and speak in German with Manfred, who shakes their hands warmly before introducing Michael and Sarah. Another man approaches after the exchange of pleasantries, saying that he is Michael's new security guide. "Where's Gromek?" Manfred asks, unable to hide his concern. "He has disappeared," the new security man says. "Herr Gerhard is most concerned." The physics professors of Karl Marx U lead Michael and Sarah around, showing them the modern accouterments of the new physics building. A woman's leg suddenly swings out from a nearby doorway and catches Michael on the shin, sending him tumbling down the last flight of stairs. The others rush to his aid.



Dr. Koska- “Still can’t understand how I fell down those stairs,” Michael says while someone shines a light into his eyes. “I tripped you,” the doctor says. “I may have overdone it.” She then introduces herself as Dr. Koska, Michael’s contact. “I thought Koska was a man,” Michael says. “That was my husband,” Dr. Koska replies, explaining further as she continues his examination. “He was a professor of mathematics here. That is why he used the sign π for our organization. We are not a political group. We only help people take a long vacation from this lovely place.” A knock comes on the door, and Koska moves to answer it. It’s Koska’s daughter, whom she introduces to Michael before instructing her to head down to the car and wait.



Escape plans- “I had to reach you urgently,” Koska says after shutting the door. “You must move very quickly. They are bound to investigate the disappearance of Gromek... It will complicate things.” Michael is confident that his tracks have been covered well enough, but Koska insists on getting photographs of him and Sarah for false identity papers. “Well, that is going to be awkward,” Michael says, speaking of Sarah. “She still thinks I’m a defector. Why, she doesn’t even know anything about the whole idiotic mess.” He tells Koska he’s only in East Germany to talk to Dr. Lindt. Koska says he’ll have to hurry, as the renowned professor of atomic physics is bound for Leningrad that evening before instructing him on how to please the professors, who will no doubt interrogate him before letting him work with Lindt. “I don’t want to see you again until you are ready to leave,” Koska says in parting. “Sorry I had to put you through all this, but in our organization, we have to resort to many bizarre means of communication.”



Taxi driver- Somewhere in East Berlin, the taxi driver that took Michael to the farmhouse leans on the hood of his cab, reading a newspaper. A large picture of Gromek catches his attention, and he quickly connects the dots in his head, jumping into his cab and driving away. Soon, he is in Gerhard's office, reporting something in nearly frantic German. The scene fades half out, superimposing the taxi driver over the events he saw at the farmhouse the day before. Suspenseful music plays. Gerhard picks up the phone and speaks to someone while the taxi driver continues prattling out his report.



Some questions- Somewhere in the depths of Karl Marx University, Manfred leads Michael into a lecture hall. A handful of professors sit in the rows of chairs as Michael is seated at the table at the head of the class. Manfred introduces Michael, listing his qualifications, until one of the impatient professors interrupts him: "Ja. We are all very familiar with Professor Armstrong's qualifications." Manfred sits beside Michael and begins, "Professor Armstrong. I have been asked by the committee of the faculty to put to you some questions." Michael says he'll happily provide whatever information he can. Manfred asks him about the missile known as Gamma Five. Michael pulls a piece of paper from his breast pocket and begins speaking, trying to ignore the security men who interrupt the proceedings, but it becomes impossible when the professors ask Michael to answer the security man's questions before they continue. "Did you visit a farm before you left Berlin?" the security officer asks. Michael says he did. "Did you meet Herr Gromek at this farm?" the security officer continues. Michael says he didn't. After some whispers, the professors say they must end today's meeting until the security concerns are resolved.



Dr. Lindt- “Gentlemen, that’s ridiculous,” Michael says, irate. “I came four thousand miles to work with Professor Lindt. Now where is he?” A man at the back of the auditorium speaks up: “I’m Lindt. What’s this rubbish about security? Who gave the order?” Manfred answers that the order comes from Gerhard, but Lindt refuses to back down: “Gentlemen, I must know about this Gamma Five work. Before I leave!” The others stand by their orders when Lindt realizes that Sarah, Michael’s assistant, may have the answers he seeks and hasn’t trespassed on any “forbidden farms.” “I want to talk to her,” he demands after figuring that she knows something about the Gamma Five project. Manfred moves to let her into the room.



Change of heart- Sarah enters and gives Michael a strange look before taking the seat he was just in. Manfred begins to explain the situation to her, but Lindt interrupts, saying, “Fräulein, were you not present at the United States Gamma Five experiments in Chicago.” “Yes, I was,” Sarah says after a pause. Lindt asks to know what she knows, first asking, “Was the experiment successful?” Suspenseful music plays while Sarah stares at the German professors. It stops while she begins moving her eyes around the room, deep in thought, before eventually looking at Michael. He stares back, stone-faced. “Come now, Fräulein,” one of the professors pleads before Manfred snaps at her: “You must cooperate. It is expected!” She refuses to say anything, demanding that Michael tell them before sprinting from the room. Michael and Manfred follow with the security man in tow. Sarah wanders away, refusing to listen until the men leave her alone on top of a hill in a nearby park. Michael asks permission to speak with Sarah in private, and Manfred grants this. After a few minutes of discussion, Sarah gives Michael a loving look while romantic music plays: she understands now that he isn’t a traitor, but a double agent. They move into the bushes nearby to kiss before returning to Manfred and the security man.



Investigation- Armed Stasi men stand outside the farmhouse, watching the chickens peck and scratch for bugs. Inside, security men wander around, looking over every inch of the house. They don't seem to be getting anywhere. Suddenly, the lead investigator notices the phone cable hanging uselessly from the wall and moves to inspect it. He holds the frayed cable in his hand as the camera moves in for a closer look. Dramatic kettledrum strikes accompany the movements of his hand: foul play happened here recently.



Dinner party- In a well-lit ballroom, people dance beneath a large portrait of Karl Marx. The camera finds Michael and Sarah seated with Manfred, who looks across the room. "Professor Lindt looks well pleased with himself," Manfred says, bemused. Michael looks to see the old man grinning with an attractive woman on each arm. "That's because he's surrounded with such lovely company," Michael jokes. Manfred comments to Sarah that Lindt is "quite taken" with her after the information she gave him that afternoon. He also comments about the luck Michael had with getting Sarah to cooperate. "I was able to combine mathematical logic with romantic inconsistency," Michael says before spotting Dr. Koska. He excuses himself to "grab a dance," twirling around the floor with Dr. Koska who tells him about the ongoing investigation and gives him instructions to meet at ten in the morning on the dot the next morning to begin his escape. As quickly as she appeared, Koska leaves.



“You’re not out trespassing”- Dr. Lindt is at the table when Michael returns from his dance. “So you’re not out trespassing tonight,” Lindt teases Michael. “We have some very nice farms around here.” After some more pleasantries and a drink, Sarah asks Manfred for a dance, but he turns her down. The two leave together after Lindt’s insistence, however: “You cannot refuse such a charming young lady.” Alone with Lindt, Michael tries to steer the conversation toward Project Gamma Five, but Lindt refuses with a hearty laugh, saying, “I never discuss my work when I’m having fun. And never, never over a drink.” Michael keeps pressing, but Lindt ignores him, saying they can discuss it after his shave at the barber shop at 9:30 the next morning. When Sarah and Manfred return, Lindt jokes that he and Michael had “a very interesting talk about farming.” The pleasant music and scenery disappear, replaced by Stasi men digging in front of the farmhouse, scored by tense brass and strings. From a sort of shallow grave, they hoist Gromek’s missing motorcycle.



Ten after ten- “It’s ten after ten already,” Koska says, nervously puffing on a cigarette in her infirmary of Karl Marx U. Sarah paces on the other side of the room, cursing herself for helping Michael meet with Lindt. The phone rings and Koska answers. A look of shock passes over her as tense music plays. “Ja,” she says breathlessly while the camera moves closer. After hanging up, she says to Sarah, “They’ve found Gromek’s body.” Sarah turns to look out the window, calling to Koska after a moment, who joins her. From outside the university, two plainclothes security men and a military minister in uniform walk briskly into the building.



Arithmetic- Having purposefully lost the security man at the barber shop, Lindt walks through the Physics department with Michael, talking about the younger man's intelligence before asking about the Gamma Five project. Michael says that if not for funding problems, they would have already built the weapon: "There's nothing the matter with the theory. As far as I'm concerned, the problem's solved." Lindt is incredulous about this, but Michael says they might have come to the same solution using different methods. Lindt leads Michael to his workroom, joking that "it's probably the most secret room in the whole country, but, you see, no guards." Clearing a spot on the chalkboard nearby, Michael begins working out the math behind the Gamma Five Project, but Lindt interrupts him, correcting some variables in the equation. Michael begins again, writing a solution that Lindt disagrees with. Lindt corrects more of the math and hands the chalk back to Michael. They go back and forth for some time until Michael finally gets the equations he needs out of Lindt. While he memorizes the formula, Lindt reports that all the students have been asked by someone over the intercom to search for Armstrong.



Search for Armstrong- Lindt realizes that he's been tricked and moves to the phone to call security, but by the time he looks back toward the chalkboard, Michael has gone. College students mill about the many halls within the Physics department, some questioning each other about what the man they're looking for even looks like. Manfred tells a handful of male students to stand guard in front of the entrance and to let no one leave. Michael uses the confusion to blend in, keeping well away from Manfred and his security men. He rushes upstairs to find Sarah and Koska waiting for him in the infirmary. Koska tries to rush him out the door, but Michael refuses, quickly jotting down the equation he was missing on a sheet of paper and stuffing it into his pocket for safekeeping.



Bike ride- Koska leads them down a fire escape staircase to a trio of bicycles parked outside. “We’re very late, but we can’t rush it,” she says firmly. “Ride slowly. Just a normal outing.” The three of them ride away slowly, as if simply enjoying a morning ride. After a while, Koska leads the Americans down an alley and knocks on a door, instructing them on what to do later that evening in Berlin. Two men open the door and take their bikes before leading them to a public bus parked in a garage, filled with people who gawk at them. As they board, one of the women removes Sarah’s hat and replaces it with a shawl so she blends in better. An older man seems to be orchestrating things, and he signals the bus to leave before sitting down near Michael and Sarah.



“Not a regular bus”- “I am Mr. Jacobi,” the older man says before a woman interrupts him in German. “She is worried,” he says to the Americans. “You are late.” “Look,” says Michael, “I’ve heard of organization, but you mean to say that the bus line is on our side?” “This is not a regular bus,” Jacobi explains, “but we travel the same route as the official Leipzig to Berlin bus. But we leave 10 minutes ahead of it.” The woman who interrupted him realizes that Sarah and Michael are American and seems offended by it. “What does it matter?” Jacobi says. “They are friends.” She begins to panic again as police on motorcycles swarm past the bus, but Jacobi argues for calm. As the bus rolls along, Jacobi talks to the Americans about π to pass the time, saying that everyone on the bus does this to help cover the tracks of those who are escaping.



A round of applause- “Herr Jacobi!” the bus driver yells. Jacobi stands to see a military truck blocking the road. He quickly explains to the Americans what they must do and reminds them to say nothing. The military men board the bus and begin looking at people’s faces. Mournful music plays while he slowly makes his way toward the rear of the bus, where Sarah and Michael are. Jacobi makes a face before pulling out a cigarette case and offering one to a man across the way, leaning strategically while lighting the cigarette for him to cover Sarah and Michael’s faces. The military man leaves, and the roadblock pulls away. The bus begins rolling again, and the people on the bus cheer and clap. “They were looking for the Americans!” the woman says. “What will happen when the real bus comes along?” “Relax,” Jacobi says calmly. “You heard Heinrich tell them they were running an extra bus.” A woman stands by the roadside, and the people on the bus laugh at her reaction as the bus speeds past. The camera looks out of the bus front window, superimposing the kilometers clicking by on the bus odometer while jaunty music plays. The music becomes stressed when Jacobi looks out the rear and sees the real bus turning a corner behind them: They aren’t making up time as they should.



Military escort- “Herr Jacobi!” the driver yells again. “Another roadblock,” Jacobi says to the Americans before heading to the front of the bus. “Army deserters!” he shouts back as a uniformed man brandishes a pistol at the driver, forcing him to stop. “Is it a holdup?” Michael asks, and Jacobi says it is, telling him to give over his money. The bandits enter the bus and take everyone’s money one by one. Suddenly, shots break out, causing the bandits to panic as they realize the army has found them. One of them struggles at the rear door until the driver opens it for him. Michael sees a chance and snatches the hat containing their money from him as he flees, earning a cheer from the others on the bus. A military officer gives the bus driver instructions in German before running off to pursue the bandits. A laugh erupts from the passengers, and Michael asks someone nearby what’s so funny. “Well, it’s funny in one way, but perhaps in another, it’s not,” the man replies. “You see, the military have decided to give us an escort.” The bus rolls down the road with a group of military motorcycles surrounding it.



The other bus- Jacobi comes back to his seat, and Michael suggests that they just let him and Sarah off so that the others can escape suspicion. Jacobi insists that they will get them to the city first, saying, "My only concern is that now we will have to behave like a regular bus," explaining further that picking up passengers will slow them down and allow the real bus to catch up with them. The woman from before realizes this too and begins to panic, demanding to get off. Jacobi lets her go on the promise that she won't talk to the police, and the bus rolls to a stop. The other occupants chatter stressfully as they see the real bus drawing closer through the rear window. Michael asks Jacobi for his instructions once they get to Berlin. "You will go to the Friedrichstraße post office. Ask for a man called Albert," Jacobi replies. The bus must stop for an elderly woman, and the others on the bus hurriedly help her and her large trunk on board. The other bus comes into clear view, and the soldiers on the bikes crane their necks to gawk at it. The other bus begins honking, its driver realizing something is amiss. As tense music plays, the bus rolls into Berlin.



"Something Straße"- The bus stops, and the soldiers dismount to go speak to the other bus driver. Taking advantage of the distraction, Jacobi helps Sarah and Michael off the bus. Once they're out of sight, Jacobi instructs the others to scatter, and they do, further distracting the guards who chase after them, firing blindly toward them with machine guns. Several of the π members fall, but most scamper away to safety. Somewhere on Berlin's streets, Sarah and Michael walk quickly away from the gunfire. "I wish I had time to write it down," Michael curses. "What the hell was it?" "It was something Straße," Sarah says, adding "We shall have to ask" when neither can remember. Saying it's safer for her to ask, Sarah manages to mime sending a letter and gets "Friedrichstraße" as an answer from a passerby.



Countess Kuchinska The camera settles on a strangely dressed woman nearby who interrupts the German women in English, pulling Sarah and Michael aside to talk to them. "I am the Countess Kuchinska," the woman says. "I am Polish. Allow me, please, to offer you both a cup of coffee." Michael tries to move away, but the countess insists: "You will take coffee with me, Professor Armstrong." Startled to be identified, and with police closing in on them, Michael and Sarah follow the eccentric woman into a nearby coffee house.



Coffee house- The trio finds a seat at an empty table, and then the countess asks if Michael has any American cigarettes. When he says he doesn't she sighs, pulling out a cigarette case and saying, "Then you must smoke the Russian ones." He declines the offer. After taking a couple of puffs from her cigarette, the countess smiles, telling the Americans, "It's not every day one meets a spy... And with his face in all the papers!" The comment leaves the Americans disquieted, and the countess tries to reassure them, saying, with comic mispronunciation, "I am not communistical. You see, I came here from Poland. I wish very much to go to the United States of America. Unfortunately, it is necessary to have friends there. How you say... sponsor." The countess promises to help Michael and Sarah if they promise to be her sponsors for her immigration papers. After a short conversation, the Americans agree. Sarah writes down their names and an address they can be reached at by the immigration officers. Overjoyed, the countess pays for the coffee they didn't touch and leads the two to the Friedrichstraße post office.



Albert- Inside the post office, the countess speaks to the clerks for the Americans, asking in her heavily accented German if Albert is in. A doorman standing in line is suspicious of the activity and wanders away. While the postal workers ignore the countess' request for "Herr Albert," the Americans become more tense. Finally, Albert appears with a business card bearing the name of a travel agency. The countess snatches and translates it for them when Sarah tries to get their attention, looking toward the front door: The doorman has returned with a policeman in tow. The Americans rush off, the Stasi men yelling "Halt" as they run after them. The countess turns and grabs the officer's machine gun, causing him to trip down the stairs and hurt his legs. The countess, who injured herself during the short struggle, sits on one of the steps, tears streaming down her face as she repeats, "My sponsor."



Travel agency- Later that evening, Michael and Sarah find themselves near the travel agency. "Must be on the other side of the street," says Michael. When they look, they see the travel agency swarming with Stasi men forcing the agency's employees into the back of a paddy wagon. As the van drives away, a pair of men walk through the shadowy streets directly toward Michael and Sarah. When the two turn to walk away, one of the men addresses them loudly in German. "You picked a bad time to call, Professor," the farmer from before says as they draw closer. "We had company." They walk with Michael and Sarah to a TV in a nearby shop window playing the news to cover their conversation. Michael asks about the state of π , and the former farmer quickly answers his questions before directing their attention to his German compatriot. This man tells the Americans that they will be smuggled out with the East German ballet company's luggage. "Remember," he concludes, "the boat is East German. You won't be safe until you're ashore." After passing them tickets for the ballet and money to pay the man who will smuggle them out of the country, they say goodbye and part. The TV remains on screen, showing Michael's face from the press conference just the day before.



Ballet- Michael and Sarah watch the ballet perform, nervously glancing around the theater. They spot the red-headed stage manager, who will smuggle them out, and he gives them a silent, knowing nod. As she spins on stage, the lead ballerina (the well-dressed woman from the plane at the beginning of the film) recognizes Michael and rushes off stage to inform her manager after her last pirouette. The manager calls the police from a nearby phone. As the performance continues, several Stasi men get the attention of the ushers in the rear of the auditorium. More and more enter in pairs, and Michael and Sarah try to keep their cool. At the rear of the hall, we see Gerhard enter and make his way toward the section where Michael and Sarah sit. Sarah glances back and recognizes him, informing Michael. After a few moments of thought, inspired by the stage effects, Michael stands and screams, "FIRE!" The auditorium erupts in a panic, allowing Michael and Sarah to make their way backstage in the confusion.



Escape- Backstage, the red-haired man quickly leads Michael and Sarah down to the dressing room where he gestures to empty baskets of costumes. The Americans climb inside and crouch down before the red-haired man covers them with frilly costumes. After this, he closes and bars the baskets for transit, quickly exiting the room, locking the door behind him as he goes. Sometime later, the camera finds a ship at sea. The red-haired man sits atop the baskets containing the Americans, smoking his pipe nonchalantly. Above him on the upper deck, the ballerina speaks with a man as the ship's horn blows.



Baskets in Sweden- Sometime later, the ship docks and people begin disembarking. On the main deck, the red-haired man and another worker pile the baskets into a net so a crane can hoist them to the nearby dock. The ballerina watches, sensing something odd about the red-haired man's insistence that a particular pair of baskets go first. After packing them gently in the net and giving the crane operator the signal to lift them away, the red-haired man says to the baskets, "Good luck!" Realizing what this means, the ballerina gets the attention of the Stasi men onboard the ship, and the crane operator stops moving the baskets. On the dock, a Swedish official argues that the baskets should be set down, but he's too late. The Stasi open fire on the baskets. The gunfire breaks open the net, sending the crates tumbling down. When the German sailors go through them, they find nothing but costumes inside. Two other baskets sit open on the deck, empty. The Germans realize too late that Sarah and Michael have escaped.



Sweet success - Dripping on the dock from their brisk swim, they and the red-haired man are greeted by the Swedish officials, who welcome them. Inside a dock office, Michael and Sarah sit by a fire. They are disturbed by the tapping of a journalist on the window over one of the doors who asks for a picture. They turn away from him, cuddling underneath Michael's blanket. Romantic music swells while Sarah giggles and the scene fades out.

