

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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THE HUMAN FACTOR 1979

Otto Preminger

OVERVIEW

Maurice Castle, a desk officer with MI6, the British international secret service, is a double agent. He has been passing information to the Russians as a gesture of gratitude to Communists in South Africa who helped his black African wife, Sarah, escape from the apartheid regime. When there is a leak in his department, Castle's colleague is wrongly suspected and killed. Castle decides to quit his double-dealing but makes one last communication with his Russian handler because he has found out about a western plot to employ tactical nuclear weapons in South Africa. As a result, he is identified and is forced to flee to Moscow, where, he has been promised, Sarah will join him. The British authorities prevent her from leaving the country and Castle is stranded in exile.

LITERARY/HISTORICAL NOTES

The historical background to this story of a mole in MI6 is the scandal of the 'Cambridge Five,' the five Cambridge-educated men who acted as double-agents for Russia during the 1940s and 1950s. That penetration of MI6 severely dented its reputation, especially among their American 'cousins.' The film is a close adaptation of Graham Greene's novel of the same name (published in 1978), with a screenplay written by Tom Stoppard. It was Otto Preminger's final film, a lucid presentation of a complex story that is a fitting conclusion to a brilliant directorial career. It is interesting to note that the names of Maurice (Castle) and Sarah (Miles) in the film are the same as those of another pair of doomed lovers in *The End of the Affair*, also adapted from a Greene novel. In the latter case, though, the enemies of love are located inside the characters, whereas in this film they are very much on the outside.

MAIN CHARACTERS

Maurice	Maurice Castle is an office worker for MI6.
Sarah	Sarah Mankosi is his wife.
Sam	Sam is Sarah's son and Castle's step-son.
Davis	Davis is Castle's colleague at MI6.
Daintry	Daintry is the new security chief at MI6.
Hargreaves	Hargreaves is the head of MI6.
PercivalDr	Percival is an advisor to MI6.
Muller	Muller is an agent of the South African security service.
Connolly	Connolly is a British South African who is a member of the local Communist party.

STORY

New security chief Maurice Castle is at work in his office inside MI6, the British international secret service. On his way out for lunch, he meets his colleague Davis, and they exchange jokes about taking secret documents out of the office and selling them for cash. Halfway out the door, he is told that his boss wants to see him. Colonel Daintry, the new head of internal security, is interviewing all the men who work for MI6. Daintry wants to know about Davis, who doesn't come from Oxbridge and has leftist political views. Daintry also examines Castle's briefcase, citing the often-overlooked regulation about not taking documents out of the office. It is a chilling encounter, the iron fist in the velvet glove of the English upper class.

Ordinary man That evening Castle takes the train to an outlying town, where he rides his bicycle from the station to his house. His wife, a black African named Sarah, greets him and says that her child (his step-son), Sam, is ill. He laughs with his wife, pets his dog and has a whisky. A perfectly normal man, an ordinary life, except that signs of anxiety appear. A new electricity man came that day, and Castle wants to buy a new book for his commute. Unseen by Sarah, Castle checks the electricity meter and finds nothing untoward.

A mole? Daintry is invited to a weekend shooting party at the country mansion of Sir John Hargreaves, head of MI6. After massacring several dozen pheasants, with the other guests, Daintry is called to a private meeting with Hargreaves and a Dr Percival. Hargreaves reveals that there appears to be a leak in Section 6 (where Castle and Davis work). He admits that it could be a ruse by the Russians to create another spy scandal (in the post Philby-era) and further damage the reputation of the British intelligence service, especially in the eyes of the Americans. Hargreaves also reveals that the tip-off came from one of their Soviet double-agents in Moscow.

Suspects 'It's a small but steady drip, mainly economic matters,' Hargreaves says and asks if Daintry has any ideas who it might be. Daintry suggests that Watson, the head of Section 6, would be very unlikely. Castle's profile is then discussed—steady worker, quiet life, married, one child. We also learn that he was brought back from a previous posting in South Africa after some personal trouble—his black African wife. Davis is more suspicious, Daintry suggests. He's a bachelor, spends a lot, member of the Labour Party and was seen taking a report out of the office.

Elimination 'Suppose he's our man, then what?' asks Hargreaves. 'Take him to court,' says Daintry, but Hargreaves is not happy: 'No, because then they [the Soviets] would have pulled it off,' he says. 'Scandal all over the press. British secret service penetrated again!' Dr Percival suggests that they just move the mole to a backwater and ignore him, but Daintry insists that they must have trial, due process, jury, etc. 'The Russians don't have trials,' Hargreaves points out. He and Percival agree that they should look into Davis' activities and, if he is the mole, 'eliminate' him. That is, poison him. All they'd need would be a doctor's certificate.

Muller and Uncle Remus Castle goes to his usual bookshop and buys two copies of *War and Peace*. Back in the office, he works alongside Davis, who is summoned for a medical check. Castle is told by Hargreaves that an agent named Muller from South Africa is arriving and that he, Castle, will work with him on a joint operation called 'Uncle Remus.' Castle points out that he and Muller had an unpleasant relationship in South Africa and suggests that Davis should be paired with Muller. Castle also suggests that Davis be given a new posting in Africa because he's a bit desk-weary and anxious. Hargreaves raises his eyebrows and says he'll keep it in mind.

Mysteries Davis is called in for another unexplained medical by Dr Percival, who asks him to return a week later. When Davis is curious about the reason for these tests, Percival claims to know nothing. 'You're in your box,' he says, 'and I'm in mine.' Davis asks Castle if Percival really is a doctor, and Castle says he has something to do with Porton Down, the government facility responsible for nuclear and biological weapons research. At Davis' flat, where Castle is to spend the night, Sarah calls and says she's scared because of mysterious calls without a voice.

Dentist appointment Castle confesses that he's worried about what Davis told him regarding Percival and his medicals. He thinks their bosses are searching for a leak in Section 6. 'Well, since neither of us is the mole, who gives a damn?' Davis says and reveals that he's getting sick of the place and plans to take Monday off to treat his girlfriend to a special meal. 'Just tell them I've gone to the dentist,' he says to his colleague.

Suspicious Next day, Davis is in a restaurant nervously waiting for his girlfriend. Daintry enters the same restaurant and notes the anxious look on Davis' face. His lie about going to the dentist has been exposed, and later he is seen waiting for someone with a government report in his hand. It is all innocent: he was waiting for his girlfriend and took the confidential report with him in order to read it while waiting because he had a meeting right after lunch. But Davis' actions convince Percival that he is the leak. When Percival communicates his suspicion to Hargreaves, he also mentions an experiment involving a poisonous mould from peanuts.

Bookshop At his usual bookshop, Castle buys two copies of another book and makes a curious phone call to an empty office. He is then summoned to a meeting with Muller, the agent from South Africa.

Flashback 1 Back in South Africa, Castle is questioned by Muller and another official, who wishes to arrest the British diplomat for breaking the country's apartheid law by living with Sarah. Against the official's advice, Muller urges caution because he wants to avoid a diplomatic scandal. He suggests that Castle simply leave the country.

Muller and Sarah Back in the present, Muller and Castle are driven to his suburban home. Muller explains that he had no idea that the 'Bantu girl,' as he calls her, was one of his agents. 'If I had

known what your real job was [spy], I wouldn't have threatened you,' he says. 'I took you for one of those high-minded anti-apartheid sentimentalists.' Muller is curious about how his agent escaped South Africa and tries to recall her name. Mankosi? 'Yes,' Castle answers, 'Sarah Mankosi.' When Muller seeks assurance that Castle bears him no grudge for the past, Castle says, 'Of course not. We're both professionals.'

Connolly When Muller is introduced to Mrs Castle, the 'Bantu girl' he had mentioned in the car, he shows no surprise. Instead, he is polite and charming. Later, after dinner, the two men talk. Muller reveals that Connolly, a white South African lawyer who supported the Communists, died in prison. 'Well, it saved him a long trial,' Muller says, nonchalantly but Castle is disturbed by the news.

Flashback 2 Back in South Africa, Castle meets Sarah at a political rally organised by Connolly. She suggests that she can help him with his 'work' (his cover is that he is a writer), they meet again and become clandestine lovers while he continues his low-level espionage activities. During a picnic, she reveals that she is pregnant with another man's child. Castle is shocked and insults her, which drives her away for a while. Later, she explains that the husband of her child was an anti-apartheid activist who was killed. She then has to leave the country when Muller threatens her with defying the country's racial laws.

Boris Back in London, in the present, Castle maintains contact with Boris, his Russian handler, meeting him in 'safe houses,' where he gives him economic reports. Now, he tells Boris that he has no need to continue because Connolly is dead. 'I was doing this for him,' Castle explains, 'not for the party.' Boris counters that he is doing it for Sarah and for her people. Castle protests that the information he gives him is trivial, but Boris says that Moscow regards Uncle Remus as very serious. Castle confesses that he is anxious, and mentions the mysterious phone calls. Boris assures him that his escape route is carefully planned. 'What about Sarah?' Castle asks. 'She and Sam will follow you, later,' Boris says.

Marked card Percival calls Hargreaves and asks for permission to proceed with his plan because the 'marked card has turned up.' Reluctantly, Hargreaves grants permission. In the following scene, Percival gives Davis another injection during a medical test.

Davis dead Castle tells Daintry that if there is a complaint against Davis, he would back him to the hilt. Daintry gives a vague reply and asks Castle to accompany him to his daughter's wedding reception. He receives a telephone call there and is told that Davis is dead. Daintry and Castle hurry to Davis' flat, where Percival hovers around the body. His explanation about what happened is equivocal, and Castle wonders why security police are searching the flat.

Coded message At home, Castle uses his copy of *War and Peace* to write a coded message, which he then conceals in the trunk of a tree not far from his house. Boris later decodes the message with information about Uncle Remus.

Nuclear weapons Hargreaves and Muller host a high-level security meeting, at which Castle is present. Muller gives a briefing about Uncle Remus. 'It is an operation,' he explains, 'not to defend South Africa, but to defend the free West.' If his country's gold mines were to close because of a racial war, Russia would become the chief source of gold and wreck havoc on world economy.' One of the military men at the meeting asks about the use of troops, and Muller answers: 'The point of Uncle Remus is to make troops unnecessary by the use of tactical nuclear weapons.'

Confession Castle is disturbed by this plan, which would possibly kill thousands of black Africans. At home, he reveals to Sarah, for the first time, that he has been acting as a double agent for the Russians, as a favour for Connolly's people rescuing her.

Danger Now, he's in danger. He knows that Davis was killed because they thought he was the leak. Sarah begs him to stop his spy work now since that would confirm that Davis was the leak. Castle says that he had written to Boris to cut off all communications, but then he learned about the nuclear weapons in Uncle Remus and sent a last communique to Boris (the one in the tree trunk). Sarah is alarmed because when that message is passed back to London, by the double-agent in Moscow, they'll know that Davis was not the leak and they'll suspect him.

Plans Castle tells her to take Sam and go to his mother's, explaining that they've had a bad quarrel. If it blows over, they'll get back together. If it doesn't, he'll use the planned escape route to Moscow, and she and Sam will follow. After receiving a telephone call, Castle realises that they have to hurry.

Sarah and Sam are sent off to Castle's mother.

Net closes in Muller tells Hargreaves that he believes Castle is the leak, but the British man covers up and denies that there has been any leak. Hargreaves speaks to Percival about Muller's suspicion, which would mean that Davis was innocent, but Percival says that Davis was no loss in any case. Daintry is told to check up on Castle and goes to his house. Daintry and Castle carry on a guarded conversation about Davis and the possible leak. They both suspect that Davis was killed, and Castle points the finger at himself, but Daintry doesn't want to accept his implicit confession.

Escape After Daintry leaves, Castle's bookshop owner arrives and announces that he is to take him on the first leg of his escape to Moscow. He drops him off at a hotel where he is booked into a room and is to wait for the next man to contact him. That man arrives, gives him a fake passport and a ticket to Paris, and then disguises him to match the passport photo.

Sarah While Sarah and Sam are staying with Castle's mother, a police inspector comes and asks her about her husband. Sarah feigns ignorance, explaining that they are separated. Next, Percival persuades Sarah to meet him for lunch and tells her that Castle has arrived safely in Moscow. After pleasantries, he turns nasty and threatens to prevent her from joining him there. Incensed, Sarah leaves in mid-conversation.

Moscow Living in a small, damp flat in Moscow, Castle is visited by other English exiles, who paint a dreary picture of his future. Boris arrives, with gifts from Sarah and explains that there are 'problems' with her leaving the UK. He didn't anticipate that the authorities would try to stop her, and Sam has no passport of his own, nor is he listed on Sarah's. If she tries to leave, she would be arrested for 'complicity.' She could be smuggled out, like Castle, but she'd have to leave the child behind.

Fake double-agent Boris then explains that the British 'double-agent' in Moscow was a fake. That is, he was not a defector, he was a Russian agent who pretended to act for the British by sending them information (from Castle and others), while also passing them other false information designed by Moscow to mislead the British secret service. Castle is bitterly disappointed and angry.

Mother-in-law When Castle gives a televised press conference in Moscow, the news reaches his mother, who denounces her son as a traitor. Sarah explains that they lied about their 'quarrel' and that she supports him. She says she will take Sam with her to Moscow, but the mother won't allow that. 'He's my grandchild; he's a British subject.'

Cut-off Castle is finally able to reach Sarah by telephone and they declare their love for each other. He paints a hopeful picture of life there, when she arrives, but the line is cut off in mid-sentence.

THEMES

The Human Factor The title announces the key theme of the film. The 'human factor' is Castle's love for Sarah, his gratitude to those who helped her escape and his sympathy for her people. Those are the motives that explain his actions, and end up destroying his life, in this complex spy thriller. When Connolly and his network of Communists in south Africa managed to get Sarah out of the country, Castle feels indebted to them. To reciprocate, he begins to feed Moscow low-level economic information from his desk at MI6 in London. And he continues to do this even when he suspects that he may be under surveillance as a mole because he is horrified by the prospect of nuclear weapons being used against black Africans. Castle's love for Sarah is paramount, trumping any other sort of loyalty, to his country, to his employer, even to his mother. He passes on secret information not because he is a communist or anti-capitalist, but only because he wants to do a favour for those who helped him and Sarah. His final communique, warning Moscow (and their black African allies in South Africa) about the nuclear weapons, may be officially defined as an act of treason, but it is, in fact, simply an act of compassion. Kindness, love, sympathy, loyalty to family—these are the human instincts that drive poor Castle to Moscow, where he languishes, without any real hope that Sarah will be able to join him. In highlighting the 'human factor,' the ordinary and decent motives of people, the film (and the source novel) differ from many other spy thrillers, which focus on greed, lust and power.

The Inhuman Factor A second theme is reverse side of the first: the callous calculations of the security agencies, British, Russian and South African. Here it is precisely the absence of the human factor that runs the bureaucracy, makes plans and takes decisions. While certain characters, notably Daintry and Hargreaves, display moments of empathy, these are snuffed out by the insidious secrecy and untrammelled power of the British intelligence agency. The sinister amorality of the agency is

embodied in Dr Percival, who has a peculiar view of the world. Looking at a painting of geometric design by Mondrian, he articulates his theory of boxes: 'You in yours, I in mine. No responsibility for the next man's box.' Each box, each man, is isolated, separate and uncommunicative with the others. And so, the state-sponsored murder of Davis proceeds without accountability or effective oversight. Hargreaves does give the 'green light,' but he also appears to lack the courage or the departmental process to stop it. He is in his box, and Percival is in his box. Davis, of course, ends up in a real box. This theme of insularity, and anonymity pervades the film, which concludes with Castle isolated in his little flat in Moscow, cut off from Sarah. The Russian spy agency is similarly cold and impersonal, and the South African agency is ruthless in its plan for nuclear weapons, but the focus is on the British agency. And this is where the film captures that peculiar British brand of hypocrisy. The good and great are always polite and never appear crass, but behind their cheerful bluster is what Hannah Arendt called the 'banality of evil,' so commonplace and ordinary that we don't even notice it.

Competing Loyalties Another, slightly less original, theme is that of competing loyalties. The most prominent example is the choice that Castle makes in choosing to spy against his own country. But, as explained above, this decision is not motivated by loyalty to another country, only to people who aided him in his time of need. It is a conflict between national loyalty and personal loyalty. This formulation of the problem is confirmed, much later, when Castle finally tells Sarah what he has been doing. 'I'm what is commonly known as a traitor,' he says. But she rejects this, saying, 'We have our own country. You, me and Sam. You'd never betray us.' Castle also shows loyalty to his colleague Davis, when the latter is suspected of being the leak, by telling his boss that he would back him 'to the hilt.' Sarah has a choice of loyalties, too, since she could leave the UK and join her husband in Moscow but chooses not to do so because then she would have to leave her son behind. However, the other mother in the film, Castle's mother, has no such qualms about denouncing her offspring as a traitor to his country.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Castle

Character Maurice Castle is an ordinary man, an office worker in London, except that he works for the British secret intelligence agency. An internal security check sums him up this way: 'moderate drinker, family man, visits his mother every mother. Doesn't have the imagination to be a double agent.' This turns out to be wrong only in the final element. Otherwise, Castle is polite, kindly and loyal to his family.

Illustrative moments

Creature of habits As a desk worker in a security agency, Castle is a man who likes routine and dislikes irregularity. This is very evident in the early scene when he goes home to his wife in the suburbs. He hangs up his coat and walks into a strangely quiet house. He goes from room to room, calling for his wife. It turns out that their son is ill and Sarah is upstairs with the doctor. When the doctor leaves, Sarah notices the worried look on her husband's face and asks if anything is the matter. Castle says, 'Well, I was worried. Everything seemed wrong. No child in the house, no dog, no whisky on the sideboard.' Sarah laughs and says he's a 'creature of habit,' and he admits it. 'I don't want any interesting variations, you know,' he says with a wink. 'Whisky on the lawn, and dog on the sideboard.' It is a revealing scene. Even the slightest irregularity alarms Castle. Not only is he a man of habits, he is also a man who is perpetually afraid that his secret will be revealed. Normality and routine are signs of safety.

Loyal Castle has no ideological or political allegiances, but he is loyal to his family and friends. The family loyalty is the centrepiece of the story, but his support for his colleague Davis is equally revealing of his character. That loyalty is put to the test in the middle of the story, as the suspicions increasingly point to Davis as the security leak. Castle is summoned by Daintry, head of security, who, in the course of an otherwise innocuous conversation, asks Castle if he is 'content' with Davis. Castle's face tightens and his voice drops as he says, 'Has there been some kind of complaint about Davis? If there has, I'd back him to the hilt.' It is a firm statement, out of character for the mild-mannered Castle, and it startles Daintry. Davis is no one special to Castle, just a genial co-worker with whom he has little in common, but if the authorities try to make a case against him, Castle will stand up for his friend.

Principled The politically neutral Castle is not, however, without moral principles, like most of his superiors. From the very beginning, we have seen that Castle is 'normal' and likeable, kind to his

wife, son and dog, but we see another side of him during a high-security meeting where the details of Uncle Remus are discussed. Muller, the South African agent, coolly explains that the plan is to use tactical nuclear weapons in the event of a black rebel army invasion. One of those present asks what he means and the South African says, 'It's a clean bomb. Much cleaner than those used at Hiroshima.' While the others around the table nod sagely, the camera cuts to Castle, who mutters 'Jesus Christ' under his breath and remains rigid with horror. He is shocked that his people would countenance such immoral, not to say illegal, methods. His outrage is silent but he decides that he has to let the Russians 'know that those bastards are up to.' It is a reckless decision because it might convince MI6 that he is the leak, but he does it because it 'might save the lives of thousands of black Africans.'

Pessimistic Although Castle is usually cheerful on the outside, inside he is worried and unsure of the future. This niggling unease emerges in a scene toward the end of the story, when he finally reveals to Sarah that he has been a double agent and, more seriously, that he has probably compromised his identity by sending a communique to his handler about the Uncle Remus operation. He sits, whisky in hand, while Sarah listens and tries to console him. His eyes are heavy and his voice gravelly. 'I'm what they call a traitor,' he says morosely. He knows he has made a mistake with the communique and that it is only a matter of time before the authorities will arrest him. There is an escape plan, to Moscow, but not with Sarah. He sits and contemplates a bleak future.

Sarah

Character Sarah was Castle's agent and becomes his wife. A tall, slender black African woman, she is dignified, proud and, when necessary, sharp-tongued. She has some of her husband's diplomatic qualities, including the ability to resist unnecessary quarrels and to sum up others quickly.

Illustrative moments

Proud Sarah is a dignified and proud woman. She will not be patronised, or treated with anything but respect, by anyone. This strong sense of self is illustrated in one of the flashbacks of her life with Castle in South Africa. They go on a clandestine picnic and all is rosy until she tells Castle that she is pregnant and that the child is not his. Castle is furious, jealous and insulting. Sarah responds with charges of hypocrisy and racial prejudice. 'You make me feel like a whore,' she says and demands that he take her back. In the car, Castle remains angry and Sarah calmly tells him to stop the car. It is in the middle of the countryside. Without a word, Sarah gets out and joins a group of black people waiting at a dusty bus stop. Her pride will not allow her to be driven by a man, especially a white man, who does not show her respect.

Supportive Once Sarah becomes Castle's wife and they settle down in England, though, she is a rock of support for her troubled husband. That firmness is best displayed in the key scene, when Castle finally tells her that he has been a double agent for seven years, ever since they came to England, and that he is likely to be arrested soon. She listens carefully and asks the right questions in order to clarify his thoughts. And when he says that he is a traitor, she rejects his self-accusation with a memorable statement. 'We are your country,' she says. 'You and me and Sam, we are your country. And you would never betray us.' It is a heartfelt and perceptive attempt to relive his conscience, but of course it doesn't change the reality outside the room. In the next moment, she is ready to discuss steps that they must take to ensure their safety. Sarah is the best kind of companion—wise, empathetic and practical.

Outspoken Always dignified and controlled, Sarah is outspoken when confronted with the hypocritical evil that runs the security service and has ruined her life. This aspect of her character is illustrated in a late scene, when Castle has already landed safely in Moscow and she is still struggling to find a way to join him. Dr Percival invites her to lunch, which she hopes will result in a plan for her to leave the country. But it is soon apparent that Percival has no such plan and, worse still, that he will not allow her to leave under any circumstances. Now, Sarah's eyes begin to burn with resentment and she says in a calm voice, 'What bastards you are.' Percival doesn't shrink back but only says, in his patronising tone, 'My dear, if you will let an old man advise you, someone who was a friend of Maurice [her husband]...' Sarah interrupts and says, 'Oh, yes, and a friend of Davis, too.' Davis, she knows, was killed and now she knows who is responsible. She won't break bread with him. She folds her napkin and leaves.

Daintry

Character Colonel Daintry is a complicated character. He is the security chief at MI6, yet he lacks that ruthless streak, the killer instinct, that one would expect in such an official. Instead, he is meek, hesitant and forgiving, even when he suspects that Castle is a traitor. Because he is full of bluff and bluster, though, it is sometimes difficult to read his true thoughts.

Illustrative moments

Harmless As the new head of security at MI6, Colonel Daintry interviews all its employees. His first appearance is the scene when he interviews Castle. Given the nature of the interview, it should be a polite but serious session, and yet Daintry manages to confound expectations. He stands, rather than sits, and greets his interviewee with a beaming smile. 'Oh, I think I knew your cousin at Cambridge,' he says as an opening remark. Daintry continues to ask questions, especially about Davis, but each time, he undercuts any gravity in his question by a chuckle or wink of the eye. He apologises for taking Castle's time and ends the interview by having to check his briefcase ('Sorry, old boy, just part of the drill.') Inside, he finds a package of sweets and confesses that he's never heard of them. 'Any good?' he asks. That final question sums up Daintry. He wishes no harm and only wants to know whether he should buy those sweets as a present for someone.

Meek Daintry is head of security at MI6, but he is not an unsympathetic character. Far from it, when in the same room with the others, he is often dismayed by what he hears but is too meek to challenge it. A perfect example of his lack of courage occurs when he is called by Hargreaves to have a private 'chat' with Dr Percival and they discuss what to do about the 'leak.' Percival suggests that they move Davis to a 'backwater and forget the whole thing.' Daintry is shocked at this suggestion. 'And abet a crime?' he asks. 'Shouldn't we put him on trial?' Hargreaves points out that the Russians don't have trials and if British are to beat their enemies, they must play 'the same game.' Daintry is baffled, throws his hands in the air and declares, 'Sorry. I don't know what you're talking about.' Hargreaves explains that they could try to trap Davis and, if he's caught, just 'eliminate him.' Daintry is aghast. 'Eliminate?' he cries with wide-eyes. 'You're asking me to push someone under a train?' Oh, no, he is assured, they can't afford an inquest. Something more discrete, like poisoning, which only requires a doctor's certificate, care of Dr Percival. Listening to this 'hypothetical' method of disposing of Davis horrifies Daintry, but he is too meek to openly protest.

Forgiving While Daintry is meek and harmless, he is not a fool. But he is forgiving, even towards Castle, whom he suspects as the leak. This quality is illustrated at the end of the story, when Daintry goes to Castle's house in order to check up on him, under orders from Hargreaves. It is now apparent to Daintry that Castle must be the leak because information has been passed to the Russians even after Davis' death. Both men know the game is up and each knows the other knows, but both pretend that they don't know. They share a drink as they talk about recent events. They agree that Davis was killed, and Daintry suggests that he might, after all, have been guilty. But Castle points out that it must have been someone with a link to South Africa, someone with experience in the region or with personal ties to an African. In other words, himself. 'You see what I mean?' Castle asks, but Daintry doesn't answer and leaves. It is an extraordinary scene. Castle has shown Daintry that he must be the leak, and Daintry understands but does not act. He likes Castle, and unless there is a smoking gun, he is prepared to look the other way.



(Castle and Sarah preparing for their escape)