

Chapter 1 : Epix Spy Drama "Berlin Station"™ Travels To UK Via Channel 4 | Deadline

The Spy Paramount takes us to Rome, American Martin Fawley, a former secret service agent, is recruited. E. Phillips Oppenheim was one of the greatest writers of spy fiction, known in his time as the Prince of Storytellers.

CHAPTER I Martin Fawley glanced irritably at the man stretched flat in the chair he coveted—the man whose cheeks were partly concealed by lather and whose mass of dark hair was wildly disarranged. One of his hands—“delicate white hands they were, although the fingers were long and forceful”—reposed in a silver bowl of hot water. The other one was being treated by the manicurist seated on a stool by his side, the young woman whose services Fawley also coveted. He had entered the establishment a little abruptly and he stood with his watch in his hand. The newcomer replaced his watch. The two statements were incontrovertible. Nevertheless, the ill-humour which he felt was eloquently reflected in his face. The man in the chair looked at him expressionless, indifferent. The inconvenience of a stranger meant nothing to him. He really had nothing whatever to do at the moment but he possessed all the impatience of the man of energy at being asked to wait at any time. While he seemed to be considering the situation, the man in the chair spoke. His French was good enough but it was not the French of a native. I require ensuite a face massage and I am not satisfied with the hand which Mademoiselle thinks she has finished. Furthermore, there is the trimming of my eyebrows—a delicate task which needs great care. The man in the chair glanced at Fawley nonchalantly and remained silent. Fawley turned his back upon him, upon Henri and Mathilde, the white-painted furniture, the glittering mirrors, and walked out into the street. He did not see again this man to whom he had taken so unreasonable a dislike until he was ushered with much ceremony, a few days later, into his very magnificent official apartment in the Plaza Margareta at Rome. Their eyes met and they exchanged one long, calculating glance. Fawley felt the spell of the man from that moment. Often afterwards he wondered why he had not felt it, even when he had seen him with his face half covered with lather and his fingers plunged into the silver bowl. I was at your Embassy on Thursday afternoon. I have worked with him. Why are you not working for your own country? They have adopted new methods. However, you need have no fear nor need you think that you are the only foreigner who is working for us. You will probably become acquainted before your work is over with a German, a Monegasque and a Dane. I am admittedly a free lance. I must have work of an adventurous type, and since my country cannot offer it to me, I must seek for it in any decent way. That is why I shall give you your work chapter by chapter. To-day I propose only to hand you your credentials—which, by the by, will mean sudden death to you if ever they are found by the wrong people upon your person—and explain the commencement of your task. Almost immediately, through a door which Fawley had not previously noticed, a young man entered, noiseless and swift in his movements and of intriguing personality. His head was shaven like the head of a monk, his complexion was almost ivory white, unrelieved by the slightest tinge of colour. His fingers were bony. His frame was thin. To his surprise, Berati introduced the newcomer. Fawley found it, as he had expected, as cold as ice. But then indeed, on that first day, Berati himself seemed unreal to his visitor. The former tore open one of the packages the secretary had brought and tossed its contents across the table. Inside was a plain platinum and gold cigarette case with six cigarettes on either side, neatly kept in place by a platinum clasp. Almost instantaneously a third division of the case disclosed itself. He seemed to be appraising the man who stood on the other side of his desk. I did not show the self-control of a schoolboy. I had not even the excuse of being in a hurry. I was annoyed because you had taken my place and I showed it. Our own men—“most of them, at any rate”—err on the side of being too stealthy. They are too obvious in their subterfuges ever to reach the summits. You have the art—or shall I call it the genius? You impressed me, as you would any man, with the idea that you were a somewhat choleric, somewhat crude Englishman or American, thinking, as usual, that the better half of any deal should fall to you. I made up my mind that if you were free you were my man. You know where to look for your identification papers if it should become necessary to show them. Your supplementary passports are in the same place—“both diplomatic and social. He looked meaningfully across his table. A countryman of ours, I remind myself, is in charge there. There is also a German named Krust—but that will do later. Our relations with him are at present undetermined. Your first

centre of activities will be within twenty kilometres of the Casino. Fawley took it, but lingered for a moment. There will be plenty of work for you. You will begin where Joseffi left off. I wish you better fortune. In doing so, however, he made a not incomprehensible error. The room was irregular in shape, with panelled walls, and every one of the oval recesses possessed a door which matched its neighbour. His fingers closed upon the handle of the one through which he believed that he had entered. The next to your right. Be so good as to pass out by the adjoining door. They are even now matching the strength of their fingers against mine. He sprang to one side, sheltering himself behind the partially opened door. A bullet whistled past his ear, so that for hours afterwards he felt a singing there, as though a hot wind was stabbing at him. There was a crash from behind him in the room. Down the passage was dimly visible the figure of a woman, whose feet seemed scarcely to touch the polished oak floor. Fawley was barely in time, for she had almost reached the far end before he started in pursuit. He called out to her, hoping that she would turn her head and allow him a glimpse of her face, but she was too clever for any gaucherie of that sort. It was only a matter of seconds before Fawley flung them on one side in pursuit and emerged into a large square anteroom with shabby magnificent hangings, but with several wonderful pictures on the walls and two closed doors on either side. He paused to listen but all that he could hear was the soft sobbing of stringed instruments in the distance and a murmur of many voices, apparently from the reception rooms of the palazzo. He looked doubtfully at the doors. They had the air of not having been opened for generations. The only signs of human life came from the corridor straight ahead which obviously led into the reception rooms. Fawley hesitated only for a moment, then he made his way cautiously along it until he arrived at a slight bend and a further barrier of black curtains—curtains of some heavy material which looked like velvet—emblazoned in faded gold with the arms of a famous family. He paused once more and listened. At that moment the music ceased. From the storm of applause he gathered that there must have been at least several hundred people quite close to him on the other side of the curtain. Notwithstanding his eagerness to track down the would-be assassin, it seemed hopeless to make his way amongst a throng of strangers, however ingenious the explanations he might offer, in search of a woman whose face he had scarcely seen and whom he could recognise only by the colour of her gown. Reluctantly he retraced his steps and stood once more in the anteroom which, like many apartments in the great Roman palaces which he had visited, seemed somehow to have lost its sense of habitation and to carry with it a suggestion of disuse. There were the two doors. He looked at them doubtfully. Suddenly one was softly opened and a woman stood looking out at him with a half-curious, half-frightened expression in her brown eyes. She was wearing a dress the colour of which reminded him of the lemon groves around Sorrento. Fawley had seen many of them before in his life but never one quite of this type. Her eyes, which should have been beautiful, were blazing. Her lips—gashes of scarlet fury—seemed as if they were on the point of withering him with a storm of words. Yet when she spoke, she spoke with reserve, without subtlety, a plain, blunt question. Instinctively he followed her lead and listened. More and more distinctly he could hear detached voices at the end of the corridor which led into the reception rooms. The curtains must have been drawn to one side, for the hum of conversation became much louder. She caught at his wrist. They passed into a darkened entresol. She locked the door with a ponderous key. She scoffed at him. The fury had faded from her face and Fawley, in an impersonal sort of way, was beginning to realise how beautiful she was.

Chapter 2 : The Spy Paramount

The Spy Paramount has the charm of a Sean Connery film without quite so many deaths or explosions. It is lighter fare than the spy novels currently in vogue, but nonetheless remains appealing despite its age.

The Spy Paramount, by E. Phillips Oppenheim Chapter 7 The blue envelope! He tore it open, read it very deliberatelyâ€”for it was in a somewhat curious cipher which he had only just committed to memoryâ€”and then, lighting a match, watched it slowly consume to ashes. Afterwards he lingered for a few minutes on his balcony, looking up towards the misty peaks eastwards of Mont Agel. He had thoroughly established himself as a leisure-loving American with a passion for games. He now busied himself at the telephone, cancelling a few social engagements, for Fawley, reserved though he was by habit, was a man always sought after. Perhaps to the same place as Joseffi, who had been found in the gardens with a bullet through his heart and a revolver by his side, but who had never been known to enter the Casino in his life. Back about Sunday, I should think. He waved his hand and drove off without further speech. Fawley, some five days later, driving his high-powered Lancia car through one of the many passes of the lesser Alps between Roquebrune and the frontier, suddenly swung around a corner to find himself confronted by a movable obstruction of white freshly painted rails and an ominous notice. A soldier in the uniform of the Chasseurs Alpains stepped forward, his rifle at a threatening angle. Fawley, who had brought his car to a standstill, leaned forward and produced a map. He addressed the soldier in his own language. You have blocked the wrong road. This is clearly marked in the latest edition of the issued maps as a Number Two road between Hegel and the village of Les Estaples. There is no passage here for civilians. He must return the way he came. I wish to discover how far that is the truth. So did the private. So did the young lieutenant, who had just ridden up on a high-spirited horse in time to hear the end of the sentence. I have a map in my hand which clearly indicates this as a public thoroughfare. The sergeant mounted on one footboard, the private on the other. He found himself, after a climb of a couple of kilometres along a road which commenced in villainous fashion, but whose latter portion was smooth and beautifully engineered, in front of a recently built, white stone house, around which a considerable clearing had been made. A sentry stood in front of the door. The lieutenant who had galloped on ahead had disappeared into the house. Fawley rose to his feet. You use a lot of timber in the army, I suppose. The horizon was suddenly blurred. A few flakes of sleet began to fall. The sergeant pointed to the house. Fawley turned up his coat collar and swore softly. The colonel is not noted for his good temper. Colonel Dumesnil looked up from his task of studying a pile of maps and watched the newcomer keenly. The former was a short man, whose spurred riding boots scarcely reached the floor, but his face was stern and his steel-grey eyes and tone were alike menacing. I must ask you what you are doing in this part of the world. There was a dead silence. There are some golf links about twelve kilometres from here at a place called Sospel. I have taken a great fancy to them and to the hotel, and as I have a little capital to invest, I thought of buying the lot. The one thing which makes me hesitate is that no one is willing or able to tell me where the new French fortifications and gun emplacements are situated, and until I know that, I feel that my property might be utterly destroyed in case of war. The Colonel examined them and his face relaxed. You should have applied to the authorities for any information you desired. All that I need is a little general information. This is from no lack of courtesy, Major Fawley. It is a matter of military necessity which I am amazed that you should not already have realised and respected. Strangers are sometimes treated generously, as Monsieur has been, on their first visit to the nest in the mountains. The second visit means the cold steel or the swift bullet. The bones of more than one too curious person will be found in the secret places of the mountains yonder, when the world comes to an end. A stern inhospitable line of country it was, with great declivities and huge fragments of rock split by the slow fires of eternity. Fawley shivered a little as he stepped back into the car. I am best out of the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, there was something serious in his expression behind the grin.

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Chapter 4 : The Spy Paramount, by E. Phillips Oppenheim

Martin Fawley glanced irritably at the man stretched flat in the chair he covetedâ€”the man whose cheeks were partly concealed by lather and whose mass of dark hair was wildly disarranged.

Chapter 5 : The Spy Paramount|E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM|Free download|PDF EPUB|Free editorial

To launch their Spy Classics series, the British Library is proud to introduce Oppenheim and his classic work to a new reading public. The Spy Paramount takes us to Rome, American Martin Fawley, a former secret service agent, is recruited as a spy by General Berati, the most feared man in fascist Italy.

Chapter 6 : The Spy Paramount [The Man Who Saved the World]

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Chapter 7 : The Spy Paramount by E. Phillips Oppenheim

The Spy Paramount: A British Library Spy Classic This breathless novel of international intrigue, first published in and now available as a British Library Spy Classic, follows the adventures of Anglo-American freelance spy Maj. Martin Fawley.

Chapter 8 : THE SPY PARAMOUNT by E. Phillips Oppenheim | Kirkus Reviews

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Chapter 9 : The Spy Paramount, by E. Phillips Oppenheim : chapter7

Michael Dirda reviews "The Spy Paramount" and "The Great Impersonation," by E. Phillips Oppenheim.