

## Rome, Open City, Part XI

Director: Roberto Rossellini (1945)

It's a sunny day. Manfredi hops down off the trolley and walks briskly to the church.

As Don Pietro sits at his desk, the sexton leans over and whispers, "There's a man waiting to see you."  
"Oh, yes. Let him come in."

Manfredi enters. Don Pietro has prepared a false ID card for him. "Giovanni Episcopo... You made me two years younger," he jokes.

The priest introduces Manfredi to the Austrian deserter, who will go with them to the monastery. Helping the priest on with his coat, the sexton scolds, "When will you stop getting yourself in trouble?"  
"Shhh! You and the boy go right to bed after dinner."  
"Yes and who can sleep?"

Out in the courtyard, Marcello sits enveloped in Francesco's arms. "We won't see each other for a while," the man explains, pulling the boy closer. "But I'll come back and we'll always be together."  
Marcello wears a black band on his sleeve.

From off-screen, the priest calls, "Let's go, Francesco!"  
"I'm coming!"

Francesco and the boy stand to say goodbye. As Francesco starts to walk away, Marcello calls out, "Papa!"  
Francesco turns back, as the three other men walk ahead.

"You might be cold. Mamma gave me this." The boy hands Pina's plaid scarf to Francesco.  
Francesco strokes his hair and he leaves.

By now, the others are out in the street. Suddenly two black cars pull up to the curb. Men in trenchcoats and German soldiers with guns drawn emerge, shouting, "Stop!" "Hands up!" "Nobody move!" They force the men into the cars.

Seeing what is happening, Francesco ducks back into the alley. The cars take off, headed for via Tasso: Gestapo headquarters.

With Ingrid watching, the Major speaks on the phone. He hangs up and tells her, "The information that we got was correct." She smiles. "Well done!"  
He puts something into her open palm.

Ingrid goes into the sitting room beyond, where Marina sits beside a table stacked with liquor bottles. "The information was accurate," she says, stroking Marina's hair. "Good girl!"

From a trunk at the back of the room, Ingrid takes out a fur coat. She shows it to Marina. "Do you like it? Try it on! Go on, darling!" She helps Marina on with the coat.

“Magnificent!” Ingrid says, leading Marina to a wall mirror. “Look at yourself, Marina!” As Ingrid arranges her hair, the young woman studies herself in the mirror.

“Did they arrest him?” she asks.

“Yes.” Ingrid puts her arms around her informant.

“What will they do to him?”

“Nothing bad.”

Ingrid lays her head affectionately against Marina’s as they gaze in the mirror. “We need certain information,” she explains. “Once he provides it, we’ll set him free.”

Marina turns away from the mirror. “And if he doesn’t want to?”

“Don’t worry. He’ll talk.”

Grasping Marina’s chin, Ingrid turns her head until they are face to face. “Do you love him?”

“Me? I don’t love anyone.” She walks away.

She sits back down, clearly distressed.

Ingrid settles on the arm of the chair, leaning over. “Why so mean to me tonight?”

Grimacing, Marina pulls away: “Let me leave!”

But Ingrid pushes her down. “No! You’re staying here by me.” She reaches into her pocket for the drugs.

“No, I don’t want to! I don’t want any more! Let me leave!” Marina sobs, “What have I done? What have I done?”

The arrested men are marched to their cell. On the way, they see a man dragged unconscious down a corridor.

A soldier pushes the priest into a room with such force that he falls. His glasses fly off and break.

As the others help him to his feet, Manfredi says, “It’s all my fault. They must have been tailing me.”

“On the contrary,” the priest responds. “They’ve probably been watching me for a long time.” He tells the Austrian, “I shouldn’t have had you come to the church.”

“Shut up!” the deserter warns. “The walls are listening to us!”

“Let them listen! Considering what we have to say...” comments Manfredi. “Right, Don Pietro?”

“Of course. We have nothing to tell.”

A piercing scream of agony from outside strikes terror in the Austrian, who says, “Did you hear that? We’ll scream like that too!” He leans his hands against the cell wall in despair.

“Be calm,” says the priest, and sets a comforting hand on the man’s back.

A soldier hands a small packet to Bergmann, saying, “This was found at the priest’s residence, sir. And these are the prisoners’ documents – all forged.”

The soldier clicks his heels and leaves.

The Austrian deserter paces in the cell. “Aren’t you afraid?” he asks, looking at Manfredi, who is sitting on the floor.

“Yes, very afraid, but I feel very calm, too.”

He looks up at the priest. "It's strange, isn't it? I don't know why, but I..."  
"I feel the same way."

"You're both crazy! Listen to me!" He kneels and puts his hand on Manfredi's arm. "I know you must have something to hide. Human lives depend upon your silence. Do you think you can resist their torture? But you don't know! They turn even heroes into cowards!"  
Manfredi responds calmly, "We're not heroes. But they'll never find out anything, I assure you."

Bergmann asks, "What time is it?"

"8:30, sir," a soldier responds, as he lights Bergmann's cigarette. Ingrid is there too, standing in front of a map of Europe.

The Major frets, "These men must talk before curfew ends in the morning! The rebels must not learn of their arrest. We have ten hours."

In the dark cell, Manfredi approaches the priest. "Listen, Don Pietro... I don't know if we're going to stay together any longer or if we'll see each other again, but thanks for all you've done for me and for all of us. No, let me say... I have to tell you the truth. I'm not who you think I am. I'm—"

The Austrian interrupts. "Listen! They're coming! I beg you, don't betray me!"

But they take Manfredi away first.

Bergmann is smoking at his desk and looking over documents when there is a knock at the door.

"Krammer, put out the light," he says and angles his desk lamp out towards the chair facing him. Then he calls out, "Come in!"

Manfredi is escorted to the chair and sits, the glare of the lamp in his eyes.

The Major begins to interrogate him, but Manfredi claims to be a merchant from Apulia, then the German stops him, saying, "If I had time to waste, I'd love to discuss your business with you, but I'm pressed for time and I regard you very highly, so I'll make you an offer. I know all about you: your real name and past political activity. As for the present, I know from my informers that you're a leader of the military branch of the National Liberation Committee.\* I absolutely must learn the details of this organization and you're just the man to tell me about it."

*\*The National Liberation Committee is the umbrella organization of the resistance against the German occupation of Italy.*

"You say you know who I am and my past and present activities... Then why make this offer? Why do you think that I could become an informer?"

"I'm sorry to see you refuse such a reasonable offer. But I'm sure we'll come to an agreement before dawn." To the waiting soldier, he orders, "Krammer, take him away."

Krammer brings him to an adjoining room, where two brawny SS soldiers are waiting.

They pull him roughly into the room and Krammer closes the door.