

Spy Game (2001)

Set in 1991, the film depicts the U.S. and Chinese Governments on the verge of a major trade agreement, with the American President due to pay a visit to China to seal the deal. The Central Intelligence Agency gets word that their Special Activities Division operative Tom Bishop (Brad Pitt) has been captured trying to free an Englishwoman, Elizabeth Hadley (Catherine McCormack), from a Chinese prison near Su Chou (Suzhou). Bishop is being questioned under torture and will be executed within twenty-four hours unless he is claimed by the U.S. Government, so they scramble to decide what to do if they claim Bishop as an agent, they risk destroying the trade agreement. Exacerbating the situation is the fact that Bishop was operating in a "rogue" capacity without permission from the Agency.

In an attempt to quickly deal with the situation, CIA executives call in Nathan Muir (Robert Redford), an aging mid-level case officer on his last day before retirement, and the man who recruited Bishop. Although they tell Muir that they simply need him to act as a "stop gap" to fill in some holes in their background files, the officials are in reality hoping that what he gives them is the smoking gun they need to justify letting Bishop die. Realizing as much, Muir attempts to save Bishop by leaking the story to CNN through a contact in Hong Kong, believing that the CIA will rescue Tom once a public outcry puts pressure on them to do so. Unfortunately for Muir, the tactic only stalls them, as a phone call to the FCC from a high ranking executive results in CNN retracting the story.

During the debriefing, referred to above, Muir describes how he recruited Bishop into the MACV-SOG while the latter was an Marine Corps sniper in Vietnam. Muir also discusses their tour of duty in Berlin in 1975. Both sub-plots are given extensive time in the film. Considerable time is also devoted to Muir and Bishop's spy work in Lebanon that culminated to a plot similar to that of the 1985 Beirut car bombing the aftermath of which led to the last time the two saw each other face to face.

With his plan quashed, Muir resorts to far more dangerous tactics, secretly creating a forged urgent operational directive from the CIA Director to commence Operation Dinner Out: a daring rescue mission spearheaded by U.S. Navy SEALs which Bishop laid the groundwork for as a 'Plan B' to his own rescue attempt. Using US\$282,000 of his life savings and a misappropriated file on Chinese coastline satellite imagery, Muir bribes a Chinese energy official to cut power to the prison for thirty minutes, during which time the SEAL rescue team retrieves Bishop and Hadley.

Hadley, who fled the UK after carrying out a bombing of the Chinese Embassy, met Bishop in Lebanon. She was in the Chinese prison after being kidnapped and exchanged for an arrested US diplomat. It was in fact Muir himself who had arranged the kidnapping, believing she could possibly expose Bishop's true identity as a CIA paramilitary operative. After realizing that Hadley was the target of Bishop's daring rescue attempt, Muir finally learns that he greatly underestimated Bishop's feelings for her. It is this guilt which prompts him to part with his life savings in order to save her and Bishop, going against his warning to Bishop years previously in Berlin that he would not go after him if he went "off the reservation."

Bishop, who is rescued at the end of the film nearly 15 minutes prior to his scheduled execution, realizes Muir was behind his rescue since the name of the plan to rescue him, "Operation Dinner Out," was a reference to a birthday gift that Bishop gave Muir while they were in Lebanon.

Cast

Cast overview, first billed only:



[Robert Redford](#)

... [Nathan D. Muir](#)



[Brad Pitt](#)

... [Tom Bishop](#)



[Catherine McCormack](#)

... Elizabeth Hadley



[Stephen Dillane](#)

... [Charles Harker](#)



[Larry Bryggman](#)

... [Troy Folger](#)



[Marianne Jean-Baptiste](#)

... Gladys Jennip



[Matthew Marsh](#)

... Dr. William Byars



[Todd Boyce](#)

... Robert Aiken



[Michael Paul Chan](#)

... Vincent Vy Ngo



[Garrick Hagon](#)

... CIA Director Cy Wilson



[Andrew Grainger](#)

... Andrew Unger



[Bill Buell](#)

... Fred Kappler



[Colin Stinton](#)

... Henry Pollard



[Ted Maynard](#)

... CIA Administrator



[Tom Hodgkins](#)

... CIA Lobby Guard

Tom Bishop: All right, so what else? What else do I need to know?

Nathan Muir: Put away some money so you can die someplace warm and don't ever touch it. Not for anyone, ever.

Tom Bishop: Okay, is that it?

Nathan Muir: Don't *ever* risk your life for an asset. If it comes down to you or them... send flowers.

If it comes down to you or them = se è una questione che tocca a te o a loro...

Nathan Muir: I take it you didn't get to be a marksman putting food on your mama's table.

Tom Bishop: No, sir. We have a Safeway back home.

Nathan Muir: Where'd you learnt to shoot?

Tom Bishop: Boy scouts, sir.

Nathan Muir: What, are you kidding me?

Tom Bishop: No, sir.

marksman = tiratore di precisione; **are you kidding me?** = hai voglia di scherzare?

Tom Bishop: Central Intelligence?

Nathan Muir: You'd be working for me. Mostly undercover.

undercover = sotto copertura

Tom Bishop: Happy?

Nathan Muir: Seventy-four casualties, an apartment block leveled, one dead terrorist? Yeah, happy.

Tom Bishop: We have some fucked up barometer for success, don't we?

fucked up barometer = barometro sballato

Charles Harker: If these walls could talk, huh. All this history, I envy you.

Nathan Muir: Then bag your job, you can be just like me.

Charles Harker: No, really. The debt this country owes you guys.

Nathan Muir: Chuck, are you gonna dance with your hand on my ass all night or are you gonna make your move?

bag your job = molla il lavoro

Nathan Muir: Hell of an ad for the Boy Scouts.

Hell of an ad for = grande pubblicità

Charles Harker: We need the press on this like we need a third tit.

Nathan Muir: You using the other two?

We need the press on this like we need a third tit = abbiamo bisogno della stampa come di una terza tetta.

Tom Bishop: Don't tell me that. Don't fucking tell me that. You didn't look in his eyes. Don't tell me that!

Nathan Muir: He was your asset, somebody you use for information.

Tom Bishop: Ah, Jesus Christ, you just... You don't just trade these people like they're baseball cards! It's not a fucking game!

Nathan Muir: Oh, yes it is. It's exactly what it is. And it's no kid's game either. This is a whole other game. And it's serious and it's dangerous. And it's not one you want to lose.

Tom Bishop: Nathan, we killed this man. We used him and we killed him. Okay, then you got to

help me understand this one. You got... Nathan, what are we doing here? And don't give me some bullshit about the greater good.

Nathan Muir: That's exactly what it's about. Because what we do is unfortunately very, very necessary. And if you're not willing to sacrifice scum like Schmidt for those that want nothing more than their freedom, then you better take a long hard look at your chosen profession my friend. Because it doesn't get any easier. You wanna walk? You wanna walk, walk.

You just don't trade these people like they're baseball cards! = è solo che non si scambiano le persone come se fossero figurine del baseball!

Nathan Muir: We didn't know when the Doc was going to be giving the Sheik his physical but it was our one and only opportunity to take him out. So I didn't have the usual time to butter him up. Which means we needed twice the sex with half the foreplay.

So I didn't have the usual time to butter him up = così non ho avuto il tempo che avevo di solito per lavorarmelo.

Tom Bishop: [*to Nathan Muir*] I'm done with the reasons, Nathan. I'm done with you. I'm not ending up like you.

I'm done with you = con te ho chiuso.

Anna Cathcart: The Scotch is older than she is...

Nathan Muir: Am I supposed to feel bad about that?

Troy Fogler: [*re-enters the room looking faintly amused*] There's been... an incident, in China.

Charles Harker: [*looks confused for a moment, then shocked as he realises that Muir has played them all*] Oh, Jesus Christ.

Tom Bishop: Vodka did me in, I'm comin' home.

Nathan Muir: Throw out the bottle. They know.

Vodka did me in = la vodka mi ha ucciso.

Nathan Muir: [*talking on the phone to the marines about his plan to get Bishop out of China. The marine commander says he is ready*] That's good. Operation Dinner Out is a go. Repeat, Operation Dinner out is a go.

CIA Administrator: [*to the rest of the room*] After all this time, he treats his retirement dinner as a CIA operation!

Repeat, Operation Dinner out is a go = ripeto, l'operazione cena fuori è autorizzata/procede.

Nathan Muir: Troy, do you remember when we could tell the good guys from the bad guys?

do you remember when we could tell the good guys from the bad guys? = ti ricordi quando riuscivamo a distinguere I buoni dai cattivi?
