

RED SPARROW (2018)

- Released on March 2nd, 2018
- 2 Hour 20 minutes
- \$69,000,000 (estimated) Budget
- Directed by Francis Lawrence
- Written by Justin Haythe (screenplay by), Jason Matthews (based upon the book by)
- Chernin Entertainment, Film Rites, Soundtrack New York
- Rated R for strong violence, torture, sexual content, language and some graphic nudity

QUICK THOUGHTS

- Phil Svitek
- Demetri Panos

DEVELOPMENT

- Based on the 2013 novel of the same name by Jason Matthews
- 20th Century Fox purchased the film rights, and signed Francis Lawrence to direct
- Lawrence worked on adapting Matthews' book in 2015, although he said he had reservations about the timeliness of a Cold War story
- Production company: TSG Entertainment, Chernin Entertainment

WRITING (Justin Haythe (screenplay by), Jason Matthews (based upon the book by))

- Matthews said the idea of "sparrows" and "sparrow school" was based on State School 4 in the Soviet Union, but Russian "sexpionage" is now done by women contracted outside of spy agencies
- The Russian concept of kompromat (compromising material for a public figure that can be used as blackmail, etc.) was also influential
- Screenwriter Justin Haythe reduced the number of narrators and shifting perspectives in the novel, concentrating on Dominika
- Vladimir Putin, who appears in the novel, was cut from the movie, due to Lawrence believing it would be a distraction to have an actor play the highly public figure
- Matthews, who said he based his book on his experiences in the CIA, was also hired as technical advisor, to supervise the accuracy of the depiction of espionage
- Justin Haythe is a writer and producer, known for Revolutionary Road, The Lone Ranger and A Cure for Wellness
- Jason Matthews is a retired officer of the CIA's Operations Directorate. Over a thirty-three-year career, he served in multiple overseas locations

STORY/TOPICS

- It tells the story of a Russian intelligence officer who is sent to make contact with a CIA agent in the hope of discovering the identity of a mole
- In modern day Russia, Dominika Egorova, a famed ballerina, who supports her ill mother
- Her uncle Ivan tasks her with seducing a Russian politician in order to replace his phone with a state-provided phone. She accepts so that her mother's medical treatments are

paid for. Ivan kills the politician then offers Dominika a choice to begin working for Russian intelligence, or be executed because she knows too much.

- Dominika is sent to train to become a Russian operative, known as a 'Sparrow'
- Her first assignment is to gain the trust of Nate Nash, a CIA operative working in Moscow, and reveal his contact
- Dominika makes contact with Nash, who determines that she is a Russian intelligence operative. Dominika reveals her true identity to him, as well as her motive to find out Marble's identity. She offers to work for Nash as a double agent.
- After a meeting gone wrong, they require her to return to Moscow. She is tortured and interrogated for days. She repeatedly denies compromising Boucher, and convinces Ivan that she is now credible to the Americans
- Dominika returns to Budapest, and informs Nash that she wishes to defect with her mother to America
- Dominika awakes one morning to find Nash being tortured by Simionov, for him to reveal the identity of Marble. She kills Simionov to save Nash
- General Vladimir Korchnoi reveals that he is Marble and asks Dominika to turn him in so she will receive a promotion and be hailed as a hero
- Instead she frames her uncle Ivan as the mole rather than betray Korchnoi. Ivan is killed by the Russian side, and Dominika is congratulated for her work

CAST:

Jennifer Lawrence as Dominika Egorova

Joel Edgerton as Nate Nash

Matthias Schoenaerts as Ivan Vladimirovich Egorov, Dominika's uncle

Charlotte Rampling as "Matron", the Headmistress of Sparrow School

Mary-Louise Parker as Stephanie Boucher, a US Senator's Chief of Staff

Jeremy Irons as General Vladimir Andreievich Korchnoi

Ciaran Hinds as Colonel Zacharov

Joely Richardson as Nina Egorova, Dominika's mother

Bill Camp as Marty Gable

Thekla Reuten as Marta Yelenova, a fellow Sparrow

Sergej Onopko as Simionov, a Russian operative and executioner

Sebastian Hülk as Sergei Matorin

Hugh Quarshie as Simon Benford

Sakina Jaffrey as Trish Forsyth

Douglas Hodge as Maxim Volontov

Sasha Frolova as Anya

Kristof Konrad as Dimitri Ustinov

JENNIFER LAWRENCE (Dominika Egorova)

- Known as Katniss Everdeen from the Hunger Games series, she also was in X-Men as Raven/Mystique, Silver Linings Playbook, Joy and American Hustle
- Francis Lawrence presented the screenplay to Jennifer Lawrence, who accepted the part
- Jennifer stated she admired Francis' direction. Her sole hesitation being the "really sexual" nature of the character
- Lawrence studied ballet for four months

- In post-production, Francis offered Jennifer Lawrence the opportunity to view a cut of the film ahead of the studio and producers, so that she might request the deletion of any nude or sexual scenes. She declined to request any deletions
- Deadline.com noted that Lawrence's salary of \$15–20 million was too much to spend on just one star
- the youngest person to have earned four Oscar nominations (she won best actress for her work in *Silver Linings Playbook*) and three Golden Globe awards
- Jennifer has worked with Director Francis on 3 other movies, all a part of the Hunger Games' series
- Lawrence is currently the highest paid actress in the world

JOEL EDGERTON (Nate Nash)

- An American CIA agent who's in league with a high-ranking Russian intelligence source
- Edgerton was coached by former CIA member and writer Matthews

MATTHIAS SCHOENAERTS (Vanya Egorov)

Dominika's uncle, a high-ranking Russian-intelligence official

- joined the cast by December 2016

CHARLOTTE RAMPLING (Matron)

- The ultimate icy headmistress, played in sadistic high style
- An icon of the Swinging Sixties, she is most well-known for her appearances in *Stardust*, *Memories*, *Evelyn Vogel* in *Dexter*, *Swimming Pool*, *Angel* and *The Night Porter*
- Rampling expresses her admiration for Lawrence and many people describe their careers as parallel, just in very different times

MARY LOUISE-PARKER (Stephanie Boucher)

- neurotic lush who's the turncoat chief of staff for a U.S. senator.

JOELY RICHARDSON (Nina Egorova)

- Her sick mother

JEREMY IRONS (General Korchnoi)

- Joined the cast by December 2016
- As a Russian general, doesn't even try for the accent
- Ivan's superior
- He reveals to Dominika that he is the mole and rather than live his life in fear, he requests that she turn him in so she can progress her career

DIRECTING (Francis Lawrence)

- Known for 3 Hunger Games movies, *I am Legend* and *Constantine*
- A well-known music video director, having directed videos for artists such as Britney Spears, Will Smith, Sarah McLachlan, and Aerosmith. He won a Grammy for Best Short Form Music Video for Lady Gaga's *Bad Romance*.
- No relation to Jennifer Lawrence

PRODUCTION (Jo Willems)

- Principal photography started in Budapest and Dunaújváros in Hungary on January 5, 2017
- Other filming locations include Festetics Mansion in Dég, Hungary; Bratislava, Slovakia; and Vienna, Austria

EDITING/VFX (Alan Edward Bell)

- Worked on Hunger Games, 500 Days of Summer
- Bell said “We didn’t want [the movie] to feel too warm”
- “We had a cut that was 150 minutes and showed it to people who thought it was awesome. Then we thought it would be great if we could get it down to 130 minutes. When we showed people that version, they didn’t like Dominika. As an editor, you have to realize that it’s about whether you’re engaged or not, whether the characters and plot are enough to keep you involved. We learned something from that audience testing and so we ended around the 140-minute mark.”
- For Bell it was important that Dominika be a likeable character, in his editing he made sure to show her as an emotional character with a conscience, not a robot

SOUND/MUSIC (James Newton Howard)

- Howard has scored The Hunger Games, The Sixth Sense, The Fugitive, Signs, King Kong, Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them
- Sony Classical released the official soundtrack album
 1. Opus 40, No. 6 – Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
 2. Wish – Vika
 3. Andante (Piano Sonata No. 1 In C, K.279) – Mitsuko Uchida
 4. Allegro Maestoso (Piano Sonata No. 8 In A Minor, K.310) – Mitsuko Uchida
 5. Swoopin – Baauer
 6. Adagio – Allegro – Andantino – Più Allegro – Tempo I (Fantasia In C Minor K475) – Mitsuko Uchida
 7. Adagio (Piano Concerto In A Minor, Op. 16) – Stephen Kovacevich, Bbc Symphony Orchestra, Sir Colin Davis
 8. Brandenburg Concerto #1 In F Major, Bwv 1046 – Bach Collegium Japan
 9. Age Of Mutation – Combichrist
 10. 28b. Pas De Deux: Adagio (The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66, Th.13 / Act 3) – The National Philharmonic Orchestra, Richard Bonyngé

PROMOTION

- Jennifer Lawrence posed with her co-stars in London and sparked controversy and outrage from women on the internet due to the fact that she was in a revealing dress with no jacket while her male co-stars were all bundled up
 - Lawrence was quick to come to her own defense saying she thought the dress was gorgeous and wouldn't dare cover it with a coat since she was only outside for a few minutes
- The official poster for Red Sparrow was released on 1/7/18
- A final trailer was released 1/8/18

BOX OFFICE

- *Red Sparrow* premiered at Newseum in Washington, D.C. on February 15, 2018
- Released in the United States on March 2, 2018
- The film has grossed \$89 million worldwide
- Release had moved from November 10, 2017 to March 2, 2018

RECEPTION

- RT: 48% Tatometer: 57%
- IMDB: 46.7/10
- Cinemascore: B
- Critics have called it "more style than substance", criticizing the film's length and over-reliance on graphic violence and sex, but praised Jennifer Lawrence's performance