

Joe & Anthony Russo's *Captain America: Winter Soldier* (2014)

aspect ratio: 2.39:1

Day One: Plot, Theme, Character



Themes



S.H.I.E.L.D. takes
the world as it is, not
as we'd like it to be.

This sometimes absurd bit of fantasy fiction makes large claims about the global order, A.I., and the use of force. Does any of it ring true?



What is so ironic about the message Fury types and shows Steve on his cell phone?



Does this tale underscore the vulnerability of the human body more than it emphasizes its resilience?



What are the limits and capabilities of the A.I. in Fury's car?



Why does Natasha find it impossible to crack the thumb drive's decryption?



What '80s film does Natasha jokingly quote, and why does this matter?

Does this Marvel film present a post-racial, colorblind narrative, or do issues of race play a role in character, dialogue, and/or plot?



How does the deceased grandfather Nick describes relate to the project he reveals to Steve?



What does Fury ask the officers who pull up next to him, and why?

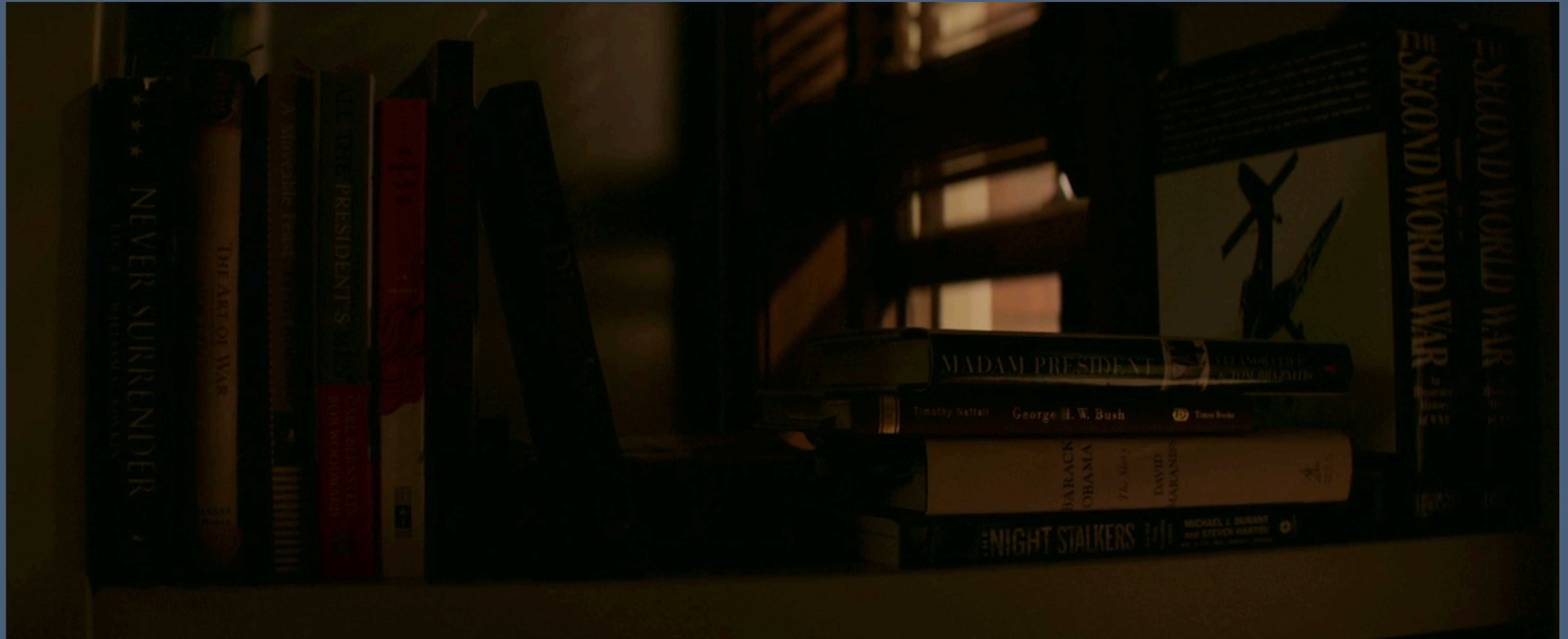
Character Studies



Why does Nick Fury's secret project upset Steve so thoroughly, and how does Fury defend his actions?



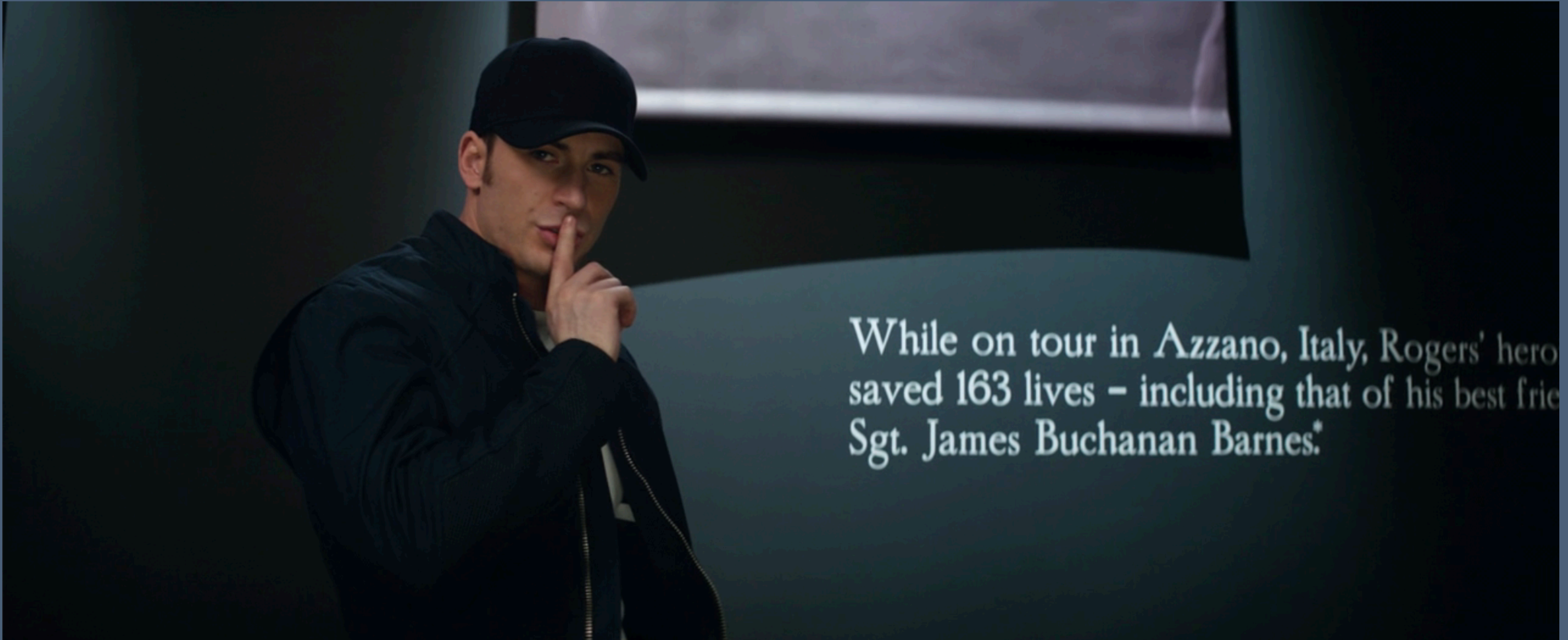
What narrative purpose does the ongoing discussion of Steve's love life serve?



What do the books on Steve's shelf suggest about his current preoccupations?

- Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* (5th c. B.C.)
- Nicolle Wallace's *Madam President*
- Eleanor Clift's & Tom Brazaitis's *Madam President: Women Blazing the Leadership Trail* (2000)
- Michael J. Durant, Hartov, & Johnson's *The Night Stalkers: Top-Secret Missions of the U.S. Army's Special Operations Aviation Regiment* (2006)
- Timothy Naftali's *George H. W. Bush: The American Presidents Series: The 41st President, 1989-1993* (2007)
- William G. Boykin's *Never Surrender: A Soldier's Journey to the Crossroads of Faith and Freedom* (2008)
- David Maraniss's *Barack Obama: The Story* (2012)

What do the books on Steve's shelf suggest about his current preoccupations?



While on tour in Azzano, Italy, Rogers' hero saved 163 lives – including that of his best friend Sgt. James Buchanan Barnes.*

Why does Steve walk into the Smithsonian outfitted in civilian attire instead of his costume?



Why does Steve open up about his moral quandary with Peggy? Does she provide helpful advice?



Are Steve's deductive and sleuthing powers equal to Natasha's?

Falcon
(Sam Wilson)



Why do Sam & Steve end up bonding?



As revealed at the VA, what are the two reasons Sam stepped back from active duty?

Black Widow
(Natasha Romanof)



When does Natasha Romanoff resemble a traditional hero, and in what ways does she not fit the mold?



What was Black Widow doing when she was shot in the side a few years earlier?



What does Natasha think to do with the thumb drive that Fury did not consider?



Is Black Widow's charm—her allure—a factor in her effectiveness as an agent?



Why is Natasha the most visibly distressed in the hospital scene?



It's not all things to
all people, all the time.

Are we supposed to view Natasha's moral flexibility
as a strength?



Why is Natasha so shaken by the revelation in Wheaton, New Jersey?



At what point does Steve finally trust Natasha?

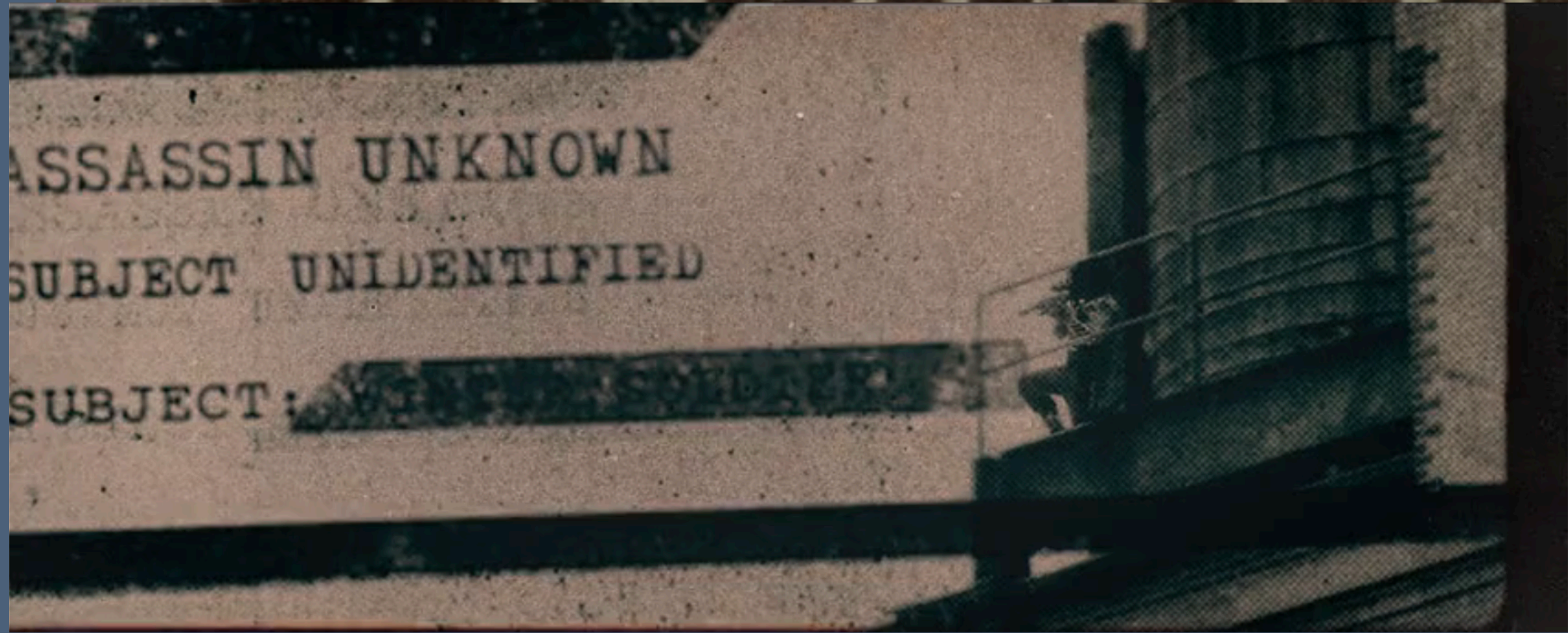
Villains



How do the Russo Brothers undercut any grace we might extend to the bad guys?

THE NATION'S NEWS SOURCE
Vol. 23, No. 89
NEW YORK, NEW YORK, TUESDAY AUGUST 14TH, 1945
WEATHER: Cloudy, Rain

GERMAN SCIENTISTS DEPORTED BY U.S.

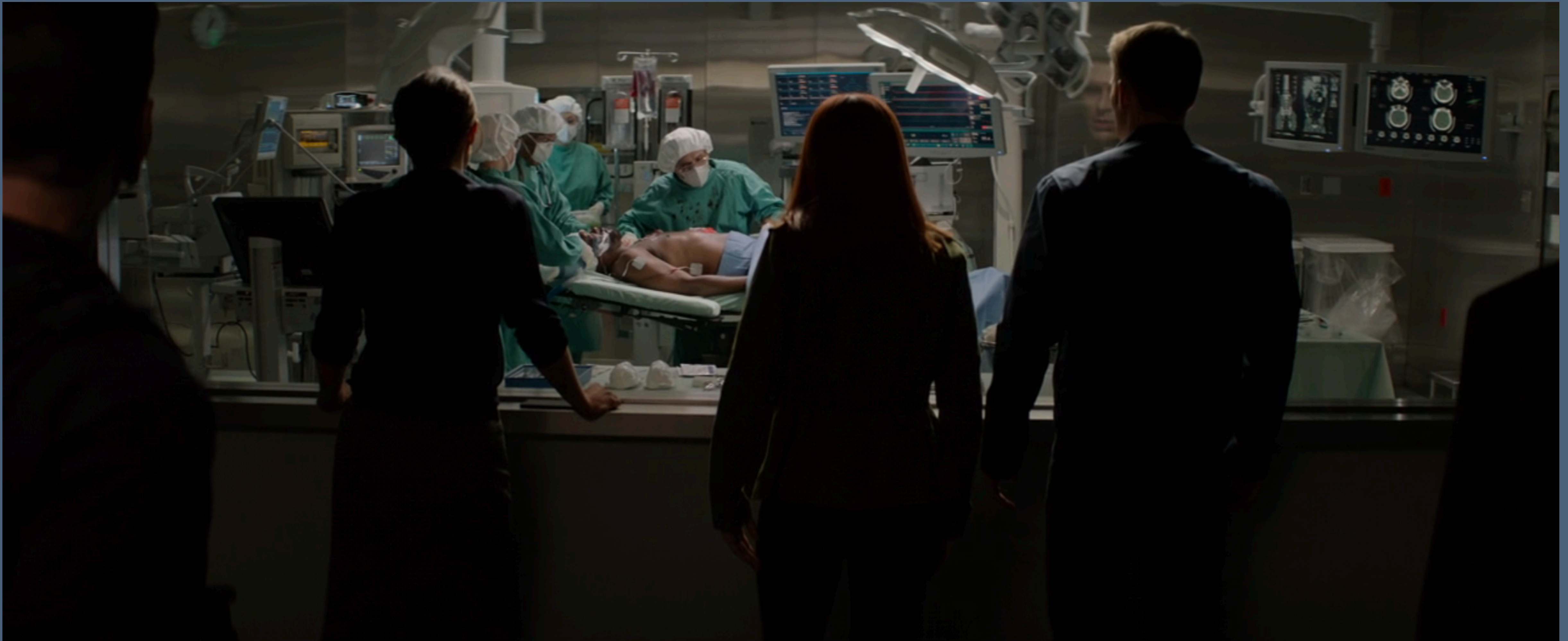


This is the day when we can start on our real task of implementation of free government in the world.
We are faced with the greatest task we ever have been faced with. The emergency is as great as it was on December 7, 1941.
It is going to take the help of all of us

How did HYDRA survive the end of WWII?



What do the images accompanying Zola's words suggest about HYDRA's reach?



Who is present at the hospital scene?



What does the list of potential HYDRA targets tell us about their agenda?



How do the filmmakers make the many hostiles on the street appear ominous?



What reasons does Pierce provide for his deep trust in Nick Fury?

Winter Soldier
(Bucky Barnes)



Does Winter Soldier appear equally menacing compared to the film's other villains?



What about Winter Soldier's fighting style makes him a cut above his opponents?



What rhetoric is used to help control Winter Soldier, besides the psychological conditioning her undergoes?

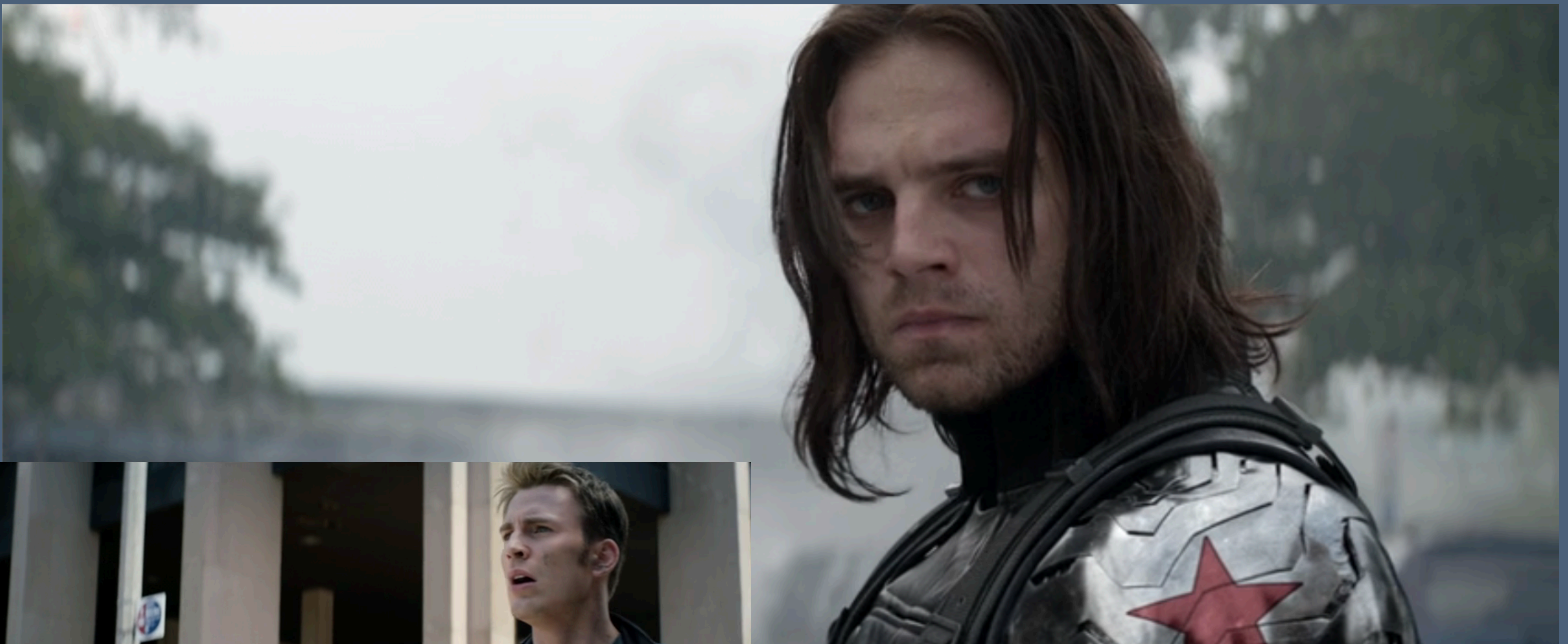


What does Steve's flashback, alone on the bridge, tell us about his most precious friendship?

Story

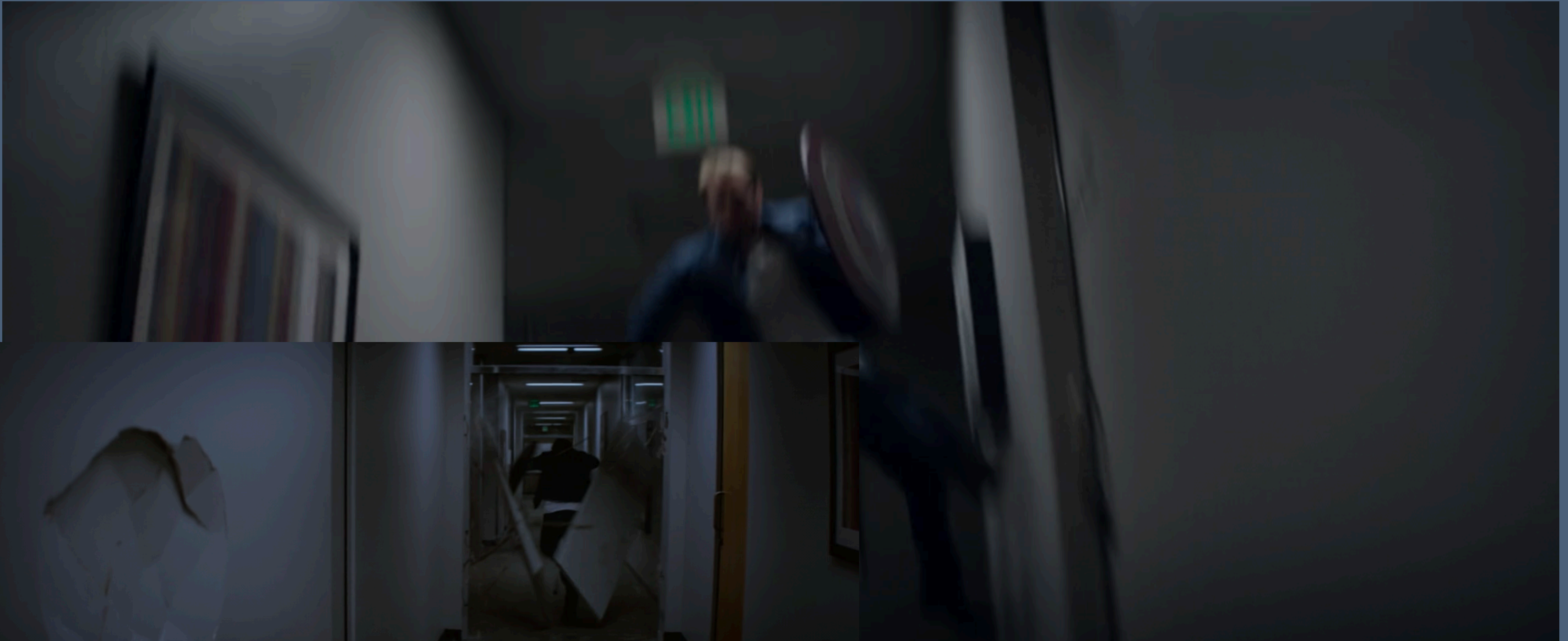


How long do the Russo Brothers withhold the first, non-combatant character reveal?



How about the second major reveal? Is this a surprise?

Superhero Exploits



How does Steve round corners when running at high speed?



Where does Steve hold his shield when he takes off in pursuit of a sniper?