

LUCATAIRE

Borderline

A famous racing champion pulls off a daring escape from Communism, but he can't outrun his conscience or those he double-crossed.

Days go by before anyone checks the apartment of the fading celebrity expat who had taken his seat each evening at the esplanade bar. When they call through the letterbox the stench is overwhelming; a local cop, who had often joined the man for a sundowner, says 'I guess they finally caught up with him.'

- A fourteen-year-old orphan is found wandering the charred streets of Berlin in 1945. With film-star looks and dogged determination he grows up to become a poster-boy of East German sporting achievement as he keeps winning on the motorcycles of the tiny MZ marque. Their much bigger rivals from Italy, the UK and the new arrivals from Japan, cannot work out how they are doing it.
- The answer is 'rocket science', the chief engineer is a veteran of the Nazi's V1 flying bomb programme and has applied his skills to develop his unique two-stroke engine technology.
- The racer travels to international grand prix though his family is always kept at home to make sure he returns. But he is seduced by the freedom his rivals enjoy and the fortunes they are making.
- Leading the Swedish Grand Prix that will see him crowned champion for the Communists, the racer suddenly disappears from the lap charts. He has taken a diversion that will change the direction of his life and the destiny of the whole motorcycle industry.
- At the same time his beautiful wife and young sons are smuggled across Checkpoint Charlie in the shadow of the construction of the Berlin Wall in a high-risk escape caper involving chloroform and a specially modified Lincoln Continental.
- The racer now re-appears on the suddenly transformed bike of an emerging Japanese maker that will go on to dominate racing and become one of the world's biggest auto companies. He wins the world championship at the iconic – and lethally dangerous – Isle of Man.
- Free at last to enjoy the fame and fortune bought with his skill, but also by the secrets that he stole, the racer becomes increasingly paranoid and erratic. His career and the family that risked so much to be with him begins to unravel.
- Pushing to recapture his racing glory he crashes at the corner that will one day bear his name. He is unlucky, knocked unconscious he lies face down in the fire from his burst petrol tank.
- While the talent remains intact and occasional wins still come, he's unable to come to terms with his disfigured looks and the constant pain. His career fades, jobs and countries come and go as he keeps moving on running from his pain, his conscience and the vengeful Stasi.

This is the true story of Ernst Degner, 1931 - 1983.

