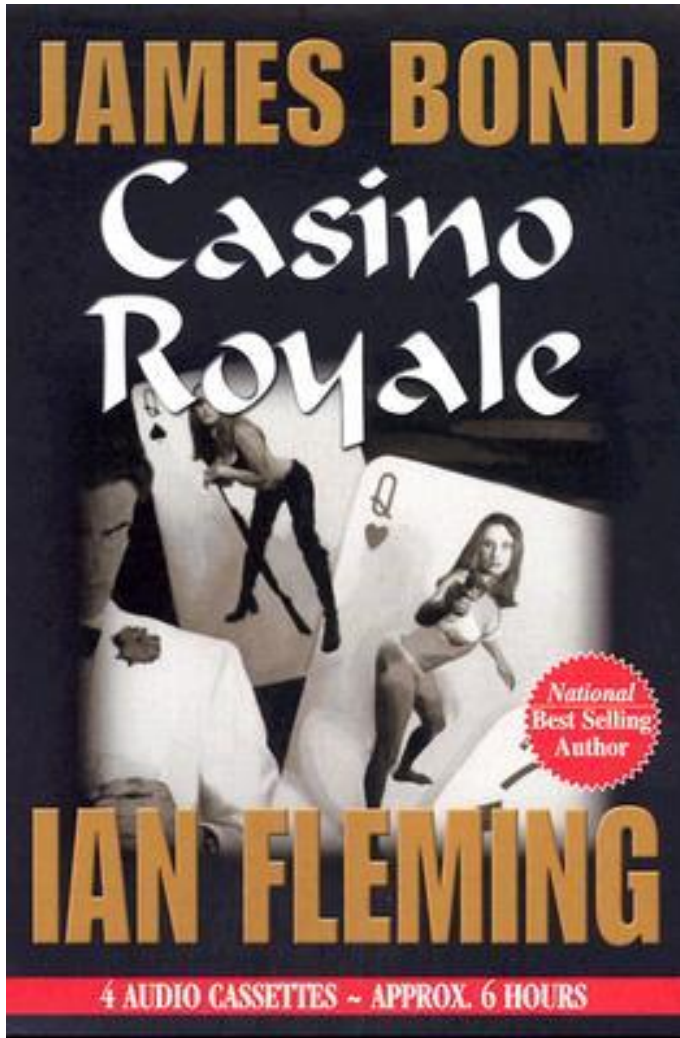

Ian Fleming

Casino Royale (James Bond (Original Series) #1)



Title: Casino Royale (James Bond (Original Series) #1)

Author: Ian Fleming

Format: Audio

Language: English

Pages: 0

Publisher: , 0

ISBN: 1578153409

Format: PDF / Kindle / ePub

Size: 8.2 MB

Download: allowed

Description

At the Casino in Deauville, Bond's game is baccarat - for stakes that run into millions of francs. But away from the discreet salons, the caviar and champagne, it's 007 versus one of Russia's most powerful and ruthless agents - and the prize is a bullet in the head from a S.M.E.R.S.H. assassin.

Insightful reviews

Madeline: Call it a guilty pleasure, this book was just fun to read, mostly because I a) love Bond movies anyway and b) delight in sexist jokes, which made it easier for me to read Bond's anti-feminist rants and just giggle to myself. Here's one of my favorites, when Vesper Lynd gets herself kidnapped by the bad guys and Bond has to take the trouble to chase after them: "This was just what he had been afraid of. These blithering women who thought they could do a man's work. Why the hell couldn't they just stay at home and mind their pots and pans and leave men's work to the men. And now for this to happen to him, just when the job had come off so beautifully. For Vesper to fall for an old trick like that and get herself snatched and probably held to ransom like some bloody heroine in a strip cartoon. The silly bitch."

Mmm. I love the smell of misogyny in the morning.

In Bond's defense, Vesper doesn't do much too much to change his opinion of women and their overall uselessness. She's supposed to be some kind of radio technician, but never gets to demonstrate any shred of intelligence that elevates her above the average 7th grade girl. Her only good bit of dialogue comes towards the end of the book, when she and Bond are safe and on vacation together:

"The bath had been filled for him and there was a new flask of some expensive pine bath-essence on a chair beside it with his towel.

'Vesper,' he called.

'Yes?'

'You really are the limit. You make me feel like an expensive gigolo.'

'I was told to look after you. I'm only doing what I was told.'

'Darling, the bath's absolutely right. Will you marry me?'

She snorted. 'You need a slave, not a wife.'

'I want you.'

'Well, I want my lobster and champagne, so hurry up.' "

That's about as interesting as Vesper gets. The rest of the time she's busy running around after Bond, being referred to as "the girl" and saying things like, "Do you mind if we go straight into dinner? ...I want to make a grand entrance and the truth is there's a horrible secret about black velvet. It marks when you sit down. And, by the way, if you hear me scream tonight, I shall have sat on a cane chair."

Fascinating.

Bond, for his part, didn't say anything especially intelligent either and made me thank god for Daniel Craig and his writers. I couldn't decide which was more annoying: Bond and Vesper during the assignment when they made banal small talk and Bond speculated on how soon he would sleep with her, or after they survive and decide they're in love and go on vacation together. (and don't look at me like I gave the plot away, you knew it was going to happen.) I think it's the latter - once Bond and Vesper survive the kidnapping, all potential of being cool vanishes as they become the most irritating couple ever. Having to read about them schmoooping their way across France, eating caviar, and calling each other "Darling," "My love," and "Dearest" was enough to make me vow never to read another Ian Fleming book again.

Anyway, point of review: movie version = awesome, book version = a delightful misogynist romp. Pick whichever you'd prefer.

Jacques Bromberg: Fleming's first James Bond novel is better than brain candy, though it is a quick one-sitting read. Notice how the characters are characterized by their cigarettes -- Felix Leiter only smokes Chesterfields, Bond smokes a Turkish/Balkan blend made by Morelands on Grosvenor Street, Le Chiffre smokes Caporals and Gauloises. Curiously, I found Bond's misogyny in the beginning and his sensitivity at the end a little overwrought, but I liked the Vesper Lynd character much more than her counterpart in the recent film. I was glad, also, to have finally had the game of Baccarat explained to me, and I have a new strategy on the roulette table.

[Some unusual diction was occasionally distracting, particularly the frequent colloquial use of "directly" instead of "as soon as". I didn't know you could do that.]

SMERSH is a *far* more terrifying and interesting enemy than the SPECTRE of the Bond films.

Grace Tjan:



To: M

From : Jane Money Penny

Subject: An assessment of Agent 007's conduct during operation "Casino Royale"

Dear Sir,

I am aware of concerns raised by certain members of the Service regarding Agent 007's performance during the abovementioned operation. Therefore, I would like to offer my personal assessment, based on the debriefing reports and my own long familiarity with the subject.

It is true that Agent 007 had somewhat compromised the operation by letting himself getting caught by the Target, otherwise known as "Le Chiffre". It is also undoubtedly true that he might have compromised the integrity of the valuable intelligence that we gathered by becoming an intimate of No. 3030, a.k.a. Vesper Lynd. However, despite all of that, he had managed to accomplish all of our objectives in the operation, as well as unmasking a potentially dangerous double agent.

I can personally vouch that the 'errors' that Agent 007 had allegedly committed stemmed not from gross negligence or willful disobedience, but strictly from certain aspects of his character, which are regrettable but perfectly understandable in a man of his persuasion. The most obvious of these is his antipathy toward female operatives, best illustrated by these quotes from the debriefing report:

"And there was this pest of a girl. Women were for recreation. On a job, they got in the way and fogged things up with sex and hurt feelings and all the emotional baggage they carried around. One had to look out for them and take care of them."

And also:

"These blithering women who thought that they could do a man's work. Why the hell couldn't they stay at home and mind their pots and pans and stick to their frocks and gossip and leave men's work to the men."

Isn't it patently obvious, sir, that such preconceived notions caused him to fall for the Target's devious trap? However, he had subsequently paid dearly for such deplorable misogyny by suffering the worst kind of torture known to the male of the species --- a ghastly affair that involved a cane chair with cut out seat, a 3 foot long carpet beater and Agent 007's naked nether regions --- the details of which is available in the medical report attached to Head of S's memorandum.

Further on, his psychological condition during the long convalescence led him to develop certain feelings for Miss Lynd, to the extent that he was prepared to propose marriage to her. I can assure you that such feelings were genuine (even though he later rather callously repudiated them) and that he truly had honorable intentions toward her. It is obvious from Miss Lynd's unfortunate reaction that the feeling was mutual.

Based on the aforementioned reasons, I propose that we keep Agent 007 in active duty as he had proved that he was able to overcome his personal weaknesses for the good of the Service. Besides, we now have incontrovertible proof that Agent 007 is irresistible to enemy females, a quality that might come handy in future missions that might require such ability.

Signed: Second Officer Jane Money Penny, WRNS.

P.S. : Please disregard any insinuation from certain members of the Service (you know who they are, sir) that I have a 'crush' on James Agent 007.

Chris: The literary Bond is way darker than the cinematic Bond. In his debut publication this is often not more obvious than while he approximately seduces a fellow agent and enjoys the fling for the "sweet tang of rape" that he will get out of her. regardless of and perhaps as a result of blatant misogyny, James Bond comes off as even more human and fascinating than what's noticeable at the great screen, and it makes you ask yourself the place Ian Fleming may need taken his production if it hadn't develop into the sort of large advertisement success. Still, a superb learn when you take pleasure in old style chilly battle espionage.

Evan Leach: each legend has a beginning. For Agent 007, that got here in Ian Fleming's 1953 novel on line casino Royale. Now, I've been partial to a number of the Bond video clips for years, yet I'd by no means tackled one of many novels till now. on line casino Royale is the 1st of 14 Bond novels and tale collections that Fleming produced, and it's a bit tough round the edges (as one may perhaps anticipate from a rookie novelist). The prose isn't undesirable by way of any means, yet it's not anything fancy. extra perplexing is the structure. I be mindful gazing the motion picture model of this tale and pondering why it was once prepare how it was; because it turns out, the motion picture used to be beautiful trustworthy to its resource material. In a nutshell, the motion within the on line casino and the faceoff with the villain all ensue within the moment 3rd of the book, leaving the ultimate 3rd to a slightly meandering ultimate act that felt a piece anticlimactic. I didn't hate this, however it certainly felt a bit "off," and that i can simply see it bothering a few readers. conversing of bothering readers, it will likely be no shock to such a lot that James isn't really a card-carrying member of NOW, however the Fifties model takes issues uncomfortably far: "These blithering girls who notion they can do a man's work. Why the hell couldn't they remain at domestic and brain their pots and pans and persist with their frocks and gossip and depart men's paintings to the men?" Say it ain't so, James. So, with all of this nitpicking, why the four-star grade? In one word: style. i assumed this publication used to be as cool as a relaxing martini, and located it nice enjoyable to read. The clothes...the booze...the cars...the caviar...all fantastic. It jogged my memory a little bit the convey Mad males during this respect. The scenes on the baccarat desk have been suspenseful and good crafted, and Fleming does a good task of explaining what for lots of readers might be an vague online game (in the film, they replaced it to Texas carry 'Em) so the motion on the desk is straightforward to follow. Le Chiffre is a good, sinister villain, and Bond (ice chilly in his unique incarnation) is a compelling hero. total this was once a really enjoyable undercover agent mystery with a few nice moments. At lower than two hundred pages this can be a fast breezy read, and lovers of the films can be to work out how 007 was once portrayed 60 years in the past whilst he first hit the scene. As I famous above (and different reviewers have mentioned sooner than me), it is a cold, nearly merciless 007, from his pontifications at the function of the fashionable girl to the book's gut-punch of a last line: (view spoiler) ["The whinge is lifeless now" (hide spoiler)] Oof. possibly no longer the fellow you'd wish courting your sister, yet he's a hell of loads of enjoyable to learn about. four stars,

recommended!

mark monday: Ian Fleming has a few poetry in his veins! i'd by no means have guessed that. a lot of the prose during this secret agent mystery is uncomplicated and nearly ostentatiously declarative. prose from and for a man's man, I suppose. yet each so often, we now have traces like: In his brain he fingered the necklace of the times to come. The moonlight shone in the course of the half-closed shutters and lapped on the mystery shadows within the snow of her body...Bond aroused from sleep in his personal room at sunrise and for a time he lay and stroked his memories. so Bond is the man, a man's man. he isn't a pleasant man, nor an empathetic one, yet he get's the activity done. Don Draper Bond? Walter White Bond? if the shoe fits. yet he is greater than a compelling anti-hero. he is a damaged vessel, one that has confident himself that he is whole. terrible Bond. he simply wishes love. and till he unearths it, he will persuade himself that that is precisely what he does not need. SPOILERS AHEAD I used to be particularly shocked at how a lot this publication is ready how Bond pertains to women. it's virtually a romance novel for anti-romantic men, person who additionally incorporates a lot of playing and pleasure of the finer issues in life. via the tip of the novel, Bond - who has been experiencing a few existential angst and is wondering even if he desires to proceed along with his selected career - makes a decision to stay with his task as a undercover agent simply because he has had his center broken. so here is what we know:- Bond is an old style sort, and has robust chauvinistic traits in his specialist work. he's unsurprisingly a gender essentialist. i am not yes if i would name him a misogynist.- he is a caveman in his outlook on romance. he desires to have rough, rapey ("rapey" now not genuine rape) intercourse with a girl who desires to be ravished.- at one element in his life, a courting ended badly for him. might be multiple relationship. love died however the courting lingered on, the result of that have made him inform himself time and again through the novel that romance isn't really for him. he simply desires to hit it and give up it. or so he says.- he sees himself as a cold, brutal sort. the most important a part of that word for me is he sees himself as. there is a lot during this publication that suggests that Bond is growing the guy he desires to be, that he is purposely hardening himself to the realm - and particularly to girls - yet he isn't particularly there yet.- Bond meets one Vesper Lynd and is instantly interested in her. his emotions in the direction of her are a fascinating stew of inflammation at having to house a colleague who's a woman, uncomplicated sexual attraction, and admiration for her cool composure mixed with an both cool supportiveness in the direction of Bond.- Bond is captured, tortured, freed. in the course of his long convalescence he stories loads of existential doubt approximately "heroes" and "villains" and the way the 2 roles are interchangeable. a colleague mocks him whilst he brings this up. Vesper visits him and treats him with kindness and empathy, and no mockery. he slowly falls for her. it was once a really relocating factor to read.- Bond and Vesper burst off on a romantic holiday together. Bond is a jogging hard-on while he thinks approximately what is to come: She was once considerate and whole of attention with out being slavish and with out compromising her boastful spirit. And now he knew that she used to be profoundly, excitingly sensual, yet that the conquest of her body, a result of significant privateness in her, could every time have the candy tang of rape. Loving her bodily might every time be an exhilarating voyage with no the anticlimax of arrival. She could quit herself avidly, he thought, and greedily take pleasure in all of the intimacies of the mattress with out ever permitting herself to be possessed. - at the first evening in their romantic getaway, Bond and Vesper ultimately hit it. it's only as notable as he imagined it's going to be. Bond and Vesper are in love.- anything bizarre and ambiguous comes among them and Bond turns into

more and more pressured and depressed. he does not know how and why the affection of his existence has turn into so unusual and distant. he is still a gentleman all through yet assumes this affair will finish like his previous relationships... with a sense of emptiness.- Vesper and Bond have a superb final evening jointly packed with drinks, lovemaking, and tears. she writes him a letter that describes how she is a double agent who has fallen in love with him. she kills herself.- Bond is going right into a nation of shock. then Bond is going into effective Agent Mode. Bond makes a decision that he'll stay a undercover agent so he can wreck SMERSH (the company that drove Vesper to kill herself). Bond can't (or will not) technique Vesper's complex again tale and the impact she has had on him, so he destroys the reminiscence of his love for her. or at the very least he makes an attempt to... Bond should be fooling himself yet he hasn't fooled me. Vesper is a defining individual in Bond's life, irrespective of how a lot he probably want to discard his reminiscence of her. the final sentence of the e-book is reserved for her, as is the particular final word... bitch. and so Bond degrades his reminiscence of Vesper and compartmentalizes her away, and is one titanic step toward changing into that cold, brutal guy he is constantly predicted himself to be. i suppose that is what wasting the affection of your lifestyles can do to a person.this used to be an absorbing, amazing advent into the area of 007. i am not yes what I expected, however it definitely wasn't this.

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