

You Only Live Twice (James Bond)

By Ian Fleming

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Shatterhand is not who he seems, however, and his impregnable fortress—known to the locals as the "Castle of Death"—is a gauntlet of traps no *gaijin* has ever penetrated. But through rigorous ninja training, and with some help from the beautiful and able Kissy Suzuki, Bond manages to gain access to Shatterhand's lair. Inside lurks certain doom at the hands of 007's bitterest foe—or a final chance to exact ultimate vengeance.

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Editorial Review

About the Author
Ian Fleming was born in London on May 28, 1908. He was educated at Eton College and later spent a formative period studying languages in Europe. His first job was with Reuters News Agency where a Moscow posting gave him firsthand experience with what would become his literary *bete noire*—the Soviet Union. During World War II he served as Assistant to the Director of Naval Intelligence and played a key role in Allied espionage operations.

After the war he worked as foreign manager of the *Sunday Times*, a job that allowed him to spend two months each year in Jamaica. Here, in 1952, at his home "Goldeneye," he wrote a book called *Casino Royale*—and James Bond was born. The first print run sold out within a month. For the next twelve years Fleming produced a novel a year featuring Special Agent 007, the most famous spy of the century. His travels, interests, and wartime experience lent authority to everything he wrote. Raymond Chandler described him as "the most forceful and driving writer of thrillers in England." Sales soared when President Kennedy named the fifth title, *From Russia With Love*, one of his favorite books. The Bond novels have sold more than one hundred million copies worldwide, boosted by the hugely successful film franchise that began in 1962 with the release of *Dr. No*.

He married Anne Rothermere in 1952. His story about a magical car, written in 1961 for their only son Caspar, went on to become the well- loved novel and film *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*.

Fleming died of heart failure on August 12, 1964, at the age of fifty-six.

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1. SCISSORS CUT PAPER

The geisha called 'Trembling Leaf, on her knees beside James Bond, leant forward from the waist and kissed him chastely on the right cheek.

'That's a cheat,' said Bond severely. 'You agreed that if I won it would be a real kiss on the mouth. At the very least,' he added.

'Grey Pearl', the Madame, who had black lacquered teeth, a bizarre affectation, and was so thickly made up that she looked like a character out of a noh play, translated. There was much giggling and cries of encouragement. Trembling Leaf covered her face with her pretty hands as if she were being required to perform some ultimate obscenity. But then the fingers divided and the pert brown eyes examined Bond's mouth, as if taking aim, and her body lanced forward. This time the kiss was full on the lips and it lingered fractionally. In invitation? In promise? Bond remembered that he had been promised a 'pillow geisha'. Technically, this would be a geisha of low caste. She would not be proficient in the traditional arts of her calling - she would not be able to tell humorous stories, sing, paint or compose verses about her patron. But, unlike her cultured sisters, she might agree to perform more robust services - discreetly, of course, in conditions of the utmost privacy and at a high price. But, to the boorish, brutalised tastes of a gaijin, a foreigner, this made more sense than having a tanks of thirty-one syllables, which in any case he couldn't understand, equate, in exquisite ideograms, his charms with budding chrysanthemums on the slopes of Mount Fuji.

The applause which greeted this unbridled exhibition of lasciviousness died quickly and respectfully. The powerful, chunky man in the black Jukata, sitting directly across the low red lacquer table from Bond, had taken the Dunhill filter holder from between his golden teeth and had laid it beside his ashtray. 'Bondo-san,' said Tiger Tanaka, Head of the Japanese Secret Service, 'I will now challenge you to this ridiculous game, and I promise you in advance that you will not win.' The big, creased brown face that Bond had come to know so well in the past month split expansively. The wide smile closed the almond eyes to slits - slits that glittered. Bond knew that smile. It wasn't a smile. It was a mask with a golden hole in it.

Bond laughed. 'All right, Tiger. But first, more saks! And not in these ridiculous thimbles. I've drunk five flasks of the stuff and its effect is about the same as one double Martini. I shall need another double Martini if I am to go on demonstrating the superiority of Western instinct over the wiles of the Orient, Is there each a thing as a lowly glass tumbler discarded in some corner behind the cabinets of Ming?'

'Bondo-san. Ming is Chinese. Your knowledge of porcelain is as meagre as your drinking habits are gross. Moreover, it is unwise to underestimate saks. We have a saying, "It is the man who drinks the first flask of saks then the second flask drinks the first; then it is the saks that drinks the man."' Tiger Tanaka turned to Grey Pearl and there followed a laughing conversation which Bond interpreted as jokes at the expense of this uncouth Westerner and his monstrous appetites. At a word from the Madame, Trembling Leaf bowed low and scurried out of the room. Tiger turned to Bond. 'You have gained much face, Bondo-san. It is only the sums wrestlers who drink saks in these quantities without showing it. She says you are undoubtedly an eight-flask man.' Tiger's face became sly. 'But she also suggests that you will not make much of a companion for Trembling Leaf at the end of the evening.'

'Tell her that I am more interested in her own more mature charms. She will certainly possess talents in the art of love making which will overcome any temporary lassitude on my part.' This leaden gallantry got what it deserved. There came a spirited crackle of Japanese from Grey Pearl. Tiger translated. 'Bondo-san this is a woman of some wit. She has made a joke. She says she is already respectably married to one bonsan and there is no room on her futon for another. Bansan means a priest, a greybeard. Futon, as you know, is a bed. She has made a joke on your name.'

The geisha party had been going on for two hours, and Bond's jaws were aching with the unending smiles and polite repartee. Far from being entertained by the geisha, or bewitched by the inscrutable discords issuing from the catskin-covered box of the three-stringed samisen, Bond had found himself having to try desperately to make the party go. He also knew that Tiger Tanaka had been observing his effort with a sadistic pleasure. Dikko Henderson had warned him that geisha parties were more or less the equivalent, for a foreigner, of trying to entertain a lot of unknown children in a nursery with a strict governess, the Madame, looking on. But Dikko had also warned him that he was being done a great honour by Tiger Tanaka, that the party would cost Tiger a small fortune, whether from secret funds or from his own pocket, and that Bond had better put a good face on the whole thing since this looked like being a breakthrough in Bond's mission. But it could equally well be disaster.

So now Bond smiled and clapped his hands in admiration. He said to Tiger, 'Tell the old bitch she's a clever old bitch,' accepted the brimming tumbler of hot saks from the apparently adoring hands of Trembling Leaf, and downed it in two tremendous gulps. He repeated the performance so that more saks had to be fetched from the kitchen, then he placed his fist decisively on the red lacquer table and said with mock belligerence, 'All right. Tiger! Go to it!'

It was the old game of Scissors cut Paper, Paper wraps Stone, Stone blunts Scissors, that is played by children all over the world. The fist is the Stone, two out-stretched fingers are the Scissors, and a flat hand is the Paper. The closed fist is hammered twice in the air simultaneously by the two opponents and, at the third

downward stroke, the chosen emblem is revealed. The game consists of guessing which emblem the opponent will choose, and of you yourself choosing one that will defeat him. Best of three goes or more. It is a game of bluff.

Tiger Tanaka rested his fist on the table opposite Bond. The two men looked carefully into each other's eyes. There was dead silence in the box-like little lath-and-paper room, and the soft gurgling of the tiny brook in the ornamental square of garden outside the opened partition could be heard clearly for the first time that evening. Perhaps it was this silence, after all the talk and giggling, or perhaps it was the deep seriousness and purpose that was suddenly evident in Tiger Tanaka's formidable, cruel, samurai face, but Bond's skin momentarily crawled. For some reason this had become more than a children's game. Tiger had promised he would beat Bond. To fail would be to lose much face. How much? Enough to breach a friendship that had become oddly real between the two of them over the past weeks? This was one of the most powerful men in Japan. To be defeated by a miserable gaijin in front of the two women might be a matter of great moment to this man. The defeat might leak out through the women. In the West, such a trifle would be farcically insignificant, like a cabinet minister losing a game of backgammon at Blades. But in the East? In a very short while, Dikko Henderson had taught Bond total respect for Oriental conventions, however old-fashioned or seemingly trivial, but Bond was still at sea in their gradations. This was a case in point. Should Bond try and win at this baby game of bluff and double-bluff, or should he try to lose? But to try and lose involved the same cleverness at correctly guessing the other man's symbols in advance. It was just as difficult to lose on purpose as to win. And anyway did it really matter? Unfortunately, on the curious assignment in which James Bond was involved, he had a nasty feeling that even this idiotic little gambit had significance towards success or failure.

As if with second sight. Tiger Tanaka spelled the problem out. He gave a harsh, taut laugh that was more of a shout than an expression of humour or pleasure. 'Bondo-san, with us, and certainly at a party at which I am the host and you are the honoured guest, it would be good manners for me to let you win this game that we are to play together. It would be more. It would be required behaviour. So I must ask your forgiveness in advance for defeating you.'

Bond smiled cheerfully. 'My dear Tiger, there is no point in playing a game unless you try to win. It would be a very great insult to me if you endeavoured to play to lose. But if I may say so, your remarks are highly provocative. They are like the taunts of the sumo wrestlers before the bout. If I was not myself so certain of winning, I would point out that you spoke in English. Please tell our dainty and distinguished audience that I propose to rub your honourable nose in the dirt at this despicable game and thus display not only the superiority of Great Britain, and particularly Scotland, over Japan, but also the superiority of our Queen over your Emperor.' Bond, encouraged perhaps by the crafty ambush of the sake, had committed himself. This kind of joking about their different cultures had become a habit between himself and Tiger, who, with a first in PPE at Trinity before the war, prided himself in the demokorasu of his outlook and the liberality and breadth of his understanding of the West. But Bond, having spoken, caught the sudden glitter in the dark eyes, and he thought of Dikko Henderson's cautionary, 'Now listen, you stupid limey bastard. You're doing all right. But don't press your luck. T.T.'s a civilized kind of a chap - as Japs go, that is. But don't overdo it. Take a look at that mug. There's Manchu there, and Tartar. And don't forget the soanso was a Black Belt at judo before he never went up to your bloody Oxford. And don't forget he was spying for Japan when he called himself assistant naval attache in their London Embassy before the war and you s...

Users Review

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