

Live and Let Die (James Bond)

By Ian Fleming

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From the jazz joints of Harlem to the shark-infested waters of the Florida Everglades, *Live and Let Die* sends Bond headlong into the exotic.

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Editorial Review

Review
"Containing passages which for sheer excitement have not been surpassed by any modern writer of this kind."
-- *The Times Literary Supplement* (*Times Literary Supplement*)

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. THE RED CARPET

There are moments of great luxury in the life of a secret agent. There are assignments on which he is required to act the part of a very rich man; occasions when he takes refuge in good living to efface the memory of danger and the shadow of death; and times when, as was now the case, he is a guest in the territory of an allied Secret Service.

From the moment the BOAC Stratocruiser taxied up to the International Air Terminal at Idlewild, James Bond was treated like royalty.

When he left the aircraft with the other passengers he had resigned himself to the notorious purgatory of the US Health, Immigration and Customs machinery. At least an hour, he thought, of overheated, drab-green rooms smelling of last year's air and stale sweat and guilt and the fear that hangs round all frontiers, fear of those closed doors marked PRIVATE that hide the careful men, the files, the teleprinters chattering urgently to Washington, to the Bureau of Narcotics, Counter Espionage, the Treasury, the FBI.

As he walked across the tarmac in the bitter January wind he saw his own name going over the network: BOND, JAMES. BRITISH DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT 0094567, the short wait and the replies coming back on the different machines: NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE. And then, from the FBI: POSITIVE AWAIT CHECK. There would be some hasty traffic on the FBI circuit with the Central Intelligence Agency and then: FBI TO IDLEWILD: BOND OKAY OKAY, and the bland official out front would hand him back his passport with a 'Hope you enjoy your stay, Mr Bond.'

Bond shrugged his shoulders and followed the other passengers through the wire fence towards the door marked US HEALTH SERVICE.

In his case it was only a boring routine, of course, but he disliked the idea of his dossier being in the possession of any foreign power. Anonymity was the chief tool of his trade. Every thread of his real identity that went on record in any file diminished his value and, ultimately, was a threat to his life. Here in America, where they knew all about him, he felt like a negro whose shadow has been stolen by the witch-doctor. A vital part of himself was in pawn, in the hands of others. Friends, of course, in this instance, but still . . .

'Mr Bond?'

A pleasant-looking nondescript man in plain clothes had stepped forward from the shadow of the Health Service building.

'My name's Halloran. Pleased to meet you!'

They shook hands.

'Hope you had a pleasant trip. Would you follow me, please?'

He turned to the officer of the Airport police on guard at the door.

'Okay, Sergeant.' 'Okay, Mr Halloran. Be seeing you.'

The other passengers had passed inside. Halloran turned to the left, away from the building. Another policeman held open a small gate in the high boundary fence.

'Bye, Mr Halloran.'

‘Bye, Officer. Thanks.'

Directly outside a black Buick waited, its engine sighing quietly. They climbed in. Bond's two light suitcases were in front next to the driver. Bond couldn't imagine how they had been extracted so quickly from the mound of passengers' luggage he had seen only minutes before being trolleyed over to Customs.

'Okay, Grady. Let's go.'

Bond sank back luxuriously as the big limousine surged forward, slipping quickly into top through the Dynaflow gears.

He turned to Halloran.

'Well, that's certainly one of the reddest carpets I've ever seen. I expected to be at least an hour getting through Immigration. Who laid it on? I'm not used to VIP treatment. Anyway, thanks very much for your part in it all.'

'You're very welcome, Mr Bond.' Halloran smiled and offered him a cigarette from a fresh pack of Luckies. 'We want to make your stay comfortable. Anything you want, just say so and it's yours. You've got some good friends in Washington. I don't myself know why you're here but it seems the authorities are keen that you should be a privileged guest of the Government. It's my job to see you get to your hotel as quickly and as comfortably as possible and then I'll hand over and be on my way. May I have your passport a moment, please.'

Bond gave it to him. Halloran opened a briefcase on the seat beside him and took out a heavy metal stamp. He turned the pages of Bond's passport until he came to the US Visa, stamped it, scribbled his signature over the dark blue circle of the Department of Justice cypher and gave it back to him. Then he took out his pocket-book and extracted a thick white envelope which he gave to Bond.

'There's a thousand dollars in there, Mr Bond.' He held up his hand as Bond started to speak. 'And it's Communist money we took in the Schmidt-Kinaski haul. We're using it back at them and you are asked to co-operate and spend this in any way you like on your present assignment. I am advised that it will be considered a very unfriendly act if you refuse. Let's please say no more about it and,' he added, as Bond continued to hold the envelope dubiously in his hand, 'I am also to say that the disposal of this money through your hands has the knowledge and approval of your own Chief.'

Bond eyed him narrowly and then grinned. He put the envelope away in his notecase.

'All right,' he said. 'And thanks. I'll try and spend it where it does most harm. I'm glad to have some working capital. It's certainly good to know it's been provided by the opposition.'

'Fine,' said Halloran; 'and now, if you'll forgive me, I'll just write up my notes for the report I'll have to put in. Have to remember to get a letter of thanks sent to Immigration and Customs and so forth for their co-operation. Routine.'

'Go ahead,' said Bond. He was glad to keep silent and gaze out at his first sight of America since the war. It was no waste of time to start picking up the American idiom again: the advertisements, the new car models and the prices of second-hand ones in the used-car lots; the exotic pungency of the road signs: SOFT SHOULDERS - SHARP CURVES - SQUEEZE AHEAD - SLIPPERY WHEN WET; the standard of driving; the number of women at the wheel, their menfolk docilely beside them; the men's clothes; the way the women were doing their hair; the Civil Defence warnings: IN CASE OF ENEMY ATTACK - KEEP MOVING - GET OFF BRIDGE; the thick rash of television aerials and the impact of TV on hoardings and shop windows; the occasional helicopter; the public appeals for cancer and polio funds: THE MARCH OF DIMES - all the small, fleeting impressions that were as important to his trade as are broken bark and bent twigs to the trapper in the jungle.

The driver chose the Triborough Bridge and they soared across the breath-taking span into the heart of uptown Manhattan, the beautiful prospect of New York hastening towards them until they were down amongst the hooting, teeming, petrol-smelling roots of the stressed-concrete jungle.

Bond turned to his companion.

'I hate to say it,' he said, 'but this must be the fattest atomic-bomb target on the whole face of the globe.'

'Nothing to touch it,' agreed Halloran. 'Keeps me awake nights thinking what would happen.'

They drew up at the best hotel in New York, the St Regis, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 55th Street. A saturnine middle-aged man in a dark blue overcoat and black homburg came forward behind the

commissionaire. On the sidewalk, Halloran introduced him.

'Mr Bond, meet Captain Dexter.' He was deferential. 'Can I pass him along to you now, Captain?'

'Sure, sure. Just have his bags sent up. Room 2100. Top floor. I'll go ahead with Mr Bond and see he has everything he wants.'

Bond turned to say good-bye to Halloran and thank him. For a moment Halloran had his back to him as he said something about Bond's luggage to the commissionaire. Bond looked past him across 55th Street. His eyes narrowed. A black sedan, a Chevrolet, was pulling sharply out into the thick traffic, right in front of a Checker cab that braked hard, its driver banging his fist down on the horn and holding it there. The sedan kept going, just caught the tail of the green light, and disappeared north up Fifth Avenue.

It was a smart, decisive bit of driving, but what startled Bond was that it had been a negress at the wheel, a fine-looking negress in a black chauffeur's uniform, and through the rear window he had caught a glimpse of the single passenger - a huge grey-black face which had turned slowly towards him and looked directly back at him, Bond was sure of it, as the car accelerated towards the Avenue.

Bond shook Halloran by the hand. Dexter touched his elbow impatiently.

'We'll go straight in and through the lobby to the elevators. Half-right across the lobby. And would you please keep your hat on, Mr Bond.'

As Bond followed Dexter up the steps into the hotel he reflected that it was almost certainly too late for these precautions. Hardly anywhere in the world will you find a negress driving a car. A negress acting as a chauffeur is still more extraordinary. Barely conceivable even in Harlem, but that was certainly where the car was from.

And the giant shape in the back seat? That grey-black face? Mister Big?

'Hm,' said Bond to himself as he followed the slim back of Captain Dexter into the elevator.

The elevator slowed up for the twenty-first floor.

'We've got a little surprise ready for you, Mr Bond,' said Captain Dexter, without, Bond thought, much enthusiasm.

They walked down the corridor to the corner room.

The wind sighed outside the passage windows and Bond had a fleeting view of the tops of other skyscrapers and, beyond, the stark fingers of the trees in Central Park. He felt far out of touch with the ground and for a moment a strange feeling of loneliness and empty space gripped his heart.

Dexter unlocked the door of No. 2100 and shut it behind them. They were in a small lighted lobby. They left their hats and coats on a chair and Dexter opened the door in front of...

Users Review

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Helen Sullivan:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray you actually, why because this Live and Let Die (James Bond) e-book written by well-known writer who really knows well how to make book which can be understand by anyone who have read the book. Written in good manner for you, dripping every ideas and creating skill only for eliminate your own personal hunger then you still skepticism Live and Let Die (James Bond) as good book not just by the cover but also with the content. This is one guide that can break don't ascertain book by its deal with, so do you still needing a different sixth sense to pick that!? Oh come on your reading sixth sense already said so why you have to listening to an additional sixth sense.

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