



Dr. No (James Bond)

By Ian Fleming

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Dispatched by M to investigate the mysterious disappearance of MI6's Jamaica station chief, Bond was expecting a holiday in the sun. But when he discovers a deadly centipede placed in his hotel room, the vacation is over.

On this island, all suspicious activity leads inexorably to Dr. Julius No, a reclusive megalomaniac with steel pincers for hands. To find out what the good doctor is hiding, 007 must enlist the aid of local fisherman Quarrel and alluring beachcomber Honeychile Rider. Together they will combat a local legend the natives call "the Dragon," before Bond alone must face the most punishing test of all: an obstacle course—designed by the sadistic Dr. No himself—that measures the limits of the human body's capacity for agony.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

The allure of James Bond was best described by Raymond Chandler, who insisted that 007 is "what every man would like to be and what every woman would like to have between her sheets." Who can argue with that? This month marks the 40th anniversary of the film release of *Dr. No*, which was the first Bond adventure to make the big screen, and two big coffee-table books are being published to honor the occasion (LJ 10/1/02, p. 96). Shockingly, Fleming's original novels have gone out of print, but Penguin here reproduces a trio of the British secret agent's early outings, released in 1952, 1958, and 1959, respectively, sporting stylish cover art. These stories were racy for the nifty Fifties but are quite tame by today's standards. Still, they can be fun.

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Review

"The essence of a James Bond thriller is its speed, its knowingness . . . *Doctor No* has a full quota of every ingredient. Bond is better than ever." --*Evening Standard* (London)

"*Doctor No* is certainly one of the best James Bond novels. In terms of sheer excitement and thrills, it ranks very high. It also has a simple, direct plot, a very appealing heroine, and the best villain since Hugo Drax. It isn't surprising that it was also chosen to be the first 007 film." --Raymond Benson, author of *High Time to Kill*

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.

Users Review

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Norman Brown:

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