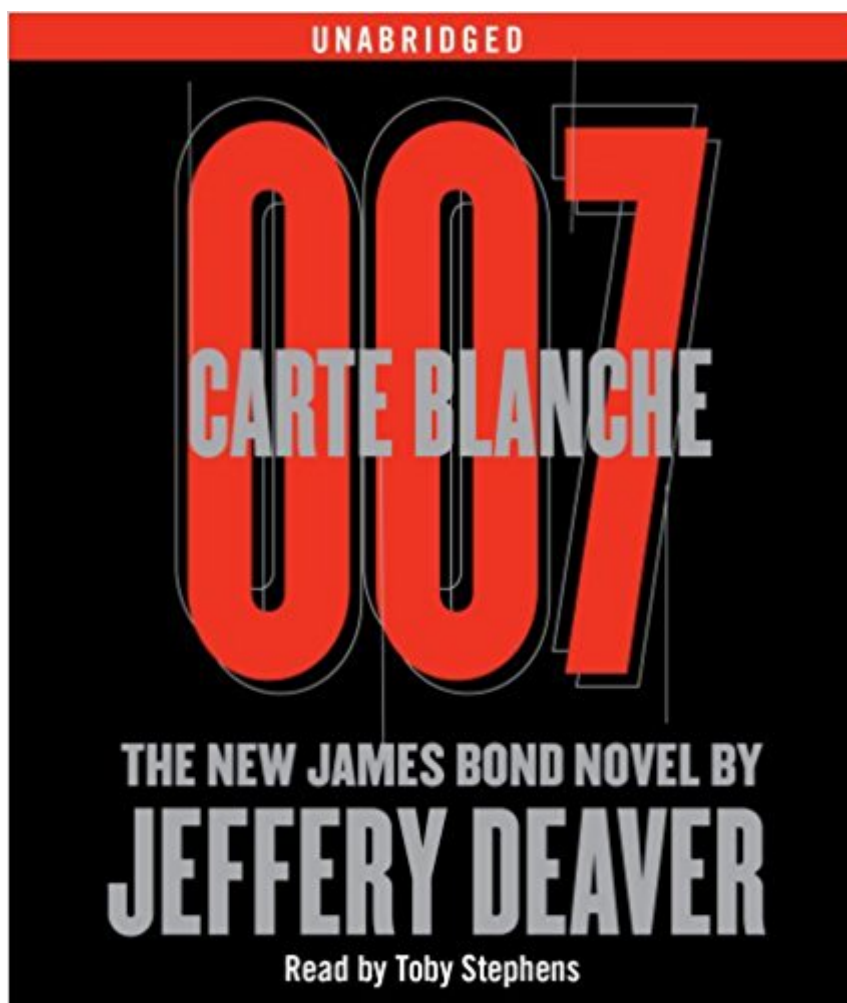


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Carte Blanche: The New James Bond Novel



Synopsis

'The face of war is changing. The other side doesn't play by the rules much any more. There's thinking, in some circles, that we need to play by a different set of rules too ...' Fresh from Afghanistan, James Bond has been recruited to a new agency. Conceived in the post-9/11 world, it operates independent of Five, Six and the MoD, its very existence deniable. Its aim: to protect the Realm, by any means necessary. A Night Action alert calls Bond from dinner with a beautiful woman. GCHQ has decrypted an electronic whisper about an attack scheduled for later in the week: casualties estimated in the thousands, British interests adversely affected. And 007 has been given carte blanche to do whatever it takes to fulfil his mission. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Exclusive: Olen Steinhauer Reviews Carte Blanche Olen Steinhauer's latest novel, *The Nearest Exit* features former CIA agent Milo Weaver, whose story began in the New York Times bestselling thriller, *The Tourist*. His previous work includes a pentalogy of thrillers set during the Cold War, beginning with *The Bridge of Sighs* and concluding with *Victory Square*. How do you bring a character created in 1953 into the modern world without disappointing that character's millions of followers in the process? This was the challenge faced by Jeffery Deaver when Ian Fleming Publications handed him the responsibility of writing the next official James Bond novel, *Carte Blanche*. I don't know how I would have done it, but I do know one thing: Deaver, a specialist in

the art of crafting nail-biting suspense, has done it better than I ever could have. It's a tightrope walk, balancing the tradition with the requirements of contemporary life, and Deaver handles it with panache. Beautiful women with unlikely but mesmerizing names? Check. (See Ophelia Maidenstone and Felicity Willing.) A top-drawer set of wheels with occasional soliloquies to its grace and power? Check. (The Bentley Continental GT coupé, in this case.) M, Moneypenny, Mary Goodnight, Bill Tanner, Felix Leiter? Check on all counts. A drink on hand that requires extra care from a bartender, but has yet to be named? Check. License to kill? Check, but under a different name: carte blanche. How about the subtly and unsubtly perverse villains? Naturally, and they come in two sharply defined forms: Niall Dunne, "The Irishman," a brilliant tactician who brings to mind From Russia With Love's Kronsteen, and his boss, Severan Hydt, the head of a global refuse-collection empire, whose love of decay in all its forms borders on necrophilia. Time spent with Hydt will make you long for a shower. But what the Fleming aficionado will inevitably notice here are the differences, which turn this latest escapade into what feels, and should feel, like one of those things that are very popular these days: a reboot. James Bond, a veteran of Afghanistan, is an ex-smoker. Despite run-ins with an MI5 twit named Percy Osborne-Smith, this Bond is more of a team player than I remember him ever being. But where one really notices the encroachment of the contemporary world is in his relations with women. James Bond has become . . . sensitive? Actually, yes, but never to the point of priggishness. The hard Bond remains, but it's a different world than it was in 1953, and the women in Carte Blanche "the Bond girls, if you will" are of equal measure to the men. Ophelia Maidenstone, a coworker at ODG (Overseas Development Group, tenuously connected to MI6), besides being ravishingly beautiful, is indispensable "without her, Bond would be dead in the water. And when romance begins to bloom between them we find that, even after he's left town, she remains, haunting his thoughts so much that after a night with another woman Bond feels, of all unlikely things, guilt. If this seems very un-Bond, it is, but it's a testament to Deaver's strength as a storyteller that the reader so easily accepts that this is Fleming's world 2.0, and it's just as dangerous and exciting as it was when Le Chiffre glared from across a card table. Don't run from this new world, aficionado, for you'll be rewarded. Not only with a gripping installment, but with a fascinating subplot concerning Bond's parents, one that not only piques the reader's interest but, by the end of the novel, begs for a continuation in the next Bond adventure. This new Bond may be a modern man, but his roots are deep in the past, and if Carte Blanche is any indication, the past will soon catch up with him. I, for one, will gladly be on hand to witness that confrontation.

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"There have been other Fleming impersonators, including Kingsley Amis and Sebastian Faulks, but the author of "The Bone Collector" is the biggest international name to take the job. He is also one of the world's smoothest, most devious, thriller writers - a far better craftsman than Fleming, in fact. So could he assume Fleming's identity rather than write another Jeffery Deaver novel only with a hero called Bond? And could he, for that matter, resist thriller publishing's current obsession with relentless action inspired by the success of the Bourne movie franchise - and indeed "Quantum Of Solace"? The answers are emphatically "Yes." Deaver preserves his book's timeless feel by largely ignoring modern geopolitics and pitting Bond against a traditionally barking villain . . . [and] adds a series of twists that reveal a Bond with more Sherlockian intelligence than Fleming's."--"The Telegraph" (London)"Deaver, as fans of his Lincoln Rhyme and Kathryn Dance thrillers would expect, has clearly done his homework. . . . the most impressive feature of "Carte Blanche" is the ingenuity of the breathless, blood-thirsty plot. A master of misdirection, Deaver manufactures more surprises than anyone flogging an old warhorse can be expected to produce. . . . Kingsley Amis, John Gardner and Sebastian Faulks are among those who have tried to bring Bond back to life. Deaver, though, is in a class of his own: nobody's done it better."--"The Evening Standard" (London)"Fleming was a master of succinct plotting and deft characterization, his books deceptively slim but containing so much. Deaver too is a genius and this publishing marriage was truly made in heaven. Bond fans will enjoy Deaver's slightly mischievous take on Ian Fleming. Deaver fans will enjoy the taut plotting and the action scenes and, by the way, it is going to make a great movie."--"The Sunday Express" (London)""Carte Blanche" is a fantastic book. . . . Deaver knows psychology and it shines here. Moreover, he knows human relationships . . . as [Ian Fleming's stepdaughter] best summarized it, Jeffery Deaver truly "got it."--"Ann Arbor News""His creator may be long gone, but James Bond (with his gadgets, women, and suave lines) lives on in the skillful hands of a suspense superstar."--Malcolm Jones, Newsweek Magazine, "10 Must-Read Summer Books""Ian Fleming's estate tapped American novelist Deaver to pen a new James Bond thriller, and the pairing is as smooth as vodka and vermouth. Yes, the villains are creepy and the women brainy and beautiful, but in a clever reboot, this 007 (who served in Afghanistan) comes armed with a tricked-out cell phone and an appealing sense of empathy."--"Parade""A magnificently manic, impeccably researched and at times gory plot, with Deaver's trademark misdirection and twists flying."--The Washington Post""After 28 suspense novels, there is no doubt that Deaver knows his way around a thriller plot, and Bond fans should be satisfied with the rollicking pace of 007's new adventure. . . . Deaver is a master of the twist in the tale and he deploys it here with cinematic verve, keeping the reader biting their nails until the last minute. . . . But the author's affection for

Bond and for all the tropes that surround him is abundantly clear, so that *Carte Blanche* reads like a lovingly crafted homage rather than deliberate pastiche. Deaver's Bond is quite recognisably Bond, but a new, streamlined incarnation for a new generation of global fears."--The Guardian (UK)"Crucially, the novel proves itself worthy of the 007 logo on its spine by presenting us with one of the most bone-chillingly creepy bad guys in history. . . . Deaver's immaculate sense of pace comes into its own. While giving Bond fans enough of the trinkets they deserve in an official novel, he also keeps the narrative pacey throughout and still allows our hero a few crucial moments of modern self-reflection. . . . It's hard to imagine anyone not being impressed by this novel. "--The Independent (UK)"It's a tightrope walk, balancing the tradition with the requirements of contemporary life, and Deaver handles it with panache. . . . But what the Fleming aficionado will inevitably notice here are the differences, which turn this latest escapade into what feels, and should feel, like one of those things that are very popular these days: a reboot."--Olen Steinhauer, "author of *The Tourist*, *The Nearest Exit*, *The Bridge of Sighs*, "and" *Victory Square*"A page-turning, action packed rip-roaring novel with plenty of twists and surprises."--"Durham Herald-Sun"Jeffery Deaver accepted one of the greatest literary challenges of the new millennium when he agreed to write a new James Bond novel. . . . With *"Carte Blanche"*, [he] somehow manages to spin a top-notch 21st-century spy thriller while both respecting Bond and reinventing him."--"Washington Independent Review of Books" "This terrific new pastiche will amply reward Bond fans and possibly bring new readers into the fold. Deaver (*"Edge"*), an avowed fan of the Fleming canon, has set the novel in the post-9/11 present, and Bond, that icon of the 1960s, handles the transition perfectly. . . . The plot is predictable in a purely Bond-ian way (credibly incredible), but also intricate and inventive, surprising and satisfying--a testament to Deaver's skill as a storyteller. . . . Fleming purists may balk at the hint of a New Age sensitivity in Deaver's Bond, but they will recognize one of the world's most enduring fictional characters: competent, courageous, charming, and cool."--"Publishers Weekly" "Ian Fleming's estate made a superb choice when it turned to thriller writer Jeffery Deaver for this summer's James Bond reboot *"Carte Blanche"*. . . . Familiar touches about, from M and Money Penny to exotic locales. Then, too, Deaver adds a knowing wink . . . A spy bash not to be missed."--"Christian Science Monitor" "Deaver, if anything, has written a 007 thriller that is superior to the best of Fleming."--"San Jose Mercury News"

I have been reading James Bond since Ian Flemming started writing about him. It was with some trepidation that I read the works of his successors, and I never felt anyone matched the original; They seemed to be writing book versions of the movie James Bond. When I saw Jeffrey Deaver had

written one of this new series, I decided to give it a go since I always enjoy Mr. Deaver's works, and I was glad I had done so. I got a kick out of reading about these younger characters, and felt for the first time in a long time I was reading about Bond -James Bond. There was a satisfying mix of suspense, story telling, sex and humor, and terrific end of chapter hooks so I always wanted to read just one more. I have not yet read the other books by different authors in this new series, but if you are going to read only one Carte Blanche is a good place to start.

I thought that this was a very good novel. Kept me up late reading, had enough action to keep my heart rate up, I cared about the characters, and the ending had some good twists. Now, as the matter of this being a Bond novel, it's only so-so. However, realize that this is not Fleming's Bond, but James Bond in the modern world. If you want to Sean Connery Bond, go read the original books. If you want a believable, grittier, more modern 007, buy this book.

It doesn't seem like a mixture that would work. Ian Fleming and Jeffrey Deaver have two remarkably different styles. However, there is something about the James Bond character that works with both authors. Deaver's approach the character and the action surrounding him is far less stylized (as Fleming's approach does come across as obvious fantasy fulfillment), offering a more realistic approach to the story. If you're a fan of the 007 movies or the earlier books, definitely grab this book. It's a worthy addition to the long lived 007 series.

Deaver updates Bond to keep him contemporary, placing his military experience in the current War in Afghanistan rather than in World War II, giving him a thoroughly modern Bentley Coupe to replace the old Aston and older pre-war Blower Bentley of the early Bonds. He also modernizes his attitudes and predilections. This Bond is a worthy successor to the Ian Fleming originals, and one hopes Deaver will be invited to pen some sequels.

I was intrigued to discover how Jeffrey Deaver would deliver on Bond feeling that it was an ambitious undertaking but that was tempered by my admiration for this author who typically writes intelligently and researches well. That said Ian Fleming has to be a hard act to follow but Carte Blanche delivered in both regards and the plot moved along in layers which developed slowly but credibly and your interest to find out more kept the pages turning. The two main protagonists physical appearance would literally make you cringe - talk about creepy! The plot was ingenious and takes the reader to some reallyh interesting parts of the world with many twists and turns along

the way. The essence of a good Bond novel is his ability to get out of death defying situations when the reader can see no possible means of escape and in Carte Blanche James has his work cut out for him but Lady Luck together with his quite incredible abilities to defeat his always formidable opponent(s) keeps the reader enthralled. I believe Jeffrey has produced a very credible Bond, if that is even possible, but I stopped short of giving 5 stars because, and maybe its just me, but I do wish he could be just a little more human, show some weakness to let us mere mortals identify with him a bit more. Perfection can be tiresome after all particularly when it comes to humans. The female characters fell into the category of either admiring James as in the case of Ophelia but with intelligence rather than open lust thus preserving his perfect image as well as hers or else showing a determined effort not to succumb to his charms and becoming very stiff and unfeminine in the process (Jordaan) but perhaps this was to preserve the professionalism of the character. There was an attempt to soften the policewoman's image at the very end but it was rather clumsy. I think this book would probably appeal more to males than females. I fall into the latter category so perhaps that explains my faint criticism but either way it is a very good read indeed.

It was fortunate that I read the novel before reading any reviews because many of the reviews are filled with spoilers. I agree with some other reviewers that the book falls short of the mark. The plot was reasonably good, but the writing fell short and did not really hold my attention all the time. Part of the problem was digressions and too much detail on trivia. It would undoubtedly do better as a motion picture where the trivia is self descriptive, and some of the digressions could be edited out. It is the usual 007 performing amazing feats as he jumps from one peril to the next. Some of the perils were loosely connected and probably could have been deleted with no great loss. I doubt that I would consider buying another book in the series. James Bond has run his course and should be put to rest.

I enjoyed Jeffery Deaver's 007 book. It has many of the ingredients found in Ian Fleming's book. A great villain in terms of twisted personality. An evil plan. Lots of action. A surprising twist in the plot line. Intelligent, decisive, interesting and beautiful women. Insightful gadgets. And, an updated world scenario. Very enjoyable.

This book reads like the modern Bond movies. I just miss the original timeline . However, to keep Bond fresh, it is necessary to alter his history some.

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