

Casino Royale Study Guide

Casino Royale by Ian Fleming

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Contents

Casino Royale Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	4
Chapter 1, The Secret Agent.....	5
Chapter 2, Dossier for M; Chapter 3, Number 007.....	6
Chapter 4, L'Ennemi Ecoute.....	8
Chapter 5, The Girl from Headquarters; Chapter 6, Two Men in Straw Hats.....	10
Chapter 7, Rouge et Noir; Chapter 8, Pink Lights and Champagne.....	12
Chapter 9, The Game Is Baccarat.....	14
Chapter 10, The High Table; Chapter 11, Moment of Truth.....	16
Chapter 12, The Deadly Tube; Chapter 13, 'A Whisper of Love, A Whisper of Hate'.....	18
Chapter 14, 'La Vie en Rose?'; Chapter 15, Black Hare and Grey Hound.....	20
Chapter 16, The Crawling of the Skin; Chapter 17, 'My Dear Boy'.....	22
Chapter 18, A Craig-like Face; Chapter 19, The White Tent.....	24
Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil; Chapter 21, Vesper.....	26
Chapter 22, The Hastening Saloon; Chapter 23, Tide of Passion.....	28
Chapter 24, Fruit Défendu.....	30
Chapter 25, 'Black-Patch'; Chapter 26, 'Sleep Well, My Darling'.....	31
Chapter 27, The Bleeding Heart.....	33
Characters.....	34
Objects/Places.....	38
Themes.....	40
Style.....	42
Quotes.....	44
Topics for Discussion.....	46



Plot Summary

Casino Royale by Ian Fleming is a spy thriller set during the Cold War. It tells the story of one man, James Bond, and his evolution into a committed spy and secret agent. Bond accepts a mission to defeat a Russian agent, Le Chiffre, in a card game. He escapes death several times but eventually defeats Le Chiffre. This is just the beginning of Bond's journey. Other events lead to his renewed commitment to his job, which is a lifestyle more than a profession. The story is full of car chases, torture and sex as Bond's evolution into an international spy is revealed.

There are several story lines in the book. The main story is between James Bond, British secret agent 007, and Le Chiffre, an agent controlled by the Communist Russians. Le Chiffre has used Soviet money meant for a Communist controlled trade union to invest in brothels. This gets him into trouble when the French outlaw prostitution. The Soviet arch-spy agency SMERSH may be on his trail and if they catch him they will kill him. Le Chiffre's last resort is to remake the money through gambling. He goes to the Casino Royale in the north of France. Bond is an excellent gambler and his mission is to defeat Le Chiffre at the baccarat table and bankrupt him.

Bond checks into the hotel and prepares his operation. He has help from his partners including the beautiful Vesper Lynd, French agent Mathis and American CIA man Felix Leiter. Before Bond has a chance to face off with Le Chiffre, the Soviets make an attempt on his life. He survives a bomb blast unscathed. He makes it to the casino and confronts Le Chiffre. After tense drama, Bond manages to beat Le Chiffre in baccarat and bankrupts him.

After his win Bond takes Vesper out for a drink. She is lured into the parking lot and kidnapped by Le Chiffre. Bond pursues her and, after he crashes his car, is captured himself. Bond is tortured by Le Chiffre. Before he has a chance to break Bond, a SMERSH agent finds Le Chiffre and kills him. Bond and Vesper manage to escape but Bond is seriously injured. He spends three weeks in the hospital. While in the hospital Bond contemplates his future as a spy. When he is finally released, he starts a romantic relationship with Vesper. They take a vacation at a seaside inn.

They start a passionate relationship and Bond decides he will ask Vesper to marry him. Before he has the chance he catches Vesper making a secret phone call and acting duplicitously. Bond is frustrated and their relationship becomes strained. It comes to a head when Bond demands to know her secret. She promises to tell him the next day. They make passionate love and Bond retires to his own room. In the morning he finds Vesper, dead from a suicide. She was a double agent working for the Russians. This infuriates Bond and he recommits to his life as a spy.



Chapter 1, The Secret Agent

Chapter 1, The Secret Agent Summary

Casino Royale by Ian Fleming is a spy thriller set during the Cold War. It tells the story of one man, James Bond, and his evolution into a committed spy and secret agent. Bond accepts a mission to defeat a Russian agent, Le Chiffre, in a card game. He escapes death several times but eventually defeats Le Chiffre. This is just the beginning of Bond's journey. Other events lead to his renewed commitment to his job, which is a lifestyle more than a profession. The story is full of car chases, torture and sex as Bond's evolution into an international spy is revealed.

The novel opens with British secret agent James Bond gambling in the French casino in the town of Royale-les-Eaux. It is 3 a.m. and he is playing roulette in the private room of the casino. Bond is exhausted and decides to quit for the day and head back to his hotel. Leaving the casino, Bond observes Le Chiffre who appears to be winning heavily. As Bond walks out of the casino he observes the layout of the building and determines it would be very difficult to rob the casino and decides Le Chiffre will almost certainly not attempt this.

Bond enters Hôtel Splendide where he is staying in room 45 on the first floor. The hotel man gives him a telegram from Jamaica. The telegram tells him he will receive ten million francs. The telegram is signed "Dasilva." Bond is wary of the hotel staff in case they are agents spying on him. Bond's headquarters is in London and he has previously worked in Jamaica. His cover is as a wealthy client of Messrs Cafery, a powerful import and export firm in Jamaica.

Bond continues to his hotel room where he examines the room and determines no one searched it in his absence. Bond calculates he has won three million francs, giving him a total of twenty-three million French francs to work with. This is equivalent to twenty-three thousand British pounds. He falls asleep with his hand on a .38 Colt Police Positive with a sawed off barrel.

Chapter 1, The Secret Agent Analysis

Bond's actions tell us that he is a very cautious and careful agent. Since his headquarters is in London, it is assumed he is an agent for the British government. The fact he is so concerned with someone searching his room may foreshadow someone doing so in the future. He is worried someone may be watching him or even trying to kill him.

It is still unclear exactly what Bond's mission is, but it has something to do with Le Chiffre. Bond is watching him and considering ways in which he may rob the casino. It is not Bond's job to protect the casino, but it is in his nature to consider any of his opponent's possible actions.



Chapter 2, Dossier for M; Chapter 3, Number 007

Chapter 2, Dossier for M; Chapter 3, Number 007 Summary

Chapter 2 begins two weeks before Chapter 1. The chapter gives details on the background of Le Chiffre, the main antagonist of the novel. "M" is the head of the British Secret Service, Bond's boss. He receives a dossier from "S" compiled by the Archivist.

Le Chiffre is also known as Monsieur Le Chiffre, "The Number," "Heir Mummer," and "Herr Ziffer." He is one of the chief agents for the USSR in France. This makes him a major opponent of the British and other NATO forces such as the United States and France. He controls a trade union and other business interests in the French town of Alsace. The dossier determines his degenerate habits are his weakness. One of his mistresses is a British Agent named 1860.

Le Chiffre is close to a financial crisis. He owns a chain of brothels, the Cordon Jaune, in France. He purchased these brothels with money entrusted to him by Leningrad Section III (the Soviets). The money was meant to be used to finance the trade union he controls for the Soviets. Le Chiffre's problems start when France passes a ban on brothels. This leads to Le Chiffre's financial ruin. The British determine this is very serious for him and may even bring about his death if the Soviets find out about it.

Le Chiffre has decided to attempt to make up his losses by gambling. He needs to make a profit of fifty million francs. He has twenty-five million francs to gamble with. He plays baccarat. British intelligence determines that if they are able to defeat Le Chiffre at the baccarat table, it will have a serious impact on the Soviets. They believe if he is defeated, the Communist trade union he controls will be bankrupted. The trade union reportedly has a membership of fifty thousand people capable of controlling a large part of northern France. The British decide to send their best gambler to out-manuever Le Chiffre. They realize this will be very expensive but they deem it necessary and worthy.

SMERSH is a Soviet agency equivalent to the British Secret Service. The agency spies on its own Soviet spies. The name comes from a combination of two Russian words that means, roughly, "Death to Spies." SMERSH is headquartered in the Russian city of Leningrad. They try to track down and eliminate traitors within the Soviet Secret Police and Secret Service. It is a very powerful organization in the USSR. It is possible they know about Le Chiffre's financial situation. The British are making every effort to learn more about SMERSH and to wipe it out. The British are working with their counterparts in France, the Deuxième Bureau, and American, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).



Head of S has some information for M which describes the operation Bond is conducting in France. Before getting in to see M, S must consult with M's Chief of Staff, Bill, and his private secretary, Money Penny.

Chapter 3 also describes the interview Bond has with M for this particular job. The interview is short. After learning the details, Bond tells M he is not sure he can win. M knows this and Bond feels embarrassed about bringing it up.

M tells Bond to talk to Q about equipment he will need. M also tells Bond he will have help with the operations. As the operation is taking place in France, the French will send one of their agents to assist. M says the French will probably send Mathis who Bond has worked with in the past and likes. The British will also send another agent to back up Bond. Bond is not happy as he likes to work alone.

Chapter 2, Dossier for M; Chapter 3, Number 007 Analysis

These chapters both take place before chapter one. They give information on what this story will be about. The book takes place during the Cold War so there is serious conflict between the USSR and western countries such as England, the USA and France. NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) is a group of western countries united to combat the influence of the Soviets.

The British decide to move against a powerful Soviet agent in France, Le Chiffre. This chapter gives us details on the background of Le Chiffre. His background suggests he does not stand for anything because he has no history. He reportedly does not know his own background prior to turning up in a German concentration camp after World War II. This leaves him looking out only for himself. This has probably led him into the criminal life. Furthermore, this has gotten him into trouble as he selfishly uses Soviet money for his own purposes.

In addition to the showdown between the Soviets and the British, there is also a possible confrontation within the Soviet system. SMERSH is policing their own Soviet spies and will more than likely kill anyone working against them. This means that Le Chiffre, unknown to him, has the possibility of trouble coming from both the British and the Soviets he works for.

Chapter 3 describes how Bond gets the job and what he is doing. It seems Bond is still a young agent as he is unsure of himself in front of his boss. He regrets some of the things he says and speaks without fully thinking things through. However, he has proven himself a capable agent and his superiors trust him.



Chapter 4, L'Ennemi Ecoute

Chapter 4, L'Ennemi Ecoute Summary

Chapter 4 moves the timeline back to where chapter 1 leaves off. Bond wakes in his hotel room. He has been in the hotel for two days and no one has attempted to contact him. He has spent the nights in the casino gambling and observing Le Chiffre. Bond determines Le Chiffre is an excellent and lucky gambler. While Bond is eating breakfast in his room, Mathis, the French agent, shows up. Bond is happy to see Mathis as they have worked well together in the past. Before Bond can greet him, Mathis stops him from talking. Mathis begins telling Bond about a radio he has with him, as if he is a salesman, giving no indication they know each other. It is apparent he is undercover as a radio salesman. While in this character, Mathis shows Bond a radio he has brought and gives Bond a sales pitch. Mathis continues to plug in the radio and fiddle with the dials. After he turns it on he comes out of character and talks to Bond as an old friend.

Mathis tells Bond his room has been bugged and there are two Soviet agents, the Muntzs, in the room above him listening to them. The radio has blocked their listening equipment. Mathis says French intelligence searched Bond's room before he arrived and discovered the bugs. Bond is worried that his cover has been blown so quickly. Mathis tells Bond he will like the other agent on his team. He tells him the other agent is an attractive woman and very capable. She speaks French and knows her job very well. There is also an American CIA agent named Felix Leiter working with them.

Mathis also reports there are three individuals checked into a local hotel. They claim to be Czech but intelligence reports say they are Bulgarian. These men are suspicious and under surveillance, the Soviets often use guys like this for hired killings or other similar jobs. Bond and Mathis make plans to meet for lunch later today at the bar of the Hermitage. Here Bond will meet his female partner. Bond is instructed to then ask her to dinner so they can get to know each other and start a relationship for anyone who might be watching them.

The chapter ends with Bond worrying about his fate. He is concerned his identity has been discovered by the opposition so easily. He is also concerned about the woman. He doesn't like working with them—he thinks woman are for fun, and tend to confuse work with sex and emotions.

Chapter 4, L'Ennemi Ecoute Analysis

The title of this chapter, L'Ennemi Écoute, means "the enemy listens." The operation has become more complicated as it is now obvious the enemy is aware of Bond's presence. It is sane to assume that they also know about Mathis.

Bond and Mathis make plans for the immediate future. Bond is meant to flirt with the female agent and start a romantic relationship with her. This will create a believable



scenario for the woman to stay close to Bond in the casino. It is unclear whether the enemy, "The Muntzs" upstairs are aware her, or the other agents. Bond and Mathis are continuing on as if they don't know about them.

Bond worries about his own safety. Combine this with the information that there are known hit men (the Bulgarians) in town, there is further foreshadowing of a possible attack on Bond's life.



Chapter 5, The Girl from Headquarters; Chapter 6, Two Men in Straw Hats

Chapter 5, The Girl from Headquarters; Chapter 6, Two Men in Straw Hats Summary

Chapter 5 begins by giving background on the city of Royale where the casino is located. It started as a small fishing village. Later sulfur was discovered in the local river. The French considered this water healthy and the town renamed itself Royale-les-Eaux, and quickly became fashionable. The local casino, the Casino Royale, was luxurious and in 1950 underwent a renovation and became popular.

Bond takes his car out for a drive. He is a car enthusiast and this is his hobby. His car is a battleship-grey convertible Bentley coupe. After his drive, Bond goes to the Hermitage to meet Mathis. Mathis is with Bond's new partner, Mademoiselle Lynd. Lynd is posing as a wireless radio expert and Mathis' assistant in his radio business. Bond immediately notices her beauty and is excited by it. As planned, Bond makes plans to have dinner with her tonight. Bond is conflicted about his feelings for Lynd. He wants to sleep with her but not while working together.

Bond leaves to go back to his hotel. When he leaves, Mathis and Lynd discuss Bond. Lynd seems smitten by him, she says he is good looking but seems cold and ruthless. As she watches Bond leave, there is an enormous explosion and the large window of the restaurant shatters. Mathis tells Lynd to stay there and he jumps through the empty window to investigate.

Bond is walking on a path towards his hotel before the explosion. He watches two men walking towards him. They are dressed as tourists but he eyes them suspiciously. Both men are carrying large camera cases over their shoulders, one red and one blue. As the men come within fifty yards of Bond the man with the red case nods to the man with the blue case. The man leans forward and does something with the case. Bond is behind a large tree when the huge explosion takes place. Bond is protected by the tree but is still knocked down by the blast.

The explosion is so large it chars and removes the leaves from the nearby trees. Blood, flesh, dirt and glass shower down on Bond. The two men are dead and their bodies destroyed. Bond vomits. Mathis arrives and helps Bond up and quickly leads him back to the hotel. Mathis turns on the radio so they can talk without spies hearing.

From Bond's description of the two men, Mathis quickly determines it must have been the Bulgarians they had under observation. Mathis informs the police and gives the press a cover story. He tells the press it was a vendetta between two Communist Bulgarians and they killed each other. In reality Mathis knows the bomb was meant to kill Bond and he tells him this. Bond's life was saved by the tree. They are both



confused by the significance of the red and blue cases. They think a third Bulgarian has escaped. While Bond has a drink and rests, Mathis heads out to investigate the scene of the explosion.

Chapter 5, The Girl from Headquarters; Chapter 6, Two Men in Straw Hats Analysis

In this chapter we begin to learn about Bond's attitude towards women, a major theme of the novel. He likes women as sexual objects but does not seem to respect them as equals. It seems he will have trouble working with them. This negative view of women is one of the themes of the novel. The explosion at the end of the chapter recalls the earlier foreshadowing, as it appears there may have been an attempt on Bond's life.

There is some serious action in this chapter. Bond survives the attempt on his life by being lucky. He happened to be behind a tree at the time of the explosion. Luck is proving to be a theme of the novel, as Bond is also described as a lucky gambler.

The showdown between the Russians and the British/Bond heats up. It is now obvious that while the British attempt to defeat Le Chiffre, the Soviets are also trying to defeat Bond. This means the Soviets may know what Bond is doing in France. It is unclear how the Russians know about Bond, there may be an informant. If they know about Bond, it would mean they may also know about Le Chiffre's misdeeds. This would put Le Chiffre in danger as well as Bond.



Chapter 7, Rouge et Noir; Chapter 8, Pink Lights and Champagne

Chapter 7, Rouge et Noir; Chapter 8, Pink Lights and Champagne Summary

Bond has a massage in his room followed by a nap. He wakes in the evening rested and heads to the casino. He tries to regain his focus on gambling. Bond is an experienced gambler. He enjoys gambling because he feels in control, wins and mistakes are his own fault. Bond considers that he has never been hurt by gambling or women, but he knows that one day he will be.

Bond goes to the private room. He changes fifty million francs into chips. He sits at the roulette table. He bets heavily and wins. He goes up one million francs. As he begins to do well, others follow his bets. One is an obvious American who Bond suspects is the CIA agent sent to work with him. As Bond rises from the baccarat table, the man offers to buy Bond a drink.

The American introduces himself as Felix Leiter. At the bar, Bond orders a dry martini and gives the bartender very specific directions. Leiter tells Bond he is there to help him with anything he needs. He says Bond was lucky after the attempted assassination this morning. Bond asks Leiter to just hang around the Casino and keep an eye on the room. Bond and Leiter head back to the hotel and agree to meet at between 10:30 and 11:00 that night.

Bond prepares himself for the night. After a rest he dresses. He wears a fine suit with a .25 Beretta handgun under his jacket. He leaves his room and meets the girl, Lynd, in the lobby. He learns the girl's first name is Vesper. She looks beautiful in an elegant evening dress. Bond is excited by her beauty. Bond and Vesper head to the restaurant for dinner. At Bond's suggestion they order cold vodka.

When Bond learns Vesper's first name he decides to name his famous martini after her, "The Vesper." They are obviously enjoying themselves. They order caviar and champagne. Bond appreciates fine things in life and has expensive tastes. The chapter ends with Vesper telling Bond she has some interesting news to tell him about the bomb.

Chapter 7, Rouge et Noir; Chapter 8, Pink Lights and Champagne Analysis

Bond gets to gamble in the private room of the casino. This room is reserved for high rollers. By playing here he will be able to keep an eye on the other high rollers, most specifically Le Chiffre.



Further cooperation between the NATO powers is displayed as the American, Leiter, is introduced. This adds to the Cold War theme between NATO and the USSR. The cold war is a major theme of the novel. The Cold War is between the Communist Russians and the Western countries.

As Bond describes his feelings about gambling and women, he knows that one day they will cause him pain. This could be foreshadowing. Bond has been lucky in life and he feels that his luck may run out soon. This could also be a theme that Bond lives by the seat of his pants and always comes out on top. Bond takes risks but always does his best to stay in control. He is a gambler, not just in the casino but in his life. The author is foreshadowing that perhaps Bond will be harmed by love or luck in the story.

Bond and Vesper are flirting during dinner. It is easy to forget they are working and on a clandestine mission. It seems at times like they are on a date. Bond is often presumptuous, he orders for Vesper without thinking she might want to do so herself. When he realizes this, he apologizes but is pleased when she chooses to order what he has suggested. Bond is clearly treating the woman as someone lesser than himself, not as an equal. This is a continuation of the theme of a negative view of women in the novel.



Chapter 9, The Game Is Baccarat

Chapter 9, The Game Is Baccarat Summary

Vesper tells Bond the story of the Bulgarians who tried to kill him this morning. They apprehended the third suspect at a road-block. This suspect confessed and they learned about the operation meant to kill Bond. The Bulgarians received the bombs from a Soviet agent and he assured them there was no way of getting caught. The Soviet agent told them the blue camera case was a smoke bomb meant for cover and the red camera case was the bomb. It turns out the agent double-crossed them. Both cases were bombs. The Bulgarian killers attempted to set off what they thought was the smoke screen and it exploded, killing them. The French authorities do not think there is any connection between these men and Le Chiffre.

Vesper then tells Bond about herself. She is personal assistant to Head of S. Because this was S's operation she was chosen to be a part of it. Vesper was told Bond would not be happy about working with a woman. Vesper is excited to work with a "Double 0." Bond says it is easy to get Double 0 status if you are willing to kill people. Bond says he killed a Japanese man in New York and a man in Stockholm. Vesper is enjoying herself, the conversation and the fancy meal. She begins to say it is too bad they are doing it for work. Before she can finish this thought, Bond gives her a very cold look and tells her that if it was not for the job, they would not be there at all.

The mood between them suddenly changes. While previously it was flirtatious and warm, Bond immediately turns cold towards his female partner. From here on, Bond is all business and he begins to tell Vesper about his plan for the operation. Vesper listens obediently but she feels embarrassed about her remarks. Vesper recalls what her supervisor told her about Bond. She was told Bond would be no fun, he is serious and difficult to work with. While he is good looking, she is advised not to fall for him.

Bond says he will be playing Baccarat with Le Chiffre. He explains the game to Vesper. Le Chiffre will be the banker and Bond will make every attempt to out-manuever him and eventually bankrupt him.

Chapter 9, The Game Is Baccarat Analysis

Bond and Vesper talk business but continue to flirt. Vesper is enjoying the night and tells Bond as much. When she begins to say it is a shame they cannot be doing this under other circumstances, Bond gets angry. It is evident Bond might have been feeling the same way and is angry with himself. He considers himself a serious man and always on the job.

This is the continuation of the theme of a negative view of women. Bond knows he is working even though it appears he is on a date and enjoying himself. Vesper naturally thinks that if they were not working, they could do this for real. Bond is angry the woman

seems not to be serious, she is thinking about something other than the job. Because of this, Bond moves the conversation to the job and talks of nothing else. He is serious and does not flirt.



Chapter 10, The High Table; Chapter 11, Moment of Truth

Chapter 10, The High Table; Chapter 11, Moment of Truth Summary

Once Bond finishes explaining Baccarat to Vesper, his mood changes. He seems to have forgotten the coolness towards her. After dinner the two move to the casino. They go straight to the private room. In the casino Felix Leiter, the CIA man, comes up to them. As planned, he offers to escort Vesper while Bond gambles. Bond collects his twenty-four million francs and puts it in his coat pocket, half in the left, half in the right. Bond moves to the private baccarat table. He has reserved the seat directly across from the banker, Le Chiffre. Bond observes his other playing companions.

There are eight other players making a total of eleven. The players sit around a kidney shaped table with Le Chiffre as the banker at the center. Besides Bond, there is: Monsieur Sixte, a Belgian with metal interests in the Congo; an American actress named Carmel Delane; the British Lord Danvers and his American wife, Lady Danvers; a wealthy couple named Mr. and Mrs. DuPont; a Maharajah of an Indian state; an Italian named Signor Tomelli; and a wealthy Greek shipping magnate. As Le Chiffre sits at the table, the game begins. Le Chiffre opens the game and wins the first hand.

Chapter 11 opens with a tense face-off between Bond and Le Chiffre. Bond has challenged Le Chiffre. Bond is cool and collected, showing little care towards his money or the game. Bond wins and takes two million francs from Le Chiffre. He shows no emotion about the win and the game moves on. Bond eyes the room and notices Le Chiffre's two gunmen. As the game continues, Le Chiffre slowly goes down ten million francs while Bond is up four million.

Eventually the game comes back to Bond and he challenges Le Chiffre for four million francs. Bond quickly loses and immediately ups the challenge at eight million francs. Bond loses again. At this point Bond begins to get nervous and his hands start to sweat, he has only sixteen million francs left. He challenges again for sixteen million francs, the remainder of his money. Bond loses again. He is broke.

Chapter 10, The High Table; Chapter 11, Moment of Truth Analysis

Chapter 10 is purely background information. It does not move the story forward. The chapter sets up the coming action. The start of the baccarat game will begin the climax of the story line. This will be Bond's chance to defeat Le Chiffre and he will meet him face to face.



In chapter 11 Bond finally meets Le Chiffre. This is the most tense moment of the story. Many things go unspoken between the two. They know who each other are and what they are trying to do but they cannot talk about it. They speak with their eyes. The end of the chapter is a cliffhanger. It seems as though Bond has failed and there is no hope.



Chapter 12, The Deadly Tube; Chapter 13, 'A Whisper of Love, A Whisper of Hate'

Chapter 12, The Deadly Tube; Chapter 13, 'A Whisper of Love, A Whisper of Hate' Summary

Bond feels totally defeated, he does not know what to do. He imagines having to go back to London defeated and embarrassed. He sees the end of his career. He looks around the room and sees Leiter is gone while Vesper gives him a look of encouragement. Suddenly, an usher from the casino comes up to Bond and hands him a large envelop. Bond discretely looks inside and finds thirty-two million francs inside, loaned from the Americans. Bond is back.

He immediately challenges Le Chiffre again for the full thirty-two million francs. If he wins he knows Le Chiffre will be totally defeated, unable to cover the losses. The casino asks to see the money and Bonds hands over the envelope of cash. As the casino's man slowly counts out the money, Bond feels a gun pressed into his back. One of Le Chiffre's men orders Bond to recall his challenge or he will shoot him in the back. As the casino's man continues to slowly count out the money, Bond considers his options.

Bond looks at Le Chiffre and sees him watching, waiting to see what Bond will do. Bond acts. He quickly heaves his body backwards and knocks the man with the gun to the floor. The gunman quickly disappears in the confusion and Bond feigns embarrassment and returns to the table. Bond looks at Le Chiffre and sees fear in his eyes.

Bond's confidence has returned and he is clear headed. It is two o'clock in the morning. Le Chiffre draws the cards. At first Bond's cards are bad. But the second draw, to the surprise of the many spectators, Bond wins. Le Chiffre is dispirited and shocked. Le Chiffre has no more money, he is broke, he leaves the table and the casino. Bond goes to the casino office and gets his payout. He returns the thirty-two million francs to Lieter and takes the rest as a check.

Bond learns that the gunman who tried to kill him got away and the gun left behind cannot be traced to Le Chiffre. Bond is too happy with his win to worry about it. He invites Vesper to celebrate with a drink and a meal. She agrees. Before the date, Bond and Lieter walk back to the hotel. Bond thanks him for his help and they part ways.

Bond reflects happily that he has escaped death twice that day, once from the bomb and once from the gunman in the casino. He is momentarily worried they might come after him again. But he knows Le Chiffre must be running from SMERSH right now. As he leaves his hotel, Bond contemplates what to do with his check for forty million francs.



He folds it very small. He then steps into the hallway and does something to the door with a screwdriver. He then leaves the room and goes to meet Vesper.

Chapter 12, The Deadly Tube; Chapter 13, 'A Whisper of Love, A Whisper of Hate' Analysis

Bond is saved when the Americans provide him with thirty-two million francs. This is an example of Cold War cooperation between the western powers. It is also symbolic of how the Americans helped the British during World War II.

Le Chiffre thought he had won after beating Bond in the first few challenges. When Bond challenges him again he is nervous. Both know that if he loses he will be totally defeated. Le Chiffre might well be killed by SMERSH for losing their money. Le Chiffre does not want to take this chance which is why his gunman threatens Bond.

Bond is surprised his team, Vesper, Leiter and Mathis, do not see what is happening. It is their job to be keeping an eye on him. This suggests that one of them might be a double-agent. Bond is lucky again when he is able to knock the gunman out. At this point Le Chiffre is obviously scared.

When Bond wins, it seems as if he has accomplished his mission, as he has achieved his objective by bankrupting Le Chiffre. It is only halfway through the book and it seems the story has reached its climax. Le Chiffre has been defeated and the operation laid out at the beginning of the story has been accomplished. This suggests something else will go wrong.



Chapter 14, 'La Vie en Rose?'; Chapter 15, Black Hare and Grey Hound

Chapter 14, 'La Vie en Rose?'; Chapter 15, Black Hare and Grey Hound Summary

Bond and Vesper enter the small dark night club. They order champagne. Bond is happy the operation is over and it went so well. Vesper expresses happiness but is not sharing the same light mood. She seems distant and cold. Bond is confused but he puts it off to her not wanting to get involved with him. Bond tries to start conversation but Vesper is non-responsive, frustrating Bond. By 4:00 a.m. Bond is ready to leave and call it a night when the maitre d'hotel delivers a note to Vesper. She reads it and tells Bond the note is from Mathis and he would like to meet her in the hotel lobby.

As Vesper leaves, Bond realizes he is exhausted after such a long day. He then realizes something about the note is wrong. He wonders why Mathis would ask to see Vesper and not him, and why he would not come to the restaurant himself in the first place. Bond rushes to the lobby. He does not see Vesper or Mathis. He runs outside. He looks around but sees nothing. Then he hears a shout. A car speeds out of the shadows and a struggle is obviously taking place within the vehicle. Bond sees Vesper's handbag fly out the window.

Bond finds the note and immediately recognizes it as a forgery. Bond rushes to his Bentley and pursues the kidnappers. As he drives, he stewes in anger at Vesper's stupidity and at M for sending such an inexperienced woman on the mission. His mind goes on a rant on women. He thinks they have no business doing this kind of work and thinks they should stay at home in the kitchen.

As he pursues the car he considers his options. He decides if the girl is ransomed for the forty million francs he will not relent. He decides he will let Vesper die. She is a member of the secret service and this comes with the job. She accepted the risk when she took the job. He decides if he does not catch her, he will simply go home and go to bed. He professes to not be worried. He is driving very fast along the coast road. He pulls a gun from under his dashboard and rests it on the seat.

Ahead in the kidnapper's car, there are three men along with Vesper. Le Chiffre is driving. Vesper has her skirt tied over her head, making her immobile. Le Chiffre slows the car and lets Bond catch up. He then pulls a lever on the floor and a noise is heard coming from the trunk of the car. Then he quickly pulls onto the side of the road. They wait as Bond's car speeds towards them.



Chapter 14, 'La Vie en Rose?'; Chapter 15, Black Hare and Grey Hound Analysis

The foreshadowing from the previous chapter comes to fruition as Vesper is kidnapped—something has gone wrong. Again, it is a woman who makes the error. Bond's prejudice against women again proves true as Vesper is the one who missteps. Bond did not want to work with a woman in the first place and here his reasoning is justified. He was ready to go to bed and move on to the next assignment but he is now forced to deal with saving the girl.

Bond sees the note as an obvious forgery but Vesper was evidently not bright enough to realize it. Again the negative view of women theme is reinforced. As Bond pursues Vesper and tries to save her, he is angry with her. He pledges not to try too hard to save her and almost seems to hope she is killed. Bond's internal dialogue rationalizes what he sees as Vesper's impending death. He thinks she is getting what she deserves. He reminds himself that she accepted this possibility when taking a job with the secret service and accepting this mission.

Vesper's skirt being tied over her head is symbolic of women's vulnerability and weakness. The description of her legs is sexually suggestive. This is further continuation of the theme of women as weak sex objects.



Chapter 16, The Crawling of the Skin; Chapter 17, 'My Dear Boy'

Chapter 16, The Crawling of the Skin; Chapter 17, 'My Dear Boy' Summary

Bond sees something in the road and slams on the brakes, but he is going too fast and can't stop in time. Le Chiffre has dropped spikes on the road and they tear the tires off of the rims of his wheels. Bond's car goes wildly out of control and crashes. Bond is knocked unconscious. Le Chiffre's men converge on the car and remove Bond from the car. They bind him and put him in the back of their car with Vesper.

Bond wakes in the back seat and considers his situation. No one knows where he is and he has no hope of being saved. He is angry with Vesper for putting him in the position. Then he notices the girl next to him. She is not moving. He whispers to her and one of his captors hits him hard in the chest. They head to Le Chiffre's rented house in the remote countryside. Bond realizes Vesper's kidnapping was just a ruse to catch Bond and he feels stupid for falling for it. He is scared.

Le Chiffre and his men lead Bond and Vesper into the house. Bond watches them take Vesper into a room. He fears they will rape her and he feels he needs to do something. He strikes out at his captor and knocks him down. Bond tries to get to Vesper, he wants to tell her not to give up. But the captor is back up and hits Bond before he can reach Vesper. They lead Vesper into one room and take Bond into another room. He knows he is totally at their mercy.

Bond finds himself in a large empty room. He is stripped naked. Le Chiffre's man takes a chair and cuts out the seat. Bond is forced to sit in the chair and is tied up. Le Chiffre enters the room and sits down in a chair across from Bond. He is drinking a pot of coffee. Le Chiffre is carrying with him a carpet-beater, a long stick with a wide racket-like head. Bond feels totally vulnerable and defenseless, he has no hope.

Bond and Le Chiffre are alone in the room. Le Chiffre looks Bond in the eyes, he says nothing. He takes the carpet-beater and holds it under the chair. The chair has no bottom, as Bond is naked his genitals are hanging free below the chair. Le Chiffre uses the carpet-beater and strikes Bond squarely in the genitals. Bond's body spasm, he is in great pain. Le Chiffre lets Bond know he is serious, he says the game of "Red Indians" is over. He asks Bond where the money is. Bond does not respond. Le Chiffre hits him again.

Le Chiffre says he will continue to hit Bond in this particularly sensitive area until he gets an answer to his question. He tells Bond there is no hope of being saved. He says if Bond still does not answer, Vesper will be brought into the room and suggests she will be raped in front of him.



Bond thinks of what he knows about torture. He knows the beginning will be the worst. If he can withstand the beginning he will be ok. He thinks of what others who were tortured have told him, that there is a period of peace at the end of it. Bond tries to resolve himself to his fate and prepares for the pain. Le Chiffre hits Bond again and again, Bond screams and his body twists in pain.

Le Chiffre asks about the money. He tells Bond his room was searched and they found his hidden code book and other papers but not the money. The torture continues. Bond worries that his manhood will be destroyed, this makes the immediate pain not all there is, he also has to worry about the future, that if he survives he will no longer be a man. Bond tries to reason with Le Chiffre, he says the money will be traced to him. Le Chiffre has accounted for this and forged a note and likely scenario to cover his tracks. Bond is just trying to delay the pain, he has no hope of being saved. The torture continues. After ten minutes Bond faints. Le Chiffre twists Bond's ears and pours coffee down his throat and splashes it in his face. He tells Bond he is finished, he is not going to kill him but he will finish him. He tells Bond to say good-bye.

Chapter 16, The Crawling of the Skin; Chapter 17, 'My Dear Boy' Analysis

Chapter 16 does move the story forward but sets up another important chapter. Chapter 17 will again see Bond and Le Chiffre face to face but this time under very different circumstances. Previously, their meeting in the casino was civilized, this time it will not be. Bond is tortured.

Le Chiffre's tactics are brutal. His true evil nature is displayed. He is cold and shows no emotion as he tortures Bond. This is an example of an important theme of the book, good vs. evil. Bond learns what evil is and he has first hand experience with the enemy. Previously his opponent was abstract and their evil was a theoretical idea. Now he is forced to see and know it.



Chapter 18, A Craig-like Face; Chapter 19, The White Tent

Chapter 18, A Craig-like Face; Chapter 19, The White Tent Summary

To Bond's surprise he hears a new voice in the room. Bond is tied so he cannot move and can only see Le Chiffre. He watches Le Chiffre's face go white and he sees the fear in his eyes. It is a SMERSH agent come to kill Le Chiffre. The SMERSH man tells Le Chiffre he has already killed the other two men. He has been sent from the Soviet Union to kill him. The Soviet agent asks Le Chiffre if he is guilty. Le Chiffre says yes. Bond hears a shot from a silenced gun and then sees a hole in the middle of Le Chiffre's forehead, it looks like a third eye. Le Chiffre is dead.

The SMERSH man turns his attention to Bond. He tells him he has no orders to kill him and he is safe. He also has not hurt Vesper. The SMERSH man marks Bond—he takes a knife and carves what looks like an inverted 'M' into Bond's hand. The SMERSH man exits the house, leaving Bond tied up.

Bond is unconscious for two days. In his unconscious state he dreams he is held captive and bound. Finally he wakes in a hospital. M has sent two British nurses to look after him and Mathis has provided a doctor. His body is bandaged heavily and he can barely move. The doctor tells Bond what has happened. A farmer found his wrecked car and notified the police. Eventually Mathis traced the car to Bond and immediately went to Le Chiffre's house where he found Bond and Vesper. Vesper has not been harmed or molested in any way. The doctor tells Bond his injuries are serious but no longer life-threatening. He tells Bond he is lucky to be alive. The doctor leaves and Mathis comes in.

Mathis tells Bond that the authorities in London, Paris and Washington are worried about him. Bond is surprised to learn that M called personally to check on him. Mathis quizzes Bond about what happened. Bond tells him SMERSH killed Le Chiffre and tells him other details of the torture. Retelling the story overwhelms Bond and makes him uncomfortable so Mathis stops. Mathis has created a cover story saying Le Chiffre killed his accomplices and committed suicide because he did not want to face questions over the misused union funds. The Communist Party is upset as Le Chiffre was a hero to them. Bond tells Mathis where he can find the check he has hidden in the door of his hotel room. Mathis leaves and Bond falls asleep thinking of Vesper.



Chapter 18, A Craig-like Face; Chapter 19, The White Tent Analysis

When Le Chiffre sees the SMERSH man he knows he is going to die—he seems to accept it and does not try to fight it. Le Chiffre knows he is wrong and he knows how SMERSH works, he has no hope of escaping at this point. It is surprising SMERSH leaves Bond alive. The story's bad guy dies and the good guy survives. But the good guy is saved by the evil force.

This chapter closes out the first storyline. Bond defeated Le Chiffre and survived. This finishes the first section of the book and transitions the story to the next storyline. Bond begins to consider his career and contemplate his future. This chapter also sets up the romantic relationship between Bond and Vesper.



Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil; Chapter 21, Vesper

Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil; Chapter 21, Vesper Summary

Three days later, Mathis returns to Bond's hotel room. He brings Bond his check. He says there is little trace of the SMERSH man and he is most likely long gone. Bond learns the M the SMERSH man carved in his hand is actually the Russian letter 'SH,' signifying Bond is a spy. Much to Mathis' surprise, Bond tells him he is planning on retiring. He says he likes being alive and does not want to die.

Bond becomes philosophical. He says when he was young it was easy to tell the difference between the bad guys and the good guys, between right and wrong, now it is difficult. Bond thinks of the two people he was forced to kill in the past. He says he was awarded his '00' status (his code name is 007) for having to kill in the line of duty. Bond says while he is considered a hero by his countrymen, if he had been killed he knows his killer would be considered a hero by his people. He sees the whole idea as futile. Bond says for him the heroes and the villains are getting confused.

Mathis is very surprised by what Bond is saying. He tells Bond he will get over it and soon there will be another Le Chiffre for him to go after. Bond agrees Le Chiffre was an evil man and he would be happy to kill him. Mathis tells Bond there will be many more like Le Chiffre, he tells Bond he may be choosier about the jobs he takes but now he knows what an evil man looks like. He tells Bond to surround himself with people and not principles. He tells him not to become too human, he is too good of a machine.

For eight days Bond has avoided seeing Vesper, even though she has come to the hospital every day. He is afraid of several things. First, he knows he has to write a report and he does not want to criticize Vesper too badly. If he talks to her, he will find out the details and he will have to write his report. His second worry is much more serious. He is afraid of what happened to him during the attack, and that he will not be able to perform as a man.

The doctor has assured him he will have a full recovery, but he is still nervous. This is the main reason he does not want to see Vesper, he is attracted to her and he is not ready yet to face his fear that he might be impotent.

Vesper enters his room and she is tan and beautiful. She tells Bond she has been sunbathing everyday. She feels guilty have been doing this while Bond is confined to his bed but Bond assures her he doesn't mind. Vesper breaks down and apologizes, she feels like everything is all her fault. Bond comforts her and tells her it's not her fault. He feels sympathy for her. Vesper describes the night she was kidnapped. There is nothing surprising to Bond. She was lured outside with the fake note. One of Le Chiffre's men



pulled her skirt over her head and threw her in the car. She says when Bond was later captured she was unconscious. Bond comforts her and tells her it's not her fault, anyone could have succumbed to the same trick. The two flirt and by the time she leaves there is a nice chemistry between them. Vesper tells Bond to get well quickly and leaves.

Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil; Chapter 21, Vesper Analysis

This chapter is the central focus of the good vs. evil theme of the book. It also ties together the two storylines and gives us insight into Bond's character. It examines two of the major themes of the book: the Cold War and good vs. evil.

Bond begins to see his enemies' viewpoint and consequently sees his jobs as largely futile. He considers there is another man on the other side who is doing the same thing as him and believes in what he is doing just as strongly. They both think they are right, and Bond knows they both cannot be right. This makes Bond want to quit and forget about the whole situation. This is a central element to understanding the Cold War. Two ideologies, Communism and Democracy/Capitalism are heading off and proponents of both feel strongly they are right and the other is wrong. It is a largely futile argument with no concrete solutions.

Previous foreshadowing plays out here as Bond and Vesper begin to fall in love. Bond's previous view of women seems to be changing as he feels tenderness for Vesper. He probably begins to see a future for himself with this woman, something he never considered before.



Chapter 22, The Hastening Saloon; Chapter 23, Tide of Passion

Chapter 22, The Hastening Saloon; Chapter 23, Tide of Passion Summary

After meeting with Vesper, Bond feels relieved and his recovery is fast. He writes his report and is easy on Vesper. She visits him every day and they get along well, Bond feels different with her than any other women in his past. They both look forward to when Bond can leave the hospital. Vesper plans a surprise for them when Bond is released. After three weeks in the hospital Bond is recovered and is allowed to leave the hospital.

As Bond and Vesper drive to the surprise destination, Vesper feels their car is being followed. They pull off the road and wait. A car passes them and the driver glances at them. Bond is sure there is nothing to worry about. He tries to comfort Vesper but she is quite upset. They continue on to a small seaside inn. Bond loves it. They take separate adjoining rooms and they are both cheerful.

Bond and Vesper are in her room. Bond kisses her. He kisses her more passionately and tries to move her to the bed. Passion overtakes him. She tells him "not now," and he calms down. Bond relaxes and goes to the beach for a swim. He dives into the cool water and enjoys the sea. Bond lies naked on the beach. He thinks he wants to sleep with Vesper, and he wants to test his body to finally see if he is impotent. He continues thinking of Vesper. He likes her but is not excited by her. He feels, as close as they might become, there will always be something distant about her and he will never fully know her. He still looks forward to sleeping with her and is excited at the thought of her body. It is getting dark so Bond heads back to the hotel, he seems to have decided he will make love to Vesper but there will not be a lasting relationship.

Chapter 22, The Hastening Saloon; Chapter 23, Tide of Passion Analysis

This chapter has some important foreshadowing. Vesper begins to act suspiciously. Considering what has happened to her recently, it is understandable she is paranoid about someone following her, nevertheless, it is still odd. She is frightened about a seemingly innocent car following them. She knows Le Chiffre is dead and they are no longer in danger but she still has real fear of something. Bond seems to settle her down but the significance of Vesper's reaction is important.

Vesper continues to act suspiciously. She is obviously hiding something and Bond feels distant from her. At a time when they should be coming closer, Bond is feeling farther

from her. Bond has obviously considered a future with her but now seems to be having second thoughts.



Chapter 24, Fruit Défendu

Chapter 24, Fruit Défendu Summary

Bond bathes before dinner. In the bathroom he shares with Vesper, he notices a bottle of sleeping pills among her things. He decides the kidnapping must have disturbed her more than it shows. Bond continues to bathe and dress and he and Vesper head downstairs for dinner. They are the only ones in the dining room. They eat lobster and drink champagne. The two look into each other's eyes and anticipate the night to come. Vesper is thrilled by the fancy dinner, she feels spoiled. She does not feel like she deserves such nice treatment. While Bond asks what she means, she tells him that he really does not know her at all.

Vesper says that "people are islands...they don't really touch. However close they are..." Bond at first feels disheartened but what she has said, but she reassures him, "my island feels very close to your island tonight." They move upstairs to her room and make love.

In the morning Bond awakes early and goes for another swim in the ocean. He dives down and sits on the ground underwater. He again contemplates his future with Vesper. This time he determines he will ask her to marry him.

Chapter 24, Fruit Défendu Analysis

Vesper's speech reveals a lot of her character. Her talk about people being islands suggests she is distant and can never truly be close to another person. Nevertheless, she obviously likes Bond and wants to pursue a relationship.

Her talk of not deserving nice treatment is very telling. It suggests there is something hidden she is not revealing, something very bad. Despite this, Bond is falling in love with her and even plans on proposing to her.



Chapter 25, 'Black-Patch'; Chapter 26, 'Sleep Well, My Darling'

Chapter 25, 'Black-Patch'; Chapter 26, 'Sleep Well, My Darling' Summary

Bond leaves the beach and heads back to the hotel. It is still early and he is surprised to see Vesper coming out of the telephone booth outside the hotel. When Vesper sees him, she is shocked and embarrassed. Her eyes are wide and her hand moves to cover her open mouth. She looks embarrassed, as if she has been caught doing something wrong. Bond is immediately nervous and asks her if something is wrong. She stumbles momentarily and says she was just trying to call Mathis to help her with some housekeeping task. Bond can tell that she is lying.

Things have changed between them. Bond continues to ask Vesper about the phone call and can tell she continues to lie about it. Each day becomes worse and a hate grows between them. Bond does not understand what happened and cannot believe their relationship has collapsed so quickly.

As they are eating lunch together in the hotel, Vesper drops her fork and Bond looks up. Vesper's face has turned white and her eyes are wide in terror. Bond turns and looks over his shoulder, there is a man with an eye patch sitting at a table behind them. Vesper tells him it was the man from the car which passed them on the way to the hotel. Vesper is terrified and shaken. Vesper takes a long drink of her wine. She leaves the table and goes up to her room. Bond investigates. He checks the car and determines it could be the same one but he cannot be sure. Eventually the man leaves and Bond inquires about him with the hotel manager. He learns the man was a Swiss businessman passing through, he has said he will come back to eat in a few days. Bond also asks the hotel manager about the phone call Vesper made. He learns she has not called Mathis as she claims. She called a number in a different government building and there was no answer.

The next two days the uncomfortable atmosphere continues. In the morning Vesper takes a taxi into town and back. She says she needs medicine. When she gets back she makes a special effort to be pleasant and makes passionate love to Bond. Afterwards she begins crying and Bond retires to his room confused. From his room he can hear Vesper go to the telephone booth and he guesses that again there is no answer on the other end. The next day the man with the eye patch is back. Vesper is not as upset but she still retires to her room displeased. Bond has learned the man's name is Adolph Gettler and he had Mathis check him out and his story as a Swiss businessman checks out.

In Vesper's room, Bond faces her and tells her they cannot go on like this. He tells her that she either tells him what is going on or they have to break up. Bond shows concern



for her and tells her he was planning on proposing to her. She is surprised to hear this, but happy. She begins to cry and Bond pushes her to confess her problems. She kisses him tenderly and tells him she is trying to do the right thing. She asks him to leave her so she can think. In the exchange, much of their intimacy returns and Bond feels love for her. She tells Bond she will tell him everything in the morning. That night they make love for two hours and all the coolness is gone, there is nothing bad between them. Bond leaves her to sleep in his own room and feels nothing but love for her.

Chapter 25, 'Black-Patch'; Chapter 26, 'Sleep Well, My Darling' Analysis

Bond confirms that Vesper is lying to him when he finds out about the phone call. He still does not know why and is understandably curious. The number she was calling, an Invalides exchange, means she was not calling Mathis. The Invalides is a section of Paris but not a government area where Mathis would work. Vesper's actions continue to be suspicious. It is now very clear she is hiding something serious.

The scene in the car when Vesper is upset about the car following them is recalled when the man in the restaurant spooks her. Evidently it was significant. It is not obvious who this man is but it seems Vesper knows him and is afraid of him for some reason.

The second reference to medicine (the first being the sleeping pills in the bathroom) is telling. Vesper's short trip into the city seems to be some sort of a turning point as she is in a happy mood when she gets back. It is not clear what she was doing but it is significant. Whatever it is, Bond expects to find out about it tomorrow. When Bond tells her he was planning on proposing, she is pleasantly surprised, and it seems to help her make some sort of decision. Bond's love for Vesper is solidified. It seems tomorrow will be a turning point for them.



Chapter 27, The Bleeding Heart

Chapter 27, The Bleeding Heart Summary

Early the next morning, the hotel manager bursts into Bond's room. He says there has been a terrible accident. Before he can explain further, Bond rushes to Vesper's room. He finds her dead in her bed. She has taken a bottle of sleeping pills. The hotel man gives Bond a note Vesper has left for him. Bond tells the hotel man to call the police and returns to his room to read the note.

The note is a confession and a good-bye. Vesper writes she is a double-agent working for the Soviets. She has been blackmailed while her boyfriend is held by the Russians. They promise to keep him alive if she works for them. She has passed on information to them, although she says she has given them as little as possible. She writes she is the one who told them about Bond's operation at the casino. Her kidnapping was staged, which is why she was not hurt. Vesper writes she has fallen in love with Bond and decides she cannot go on living. She has no options. She had been calling her controllers from the phone booth when Bond saw her. She knows her lover, who is still alive, will now be killed. She was warned SMERSH will come after her and she knows she cannot get away. Vesper apologizes and professes her love for Bond.

Bond is angry and curses. His eyes are wet but he clears them. He is angry he has been betrayed, that Vesper was a spy. He can only think of her treachery and considers what damage it has done. He recalls his conversation with Mathis about evil. He finds it ironic that while he has been off looking for the enemy abroad it was right there at his office working coldly and silently. He is angry and ashamed. He promises himself that he will hunt down SMERSH and extract revenge. Before Bond reports into London he knows his future. He knows he has no choice but to hunt down the evil in the world, to continue with his job. If he does not, he will die. He will not go after the spies but the ones controlling them, they are the true enemy.

Chapter 27, The Bleeding Heart Analysis

This is the final chapter of the novel but it is not the end for Bond. The events of this chapter will have undoubtedly have a significant affect on Bond's worldview and shape his future. Vesper kills herself because she sees no options in her life.

Bond's original negative view of women is reconfirmed as he is betrayed by a woman. He has given his love to her, allowed himself to become vulnerable, and he is hurt for it. He will likely never allow himself to be in love again and will never trust a woman.

Bond's view of good and bad is questioned. Someone he thought was good, someone he loved, has turned out to be the enemy. This combines all the themes of the novel. A women Bond thought was good has proven to be bad. She was forced to become evil due to the pressures of the Cold War. Bond's life is rededicated to his career as a spy.



Characters

James Bond (Code name Agent 007)

Bond is a British Secret Agent. He has worked previously in Jamaica. He is a bachelor and enjoys the finer things in life—expensive clothes, champagne and fine food. He has killed two people in the past, earning him "double-0 status."

Bond loves to gamble and he is good at it. His hobby is his car, he owns a battleship-grey 4 ½ -liter Bentley convertible coupe with a supercharged engine. He has grey-blue eyes and short black hair. He has a thin vertical scar down his right cheek.

Bond has a decidedly negative view of women. He sees their place as being in the kitchen and not in the work place. He does not like having to work with them, especially in the field. He likes to work alone and does not like having to rely on other people. He is meticulously careful in his actions.

Le Chiffre

He is also known as Monsieur Le Chiffre, "The Number," "Heir Mummer," and "Herr Ziffer." He is an agent for the USSR stationed in France. He is about 45 years old. He is five feet eight inches tall and weighs 18 stone (252 pounds). He has a pale complexion, a clean shaven face and red-brown hair. His eyes are brown, his mouth is small with fake teeth. He has small ears, hands and feet. He dresses very well, usually in dark suits. He speaks English, French and German. He does not smile often and never laughs. He reportedly has "gross physical habits and predilections."

He controls the trade union and transport industries of Alsace for the Communists. He has gotten himself into trouble by investing trade union money in brothels. When France outlaws prostitution, he endures huge financial losses with Soviet money. Consequently the Soviet secret police, SMERSH, may be after him.

Le Chiffre's history is largely unknown. After World War II he turns up in Dachau, the German concentration camp. He reportedly does not know his own history. Consequently, he has no nationality and no family or affiliations of any kind.

Vesper Lynd

Bond's partner. She is a Briton and is the assistant to the Head of S. She has dark black hair cut short and square. Her eyes are blue and wide apart. Her skin is lightly sun-tanned. She normally wears no makeup except lip stick. She is beautiful. She is posing as Mathis' assistant radio technician.



Following their operation in the casino, their capture and Bond's torture, Vesper and Bond fall in love.

At the end of the novel it is revealed Vesper is actually a double-agent working for SMERSH. She does not do this for ideological reasons but because her lover is being held by SMERSH. They blackmailed her into giving them information about the British Secret Service and she passed them information about the Casino Royale operation. She cooperated with Le Chiffre in capturing Bond and revealed details about his movements. When she falls in love with Bond she feels guilty and sees no way out, so commits suicide.

Mathis

Mathis is a French secret agent and an important supporting character in the novel. He has worked with Bond previously in Monte Carlo and they get along well. He is undercover as a radio salesman in the story. Along with Vesper, he is Bond's main partner in this operation. He is Bond's contact with the French government. He often gives Bond background information and lets him in on French intelligence. He helps Bond when he is injured and works on the periphery of the story to clean up loose ends. He often puts out cover stories so the press and the public do not know what has happened after major events.

Felix Leiter

Leiter is an American CIA Agent. He is a retired Marine from Texas. He is currently stationed with the Joint Intelligence Staff at NATO. He is thirty-five years old. He has boyish looks and his speech is slow.

M

Bond's boss and the head of the Service. Officially he does not exist.

Head of S

The British agent in charge of the section of the Secret Service concerned with the Soviet Union.

The Muntzs

Soviet spies. They are staying in the room above Bond and listening in on his room 24-hours a day. He is German and she is from somewhere in Central Europe.



Bill

M's Chief of Staff. He was wounded during an operation in 1944.

Ms. Money Penny

M's private secretary.

Fawcett

Fawcett works for the Jamaican newspaper the Daily Gleaner. He is the intermediary between Bond and his handlers. He just passes on information and does not know anything about what Bond does.

1860

A British secret agent currently undercover as Le Chiffre's mistress.

Monsieur Sixte

One of the baccarat players. He is a Belgian with metal interests in the Congo.

Lord Danvers

One of the baccarat players. "A distinguished but weak-looking man." He is married to Lady Danvers

Lady Danvers

One of the baccarat players. A middle aged American woman married to Lord Danvers.

Carmel Delane

One of the baccarat players. An American film star.

Mr. & Mrs. DuPont

The couple sitting next to Bond during the baccarat game. They may be related to the famous DuPont Chemical family.



The Maharajah

One of the players at the baccarat game. He is the head of small Indian state.

Signore Tomelli

One of the players at the baccarat game.



Objects/Places

Royale-les-Eaux

A fictional seaside town in the north of France. It is located in the region of Brittany near the mouth of the Somme River. In the novel it is described as a recently having undergone a resurgence due to its sulfur-infused water. It has a nice, old-time casino and attractive beaches.

Casino Royale

This is the Casino where much of the action of the novel takes place.

Hôtel Splendide

The hotel in Royale-les-Eaux where Bond is staying. It is adjacent to the casino.

Salle privée

French for "private room." The room in the casino where the wealthy high rollers play. This is where Bond and Le Chiffre play their baccarat game.

Baccarat

A card game, similar to blackjack. It is a game of chance requiring little skill or strategy. The object of the game is to get cards adding up to 9. Each player gets two cards to start. Face cards are worth zero and the ace is worth one, number cards are worth their face value. Players may choose to take a third card to try and add up to nine.

Roulette

A casino game of chance. It uses a wheel and players bet on red, black or green and/or the numbers one through thirty-seven.

Carpet-beater

A tool used to clean carpets. It has a long handle with a large racket like head.



Bentley

An expensive British-made car.

Gordon's

Gordon's is a British brand of gin. It is one of the ingredients in Bond's martini which he names 'The Vesper.'

Kina Lillet

Lillet is a bitter aperitif wine made in France. It is one of the ingredients in Bond's martini which he names 'The Vesper.'

.38 Colt Police Positive

A hand gun. The gun is a revolver. Bond sleeps with this gun under his pillow.

Long-barreled Colt Army Special .45

A hand gun. This gun is a pistol. Bond keeps this under the dashboard of his Bentley.



Themes

The Cold War

The novel takes place during the heart of the Cold War. This is the struggle between the Western powers (primarily Western Europe and the United States of America) and the Soviet Union. It can also be viewed as a struggle between democracy/capitalism and communism. The Cold War results in a large nuclear buildup between the large powers. Due to the threat of nuclear war, traditional fighting never breaks out. Instead, the struggle is largely clandestine as intelligence agencies try to undermine each other.

Organizations like the CIA, the British Secret Service and the Russian KGB thrive during this time (in the novel the KGB is represented by SMERSH and MWD). All of these organizations are intelligence agencies and operate largely in secret and outside of the view of the public. Bond is one of the many agents who live in this world. For the average citizen, the Cold War is just something to read about in the paper, but for Bond it is very real, he lives it every day.

Women

Bond's relationship with women is another major theme of the book. He seems to have a very 1950's view of a woman's role. He has a very negative view of women. He thinks they should stay at home and do the housework. He especially does not see them as having a place in the world of the secret service. He is quite unhappy about having to work with Vesper in the field. That said, Bond enjoys and appreciates women as sexual objects. He enjoys romancing them and treating them with care.

The main woman of the novel, Vesper, turns out to be the enemy. Through her weakness for her lover, she has been used by the Soviets. She has put Bond's life in danger and made her country vulnerable. In Bond's eyes, these actions are unredeemable.

Good vs. Evil

Following Bond's torture experience, he begins to become introspective. He starts to view his role in the world differently. Previously he views himself as the good guy and the Soviets as the bad guy. He did not question this, his country was right no matter what. He later starts to see things from the other side. He realizes the Soviets view themselves as right and Bond as wrong with the same passion. This confounds him and makes him ambivalent towards his work.

Bond no longer knows what is right and what is wrong. Everything he thought was right has been cast into doubt. His entire world view is confused. Previously Bond saw himself as the good guy and always doing the right thing. He thought he was on the

right side of the fight and there was no question in his mind he was the good guy. Bond becomes unsure of himself.

Style

Point of View

The novel is written in the third person. The narrator is not a character in the story and is reliable and knows all details. The narrator describes not only the actions but also the feelings and thoughts of the characters.

Setting

The novel is set in the north of France, primarily in a fictional town called Royale-les-Eaux. The town is described as having been a declining seaside town before the local water source was found to contain beneficial amounts of sulfur. The town re-brands itself as a healthful seaside resort. The local casino receives a makeover and its popularity increases. There is a significant organized crime presence, with gangsters running many of the gambling operations.

The novel takes place in the 1950's during the Cold War following World War II.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is British English. The book was written in 1953 so the language is at times slightly antiquated.

There are short snippets of French spoken throughout the novel. Fleming also refers to the casino and hotel staff by their French names. It is not necessary to comprehend French, however, as the meaning is easily understood via the context.

Fleming's language is mostly restrained. He does not tell us graphic details of sex or torture, he simply suggests what is happening and allows the reader to imagine what is happening.

Structure

The chapters are short, mostly shorter than ten pages, and suspenseful. The action moves quickly. The chapter names refer to something in the story.

The story arc of the novel is slightly unusual. There are two main storylines. The first storyline is Bond vs. Le Chiffre. This story culminates about two-thirds of the way through the novel. Here the second storyline picks up, it is an examination of Bond's feelings towards his work and his relationship with Vesper.



Once the action in the casino and the kidnapping are resolved, the pace of the novel changes significantly. It becomes slower and there is little action or suspense. Fleming focuses on the characters' thoughts and feelings. The last quarter of the novel is largely psychological and examines the personal life of a spy.

The novel is very easy to read, it is suspenseful and the story moves quickly.



Quotes

Bond "has never yet been made to suffer from cards or by women. One day, and he accepted the fact, he would be brought to his knees by love or by luck." Chapter 7, Rouge et Noir, p. 42.

"A dry martini" [Bond] said. "In a deep champagne goblet...three measures of Gordon's, one of vodka, half a measure of Kina Lillet. Shake it very well until it's ice cold, then add a large thin slice of lemon peel. Got it?" Chapter 7, Rouge et Noir, p. 45.

"I take a ridiculous pleasure in what I eat and drink. It comes partly from being a bachelor, but mostly from a habit of taking a lot of trouble over details. It's very persnickety and old-maidish really, but then when I'm working I generally have to eat my meals alone and it makes them more interesting when one takes trouble." Chapter 8, Pink Lights and Champagne, p. 55.

"It's not difficult to get a Double 0 number if you're prepared to kill people." Chapter 9, The Game is Baccarat, p. 58.

"These blithering women who thought 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." Chapter 15, Black Hare and Grey Hound, p. 99.

"This job was more important than her. It was just too bad." Chapter 15, Black Hare and Grey Hound, p. 99.

"With only his feet as weapons, there was no plan in his mind except to do as much damage as possible to the two gunmen and be able to exchange a few hurried words with the girl. No other plan was possible. He just wanted to tell her not to give in." Chapter 16, Casino Royale, p. 108.

"This is not a romantic adventure story in which the villain is finally routed and the hero is given a medal and marries the girl." Chapter 17, Casino Royale, p. 114.

"That's all very fine. The hero kills two villains, but when the hero Le Chiffre starts to kill the villain Bond and the villain Bond knows he isn't a villain at all, you see the other side of the medal. The villains and heroes get all mixed up." Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil, p. 133.

"This country-right-or-wrong business is getting a little out-of-date." Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil, p. 133.

"History is moving pretty quickly these days and the heroes and villains keep on changing parts." Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil, p. 133.

"There's a Good Book about goodness and how to be good and so forth, but there's no Evil Book about evil and how to be bad. The Devil has no prophets to write his Ten Commandments and no team of authors to write his biography...he has no book from



which we can learn the nature of evil in all its forms." Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil, pp. 136-137.

"When you get back to London you will find there are other Le Chiffre's seeking to destroy you and your friends and your country. M will tell you about them. And now that you have seen a really evil man, you will know how evil they can be and you will go after them to destroy them in order to protect yourself and the people you love. You won't wait to argue about it. You know what they look like now and what they can do to people. You may be a bit more choosy about the jobs you take on. You may want to be certain that the target really is black, but there are plenty of really black targets around. There's still plenty for you to do. And you'll do it. And when you fall in love and have a mistress or a wife and children to look after, it will seem all the easier." Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil, pp. 138-139.

"Surround yourself with human beings, my dear James. They are easier to fight for than principles....But don't let me down and become human yourself. We would lose such a wonderful machine." Chapter 20, The Nature of Evil, p. 139.

"People are islands,' [Vesper] said. 'They don't really touch. However close they are, they're really quite separate. Even if they've been married for fifty years.'" Chapter 24, Fruit Défendu, p. 162.

"My island feels very close to your island tonight." Chapter 24, Fruit Défendu, p. 162.

"It seemed fantastic to Bond that human relationships could collapse into dust overnight and he searched his mind again and again for a reason." Chapter 25, 'Black-Patch,' p. 167.

"He saw [Vesper] now only as a spy. Their love and his grief were relegated to the boxroom of his mind. Later, perhaps they would be dragged out, dispassionately examined, and then bitterly thrust back with other sentimental baggage he would rather forget. Now he could only think of her treachery to the Service and to her country and of the damage it had done." Chapter 27, The Bleeding Heart, p. 180.

"[Bond] would take on SMERSH and hunt it down. Without SMERSH, without this cold weapon of death and revenge, the MWD would be just another bunch of civil servant spies, no better and no worse than any of the western services." Chapter 27, The Bleeding Heart, p. 181.

"Advance against the enemy and the bullet might miss you. Retreat, evade, betray, and the bullet would never miss." Chapter 27, The Bleeding Heart, p. 181.

"[Bond] would go after the threat behind the spies, the threat that made them sly." Chapter 27, The Bleeding Heart, p. 181.



Topics for Discussion

What role does luck play in Bond's life?

Is Bond, and other spies like him, simply a tool of his government?

Le Chiffre came to light in a concentration camp following World War II, and he does not know his own personal history. What role does this play in him becoming the man he is? Mathis calls Le Chiffre a "really evil man." Is this really the case?

Can either side in the case, the Soviets or the British, ever be objectively right and justified in their actions? Is Bond right and if so why?

Why does SMERSH allow Bond to live? What is the significance of the mark left on Bond's hand?

Does Bond truly love Vesper or does he just like the idea of a married life?

What does Vesper mean when she says "people are islands?" Does she really believe this? What in her history might have brought her to this viewpoint?

How will Vesper's death affect Bond? At the beginning of the novel it is revealed Bond knows one day he will be "brought to his knees by love or by luck." Is this what has happened?

Is this novel anti-women?

At the end of the novel Bond is angry. Is he more angry about love lost or about Vesper's treachery?

Vesper was blackmailed into becoming a double agent. What other choices did she have? Was she justified in trying to save her lover? Should you always put your country ahead of your personal life?

How is the Cold War of the 1950s similar to the 'War on Terror' today? How is it different?