

OCTOPUSSY AND THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS AND OTHER STORIES (WITH INTERVIEW) BY IAN FLEMING



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The last book written by Ian Fleming, but by no means the least. In Octopussy, a talented but wayward British major pays a high price when his wartime past catches up with him, while in The Property of a Lady, a Fabergé egg leads Bond to a KGB spy. In The Living Daylights, Bond has a perilous rendezvous in sniper's alley between East and West Berlin, and 007 in New York (read by Lucy Fleming) see him sent to America to warn an ex-MI6 operative about a dangerous liaison. All part of the job for 007...

Includes an exclusive bonus interview with Tom Hiddleston.

Ian Fleming was born in London in 1908. He was educated at Eton and worked as a journalist in Moscow and a banker and stockbroker in London before becoming personal assistant to the Director of Naval Intelligence during the Second World War. He wrote his first Bond novel, *Casino Royale*, in 1952 at Goldeneye, his home in Jamaica. Since then James Bond has gone on to become a global phenomenon.

Tom Hiddleston is well known for his role as Loki in the films *Thor* and *Avengers Assemble*. Among his other film credits are *Muppets: Most Wanted*, *Only Lovers Left Alive*, *War Horse*, *Midnight in Paris* and *Archipelago*. He played Prince Hal/Henry V in the acclaimed TV drama series *The Hollow Crown*, The BBC's adaptation of four of Shakespeare's history plays. Theatre credits include the title role in *Coriolanus*, Cassio in *Othello* and Lvov in *Ivanov*.

Lucy Fleming is the niece of James Bond author Ian Fleming. She has been acting for over 40 years both on television and the West End stage.

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Look Cubby! Bond with no gadgets and no women.

By john purcell

Ian Fleming penned 14 Bond adventures before his death in 1964. He lived to see the first few movies made, was hopelessly smitten with the young Ursula Andress, and fortunately did not live to see the excesses of his successors.

This book is a compilation of three short stories in *Octopussy*, *The Living Daylights*, and *Property of a Lady*.

There is no real resemblance to the similarly titled films, but some of the scenes and characters from the short stories made it to the big screen.

These stories show what Bond would do on a slow day, no gadgets or romance involved. Bond does not entertain three women per story, in fact, he meets none. He is smitten at a distance with a cello player, but nothing develops romantically, and the female lead of the third story is described as unattractive.

Bond simply closes out a few files, as one might do in a short week before heading out on holiday. Of course, M and Ms. Moneypenny appear here, with M and the unnamed Chief of Staff providing Bond with his orders and accoutrements.

Octopussy is the best of the lot here. In fact, Bond barely appears in the story set in Fleming's beloved Jamaica about 15 years after the war. A British army major comes into a treasure in the closing chaotic days of the war in Europe. His techniques included murder and eventually he is tracked down by 007 who had been an acquaintance of the "Good German" victim.

The Living Daylights features a challenge between two trained assassins, which will be familiar to viewers of the Timothy Dalton film. Fleming very cleverly sets the scene at Checkpoint Charlie just before the Wall went up. Both sides use innovative cover to muffle their killer's sounds and movements. We get a real sense of the unpleasant side of the business, as Bond's portfolio is murder. He does not relish the assignment, in fact, he speaks of a preference for demotion, drinks whiskey before the event, and fails to complete all parts of the assignment.

Property of a Lady is a primer on Faberge with the famous auction scene, brought to the big screen in a Roger Moore film. Rather than lamely stealing the real article, Bond uses the event to better ends. Here Bond shows more initiative and insight than M in flushing out an important Soviet agent while keeping a useful double agent in place.

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

Bond's "regular" assignments

By Amazon Customer

Octopussy and the Living Daylights is a terrific collection of stories that show some of James Bond's smaller, more ordinary assignments. Of course since he's Bond even his more routine stuff is thrilling reading. First out is Octopussy which has nothing to do with the horrible Roger Moore movie. This story was really about a retired English major who once had a fine career in military intelligence. At the end of the war the major makes a terrible decision and years later in his middle age a man named Bond shows up at his Jamaican home and makes him pay for it. This story is very well written and shows that Ian Flemming had a real knack for characterization.

Property of a Lady shows Bond on a pleasant but serious assignment. For a change he never has to leave London or even break a sweat but he manages to expose one high ranking Russian spy and wryly observes a low level double agent playing the spy game badly.

Living Daylights in my favorite of the stories. Bond has been ordered to Germany to take out a sniper so an agent can escape to the West. This is not a nice job and Bond spends a surprising amount of time considering his distaste about the job. The little details about Bond's preparations, his school marmish old contact, the velvet snipers uniform and walking and eating around Germany are all fascinating. And in the end Bond makes a decision about the Russian sniper and his fellow agent whom he's been sent to save.

The last story and the shortest is Bond in New York. He's been sent on a mission of mercy and plans to enjoy himself in Manhattan. We learn of Ian Fleming's opinion of frozen food and that Bond once had an apartment in Manhattan!

I wouldn't buy this short story collection first. Try the full length novels and then this one because it's all so much about showing the other side of Bond. This is a treat for serious Bond lovers, old and new.

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Fleming's least known 007 book

By A Customer

As Conan Doyle did in the late 1890's (and as others like Ellery Queen and Agatha Christie followed), Ian Fleming seemed to have subscribed the theory that sometimes "less is more" in writing a story, thus choosing a short tale instead of a long one for more impact. This book comprises, in its final form, three novelettes a la "For Your Eyes Only". The book was first printed in 1966 (being the last release of a Fleming original), but the stories were written and fictionally occur after "The Spy Who Loved Me" and before "On Her Majesty's Secret Service". The title episode is another showcase for Fleming's ability to write a story in the true sense, picturing a tale of a man's life since the WWII up to his last days in the Caribbean. Bond is merely an excuse for a dramatic tale of greed, murder and treachery. This story is highlighted by another excellent underwater frame-sequence. "The Living Daylights" is pure Bond, from his practice with the rifle outside London to the tense climax at Berlin. This story is another twist of the plot of "For Your Eyes Only", showing 007 as an assassin questioning about his job but doing it the best he can. Excellent surprising villain(ess). "The Property of a Lady" is a brief example of the author's master touch for describing with great detail and gusto parts of recent history and all kind of things and subjects, in this case jewels and auctions. The development itself is direct and simple, too short indeed, with an ending that doesn't matter as much as the description of the events. By the way, this episode refers to another traitor in the Service. A collection of odd but varied 007 missions.

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