

## **Bond is back**

**“*Carte Blanche*” by Jeffery Deaver. Simon and Schuster, 2011. \$26.99, 404 pages.**

When Ian Fleming created the character of James Bond, he had no way of knowing just how popular Bond would become. With 12 Fleming novels and several short stories, 22 films, and numerous sequels, prequels, spin-offs and reboots after Fleming’s death, Bond is a character known across the world by just his last name.

In the newest official James Bond novel “*Carte Blanche*” by Jeffery Deaver Bond has resettled himself firmly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A veteran of the war in Afghanistan, 007 now works for a branch of the government innocuously named the Overseas Development Group. The ODG is responsible for protecting the British Realm “by any means necessary,” and in a world full of terrorist threats, the ODG agents are given *carte blanche* to do anything and everything, including breaking the law, to fulfill that mission.

Bond’s latest assignment comes from an intercepted message that reveals the existence of an upcoming attack that promises thousands of deaths, and with only five days to identify the location and the people behind it, Bond must race against time to prevent the threat from becoming reality.

Bond’s investigation leads him across the globe from Serbia to England to Dubai to Cape Town, South Africa, and to the man he must stop, recycling entrepreneur Severan Hydt, a villain obsessed with decay, destruction and decomposition. Bond must use every ounce of his training, intelligence and prodigious skills if he is to keep the Realm safe from the devastation Hydt has planned.

“*Carte Blanche*” is at once both a James Bond novel and a Jeffery Deaver thriller, filled with the fast paced twists and turns readers have come to expect from Deaver, but staying true to the spirit of the original Bond stories. Readers will see familiar faces from the Fleming novels such as M, Felix Leiter, Rene Mathis, Mary Goodnight, and Miss Money Penny, but the new characters are just as at home in this tale as the old friends, and the updated time period of the novel lends itself well to the lightning quick speed at which Bond must work, utilizing fancy gadgets and state of the art technology to accomplish his mission.

“*Carte Blanche*” is a thoroughly entertaining and exhilarating journey through the world of James Bond, but it is not necessary to have even more than a passing knowledge of the Bond canon to enjoy the story. Just pick up the book and enjoy the ride.

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