



Never Dream Of Dying

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A movie is a perfect hiding place for crime, as Bond finds when he uncovers how a film producer is a front for an international crime conspiracy. The Union - already encountered in the latest two Bond adventures High Time to Kill and Doubleshot - reveals its connections to the Cannes Film Festival and the Corsican mafia. Before he has finished, Bond will have to save the producer's exquisite movie-star wife, confront Le Gerant, the brains behind the Union - and settle a score from many years ago.

Never Dream Of Dying Details

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From Reader Review Never Dream Of Dying for online ebook

Dave says

James Bond novels tend to be hit or miss. The Ian Fleming books are classics and I enjoyed the John Gardner books. This story was fast paced and had some good set pieces.

David says

Benson's original Bonds tend to work for me, at least better than the second 8 of Gardner. There are still (always) innumerable cliches and gratuitous sexism, but one hardly expects anything else of a 007 novel.

Mark Welton says

Really enjoyable. Rattled through it quickly, quite a page turner. Rumour is the next Bond film will be based on this, although I can't see how they can merge this with the end of Spectre myself!

Wes87 says

a rather good/wild story. read it only twice years back. rather long. but hell its bond, james bond people.

Paul Williams says

Benson concludes his trilogy about the Union, in a way that pays homage to the original Bond novels and that detracts from the end product. There was no need to bring back Rene Mathis and Marc-Ange Draco. The revelations about Draco are not surprising, being too well signposted, and deny a final confrontation with the real villain. Also, unlike the originals, far too much of the story is told from the viewpoint of the supporting characters.

Raza Mustafa says

Just a regular spy story. Predictable.

John Yelverton says

The mystery story itself was good. What I cannot abide was the horrible treatment of not one but two characters created by Ian Fleming, and their horrible mistreatment in this novel by Raymond Benson.

Steve Mitchell says

Raymond Benson's seventh addition to the James Bond novels is actually the finale of the trilogy that pits the hero against the Union. I think this is one of the better Bond novels; it lacks the plot holes that Ian Fleming never bothered to fill and does not go for too many twists in the plot that made many of John Gardner's book a bit of a drag.

After coming so close to finishing off the Union in the previous book Bond is continuing his hunt. M feels that maybe the trail has run cold and Bond would be better off with a new assignment. When it turns out that Rene Mathis is on the case and closing in on the Union and its mysterious leader Le Gerant, Bond manages to prolong his assignment for a while. The hunt takes Bond through France and onto Corsica where Bond makes new friends - and enemies - as well as becoming reacquainted with figures from his past. All in all this is a bit of a ripshorter and well worth a read.

Johnny says

When Raymond Benson introduces *Never Dream of Dying* with a joint counter-terrorist operation between the French D. G. S. E. and Bond's SIS goes wrong and plenty of innocents are killed, it offers plenty of verisimilitude. It sounds very much like the intelligence agencies in the U.S. government that seem to have ignored cues that might have held off 9/11 and the Boston Marathon bombing. Even in the novel, it seems like the agencies got something wrong. Unfortunately for the fictional world in which the novel is set, but fortunately for the reader, this error portends a greater threat or threats—at least one of which is something very like the bombing just mentioned. And, there is an unexpected (at least, to me) tie to this, apparently, botched mission as the book reaches its climax.

In the meantime, *Never Dream of Dying* has everything one might expect in a solid Bond novel. It has a larger than life “boss monster” or “Ultimate Bad Guy” with powerful minions. It has an ultra-secret base. It has a beautiful woman with whom our favorite spy becomes almost fatally involved. It has cool technology out of Q Branch (although it isn't specifically called that in this novel). And it has exotic locations! Much of the story takes place on the French Riviera, Monaco, and Corsica. There are scenes that take place at the Cannes Film Festival, Monte Carlo casino, a Riviera film studio, and a Corsican archaeological site, as well as the obligatory underwater scene with Bond piloting some exotic scooter.

The villains are credible and Benson stakes out their motives well. Even when we think we understand the non-Bond characters well and our assumptions prove unfounded, the motivation for that difference is clear-cut and understandable. The sex scenes are not extraneous to the plot and are just enough more explicit than Fleming's descriptions to reflect modern sensibilities without turning it into soft-porn or a steamy bodice-ripper. Some supporting characters show just the right amount of fear to make the evil of *Le Gerant* (the Ultimate Bad Guy) seem palpable and one supporting character even added some intriguing mysticism.

In fact, the eponymous fear of dying in a dream is tied to that character, a so-called *mazzeri* or dream hunter. These *mazzeri* are called by a power to hunt down various people and kill them in a dream. Two such *mazzeri* in this story take the form of wolves. Bond doesn't buy it, but it provides a warning for him that could be considered prophetic.

Fear and passion for vengeance are just two of the emotions expressed throughout the supporting cast that were so real that I worried about the future of the Bond character. Trust me. In spite of how strange my description may sound, the book ends on a sane and rational conclusion.

Maybe it was the exotic venues (only a portion of which I've been privileged to visit) and maybe it was wrapping up a portion of a meta-plot, but I found myself more satisfied with this Bond novel than with any for a long time. I may have slightly overrated it, but *de gustibus non est disputandum*.

Sara Vazquez says

Bond. *squeal* James Bond *squeal*****

Wyatt says

A satisfying finale to Benson's "Union Trilogy" following High Time to Kill and Doubleshot. Le Gerant makes for a convincing Bond villain; Benson will also delight some (and enrage others) by bringing back some of Bond's 'old friends' from the Fleming era, as he has done in some previous novels (like Felix Leiter). These nods to the past have a major impact on the story, so I won't spoil anything by discussing them here.

I continue to be impressed both by Benson's handle on the character's thinking as well as his ability to write in a way that propels the reader forward (in a similar way to oft-discussed "Fleming sweep"). I have yet to read The Man with the Red Tattoo and the novelization of Die Another Day (it will be a challenge to clean that mess of a screenplay up, I imagine), but based on what I've read so far of Benson's Bond, it seems a shame that he did not continue his efforts after 2002.

Cindy says

Worst James Bond novel *ever*. I usually read a book all the way through even the bad ones but if it's due back to the library before I finish it so be it.* The sentence style is middle school caliber and Bond's thoughts and actions are totally inconsistent with his personality. Nobody ever said Bond books were realistic but this one takes the cake on plot holes.

*Update: I did finish it. Read the last 180ish pages the night before it was due. It didn't get much better. In fact, it often got worse. But I hate to leave a book unfinished, especially one that might provide another layer of character development in a series.

Martyn Perry says

And I've finally crawled over the finish line (life is simply too busy at the moment to read a book in a sensible time frame).

Benson's Bond returns in the final chapter of The Union saga as Bond sets out to disband the new SPECTRE once and for all.

In the main, the story is enjoyable enough, with sufficient action and plot to sustain interest. It won't however, go down as one of the more memorable Bond books.

There's nothing original here, Benson returning to tried and tested formula for this novel. There's the big bad plot at the Cannes film festival, some movie set action and a couple of returning Fleming characters to capture the interest. But otherwise it's a return to the find the bad guy, deduce the evil plan, get captured, tortured, escape and win formula which seems to hinder most good bond books and movies.

Does the job but doesn't innovate. 3 stars.

Jonathan says

Great story

Never Dream of Dying fleshes out the Union to its fullest extent. Coupled with a return of some characters from the Fleming days, the story is one of the most well rounded for the Benson Bond stories. It's filled with haunting regret for both Bond and his former father-in-law. The pacing is perfect for the project pursued. And the action is about as iconic as you'd expect from a 007 story.

Carson says

Something Raymond Benson does quite effectively is weave his stories through the tapestries of the Fleming lore and this story is no different, albeit in a more poignant and controversial way. He treads on sacred ground here, but does it respectfully though I still am not 100% sure how I feel about it.

That said, right up until the chilling conclusion, this one navigates through interesting terrain - that of the subconscious and nearly superhuman - but does it in a realistic way, integrating familiar elements like casinos and baccarat into the final showdown with the Union.

4 stars.
