



BY TOM ROSTON

The sixth man to take on the mantle of James Bond, *Casino Royale*'s Daniel Craig vows to do what none of his predecessors could—keep it real.

THE BOOK OF

DANIEL

PHOTOGRAPHS
BY RANKIN





"OVER
TO
YOU,
KIDDO."

WITH THOSE WORDS STILL RINGING IN HIS EAR, DANIEL CRAIG DROPPED THE BOX OF ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY DISHWASHING POWDER HE WAS HOLDING. THE MAN WHO WOULD BE BOND GRIPPED HIS CELL PHONE TIGHTLY AND STARTED

WALKING QUICKLY DOWN THE AISLE OF THE BALTIMORE WHOLE FOODS HE WAS SHOPPING IN. PRODUCER BARBARA BROCCOLI, THE DAUGHTER OF ALBERT R. "CUBBY" BROCCOLI, WHO HAD TURNED IAN FLEMING'S 007 BOOK SERIES ABOUT A SUAVE, LETHAL SPY INTO ONE OF THE MOST LUCRATIVE FRANCHISES IN MOVIE

history, was on the line giving Craig the news that his life would be changed forever.

He knew what he wanted to do. First: Abandon the groceries. Second: Get the booze. The 38-year-old Liverpool-bred actor found a liquor store, asked for the best vodka on the shelf (which turned out to be Grey Goose), added some vermouth and a shaker, and drove back to his place. And then he got drunk. Alone.

It's not something that he's especially proud of, he says. But he was on location in Maryland that October, filming *The Visiting* with Nicole Kidman, and happened to be the only actor with the day off.

"It's kind of sad," says Craig, wearing jeans and a fitted gray T-shirt, sitting in an ornate room in London's Dorchester Hotel. It's now July 2006, just five days after he wrapped *Casino Royale*, the 21st Bond installment. "I think the story's rather sad that I wasn't on a yacht in the middle of the Mediterranean when"—and here Craig puts on a mock upper-class accent—"Hello, darling, you're Bond" came through. I was in a fuckin' Whole Foods."

But he doesn't really mean that. Because if he were that guy, then he'd be more like, well, what we already imagine James Bond to be. Or at the very least, someone like him—say, Roger Moore (who lives, after all, in Monte Carlo), or Sean Connery, or even Pierce Brosnan. Guys with panache. Guys who look equally comfortable in a tuxedo, a wet suit, and a silk robe with gold piping.

And Craig knows that the Bond he was hired to be is not *that* guy. At least not yet. When his Bond hits screens worldwide on November 17, he's going to be, at times, awkward. He's going to bleed. He's going to be human. And when he needs a drink, he'll take it however he can, without arching his eyebrow or discoursing on the vintage. "The irony of that Whole Foods story, for me, is great," Craig says. "It makes everything else real."

WHEN LAST WE SAW BOND, IN 2002'S *DIE ANOTHER DAY*, THE WORD "real" wasn't the first that came to mind. Brosnan drove an invisible car, surfed a glacier, and put a stop to a giant outer-space heating lamp. "The technology began to overwhelm the story and the characters," admits producer Michael G. Wilson, Barbara Broccoli's half-brother and her partner in shepherding the Bond legacy.

This has happened before. The franchise has gone through several "periods of changing," as Wilson puts it. Even the most dedicated fan recognizes when a particular

Bond movie rides off the rails, becoming bloated with double entendres, far-fetched gadgetry, and sloppy storytelling. We saw it in 1971's *Diamonds Are Forever*, in which Connery looked ridiculous racing around the desert in his moon-mobile, as well as in 1979's Moore-starring *Moonraker*, the franchise's desperate attempt to keep up with *Star Wars*. "And what we saw in *Die Another Day* was that we got to the same point," Wilson says. "And we thought it was very important to bring it down to earth."

Still, it's a surprising conclusion given that *Die Another Day* was the biggest box office earner in 007 history, raking in \$456 million worldwide. But a recent turn of events—in 2000, the Broccoli family won the rights to the first Fleming novel, *Casino Royale*, after a long legal dispute—dovetailed nicely with the producers' desire to reboot.

"I said to Barbara, 'Let's do it. It's a good way to bring Bond back to basics,'" Wilson says. "We'll just show how he became James Bond.'"

For Wilson and Broccoli, that meant a new lead actor. "The world has changed; the world is more serious. They want real heroes more than ever," Broccoli says. "Once we decided we were going to make *Casino Royale*, we felt that Daniel was the perfect actor for the role. He can handle all the elements that we need for this."

Few would argue that the theatrically trained Craig isn't a good, even great, actor. He has given subtle, gripping performances in films such as *Road to Perdition*, *Sylvia*, and *Layer Cake*. (He was even pretty damn good in *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*.) But great acting in interesting movies isn't the standard requirement for becoming 007. "He's overqualified," agrees Douglas McGrath, who directed Craig as killer Perry Smith in October's *Infamous*, the second of the Truman Capote movies. "But he happens to be a very dashing character actor with a magnetic screen personality. All of which makes sense for Bond."

And when Broccoli talks about the necessary "elements," she isn't just referring to acting tools. She means that the new Bond must do more than convincingly defeat menacing villains and be catnip to beautiful, exotic women—he also has to placate the voracious beast of worldwide media expectations.

SOON AFTER GETTING THE CALL at Whole Foods, Craig did in fact find himself on a boat, but it wasn't in the Mediterranean—it was on the Thames. And, flanked by two members of the British Royal Marines, he was wearing a suit, an awkwardly placed life preserver, and what some perceived as a scowl. This was his introduction, on October 14, 2005, to the world press as the new Bond. Like a deer—

one chewing gum, no less—caught in the headlights, Craig seemed uncomfortable as he responded to the hungry journalists' questions. "I'm speechless," he was reported as saying. Asked why he should be the new Bond, he replied, "Why not?"

The actor's relationship with the media had been antagonistic for a while. The British press can be vicious with its celebrities, and the intensely private Craig, who was married briefly in the early '90s to a Scottish actress with whom he has a teenage daughter, hasn't helped matters by appearing subsequently with the sort of women (Kate Moss, Sienna Miller) who are chum to the tabloids. But at the time of the Bond announcement, Craig

was nursing fresh resentment from an incident just a few days earlier involving another woman dear to his heart: his mum. After getting the call from Broccoli, Craig shared the news with his mother, a retired art teacher, who knew not to talk about it publicly. But, Craig says, a tabloid reporter called her up and said, "The news has broken. What do you think?" To which she guilelessly and understandably replied, "I'm over the moon."

"It's a simple trick. But she's my mother," says the actor, who moves constantly while talking, squirming, rubbing his leg, gesturing with his hands. "You've got to go through life thinking the best of people, because if you don't, you're fucked. And sadly there are a whole bunch of people who are just cunts. And they are going to fuck you over."

Some of the headlines on October 15—"The Name's Bland, James Bland," "Shaken Scared"—were unsparing. (The overhyped website craignotbond.com served as a handy catalog of his supposedly objectionable traits: too blond, too plain, too short. Then again, even Connery was initially dismissed as a "snorting lorry driver" by Fleming.) The reports were consistent with the negative press Craig has been getting ever since the rumor that Brosnan was being replaced began circulating in 2004. The names floated at that time included Craig, Clive Owen, Ewan McGregor, Hugh Jackman, and Eric Bana. "You kind of do think in a paranoid way—maybe not so paranoid—that they're deliberately trying to put four names together to see what the general public thinks," Craig says. "The joke of it is, if they did that with me, my press was fuckin' appalling. And they still went with me."

The actor first sat down with Broccoli and Wilson almost two years ago. "A lot of people were saying, 'Oh my God, well, here's the golden ticket.' I couldn't look at it like that," he says, admitting that he didn't really want the part at first. "It's a poisoned chalice if it doesn't work out properly." After more than three months of discussion, he preempted their decision. "I said, 'No. I'm not interested.'"

But Broccoli persisted. She set up another meeting, at which Craig hedged a bit. "I said, 'Look, until I read a script I cannot even begin to . . .'" and that was already me with one foot in the door."

In February 2005, Craig found himself in the "nerve-racking" position of sitting at the BAFTA awards, Britain's version of the Oscars, looking at the back of Brosnan's head. "I didn't know how much he knew about this. But if I wasn't up front with him about it, if I met him again I wouldn't be able to look him in the eye." So he leaned in to Brosnan and said, "Look, this is a possibility. What do you think?"

"I don't know if I gave him much choice," says Craig, "but he said, 'Go for it.' He didn't hit me. I don't know [if] anybody was underhanded with Pierce about this, but I know I wasn't."

Craig was hoping he'd hate the script when it finally arrived, but he was hooked. "It read brilliantly," he says. "It read like something that was being absolutely reverential toward the history of Bond but

was also taking the piss out of all the Bonds. And I got that cold bead of sweat down my forehead, going, 'Oh, shit.' So we moved along with it."

Meanwhile, Sony, the studio that took over the franchise from MGM, was still having doubts about Craig. As was Martin Campbell, who directed Brosnan in his first outing as Bond (in 1995's *GoldenEye*) and had been tapped for *Casino Royale*. "I wasn't totally convinced about Daniel," says Campbell, who reveals that Jackman and Owen weren't even on his radar, but

CRAIG'S LIST

When Craig was 14 and going to the movies by himself in Liverpool, *Blade Runner* shook him to the core. It's been a slow, steady climb since then, from drama school to Bond. Over the years, he has turned out an impressive array of performances, with one recurring theme: He delicately plays complex killers, displaying their weaknesses and violent tendencies in subtle shades of gray.

THE POWER OF ONE "A nasty piece of work," Craig says of the South African cop he played in his first studio movie. "I would freeze when they called 'Action!' They thought that was just me being intense." (1992)

LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER He scored the juicy role of Angelina Jolie's love interest/nemesis, but "a lot of lessons



"I've got nothing in common with Paul Newman or Tom Hanks—not that they're not fantastic guys. But I made the most of that. I just went, 'I'm not these people.'" (2002)

SYLVIA "Couples can do things to each other which go against human rights conventions," he says of playing poet Ted Hughes to Gwyneth Paltrow's Sylvia Plath. "The way they wind each other up." (2003)

ENDURING LOVE The message of hope in this dark tale of love and stalking, says Craig, is "talk. Communicate. Make sure you don't become so self-

obsessed that it leads to your own madness." (2004)

LAYER CAKE (2) "Most drug dealers and criminals are wearing ties and cuff links and doing business in gentleman's clubs. So that's where we started." (2004)



ROAD TO PERDITION (1) The angry son of a gangland boss "was the one who couldn't get the love. And I thought,

LICENSE TO LOVE: Craig's 007 falls for Eva Green's Vesper Lynd.





SECRET AGENT DAN: As Bond, Craig, clockwise from top left, faces down a terrorist (Sébastien Foucan); rises from the sea in an ode

to Ursula Andress's *Dr. No* entrance; and seeks alternative transport in an explosive airport scene.



acting debut, happens to be one of the world's preeminent "free runners," the ambassador of a martial-arts-inspired sport in which people speed acrobatically through urban landscapes (you may have seen him doing this in a Nike commercial). The fronds are coming at them hard. Craig looks winded after a few runs, but he laughs when Foucan goads him on with some rapid high-stepping between takes.

Craig's stunt double coaches him on how to dodge and weave down the path. With his strong, square jaw, the stuntman looks like a cross between Craig and Matt LeBlanc, and he has a smoother Hollywood glow than the star for whom he's standing in. As for Craig, he's plastered with grime and sweat, dressed in baggy linen pants and a T-shirt that reveals chest topography unknown to previous Bonds. The guy's got pecs—and he is either so toned or so emotionally wired (or maybe it's just genetics) that he has an almost convex walk, his powerful shoulders and taut legs trailing behind his waistline. Handsome, but unconventionally so (Craig's childhood friends reportedly called him Mr. Potato Head), he's got a brawler's mien and physique; he makes you believe he could kick some ass without pulling a rocket launcher out of his back pocket. But he also looks haggard and like he's in pain.

"I injured myself constantly," Craig says back in London. "I mean, there's stuff in the press about [that]." (He's referring to headlines like "Wussy Galore," earned after he was inadvertently kicked in the mouth by a stuntman.) "I was in pain all the time."

"It was a learning curve for him," agrees Campbell. "I remember at the end of the free-running scenes, where he has to fight. God, I think it was 19 takes. And I made

McGregor was a strong contender ("I think he got another job," he adds vaguely, "or decided he didn't want to do it"). "I was still thinking inside the old box. [Daniel's] obviously a terrific actor, a very interesting-looking guy. He's got a toughness to him. But it was when Paul Haggis [writer-director of *Crash*] came on to do the rewrite that it all fell into place. It became a more serious Bond, a more realistic Bond. Much more like the books. And then of course Daniel fits perfectly."

Craig was among five actors tested for the role. With Campbell directing, he did one scene each from *Casino Royale* and *From Russia With Love* (the latter a rite of passage for previous Bonds). Things went smoothly until, late in the day, he hit an emotional wall. "It was about five o'clock, and I just went, 'No. Fuck it. Good night,'" he says, imitating himself, overwhelmed by the moment, waving to the crew and running for the door.

No worries. They had what they needed in the can. And Sony signed off on Craig, allowing him to follow in the footsteps of Sean Connery, George Lazenby, Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, and Pierce Brosnan. It's a group of men with whom, Craig says, he's not yet sure he feels solidarity. "Let's wait till this one comes out," he says with a hearty laugh. "Maybe they won't want to be in solidarity with me."

ON A WARM, WINDY MARCH DAY IN THE BAHAMAS, CRAIG IS THRASHING through what's not traditionally given Bond much challenge: plant fronds. He's chasing Sébastien Foucan, playing a terrorist named Mollaka, through thick brush in an "extreme running" action scene that in the movie is set in Madagascar. Foucan, who's making his

him go on and on. And he got it. And it probably would have taken five takes at the end of the shoot.”

All of which, in a strange way, fit in well with the goal of making Bond more realistic. “He’s more complex; he makes mistakes,” says Campbell of the character in *Casino Royale*. “I liked in the book his aversion to violence [being] ugly and dirty. But by the end, he’s completed a journey which brings him to being, I think the line in the book is, ‘the beautiful killing machine.’”

CRAIG’S FIRST MOMENT AS BOND

onscreen is shot in black and white. He’s sitting in a chair, about to make the kill that will earn him his 007 status, and he’s flashing back to a mission gone bad, in which he desperately tried to eliminate a man with his fists, a sink, a wall, water, and whatever else he could find. When his new, imminent victim asks how the man died, Bond says, “not well,” a bit of clever writing that recalls the traditional 007 quips but with a grim edge. With Craig delivering the line in a cold monotone, this whole precredit sequence practically screams, “This ain’t your daddy’s Bond.”

The boilerplate on *Casino Royale* is that it will be gritty, and that there will be no Moneypenny, no Q, no gadgetry. But there will still be exotic settings (Montenegro, the Bahamas, Madagascar, Venice), babes (see sidebar at right), M (Judi Dench is the sole principal actor returning from a previous installment), and an effete bad guy (“There are some slight undertones that he might be interested in men,” says Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen, who plays the villainous Le Chiffre. “Some will see it, some won’t”). And that black-and-white opening? It’s shot as sleekly as a Chanel No. 5 ad.

This is the first true adaptation of Fleming’s 1953 novel. (There was a 1954 television episode that turned Bond into an American spy named Jimmy Bond, as well as an embarrassingly bad movie spoof made in 1967, starring Peter Sellers and David Niven.) The 007 of *Casino Royale* is, as Fleming put it, an “ironical, brutal, and

BIG SLICK: *Casino Royale* may begin with a rough-and-tumble Bond, but eventually Craig has to clean up nicely for a game of high-stakes poker.



IVANA MILICEVIC
1



CATERINA MURINO
2

FEMALE BONDING

There’s nobody named Kissy, Pussy, or Onatopp in *Casino Royale*. But how much have things really changed for the Bond babes?

1. VALENKA (IVANA MILICEVIC) “In character terms, she’s window dressing,” Campbell says bluntly of Le Chiffre’s bad-girl accomplice, played

by Milicevic (*Vanilla Sky*, *Running Scared*), whose family moved from Sarajevo to Michigan when she was five. “It’s nice to show her ass climbing onto the boat. Well, that’s precisely the reason she’s there.”
2. SOLANGE (CATERINA MURINO) “There are people who say, ‘Okay, now you’re a James Bond girl. You finished your career,’” says Murino, a native of Sardinia who’s making her English-language film debut.

“[But] I’m very glad. I hope that it can open more doors.”
3. VESPER LYND (EVA GREEN) “I don’t want to be perceived as the bimbo,” says Green, a French actress who has had major roles in *The Dreamers* and *Kingdom of Heaven*. “She’s not like that. There’s a lot of subtext in the character.”



EVA GREEN
3

cold” hero, a complex loner who is as obsessive about choosing his caviar as he is about his cloak-and-dagger work for the British secret service. (The product of an unenlightened era, the novel also has him associating sexual conquest with “the sweet tang of rape.” Yikes.) Fleming’s story is set during the Cold War, and that is where the adapters—screenwriters Neal Purvis and Robert Wade, who worked together on *The World Is Not Enough* and *Die Another Day*, and rewriter Haggis—made some of their biggest changes. The main villain, Le Chiffre—a powerful agent for the Russians in the novel—has become a moneyman for the world’s terrorists, investing their millions in global commodities based on the foreknowledge of terrorist acts. Otherwise, the story line is similar: Le Chiffre, who has a weakness for gambling, loses his clients’ money and, in an attempt to recoup those losses, enters a high-stakes game of Texas Hold ‘Em (in the book, it’s baccarat). As the best poker player in M16, Bond is picked to beat him in the game. The Brits assign Vesper Lynd (Eva Green) to keep tabs on Bond, and the two eventually fall in love.

“As adaptations go, and considering it’s 53 years old, it’s pretty accurate,” says Wilson, noting that the novel provides the basic structure for the second half of the film, while the first half has a number of action sequences Fleming couldn’t have dreamed of. The book’s most pivotal scene—a vicious torture sequence in which Le Chiffre pummels Bond’s nether regions to a pulp—remains, however. “What we haven’t done is take the title of the book and completely rewrite the whole thing around some lunatic taking over the world,” Campbell says.

Another element of the book that hasn’t been updated in easily digestible form is Bond’s sexism. “I don’t think you shy away from it,” Craig says. “I mean, that’s what he is. What I love about this script is that we have a Bond who at least at first is fallible. And so therefore has to learn. I wanted to question what he does. I want [the audience] to go, ‘That’s not right. He shouldn’t do that.’”

Craig talks with equal dedication about making Bond’s main love interest, Vesper, into the sort of multidimensional character not usually associated with Bond girls. “We wanted an actress to take on [the Bond girl role] and go, ‘We have to turn this upside down,’” he says. Who knows what kind of movie the filmmakers would have made if they had scored their first choices (Campbell confirms that both Angelina Jolie and Charlize Theron were approached). But with Green, the sultry and (Continued on page 107)

Daniel Craig

(Continued from page 68)

serious French actress who starred in *The Dreamers* and *Kingdom of Heaven*, Craig says they got the right fit. “She’s unusually stunning, which is just perfect for this. Because we don’t really know who she is. There’s a great friction there. And for me, I think that’s sexier than [*breaking into a funny Bond baritone*], ‘Hello there, how do you do?’ ‘I’m rather cold.’ ‘Well, come to bed, darling.’ ” (But don’t worry, you eager, prurient Bond fans out there: There’s another girl—Solange, played by Italian bombshell Caterina Murino—whom Bond beds in a voracious fashion. Murino, growling for emphasis, refers to their sex scene as “animalistic” and “rough.”)

Vesper figures prominently in the movie’s final act, after the poker game. She and Bond end up in the clutches of Le Chiffre, who makes mincemeat of 007’s manhood. As in the book, his henchman cuts a hole in the bottom of a chair, straps Bond to it, and then . . . well, Craig says it best: “From that moment on, when I sit in that chair, I’m hanging out from under there, or at least—you know, I’m not giving myself that much praise, but it’s definitely down there.” The day before they shot this torture scene, says Mikkelsen, he, Craig, and Campbell discussed how to make it “a little more realistic. We wanted two characters who were really desperate in one room. And so we changed a couple lines. You can do one-liners one way or the other. If you do it because you’re desperate, it’s one thing. If you’re doing it because you’re really cool, it’s a different thing. We wanted it to actually be about life and death.”

The ending, which involves a sinking palazzo in Venice, “is harrowing,” Campbell promises. And he accepts that audiences may be disturbed. “We didn’t equate depth with Bond [in the earlier installments], and the truth is that whenever we tried to achieve depth, it didn’t fit. If it doesn’t work in this, I don’t think it can work in a Bond film.”

COILED ON HIS CHAIR IN THE

Dorchester, Craig answers questions with an affable, kinetic charm. He seems eager to jump from his dainty chair to do something physical, like help deliverymen load crates onto a truck (or lorry, as Fleming would have it). But he contains himself, channeling his energy into his storytelling. His self-consciousness about his vaunted status as an actor could suggest neurosis, but is probably just modesty. He often self-edits, referring to himself as a “twat” and occasionally mocking his own answers to questions.

He says he’s looking forward to having ten days of vacation soon, but teases himself: “It’s classic actor talk. In two weeks time, I’ll be like”—he puts on a nelly voice—“‘What

am I going to do? I’ll never work again!’ ”

In fact, he’s signed up for a second Bond, which he says should go into production next May, and he’s already steeling himself for the two-month *Casino Royale* promotional tour that starts in the middle of October and will take him “fucking everywhere.” (Craig says he has no contractual limitations about doing other work, as long as it doesn’t interfere with his Bond acting and promoting. Three weeks after our interview, it’s announced that he will play Lord Asriel in the fantasy *His Dark Materials: The Golden Compass*.)

“I think it’s quite difficult for him to deal with all the publicity,” says Green (who also has a role in *The Golden Compass*). “People expect him to behave as Bond. I’m sure he doesn’t like it.”

But even more notable than the incongruity of this private, celebrated character actor becoming the face of a worldwide marketing juggernaut is Craig’s sense of responsibility to the character he has become, and to the Bond franchise. “I’ve been involved every step of the way,” he says. “I’ve had input into posters. We listened to the music [by Audioslave’s Chris Cornell] the other day. I’ve been part of a \$100 million movie. And I felt so close to this. It made me think, Okay, let’s make the second one now. And let’s make it better. Because I know now we can make it better. And it’s not that this one isn’t fantastic.”

So when Craig hears *Casino Royale* being compared to another, gritty spy-thriller franchise, based on the character of Jason Bourne, his voice takes on a defensive edge. “I hate that,” he says. “This does not look like the Bourne movies.

“This is a *Bond* movie,” he adds without ambiguity. “[When] you pay your ticket for a Bond movie, you are paying for something. And that has to be delivered. If a Bond moment comes up—and there are plenty of them in the movie—believe me, I haven’t held back. I’ve gone, ‘Okay, it’s a Bond moment. Now what does that mean to me?’ ” This talk reminds him of a scene in *Casino Royale*, in which Bond approaches a bar, and the bartender asks him in one of those familiar wink-wink, nudge-nudge Bond moments, “Would you like a martini, shaken or stirred?” “And at that particular point in the story, it’s fuckin’ irrelevant,” Craig says. “At that point in the story, he wants a fucking drink. And he wants a big drink. So it’s like, ‘Oh, fuck off. Give me a fucking drink.’ ”

There’s pride in Craig’s voice, as if he’s talking about someone he likes, someone he knows well and hopes to know even better. “And next time he goes to the bar,” he says, “it doesn’t stop Bond from going, ‘I want a martini. And I want it shaken.’ ” ●

Go to premiere.com/bond for more inside scoops, including how Craig asked Steven Spielberg if he should take the role, and how he later put the kibosh on a suicide bomber.