

The Road To

A **QUANTUM OF SOLACE** AND A WHOLE LOT OF BLOOD, BRUTALITY AND BALLS-TO-THE-WALL ACTION. DANIEL CRAIG PLAYS BY HIS OWN RULES IN THE MOST RUTHLESS 007 OUTING YET...

WORDS **MATT MUELLER**

If *Casino Royale* is still basking in the afterglow of being declared the Best Bond Movie Ever™ and 007's most bountiful mission (594 meelyun dollars, Meester Bond...), what will that make *Quantum Of Solace*? *Royale*'s angry, morose sibling, subjected to preternaturally high standards it can't possibly meet? A super-slick facsimile that ticks all the boxes but feels like a *Royale* redux? Or an equally groundbreaking standard-bearer that helps shove those pesky *Bourne* comparisons into the incinerator once and for all? With the stakes this stratospheric, it's a question that terrifies – and exhilarates – franchise gatekeepers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G Wilson, daughter and stepson of the mythic Cubby.

"The good news is *Casino Royale* did so fantastically well," says Broccoli. "The bad news is, 'Oh my god, what do we do now?'"

"But better doesn't mean bigger," adds Wilson. It just means better. We've got to work at making this one *better*."

In Eon's plush, high-ceilinged Piccadilly offices, fit for Bond to roam through and feel very at home, Broccoli chuckles lightly: "I'll settle for 'As good as...'"

The sell for *Quantum Of Solace* is Bond goes rogue. That's what Eon and Sony's marketing – including a 10-minute promo reel of sexy, spy-thriller goodness unspooled for *Total Film*'s pleasure – is mainlining into the movie ether, depicting an extremely irate M (Bond won't like her when she's angry – she cancels his credit card and puts him on MI6's "capture or kill" list) and Craig slaking his vengeful bloodlust in far-flung corners to find the mysterious man – or men – who drove Eva Green's *Vesper* to suicide. From the spy who loved her to one shrouded in a mourn identity, the Bond of *Solace* ends up on the run from his own agency. "We hit a mark at the end of the last movie and the decision was made very early on we should continue that feeling," says Craig. "Bond has had the love of his life taken away from him and *Vesper* was not what she seemed ... She ripped him apart."

Which is what Eon did with its franchise when it sacked Pierce Brosnan and started over. *Casino Royale* stripped Bond back to basics, eliminating the camp, garish accoutrements, gadget clutter,



Revenge





panto buffoons (walk the plank, Q) and the stale, fusty haze that threatened to deep-six the franchise after *Die Another Day* humiliated its flag-bearers with shitty CGI and lame concepts. Picking up *Royale*'s gritty, visceral baton, *Solace* packs in an extra ration of ballistic set-pieces, including a tire-screaming car chase, an art-gallery scrap, a frantic, aggressive boat sequence out to top *The World Is Not Enough*'s Thames tearaway and a scorching finale that everyone involved claims raises the bar.

Royale's success was fuelled by action-nirvana fairy dust, but it was also, in large part, due to the lean, mean makeover of James Bond as an 007 with depth and – say it – soul, as channelled by Daniel Craig in a lethal (and unashamedly blond) incarnation of Ian Fleming's martini-loving British civil servant. Bond's tormented psyche is something that Craig and debutante director Marc Forster were intent on exploring further in *Solace*, the first direct sequel in the series' 46-year history, spending weeks together with the sketched-out script handed over to them by Paul Haggis (returning from *Royale* to do a polish on Neal Purvis and Robert Wade's early draft). "Paul Haggis didn't give us a finished script so Daniel and I really developed it together," says Forster. "There was a very intense relationship between us while we were doing that."

Eon arrived at the unusual choice of Forster after a desperate hunt "to find a director that I would find inspiring," says Craig, although the German-born director of *Monster's Ball* at first rebuffed their smothering advances ("I just didn't see what the positive side of it was"). But once he was won over, Forster and Craig quickly formed an alliance. Their mutual vision for *Solace* embraced the spirit of legendary production designer Ken Adams, pushed for deploying locations over sets (*Solace* flits the globe more than any of its predecessors, from Chile's desolate Atacama desert to the lakeside opera stage in Bregenz, Austria) and integrating action into story rather than awkwardly crowbarring it in. "I said to Daniel at the end of the shoot, 'I think it was a great collaboration because we couldn't have done it without each other. We never had an argument about anything stylistically, we always were in sync, which was really surprising.'"

"Visually, Marc wanted to push the envelope in terms of creating a world that is – how did he describe it? – a little retro but post-modern in structure," says Broccoli. Pushing the envelope meant pushing the budget, with reports pegging *Solace*'s cash-consumption at \$230m – by far the most expensive Bond film ever. "Without a doubt," admits Broccoli, her eyes and voice steady. "But the money's always on the screen. There's twice as much action as the last movie."

Picking up an hour after Bond put a bullet in Mr White's (Jesper Christensen) leg at the close of

Casino Royale, Bond launches on his Vesper-revenge mission, discovering that his limping adversary is a tiny cog in a global conspiracy machine that reaches into the highest echelons of the government. Forster's desire to hark back to Bond's iconic '60s spirit brings a sinister, SPECTRE-style organisation called QUANTUM onto the scene (acronym still under wraps but which may plague Craig for his entire Bond career). Forster and Craig's other brainwave? To burrow under Bond's skin, into his brain, more than any prior outing for the secretive spy. To show a flintier, nastier Bond, but also one attempting to heal deep wounds. "Everything around him is turned upside down," explains Craig. "Everything he understood as being good turns out to be bad."

Forster nods. "He's always been a mystery to the audience, which is part of the intrigue, but in this film he gets to figuring out who he really is," says the director. "Today the lines between good and bad are blurred, and it's the same with Bond – he's not just a good guy."

"Tonight I'm gonna run through a restaurant and shoot people. While eating linguini..." Blue eyes twinkling, Daniel Craig is trying to keep the mood light. He's also a bit twitchy, having just downed a second espresso in a compressed space of time on this cold Austrian night. Outdoors, a floating opera stage rises out of Lake Constance, scene for a production of Puccini's tragedy *Tosca* and a key sequence in *Solace*. Currently, we're inside in the opera house's chic, airy restaurant, observing a sequence in which Bond has tracked *Solace* villain Dominic Greene (Mathieu Amalric) to the lakeside hamlet, to find him meeting with a cabal of shadowy power players. Having confronted Greene, Bond is forced to flee as two of the villain's hench-thugs chase him through the packed eatery.

Manoeuvring between tightly packed tables, startled diners and tray-ferrying waiters, Craig whirls around and downs one of the henchman with a single shot, then dashes for protection behind an island bar in the middle of the room. Gun cocked in that iconic hitman pose, his fierce gaze waits for the second henchman to round the corner. He fires off two quick shots, hurls himself over the countertop and escapes into the kitchen. For several takes, Craig repeats the sequence in a dynamic display of action and performance that superbly demonstrates why many feel the 40-year-old actor may go down as the greatest 007 ever. And one of the most hands-on... "That was one of the things I'd said when I was being barracked into doing it: 'I want to be involved with as much of it as possible,'" says Craig. "That doesn't mean I want to be making huge decisions but I want to have a say because it means I can feel that I know what's going on and

how things are working. It's my job to encourage: do we want Marc Forster to direct this movie? Yes we do. I



'YOU'VE GOT
ONE SHOT, TAKE
A DEEP BREATH.
MAKE IT COUNT'

JAMES BOND

can't make the decision but I can certainly make the phone calls."

By opting for the title of one of Ian Fleming's more obscure short stories, Eon took a few brickbats for Sellotaping that high-falutin' title onto their latest brooding Bond adventure ("sounds like something a doctor might prescribe for an enlarged prostate," sniffed one unimpressed publication). If it hasn't already drip-fed into your consciousness, it translates as "measure of comfort", which is what Bond is looking for following Vesper's death. Forster wasn't sure at first, either, but now agrees it's smart, enigmatic – and sticks in your brain. "I was just happy it didn't have 'Die' or 'Death' in it," he muses.

From a blistering 20-minute opening that whisks through an Aston Martin vs Alfa Romeo car chase before ending up in a 2,000-year-old Carrara marble quarry, to Mr White's safe-house torture session, through a rip-roaring tear through the streets, cisterns and rooftops of Siena, before culminating with a swinging-rope face-off inside an art gallery, there's no doubt that *Solace* is out to leap over the lofty bar set by *Royale*. There's less CGI and model-work than *Royale*, in which sequences such as the sinking Venice palazzo exteriors were done with miniatures. Not so on *Solace*. "What we are achieving in this is more what it would do in real life, where a car smashes into the side of a building and *doesn't* blow up into a million pieces," says special-effects supremo Chris Corbould. "It's going to be much more hard hitting than seeing great balls of flame go up in the air or a car that does four pirouettes as it goes off a cliff." Indeed, from a DC-3 aerial dogfight to a Siena sewer foot-chase, the watch-word is "realism" – or as much realism as is humanly possible. And that makes everything a little bit riskier.

"There's always a potential for danger because we're creating scary situations on film," says Craig. "We do things that look incredibly dangerous as safely as possible. But things like my finger – it's an accident, it's a small thing but it happens..."

Small things... Tell that to Broccoli. As was widely reported, Craig ended up in hospital for a few hours when a small chunk of his finger fell to the Pinewood soundstage floor. But she recalls a more terrifying moment, during the shooting of *Solace's* explosive climax, when their irreplaceable asset vanished into the flames of multiple explosive charges... and didn't reappear. "We're sitting there watching the monitor and there's 15 explosions, collapsing staircases, things going off – and we're going, you know, quietly, 'Where's Daniel? Where is he? WHERE ISSSSSSSS HEEEEEE?'" Broccoli



covers her eyes and exhales deeply, recalling the traumatic incident. "We're just 100ft away and yet we're thinking, 'My God, what have they done to him?'" chimes Wilson. "He's in the middle of a fireball," says Broccoli. "...And then he pops up. Oh, thank God!!!"

Six weeks after Austria, *Total Film* journeys out to Pinewood, to watch part of *Solace's* scorching, eco-hotel-set finale being filmed. A few months earlier, the production had camped out in Chile at the Paranal observatory, but now its hotel has been recreated on soundstages and Mathieu Amalric, as Greene, is streaking past a glass wall being detonated by explosives, his arms frantically covering his face. Wandering over to chat to *Total Film* after running

the gauntlet, the Frenchman looks exhilarated. "It's exciting, it's like a game – it's a big toy! I love it, I just love it. I was expecting the explosion but it wouldn't come.

'THE FIRST THING YOU SHOULD KNOW IS THAT WE HAVE PEOPLE EVERYWHERE'

MRWHITE



BEYOND BOND 1 BAUER FOR A DAY

What might happen if James traded MI6 for CTU...

07:00AM Bond's alarm goes off. First day at CTU after M booted him out of MI6. It's going to be a great day...

07:02AM ...No it's not. terrorists from Fakenameistan plan to add nerve-gas to LA's water supply.

08:15 In CTU elevator, colleague asks, "What's with the tux, Jimmy B?" Bond says, "The name's Bond", snaps his right humerus, then quips, "You'll need to re-arm."

08:45 Bond gets his orders in CTU's Situation Room.

10:20 Female CTU eavesdropper traces terrorist on his mobile (duh) - he's two hours' drive away from Bond.

10:32 Bond squeals up to the location.

10:45 Infiltrating the warehouse, Bond is captured and tortured, his face a bloodied, swollen pulp.

11:59 Slips out of his bonds and takes down the 12 guards. Tortures them all. The nerve-gas is just a ruse - they're actually plotting to detonate a nuclear bomb!

12:39 Bond dashes to Aston Martin. His bloodied, pulped face has de-swelled to just a nick over left eye.

14.54 The US President phones. His actress daughter has been kidnapped and the Fakenameistan terrorists have strapped the nuclear bomb to her.

17:31 Bond meets a CIA contact, who informs him the terrorist's base is in Vegas. Bond orders a martini. Paralyzes barman when it arrives stirred, not shaken.

20:15 Lead terrorist phones Bond to say he'll never get to Vegas in time to stop them, mwahahah!

20:19 Bond arrives in Vegas in a fold-away helicopter. Terrorist head impressed; challenges Bond to Baccarat.

22:12 His henchmen blast rounds at Bond when he loses. An eavesdropper phones mid-gun-battle to tell Bond she's tracked the device to the honeymoon suite.

23:29 Bond slips past security. Device set to go off in 60 seconds. Bond defuses it with one second to spare.

23:31 Head terrorist drops from ceiling. Vicious, hand-to-hand fight bursts out onto the balcony, the Vegas lights twinkling below them.

23:59 Bond hurls terrorist off balcony. He just manages to grab the ledge, laughing. "You fool - don't you know who I am?" Rips off face-mask to reveal... Judi Dench.

00:01 She slips out of Bond's hands and plummets to her doom. Bond cries out: "Mommy!!!!!!!"

06:59 President phones Bond on a yacht, where he's lying on top of the President's daughter. "Oh Daddy," she purrs, dropping the phone into the sea.

‘IN ROCKNROLLA
EVERYONE TALKED
TO MY CHEST’

GEMMA ARTERTON

GEMMA ARTERTON

IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A BOND GIRL, YOU WANT one of *those* moments. A bikini-clad emergence from the sea, a gold-plated death, a steamy sauna battle where you grip 007 in your vice-like thighs... something that everyone can remember long after the closing credits.

Fortunately for Gemma Arterton, Agent Fields has such a moment. Without giving too much away, it involves a bed, her body, and copious amounts of black oil.

"I couldn't move, I couldn't see, I couldn't breathe properly," she recalls, "I couldn't even hear because all the oil went in my ears. It was pretty unpleasant but, as you say, hopefully it will be an iconic part of the film..."

An engaging whirlwind of cheek, charm and good humour, the last time Arterton chatted to us she had just wrapped *RocknRolla*.

"That was properly Boy's Own!" she grins of the testosterone-heavy set. "I literally was the totty. I had tight jeans on, this tight top with a push-up bra. Everybody was like, 'A girl!' And they all seemed to be talking to my chest. I was thinking, 'I'll let you off knowing you haven't had any boobs to stare at for a while.'"

At that time, she described her role in *Quantum Of Solace* as "the light relief". She's now honed that to The Bond Girl You Could Go To The Pub With.

"There is a formula to Bond women," she asserts. "They're his women. You just have to make them your own in any way you can. To the normal guy, they're unobtainable but I didn't want that. I wanted my character to be a girl from down the road who does this job – we don't know exactly what she does but she goes to work every day – and comes back and she goes down the pub at the weekend and has a drink. At first you might think she was a bit of a snooty bitch but she's actually quite nice when you get to know her. I wanted to make her real. She's not hot but I hope there's a charm to her. I'm not sure whether she'll be the Bond girl who the boys pin up on their walls but they might say 'I don't know what it is about that Agent Fields, but I quite fancy her...'"

She grins. Despite some heavyweight roles in the pipeline ("I like to mix a bit of fluff with a bit of serious") she has no problem with playing one of 007's conquests.

"I've read interviews with previous Bond girls and they're always trying to justify why they did it. It's an institution for God's sake! When I'm an old woman my grandkids can say, 'Nanny was a Bond girl.' How brilliant is that?"

She laughs. "Of course, they'll be like, 'Look at her now. You'd never know...'"



BEYOND BOND 2 BOURNE FOR A DAY

What might happen if James Bond had the kind of amnesia that made him re-Bourne...

KRASNOVODSK, A PORT ON THE CASPIAN SEA...

James Bond wakes up on a surfboard. He doesn't know how he got there. He doesn't remember anything. A Russian navy vessel tows him to shore. Bond finds a locker key that says "Gare Du Nord" in his pocket...

PARIS, FRANCE...

At Gare Du Nord, Bond puts key in locker. Inside he finds 207 alias passports, a cash card, a Martini shaker, guns, knives and a picture of Matt Damon. The photo makes him angry but he can't put his finger on why...

Goes to ATM. Balance: £6.7m. He takes out 50 quid... then spots three dark-suited government agents with earpieces weaving through the crowd. He knows they're looking for him. They see him and start to chase. Bond pushes someone off their Vespa and speeds off, whizzing through the streets of Paris as the agents follow in hot pursuit...

MOSCOW, RUSSIA...

He runs through Red Square with the agents in hot pursuit. His mind flashes to a knife-toed lesbian...

VENICE, ITALY...

...He steers a vaporetto through the Venetian canals with the agents in hot pursuit. His mind flashes to driving a white Lotus through water...

Bond crashes the boat off a ramp and lands on a helipad. He leaps into a helicopter about to take off.

Pilot is a punky-looking fräulein. Bond tries to shag her but has to settle for a meaningful conversation. She flies James to...

PISA, ITALY...

Bond runs up the Leaning Tower's eight flights of stair to reach the bell chamber, where he finds a Union Jack hang-glider. He sails out and lands in...

CAIRO, EGYPT...

He pushes his way through bustling Third World streets. His mind flashes to a fluffy white cat sitting in a bald man's lap – no, wait, a white-haired old woman sitting in a bald man's lap... no, wait, a white-haired old woman sitting in his lap – a shag at last!... no, wait, a white-haired old woman who keeps repeating "double-o heaven". Brilliant, he gave her two orgasms!... No, wait...

LONDON, ENGLAND...

M picks up the phone at MI6 headquarters. "I know who I am... the name's Bond, James Bond."

M pleads for him to come in. "Where are you James? We want to help you." A framed photo of her hugging Matt Damon is perched on her desk.

"Then why are you trying to replace me?" he whispers in her ear, popping up behind her.

She grabs Damon's photo and makes a run for it but Bond tackles her from behind, snatches it out of her hands, then leaps through plate-glass window and dives into the Thames. He doesn't resurface. But M knows he'll be back for at least two more sequels, pending his renegotiated contract...

I was running and I say, 'Shit, it's not working.' And then bam!! I just wanted to get my arms down earlier so they see my face. But something hit me so I forgot."

Amalric's nefarious Greene is a phony eco-warrior, who conceals his evil intentions behind his philanthropic organisation while secretly plotting to monopolise the water-supply. On her own vendetta and getting close to Bond after a period of initial distrust, Kurylenko starts *Solace* as Greene's moll, with the duo inventing a perverted sexual history between Camille and Greene, although it's only hinted at in the final film. "With Olga, I have a doubt that maybe she's fucking with me, not only for my beautiful body. And that is disgusting for him," says Amalric. But it's worse. "We said to the new writer who was on set that we had invented this thing... it's very intimate but I think it's a reason to kill somebody: does he make her come? He has a doubt, and if she's lying, he's not a man anymore. That can make you crazy. Sexual frustration – I think that's why you're a villain. A man is not very complicated."

In his climactic fight with 007, Greene gets frenzied, scratching and clawing and kicking... "We tried to do things that are wild and disgusting, something that's not allowed. I had to see with Daniel, How much could I hit him? And he had to hit me too because you feel it. We're not in the '50s anymore. So that's where there's a big intimacy and respect for the other actor. I still feel it in my ribs because he punched me all the time and you do it 15 or 20 times. And each time you say, 'No, more more more!! More!' You get crazy."

Total Film doesn't put any credence into the "curse of Bond" stories that wafted from the set of *Solace* after the Aston Martin ended up in Lake Garda and a tragic mishap involving the Alfa Romeo sent one stuntman to the hospital.

But we do wonder how events like that affect cast and crew morale. Do Broccoli and Wilson have to step in with pep talks to bolster everyone's

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Where now? We explore possible source material for the Blond Bond's third outing...

THE HILDEBRAND RARITY

The not-so-smart money was on this short story becoming the basis for Bond 22 rather than *Quantum Of Solace*. The plot's feeble (Bond goes on an ocean fishing trip and someone dies), but a man does get choked to death by someone ramming a fish down his throat, so it's not all bad.

AVIEW TO A KILL

The title been used, but none of the plot from the short story made the leap to the big screen. It's all about Bond going undercover as a dispatch rider to catch an assassin. Plenty of scope for motorbike chases and shoot-outs, but it's going to need some serious massaging to work in a love interest.

007 IN NEW YORK

The title makes *Quantum Of Solace* sound catchy but the plot's got potential. 007's packed off to the Big Apple to warn a female agent that her boyfriend is actually a Russian spy. Change "spy" to "terrorist" and Bob's yer undercover agent.

COLONEL SUN

A kidnapped M and a Chinese agent out to scupper a Middle Eastern peace conference make for a juicy plot. The original 1968 novel's not by Fleming, but was penned by Kingsley Amis, who was hired by Fleming's estate to write a new Bond under the pseudonym Robert Markham after the old fella's death.

DEVIL MAY CARE

Less new Bond novel, more hugely derivative '60s-set pastiche of Fleming's favourite tics (barmily named heroines, deformed henchmen, sadism, all the faves). The Broccolis have said they don't fancy making a movie of Sebastian Faulks' 2008 novel, but never say never, eh?

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG

Flying cars, evil despots in middle-European countries, a leading lady with a saucy name and written by Ian Fleming? If only there was a bit where the Child Catcher tortured Caractacus Potts with a toot sweet they'd have rejigged it as a Bond movie years ago.

spirits? "Everybody was devastated because everything is designed for these things not to happen," says Broccoli. "It sounds like a cliché that you're a family but you are: you're eating, sleeping, travelling, working, spending 18 hours a day together for six months – it's impossible not to feel as close to everybody on the set as you do to your closest friends and your family. It's a very, very intense experience and it's devastating."

"Everybody was second-guessing themselves after that happened," adds Wilson. "You all feel responsible."

"But I don't think we were all sitting around saying, 'Oh god, are we cursed?'" continues Broccoli. "We were all devastated by it and I think fortunately, because Aris [*Comininos*] has done so well – he's managed to come back to being 98 per cent better or something – we're actually thinking the opposite. We're thinking, 'Thank God. Someone's watching over us.' We believe in miracles now."

When *Total Film* meets Forster embroiled in post-production in London, he undoubtedly feels like he could use a miracle of his own. Slumped, he bemoans *Solace's* truncated editing schedule – "all my other movies, I had like 14 weeks; on this, I have four or five weeks. It's just rush, rush, rush" – and though he doesn't come out and say it directly, he's obviously concerned that he will not be able to apply the finesse that he's used to.

The pressure is on. When we tell him that Craig has already told *Total Film* he's looking forward to viewing Forster's cut in time to put in his two-penneth-worth, the director's mouth tightens and his cheeks twitch: "I said I will show it to him before I do the preview," he nods, "but I haven't ever got notes from an actor. So I will show him the movie and hopefully he likes it and if he doesn't, it is what it is."

Forster's already decided he won't be returning for Craig's third stint as the tuxedoed assassin, much to Broccoli and Wilson's chagrin... "I said to the studio, 'The only problem with Marc Forster is who's going to follow him?'" says Broccoli. "That's the real challenge because he's been impeccable – an extremely cooperative, wonderful director of great vision. He's remarkable – a very, very tough act to follow."

And having so strongly resisted the early advances, is Forster glad that he finally sought *Solace*? "If the movie's successful, it will be great to celebrate it. If it's not, it will be a hard burden to carry because so many fans will be disappointed. You want the fans to continue the celebration of *Casino Royale*. It's something I didn't really process while I was doing it, but now suddenly that comes closer and I just hope that all those expectations will be fulfilled." **TF**

Quantum Of Solace opens on 31 October and will be reviewed in a future issue of Total Film.

'YOU ARE SO
BLINDED BY RAGE
YOU DON'T CARE
WHO YOU HURT.'

M



