

= Never Say Never Again =

Never Say Never Again is a 1983 British spy film directed by Irvin Kershner , produced by Jack Schwartzman , and written by Lorenzo Semple Jr. with uncredited additional co @-@ writers Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais , from a story by Kevin McClory , Jack Whittingham , and Ian Fleming . It is the second adaption of Fleming 's Thunderball , which was previously adapted as the 1965 film of the same name . Unlike the majority of Bond films , Never Say Never Again was not produced by Eon Productions , but by an independent production company , one of whose members was Kevin McClory . McClory , one of the original writers of the Thunderball storyline , retained the filming rights of the novel following a rights controversy .

Sean Connery played the role of James Bond for the seventh time , marking his return to the character 12 years after Diamonds Are Forever . The film 's title is a reference to Connery 's reported declaration in 1971 that he would " never again " play that role . As Connery was 52 at the time of filming , the storyline features an aging Bond , who is brought back into action to investigate the theft of two nuclear weapons by SPECTRE . Filming locations included France , Spain , the Bahamas and Elstree Studios in England .

Never Say Never Again was released by Warner Bros. in autumn 1983 , opening to positive reviews and was a commercial success , grossing \$ 160 million at the box office , although less overall than the Eon @-@ produced Octopussy released in the same year . Metro @-@ Goldwyn @-@ Mayer , to date , owns the distribution rights and distributes Eon 's Bond films , and the company has handled subsequent home video releases of the film .

= = Plot = =

After MI6 agent James Bond , 007 , fails a routine training exercise , his superior , M , orders Bond to a health clinic outside London to get back into shape . While there , Bond witnesses a mysterious nurse named Fatima Blush giving a sadomasochistic beating to a patient in a nearby room . The man 's face is bandaged and after Blush finishes her beating , Bond sees the patient using a machine which scans his eye . Bond is seen by Blush and an attempt is subsequently made to kill him in the clinic gym , but Bond manages to defeat the assassin .

Blush and her charge , a United States Air Force pilot named Jack Petachi , are operatives of SPECTRE , a criminal organisation run by Ernst Stavro Blofeld . Petachi has undergone an operation on his right eye to make it match the retinal pattern of the US President , which he uses to circumvent iris recognition security at an American military base in England . While doing so , he replaces the dummy warheads of two cruise missiles with live nuclear warheads ; SPECTRE then steals the warheads , intending to extort billions of dollars from NATO governments . Blush murders Petachi to cover SPECTRE 's tracks .

Under orders from the Prime Minister , M reluctantly reactivates the double @-@ 0 section and Bond is assigned the task of tracking down the missing weapons . He meets Domino Petachi , the pilot 's sister , and her wealthy lover , Maximillian Largo , a SPECTRE agent . Bond follows Largo and his yacht to the Bahamas , where he spars with Blush and Largo .

Bond is informed by Nigel Small @-@ Fawcett of the British Consulate that Largo 's yacht is now heading for Nice , France . There , Bond joins forces with his CIA counterpart , Felix Leiter . Bond goes to a beauty salon where he poses as an employee and , whilst giving Domino a massage , is informed by her that Largo is hosting an event at a casino that evening . At the charity event , Largo and Bond play a 3 @-@ D video game called Domination ; the loser of each turn receives a series of electric shocks of increasing intensity or pays a corresponding cash bet . Bond ultimately wins . While dancing with Domino , Bond informs her that her brother had been killed on Largo 's orders . Bond returns to his villa to find that Nicole , his French contact , has been killed by Blush . After a vehicle chase on his motorbike , Blush captures Bond . She admits that she is impressed with him , and forces Bond to declare in writing that she is his " Number One " sexual partner . Bond distracts her with promises , then uses his Q @-@ branch @-@ issue fountain pen to shoot Blush with an explosive dart .

Bond and Leiter attempt to board Largo 's motor yacht , the Flying Saucer , in search of the missing nuclear warheads . Bond finds Domino . He attempts to make Largo jealous by kissing Domino in front of a two way mirror . Largo becomes enraged , traps Bond and takes him and Domino to Palmyra , Largo 's base of operations in North Africa . Largo coldly punishes Domino for her betrayal by selling her to some passing Arabs . Bond subsequently escapes and rescues her .

Domino and Bond reunite with Leiter on a United States Navy submarine and track Largo to a location known as the Tears of Allah , below a desert oasis on the Ethiopian Coast . Bond and Leiter infiltrate the underground facility and a gun battle erupts between Leiter 's team and Largo 's men in the temple . In the confusion Largo makes a getaway with one of the warheads . Bond catches and fights Largo underwater . Just as Largo tries to detonate the last bomb , he is killed by Domino , taking revenge for her brother 's death . Bond returns to the Bahamas with Domino .

= = Cast = =

Sean Connery as James Bond , MI6 agent 007 .

Kim Basinger as Domino Petachi , sister of Jack Petachi and girlfriend / mistress of Maximillian Largo .

Klaus Maria Brandauer as Maximillian Largo ; based on the character Emilio Largo , a senior member of SPECTRE .

Barbara Carrera as Fatima Blush ; based on Fiona Volpe and a member of SPECTRE .

Rowan Atkinson as Nigel Small @-@ Fawcett , Foreign Office representative in the Bahamas .

Bernie Casey as Felix Leiter , Bond 's CIA contact and friend .

Max von Sydow as Ernst Stavro Blofeld , the head of SPECTRE .

Edward Fox as M , Bond 's superior at MI6 .

Gavan O 'Herlihy as Jack Petachi , a pilot used by SPECTRE to steal the nuclear missiles . He is Domino Petachi 's brother .

Alec McCowen as Q ( also known as Algy )

Ronald Pickup as Elliott , a government agent working under M

Pamela Salem as Miss Money Penny , M 's secretary

Saskia Cohen Tanugi as Nicole , Bond 's MI6 contact in France

Prunella Gee as Patricia Fearing , a physiotherapist at the clinic

Valerie Leon as Lady in Bahamas

John Stephen Hill as Communications Officer

Milow Kirek as Kovacs

Pat Roach as Lippe

Anthony Sharp as Lord Ambrose

= = Production = =

Never Say Never Again had its origins in the early 1960s , following the controversy over the 1961 Thunderball novel . Fleming had worked with independent producer Kevin McClory and scriptwriter Jack Whittingham on a script for a potential Bond film , to be called Longitude 78 West , which was subsequently abandoned because of the costs involved . Fleming , " always reluctant to let a good idea lie idle " , turned this into the novel Thunderball , for which he did not credit either McClory or Whittingham ; McClory then took Fleming to the High Court in London for breach of copyright and the matter was settled in 1963 . After Eon Productions started producing the Bond films , it subsequently made a deal with McClory , who would produce Thunderball , and then not make any further version of the novel for a period of ten years following the release of the Eon @-@ produced version in 1965 .

In the mid @-@ 1970s McClory again started working on a project to bring a Thunderball adaptation to production and , with the working title Warhead , he brought writer Len Deighton together with Sean Connery to work on a script . The script ran into difficulties after accusations from Eon Productions that the project had gone beyond copyright restrictions , which confined McClory to

a film based on the Thunderball novel only , and once again the project was deferred .

Towards the end of the 1970s developments were reported on the project under the name James Bond of the Secret Service , but when producer Jack Schwartzman became involved and cleared a number of the legal issues that still surrounded the project he brought on board scriptwriter Lorenzo Semple , Jr. to work on the screenplay . Connery was unhappy with some aspects of the work and asked Tom Mankiewicz who had rewritten Diamonds Are Forever to work on the script ; however Mankiewicz declined as he felt he was under a moral obligation to Cubby Broccoli . Connery then hired British television writers Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais to undertake re @-@ writes , although they went uncredited for their efforts because of a restriction by the Writers Guild of America .

The film underwent one final change in title : after Connery had finished filming Diamonds Are Forever he had pledged that he would " never " play Bond again . Connery 's wife , Micheline , suggested the title Never Say Never Again , referring to her husband 's vow and the producers acknowledged her contribution by listing on the end credits " Title " Never Say Never Again " by : Micheline Connery " . A final attempt by Fleming 's trustees to block the film was made in the High Court in London in the spring of 1983 , but this was thrown out by the court and Never Say Never Again was permitted to proceed .

= = = Cast and crew = = =

When producer Kevin McClory had first planned the film in 1964 he held initial talks with Richard Burton for the part of Bond , although the project came to nothing because of the legal issues involved . When the Warhead project was launched in the late 1970s , a number of actors were mentioned in the trade press , including Orson Welles for the part of Blofeld , Trevor Howard to play M and Richard Attenborough as director .

In 1978 the working title James Bond of the Secret Service was being used and Connery was in the frame once again , potentially going head @-@ to @-@ head with the next Eon Bond film , Moonraker . By 1980 , with legal issues again causing the project to founder , Connery thought himself unlikely to play the role , as he stated in an interview in the Sunday Express : " when I first worked on the script with Len I had no thought of actually being in the film " . When producer Jack Schwartzman became involved , he asked Connery to play Bond ; Connery agreed , asking ( and getting ) a fee of \$ 3 million , ( \$ 7 million in 2016 dollars ) a percentage of the profits , as well as casting and script approval . Subsequent to Connery reprising the role , the script has several references to Bond 's advancing years ? playing on Connery being 52 at the time of filming ? and academic Jeremy Black has pointed out that there are other aspects of age and disillusionment in the film , such as the Shrubland 's porter referring to Bond 's car ( " They don 't make them like that anymore . " ) , the new M having no use for the 00 section and Q with his reduced budgets .

For the main villain in the film , Maximillian Largo , Connery suggested Klaus Maria Brandauer , the lead of the 1981 Academy Award @-@ winning Hungarian film Mephisto . Through the same route came Max von Sydow as Ernst Stavro Blofeld , although he still retained his Eon @-@ originated white cat in the film . For the femme fatale , director Irvin Kershner selected former model and Playboy cover girl Barbara Carrera to play Fatima Blush ? the name coming from one of the early scripts of Thunderball . Carrera 's performance as Fatima Blush earned her a Golden Globe Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress , which she lost to Cher for her role in Silkwood . Micheline Connery , Sean 's wife , had met up @-@ and @-@ coming actress Kim Basinger at a hotel in London and suggested her to Connery , which he agreed upon . For the role of Felix Leiter , Connery spoke with Bernie Casey , saying that as the Leiter role was never remembered by audiences , using a black Leiter might make him more memorable . Others cast included comedian Rowan Atkinson , who would later parody Bond in his role of Johnny English .

Former Eon Productions ' editor and director of On Her Majesty 's Secret Service , Peter R. Hunt , was approached to direct the film but declined due to his previous work with Eon . Irvin Kershner , who had achieved success in 1980 with The Empire Strikes Back was then hired . A number of the crew from the 1981 film Raiders of the Lost Ark were also appointed , including first assistant

director David Tomblin , director of photography Douglas Slocombe and production designers Philip Harrison and Stephen Grimes .

#### = = = Filming = = =

Filming for *Never Say Never Again* began on 27 September 1982 on the French Riviera for two months before moving to Nassau , the Bahamas in mid @-@ November where filming took place at Clifton Pier , which was also one of the locations used in *Thunderball* . The Spanish city of Almería was also used as a location . Largo 's Palmyran fortress was actually historic Fort Carré in Antibes . For Largo 's ship , the *Flying Saucer* , the yacht *Nabila* , owned by Saudi billionaire , Adnan Khashoggi , was used . The boat , now owned by Prince Al @-@ Waleed bin Talal , has subsequently been renamed the *Kingdom 5KR* . Principal photography finished at Elstree Studios where interior shots were filmed . Elstree also housed the Tears of Allah underwater cavern , which took three months to construct . Most of the filming was completed in the spring of 1983 , although there was some additional shooting during the summer of 1983 .

Production on the film was troubled , with Connery taking on many of the production duties with assistant director David Tomblin . Director Irvin Kershner was critical of producer Jack Schwartzman , saying that whilst he was a good businessman , " he didn 't have the experience of a film producer " . After the production ran out of money , Schwartzman had to fund further production out of his own pocket and later admitted he had underestimated the amount the film would cost to make .

Steven Seagal , who was the fight choreographer for this film , broke Connery 's wrist while training . On an episode of *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno , Connery revealed he did not know his wrist was broken until over a decade later .

Many of the elements of the Eon @-@ produced Bond films were not present in *Never Say Never Again* for legal reasons . These included the gun barrel sequence , where a screen full of 007 symbols appeared instead , and similarly there was no " James Bond Theme " to use , although no effort was made to supply another tune . A pre @-@ credits sequence was filmed but not used ; instead the film opens with the credits run over the top of the opening sequence of Bond on a training mission .

#### = = = Music = = =

The music for *Never Say Never Again* was written by Michel Legrand , who composed a score similar to his work as a jazz pianist . The score has been criticised as " anachronistic and misjudged " , " bizarrely intermittent " and " the most disappointing feature of the film " . Legrand also wrote the main theme " *Never Say Never Again* " , which featured lyrics by Alan and Marilyn Bergman ? who had also worked with Legrand in the Academy Award winning song , " *The Windmills of Your Mind* " ? and was performed by Lani Hall after Bonnie Tyler , who disliked the song , had reluctantly declined .

Phyllis Hyman also recorded a potential theme song , written by Stephen Forsyth and Jim Ryan , but the song ? an unsolicited submission ? was passed over given Legrand 's contractual obligations with the music .

#### = = Release and reception = =

*Never Say Never Again* premiered in New York on 7 October 1983 , grossing \$ 9 @. @ 72 million ( \$ 23 million in 2016 dollars ) on its first weekend , which was reported to be " the best opening record of any James Bond film " up to that point and surpassing *Octopussy* 's \$ 8 @. @ 9 million ( \$ 21 million in 2016 dollars ) from June that year . The film went on general release in the US in 1 @, @ 500 cinemas on 14 October 1983 and had its UK premiere at the Warner West End cinema in Leicester Square on 14 December 1983 . Worldwide , *Never Say Never Again* grossed \$ 160 million in box office returns , which was a solid return on the budget of \$ 36 million .

Warner Bros. released *Never Say Never Again* on VHS and Betamax in 1984 , and on laserdisc in

1995 . After Metro @-@ Goldwyn @-@ Mayer purchased the distribution rights in 1997 ( see Legacy , below ) , the company has released the film on both VHS and DVD in 2001 , and on Blu @-@ ray in 2009 .

= = = Contemporary reviews = = =

Never Say Never Again was broadly welcomed and praised by the critics : Ian Christie , writing in the Daily Express , said that Never Say Never Again was " one of the better Bonds " , finding the film " superbly witty and entertaining , ... the dialogue is crisp and the fight scenes imaginative . " Christie also thought that " Connery has lost none of his charm and , if anything , is more appealing than ever as the stylish resolute hero . " David Robinson , writing in The Times also concentrated on Connery , saying that : " Connery ... is back , looking hardly a day older or thicker , and still outclassing every other exponent of the role , in the goodnatured throwaway with which he parries all the sex and violence on the way " . For Robinson , the presence of Connery and Klaus Maria Brandauer as Maximillian Largo " very nearly make it all worthwhile . " The reviewer for Time Out summed up Never Say Never Again saying " The action 's good , the photography excellent , the sets decent ; but the real clincher is the fact that Bond is once more played by a man with the right stuff . "

Derek Malcolm in The Guardian showed himself to be a fan of Connery 's Bond , saying the film contains " the best Bond in the business " , but nevertheless did not find Never Say Never Again any more enjoyable than the recently released Octopussy ( starring Roger Moore ) , or " that either of them came very near to matching Dr. No or From Russia with Love . " Malcolm 's main issue with the film was that he had a " feeling that a constant struggle was going on between a desire to make a huge box @-@ office success and the effort to make character as important as stunts . " Malcolm summed up that " the mix remains obstinately the same @-@ up to scratch but not surpassing it . " Writing in The Observer , Philip French noted that " this curiously muted film ends up making no contribution of its own and inviting damaging comparisons with the original , hyper @-@ confident Thunderball " . French concluded that " like an hour @-@ glass full of damp sand , the picture moves with increasing slowness as it approaches a confused climax in the Persian Gulf . "

Writing for Newsweek , critic Jack Kroll thought the early part of the film was handled " with wit and style " , although he went on to say that the director was " hamstrung by Lorenzo Semple 's script " . Richard Schickel , writing in Time magazine praised the film and its cast . He wrote that Klaus Maria Brandauer 's character was " played with silky , neurotic charm " , whilst Barbara Carrera , playing Fatima Blush , " deftly parodies all the fatal femmes who have slithered through Bond 's career " . Schickel 's highest praise was saved for the return of Connery , observing " it is good to see Connery 's grave stylishness in this role again . It makes Bond 's cynicism and opportunism seem the product of genuine worldliness ( and world weariness ) as opposed to Roger Moore 's mere twirpishness . "

Janet Maslin , writing in The New York Times , was broadly praising of the film , saying she thought that Never Say Never Again " has noticeably more humor and character than the Bond films usually provide . It has a marvelous villain in Largo . " Maslin also thought highly of Connery in the role , observing that " in Never Say Never Again , the formula is broadened to accommodate an older , seasoned man of much greater stature , and Mr. Connery expertly fills the bill . " Writing in The Washington Post , Gary Arnold was fulsome in his praise , saying that Never Say Never Again is " one of the best James Bond adventure thrillers ever made " , going on to say that " this picture is likely to remain a cherished , savory example of commercial filmmaking at its most astute and accomplished . " Arnold went further , saying that " Never Say Never Again is the best acted Bond picture ever made , because it clearly surpasses any predecessors in the area of inventive and clever character delineation " .

The critic for The Globe and Mail , Jay Scott , also praised the film , saying that Never Say Never Again " may be the only instalment of the long @-@ running series that has been helmed by a first @-@ rate director " . According to Scott , the director , with high quality support cast , resulted in the " classiest of all the Bonds " . Roger Ebert gave the film 3 ½ out of 4 stars , and wrote that Never

Say Never Again , while consisting of a basic " Bond plot " , was different from other Bond films : " For one thing , there 's more of a human element in the movie , and it comes from Klaus Maria Brandauer , as Largo . " Ebert went on to add , " there was never a Beatles reunion ... but here , by God , is Sean Connery as Sir James Bond . Good work , 007 . "

= = = Reflective reviews = = =

Because Never Say Never Again is not an Eon @-@ produced film , it has not been included in a number of subsequent reviews . Norman Wilner of MSN said that 1967 's Casino Royale and Never Say Never Again " exist outside the ' official ' continuity , [ and ] are excluded from this list , just as they 're absent from MGM 's megabox . But take my word for it ; they 're both pretty awful " . Of the more recent reviews , opinion on Never Say Never Again is still mixed : film review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes lists the film with a 63 % rating from 46 reviews . The score is still more positive than some of the Eon films , with Rotten Tomatoes ranking Never Say Never Again 16th among all Bond films in 2008 . Empire gives the film three of a possible five stars , observing that " Connery was perhaps wise to call it quits the first time round " . IGN gave Never Say Never Again a score of 5 out of 10 , claiming that the film " is more miss than hit " . The review also thought that the film was " marred with too many clunky exposition scenes and not enough moments of Bond being Bond " .

In 1995 Michael Sauter of Entertainment Weekly rated Never Say Never Again as the ninth best Bond film to that point , after 17 films had been released . Sauter thought the film " is successful only as a portrait of an over @-@ the @-@ hill superhero . " He did admit , however that " even past his prime , Connery proves that nobody does it better " . James Berardinelli , in his review of Never Say Never Again , thinks the re @-@ writing of the Thunderball story has led to a film which has " a hokey , jokey feel , [ it ] is possibly the worst @-@ written Bond script of all " . Berardinelli concludes that " it 's a major disappointment that , having lured back the original 007 , the film makers couldn 't offer him something better than this drawn @-@ out , hackneyed story . " Critic Danny Peary wrote that " it was great to see Sean Connery return as James Bond after a dozen years " . He also thought the supporting cast was good , saying that Klaus Maria Brandauer 's Largo was " neurotic , vulnerable ... one of the most complex of Bond 's foes " and that Barbara Carrera and Kim Basinger " make lasting impressions . " Peary also wrote that the " film is exotic , well acted , and stylishly directed ... It would be one of the best Bond films if the finale weren 't disappointing . When will filmmakers realize that underwater fight scenes don 't work because viewers usually can 't tell the hero and villain apart and they know doubles are being used ? "

= = Legacy = =

In the 1990s , McClory announced plans to make another adaptation of the Thunderball story starring Timothy Dalton entitled Warhead 2000 AD , but the film was eventually scrapped . In 1997 the Sony Corporation acquired some or all of McClory 's rights in an undisclosed deal , and subsequently announced that it intended to make a series of Bond films , as the company also held the rights to Casino Royale . This move prompted a round of litigation from MGM , which was settled out @-@ of @-@ court , forcing Sony to give up all claims on Bond ; McClory still claimed he would proceed with another Bond film , and continued his case against MGM and Danjaq ; on 27 August 2001 the court rejected McClory 's suit . McClory died in 2006 .

On 4 December 1997 , MGM announced that the company had purchased the rights to Never Say Never Again from Schwartzman 's company Taliafilm . The company has since handled the release of both the DVD and Blu @-@ ray editions of the film .