

= Salt (2010 film) =

Salt is a 2010 American action thriller film directed by Phillip Noyce , written by Kurt Wimmer , and starring Angelina Jolie , Liev Schreiber , Daniel Olbrychski , August Diehl and Chiwetel Ejiofor . Jolie plays Evelyn Salt , who is accused of being a Russian sleeper agent and goes on the run to try to clear her name .

Originally written with a male protagonist , with Tom Cruise initially secured for the lead , the script was ultimately rewritten by Brian Koppelman for Jolie . Filming took place on location in Washington , D.C. , the New York City area , and Albany , New York , between March and June 2009 , with reshoots in January 2010 . Action scenes were primarily performed with practical stunts , computer @-@ generated imagery being used mostly for creating digital environments .

The film had a panel at the San Diego Comic @-@ Con on July 22 and was released in North America on July 23 , 2010 , and in the United Kingdom on August 18 , 2010 . Salt grossed \$ 294 million at the worldwide box office and received generally positive reviews , with praise for the action scenes and Jolie 's performance , but drawing criticism on the writing , with reviewers finding the plot implausible and convoluted . The DVD and Blu @-@ ray Disc were released December 21 , 2010 , and featured two alternate cuts providing different endings for the film .

= = Plot = =

Evelyn Salt (Angelina Jolie) is being tortured in a North Korean prison on suspicion of being an American spy . Her boyfriend , arachnologist Mike Krause (August Diehl) , generates so much publicity that the CIA is forced to arrange a prisoner exchange , despite the agency 's policy against it . Salt 's CIA colleague Ted Winter (Liev Schreiber) greets Salt at the border . As they drive away , Mike proposes marriage , despite Salt 's admission that she is in fact a CIA operative .

Two years later , on Salt and Mike 's wedding anniversary , a Russian defector named Oleg Vasilyevich Orlov (Daniel Olbrychski) walks in to Salt 's office . Salt interrogates him , with Winter and CIA counterintelligence officer Darryl Peabody (Chiwetel Ejiofor) observing . Orlov claims that , on " Day X , " highly trained Russian sleeper agents known as ' KAs ' will destroy the U.S. Orlov tells them that Agent " KA @-@ 12 " will assassinate Russian president Boris Matveyev (Olek Krupa) at the funeral of the American Vice President . Orlov reveals that KA @-@ 12 is named Evelyn Salt , and lie detectors confirm his entire story . Peabody orders Salt be detained , but Orlov kills two agents and escapes . In the confusion , Salt is able to escape as well , running barefoot through the street . While she is being chased , she discovers that Mike was kidnapped .

Later , at the funeral , Salt appears to succeed in killing President Matveyev , and then surrenders herself . Matveyev is declared dead . Salt escapes again and heads to a barge where Orlov is hiding with other sleeper agents . In a series of flashbacks , Salt recalls growing up in the Soviet Union and being trained with other children . On the barge , Orlov welcomes her back and has Mike killed in front of her . When Salt shows no reaction , Orlov is convinced she is loyal and begins briefing her on her next mission . She is to rendezvous with another KA who will help her assassinate the American president . Salt then kills Orlov and all of the other agents on the barge . She then meets with KA Shneider (Corey Stoll) , who uses his cover as a NATO liaison to get Salt into the White House . Once inside , Shneider launches a suicide attack to force agents to move the President (Hunt Block) to an underground bunker , accompanied by Winter . Salt follows them and manages to enter the bunker before it is sealed .

The US President learns that Russia has mobilized its nuclear arsenal in response to their president 's death . He orders American nuclear weapons readied in response . CIA Agent Winter then suddenly kills everyone except the President and introduces himself as Nikolai Tarkovsky , another KA . Winter incapacitates the President and begins aiming nuclear missiles at Mecca and Tehran to incite millions of Muslims against the United States . Salt tries to persuade Winter to let her inside the sealed room , but then he sees a television report that President Matveyev is alive and well : Salt had used spider venom to cause a simulated death of Matveyev . Winter refuses her entry and reveals that Mike 's kidnapping and her blown cover were his idea . Winter plans to place full blame

for the nuclear attacks on Salt . Salt breaks into the room before he can launch the missiles . The two wrestle for control of the nuclear football , with Salt aborting the missile strikes before being captured .

As Salt is being led out in chains , Winter grabs a pair of scissors , apparently to attack her or to defend himself if necessary . She unexpectedly hooks her chain around Winter 's neck and jumps over the stair railing , choking him to death . On the helicopter ride to be interrogated , Peabody questions her . Salt explains that she killed Winter because he orchestrated the death of her husband , and promises to hunt down the remaining KA agents if freed . Peabody is convinced after receiving a text that Salt 's fingerprints were found on the barge where the sleeper agents were killed , supporting her story . Salt is allowed to escape , jumping out of the helicopter into the river below and escaping into the woods . In an alternate ending Salt jumps out of the helicopter and arrives in disguise at the place where she was trained as a child in the Soviet Union , she is then seen by the water as the place blows up and Salt smiles .

= = Cast = =

= = Production = =

= = = Development and writing = = =

The early development of the script began while Kurt Wimmer was doing interviews promoting *Equilibrium* . In a November 2002 interview , he discussed what scripts he was working on . He stated that " I have several scripts ? foremost of which is one called *The Far @-@ Reaching Philosophy of Edwin A. Salt* ? kind of a high @-@ action spy thriller ... " In another interview , Wimmer described the project as " very much about me and my wife " . The plot incorporated many elements from *Equilibrium* , with an oppressive and paranoid political system of brainwashing that gets overthrown by one of its high @-@ ranking members who rebels due to an emotional transformation . With the shortened title *Edwin A. Salt* , the script was sold to Columbia Pictures in January 2007 . By July 2007 , the script had attracted the attention of Tom Cruise .

Terry George was the first director to join the project , and he also did some revisions to the script , but he soon left the project . Peter Berg was the next director to consider , but he too , eventually dropped out for undisclosed reasons . A year later it was confirmed that Phillip Noyce would direct . Noyce was attracted to *Salt* for its espionage themes , which are present in most of his filmography , as well as the tension of a character that tries to prove his innocence yet also does what he was previously accused of .

= = = Casting = = =

Initial discussions took place in 2008 between Tom Cruise and Noyce about Cruise playing Edwin A. Salt . These discussions were ongoing for more than a year between the pair and their representatives . It was finally decided that Cruise was unable to commit to the script , because he feared that the character was too close to his *Mission : Impossible* character Ethan Hunt . Cruise decided to work on *Knight and Day* instead . The filmmakers tried to differentiate the character from Hunt , but eventually came to accept they were too similar and decided not to change the characteristics of *Salt* . Noyce said " But , you know , he had a valid point . It was kind of returning to an offshoot of a character that he ? d already played . It ? s like playing the brother , or the cousin , of somebody that you played in another movie " .

Columbia Pictures executive Amy Pascal suggested Angelina Jolie to Noyce , who had often spoken to Jolie in the past about a desire to create a female spy franchise . Pascal even invited Jolie for a Bond girl role , but the actress playfully replied that she was more interested in playing James Bond himself instead . Jolie was sent *Salt* 's script in September 2008 and liked it . Wimmer ,

Noyce , and producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura went to visit Jolie at her home in France to discuss a possible script and character change . Writer Brian Helgeland helped with the character development and dialogue of the script based on the notes that came out of those discussions with Jolie and to accompany the gender change , the title character 's name was changed to Evelyn Salt .

One of Jolie 's requests was to rework the third act , which originally had Salt rescue his wife and son from a coalition of villains , because she did not believe a mother would neglect her child in this kind of situation . Wimmer decided to then make Salt more crucial to the villain 's schemes , and add a sequence where Salt breaks into " a place harder than Fort Knox " ? after considering Camp David , Wimmer settled on the White House . When asked if the script written for Cruise was the same for Jolie , he said " I think that it ? s just been a continual process , obviously accelerating by changing the central character . But the ideas ? the locomotive of ideas that drive the film are the same . An undercover CIA operative is accused of being a Russian mole , and has to go on the run to defend himself . That ? s been the same since day one . The tone of the film has changed in this evolution . In the same way , I guess , as ? you know ? action thrillers have changed along the lines of the Bond films and the Bourne films " .

On February 19 , 2009 , it was reported that Liev Schreiber would play the role of Ted Winter , Evelyn Salt 's friend and colleague in the CIA . Three days later Chiwetel Ejiofor named as CIA Officer Peabody , who is in pursuit of Salt . Noyce said Ejiofor , whom he first saw in Dirty Pretty Things , seemed to have the " intelligence and disarming sort of obsessiveness " that a counter @-@ intelligence officer would need . August Diehl , who played Salt 's husband Mike Krause , came after a recommendation from Jolie 's partner Brad Pitt , who had worked with Diehl in Inglourious Basterds , and Daniel Olbrychski was chosen for Orlov because Andrei Konchalovsky told Noyce that such an evil Russian character could only be played by a Polish actor .

= = = Filming = = =

On a budget of \$ 110 million , principal photography took place mostly on location in New York and Washington , D.C. from March to June 2009 . Noyce decided to avoid " typical post @-@ card views of Washington DC " to reflect " the more day @-@ to @-@ day environment of massive federal buildings inhabited by the typical bureaucrat " . The opening sequence in North Korea was shot at the Floyd Bennett Field , with an extra who had experience with prisoner exchange acting as a consultant . Salt 's rendezvous with Orlov was shot on the " Frying Pan " , a former lighthouse ship , now moored in the Hudson River , at 26th Street in New York . The outside of the KA training facility was the Makaryev Monastery in Russia , while the interior was the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Virgin Protection in New York 's East Village . Filming for a chase sequence took place in Albany on Water Street near the Interstate 787 ramp between April and May . Studio production took place at Grumman Studios in Bethpage , Long Island , New York . While the film was in post @-@ production , di Bonaventura became dissatisfied with some scenes . Steven Zaillian was brought for uncredited rewrites , and reshoots , mostly of action scenes , were held in New York during January 2010 . Filming also took place in upper Manhattan 's neighborhood Washington Heights on 157th St and Riverside Dr. Some scenes were also filmed outside of Manhattan including The Bronx , Queens , Staten Island , and in Westchester County .

After Jolie had just given birth to twins , she spent time training before filming to get fit in order to perform almost all of the stunts herself . Bonaventura said , " She is so prepared and so ready and gung @-@ ho , she 'll do any stunt . We had her jumping out of helicopters , shooting , jumping off of all sorts of things and infiltrating places that are impossible to infiltrate " . Salt 's fighting style was described as a mixture of Muay Thai , Shaolin Kung @-@ Fu , & Jeet Kune Do , which was considered by the stunt team the most fit for Jolie 's physique , and Krav Maga , for its rawness and aggressiveness . Noyce wanted to film the scene where Salt hangs from the edge of the building in a studio with chroma key , but Jolie insisted on doing it herself in the actual location . On May 29 , 2009 , filming was temporarily halted after Jolie suffered a minor head injury during filming an action scene . She was taken to a hospital as a precautionary measure and released on the same day with

no serious injuries , allowing filming to resume . Salt 's escape after being captured in St. Bartholomew 's originally involved jumping her off a building into a window cleaning machine , but budgetary constraints caused the scene to be changed into a car chase .

Computer @-@ generated imagery (CGI) was used extensively throughout the film to create environments and elements , such as bullet holes and flames . More dangerous objects such as a taser or the handcuffs used to strangle Winter were also made from CGI . Five companies were responsible for visual effects . The two most involved were CIS Vancouver and Framestore . CIS Vancouver recreated the White House since the crew did not have permission to shoot in the building , and made a digital elevator shaft for the scene where Salt goes down into the White House bunker . Framestore was responsible for the assassination attempt on the Russian president , which combined actual shots of St. Bartholomew 's Church , a digital recreation of the church 's interior , and scenes with actor Olek Krupa falling down a collapsing floor .

Female CIA officers were consulted about the creation of disguises , leading to the scene where Salt undergoes subtle changes to disguise herself as a Puerto Rican . The " sweet and caring " blonde Salt dyeing her hair black would represent the shift to Chenkov , the menacing Russian agent . For the scene where Salt disguises herself as a Major , pictures of Angelina Jolie were treated on Adobe Photoshop to create a believable male version , with the resulting image being used by the make @-@ up team as an inspiration for the prosthetics .

== Versions ==

Director Phillip Noyce has said that due to the extensive usage of flashbacks , " there was always going to be a mountain of alternative material that would not fit into the theatrical version . " The film ended up having two extra versions , the Director 's Cut and the Extended Cut ? which Noyce refers to in his audio commentary as the film 's original cut ? both included on the DVD and Blu @-@ ray Disc deluxe editions .

The Director 's Cut was described by Noyce as " my own personal take on the material , free from the politics and restrictions of producers , studio or censorship ratings . " Four minutes of film are added , leading to a running time of 104 minutes . More flashbacks are added , and the violence is amped up ? for example Mike being drowned rather than shot to death . The ending is also different : in the bunker scene , Winter shoots the President instead of only knocking him unconscious , and a media report during the final scene reports that the new US President had been orphaned on a family visit to Russia , implying he is also a sleeper agent . Noyce has described this ending as " an ending yet just a beginning ? and it 's an ending that turns the whole story on its head " .

The Extended Cut increases the running time by only one minute , but rewrites the plot by removing , rearranging and adding scenes . The ending has Salt escaping custody from the CIA and going to Russia , where she kills Orlov ? his death scene at the barge does not appear in this cut ? and destroys the facility where new child spies are being trained .

== Soundtrack ==

Salt : Original Motion Picture Soundtrack was released on July 20 , 2010 on iTunes and on August 11 , 2010 as on @-@ demand CD @-@ R from Amazon.com. The music was composed by James Newton Howard and released by Madison Gate Records . The song " Orlov 's Story " includes a Russian lullaby which music editor Joe E. Rand found at Amoeba Music , and which served for inspiration for the choir heard in other tracks ? but the chants in the rest of the score are only random syllables , as Rand and Howard thought actual Russian words would spoil about Salt 's allegiance .

Track listing

All songs written and composed by James Newton Howard .

== Release ==

The film's marketing campaign included a panel at the San Diego Comic-Con on July 22, 2010, and an episodic advergame titled "Day X Exists", where players watched webisodes and performed missions to unveil the terrorist plot. It was released in North America on July 23, 2010. It was released on August 18 in the United Kingdom, despite poster advertisements suggesting it would be released on August 20. The Deluxe Unrated Edition Blu-ray Disc and DVD was released on December 21, 2010 by Sony Pictures Home Entertainment. It includes three versions of the film: the original theatrical film and two additional unrated extended cuts not seen in theaters with two alternate endings. A Theatrical Edition DVD was also released. In the home video charts, Salt debuted at first in the rentals and third in sales.

=== Box office ===

Sony predicted an opening weekend take in the low-\$30 million range, while commentators thought it would come in closer to \$40 million and beat Inception for the number one spot at the box office. Salt opened in 3,612 theaters, with an opening day gross of US\$12,532,333, \$3,470 per theater, and on its opening weekend, \$36,011,243, \$9,970 per theater, behind only Inception, which made \$42,725,012 in its second weekend. Salt also grossed \$15 million from 19 minor international markets. On its second weekend, it declined in ticket sales by 45.9% making \$19,471,355, \$5,391 per theater and placed number three behind Dinner for Schmucks, but by opening in 29 countries that same weekend, it grossed \$25.4 million internationally. Salt ended up grossing \$118,311,368 in the United States and Canada and \$175,191,986 in other countries, for a worldwide total of \$293,503,354.

=== Critical reception ===

Salt received generally positive reviews from critics. Review aggregation website Rotten Tomatoes gives the film a score of 62% based on 231 reviews, with a rating average of 6 out of 10. The site's critical consensus reads: "Angelina Jolie gives it her all in the title role, and her seasoned performance is almost enough to save Salt from its predictable and ludicrous plot." Metacritic, which assigns a weighted average score out of 100 to reviews from film critics, gave the film a score of 65 based on 42 reviews, indicating "generally favorable reviews." Many reviewers highlighted the coincidence of Salt getting released shortly after the reveal of real Russian sleeper agents in the Illegals Program, with a few comparing Salt to one of the agents, Anna Chapman.

Kirk Honeycutt of the Hollywood Reporter said that, "While preposterous at every turn, Salt is a better Bond movie than most recent Bond movies, as its makers keep the stunts real and severely limit CGI gimmickry". Chicago Sun-Times critic Roger Ebert gave the film four stars (his maximum), saying "Salt is a damn fine thriller. ... It's gloriously absurd. This movie has holes in it big enough to drive the whole movie through. The laws of physics seem to be suspended here the same way as in a Road Runner cartoon."

Time's reviewer Richard Corliss praised the action scenes and Noyce's persistence in keeping a serious tone, "he ignores the story's preposterous elements and lets the audience decide whether to laugh, shudder or both". Empire's William Thomas praised Jolie's performance remarking that "when it comes to selling incredible, crazy, death-defying antics, Jolie has few peers in the action business", and Village Voice's Karina Longworth considered that original star Tom Cruise would never express the protagonist's ambiguity as well as Jolie.

Among negative responses, The New Yorker's David Denby said Salt "is as impersonal an action thriller as we've seen in years", finding the supporting cast underexplored, "the tricky plot locks them into purely functional responses". Claudia Puig of the USA Today considered the film a "by-the-book thriller" with Jolie's performance as the only distinguished feature. Lawrence Toppman of The Charlotte Observer was mostly critical of the writing, describing the film as absurd, overplotted and incoherent, and saying the villainous schemes "would have been called off 20 years ago at the latest, when the Soviet Union dissolved". Steven Rea of The Philadelphia Inquirer

described Salt as " commendably swift and progressively inane " , saying the script was a " sloppy concoction of story elements from ' 70s espionage classics " that ended up not working right with its " nonsensical setups and wildly illogical twists " . James Berardinelli of Reelviews considered that , while the film was fast @-@ paced and the action scenes competently shot , the plot was predictable and " the spy aspects , which are by far the most intriguing elements of the movie , are shunted aside in favor of spectacular stunts and long chases " .

= = = Awards = = =

Salt received one Academy Award nomination , for Best Sound Mixing (Jeffrey J. Haboush , Greg P. Russell , Scott Millan and William Sarokin) , which it lost to Inception . The film won Best Action / Adventure Film at the Saturn Awards , with Angelina Jolie being nominated for Best Actress , and the Deluxe Unrated Edition being nominated for Best DVD Special Edition . At the Taurus World Stunt Awards , stuntwoman Janene Carleton 's jump on a moving truck won Best Overall Stunt by a Stunt Woman , and the film was nominated for Best Stunt Coordinator and / or 2nd Unit Director . It was also nominated for Satellite Awards for Cinematography and Original Score , a Golden Reel Award for Sound Effects and Foley , a People 's Choice Award for Favorite Action Movie , and two Teen Choice Awards .

= = Sequel = =

Director Phillip Noyce was optimistic about a sequel , saying " Hopefully within a couple of years , we 'll have another one . Angelina 's so great in this part . When audiences see the movie they 're going to feel like it 's only just the beginning . " Producer Lorenzo DiBonaventura also expressed further interest : " Angie , I know , loved that character , and would love to explore the character some more first and foremost . "

Noyce later said he had other projects and would not participate . " Those 3 Blu @-@ ray Disc cuts represent just about everything I have to offer on Evelyn Salt . If there ever is a sequel , better it 's directed by someone with a completely fresh take on what I believe could be a totally entertaining and complex series of stories . "

On June 6 , 2011 , Wimmer was announced as screenwriter , but Jolie equivocated , " if it comes together right " . On December 10 , 2012 Sony Pictures announced hiring screenwriter Becky Johnston (known for Prince of Tides , Seven Years in Tibet , and Arthur Newman) , as well as producers Lorenzo di Bonaventura and Sunil Perkash .