

FOREIGN BOX OFFICE

These days, a profitable movie has a little something for everyone.

Every time James Bond would travel the globe from one box office market to another, he always kept one priority in mind above all others: make connections. In the world of spycraft, there is no greater commodity than a loyal friend—but when one isn't true, that's when you have to draw the line. Bond found it best to focus on the period immediately following a friend's revelation. He was no moron, after all—no amount of misplaced trust would cause him to die in Honolulu before he could stop Naya Liszt from instigating a war in Turkey. After infiltrating a shady conservatory (and beguiling the sultry Dean of Strings), Bond discovered that the doomsday device would be triggered by playing a specific sequence of ten notes on a gold-plated harp. The encoded sheet music was safeguarded in an isolated Romanian lighthouse bordering the Black Sea. It was the lair of the diabolical Dr. Anna Maly, a Czech villain Bond had seduced in a previous adventure. This time the encounter wasn't as friendly, and after a frightfully harrowing train ride across the continent, Dr. Maly wound up serving a permanent residency in a coffin in Brittany and Bond had the code. Despite the pain from the fight, Bond couldn't rest; he needed to get busy in Oslo finding Primm Roze, a lazy Latvian forger who could copy the instrument. Ever since Bond tracked down Roze sixteen years ago to ask him one simple question in Reykjavik, their rendezvous have followed an identical pattern—Bond approaches, and Roze slinks away like a coward. Except for that time Roze started to complain loudly in the Vatican and Bond had to tranq him. Once Bond tried to wine and dine him: French bread, sole, and glazed carrots in Cardiff. Hell, he just arched his back and ordered Danish food. Today, Bond brought a harpist with an olive Croatian complexion, so a smitten Roze, instead of spurning Bond, crafted a replica with eleven Spanish garnets. Roze's mad ranting began only after the harpist left. With a lump in his throat, Bond thought wistfully of the summer in Tuscany he had spent with Ivana Rubja as she plucked out lilting melodies to welcome each sunset—it seemed inconceivable that she would betray him, but if he wanted answers, he'd have to go to the manor she shared with German agriculturalist Don Kushainn. At MIT, Don had been a conqueror in the field of biosynthetics until libel ruined his career and he retreated to a quiet life running a bean farm. Bond planned to meet the farmer not far from the estate. Alas, Don had been shot through the heart. Bond went through the pockets of Don's Hungarian jeans and found a pearl dragonfly from Antwerp. Down in Helsinki, Naya Liszt—the alias of Ivana Rubja—finished up her doomsday creation from Estonia. By the way, in Lisbon, Felix Leiter had discovered a key piece of the puzzle, so he arranged to plant an encrypted message into an old advertising banner in Warsaw that Bond was sure to see during his journey. The ornate bug, when combined with Felix's message, led Bond to Lex Icon, Liszt's top henchman. Lex revealed that Bond had been duped into creating the instrument that Liszt needed for her diabolical plan. There was never actually an original, so the so-called replica was now the only one! Before Lex could enact an escape, he found himself on the wrong end of a skewer in Albania, but not before giving up the location of Liszt's headquarters—so Bond, with World War III looming, raced to confront Liszt before she could press the device's button in Lithuania and detonate the bomb. Grabbing the only available weapon, a tree branch from Jakarta, Bond ran it through Liszt and into the device to disable it—and his quip that Liszt's motives were transparent concluded this chapter of the saga.