

I Love You to Death ★★★

Year of Release: 1990

Review by Randy Parker

Country: USA

Verdict: See It

Director Lawrence Kasdan drew weary yawns from many of his fans with *The Accidental Tourist*, his surprisingly boring and tedious 1988 debacle. After *Tourist*, virtually anything, even someone reading a phone book, would seem stimulating and exciting. *I Love You to Death* is certainly a step in the right direction. Unlike *Tourist*, *Death* never ever takes itself seriously.

Based on a true story, the movie is a tongue-in-cheek black comedy starring Kevin Kline as a shameless womanizer and Tracey Ullman as his mousy wife. When Ullman learns of her husband's adulterous escapades, she and her mother (Joan Plowright) vow to kill Kline. First, they poison his spaghetti. Then, they shoot him in the head. But

neither method proves successful so they hire a pair of spaced-out drug-addicts to finish the job. William Hurt and Keanu Reeves are hysterical as the brain-dead would-be-assassins.

The magnificent supporting cast also includes the incomparable River Phoenix (who, with his long blond hair, resembles Sting) and Phoebe Cates (Kline's real-life wife) in an uncredited cameo appearance. The actors, particularly Kline and Plowright, play their parts perfectly, helping you forgive the film's lapses in momentum and lack of substance. *I Love You to Death* doesn't live up to *Body Heat*, *The Big Chill* or *Silverado*, but it does, thank goodness, wash away the bitter aftertaste left by *The Accidental Tourist*.

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