

## Outrageous Fortune ★★★

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**Year of Release:** 1987

Review by Randy Parker

**Country:** USA

**Verdict:** See It

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While *Outrageous Fortune* may not be the blockbuster comedy I had hoped for, it nevertheless succeeds in overcoming its faults to provide some genuine (if mindless) fun. Bette Midler and Shelley Long give fine comic performances as two actresses from different sides of the tracks who become buddies while sharing a series of misadventures. Midler—as a crude, uneducated, down-and-out actress—brings her usual spunk and comic flair to the film. Long is equally appealing as a sophisticated, pompous, and intellectual “student of theatre,” a familiar and comfortable role for Long—not unlike her rendition of Diane Chambers on “Cheers.” The strong chemistry between Midler and Long gives *Outrageous Fortune* the extra spark that makes it a worthwhile effort. During the course of the film, their relationship changes from one of contempt to one of compassionate friend-

ship, a process which consistently keeps you in stitches.

Unfortunately, *Outrageous Fortune* is less than the sum of its parts. The movie’s main strengths are Midler’s and Long’s engaging performances and several extraordinarily hilarious scenes. For instance, in one sequence, Midler and Long impersonate cops in order to extract information from some thugs; in another, they disguise themselves as men only to be mistaken for young teenage boys. The film’s major shortcoming is its weak and uneven plot. Whereas the first half of *Outrageous Fortune* is a superb buddy-buddy comedy, the second half deteriorates into a lame, second-rate spy caper. Fortunately, Long’s and Midler’s charming performances and the touching chemistry between them salvage the film even in its lowest moments.