



To Die For: A Novel

By Joyce Maynard

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"That's the beauty of television. It's like an eye that's on you all the time . . . Kind of like God, if you want to get heavy" Local weather reporter Suzanne Maretto craves nothing more than to transcend life at her suburban cable television news station and follow in the footsteps of her idol: Barbara Walters. When she concludes that her unglamorous husband is getting in the way of her dream of stardom, the solution seems obvious: Get rid of him. She seduces a fifteen-year-old admirer, Jimmy, and persuades him to do her dirty work. Mission accomplished, Suzanne takes to the airwaves in her new role as grieving widow, in search of a TV deal. If that means selling Jimmy down the river, she's ready. Maynard's brilliant, funny, and groundbreaking novel-adapted by Gus Van Sant into the cult classic movie of the same name, starring Nicole Kidman-was first published in 1992 before the era of manufactured stardom and the phenomenon of televised murder trials as entertainment. The book still stands as a razor-sharp satire of celebrity-fixated culture and the American obsession with TV-a novel that imagined the phenomenon of reality television before its creation, with alternately bone-chilling and hilarious accuracy.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A ruthlessly ambitious young woman recruits three high school misfits to kill her husband in Maynard's carefully constructed but somewhat unconvincing fact-based fiction, a Literary Guild selection in cloth. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Kirkus Reviews

Perky, aspiring newscaster Suzanne Maretto persuades her teenaged lover and his buddy to kill her straight-arrow husband; just deserts follow for all. Suzanne, who thinks that "if people could just be on TV all the time, the whole human race would probably be a much better group of individuals," sets out to captivate the none-too-bright kids she's interviewing for a demo tape that'll get her out of her local (suburban Boston) station and onto the network fast track. There's Jimmy Emmet, who worships her as stupidly as does her hapless restaurant-family husband Larry; Russell Hines, who's just in it for the thousand dollars; and Lydia Mertz, who's so hopelessly smitten with Suzanne's big-sister glamour that she's willing to supply the gun. But the real culprits, as bestselling author/media-child Maynard (*Baby Love*, 1981; *Domestic Affairs*, 1987, etc.) keeps screaming in an amusingly flat series of self-revealing monologues, are Malibu Barbie, Victoria's Secret, Wheel of Fortune, abusive (or adoring) parents, and Donahue--all the accoutrements of cut-rate acculturation that give her characters such venal dreams and mindless determination. Maynard's ear for sincere garbage ("We're so connected, I can taste her Tic Tac," boasts Jimmy after Suzanne deflowers him) is as sharp as ever, but after 50 pages of such homogeneous stuff you'll start looking for the exit--unless, of course, your own taste for pulp romances of sex, power, and violence are just as depraved as the ones so lovingly excoriated here. What's most offensive here, as in Bret Easton Ellis's notorious *American Psycho*, is the raised-nostril pretense that this revolted attack on pop culture, already due for serialization in *Penthouse*, stands above it all. A more penetrating writer could have a field day analyzing recent popular fiction's disavowal of the tawdry culture that continues to grip it as tightly as Suzanne holds Jimmy. -- Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Review

"A seductive page turner." —*The New York Times Book Review*

"A triumph." —*The Boston Globe*

"A powerful novel of murder and sexual obsession. . . . Chilling." —*The Star-Ledger*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marcus Galvan:

Book is definitely written, printed, or illustrated for everything. You can recognize everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. As we know that book is important factor to bring us around the world. Close to that you can your reading talent was fluently. A guide To Die For: A Novel will make you to always be smarter. You can feel much more confidence if you can know about every little thing. But some of you think this open or reading some sort of book make you bored. It is not make you fun. Why they are often

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Anthony Hubbard:

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Mindy Hicks:

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