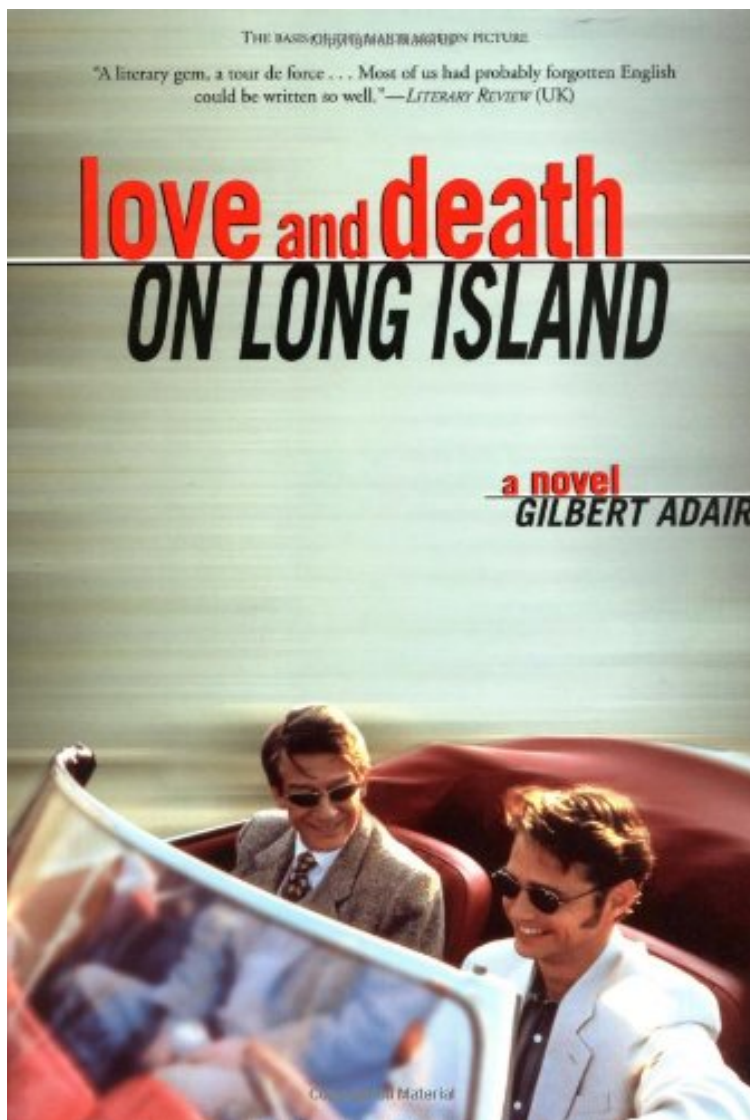


(Mobile pdf) Love and Death on Long Island: A Novel

## Love and Death on Long Island: A Novel

*Gilbert Adair*

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**Gilbert Adair : Love and Death on Long Island: A Novel** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Love and Death on Long Island: A Novel:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Love Bites By Mr. D. James Gilbert Adair, Love and Death on Long Island This fictional memoir of a love affair between a defunct ageing writer and Ronnie Bostock, a handsome young actor is an engaging study of an obsession bordering on madness. The reader soon realises that the sophisticated and highly articulate narrator has nothing in common with the rising star, a young pin-up whose image appears on sundry teen magazines as a role model. In fact Ronnie's picture on the stills outside a Hampstead cinema becomes the seed of

a monstrous passion that drives the narrator to fly to Long Island to meet his love object. This short novel is beautifully paced, as the narrator intellectualises his physical yearning for the boy: 'Was I alone in tracing beneath the conventional surface a timeless and universal ideal, an almost supernatural radiance of pure heart, of innocent spirit and of sun-inflamed flesh?' The details about the youth's ripe redness of the lower lip, the way he wiped sweat from his brow and even 'the inside cup of his elbow' show how far the obsession has gone, but we are as yet only a third of the way through the book; the pair have yet to meet, and, although Ronnie knows nothing of his latest fan, a meeting is inevitable. The style Adair adopts is deliberately pedantic and meticulous. In some sentences the distance between subject and eventual object can exceed 50 words. Precision and accuracy are essential to the narrator's fidelity to his feelings. He is the archetypal dilettante, with a sublime contempt for the world around him; the fake and tawdry trappings of the entertainment industry, for instance, allow him ample opportunity for invective, as do the clichés of the press. Yet when the banalities of gossip columnists are lavished on Ronnie, the lover is delighted: 'that he would kiss a girl on their first date "only if she made it clear she wanted me to" and that his greatest ambition was to play in a movie opposite Madonna. 'Had he ever been in love? "Who hasn't?" Pet hate? 'Designer stubble.' And his secret unspoken fantasy? 'To go to bat for the Mets.' Embracing the mandarin style of a Henry James and the self-referential qualities of a Marcel Proust, *Love and Death on Long Island* is a classical display of fine writing in miniature format. Overall it's a haunting account of romantic love, the supreme idiocy that flesh is heir to. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. NOT FOR ALL TASTES By David Schauweker The main character, Giles De'Ath, reminds me of the prissy, rich uncle played by Clifton Webb in the original film version of W. Somerset Maugham's "The Razor's Edge": hilarious on short acquaintance, but likely to prove tiresome in the long, as De'ath proved to be, at least to my mind. I'm adding isolated eccentrics to my list of those, like drunks and crazy people, whom I feel make uninteresting protagonists. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Never mind the width, feel the quality By Bevan Lee What a small gem! Only 137 pages, but a rich and full journey into the mind of a closeted academic as he works his way through an infatuation with vacuous teen idol Ronny Bostock. Gilbert De'Ath's encounters with the modern world in the form of multiplex cinemas, teenage fanzines, video recorders, pulp cinema and Pakistani newsgents is both hilarious and touching. A vast improvement on the somewhat lacklustre screen treatment.

A literary gem, a tour de force . . . Beautifully constructed, superbly characterized. What disturbs is the sheer elegance of Adair's prose style most of us had probably forgotten English could be written so well. Literary Review (U.K.)

.com Giles De'Ath is a widowed British novelist so obstinately old-fashioned that he speaks of the "current fad for videotape recorders." Caught in the rain one afternoon, he ducks into a cinema and inadvertently finds himself watching something called *Hotpants College II*, where he first gazes upon an American heartthrob named Ronnie Bostock. Initially denying even the possibility that he might be experiencing a homosexual crush, De'Ath soon finds himself giving in to this "strange and bothersome distraction" by scouring teenybopper magazines for articles like "20 Facts Ya Didn't Know About [Ronnie]!" "As someone who did not know any facts at all about him as yet," he notes, "I confess I felt a certain onset of excitement." Gilbert Adair's narrative--it might be more accurate to call it a novella instead of a novel--is a precise depiction of romantic obsession and frustration. Narrated by De'Ath, it is thus somewhat more internally driven than the excellent 1998 film adaptation starring John Hurt and Jason Priestley. *Love and Death on Long Island* can be easily polished off with a few hours' reading, but its nuanced characterization of a man who trades restraint for recklessness is well worth savoring. --Ron Hogan From the Back Cover The basis for the hit independent film starring Jason Priestly and John Hurt, *Love and Death on Long Island* is a brilliant, witty, and heartrending update of *Death in Venice*. When he wanders into the wrong theater and finds himself watching the wretched teen-pic *Hotpants College II*, cerebral British author Giles De'Ath becomes romantically obsessed with dreamboat Ronnie Bostock. Giles's infatuation drives him to the unthinkable: he reads American fan magazines and watches movies with titles like *Tex Mex* and *Skid Marks*. And finally, he travels to Long Island, intent on meeting Ronnie in the flesh. "A literary gem, a tour de force . . . Most of us had probably forgotten English could be written so well."-Literary (UK) "Utterly original, baroquely comic . . . [*Love and Death on Long Island* ] is about the generally closeted nature of love, in general, and about how all of us are capable of conjuring up love objects in the least likely of places."-Daphne Merkin, *The New Yorker* (on the film) "A very funny portrait of an extraordinarily unworldly academic's introduction to the dizzyingly incomprehensible realm of popular culture."-Nick Hornby "Brief, pure, intense. With perfect poise and poignance, Adair puts across the impossibility of fulfillment, the heat and humiliation of passion. The writing is masterly, the conjuring of contrasting worlds a triumph."-Financial Times (UK) Gilbert Adair is well-known in the United Kingdom as an author and critic. He has written essay collections and a prize-winning novel, *The Holy Innocents*.