

## **Someone to Watch Over Me (1987) Ridley Scott**

P Michell, 2023

*Some movie posters for this film featured a long blurb that read: "He's a streetwise cop who just made detective. She's a stunning sophisticate who just saw a murder. A killer is the only thing they had in common. Until tonight. Someone to Watch Over Me. A classic thriller with a twist of romance".*

So-so success on release by hugely influential Ridley Scott. Unlike Blade Runner which was not. Now both highly regarded. Knowns for its stylistic sets.

Another film chosen for the wonderful collaboration of the main stars, script, style and direction.

### **Creative Personnel**

Ridley Scott – Director (57 credits / 157 as producer!)

<https://ridleyscott.com>

Scott Free Productions, Black Dog Films, etc. etc.

Hugely influential film maker known primarily because of Blade Runner (1982) initially a poorly received film. Now considered one of Sci-Fi's most important. Less known for his vast production output. Worked in almost every visual medium.

Over the decades has worked simultaneously in TV and film. As producer known for The Bowring Version (1994), Gladiator (also director – hugely successful), The Last Vermeer (2019), The Man in the High Castle (2015-19 Amazon TV), Death on the Nile (2022).

As director – STWOM, Thelma and Louise (1991), White Squall (1996), Hannibal (2001), The Martian (2015), etc. Much work in TV including House of Gucci. Explore above website.

Born 1937, in County Durham. He went on to study at the [Royal College of Art](#) in London, contributing to the college magazine *ARK* and helping to establish the college film department. With brother founded an advertising company – Ridley Scott Asooc. Many famous advertisements filmed by them.

Five members of the Scott family are directors, and all have worked for RSA. His brother Tony was a successful film director whose career spanned more than two decades; his sons [Jake](#) and [Luke](#) are both acclaimed directors of commercials, as is his daughter, [Jordan Scott](#). Jake and Jordan both work from Los Angeles; Luke is based in London. In

1995, [Shepperton Studios](#) was purchased by a consortium headed by Ridley and Tony Scott, which extensively renovated the studios while also expanding and improving its grounds.

[On-sold to Pinewood Studios in 2001.]

Howard Franklin – Script (9 credits)

Known for: Romancing the Stone (1984)[uncredited], Name of the Rose (1986) and STWOM. Directed three films in the nineties with Bill Murray. Wife Anne Litt – wealthy philanthropist and music director at KCRW and ,music department of some films.

Jim Bissell – Production Designer (38 credits)

Known for Arachnophobia (1990), E.T (1982), Jumanji (1995), 300 (2006), The Monuments Men (2014).

Original chair for Art Directors Guild Awards, and former President of the Guild. Extensive teaching credentials.

Invented Digital Previs for *Boy Who Could Fly* (1986). Digital form of storyboarding where drawings would illustrate proposed film.

#### Stephen Poster – Cinematographer (71 credits)

Poster founded a production company with director [Michael Mann](#) and served as the cinematographer on numerous [industrial](#) and [education films](#).<sup>[1]</sup> He served as the second-unit director of photography on *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Poster joined the [American Society of Cinematographers](#) (ASC) in 1987, relocating to [Hollywood](#) in the process. He shot the iconic [music video](#) to [Madonna's "Like a Prayer"](#), as well as commercials directed by [Ridley Scott](#) and [Kinka Usher](#). In 1988, he was nominated for the [ASC Award](#) for Outstanding Achievement in Theatrical Releases for his work on this film.

Known for *Donnie Darko* (2001), *The Boy Who Could Fly* (1986),

#### Music

The [George Gershwin](#) song "Someone to Watch Over Me" is heard in the movie in three separate renditions. They were by: (1) [Sting](#), heard at the start of the film (2) [Roberta Flack](#), heard over the end credits and (3) [Gene Simmons](#) with Richard Wyands, Doug Watkins and J.C. Heard, from an original 1961 version. The [Sting](#) and [Roberta Flack](#) versions were new takes recorded especially for this movie. No movie soundtrack album for [Someone to Watch Over Me](#) (1987) was ever released.

The classical piece of music entitled "Lakmé" (Viens Malika... Dôme épais le jasmine) by [Léo Delibes](#) featured had previously prominently featured in his brother [Tony Scott's](#) earlier movie [The Hunger](#) (1983).

#### Tom Berenger – Mike (113 credits)

Known for: *Looking for Mr Goodbar* (1977) [film debut], *The Big Chill* (1983), *Platoon* (1986), *STWOM*, and more recently *Inception* (2010)

Often portraying varying and wide-ranging roles, [Tom Berenger's](#) interest in "Someone to Watch Over Me" was in keeping with his reputation of an ever-changing screen persona. Berenger said: "I've never played a cop before. I liked the character because even though he is the hero of the story, he has negative qualities and makes some big mistakes. I always find that interesting, a character with a dilemma to face, confronting his personal morality".

#### Mimi Rogers – Claire (113 credits / 50 movies)

Known for this film, *The Doors* (1991), and *The Rapture* (1991).

[This](#) film that got her noticed and her springboard to stardom.

Despite her early successes, few meaty, interesting roles came her way in the '90s. More recently working in television.

Better than average Poker player, is on the board of directors of the World Poker Tour.

#### Lorraine Bracco – Ellie (63 credits)

Started as a model. Like Mimi Rogers, *SOTWOM* was her break-out movie.

Known for this film, *Goodfellas* (1990), *The Sopranos* [TV] (1999-2007), *Medicine Man* (1992).

Lorraine was voted the "ugliest girl in the 6th grade" at her Long Island grade school. She moved to France in 1974 where she became a fashion superstar for [Jean-Paul Gaultier](#).

While modelling as a young woman in Europe, was once asked to posed nude for the late, eccentric, Spanish surrealist painter, [Salvador Dalí](#). She refused. Her daughters, [Stella Keitel](#) (fathered by ex-boyfriend [Harvey Keitel](#)) and [Margaux Guerard](#), played her daughter at different ages in [Goodfellas \(1990\)](#). Multilingual – Italian, Spanish, French, Arabic & Japanese.

Jerry Orbach – Lt Garber (95 credits) & many Broadway shows  
Smallish role by one of the great American theatre people.

Famous for his role as Det Lennie Briscoe in Law & Order TV series. In reality A multi-talented actor on screen, stage and Broadway musicals! Was in the original Broadway productions of Chicago (1975-77), 42<sup>nd</sup> St (1980-85), AND The Fantasticks (1960) [was the first person to sing the now standard ‘ Try to Remember’], etc. Voice actor of Lumiere in Disney’s Beauty and the Beast (1991).

On Law & Order being the ‘pension fund’ for actors: *“I used to say when I was working in the theater that if I ever had five seasons of a hit TV show I'd never have to worry about money and wouldn't have to do anything I didn't want to do . . . The 12 seasons on [Law & Order \(1990\)](#) really made that possible.”*

Tiny role: Nina Simone.

## Trivia

The nightclub scenes were filmed on board the Queen Mary in Long Beach, California. The murder scene was filmed in the Queen Mary's pool area.

The filming company moved to The Burbank Studios. There, production designer [Jim Bissell](#) had built the interior of Mike and Ellie's house, as well as Claire Gregory's palatial apartment.

The pistol hidden underneath the table is a nod to Wyatt Earp's habit of having a hidden gun under his table for protection against outlaws.

## Thoughts by Scott

"There's a very delicate balance of sympathy between the society woman and the wife", said director Sir [Ridley Scott](#) who added, "If [Tom] Berenger's character is simply attracted to a beautiful woman, sympathy starts to weigh against him. I wanted to create that dilemma in the central character's mind by giving him a very strong home life and a very strong wife. I wanted his attraction to Claire to be more than sexual. I wanted it to be cerebral to be everything. [Mike] Keegan is facing a very difficult question that has nothing to do with bank balance or other external forces. It's a choice between women. Proper casting was crucial to creating this balance and making it work".

The locations that director Sir [Ridley Scott](#) chose for the opening of "Someone to Watch Over Me" exemplified Scott's strong sense of style and vision. In the opening scene, the director used New York, Los Angeles, and the Queen Mary ship in Long Beach for a scene scripted at a Manhattan disco. Other locations included the Wilshire Ebell Theater. The entrance to downtown Los Angeles' Rex II Ristorante and the now vacant Lakeview Hospital.

"So the film opens with a shot of Manhattan, then cuts to the art deco entrance of Rex in downtown Los Angeles and follows our characters as they walk through the doors and into the interior of the Queen Mary [ship]. Architecture and style hold the whole thing together" explained director Sir Ridley Scott.

## Reviews

George Pursall – Blueprint Review, 2021

<https://blueprintreview.co.uk/2021/05/someone-to-watch-over-me/>

You never know what you are going to get with Ridley Scott. For an A-List Hollywood director who has arguably become a filmmaking legend within his own lifetime, his career is remarkable for having an almost dizzying amount of peaks and troughs. For every *Alien*, *Blade Runner*, *Thelma and Louise* or *Kingdom of Heaven* (go and watch the Director's Cut then come back) which are not just career highlights but bona-fide cinematic masterpieces, there are an equal amount of frustrating stumbles and falls such as *Hannibal*, *A Good Year*, *The Counsellor* or *Exodus: Gods and Kings*. The one thing you are guaranteed with a new Scott film is awe-inspiring visuals and virtuosic world building; the one thing you are not guaranteed is a great film. It may look stunning, but all too frequently there is a hollowness lurking underneath the sparkly surface sheen.

Which leads us neatly onto *Someone to Watch Over Me*. Long regarded as one of the lesser entries in Ridley Scott's filmography, this 80s Noir is being brought to Blu Ray this month by Indicator. Does the film reveal hidden depths in this new edition or does it deserve to be continually consigned towards the bottom of Scott's cinematic output?

*Someone to Watch Over Me* catches Scott midway through what was turning out to be a career nadir. After hitting the ball out of the park in the 1970s with his first two films (*The Duelists* and a little seen film called *Alien*) the 1980s were proving more of a challenge. Despite its now classic status, *Blade Runner* had fared disastrously both with critics and at the box office, while the Tom Cruise helmed *Legend* fared little better. By 1986, with two big flops behind him, Ridley Scott was desperate to prove two things. First, that he could bring a movie in on time and on budget. Secondly, that he could make a successful film that didn't rely on special effects and fantastical or futuristic worlds. He wanted to make something more down to Earth, more focused on characters and drama than world building, if only to prove to himself as much as the studios that he could do it. The script for *Someone to Watch Over Me*, a gritty neo-noir about a New York cop falling for the woman he is meant to protect, seemed to tick all the right boxes.

The story itself feels as old as the hills. Explored, ironically, in Indicator's previous Noir boxset in the Ginger Rogers film *Tight Spot*, all the way through to 90s mega-smash *The Bodyguard* and more recently in Jed Meccurio's TV sensation *Bodyguard* (even the titles don't strive for originality!) *Someone to Watch Over Me* at least tries to do something different with a now familiar plot. When rich socialite Claire Gregory (Mini Rogers) witness a brutal murder by New York hood Joey Venza (Andreas Katsulas), newly promoted Detective Mike Keegan (Tom Berenger) is called in as part of the team to provide protection to Claire as she waits to officially identify the murderer.

Of course, Mike and Claire begin to develop feelings for each other, but screenwriter Howard Franklin attempts to throw something different into the mix by suggesting that, for Mike at

least, it is not mere animal attraction at play here. Mike, despite being happily married to Ellie (Lorraine Bracco) begins to be seduced as much by the luxury and affluence of Claire's world as by Claire herself, which stands in stark contrast to his far more humble home life.

Right from the off, *Someone to Watch Over Me* feels remarkably different to any previous Scott film (up to that point). Opening with a party at Mike's house, the film immediately feels earthy and real. Gone are the gliding shots of the interior of the *Nostramo* and a controlled atmosphere of calm dread...here, Scott throws us headfirst into what was contemporary 80s New York with a loose, gritty, almost documentary relish. While Scott eventually relinquishes and falls back on his more formal elegance and control as the movie progresses, the opening of *Someone to Watch Over Me* certainly feels like a statement of intent, proof that Scott could make the real world feel just as visceral and alive as the ones conjured from his imagination.

It of course goes without saying that the rest of the film adheres to Scott's typically glorious visuals. Despite the more grounded setting, he still imbues the frame with elegance and depth, whether he is shooting the shadowy interiors of Claire's apartment or following Mike on the subway. The world itself, restricted to a few New York locations, never feels less than strikingly authentic and real. Yet, as frequently happens with many of Scott's films, the story that takes place within this brilliantly realised setting feels thin and empty.

Howard Franklin's aspiration to explore the contrast between Claire's world of affluence and Mike's more grounded circumstances never really moves beyond the surface. It certainly doesn't feel like the driving force behind Claire and Mike's relationship and more like a desperate attempt to explain *why* they fall for each other, as the script certainly offers no other plausible reasons or explanations. The hollowness at the heart of the relationship unfortunately means that there is a hollowness at the heart of the film. Ultimately, you just end up not caring, watching as Claire and Mike go through dull and predictable motions. Even the conclusion feels cheaply earned, tying up the story and characters in a convenient manner than happily seems to disregard the previous ninety or so minutes.

Yet it is not just Scott who tries their hardest to make it work. Berenger and Rogers give authentically understated performances that keep the film and relationship grounded (with Berenger, just coming off *Platoon*, proving what a brilliant actor he is, something that is all too often forgotten). Yet the real acting plaudits here belong to Lorraine Bracco. *Someone to Watch Over Me* was her first feature film and her performance is so good (especially in a scene that takes place outside a restaurant) it is no wonder that one critic thought that it almost destabilised the entire production. You certainly feel a great deal of sympathy for her and the situation she finds herself in. This perhaps offers another clue as to why *Someone to Watch Over Me* is ultimately unsuccessful. The audience just isn't able to invest in the affair at the heart of the film because they are unable to root for the key protagonists. Claire and Mike don't come across as tragic or ill-fated lovers, separated by class and circumstance. Instead they feel selfish and indulgent and their transgression (Mike's especially) only ends up feeling more egregious when contrasted against Bracco's brilliant depiction of the pain he is causing her. It's not often you find a film where you are desperate for a person having an affair to return to their marriage.

Yet the performances in the film speak to one of Scott's great unappreciated talents – his ability to direct actors. His work here is just as impressive as in any of his films and for that reason it is hard to write off *Someone to Watch Over Me* as a complete failure. Combined with his typical visual flair (a great shootout in a mirrored walk-in wardrobe certainly stands out)

the film is a somewhat enjoyable and engaging watch. Yet as much as Scott buffers up the thin script with his visual polish, it still leaves you wanting more.

*Someone to Watch Over Me* finds the legendary director in a transitory period, struggling to make his voice heard against both his own illustrious past and his own contemporaries (*Fatal Attraction* trounced it at the box office). It would be several more years until Scott went on to make a masterpiece in a more realistic setting but Indicator's new Blu Ray offers an interesting glimpse at his journey towards that point.

Crossing the Line of Duty.

Camus,. Cineoutsider, 2001

[http://www.cineoutsider.com/reviews/bluray/s/someone\\_to\\_watch\\_over\\_me\\_br.html](http://www.cineoutsider.com/reviews/bluray/s/someone_to_watch_over_me_br.html)

This review includes analysis of extras on the BluRay which are quite informative.

Ridley Scott, defensive?! Sir Ridley is a very talented director with a CV most Hollywood directors would die for. While great success has tapped on his shoulder more than once, you get the impression from his interviews and commentaries that Scott is still (now at the age of 82) aching to prove himself a member of that very exclusive club of 'film directors who don't have to explain themselves'. I hope with his name attached to myriad eclectic projects he can ease back a little and be more forgiving of those Hollywood execs who might still question his decisions (why does that even happen anymore?) On the [Prometheus](#) commentary you could feel Scott's virtual blood pressure rising. In 1987, after four visually stunning efforts, some praised, some damned (both judgements prey to cultural conditions of the day), Scott decided to make a 'normal' film with its own 'shooting in New York' practical challenges. It's the equivalent of Spielberg taking on **Raiders of the Lost Ark** wanting to prove that he could shoot a 'normal' film on time and on budget after several projects that ballooned during production.

**Someone To Watch Over Me** is the story of two conflicting social strata in one island melting pot, (I don't mix metaphors, I liquidise them) in fact probably the most architecturally famous melting pot in the world. Manhattan is displayed as the authentic backdrop to an affecting drama that asks "How does a well-meaning man reconcile a happy marriage with a brief affair entered into to allow the woman he has been assigned to protect to feel even safer?" It's a tricky one. The relationship/affair was never going to go anywhere and the woman is sympathetic to her new lover's plight but she still is the beautiful, wealthy wedge between man and wife. While the Twin Towers embeds the film in the pre-9/11 world, the film treads very familiar ground but that's not so much a criticism as simple recognition. We are in police procedural territory and there's little that's surprising but that doesn't stop the film from being easily diverting. On his promotion to detective in the NYPD, Mike Keegan is seen to be a devoted father and husband living in a run down area in Queens throwing a party for his nearest and dearest. Not that far geographically but half a world away is Claire Gregory, an über-wealthy Manhattan socialite who is chauffeur driven from event to event clad in hugely expensive clothes with a wistful look of royalty and an air of entitlement but not displaying overt vanity or privilege despite swimming in the stuff. She greets an old friend, Winn, at an art gallery, an old friend who is in business with Joey Venza, a shady

character who seems to have more than a single screw loose. Enraged at his business associate's dismissal of him, Joey stabs Winn to death while the murdered man's friend Claire inadvertently watches horrified from the balcony while on her way to see him. She barely escapes with her life and for his first assignment, Detective Keegan has to step into an alien, palatial world with which he is so unfamiliar and provide protection for his key witness whose testimony can put the bad guy away. That's about the essence of the plot. Everything else is the quiet simmering of an illicit relationship brought about by the need to be protected and the parallel need to be the protector.

The performances are all very believable and in some cases show off the performers' range. Tom Berenger, fresh from playing the facially scarred, nastiest bastard in all of Vietnam in Oliver Stone's **Platoon**, Sgt. Barnes, now shows us his significantly softer side. Berenger made a career of playing tough guys but as Mike Keegan, his confusion and vulnerability are front and centre. Here is a decent man in a no-win situation. Ah, you say, but he didn't 'have' to have a short affair given his happy marriage. There were many things that led to his decision to cheat on his wife and not all of them easily defensible. But certain men in certain positions can entrap themselves with the best of motives (supporting a vulnerable woman who just happens to be absurdly wealthy and film-star attractive). He could have stayed in the hallway opposite the lift and simply have done his job. He didn't have to be intimate with Claire. But there'd be no movie without that ensuing complication. And love is no respecter of logic or social boundaries. How many people feel that falling in love is something beyond our control and as my wise French teacher once said "...being genuinely in love with two people is heartbreaking for all."

Mimi Rogers is perfect casting as Claire, aloof, seemingly unattainable, scared and yet, very human. Rogers has the dubious distinction of introducing once husband Tom Cruise to Scientology. She has since left the organisation. The cat who stole the cream in the cast is Lorraine Bracco as Keegan's wife Ellie. Her role fizzles with life given great energy by Bracco's performance. Yes, we feel sympathetic towards her – she is 'wronged' after all – but credit to the character. She has an honest husband unable to lie about his physical affair with Claire but desperately wanting his family back. She's smart enough and forgiving enough to see the many sides of the emotional wreckage brought about by simple happenstance (and a man's need – positive spin – to keep his charge safe and protected, - negative spin – to have his ego bolstered by a wealthy beauty's sexual interest in him. The truth of those positive and negative spins is very probably somewhere in between the two. I know that's a cliché but no one said they weren't true.

The prototypical Hollywood bad guy from the 80s was an actor named Andreas Katsulas who died in 2006. You can tell he was the bad guy as he is smoking on the poster, a vice that led to his early death. I'm more familiar with him as the Romulan Tomalak from *Star Trek The Next Generation*. It must have been both satisfying and galling to be cast as the bad guy time and time again. He has a face that quickly identifies him as someone an audience can boo. He was, of course, the one armed man from the Hollywood remake of the TV series *The Fugitive* with Harrison Ford. If you have the face, you also need the acting chops. Katsulas was highly convincing as a psychotic bastard but being insane does have its disadvantages when it comes to character motivation but we'll get to those in a moment.

The use of music is noteworthy in the film. Aside from the top and tail renditions of the title song (by Sting and Roberta Flack respectively), music is used to emphasise the divide between the two worlds of the leads. While Keegan's home life is largely devoid of score (there is some diegetic music at the opening promotion party), Claire's world is indicated by rarefied classical cues, mostly famous including the Brothers Scott staple, the duet from the opera *Lakmé* by Delibes. I found this signposting a little obvious and also a bit grating that music is so identified with a higher class of person, a signifier of culture and refinement. Of course there's the 80s techno score for the art museum at the start but the film's traditional score by then giant in the field Michael Kamen, is quite subtle underlining tense and tender passages with a measured orchestral sound that fits the film like a bespoke glove. There's even the inclusion of the New American Orchestra's cover of Vangelis' *Memories of Green*, more famous as the accompaniment to [Blade Runner](#)'s Rick Deckard as he watches the city below his apartment block. Why not use the original?

In one of the film's action sequences, there's more than a nod to the famous mirror sequence from Orson Welles' [Lady From Shanghai](#). It must have been a nightmare to shoot. Editor Claire Simpson's work is largely invisible (which editorially is how things should be) and the film's pace, while not leisurely, is certainly kept at a clip enough to keep us interested. Now, about that ending (no spoilers). The answer to the question you will be asking yourself is probably "He's insane." That will have to do. There's spoiler territory in the commentary review below well signposted before you get to it. And for a stylish, subtle romantic thriller, there is the oddest, gross fist-hits-face sound effect that I think I've ever heard. Did the mixer twitch and send the sound level up or was this sound effect something Scott wanted? At one hour and nine minutes in, a tearful Lorraine Bracco says "Don't talk to me about respect," and throws a punch. The traditional Hollywood punch sound - as far from reality as it always has been - is rendered here almost comical obliterating the word 'about'. Was there a fluffed line recording that had to be drowned out? It's very odd.

Despite its initial theatrical failure, **Someone** has aged extremely well. It's made with great care and features some lovely performances. It's nowhere near the top of Scott's more obvious culturally affecting output but it works as a romance and as a thriller and it's great news that it's getting some love from the team at Indicator. Bravo.

sound and vision

It's Ridley Scott. The picture quality is gorgeous with no blatantly visible dust or negative damage. The film has cleaned up just beautifully. Even in the lighter scenes the actors are lit artfully which is not just another way of saying that you can't make anything out. Despite its high profile in the film, the lighting doesn't call attention to itself as much as you may think. The detail contained in the 1.85:1 aspect ratio frame is sometimes so dense, it may take you a few passes to take everything in. Scott and cinematographer Poster had just too much fun in Claire's apartment created on a sound stage. It's hard to believe the marble floors are painted paper.



There are no fidelity issues with the stereo sound. All the dialogue is crystal clear and the score and songs are faithfully rendered in the mix. I'm reviewing this disc away from home while working so cannot put the Blu-ray through my normal system but I'm going to assume the soundtrack has not been remastered into a 5.1 surround presentation. There's no such option on the disc itself. There are new and improved subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

extra features

***Audio commentary with filmmaker and film historian Jim Hemphill (2021)***

Hemphill's commentary is an intelligent and enthusiastic stroll through Ridley Scott's oeuvre via one of his lesser-known films. He reiterates the movie's class divide via the opening Scott-filmed helicopter shot that takes us from Manhattan to Queens and makes some telling observations about how Berenger is literally framed indicating his solid, straight character. He also compares Scott with both Spielberg and Scorsese, directors who see the world in a unique way regardless of the genre in which they are working. I've always been both impressed and wary of anyone who claims to be able to 'tell' from a movie's mise-en-scene exactly who directed a film. Hemphill covers almost every detail of the film, bios on the actors and great detail on Scott's creative collaborators and producers. He reminds us that Scott was dented by the failure of **Legend** that had an even more tumultuous post-production than **Blade Runner**'s. I remember how condescendingly dismissive the *Time Out* review was at the time. Say what you like about the film, it can't be denied it is about as sumptuous a movie you are ever likely to see with a bad guy whose image literally stopped me in my tracks when first seeing it on an Underground poster. On that subject – the canard that Scott makes pretty pictures and nothing more gets a hearty slap down from Hemphill. He says; "I feel very sorry for that person because I know that they are an idiot..." Hemphill acknowledges the failure of the film as a tamer version of the incendiary (at the time) thriller **Fatal Attraction** coincidentally directed by another alumnus of the UK advertising industry, Adrian Lyne. And finally a personal hurrah... SPOILER ALERT... Hemphill nails the silliness of the climax. What, as both he and I ask, does bad guy Venza hope to get out of holding Keegan's family hostage? If he gets to kill Claire (the witness to his original murder) he has three other witnesses to deal with. It's just mad, Ted. This is a terrific, informative and wry commentary. I'd like to hear more from Jim Hemphill.

***Someone... to Write a Script (2019): writer Howard Franklin recalls working with director Ridley Scott and the inspirations behind his screenplay (10' 41")***

"It was my first movie, and sort of like a first love," sums up Franklin on his experience of writing **Someone**. He covers how differently writer and director imagined the tone and design of the film, names the opening credits as his favourite part of the film (!) and he also identifies the pianist in a fancy bar whose appearance is so fleeting to be almost negligible. But there's nothing negligible about Nina Simone. How she (a) became cast and (b) agreed to such a small role is beyond me. She is somewhat passed over in a leisurely pan to the principals having a drink. When you are primed you can spot her. Franklin also reveals a rather odd inspiration for his fish out of water thriller. Somewhat infamous at the time being seen as anti-gay, **Cruising** (directed by William Friedkin and starring Al Pacino) featured a

cop having to find a murderer in the unfamiliar (to him) milieu of gay S&M leather bars. Franklin simply transposed the idea, to Manhattan's wealthy high society.

***Someone... to Shoot a Movie (2019): director of photography Steven Poster discusses creating the distinctive look of the film (14' 04")***

This is a fascinating interview with a man clearly blessed with talent and the ability to recognise a golden opportunity when it falls in your lap. I would imagine - given Ridley Scott's expertise as a lighting cameraperson - that most cinematographers would be intimidated working with him but the collaboration between Scott and Poster seems to have been mutually beneficial. Having been in the film and TV business myself for almost 40 years, lighting is the one craft I know least about and so gems like this extra help dispel my pure ignorance of the subject. Poster talks about smoke, reflections and mirrors, all tools in the creative arsenal. This is a very informative extra feature that taught me a lot.

I have fond memories of seeing **Someone To Watch Over Me** at the cinema during its original run and couldn't quite understand why the press was so hostile towards it. Yes, it's not **Citizen Kane** but as undemanding entertainment it has many virtues, not least the cinematography and earnest and authentic performances. For reasons probably not unconnected to writing this review, I re-watched both **The Big Chill** and **Platoon** a few days ago and can clearly appreciate that Berenger is a class act. How can you will Charlie Sheen to shoot this guy in one film and then be heartbroken for him in another? That's great acting. While this may be Ridley Scott-light, it's still in a class of its own. Well recommended.