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**"STUNNING! TWO MELANCHOLY LONERS
WHO FIND A KIND OF DOMESTIC BLISS TOGETHER.
KIM KI-DUK MAKES SILENCE SING."**

-LISA SCHWARZBAUM, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY



3-IRON

A FILM BY KIM KI-DUK

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From Kim Ki-duk, director of *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter...and Spring*, comes a magical love story and another visual triumph. A young drifter enters strangers' houses while the owners are away. He stays a few days repaying their unwitting hospitality by doing laundry or small repairs. His life changes when he runs into a beautiful woman in an affluent mansion who is ready to escape her abusive marriage.

KOREA • 2004 • 87 mins • Color • In Korean with English subtitles

Director Kim Ki-duk shows the brutality in society but also tells a tender love story and offers a critique of modern life.

KEVIN THOMAS



Kim Ki-duk's deliciously audacious "3-Iron" is a romantic fable that in its telling lays bare the casual brutality that lies just beneath the surface in Korean society and by extension just about every other country. Alternately witty, caustic, tender and endlessly imaginative and unpredictable, this latest film from one of Korea's most idiosyncratic and prolific directors is as confident as its resourceful hero, Tae-suk (Jae Hee).

Tae-suk has fashioned for himself a most unusual existence. He drives through Seoul's highly varied residential neighborhoods on his motorcycle, posting fliers on front doors. He then returns after some time has passed to discover if any remain. If a flier is still there he takes the chance that the occupants of the house or apartment are on vacation and he proceeds to pick the door lock and enter. He checks answering machines, which invariably reveal that the occupants are away and will return on such and such date. Tae-suk swiftly settles in, helping himself to any food on hand but also repairing any appliance he finds broken and laundering any dirty clothes. He always leaves a residence immaculate.

One day while driving through an upscale neighborhood that could easily pass for a section of Trousdale or Mount Olympus, he selects a luxurious modern house for breaking and entering. After surveying the nouveau riche interiors, including gold-leafed matched living room and dining room furniture in an opulent Empire style, he quickly moves in. When he repairs a bathroom scale, the young mistress of the house, Sun-hwa (Lee Seung-yeon), who has been hiding, becomes sufficiently convinced that he is no ordinary burglar and steps out of the darkness. A quick series of incidents propels Sun-hwa into fleeing her brutal husband, Min-

kyu (Kwon Hyuk-ho), on the back of Tae-suk's motorcycle.

So completely are Tae-suk and Sun-hwa in harmony that they never need to say as much as a single word to each other, and Sun-hwa, a neatness freak herself, happily joins him in his housesitting and gradually falls in love.

Such an existence is inevitably fragile, and it leads to adventures and incidents that attest at once to the harshness of modern life and also to the tenacity and resilience of the individual, as in the case of this couple whose love becomes seriously tested.

It is significant that one residence taken over by the couple has caring and hospitable owners who are not thrown by encountering them in their home and garden, which are in traditional Korean style and bespeak beauty and civility. The film's title comes from a golf club belonging to Min-kyu, a sport with which Tae-suk becomes obsessed.

"3-Iron" is full of sly, surprising touches that contribute to a fresh vision of modern life that is critical of its unthinking, reflexive cruelty and materialism yet not despairing of the power of love.

As a romantic team, Jae Hee and Lee Seung-yeon are as captivating as the film itself.

3-IRON

Written (in Korean, with English subtitles), produced, directed and edited by Kim Ki-duk; director of photography, Jang Seung-beck; music by Slvian; art director, Joo Jin-mo; released by Sony Pictures Classics. Running time: 87 minutes. This film is not rated.

WITH: Lee Seung-yeon (Sun-hwa), Jae Hee (Tae-suk), Kwon Hyuk-ho (Min-kyu), Joo Jin-mo (Detective Cho), Choi Jeong-ho (Jailer) and Lee Joo-suk (Son of Old Man)

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