

Review – Submarine

by John Kennedy

Adapted and directed by Richard Ayoade from Joe Dunthorne's comic novel, *Submarine* is a bittersweet coming of age observation of teenage agonies and ecstasies, love requited and slighted set against a Welsh, industrial coastal background.

Protagonist, fifteen year-old Oliver Tate's internal narrative drives the film, as we share his fumbling attempts to rationalise the unfathomable mysteries of the two principal females in his life. His mother, gasping for emotional oxygen in a stultified marriage, and classmate beauty, the enigmatic Jordana Bevan (Jasmine Paige).

Aspiring to be an informed existentialist whilst desperate to lose his virginity, Oliver's machinations, secret notes and parental spying can sometimes make him more a nerdy control-obsessed *Adrian Mole* than his *Catcher In The Rye* role model, Holden Caulfield. With a depressed dad, still bitter from being sacked for corduroy fashion crimes and charisma-free presentation skills from OU broadcasts, and the foul-mouthed fount of all carnal knowledge, match-breaker, classmate Kieron pulling him in confusing directions, Oliver's life seems to be heading for a fright of passage teenage trauma train crash.

The unobtrusive, sympathetic sound track is augmented by wispy, atmospheric acoustic songs from Arctic Monkey, Alex Turner.

If you enjoyed the adaptation of graphic novel, *Scott Pilgrim*, or have read Bruce Robinson's (*Withnail And I*) '*Peculiar Memoirs of Thomas Penman*', this is for you. Teenagers will empathise, parents will squirm and new lovers will sigh some more. Recommended.

Submarine (2011) gets an impressive 100% from [Rotten Tomatoes](#).
Comedy/drama/romance
Cert 15. General release.

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