

Review

TV: *Black Mirror: Nosedive*

Imagine a world where you get rated by everyone you meet, all the time. Not only that, but your rating is closely related to your socioeconomic status. If you do not score high enough, you get pushed to the margins of society. Welcome to the world of *Nosedive*, one of the Charlie Brooker's *Black Mirror* series.

Lacie Pound is a 4.2/5. She desperately wants to increase her rating so that she can buy a luxurious apartment which promises to finally make her content. The golden opportunity arrives when her popular childhood friend Naomi asks her to be her maid of honour after seeing a post of Mr Raggs, a stuffed toy they made together as children. The reality is that they have fallen out over the years and each is only interested in achieving a higher rating. Nonetheless, they keep up the appearances and Lacie sets out on a journey which only gets darker and darker...

The message is chilling. It lays bare the dangers of our generation's obsession with social media. Instead of investing in real relationships, people become more concerned with creating an image of themselves that they think others will like. This endeavour leaves no room to express genuine emotions or opinions, if they may not be 'liked'. People begin to judge others based on their profile rather than getting to know them. Reality is gradually replaced with 'virtual reality'. Of course, as Lacie finds out, nobody is perfect. We can't please everyone and some things are simply



out of our control. But how is she going to cope once her perfect image starts to crumble?

This dystopian vision of the world is in stark contrast to the biblical view which tells us that God loves us irrespective of who we are, or what we have done. No matter how bad things get, he has provided the way for redemption. We do not and cannot earn salvation. We know our value because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross, regardless of how the world may 'rate' us. He promised us something far better than a 5-star rating: eternal life in a loving relationship with the everlasting father, the ultimate source of happiness. Yet Jesus warned us that if we follow him, the world will hate us, just as it hated him. This is the opposite of 'like'. The message of the Bible has never been more

countercultural than today.

If you want to find out if Lacie eventually manages to break free from the madness of a rating-obsessed society, watch *Nosedive*. As you watch it, consider how our society's expectation to keep up the perfect image on social media might have affected you. Does social media make you anxious about how others rate you? Does it raise wider questions about how we see our identity? How can we live more authentically for an audience of one? ■

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