



FILM REVIEW

by Krista Bonello Rutter Giappone
and Noel Tanti

IT FOLLOWS



NOEL: Early in the film, Jay (Maika Monroe) asks Hugh/Jeff (Jake Weary) to pick a random stranger with whom he wouldn't mind switching lives. Curiously enough he chooses a little boy because he envies his 'total freedom', going 'to the bathroom any time [he wants]' and 'get[ting] away with that'.

Out of all possibilities, Hugh/Jeff goes for toilet duties. Apparently he yearns for a regressive state in which his ego is not yet fully formed, one in which he is fully dependent on an outside agency. It's a strange thing coming from a young man on the cusp of adulthood. The film's theme is a sort of coming of age tale in reverse.

The protagonists in *It Follows* seem to be battling against the relentless passage of time. They are doing things that grown-ups do, including sex; yet they still want to be like that little boy and shed responsibility. By doing so they subvert one of the main tropes of the slasher film, a sub genre which *It*

Follows certainly endorses: sex as a rite of passage from childhood into adulthood.

Jay repeatedly uses the house pool. With our Freudian hats on, the pool becomes an obvious reference to her trying to reclaiming the security of her mother's womb. It's her comfort zone and she goes there to be on her own, to feel safe. We never see her share the pool with anyone else.

It is revealing though that when Jay (supposedly) has sex with three men in a boat, she goes back to the pool only to find it broken and empty of water. This suggests that her indiscriminate choice of sexual partners has robbed her of a substantial amount of that yearned for 'childhood innocence'. She has crossed the point of no return.

The adult world is conspicuously absent. We rarely come across grown-ups and when we do they seem to inhabit a different world. The nuclear family has jumped ship. There is nobody to whom the young

generation can turn to for advice and they are left to cope on their own. *It Follows* is an anti-coming of age tale because there is no conflict between young and old, and without conflict there is no growth.

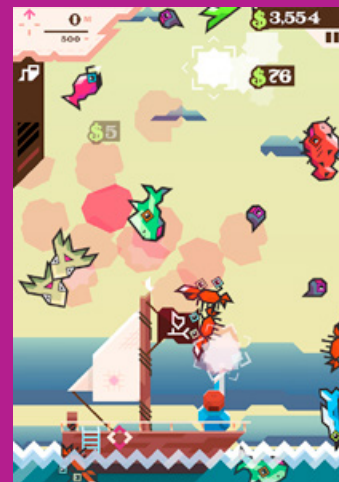
KRISTA: *It Follows* quasi-climactic pool scene is reminiscent of the finale in Cronenberg's *Shivers* (1975). Both films feature a kind of infectious sexual awakening. However, where *Shivers* is celebratory, orgiastically joyful, the sex in *It Follows* feels oddly uneventful. Though the scene takes place in a communal pool, it follows the pattern established in the previous house pool scenes—Jay is isolated within the larger pool.

The film's use of space reinforces this impression of isolation. Though in the vein of coming-of-age movies, the film foregrounds friendship, there is a sense of extended silence—a space of waiting, never fully breached. As the teacher reads TS Eliot's *The Love Song*

Year of release: 2014
Director: David Robert Mitchell
Gore Rating: 🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷

of *J. Alfred Prufrock*, Jay sits at the far end of a long table on her own. This is reinforced in scenes showing expanses of sea and sand and grey, with a slow walking 'it' that follows Jay. The slowness of this sinister presence that permeates the film is reminiscent of Hancock's *Let's Scare Jessica to Death* (1971) and Blatty's *Exorcist III: Legion* (1990).

There is anticipation, but as Noel notes, there is no corresponding growth. The film lacks a climax – dread settles, quietly. On the way to the pool, Yara (Olivia Luccardi), one of Jay's friends reminisces: 'when I was a little girl, my parents wouldn't allow me to go south of 8 Mile. And I didn't even know what that meant, until I got a little older, and I started realising that that's where the city started, and the suburbs ended.' The film positions itself in a moment of suspension, never leaving the suburbs, calling: 'there will be time, there will be time...' But time for what? **T**



GAME REVIEW

by Costantino Oliva

RIDICULOUS FISHING

Platforms: iOS (version tested), Android

Developer: Vlambeer

Ironically, the most popular story about *Ridiculous Fishing* concerns the clone that copied its core idea. Game cloning, albeit with different graphics, is unfortunately common practice in the mobile games market. Vlambeer were hit hard when a replica of their game was released before the genuine article. Their struggle with *Ridiculous Fishing* reflected the whole industry's difficulties: creativity and originality are not always respected. The questions it raised propelled the game's credibility, but best of all: *Ridiculous Fishing* is a brilliant piece of design.

Its premises are, indeed, ridiculous: fishing and shooting are combined in one frantic move. You're an apparently tranquil fisherman that has to make their bait go as deep into the sea as possible while avoiding every obstacle. When you pull it up and fetch your catch, it will subsequently be propelled in the air. At that point, of course, you finish the job by dispatching your catch with miniguns.

This is Vlambeer's unconventional design style: a deconstruction of old school game genres, namely the classic *shoot'em up*, where classic tropes are neglected in favor of bizarre game situations. Dribbling through obstacles is reminiscent of 80's arcade games, while shooting flying targets refers to Nintendo's classic *Duck Hunt*. These elements are brilliantly adapted to touchscreen devices, creating a game that is both immediate and deep: the qualities every mobile game wishes to have. **T**

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