

Review: Romance and heartbreak collide in appealing series 'One Day'



CHENNAI: Created by Nicole Taylor and based on David Nicholls' best-selling novel, the 14-episode series is a lovely love story that follows Emma Morley (Ambika Mod) and Dexter Mayhew (Leo Woodall), who meet on their graduation day.

The audience checks in on the pair over the period of 20 years, from 1988 to 2007, on July 15 every year. Though the romantic tension is palpable, they each lead largely separate lives while remaining in touch.

The novel clearly holds enormous appeal (a film adaptation with Anne Hathaway and Jim Sturgess was tried out in 2011, but it turned out to be wishy-washy) and "One Day" seems to have done justice to the book. It is a story of hope and

heartbreak, romance and remorse and is as close as possible to the literary work. The series saw various auteurs try their hand at different episodes, with Molly Manners, Luke Snellin, John Hardwick and Kate Hewitt in the director's chair.

When Emma and Dexter run into each other for the first time, we see endless possibilities. They split but continue to meet every July 15, nurturing and cementing a friendship that merely gets stronger and deeper. He becomes a successful television personality, but her dream to become a writer appears unattainable at first. Both try their luck at love and grapple with loss — and this is where the series shines. Side characters are fully fleshed out, for the most part, and not treated as window dressing, which is a breath of fresh air.

Though “One Day” is eminently watchable and incredibly emotional, it has one glaring omission: We spend lot of time with Dexter's folks, his jovial mother Alison (Essie Davis) and his stern but loving father, Stephen (Tim McInnerny), but we are clueless about Emma's family. Casting an actress of South Asian origin seems to serve no purpose in the context beyond saving the series from failing the diversity checklist.
