



# VICTORIA & ABDUL

**MOVIE  
MOMENTS**

**Nick and Carol Pollard from EthosMedia.org share thought-provoking reflections on the latest films.**

## Valuing old age

*Victoria and Abdul* may appear to be a simple linear story about an unexpected relationship between an ageing queen (played by Judi Dench) and her Indian servant (played by Ali Fazal). But scattered through the narrative are profound moments which provide important insights into the invisible inner life of many people in their final years.

We first see Victoria as she is hauled from her bed to be dressed, decorated and wheeled out for ceremonial occasions, where she nods off out of boredom. Who would think that, within this old body, still lives a real person with the capacity to learn, laugh and love?

When Abdul arrives, to present a ceremonial coin, he is instructed not to make any eye contact with Victoria. But, he refuses to treat her in the same way as the self-serving officials, and there is an instant human connection between them. As their relationship grows, Victoria reveals to Abdul her sense of imprisonment by those who see her as a 'fat, lame, impotent, silly old woman'. And so, we see the release of her vibrant inner life. She wants to sing and dance under the stars. She wants to taste mango. She wants to learn Urdu. Her body may have aged, but she is still young at heart.



At a time when questions are being raised about the social cost of providing for elderly people, this film offers an important reminder of the humanity and value of everyone, whatever our age. In their final years, many echo the words of Psalm 71 'Even when I am old and grey, do not forsake me, O God'. Perhaps this film will encourage us all to be part of the answer to those prayers.



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**EthosMedia.org provides free resources to help people explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through the latest feature films.**

