



# Broken

Autumn  
Season  
2013

**Release:** 2012

**Cert (UK):** 15

**Runtime:** 91 mins

**Director:** Rufus Norris

**Screenwriter:** Mark O'Rowe from the novel by Daniel Clay

**Cast:** Tim Roth, Rory Kinnear, Eloise Lawrence, Cillian Murphy



The title "Broken" most directly refers to families, but it's also an adequate assessment of the Rufus Norris's debut feature, an absorbing coming-of-age drama

"Broken" has been quite transparently conceived as an homage to *"To Kill a Mockingbird,"* which author Daniel Clay, who wrote the novel on which the film is based, has acknowledged as an inspiration. At times the movie seems closer to full reworking than tribute, and there's a fascination in seeing a quintessentially American story transplanted to a British context. To the extent that "Broken" follows Harper Lee's template—observing a child's dawning awareness of the morally troubled world around her—it's quite good.

But context is key, and while Lee's masterwork turned an eye on 1930s Alabama, "Broken" doesn't show much interest in the world beyond the cul-de-sac. Dramatically, the film is a closed system, in which just about every major action prompts an unintended consequence, and the best intentions unfailingly go awry. In that sense, "Broken" owes more to didactic tapestry films like "Babel" than to one of the great works of 20th-century literature.

'Newcomer Lawrence gives the standout performance as the smart, precociously mature tween, but the ensemble cast all handle the tough, emotionally honest material with sensitivity' Empire.