

That Awkward Moment (2014)

Rated R. Our ratings:

Our content advisories Violence 1; Language 7; Sex 1/Nudity 8.

Running time: 1 hour 34 min.

Our star rating (1-5): 2

A friend loves at all times, and kinsfolk are born to share adversity.

Proverbs 17:17

Director/writer Tom Gormican's raunchy tale is about the ups and downs of three buddies— Jason (Zac Efron), Daniel (Miles Teller), and Mikey (Michael B. Jordan)—who make a pact that they will not enter into any more serious relationships because two of them have been dumped by their women. The movie is just a small step above the huge number of teen comedies that seem to specialize in fart jokes. In this one ejected body gas is replaced by penis humor, even a visual one, our alleged hero Jason showing up at a party with a faux penis dangling from his pants like a snake. Ellie (Imogen Poots), the girl who issues the invitation says it is a dress up affair, which he takes to mean not formal but costume). This means that there will be a remark about a “cock tail,” so this male slant makes this a hard sell for a date movie—this is really a buddy movie posing as a romantic comedy.

Jason, falling for Ellie, and Daniel, discovering that his female drinking partner (these people never seem to stay home and watch cable or TV) Chelsea (Mackenzie Davis) has more to offer than sharing a drink and helping him hit on other women, conceal from each other their romantic relationships. The married Mikey, whose wife Vera (Jessica Lucas) had left him,

begins a campaign centered in the bedroom to win her back, but of course, he does not tell his buddies.

If you can stand this kind of humor—and the fact that the plot device is borrowed from Shakespeare's *Love's Labor Lost* did not dispel the vulgarity for me—plus the gutter language issuing out of the mouths of the women as well as the men, you will discover some tender moments, even a lesson that showing up when a person needs you is what relationships are all about. These guys also slowly learn that recreational sex, divorced from love and commitment, does not satisfy one for ever. If this were a better film, I would add it to my list of character transformation films, with the caddish Jason at last arriving at the point when he realizes and accepts that he is not the center of the universe,

The framing device of Jason sitting on a cold park bench narrating the back story is clever, and it is not spoiling things too much with such a predictable film to quote the Bard, "All's well that ends well."