

## Film Review: ‘The Aftermath’ is Strained & Illicit Romance During War

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on March 26, 2019 - 10:10am

- [Alexander Skarsgard](#) [2]
- [Britain](#) [3]
- [Flora Theimann](#) [4]
- [Fox Searchlight Pictures](#) [5]
- [Germany](#) [6]
- [Hamburg](#) [7]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [8]
- [Jason Clarke](#) [9]
- [Kate Phillips](#) [10]
- [Keira Knightley](#) [11]
- [Movie Review](#) [12]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [13]
- [The Aftermath](#) [14]
- [World War 2](#) [15]

CHICAGO – One of the roots of the sexual revolution in America was World War II (as it was the roots of many social movements). The stakes of life and death in an instant motivates the softest of puppy love to passion. “The Aftermath” takes that time honored emotional intensity into a right-after-the-war romance.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

The film – adapted from a novel by Rhidian Brook – is set in the devastated port city of Hamburg, which was destroyed by Allies bombers in the mid 1940s. Shortly after the German surrender, the British were assigned to start the rebuilding process, and set up a system for tribunals and construction. Against this backdrop is the particulars of the romantic triangle. Keira Knightley continues her reliable path of deep resonance as the conflicted woman torn between two lovers, and Jason Clarke surprises as the husband in the triangle who values his duty as much as his wife. This is a consequence of another time and place, but the issues are universal, and the history is important to realize. Also a note to planners of a date night ... this is a good one to consider.

In 1945, Germany has surrendered in World War 2, and the rebuilding process will be taken up by their British vanquishers. One officer of the contingent is Colonel Lewis Morgan (Jason Clarke), who is assigned to the destroyed city of Hamburg, Germany, and is given an estate to live in once owned by German citizen Stephen Lubert (Alexander Skarsgard). The colonel also calls his wife Rachael (Keira Knightley) to reunite with him for the first time since a London blitz killed their only child.

The couple take pity on the widowed Lubert – he lost his wife in the 1943 Hamburg bombings – and his daughter Freda (Flora Thiemann), and allows them to stay in another part of the house instead of turning them out. Morgan’s duties take him away from the home for long stretches, and the distant between him and Rachael allow the wife to fall into Lubert’s arms, and they begin an intense affair. This will all play out against the backdrop of post war rebuilding and reassessment.

*“The Aftermath” opened in Chicago on March 22nd. Featuring Keira Knightley, Jason Clarke, Alexander Skarsgard, Flora Theimann and Kate Phillips. Screenplay adapted by Joe Shrapnel, Anna Waterhouse and Rhidian Brook. Directed by James Kent. Rated “R”*



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Alexander Skarsgard, Knightley and Jason Clarke of ‘The Aftermath’

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- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/britain>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/flora-theimann>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/fox-searchlight-pictures>
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- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/movie-review>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-aftermath>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/world-war-2>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/29260/the-aftermath-is-strained-illicit-romance-during-war>