

Inconsistent But Sweet '3, 2, 1... Frankie Go Boom'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on September 14, 2012 - 2:27pm

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Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Jordan Roberts “3, 2, 1... Frankie Go Boom” is available On Demand in advance of its October theatrical release and it’s likely to be enticing to fans of the mega-hit “Sons of Anarchy” (which premiered this week to record-setting numbers) and those looking for a new comedy as the multiplex is crowded with horror and action movies. The raunchy comedy feels like a cousin of the Judd Apatow brand without the same degree of timing but the likable cast goes a long way to getting one over the screenwriting speed bumps. It may be more of a whimper than a boom but it’s harmless enough to make for modest entertainment on a Saturday night.

The incredibly charismatic and underrated Charlie Hunnam (“Undeclared,” “Sons of Anarchy”) plays Frank, a loner writer who lives in a mobile home in Death Valley where he tries to write a novel. He’s cut off from the world in no small part because he’s become the butt of a viral video. His brother Bruce (Chris O’Dowd of “Bridesmaids” and “Friends with Kids”) spent most of his life tormenting Frank and even went as far as to put video of his bro’s disastrous wedding (at which he found out his bride was cheating on him with his best man) on YouTube. Frank hasn’t spoken to Bruce in the three years since. However, when mom Karen (Nora Dunn) calls and tells him that Bruce is getting out of rehab, Frank decides to be the better man and come home to greet him.



3, 2, 1...Frankie Go Boom

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

Bruce is a force of irresponsible nature. He’s the kind of guy who gets other people near him into trouble, usually legal, without even really meaning to do so. In rehab, Bruce met an over-the-hill movie star named Jack (Chris Noth, who seems to be channeling someone like Robert Blake at times but doesn’t quite have the edge as an actor to pull that off) and he wants to make films again, even going as far as to set up cameras on his brother again just in case wedding video magic strikes twice. Wouldn’t you know it that Frankie gives Bruce a show when he brings home the drunken Lassie (Lizzy Caplan) and can’t get it up in her company. Frank’s impotency becomes Bruce’s next film topic.

“3, 2, 1... Frankie Go Boom” essentially becomes a bizarre brother buddy comedy for most of its running time after the pair realizes that Lassie happens to be the crazy actor Jack’s daughter. Jack is the kind of guy who tries to kill Lassie’s ex-boyfriend. What will he do to Frank and Bruce when he sees her in a sex tape? They have to get the tape back before it goes viral and the wacky adventure takes them to bizarre

places like giving the Heimlich Maneuver to a potbellied pig, staging a recreation of Frank & Lassie's first night, and even to the home of a former convict friend of Bruce's who used to be Phil but is now Phyllis played by perhaps the least feminine actor alive – Ron Perlman.



3, 2, 1... Frankie Go Boom

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

There are a lot of jokes in "3, 2, 1" that fall flat. In fact, the entire production often verges on complete disaster, never more so than when Perlman shows up in awful drag. And yet every time I was about ready to write it off, there would be a moment or a laugh that worked. It's not a big guffaw movie because it's actually the broad jokes that work least effectively but there are nice little laughs, usually courtesy of Hunnam, O'Dowd, and Caplan's comic timing. All three deliver. Hunnam knows that we have to like Frank for the movie's plot to work at all and so he pours on the sweet charm while O'Dowd never makes Bruce totally despicable. What works about this cast is that while the humor gets raunchy and out of control, they ground it in something believable and even heartfelt at times.

"Bachelorette" recently made headlines by selling a surprising number of downloads in advance of its theatrical run. It's clearly something that's going to be happening more and more often as delivery systems change in years to come. I don't think "Frankie Go Boom" will be quite the same success story but it is actually a better comedy.

"3, 2, 1... Frankie Go Boom" stars Charlie Hunnam, Chris O'Dowd, Lizzy Caplan, Nora Dunn, Sam Anderson, Whitney Cummings, Chris Noth, and Ron Perlman. It was written and directed by Jordan Roberts. It is now available On Demand and opens in limited release in October.



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