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**"Love Actually" does exist**

**Jessica Kemp**

Copy Editor

The same people who created "Notting Hill" and "Bridget Jones's Diary" strike gold again with the new British romantic comedy "Love Actually." With an all-star cast of European actors, including Hugh Grant, Colin Firth, Liam Neeson, Alan Rickman and Emma Thompson, this movie provides a light, hilarious look at different people as they try to figure out if love actually exists.

The movie follows a montage of characters, who are all somehow loosely connected, as they prepare for the Christmas holidays in London. As the movie begins, washed-out rock star Billy Mack, played by Bill Nighy, is trying to make a comeback with a Christmas version of the song "Love is All Around" by substituting the word Christmas for love. Also Hugh Grant has just been elected Prime Minister and is moving into his new house at 10 Downing Street.

Emma Thompson is the prime minister's sister Karen and is married to Harry (Alan Rickman). Karen is trying to raise her kids and get ready for the holidays, while her husband Harry flirts with his sexy secretary at work. Laura Linney, who plays Sarah, works with Harry and has been in love with her co-worker Karl for the past two years. She is torn between pursuing her love for Karl and taking care of her younger brother who is mentally ill.

The prime minister and Karen have another brother, Daniel (Liam Neeson). Daniel's wife just passed away and he is left trying to raise his six-year-old stepson Sam. Sam is in more pain from his unrequited love for a classmate than the loss of his mother. His childish insights and



Photo courtesy of movies.com

Hugh Grant, Colin Firth, Liam Neeson, Laura Linney and Emma Thompson round out the all-star cast of "Love Actually." The complicated plot serves to keep the audience on its toes.

comments provide a lot of the comedy in the movie.

Another plotline follows Jamie (Colin Firth) after he finds out his girlfriend is cheating on him with his brother. He is a struggling author and moves out to the country to write. While there he falls in love with his Portuguese maid, but they have problems communicating clearly because of the language barrier.

As the movie progresses, these relationships are developed and explained, along with other relationships that are too minor to get into. The prime minister falls in love with his personal assistant Natalie, played by popular British actress Martine McCutcheon. One of the funniest parts of the movie is when he goes door to door looking for her and ends up singing the Christmas carol "Good King Wencelas" for three young girls. Hugh Grant plays an excellent bumbling prime minis-

ter, whose greatness is only matched by the cameo of Billy Bob Thornton as the president of the United States.

"Love Actually" is a very complex movie following at least 10 different couples as they deal with love at Christmas. Every relationship is humorous in its own way. The end of the movie tries to tie up all of the loose ends, but leaves some questions unanswered. While the movie was hilarious and entertaining, the ending was slightly disappointing.

For everyone who loves British comedy and romantic movies, "Love Actually" is a great choice. After leaving this movie, it is obvious that love actually does exist: everywhere.

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Write for the Pendulum. x7247**