

‘A Man Called Otto’ is O-T-T-Oh No for Tom Hanks

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 5, 2023 - 9:25am

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Rating: **2.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – Tom Hanks finds himself – as the title character – stranded in a slough of artificiality in this clumsy manipulative attempt at a crowd pleaser. He plays a grump in “A Man Named Otto,” a remake of a 2015 Swedish film. The setting has been transferred to the grey rust belt of Pittsburgh, and Hanks is a widower with a lot of chips on his shoulder about the world today.

Otto sees himself surrounded by idiots. He also has both the obstinance and time to complain, whether its cars driving around his housing complex’s gate, or being charged for six feet of an item when he only wanted five feet. His patience is further tested by the changing nature of his neighborhood and a Hispanic family that moves in across the street. The husband Tommy (Manual Garcia-Rulfo) is a clumsy nitwit and the wife Marisol (Mariana Treviño) is a talkative-but-kind person ... she is always popping over to ask to borrow an allen wrench or to drop off some home baked cookies.



Meet the Neighbors: Tom Hanks in ‘A Man Called Otto’

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Releasing

The film also deals with a ton of subplots, like a nasty real estate man (Mike Birbiglia) trying to force the older residents out of their homes to gentrify the neighborhood, and a friendship that had a falling out (over cars of all things) years ago. But the most distracting moment is with a paper deliverer who just happens to be transgender. This particular subplot gets shoehorned in in the most clumsy and incongruous way possible. Otto starts yelling about getting mailers on his lawn, then the delivery person just says they’re trans and they had been in his wife’s classroom, and suddenly Otto’s cool with all of that.

That's meant to show that grumpy old Otto isn't that grumpy for real. But it's yet another sign that this film is just grasping at straws trying and failing to find something that could connect with an audience. Every thread comes off as fake and manipulative. I'm sure I slapped my hand on my forehead a couple of times with the eye rolling developments, but this movie is such a slog it also helped me stay awake.

As you might guess, our grump finally learns that maybe life is worth living after all, but not before a medical issue puts him in the hospital for real and just for good measure the film has Marisol go into labor right in his room. Tack on a grieving montage, and one of the laziest and incomprehensible "happy endings" I've seen in quite some time, and "A Man Called Otto" is just a real O-T-T-Oh no.

"A Man Called Otto" opens in select theaters on January 6th, with a wide release on January 13th.. Featuring Tom Hanks, Mariana Treviño, Manuel Garcia-Rulfo, Truman Hanks and Mike Birbiglia. Screenplay adapted by David Magee. Directed by Marc Forster. Rated "PG-13"



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