

Million Dollar Baby, 2004

Directed by Clint Eastwood

Book by F. X. Toole

Screenplay by Paul Haggis

Cast

Frankie Dunn	Clint Eastwood
Maggie Fitzgerald	Hilary Swank
Eddie Scrap-Iron Dupris	Morgan Freeman
Danger Barch	Jay Baruchel
Big Willie Little	Mike Colter
Billie "The Blue Bear"	Lucia Rijker
Father Horvak	Brian F. O'Byrne
Shawrelle Berry	Anthony Mackie
Earline Fitzgerald	Margo Martindale
Omar	Michael Pena
Billie's Manager	Benito Martinez
Mickey Mack	Bruce MacVittie
Little Girl in Truck	Morgan Eastwood
Sally Mendoza	Ned Eisenberg



Awards:

2005 Academy Award, Best Achievement in Directing, Clint Eastwood
2005 Academy Award, Best Motion Picture of the Year
2005 Academy Award, Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role, Morgan Freeman
2005 Academy Award, Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role, Hilary Swank
2005 American Screenwriters Association, Discover Screenwriting Award, Paul Haggis
2004 Boston Society of Film Critics, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2005 Broadcast Film Critics Association Award, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2004 Chicago Film Critics Association Award, Best Director, Clint Eastwood
2005 Dallas-Forth Worth Film Critics Association Awards, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2005 Dallas-Forth Worth Film Critics Association Awards, Best Picture
2005 David di Donatello Award, Best Foreign Film, Clint Eastwood
2005 Directors Guild of America, Outstanding Directorial Achievement, Clint Eastwood
2005 Florida Film Critics Circle Awards, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2005 Golden Globe, Best Director, Clint Eastwood
2005 Golden Globe, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2005 Golden Satellite Award, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2005 Golden Satellite Award, Best Screenplay, Paul Haggis
2005 Image Awards, Outstanding Supporting Actor, Morgan Freeman
2005 Kansas City Film Critics Circle Award, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2005 Kansas City Film Critics Circle Award, Best Film
2004 National Board of Review, Special Achievement Award, Clint Eastwood
2005 National Society of Film Critics Awards, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2005 National Society of Film Critics Awards, Best Film
2004 New York Film Critics Circle Awards, Best Director, Clint Eastwood
2004 Phoenix Film Critics Society Awards, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2004 San Diego Film Critics Society Awards, Best Director, Clint Eastwood
2004 San Diego Film Critics Society Awards, Best Original Score
2005 Screen Actors Guild Awards, Best Actress, Hilary Swank
2005 Screen Actors Guild Awards, Best Supporting Actor, Morgan Freeman
2004 Seattle Film Critics Awards, Best Director, Clint Eastwood
2004 Seattle Film Critics Awards, Best Picture
2005 USC Scriptor Award, Best Screenwriter, Paul Haggis & F. X. Toole
2005 Vancouver Film Critics Circle, Best Director, Clint Eastwood

Opening Dates USA December 15, 2004 (limited)

Filming Dates, 7 June 2004 - 14 July 2004, Copyright © 2004 Warner Bros.

Entertainment Inc.

Filming Locations

- Hollywood Athletic Club, Hollywood, Los Angeles, California

- Las Vegas, Nevada
- Los Angeles, California
- Warner Brothers Studios, Burbank Studios, Burbank, California

Crazy Credits

The Warner Brothers logo is the classic shield version, shown in a color palette (mainly black and white, with a dark green tint) matching the "feel" of the movie, and is static instead of the modern 3D animated sequence.

Chapter 1: The best cut man.

- Official National opening date January 28, 2005, Release year 2004
- Budget \$30,000,000
- Based on a short story "Rope Burns: Stories From the Corner", F.X. Toole
- 25th film directed by Clint Eastwood
- 57th film acted by Clint Eastwood
- Hilary Swank gained 20 lbs of muscle due to the workouts
- Three months of training for Hilary Swank

"Rope Burns: Stories From the Corner", F.X. Toole, a collection of short stories based on the experiences of long-time fight manager and cutman Jerry Boyd, writing under the pen name F.X. Toole, was published in 2000 by Harper Collins. Toole was 70 at the time and had been writing and battling rejection letters for forty years. "Rope Burns" was his first published work. Soon after its publication he was commissioned to write his first novel, an epic story set on the Texas-Mexico border. He died on 2 September 2002 at age 72, just before his novel was finished. "Rope Burns" was dedicated to Jerry's partner and longtime friend Dub Huntley.

This is the 25th film Clint Eastwood has directed, the 57th film in which he has acted, and the 21st he has produced.

Hilary Swank underwent a serious training schedule to prepare for this film. She gained nearly 20 pounds of muscle due to the workouts.

From the Official Website, by Warner Brothers

Adapted for the screen by Emmy-winning screenwriter Paul Haggis, *Million Dollar Baby* is based on a short story from the collection *Rope Burns*, by F.X. Toole. Toole spent years working as a "cut man" – the member of a boxer's team whose job it is to patch up his injuries so he can continue fighting – and his stories vividly capture the essence of life in the ring.

Chapter 2 (0:04:59) God dialogues.

Two reasons why Maggie wants to fight

1. it is her way out of her current living situation
2. It defines her, it makes her feel good.

- Most fighters come from a background of where they suffered a lot (painful background)
- Eastwood states that what this picture is about is “people who are on the edge of society.”
- Sandra Bullock was the first actress attached to play Maggie

H- I never really did understand boxing, getting into a ring and letting someone hit you, didn't make a lot of sense. It wasn't until I studied boxing that I began to understand the sport. But there is an adrenaline rush behind it and for a lot of people it is their way out. Two reasons why Maggie wants to fight, is (1) it is her way out of her current living situation, and (2) It defines her, it makes her feel good. For the character of Maggie, it certainly is her way out. Her background her history and what her family life was like, not only is it her way out, but it is also she feels good doing. And when you find that thing that you feel good doing, that thing that you love there is nothing else you want to do.

Lucia Rijker “Billie the Blue Bear” states that a fighter is born, it is something within you. That is what makes you a fighter and only when you are put to the test will you know. Most fighters come from a background of where they suffered a lot (painful background), which helps them to take the punishment of the sport, the beating of physically getting hit.

Chapter 3 (0:06:40) Hit Pit Gym

Eastwood states that what this picture is about is “people who are on the edge of society.” This beat up gym that is on the outside of Los Angeles house a bunch of people that are odd balls. People who just drift in, who want to become boxers, and there are people who are there that just have no where else to go.

Lucia Rijker “Billie the Blue Bear” you do see this character of Danger at every gym, the guy who is a little off, but he loves the gym and he loves the atmosphere of boxing.

Sandra Bullock was the first actress attached to play Maggie, and she wanted to pursue Shekhar Kapur as a director. By the time a studio expressed an interest in the project, her commitment to *Miss Congeniality 2* prevented her from doing the film.

The role of passionately dedicated boxer Maggie Fitzgerald was a physically demanding one, and Hilary Swank had just three months to train before filming began. “I'd never worked with Hilary before,” says Eastwood, “but I had met her on several occasions before and I knew just by the way she moved that she had good athletic ability. I had no doubts about her acting at all, but I knew that her success in this film would depend on how diligently she would train to get this role under her belt. And she did. She has a work ethic that's unparalleled.”

The actress worked for three months with legendary boxing trainer Hector Roca at Gleason's Gym in Brooklyn. Rated by *International Boxing Digest* as one of the best trainers in the world, Roca has guided numerous world champions, including Iran

Barkley, Arturo Gatti, Regilio Tuur and Buddy McGirt.

In addition to her boxing, Swank worked with weight lifter and trainer Grant Roberts several hours a day to build the necessary muscle mass to convincingly play a highly conditioned professional athlete.

The training paid off. As Eastwood proudly attests, “There isn’t a one ‘double shot’ in the whole picture. No doubles were used during filming, and Hilary did all of her own fighting.”

The film’s most pivotal set, Frankie’s gym The Hit Pit, was constructed in an empty warehouse in downtown Los Angeles. “This picture is about people who are on the edge of society,” says Eastwood. “This small beat-up old gym in downtown L.A. houses a lot of people who are oddballs, people who just drift in and out. It’s where Frankie and Scrap live their lives.”

“We looked and looked,” recalls Bumstead, “and when I saw pictures of this warehouse, I knew it would make a great Hit Pit. So I showed Clint the pictures of the warehouse, and he went down and looked at it and agreed with me. Then I showed him a plan of what I was going to do, putting his office on a platform looking down on two boxing rings and all the other requirements of the script. Clint looked at it and said, ‘Perfect.’”

Bumstead paid particular attention to achieving the proper time-worn look for the Hit Pit. “I’m a stickler for aging,” says the designer. “It’s glazing the walls and ceiling to give them a patina. Also the light fixtures and all the furniture are aged to look like they have been there a very long time. My assistant, art director Jack Taylor; set decorator, Richard Goddard; paint foreman, Rick Paronelli and my construction foreman, Mike Muscarella makes me look good. As I have always said, I’m only as good as my crew, and they are fantastic.”

Los Angeles Locations

- Venice Beach Boardwalk (Maggie’s employment as a waitress)
- Eagle Rock (Maggie’s family)
- Hollywood Boulevard (The Hit Pit Gym, was constructed in an empty warehouse)
- Grand Olympic Auditorium (fight sequences)

Million Dollar Baby was shot in various locations in and around Los Angeles, including the (1) Venice Boardwalk, (2) Eagle Rock and (3) Hollywood Boulevard. The fight sequences were staged at the (4) Grand Olympic Auditorium, the site of many current professional boxing matches, and in a number of other locations around the city.

Chapter 4 (0:11:11) Who’s your new girl?

Loyalty is what keeps these two characters together and working with each other. Later you will learn their back story and understand the root of that loyalty, but it is loyalty that keeps these two together. There are two guys here that have a certain amount of disappointments and Scrap has no one in the world, except Frank and the gym, and there

is a certain statement about loyalty. The gym is the central thing that they are interested in; I think the scrap character is very important to this story. Scrap is the first one to see the potential in helping this young lady along.

- Seven Academy Award nominations and won four Oscars
- 2005 Academy Award, Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role, Morgan Freeman
- 2005 Academy Award, Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role, Hilary Swank
- 2005 Academy Award, Best Achievement in Directing, Clint Eastwood
- 2005 Academy Award, Best Motion Picture of the Year
- 37 days to shoot, with five of those days half days

Chapter 5 (0:14:45) After-hours advice

For Scrappy and Maggie to have their relationship, he sees in her something that he used to feel. Scrappy and Maggie begin to have a relationship because of four factors Scrappy sees in her; (1) drive, (2) passion, (3) focus (4) talent, not to mention the underdog in her as well. Thus they have a connection.

She doesn't really realize how much involved he is in putting everything together. Maggie has no idea the guidance and support that Scrappy is supplying toward her mission of becoming a boxer, and there is beauty in the audience knowing something that the character does not know. So what we know from the beginning of this story is that Scrap is the main reason that Frankie is going to take on this new client. He will help them get to where they are going to get.

“Two thick braids of auburn hair hung down behind each ear, framing a freckled face and a pair of agate eyes, like Frankie's daughters” F.X. Toole

Tom Rosenberg (Producer) talking about the call sheet and filming with Clint Eastwood stated that the call sheet showed that the crew would arrive at 10 a.m. and shooting would begin at 10:15 a.m., something that is never done. Rosenberg watched as the camera's first shot took place at 10:03 and moved at 10:08, and he said to himself, this is going to be different. Clint Eastwood is completely confident, he edits in his head, he knows what he has, and there is no pretentiousness about him. The film was shot in 37 days, but five of those days were only half days of shooting. There was not one minute of over time on the set; it was beautiful, like watching a cool jazz magician at work, in top form.

Tom Rosenberg went to the Golden Globes with Clint Eastwood, and he said that when Clint won he got choked up watching him receive the award. This type of film is not made today.

Chapter 6 (0:21:00) Keep the bag

Continuity: When Eddie is reading a magazine, while on his bed, Frankie enters the Gym with a hamburger. Eddie throws the magazine on the bed to see who has entered.

The magazine is seen on the pillow, wide open. The magazine is next seen closed and almost out of sight.

Maggie has seen this man take fighters and mold them into something incredible. And for whatever reason he is the coach for her, and so she is set on him, she has these blinders on and it is all about you, you and you, until he gives in to her unrelenting demands to be her coach.

Continuity: The "Everlast" patch on the speed bag moves repeatedly between shots after Frankie begins to train Maggie (the last half of the speed bag scene).

Chapter 7 (0:23:10) Gotta leave you

Hilary stated that you did have the freedom on the set to improvise a line here and there, but you are so in tune to the script that you know it has the right things there. The only real moment was when Hilary jumped on Clint during the filming.

Hilary began acting at the age of nine doing school plays. Her mother knew that she really wanted to do this as a career, and her mother was at a crossroads in her life and stated, "Well let's go to Hollywood, that is where you need to go to do this." They drove to Hollywood in a Delta Oldsmobile Supreme with \$75 in their pockets and a Mobile gas card. They would occasionally use the card to eat off of in a deli. Hilary was only 15 years old and a high school drop out.

Hilary and her mother purchased an agents book at the Samuel French store in Hollywood and began calling on a pay phone to contact an agent. Each time the agent would say, you need a resume and a head shot, two things she didn't have, and then they would say we are going to give you a call. But they didn't have a phone.

The only agencies that she got into were Harry Gold, where she read for a McDonald's commercial and they signed her on the spot. Hilary attributes it to fate.

Chapter 8 (0:25:17) Say that in Gaelic

Hilary Swank states that this movie is about "people trying to find their way in life and moving through life not knowing what is going to come at them."

"We found a perfect house for Frankie's bungalow with dark woodwork and a perfect floor plan," says Bumstead. "We found the restaurants where Maggie works on the Venice Boardwalk and on Hollywood Boulevard, and for a sequence that takes place in Missouri; we did some driving in wooded areas near Los Angeles and used a service station on Lake Avenue in Pasadena. We also filmed in a pro boxing equipment store on Lake Avenue."

Chapter 9 (0:29:05) Backwards

The 2005 Academy Award ceremonies gave this film four of the top awards, Best Achievement in Directing, Clint Eastwood, Best Motion Picture of the Year, Best

Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role, Morgan Freeman, and Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role, Hilary Swank

James Lipton (Actor's Studio) This film earned seven Academy Award nominations and won four Oscars.

Clint Eastwood states that he just does what feels right, he is neither reckless in his choices or conservative in his selections. He states that he is blessed with the mind set of not over thinking things. Eastwood further suggests that he likes what he likes, and doesn't sit down and analyze why he likes something.

The name of the café that Hilary Swank's character works in is, "On the Waterfront Cafe".

Chapter 10 (0:31:59) Frankie's terms

Getting into the character of Maggie wasn't all that difficult for Hilary as they both have similar backgrounds. The idea of having a dream and being really disciplined and focused, also being rather lucky having someone that believes in you. Hilary was also attracted to the flip side of this role; here was a challenge, the emotional and psychical demands of the part. Hilary stated that she learned how to push her body in the making of this picture, to push it further than she believed possible.

Chapter 11 (0:36:40) To make a fighter

There is some beauty in seeing all of the training pay off in the ring. Everything that you are taught as a boxer is used within the ring. The fighters are both working so hard and putting everything into the three or four rounds that they are in the ring. Hilary stated that she learned how to push her body in the making of this picture, to push it further than she believed possible.



An advertisement for Donald Trump's "The Apprentice" (2004) television show appears on the side of the bus Maggie is riding.

0:40:00 Crew or equipment visible: When Maggie is training with Frankie in the ring, you can see the power pack on her back.

0:41:33 Crew or equipment visible: When Frankie introduces Maggie to one of the managers at the gym, movie lights can be seen reflected in the sunglasses hanging on his shirt.

Chapter 12 (0:39:11) My fighter

Morgan Freeman states two tasks in acting, (1) Acting, (2) Reacting is simply living. Morgan stated that while working with Hilary he knows that all he has to do is listening and respond. Listening is the essence of acting, it is everything to acting.

0:42:30 Continuity: During Maggie's first fight, the manager takes her mouthpiece and rinses it but never gives it back to her.

Chapter 13 (0:45:49) Too many holes

Listening is the essence of acting, it is everything to acting. If you lack the ability to listen how are you going to respond to someone else, if you were not listening at first?

Chapter 14 (0:47:31) Who's boss

Even though Frankie is the owner of the gym and trains fighters, because of his previous experience, his back story, he is reluctant to let fighters live up to their potential in the ring, kind of holds back his fighters. In his mind he is kind of retired from the ring, even though he hasn't done that yet.

Frankie's family history is what haunts him and plaques him the most. Frankie is angry generally pissed off at the world. In a lot of cases he is his worst enemy. He is in the pain business, but he wants to fight pain. He gets a good fighter, but he wants to protect him from fighting and getting hurt, and that has everything to do with the character of Scrap.

Chapter 15 (0:52:00) Wounds



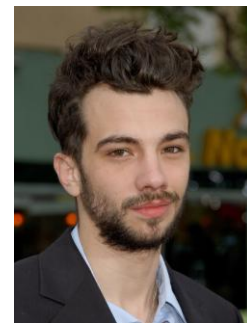
Morgan Freeman has a secret life as a dancer. He started dancing in San Francisco, as he heard that actors who could sing and dance could get more work. He has studied Jazz, Modern Dance, Ballet and Tap. He has been featured at numerous schools and at the New York World's Fair.

Chapter 16 (0:56:00) Good offers

This script captures that brawling nature of boxing, the betting that goes on behind the scenes where everyone has their own agenda, and the profit margins weigh heavily on that agenda.

Chapter 17 (0:58:50) Scarp's 109th fight

Morgan Freeman (Eddie Scrap-Iron Dupris) without Frankie, Scappy would probably be homeless. This relationship between Frankie and Scrap of 23 years, gives him purpose and one of his purposes is to be with Frankie.



Jay Baruchel (Danger Barch) everyone can put two and two together to figure out that this character is not going to make anything of himself in boxing, but he is a bit slow, and it doesn't occur to him that he would need anything else but heart. He

practices and trains very hard but it all amounts to nothing. Every gym has the character of Danger.

Chapter 18 (1:04:10) Return to sender



Clint has a unique way of starting and stopping a take. When he starts a take he doesn't say "action" but rather he says, "Okay whenever you are ready." The reason he does that is that Clint feels "action" makes people tense up and not relaxed to do the filming. Something he learned while filming westerns.

Factual errors: Before every professional (and even amateur) boxing matches, the referee brings both combatants to the center of the ring for a reading of the rules and traditional touching of gloves. In the film, we see Maggie and her opponents immediately commence fighting, as the bell rings after the introductions.

Chapter 19 (1:06:25) Mo Cuisle triumphant

This is an Establishing shot of the Parliament building in London on the Thames River.



Hilary Swank stated that she learned really quickly that when you are in the ring you must be in the moment. An example is that some one can hit you and then you think, how did they hit me, but that second of thinking about how you get hit in the first place allows for the second hit to take place as you are thinking on the first. Billie, stated that in training, Hilary never complained, even when she received a bloody nose or cut her lip during the filming and practices. Billie stated that Hillary was a true fighter.

The sport of boxing for women is no longer a respected sport. There was a time when it was a respected sport. While making the film, numerous female boxers were happy that their experiences would be told, and possibly some respect for the sport would be regained by the public.

Factual errors: The Gaelic term of endearment printed on Maggie's robe is spelled wrong. It should read "mo chuisle", not "mo cuishle", although the pronunciation - "muh kwish-le" - fits better with the misspelled version.

Chapter 20 (1:12:02) Fight talk

Boxing is the peripheral edge of society; it is not a mainstream sport, in comparison to football, baseball, basketball or golf. It has a sort of lone little society out there.

Chapter 21 (1:12:36) Visiting the family

This story about her buying a house also comes from the fighter Lucia Rijker “Billie the Blue Bear” (Technical advisor and cameo in the film), who to this day gets choked up relating the story to the press in interviews. She said that after she acquired some money from boxing, she wanted to purchase a new home for her mother. One of the reasons why she started fighting was that her parents divorced and they were really struggling, and she remembers that her mother was ungrateful about the gift. She said that her mother would complain about her sofa, and then she would make a little money and then buy her mother a new sofa, but it was never enough.

Another time Billie was on the cover of the newspaper and she was excited and showed her mother, and her mothers comments were, “you look like a man.” It felt like someone had spit her in the face, as she so wanted her mother’s approval.

1:12:55 Errors in geography: When Maggie is taking her mother to the new home she just bought her, there are palm trees around the other houses in the neighborhood. This scene is supposed to be in a small town in Missouri, where palm trees do not grow.

1:15:56 The role of "Little girl in truck" was played by Clint Eastwood's daughter, Morgan Eastwood.



Chapter 22 (1:16:50) The best lemon pie

Sometimes it is more important for the audience to feel with you the emotions, rather than to see every emotional shot. Sometimes it is what you don’t see that teases the imagination more than what you see, this is reflected in Eastwood’s choices of actors turning their backs to the camera, or the lighting in shadows.

Clint Eastwood born 1930, was 75 when this film was released.



Chapter 23 (1:19:06) Decisions

Scrappy provides the point of view for us, through his voice-overs he is the audience. This is not a carry over from the novel; in fact the Scrappy character does not exist in the novel, but does exist in another F.X. Toole story.

Chapter 24 (1:12:22) Scrap in the ring

The situation where Danger gets beat up by the other guys in the gym is a true story from Lucia Rijker “Billie the Blue Bear”. She was working out at a gym and one of the trainers asked if she wanted to go a round. She said sure as she didn’t want to back down from a challenge. She knocked out three guys and the trainer got pissed off, so he placed a pro in the ring with her and she got badly beaten up. The gym manager walked in and stopped the beating, just what scrappy does for Danger in the movie.

Anthony Mackie “Shawrelle Berry” doesn’t like Danger at all, just the fact that this guy is allowed to work out in the same gym, bothers him. The fact that Maggie is in the gym also bothers him, as he sees that he is losing his coach, and not getting the attention he thinks that he deserves, thus he gets into a fight with Danger. Scrap puts him in his place, old school style.



Continuity: Before Maggie's fight in England, Frankie gives her a new robe which she puts on over a black top and shorts. When she enters the ring, and takes off the robe, she's wearing a totally different color outfit.

Chapter 25 (1:24:47) Round one

During the film process, the production stage of this film, Hilary Swank took off her boots one day and had a blister the size of her palm on the base of her foot. She didn’t want anyone to know that she was injured, as she didn’t want to slow up the production of the movie. She also stated that this is what happens to boxers, they get hurt, they get an infection and they continue on. She went home and popped the blister and blood oozed out of the sore, the next day at practice she noticed that the whole area was red and that she had a red line going up her leg. She immediately went to the hospital where she was informed that she had a staff infection, and that had she waited even a few hours later, she might have lost her foot, or leg, or it could have been fatal.

Clint Eastwood was not informed of the injury until an interviewer from 60 minutes told him about it, ten months after the film was released. He stated, “That doesn’t surprise me, that is just the kind of actress Hilary is.”

Chapter 26 (1:28:30) Round two

Boxing and Kickboxing champion Lucia Rijker, who also plays the part of Billie "The Blue Bear" in the film, was Hillary Swank's boxing coach.



Factual errors: When Maggie is going to the ring with the green (typical Irish color) suit and the letters "Mo cuishle" (Irish Gaelic) and the harp (Irish symbol) on her back, she's accompanied by some pipers playing bagpipes (Scottish instrument).

Irish people play the uilleann pipe (Irish instrument), activating the bag with their elbow, not blowing like the Scottish. Audio/visual unsynchronized: During any fight when people are yelling "Mo cuishle", watch the spectators around and you'll notice that no one is mouthing the words, or is in sync with those words. Even if the yelling came from

offscreen (i.e. from the farthest bleachers) the noise should have sounded from far away, not as neat and close as it sounds.

Looking at this genre of films there are many stereotypes that are repeated in boxing films that assist in their success on the big screen, here are the rules.

- (1) Corner man as crusty saint.
- (2) The clueless referee.
- (3) The three-minute title fight workout.
- (4) Women who hate boxing who marry boxers,
- (5) A mob that roars,
- (6) The champ - he hate me. (see enclosed article)



Chapter 27 (1:32:00) The accident

Here the movie takes a turn that is not anticipated by the audience plot twist, so often we are forced to accept these happy endings, that this is a surprise.

It is nice to embark on this journey that is inspiring and real, uplifting and sad. Because the emotions of the characters are real, you as an audience member are able to connect to that.

Chapter 28 (1:33:16) Her fault, his fault

“If you want to make a good movie, you always have to take a risk.” Clint Eastwood. Angelica Huston originally brought the book "Rope Burns" to producer Albert Ruddy's attention, hoping that he would ask her to direct the film. She guaranteed that he would cry after reading the "Million Dollar Baby" story, and he admits that he did. However, by the time Ruddy acquired the rights, Huston was busy on another project. Clint Eastwood based his character's voice on producer Albert S. Ruddy.

1:35:10 C1/C2 Complete means that the individual is immobile from the neck down, no hope for repair

Instead of running from pain, which is the natural thing in life, in boxing you step into it, get me?" F.X. Toole

1:36:00 After reading the book Albert Ruddy, the producer, stated his routine by calling up F.X. Toole, contacting his agent. His agent told him that under no circumstance would Toole option this story to anyone in Hollywood. HBO originally wanted to buy the entire book and do a series on boxing, but they didn't go through with the rights.

F. X. Toole had a fascinating life; he was a very intense Irish gentleman, he was a bullfighter in Mexico, learned to speak Spanish, longshoreman, writer, corner man, and a world traveler. After Toole spent two hours on the phone with Albert Ruddy they decided to meet for drinks, where the two of them got plastered in about three or four

hours. Toole was a devote Catholic who went to church on a daily basis, carried over in the character of Frankie in the movie.

Paul Haggis, Screen writer/Producer (Walker Texas Ranger) The script is the first draft written by Paul and accepted by Clint Eastwood. Something that is highly unusual in Hollywood, it is not uncommon for a script to go through 10 to 20 rewrites, and then more rewrites on the set. Clint Eastwood always has a vision of what the movie is to look like, but he always wants to see what the other artists bring to that vision. Writer Paul Haggis was directing *Crash* (2004) and was scheduled to direct this film when Clint Eastwood (who was to act only) asked to direct it as well. Haggis agreed to step aside as director.

Tom Rosenberg (Producer) knew Hilary Swank and the similarities that Hilary had with the character of Maggie, as far as her background and up bringing, thus he sent her a script. Hilary loved the script from the initial reading of the material. Tom knew that Hilary would become an actual fighter to do this role.

“Boxing is an unnatural act” whispered the voice. “Understand me on this kid. Everything in boxing is backwards to life.” F.X. Toole

Chapter 29 (1:38:00) Caregivers

When the Warner Brothers executive team saw the first edit of the film they cried as the story was so powerful, and this was without sound effects or a musical score.

Chapter 30 (1:40:20) A cabin in Innisfree

From the Official Website, by Warner Brothers

Legendary producer/director/actor Clint Eastwood chose *Million Dollar Baby* as the follow-up to his highly acclaimed, Academy Award-winning 2003 drama *Mystic River* upon reading Haggis’ script. “What interested me about *Million Dollar Baby* is the fact that it isn’t really a boxing story,” Eastwood says. “It’s a love story about a person who is distressed about his non-existent relationship with his daughter, and who then finds a sort of surrogate daughter in this young girl who is trying to make her mark on the world as a boxer.”

Chapter 31 (1:43:40) Family business

Eastwood’s legendary talent, no-nonsense directing style and keen understanding of performance have made him a filmmaker that many accomplished actors aspires to work with. Under his direction, Sean Penn and Tim Robbins garnered Academy Awards for Best Actor and Best Supporting Actor, respectively, for their extraordinary performances in *Mystic River*.

“My theory in directing actors is to not insert the ego,” Eastwood explains. “Having come up in that side of the business, I’m very sympathetic to the securities that are necessary and the insecurities that are unnecessary to make a good performance, and so I let the actors bring a lot to the table. When they bring something that’s good, fine; and

when they bring something that's not quite so good, I make adjustments to it. I try to ease into everything and then eventually the performances come together. You set a working environment for the actors and then they feel good about themselves."

Eastwood sees *Million Dollar Baby* as a film enriched not only by the multi-layered performances of his cast, but by the backdrop against which the characters struggle to realize their greatest desires and confront their deepest fears.

"Boxing plays an important role in the story, but this picture isn't about boxing; it's about human relationships," Eastwood emphasizes. "And there are some things that go unspoken in the film. Just as it was with *Mystic River*, the audience has to participate somewhat in deciding where the story goes after the film ends."

Chapter 32 (1:50:30) Asking a favor

Morgan Freeman was originally approached to play the role of Frankie Dunn. But even before Clint Eastwood took on directing and starring roles, he decided to take the part of Eddie "Scrap-Iron" Dupris.

Chapter 33 (1:56:19) You'll be lost

Director Clint Eastwood envisioned a very specific look that he wanted to achieve for *Million Dollar Baby*. "I was trying to get a period look with this film," he reveals. "Even though the picture is set in the present, I was trying to capture the feeling that this story is taking place in another time in history. It could have been the '40s, '50s, '60s, '70s – I wanted it to have a timeless quality."

The director was aided in this effort by cinematographer Tom Stern, who began his long association with Eastwood on the 1982 film *Bird* and served as director of photography on *Blood Work* and *Mystic River*, and production designer Henry Bumstead.

Million Dollar Baby marks the twelfth collaboration between Clint Eastwood and Academy Award-winning Bumstead, winner of two Academy Awards for his work on *The Sting* and *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

Chapter 34 (2:00:00) She got her shot

Chapter 35 (2:04:00) What Mo Chuisle means

Mo Chuisle means my darling, my blood. "Mo chuisle" literally means "My pulse", but can mean "My love" or "My darling". It's a term of endearment taken from the original phrases "A chuisle mo chroí", or "Pulse of my heart".

There are several elements of the picture which are unspoken, the ending is one and there are several relationships that are also unspoken. It is up to the audience to help participate in that and decide where the character of Frankie will end up.

Chapter 36 (2:06:00) Wishful thinking

Technical term is Euthanasia, or mercy killing.

One of the biggest reveals of the movie is that Scrappy has been narrating the film not for the audience's sake but for whose sake, Frankie's daughter? Also we understand why Scrappy has been narrating the film. It is genius!

Chapter 37: End Credits

Why Boxing's a knockout on film

with feel-good clichés in its corner, a movie ought to be a contender

By Michael Booth , Denver Post Staff Writer, June 12, 2005

Boxing is nearly dead as a sport but more vital than ever at the movies.

Hardly anyone can name even one of the current world heavyweight champions - or make sense of the alphabet soup of title belts - while Russell Crowe, Will Smith and Hilary Swank are the most famous boxers of their generation.

Boxing works better as fiction than reality. A dwindling core of spectators watches live bouts amid growing criticism of the sport as bloody, inept, unsettling and possibly corrupt.

The stereotypes and archetypes created by generations of boxing movies, though, seem more important to people every decade and more powerful in our popular culture. The most coveted trophy in boxing these days is not the gilded belt of the "new world champion," but the Academy Award. "Rocky" won in 1976, "Million Dollar Baby" won last year, and unless "Cinderella Man" turns into a box-office tomato can, the Depression-era weeper and star Russell Crowe are early Oscar bets.

We've heard enough coach-potato sports writer's bloviate about the "sweet science" of facing off inside a ring. But boxing movies resonate because of less obvious clichés that gift wrap little daydreams for our everyday lives.

The Loyal Gal Who Kisses Boo-Boos. The Grouchy Corner Man Who Would Beat Up the Bad Guy Himself if He Wasn't Five-Foot-Two. The Supportive (or Abusive) Mob That Bought Tickets. The Ineffectual Referee. The Dirty Champion. The Training Montage, or Get Strong in Three Minutes. Consider this a handy checklist of ideas for you to tick off the next time you see "Requiem for a Heavyweight" or "The Hurricane."

Corner man as crusty saint. Don't we all want a cigar-chomping boss with a heart of gold? Someone who will call us pathetic when we need it, then stand by our side and snarl at our opponents when the heat is on. (A quick hand with the No Swell tool helps, too.) Burgess Meredith seemed to have retired the role forever in "Rocky," but Paul Giamatti breathes new life into the myth. In "Cinderella Man," Giamatti may be even tougher than Crowe's James Braddock. And they make Giamatti human by giving him a

beautiful wife, after too many recycles of Morgan Freeman or Meredith as monkish gym rats.

The clueless referee. Memo to the refs: Boxers can be nasty. But boxing referees are always somewhere else when the dirty punch happens. This stereotype speaks to our underdog delusions: We all know life isn't fair, and you can't count on the government to sort out your problems. It's as if the ref has never seen a head butt before, or a jab below the belt, or a contender brained by a flying chair. The entire world of pro wrestling is built on this premise. Some argue "Million Dollar Baby" took this cliché to new lows, letting the mean champion terrorize poor lil' good ol' girl Hilary Swank.

The three-minute title fight workout. Boxing movies didn't necessarily invent the training montage, but they sure perfected it. They feed on our desire for reward without suffering. Start with an out-of-shape, self-doubting contender. Have him hit something unorthodox, like a side of beef. Make him jog in ugly sweats. Make that speed bag waggle like a dog's tail at supertime. Voila! Instant champion and it took less than 180 seconds of hard work. Rocky lifts himself out of the Philadelphia gutters to sprint up the city's most famous stairway.

Women who hate boxing who marry boxers. Isn't it time for a psychologist to write a book about this strange phenomenon? These delicate flowers who fall in with pugilists. Hey, these women can't take a punch! "Oh honey, please don't fight again." "Sweetie pie, stay home with me and the turtles!" Secretly, or not so secretly, every good man longs for a good woman who will sweetly kiss the vicious cuts at the corners of his soulful eyes. Talia Shire stretched the genre for "Rocky" by turning Adrian into a near-catatonic recluse. But of course she shows up for the big fight. For a star turn that attacked this cliché head-on, watch Maureen O'Hara give John Wayne as good as she gets in "The Quiet Man."

A mob that roars. The extras who populate the bleachers for boxing movies have seen way too many gladiator pictures. Thumbs up or thumbs down, the spectators are a picked scab of raw emotion. They want the underdog to win, of course, but they're willing to give up that dream as long as somebody gets pummeled. They love their Cinderella Man and will carry him from the arena on their shoulders. But if he clenches one too many times in his next fight or dances away from a beating, they'll drop him like a rotten pumpkin. Relief for this hoary staple came with the internal strength of boxers in movies like "The Hurricane," where Denzel Washington's Rubin Carter fought for pride, not adulation.

The champ - he hate me. The person we defeat must deserve to be defeated. Americans find it too confusing to choose between worthy opponents. So one of them must be evil. The reigning champion taunts us, stacks the odds in his favor, sneers at our girlfriends and mothers, and never, ever fights fair. Why, in "Million Dollar Baby," the champ is so mean she turns the underdog into a quadriplegic! Carl Weathers as Apollo Creed brought new energy to an old concept in "Rocky," bringing a suave beauty and friendly arrogance to the part. In "Cinderella Man," Max Baer as played by Craig Bierko is as dirty as they

come, even calling out Mrs. Braddock. The cliché suits the needs of any audience - those who believe the world is run by tyrants and stacked hopelessly against us, and those who believe clean living and a three-minute training montage can overcome all obstacles.

Step in the ring with these winners

Everyone has seen "Rocky." A lot of folks by now have seen "Million Dollar Baby." If you haven't seen "Cinderella Man" in the theater, give yourself a treat and go. But there are plenty of other boxing movies that deserve a look on DVD. Here are a few:

"The Hurricane" (1999) features one of Denzel Washington's most memorable roles, as boxing great Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, imprisoned in his prime by misguided prosecution of a New Jersey murder case.

"Raging Bull" (1980) is a must-see because it insists on honesty at every point, while the typical boxing movie goes for cheap sentiment. It shoulda been the contender for the Oscar, but lost to "Ordinary People." Robert De Niro won, though, for his brutal and relentless portrayal of Jake La Motta.

"Fat City" (1972) takes on a completely different boxing world under the gritty gaze of John Huston: small-time, small-stakes gambling in California, far from the heavyweight bright lights.

"Pulp Fiction" (1994) isn't much of a boxing movie, but it's a terrific film that shows a smart palooka trying to flee the sport on his own terms. Bruce Willis makes a punchy puncher.

"The Great White Hope" (1970) is the story of boxer Jack Johnson, the first black heavyweight champion, whose career was scuttled by racism. (He's called Jefferson in the film.) It was the breakout role for James Earl Jones.

"The Quiet Man" (1952) from director John Ford makes domestic life a brawling epic with his tale of an Irish-American fighting champ going home to the old country to settle down. John Wayne ends up battling fiancée Maureen O'Hara and her wily brother, to great comic effect.

— *Michael Booth*