

RUMBLE IN THE RING

Written by

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INT. BOXING GYM - DAY

MONTGOMERY - 16, leader of the preppies, posh - is focusing intently as he beats a punching bag held by ELLIOTT - 15, also a preppy, loyal to a fault. Around the room, others are doing various boxing drills. Beethoven's Fifth plays from an iPod classic mounted on a speaker. In the break area, boxers are sipping tea out of fine china.

The doors fly open. The music stops. The group that comes through are just silhouettes. All the boxers except Montgomery stop to look.

MONTGOMERY  
(Still punching)  
Members only, gentlemen.

The door shuts. Standing there is EDDIE - leader of the greasers, snarky - and his band of badasses.

EDDIE  
Sure you can deal for a moment,  
Monty.

Montgomery punches a full force straight right, knocking Elliott onto his ass. Elliott resumes his position.

MONTGOMERY  
(threateningly)  
Montgomery. Don't call me Monty.

EDDIE  
Pleased to meet 'cha.

Eddie offers his hand but Montgomery ignores it; continues his drill. Eddie recovers; uses his hand to smooth back his slicked-back hair.

MONTGOMERY  
I know who you are. Eddie  
Caulfield. Your ascension to power  
was quite remarkable after being  
the new kid just a couple of months  
prior.

EDDIE  
Then you'll listen to my  
proposition.

Montgomery stops and faces Eddie

MONTGOMERY  
Listen? Yes. I cannot promise you  
any more.

Elliott appears with a cup of tea for Montgomery. Montgomery accepts it without looking and, with no difficulty, drinks it with his gloves still on.

MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)

Well?

EDDIE

Alrighty. So, my boys told me about this whole dance situation. We got ours and you've got yours. Problem is: not enough girls to go around. Now, we could do it like it's been done past years. But that was before I came to town. And I gotta better idea.

MONTGOMERY

Do tell.

EDDIE

We box for 'em.

Montgomery and his fellow preps snicker.

MONTGOMERY

You vs. Me? At... boxing?

EDDIE

(irked)

Oh, so now you've got tough? I can take down a fairy cake like you, dontchu worry.

MONTGOMERY

On the streets? I have little doubt. But the ring is my domain.

EDDIE

So they been tellin' me. Chose it for that there very reason.

MONTGOMERY

But surely there must be a catch. Why on earth would you suggest fighting a battle you could not possibly win?

EDDIE

'Cause boxing schmoxing. I know how to really fight and I think I can beat a pup like you. Like I said, dontchu worry. I'm from Philly.

MONTGOMERY

And?

EDDIE

Haven't you never seen Rocky?

MONTGOMERY

(condescendingly)

You mean to suggest that merely being born in the same city as the FICTIONAL boxer Rocky Balboa makes you a better combatant? Don't make me laugh!

EDDIE

'Ey! Dontchu be bearing down on my boy Rocky.

MONTGOMERY

They're fantastic pieces of cinema. I'm not saying any different. But they don't make a great boxer. Nor does being born in the city of Philadelphia.

EDDIE

Dontchu-

MONTGOMERY

I know. Don't I worry. Have the girls agreed?

EDDIE

That's the beauty of it. They don't hafta! We just call off whichever school's dance that loses.

Montgomery considers.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(smiling mischievously)

So... when you wanna do this, Monty?

CUT TO: THE RING

INT. BOXING GYM - NIGHT

Montgomery and Eddie are in their corners. Lights blare down on the ring. Eddie has been decked out in loaned gear. Elliott stands behind Montgomery's corner. For Eddie, it's his second-in-command, GUS - 17, greaser, short and stout.

Montgomery's corner.

ELLIOTT  
(to Montgomery)  
Calm yourself. Take your time. Test  
him this first round.

MONTGOMERY  
(to Elliott, angrily)  
Oh please, Elliott . I can handle  
this underprivileged snot.

Eddie's corner.

GUS  
...show 'em what we'ze at Saint  
Basilides're all about.

EDDIE  
Dontchu worry, Gus. This privileged  
prick won't see what's comin' to  
'im!

The bell rings. ROUND 1.

Montgomery goes into a boxing stance. Eddie stands straight. Montgomery erupts; rushes in with a powerful right straight punch to Eddie's face. Before it can land, Eddie lands a quick left to Montgomery's gut, interrupting his onslaught.

Montgomery keels over. Eddie assumes a perfect boxing stance. He lands a combo; Eddie's fighting dirty. Montgomery regains composure and raises his arms to block.

Eddie backs off. They stand circling one another. Montgomery realizes he's underestimated his opponent.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Got a few good shots in there,  
dinnit I, Monty?

MONTGOMERY  
I told you not to call me that!

Monty swings. The bell rings. He stops just dead of Eddie's face. Eddie stares him down; Never flinches once.

END OF ROUND 1. Eddie and Montgomery return to their corners.

Elliott offers Montgomery a cup of tea. Montgomery knocks it out of his hand.

MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)  
(frazzled)  
What in all hell was that?

ELLIOTT  
I don't know for sure but it seems  
to me that that *townie* did not let  
on the full extent of his training.

Gus is fixing up Eddie's hair with hairspray and a comb.

GUS  
You gots this, boss! You show 'em  
good.

EDDIE  
I think I need ta slow down this  
round, Gus.

GUS  
Yeah, don't show 'em too much,  
y'know? Slow down is right, boss.  
Very smart.

Bell rings. ROUND 2.

Both are much more tempered this time around. They circle one  
another. Montgomery's gloves are raised. Eddie's aren't.

EDDIE  
You're seein' that broad, Penny,  
yeah? Think imma ask 'er, after I  
knock your ass out.

MONTGOMERY  
(irked)  
What an active imagination you  
have. Is that a side effect of  
being poor?

That sets off Eddie. He rushes in and starts throwing punches  
all over the place. Montgomery blocks them all.

Eddie continually throws punches left and right, attempting  
to knock down Montgomery's guard. He breaths heavily and  
stops punching. Montgomery sees his opening and WHAM lands a  
hit followed by a combo. The left jab to the face comes as a  
surprise to Eddie; the straight right knocks him off of his  
feet.

Eddie lays on the floor as the count begins. Montgomery backs  
into his corner as the preppies begin to count. Eddie  
struggles to stand back up.

PREPPIES  
ONE...TWO...THREE...FOUR...

MONTGOMERY  
No smart aleck comments now.

PREPPIES  
FIVE...SIX...SEVEN.

Eddie stands up, still appearing out of breath and in pain.

EDDIE  
I'll do my best just for ya, Monty.  
Wouldn't want this to get boring,  
now, would we?

They circle one another again.

The bell rings. END OF ROUND 2.

Montgomery's corner.

ELLIOTT  
That was class! We'll surely be  
hosting the affair at this rate!

Montgomery doesn't look as satisfied. His eyes move to his opponent.

Gus is whispering into Eddie's ear. Eddie smiles and makes eye contact with Montgomery. He winks at him. Montgomery is confused.

The bell rings. Round 3.

Eddie seems to have reclaimed his fighting spirit. Montgomery remains poised. They approach one another.

MONTGOMERY  
Credit to you, you bounce back  
quite quick.

EDDIE  
'Nother side effect of 'being  
poor', I guess.

Eddie jolts a few teasing taps onto Montgomery's defensive stance. Montgomery swings a vicious right straight. It whistles past Eddie's left ear as he effortlessly sidesteps.

Eddie moves in with incredible quickness and throws a flurry of uppercuts to Montgomery's gut. Montgomery sustains them and throws a hook that CRUNCH hits Eddie's eyebrow HARD.

Eddie moves back as Montgomery returns to his normal stance. Eddie wipes his eyebrow with his glove. He sees blood.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Aww ya prick! That was my good side!

Eddie rushes in, leading with a left jab. Montgomery anticipates him and is ready for the counter. SMACK! Eddie hits the floor again.

MONTGOMERY  
Stay down.

Eddie gets up promptly this time. He's battered and bruised now. Confident as ever; but now with a fiery rage in his eyes. They circle one another, fists raised.

EDDIE  
How long ya been a fighter Monty?

MONTGOMERY  
(focused)  
Middle school.

EDDIE  
Heh.

MONTGOMERY  
You've clearly had practice yourself.

EDDIE  
My pop's a coach. Has his own gym. Fought my way out of the womb, practically.

MONTGOMERY  
(surprised)  
Oh, really?  
(taunting)  
Well, time doesn't qualify skill.

EDDIE  
Y'know, Monty, that's very true but, truth be told, it helps a damn lot. I've gained a rep for my right straight. Held it back 'til now 'cause I didn't think I'd be needin' it, but now-

The bell rings. End of Round 3.



EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Now, I think I'll be needin' it.

Eddie winks; Montgomery scowls. They return to their corners.

MONTGOMERY  
Earl grey, Elliot, PRONTO!

Elliott pulls the cup seemingly out of nowhere. Montgomery's glare can't be pulled from Eddie, who's brow is being stitched by Gus across the way; not breaking eye-contact, looking smug.

Montgomery looks down at his gloves. The blood splatters unnerve him.

Bell rings. ROUND 4

They resume their circling.

Eddie lowers his gloves and stands facing Montgomery.

EDDIE  
Show time baby!

The greasers cheer.

MONTGOMERY  
Raise your gloves.

EDDIE  
No can do.

MONTGOMERY  
Raise your gloves. It's improper.

EDDIE  
You're really scared, ain't 'cha?

Montgomery considers; goes for an uppercut at the exact same moment that Eddie shoots his famous right straight. BOOM! They both land. Montgomery is knocked out clean. Eddie flashes a smile before falling down himself. The cheering has stopped. Everyone's disappointed.

MONTGOMERY'S ESTATE - NIGHT

Montgomery lays on a lavish couch reading The Prince and the Pauper. He's all bruised up, wearing a designer dressing gown. The room drips of extreme wealth.

The door slams shut. Montgomery turns a page. The doorbell rings.

MONTGOMERY  
(frustrated)  
That must be mother. Why can't she  
ever remember her damned keys?

He gets up with great difficulty.

INT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

There is a grand staircase and a big, heavy front door.  
Montgomery looks in the key bowl but doesn't see his Mom's  
keys. He opens the door.

MONTGOMERY  
I don't know where they've-

He stops when he realizes it is Eddie standing before him.  
He, too, has seen better days.

EDDIE  
Sup?

MONTGOMERY  
To what do I owe the pleasure,  
Eddie?

EDDIE  
I knew your sorry ass would be  
'ere, so I figured we could do  
some'n since everyone else is at  
that dance at the girls school.

Montgomery's expression is blank.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Guess we fought like idiots for  
nothing, eh?

MONTGOMERY  
(quietly)  
No.

EDDIE  
Heh? Didn't catch that, my eardrums  
all banged up.

MONTGOMERY  
I said no: it wasn't for nothing.  
That was a beautiful match you  
fought.

Montgomery smiles; offers out his hand. Off his look, Eddie  
accepts. They shake.

EDDIE

Look, I know, I'm a shmuck, but so  
are you. So, whaddya say,  
Montgomery? Pals?

MONTGOMERY

Call me Monty.

MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)

Well, I have no plans for the  
evening since our little fisticuffs  
got us banned from tonight's  
proceedings - so... do come in. I  
will set up the screening room.

EDDIE

Screening room! Just how big's this  
place? Whaddya wanna watch?

MONTGOMERY

I recall we share a fondness of the  
Rocky films?

Montgomery shuts the door after Eddie.

CUT TO BLACK.