

Ash's Advice: Article 3

By Ashley Moore

On Tuesday, March 11, *An Unbreakable Bond* makes its world debut at the Miami International Film Festival. This is a film by Emilio Estefan documenting the relationship between NFL Hall of Famer Nick Buoniconti and his son Marc. It is a documentary that tells the story of their nearly three-decade-long struggle to find a cure for spinal cord injuries. I am incredibly excited about this premiere for two reasons. First, I am excited to see more people learn about The Miami Project, especially those with spinal cord injuries living without the hope of a cure. Second, when I am not doing whatever I can to help The Miami Project, I dedicate my time and passion to the art of cinema. In light of my excitement over the film premiere, I thought I would write this month's column about another film involving an individual living with a spinal cord injury, *The Intouchables*.

The Intouchables is a highly acclaimed French comedy teaching us that sometimes you have to reach into someone else's world to find what is missing in your own. Philippe, a millionaire, living life as a quadriplegic, hires the most unlikely caregiver, a younger man from the projects in Paris named Driss. After a unique bond forms between patient and caregiver, Philippe and Driss help glue the pieces of each other's broken lives back together.

I know you are probably skeptical of watching a foreign film if you are not a cinematic connoisseur like myself, but hear me out. Many stories are visually and emotionally provocative enough to distract you from your everyday life and to make you stop and think. In that case, it doesn't matter whether you have to read the dialogue instead of listening to it. Foreign or not, a good film like this is always worth your time.

Why do I believe you should see this film? I want others to see this film because of the acting and story, the same reasons it was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Francois Cluzet is the actor who plays Philippe, who has quadriplegia. Cluzet is a physically able man who has never had a spinal cord injury yet wholly fooled me into believing he could not move from the shoulders down. I often feel like most people do not understand how a person with a spinal cord injury lives. Seeing an actor fully embody paralysis as Francois Cluzet does in *The Intouchables* gives me hope that people can understand. Also, I am an aspiring screenwriter. I live for a good story. Based on the true story of a quadriplegic man named Philippe Pozzo di Borgo, this film has a beautiful story. He is still good friends with his caretaker, the person Driss is based on. Knowing that this story of strength and friendship is true makes it even more powerful.

I have two pieces of advice for this month. The first is to see two films, *An Unbreakable Bond* and *The Intouchables*. The second is to tell as many people as you can about these two films. More people need to know how desperate those living with spinal cord injuries are for a cure that will make simple daily tasks easier. These two films can help people understand just that. Tell your family and friends. We need as many people as possible to help The Miami Project find a cure.