



A Second Wind: The True Story that Inspired the Motion Picture The Intouchables

Philippe Pozzo di Borgo

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“He was unbearable, vain, proud, brutal, inconsistent, human. Without him, I would have rotted to death. . . . He was my guardian devil.”

As the descendant of two prominent French families and director of one of the world’s most celebrated champagne houses, Philippe Pozzo di Borgo was not someone in the habit of asking for help. Then, in 1993, right on the heels of his wife being diagnosed with a terminal illness, a paragliding accident left him a quadriplegic.

Passing his days hidden behind the high walls of his Paris townhouse, Philippe found himself the modern equivalent of an “untouchable”—unable to reach out to others, as others were afraid to reach out to him. The only person who seemed unaffected by Philippe’s condition was someone who had been marginalized his entire life—Abdel, the unemployed, uninhibited Algerian immigrant who would become his unlikely caretaker. In between dramas and jokes, he sustained Philippe’s life for the next ten years.

A Second Wind, the basis for the major motion picture *The Intouchables*, is the inspiring true story of two men who refused to ask for help, and then wound up helping each other.

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