

# Dead man walking vs the green mile: movie analysis

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While *Last Dance* isn't strictly a gender-switched re-telling of *Dead Man Walking*, there are a number of obvious similarities. In this film, the death row inmate is Cindy Liggett (Sharon Stone), a woman tried and convicted for the brutal beating deaths of two high school kids. There's no doubt that she's guilty, and Cindy never pleads innocence, although she does claim to have been high on crack at the time of the deed. As a result of various appeals, she has been awaiting death for twelve years, and the execution order has been handed down three times. On this occasion, barring a last minute miracle, it appears that the lethal injection will be administered.

Enter Rick Hayes (Rob Morrow), a new hire at the Clemency Board. After reviewing Cindy's case, he thinks she might have been given a raw deal — her lawyer didn't bring up the drugs in her defense. So, after breaking through Cindy's hard-as-nails exterior, he begins to gather evidence to obtain another stay of execution. The deeper he digs, the more he becomes emotionally involved, risking his career for the life of this friendless woman he has learned to care for.

At the center of the film are two quite selfish people Cindy Liggett (Stone) is awaiting execution for bloodily beating to death two teenagers a dozen years before.

Rich Hayes (Morrow) is a dilettante in his first real job — an attorney reviewing capital punishment cases for.

REVIEW—Possible clemency who find they have enough in common to become fast friends.

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Rich Hayes (Morrow) is a dilettante in his first real job — an attorney reviewing capital punishment cases for possible clemency.

He's driven by some mixture of guilt over his feckless past and the challenge of a seemingly hopeless case — Cindy is unrepentantly guilty and doesn't want to miss her date with the execution chamber. (It's more humane than lifelong incarceration where televisions blare game shows and soap operas incessantly, she explains.)

Rick works in an unnamed state in the Ozarks, which furnishes Stone with an annoying accent and the movie with an opportunity to exploit racial and sexual prejudices.

“ I'm not beggin' for mercy I'm not goin' to get,” Cindy drawls to Rick. She's savvy enough to realize the political ramifications involved in her case. It's an election year and one of her victims was the son of a close friend of the governor — who has the power of clemency.

Rick encounters the political pressure against his crusade to get Cindy's sentence commuted to life in prison.

The first to back Rick against the wall also becomes his staunchest ally — his boss, Sam Burns (Randy Quaid, in the most interesting role and performance of the film).

Stone's character has been on death row for 12 years, following a pair of crack-induced murders: vicious, brutal murders of two teenage lovers. She doesn't even want to fight the sentence anymore, but state law requires a review by a clemency board. Enter Rob Morrow as the new lawyer on the block. Morrow's brother is the governor's chief of staff, and he pulled strings to get the kid a break. The kid drives a Porsche. Has a stupid haircut. Wasn't all that upstanding as a lawyer in the past. And before you know it, he develops strong, um, feelings for the convict. Why does he feel this way? Where do his emotions spring from? Hell if I know. But he fights like a hellcat, perhaps I should say overemotionalizes (in layman's terms, "overacts"), to save her life. The battle continues up to the end of the movie, which I won't reveal, just in case you actually sit through this thing. It's not a hard thing to sit through, it's just not a great way to waste your time.

I'm not fully sure if the problem is solely a bad performance on Morrow's part, or a valiant effort to make something of a bad script — and the script is a bad one. Big death scenes should not make an audience laugh, but they did. The final scene (which I will not describe) should not make the audience keel over, but it did.

Across the board, whether from Stone, Morrow, or Peter Gallagher (playing Morrow's brother), the performances were not entrancing. The supporting characters are all stereotypical — the southern governor up for reelection; the minority death row inmate convinced that the "white girl" is going to be the one who gets off; the bureaucrat who's seen these cases come and go, always the same way.

That would be Randy Quaid, who begins as a stereotype and is the sole member of the cast to develop into a full-bodied character. But it isn't enough, and frankly, my dears, I didn't give a damn. It's not worth very much to watch an accent in search of an emotional cacophony, which is a simple way to describe Sharon Stone's performance.

### **THE GREEN MILE**

But placed in such a self-important framework, a lot of what made the book tick starts to feel borderline hokey. The crux of *The Green Mile* centers on the relationship between Paul Edgecomb (Tom Hanks, in reliable, decent-guy mode), the head guard at Cold Mountain Penitentiary's death row, and John Coffey (Michael Clarke Duncan), a seven-foot musclebound hulk sentenced to death for the rape and murder of two little girls.

As soon as Coffey reaches Cold Mountain, Edgecomb begins to suspect something is not quite right. Coffey is afraid of the dark, he cries at the slightest provocation, and displays all the ferocity of a bunny rabbit — not the sort of behavior you would expect from a killer of children. And Edgecomb's suspicions grow stronger after he sees Coffey perform what can only be described as a miracle — an event that throws *The Green Mile* into loftier and trickier territory.

That's only one of the ways in which *The Green Mile* confounds expectations. Also featured prominently in the plot are a personable little mouse, as well as a magical cameo appearance by Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. This is not your ordinary prison drama. Despite its grim subject matter, the movie is really a New Age-y exercise in spiritual uplift — a gloss on faith and

forgiveness married to a plot that never runs out of surprises. The Green Mile feels long, but it's never boring, and Darabont finds the perfect balance of gentle fantasy and harsh reality, giving the film a unique tone that feels completely

Hanks plays Paul Edgecomb, a prison guard on death row who treats his prisoners with respect and compassion a man who is just doing his job when he marches them down that green line on the way to their execution. He has to live with that side of the job. The story is set around the murder of two little sisters and the giant hulk of a man who was caught red-handed with the victims the magical John Coffey (Michael Duncan in a powerful performance). A sadistic little twerp named Percy Wetmore (Doug Hutchison) leads Coffey into his cell, announcing gleefully and repeatedly, " Dead man walking!" Neither the prisoners nor his fellow guards like Percy, but he's safe in his job due to the nepotism of his uncle, who happens to be the governor.

Paul Edgecomb is a slightly cynical veteran prison guard on Death row in the 1930's. His faith, and sanity, deteriorated by watching men live and die, Edgecomb is about to have a complete turn around in attitude. Enter John Coffey, He's eight feet tall. He has hands the size of waffle irons. He's been accused of the murder of two children... and he's afraid to sleep in a cell without a night-light. And Edgecomb, as well as the other prison guards - Brutus, a sympathetic guard, and Percy, a stuck up, perverse, and violent person, are in for a strange experience that involves intelligent mice, brutal executions, and the revelation about Coffey's innocence and his true identity.

## **The Green Mile**

### **Characters:**

Coffey: caught for raping and murdering the Dett. Twins.

Black, docile, slow, not educated

Frightened in the dark

From the south

Kind of magic

Paul: narrator headscrew, married, had a urinary infection and so he found out that Coffey has a " gift of God"

Percy: mean, brutal, evil, related to the governor

Wharton: evil, crazy, mad, he actually murdered the twins, he is a good actor (plays the quiet sick man and then he starts fighting, when they bring him to the E-Block)

### **About the electric chair:**

Old Sparky is sitting upon a plank platform at the southeast corner of the storeroom . He has stout oak legs , broad oak legs , broad oak arms that had absorbed the terrorized sweat of scares of men in the last minutes of their live and a metal cap . A cord ran from it and through a gasket - circled hole in the cinder block wall behind the chair . Before an execution a sponge was soaked in brine to better conduct the charge of direct current electricity that ran through the wire , through the sponge and into the condemned man`s

brain -\* Usually King only wrote facts , but when he used expressions like ,, terrorized sweat ,, it makes you feel horrified and anxious .

### **The capital punishment:**

The criminal walks down the Green Mile , (corridor ) stops at the office and a priest prays with him . He walks further the corridor and stops in the storeroom , where Old Sparky is placed .( About forty chairs and /or witnesses are in place ) . The criminal sits down in the electric chair and his ankles get secured . Also the warders clamp his wrists . Then one of the guards says : ,, Roll on one !” Then he says to the criminal :” \_\_\_\_\_ , you have been condemned to die in the electric chair , sentence passed by a jury of your peers and imposed by a judge in good standing in his state . God save the people of this state . Do you have anything to say before sentence is carried out ?”

Then the criminal has time to say something , before he gets the mask , the wet sponge and the metal cap .

After that the guard says : ,, \_\_\_\_\_ , electricity shall now be passed through your body until you are dead , in accordance with state law. May God have mercy on your soul , Roll on two !”

Effects on the witnesses

moral : it`s immoral to be a murder now too , just because somebody killed a relative , you don`t make anything better physical : They get sick and lose consciousness , even the doctor



They watch somebody dying and many of them cannot really handle that psychological : They feel eased , because they think that the horrible past has stopped now . They don` t want to think about it anymore.

Repetitions between the executions

They get shaved

They leave their cells with no protest

Walk up the Green Mile

Office : pray ( with brother Schuster )

Lot of people sit in their chairs to watch

Sit down , fix feet

Get mask on , wet sponge

Get metal cap

First step : ,, roll on one ,,

warden talks to him

,, roll on two ,,

doctor comes

Contrasts

Delacroix :

Percy on position didn't put on the wet sponge ( didn't make it wet )

Burned · stunk ·

Witnesses lost consciousness

Coffey :

Paul takes necklace

Everybody is really sad -\* cries , Paul prays with Coffey

Dettericks shout mean things

Doesn't get the mask ( afraid of darkness )

Paul gives him his hand

Rehersal Del : Percy is on the head position

King criticizes:

He criticize death penalty when he lets the people ( reader ) know , that Coffey didn't kill the kids , but Wharton . But Coffey gets killed ! He shows how brutal death penalty can be and how hard the job for wardens sometimes is.

### **The Detterick case**

Claus Dett. & his wife live in a farm house with their twin girls Cora & Kathe.

On a warm night in June asked for and were given permission to sleep on the screen - enclosed side porch of the house. Their mother kissed them good night and this was the final time she saw them until they were in their coffins and the undertaker had repaired the worst of damage.

Next morning Klaus & Marjorie went out onto the porch and found it empty. The screendoor had been yanked off and on the boards of it were spatters of blood. They found Brower, the dog, lying dead in front of the porch.

A group of men started to search for the twins. They found Cora & Kathy lying in the arms of the biggest man they've ever seen. Their bodies were bloody, they had been raped and killed apparently by this big black man, John Coffey.

Repetitions/contrasts-wonder cure

mouse Melinda Paul

Percy stepped on it tumor urinary infection

almost dead almost dying bad sickness

Let bad things out of his mouth

Everything gets lightened

They got old then ( mouse , Paul )

Can't remember remembers

(sickness ) everything

many people around many people around alone with Coffey

Del watched it

Took mouse in hand kissed her touched penis

Gives him necklace brings cornbread

### **Why Mister Jingle**

1. Mr. Jingles shows the good character of Delacroix
2. Mr. Jingles shows at the end that the story is true , when Paul shows him to Elaine (age shows it's a wonder) .
3. Mr. Jingles structures the story: they find parts of his spool-\* remember everything.
4. Mr. Jingles shows Percy`s bad character – he hates the mouse, wants to kill it.