



Courage (Muhammad Ali) Backstory

Muhammad Ali was raised Cassius Clay in a small home in Louisville, Kentucky. From those humble beginnings neither he nor any observer at that time could have fathomed the path he would carve through life. A Golden Gloves champion at age 17, an Olympic gold medal at age 18, and an undefeated heavyweight champion at age 22.

Spurred by the theft of his prized new bicycle, he was out to get the person responsible. Ali was venting his anger at the local gym, when the perceptive policeman Joe Martin admonished, "You better learn to box first." And box he did. Within a week he had his first match and first win. This feisty 89-pound young man was ready to take on the world. And before his career in the ring ended, the world would know his name as the man crowned heavyweight champion three times—the greatest.

Yet, his greatest fight has not been in the ring. Ironically, after beating the world's toughest opponents, it was Parkinson's disease that would prove to be his greatest foe. But in true Ali style, he met this challenge head on. Instead of shrinking from this difficulty he has stepped onto the world stage once more as a champion. His tireless work raising money to fight this debilitating disease has inspired thousands and endeared him to a new generation of admirers around the world. As he was in the ring, he remains in our eyes—the greatest.

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