

Erin Brockovich

In 1993, Erin Brockovich (Julia Roberts) is an unemployed single mother of three children, who has recently been injured in a traffic accident with a doctor and is suing him. Her lawyer, Ed Masry (Albert Finney), expects to win, but Erin's explosive courtroom behavior under cross-examination loses her the case, and Ed will not return her phone calls afterwards. One day he arrives at work to find her in the office, appearing to do work. She says that he told her things would work out and they didn't, and that she needed a job. He feels bad for her, and decides to give her a try at the office.

Erin is given files for a real-estate case where Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) is offering to purchase the home of Hinkley, California, resident Donna Jensen. Erin is surprised to see medical records in the file and visits Donna, who explains that she had simply kept all her PG&E correspondence together. Donna appreciates PG&E's help: she has had several tumors and her husband has Hodgkin's disease but PG&E has always supplied a doctor at their own expense. Erin asks why they would do that, and Donna replies, "because of the chromium". Erin begins digging into the case and finds evidence that the groundwater in Hinkley is seriously contaminated with carcinogenic hexavalent chromium, but PG&E has been telling Hinkley residents that they use a safer form of chromium. After several days away from the office doing this research, she is fired by Ed—until he realizes that she was working all the time, and sees what she has found out.

Rehired, she continues her research, and over time, visits many Hinkley residents and wins their trust. She finds many cases of tumors and other medical problems in Hinkley. Everyone has been treated by PG&E's doctors and thinks the cluster of cases is just a coincidence, unrelated to the "safe" chromium. The Jensens' claim for compensation grows into a major class-action lawsuit, but the direct evidence only relates to PG&E's Hinkley plant, not to the senior management.

Knowing that PG&E could delay any settlement for years through delays and appeals, Ed takes the opportunity to arrange for disposition by binding arbitration, but a large majority of the plaintiffs must agree to this. Erin returns to Hinkley and persuades all 634 plaintiffs to go along. While she is there, a man approaches her to say that he and his cousin were PG&E employees, but his cousin recently died from the poison. The man says he was tasked with destroying documents at PG&E, but, "as it turns out, I wasn't a very good employee".

He gives Erin the documents: a 1966 memo proves corporate headquarters knew the water was contaminated with hexavalent chromium, did nothing about it, and advised the Hinkley operation to keep this secret. The judge orders PG&E to pay a settlement amount of \$333 million to be distributed among the plaintiffs.

Cast

Julia Roberts	as	Erin Brockovich
Albert Finney	as	Edward L. Masry
Aaron Eckhart	as	George
Marg Helgenberger	as	Donna Jensen
Tracey Walter	as	Charles Embry
Peter Coyote	as	Kurt Potter
Cherry Jones	as	Pamela Duncan
Scarlett Pomers	as	Shanna Jensen
Conchata Ferrell	as	Brenda
Veanne Cox	as	Theresa Dallavale

Scotty Leavenworth	as	Matthew Brockovich
Gemmenne de la Peña	as	Katie Brockovich
Gina Gallego	as	Ms. Sanchez
T.J. Thyne	as	David Foil
Valente Rodriguez	as	Donald
Erin Brockovich	as	Julia
Jamie Harrold	as	Scott

Memorable quotes (with notes on difficult vocabulary)

Erin Brockovich: [testifying in court about her accident] I was **pulling out** real slow, and out of nowhere his Jaguar comes **racing** around the corner like a bat **outta** hell...They took some bone from my hip and put it in my neck; I didn't have insurance so I'm about \$17,000 in debt right now. I couldn't take **painkillers** 'cause they made me too **groggy** to take care of my kids...Matthew's six, Katie's four and Beth's just nine months... I just **wanna** be a good mom, a nice person, a decent citizen. Just wanna take good care of my kids. You know?

Ed Masry: [quietly] Yeah... I know.

Defending Lawyer: \$17,000 in debt? Is your ex-husband helping out?

Erin Brockovich: Which one?

Defending Lawyer: There's more than one?

Erin Brockovich: [becomes defensive] Yeah, there's two. Why?

Defending Lawyer: Right, no doubt. So, you must've been feeling pretty desperate that afternoon.

Erin Brockovich: What's your point?

Defending Lawyer: **Broke**, three kids, no job. A doctor in a Jaguar must've looked like **a pretty good meal ticket**.

Erin Brockovich: What? [referring to the doctor] He **hit** me!

Defending Lawyer: So you say!

Erin Brockovich: [starts yelling] He came **tearing** around the corner out of control!

Defending Lawyer: [sarcastically] An ER doctor who spends his days saving lives was the one out of control...

Erin Brockovich: THAT ASSHOLE SMASHED IN MY FUCKING NECK!

To pull out: immettersi sulla carreggiata; **I was pulling out real slow:** mi stavo immettendo molto lentamente; **To race:** (qui) andare a forte velocità; **Outta:** out of; **Painkiller:** antidolorifico; **Groggy:** malandato/fiacco/malaticcio; **Wanna:** want to; **Broke:** squattrinato; **A pretty good meal ticket:** (qui) un bel pollo da spennare; **To hit:** (qui) andare addosso; **To tear:** (qui) andare a forte velocità; **He came tearing around the corner out of control!:** è sbucato dall'angolo a tutta velocità e ha perso il controllo!

Erin Brockovich: [to Ed, trying to persuade him to **hire** her] Now, I'm smart, I'm hard-working and I'll do anything... and I'm not leaving here without a job. Don't make me **beg**. If it doesn't **work out**, fire me... But don't make me beg!

To hire: assumere; **To beg:** pregare/implorare; **To work out:** (qui): funzionare/andare a buon fine

Erin Brockovich: Annabelle Daniels: 714-454-9346. 10 years old, 11 in May. Lived on the plume since birth. Wanted to be a synchronized swimmer so she spent every minute she could in the PG&E **pool**. She had a tumor in her **brain stem** detected last November, an operation on Thanksgiving, **shrunk** it with radiation after that. Her parents are Ted & Rita. Ted's got Crohn's disease, Rita has chronic headaches, and nausea, and underwent a hysterectomy last fall. Ted grew up in Hinkley. His brother Robbie, and his wife May and their five children: Robbie Jr, Martha, Ed, Rose & Peter also lived on the plume. Their number is 454-9554. You want their diseases?

Pool (swimming pool): piscina; **Brain stem:** tronco cerebrale; **She had a tumor in her brain stem detected last November:** le hanno diagnosticato un tumore al tronco cerebrale lo scorso novembre; **To shrink:** (qui) ridurre

Erin Brockovich: **Ya** know why everyone thinks that all lawyers are **back-stabbing, blood-sucking scum bags**? Cause they are! And I can not believe you expect me to go out, leave my kids with strangers and get people to trust you with *their* lives while all the while **you're screwing me!** You know, Ed, it's not about the number! It's about the way my work is valued in this firm...

[She looks at the two million dollar bonus check]

Ed Masry: Like I was saying, I thought that the number you proposed was inappropriate, so I increased it.

[Turns to walk away and turns around to her]

Ed Masry: Do they teach beauty queens to apologize? Because **you suck at it!**

Erin Brockovich: [Long pause, as Erin looks at the check] Uh, Ed... uh... thank you...

Ya: (slang) you; **back-stabbing:** che accoltellano alle spalle/traditori; **blood-sucking (agg.):** sanguisughe; **scum bag (volg.):** stronzo/bastardo; **To screw someone:** (qui) mettere nei guai; **To suck at something:** fare schifo nel fare qualcosa/non essere in grado di fare qualcosa

Ms. Sanchez: [at the meeting with the PG & E lawyers] Let's be honest here. \$20 million dollars is more money than these people have ever dreamed of.

Erin Brockovich: Oh see, now that **pisses me off.** First of all, since the **demur** we have more than 400 **plaintiffs** and... let's be honest, we all know there are more out there. They may not be the most sophisticated people but they do know how to divide and \$20 million isn't shit when you split it between them. Second of all, these people don't dream about being rich. They dream about being able to watch their kids swim in a pool without worrying that they'll have to have a hysterectomy at the age of twenty. Like Rosa Diaz, a client of ours. Or have their spine deteriorate, like Stan Blume, another client of ours. So before you come back here with another **lame-ass** offer, I want you to think real hard about what your spine is worth, Mr. Walker. Or what you might expect someone to pay you for your uterus, Ms. Sanchez. Then you take out your calculator and you multiply that number by a hundred. Anything less than that is a waste of our time.

[Ms. Sanchez picks up a glass of water]

Erin Brockovich: By the way, we had that water brought in specially for you folks. Came from a **well** in Hinkley.

Ms. Sanchez: [Puts down the glass, without drinking] I think this meeting is over.

To piss someone off (volg.): far incazzare; **Demur:** intentazione di una causa; **Plaintiff:** querelante/ricorrente; **Lame-ass (volg.):** di poco valore/pidocchioso; **Well:** (qui) pozzo/sorgente

Ed Masry: Damn right it is.

Erin Brockovich: Hey Scott, Tell me something. Does PG&E pay you to **cover their ass**, or do you just do it **out of the kindness of your heart?**

Scott: I don't know what you're talking about...

Erin Brockovich: The fuck you don't! Nobody calls me Pat-te, that **heavy-breathing sicko** that called the other night could have only found out about me from you... People are dying, Scott, you've got document after document here telling you why, and you haven't said one word. I wanna know... How the hell you sleep at night!

To cover someone's ass (volg.): coprire le spalle a qualcuno; **Out of the kindness of one's heart:** per bontà d'animo; **Heavy-breathing:** (qui) ansimante; **sicko (o psycho):** psicopatico

Sources: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0195685/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erin_Brockovich_%28film%29