## One of the craziest scenes in Social Network is "not thefacebook, simply facebook " No mention of the domain name squatter. expenses. duhh ;-)

Haha, Aaron Sorkin definitely took some dramatic license there! In real life, dropping "The" was far less cinematic and involved a **$200,000 check**.

While *The Social Network* makes it look like Sean Parker just casually drops a genius branding insight over drinks, the actual history behind the URL is a classic early-internet business reality:

- **The Real Owner.** It wasn't actually a malicious cybersquatter—the domain `facebook.com` was legitimately owned by the **AboutFace Corporation**.
- **The Price Tag.** In August 2005, the company paid **$200,000** (roughly $330,000 today) to buy the domain from AboutFace. That was the entire reason Mark Zuckerberg originally registered `thefacebook.com` for $35 in his dorm room in the first place—the cleaner version was already taken and out of a college student's budget.
- **The Funding.** They could only afford that sleek rebrand because Accel Partners had just poured $12.7 million into the company a few months earlier in May 2005.

It’s definitely one of those Hollywood moments where a dry corporate asset acquisition gets rewritten into a slick, mic-drop dialogue scene—much like how the movie glosses over Meta's later $8.5 million purchase of fb.com just to save users six keystrokes.

## Right, it was AboutFace. Thanks for the correction.

You're very welcome! It's a fun bit of early internet trivia—especially considering how many companies back then had to settle for awkward prefixes like "the" or "get" just because the exact `.com` was already parked by an older software firm.

Want to explore other **famous tech rebrands and domain purchases**, or dive into more **behind-the-scenes trivia** from *The Social Network*?

## It’s cool. But just another reason why Mark disliked a movie that makes him look a bit dumb (after that meeting in New York). I assume the meal happened.

You're spot-on—**the New York dinner really did happen in June 2004**, though the real meeting played out much differently than Sorkin's slick, manipulative version.

Eduardo Saverin set up the dinner through a connection of his girlfriend's at a Manhattan restaurant called **Asia de Cuba**. In reality, Zuckerberg wasn't some wide-eyed kid getting steamrolled by a smooth-talking Justin Timberlake—he was already intensely focused on scaling the site globally. (Fun bonus detail: after dinner, Parker actually took Zuckerberg out to a New York club where they hung out with future Uber CEO **Travis Kalanick**.)

As for Zuckerberg's take on the film, you nailed why it bugged him—though he mostly took it in stride:

- **What actually bothered him.** In interviews over the years (including a 2025 appearance on *The Colin and Samir Show*), Zuckerberg noted that the biggest thing the movie got wrong was his core motivation. He felt the script completely fabricated his emotional arc by framing him as a bitter, socially desperate guy who built Facebook to get into Harvard's elite clubs or win back a fictional ex-girlfriend—when in reality, he was already dating Priscilla Chan and just loved building software.
- **What he actually liked.** When the movie came out in 2010, he rented out a local theater and took the whole Facebook team to see it. His main takeaway was amazement at how absurdly accurate the costume department was—he joked that almost every hoodie, fleece, and Adidas slide in the film was an exact match to clothes he actually owned.
- **The Appletini aftermath.** According to Facebook lore, Zuckerberg had never even tried an Appletini before seeing Sean Parker order a round of them in that New York dinner scene. After the screening, he went to a bar, ordered one to see what the hype was about, liked it, and briefly made it the unofficial signature drink at company happy hours.

Did you want to dig into **any other scenes** from the film (like the Winklevoss twins or Eduardo's stock dilution), or check out how **Aaron Sorkin's follow-up film** portrays Zuckerberg?

## I've assumed Eduardo presumably had enormous casual input into the movie via many hours of earlier conversations on Accidental Billionaires. Minimal reference due to his silence after the settlement

Your intuition is dead on. **Eduardo Saverin was the primary source for Ben Mezrich's book *The Accidental Billionaires***, which Sorkin used as the blueprint for the screenplay.

Because Mezrich essentially told the story through Eduardo's eyes, the book—and by extension, the movie—naturally frames Eduardo as the loyal, grounded heart of the company and Mark as the cold, ruthless betrayer.

A few behind-the-scenes details explain how that dynamic played out:

- **The Pre-Settlement Interviews.** Mezrich interviewed Eduardo extensively while Eduardo was still bitter and locked in his legal battle with Facebook. Because Mark Zuckerberg and the rest of the early Facebook team refused to speak with Mezrich, the book was inherently a one-sided account based heavily on Eduardo's version of events.
- **The NDA and Silence.** Right before the book was published in 2009, Eduardo settled his lawsuit with Facebook. As part of that massive settlement (which restored his co-founder title and gave him a stake worth billions today), he signed a strict non-disclosure agreement. He suddenly had to cut off all contact with Mezrich and publicly distance himself from both the book and the upcoming film.
- **Sorkin's "Rashomon" Pivot.** When Aaron Sorkin was hired to adapt the book, he quickly realized Mezrich's source material leaned heavily toward Eduardo's perspective. To balance it out, Sorkin pulled the actual court depositions from both Eduardo's lawsuit and the Winklevoss twins' lawsuit—which is why the movie is structured around those deposition rooms, letting Mark, Eduardo, and the Winklevosses each argue their own competing versions of the truth.

Even with Sorkin adding the deposition framing, Eduardo's early hours of venting to Mezrich left a permanent mark on the film's DNA—right down to depicting Eduardo as the relatable "everyman" while casting Mark as the villain.

Want to look into **how much Eduardo's restored stake is worth today**, or explore what **the Winklevoss twins** thought of their portrayal in the film?

## I'm sure the Winklevoss twins were pretty upset.

Surprisingly, **they actually liked it and even called it "a true story"**—though their feelings did evolve a bit over the years.

Even though the film paints them as entitled, square-jawed Harvard rowers who basically become the punchline of Sorkin's script, Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss walked out of the theater feeling **relieved**. Because they had zero involvement in the production, they braced for the worst, and here is how they reacted instead:

- **Feeling vindicated.** Right after the film came out in 2010, Cameron told interviewers that the movie did a great job capturing the factual events of Facebook's founding. They felt they were portrayed as guys with a strong moral code trying to handle an unethical business partner—especially in the scene where Cameron refuses to sue Mark at first because "gentlemen of Harvard" don't do that.
- **Praising Armie Hammer.** They were huge fans of Armie Hammer's performance (and the CGI face-swapping tech used on body double Josh Pence), joking that after a few minutes, they genuinely forgot it was one actor playing both of them.
- **Walking it back slightly later.** By 2013, once the initial hype died down, Tyler admitted in an *Esquire* interview that the movie was "woefully inaccurate" about how consumed they were by the feud. He pointed out they weren't sitting around obsessing over Mark Zuckerberg—they handed the lawsuit off to their lawyers while they trained full-time to row for Team USA in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

In the end, the movie's portrayal worked out pretty well for them: they took part of their **$65 million Facebook settlement** (which included stock that skyrocketed), poured it into **Bitcoin** back in 2012 when it was around $10 a coin, and became billionaires anyway.

Did you want to check out **what happened to Divya Narendra** (their third co-founder who often gets overlooked), or explore how **David Fincher pulled off the CGI twin effect** in the movie?

## Both

Both pieces of trivia are great—one shows how a third founder quietly built his own success away from the spotlight, and the other is a wild technical feat by David Fincher.

What Happened to Divya Narendra

In the movie, Divya Narendra (played by Max Minghella) is depicted as the fiery, short-tempered third wheel to the Winklevoss twins who constantly wants to sue Mark. In real life, he is much more low-key and actually ended up working alongside some of his old rivals:

- **His share of the settlement.** As the third co-founder of ConnectU, Narendra got a piece of that **$65 million Facebook settlement**—though reports indicate he received a smaller cut than the twins, around **$20 million** in cash and stock.
- **His actual career.** Unlike the twins, who became crypto evangelists, Narendra went the traditional finance route, working in mergers and acquisitions at Credit Suisse and later at Sowood Capital.
- **SumZero.** In 2008, he co-founded **SumZero**, an exclusive, vetted online community and research network for professional buy-side investors (hedge funds, private equity, and mutual funds).
- **The ironic twist.** Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss invested in SumZero, and years later, Narendra actually buried the hatchet with the Facebook camp—even attending events with early Facebook executives and taking a much more pragmatic view of how things played out.

How Fincher Pulled Off the CGI Twin Effect

Back in 2010, seamlessly putting one actor's face onto another actor's body for an entire feature film was groundbreaking. David Fincher refused to use old-school split-screen tricks because he wanted the camera to move freely around both twins at the same time.

- **The body double.** Fincher hired actor **Josh Pence**, who matched Armie Hammer's 6'5" build and underwent the exact same intense rowing and vocal training so their posture and mannerisms were identical.
- **Shooting scenes twice.** For every scene with both twins, Armie Hammer played Cameron opposite Josh Pence as Tyler. Then, Fincher made Hammer go back and perform the entire scene *again* alone in front of a green screen with a special camera rig, acting out Tyler's lines and matching Pence's exact head movements.
- **Digital face replacement.** Visual effects house Digital Domain then erased Pence's head frame-by-frame and digitally grafted Hammer's performance onto Pence's body—carefully adjusting the lighting, skin texture, and even the jawline so "Tyler" looked subtly distinct from "Cameron."
- **The payoff.** Josh Pence's actual face only appears once in the entire movie: a brief, out-of-focus cameo in the background of the Caribbean-themed party scene at Harvard.

Want to explore any other **behind-the-scenes filmmaking tricks** David Fincher used on the movie (like the famous Henley Royal Regatta rowing sequence), or look into **Sorkin's planned follow-up film**?

# ** End of Conversation