

because of a lack of results. According to Obadike, after eight weeks of hard training and clean eating, Chestnut was down to about 195, a 25-pound decrease from his starting weight.

"Even though he was dropping weight, he was also putting on lean muscle," Obadike says. "When he was 220, his arms weren't that big. Once the program was over, his arms were bigger and his back was bigger and more defined. I wasn't so concerned with him being strong, but through the process, that's what happened. When he started, he could barely do five pull-ups by himself. At the end of the program, he was doing four sets of 12 pull-ups. He was hitting it really, really hard. He's a very disciplined guy."

## SHREDDED FOR SCREEN

When filming started in Toronto in April, Chestnut was more or less where he needed to be, but his program was far from over. His shirtless scenes weren't scheduled until the last few weeks of shooting in May, so he had to stay disciplined with his training and diet for the duration.

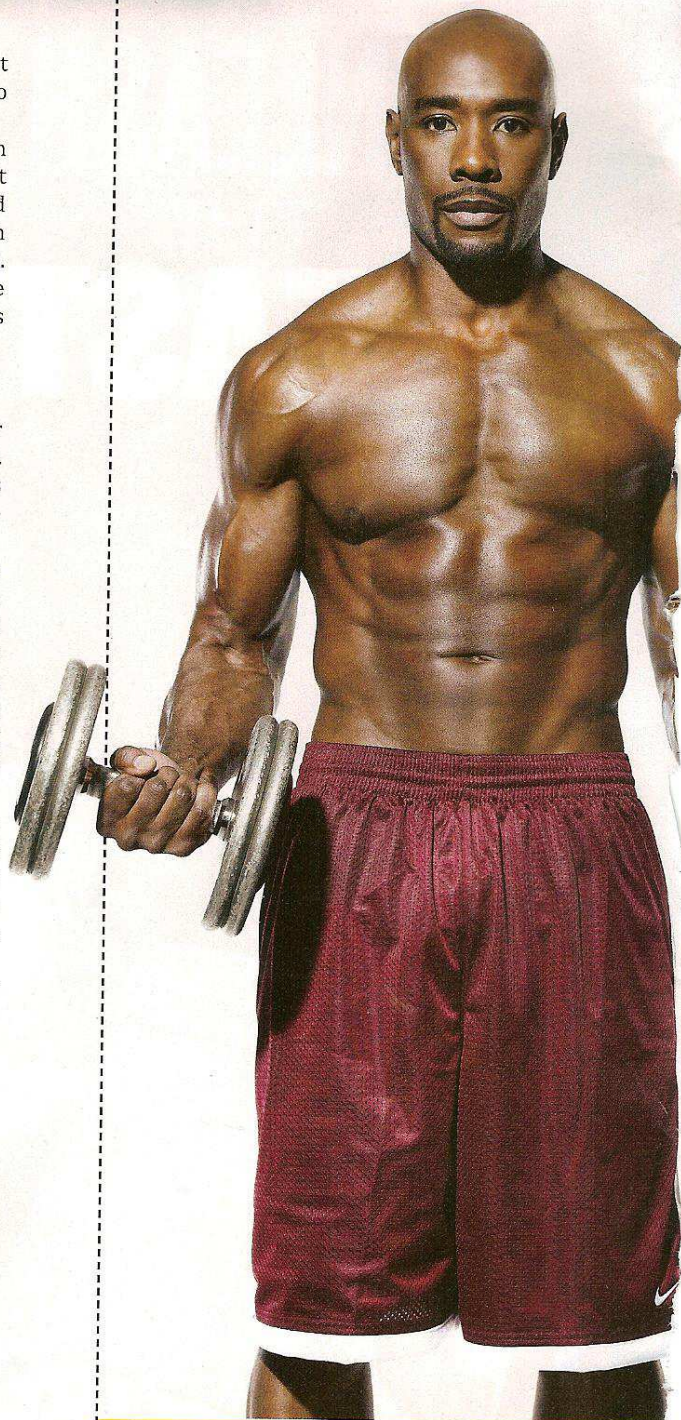
"I would have rather done the shirtless scenes earlier because it's very difficult to maintain your weight when you're on a movie set," Chestnut says. "They're always bringing treats and a whole bunch of junk food to cast members. And when you go through the lunch line and get your food, at the end of it, there's always cakes and cookies and candies ... so many temptations. You have to be very disciplined. But I kept it clean. I kept checking in with Obi and we had our diet down, and I was still doing the cardio. I was on a mission."

Chestnut was so disciplined, in fact, that he continued to trim down during filming. This caused some clothing issues on set. When he was fitted for wardrobe initially, Chestnut was at a higher bodyweight. As shooting progressed, his clothes fit worse and worse. "I kept cutting body fat because I didn't want to peak too early," he says. "So we had to make a conscious effort to make me look bigger by wearing tight, clingy-fitting clothes because my character was a football player."

Leading up to the shirtless scenes, Obadike flew to Toronto to resume in-person training with Chestnut for one final week. In the condition he was in, Chestnut could've easily passed for an NFL running back — "but he wasn't *there-there* yet, if that makes sense," Obadike says. "He wasn't totally hard and ripped yet, but he was close. He was within striking distance. So I dialed him in like he was getting ready for a photo shoot. The last week, we trained together. I did his whole routine right alongside him because I wanted to really push him and let him know that I was going through it with him."

The morning of the first shirtless scene, Chestnut stepped on the scale and saw 187, and it was all good weight. Obadike estimates Chestnut was at 6 percent body fat, down from 17 or 18 percent in January. This made smashing successes of both his shirtless scenes, garnering praise from many on set, including director Malcolm D. Lee, cousin of Spike Lee. "When he peaked for those scenes, he had the body of a top fitness guy," Obadike says.

Ironically, Chestnut never disrobed in 1999's *The Best Man*, despite the fact that it would have been easier to achieve a shredded six-pack then than at his current 44 years of age. "It's definitely much harder now," Chestnut says. "The body fat doesn't come off as fast anymore. If I would have done the workouts I did with Obi when I was in my 20s, I could have gotten myself down to *no* body fat. Now it just takes longer to tighten up because my metabolism isn't as fast. But fortunately, I can still get there."



## FILMOGRAPHY

A handful of Morris Chestnut's most memorable movie roles:

- Boyz N the Hood* (1991)
- The Best Man* (1999)
- The Brothers* (2001)
- Like Mike* (2002)
- Ladder 49* (2004)
- Breakin' All the Rules* (2004)
- Kick-Ass 2* (2013)
- The Call* (2013)
- The Best Man Holiday* (2013)