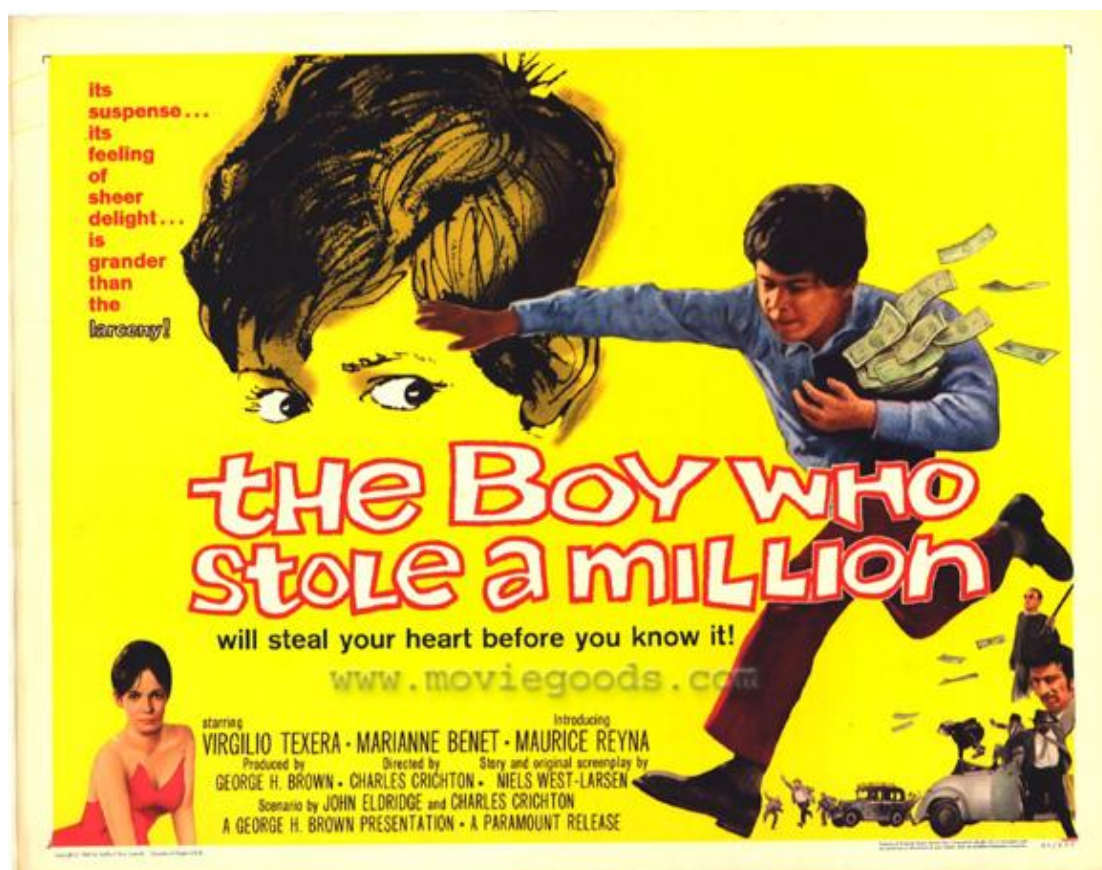


The Boy Who Stole a Million

UK : 1960 : dir. Charles Crichton : Fanfare / British Lion : 81 min †
 prod: George H Brown : scr: John Eldridge & Charles Crichton : dir.ph.: Douglas Slocombe
 Maurice Reyna [deb]
 Virgilio Texera; Marianne Benet; Harold Kasket; George Coulouris; Edwin Richfield;
 Curt Christian; Bill Nagy; Warren Mitchell

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	€	M	✂	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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[† US running time given as 64 mins]



Source for all stills: Moviegoods.com

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide
 1996 review:

"Family-type film of a youth who gets involved in a bank theft to help his father with oppressive debts¹. **"

¹ The "youth" is aged no more than 10 or 12

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review – identical to above

Halliwell's Film Guide review:

"A young page in a Spanish bank "borrows" some money to help his father but finds dad, police and crooks all after him. Half-hearted attempt at a British "**BICYCLE THIEVES**", oddly set in Spain, and never quite managing to convince or interest us. Scr: John Eldridge & Charles Crichton."

Radio Times Guide to Films review:

“Although many critics have compared this hard-times drama to Vittorio De Sica’s neo-realist classic **"BICYCLE THIEVES"**, it is, in fact, much closer in spirit to the Graham Greene-penned tale **"THE FALLEN IDOL"**. Co-written by director Charles Crichton and one-time documentarist John Eldridge, the story of a Spanish boy who steals from a bank to help his impoverished family is supposed to be gnawingly realistic. However, not even the drab photography or the run-down locations can increase the authenticity of the protracted pursuit by some sniffy bank officials and a gang of smeaky criminals. A cloying and unconvincing disappointment. ** ”

Variety Movie Guide 1993 review:

“It’s difficult to go wrong with the combo of an appealing kid, the inevitable pooch, and a chase in which the youngster’s up against the world. This one is marred by some slightly uneasy dubbing and an occasional lapse into slapstick when only light comedy was needed, but overall it’s a warm little piece. Though a British film, it was mainly shot in locations in Valencia, Spain. The yarn concerns a likeable youngster who lives with his widowed father and works as a bank messenger. He finds that his taxi-driver father needs money to get his cab out of hock and decides to borrow some from the bank. His haul, however, turns out to be a million pesetas (roughly \$28,000) and that sets the city on its ears. At the drop of a peseta he is being chased by half the thugs in Valencia, the police and his father. Young Maurice Reyna, making his screen debut, goes through the motions of thesping admirably. Harold Kasket is breezily effective as the friend of the kid’s father, who is rather glumly played by Virgilio Texera.”

Cast:

Paco**Maurice Reyna**
MiguelVirgilio Texera
MariaMarianne Benet
LuisHarold Kasket
Bank ManagerGeorge Coulouris
Police ChiefBill Nagy
PedroWarren Mitchell
MateoTutte Lemkow

[no listing in "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

Sunday Times note:

“A cunning yet sensitive young rascal gets involved in a bank job to help pay off his father’s debts.”

Daily Mirror note:

“Resourceful youngster tries to get his father out of a fix - by making an illicit withdrawal from a bank. Small-scale family entertainment strangely set in Spain. The interest rates are pretty low. ** ”

From an original story by Neils West Larsen and Antonio de Leon. Some of these reviewers had either never seen the film or long since forgotten it. Paco is neither especially "cunning" nor "sensitive", and he certainly doesn't "get involved in a bank job". Finding his pa distraught at where the money will come from to pay the garage bill for essential repairs to his taxi, the boy simply helps himself to a bag from the vault next day at work, and walks out with it. The film, as Halliwell says, looks partly like a mediocre attempt at neo-realist cinema, and partly like a tourist film on Valencia, extensive location footage stitched together by the simplest of plots, and with an uneasy mix of Spanish and English cast (including Warren Mitchell in a brief role as the town drunk).

It's a child fugitive story, similar to those films where a kid mistakenly thinks he's committed a murder and goes into hiding. Paco flees willy-nilly about the city with his dog Chico as various unwholesome gangs are alerted to the theft and blunder ineptly after him. For sixty minutes. A little more in the way of character development would have helped, Paco is no more than an off-the-peg kid with a fetching smile, and the film never places him sufficiently in extremis to catch the sympathy of the audience. Nothing further is known of Maurice Reyna.

See subject index under **CHILD FUGITIVES, CRIME / DELINQUENCY, DOGS** and **RUNAWAYS / STOWAWAYS**.