Written by Kam Williams
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Lincoln opened the awards season as the odds-on favorite to win the Academy Award for Best Picture by virtue of its landing the most nominations. But the snub of Ben Affleck in the Best Director category made his movie, Argo, the sentimental favorite of the Golden Globes and the Screen Actors Guild, and the momentum of that sympathy vote is likely to carry over to Oscar night.

While Lincoln won't take home the top prize, it will nevertheless win the most awards (5), followed by Les Miserables (3), and then by a number of films taking 2 apiece: Argo, Silver Linings Playbook, Life of Pi, Skyfall and Django Unchained. A quintet of Oscars sans Best Picture won't exactly be a sweep, but it's a far better fate than that of Zero Dark Thirty, whose hopes were torpedoed by political blowback even before it had a chance to open in theaters.

Besides forecasting the winners below, I also indicate which among the nominees in the major categories are actually the most deserving. And because some great performances are invariably snubbed by the Academy, I also point out a few I feel were overlooked entirely.

The 85th Academy Awards will air live on ABC on Sunday, February 24th at 8 PM ET/5 PM PT, and will be hosted by Seth MacFarlane.

Best Picture

Will Win: Argo
Deserves to Win: Zero Dark Thirty
Overlooked: Looper

Best Director

Will Win: Steven Spielberg (Lincoln)
Deserves to Win: David O. Russell (Silver Linings Playbook)
Overlooked: Kathryn Bigelow (Zero Dark Thirty), Ben Affleck (Argo) and Quentin Tarantino (Django Unchained)

Best Actor

Will Win: Daniel Day Lewis (Lincoln)
Deserves to Win: Daniel Day Lewis (Lincoln)
Overlooked: John Hawkes (The Sessions) and Suraj Sharma (Life of Pi)

Best Actress

Will Win: Jennifer Lawrence (Silver Linings Playbook)
Deserves to Win: Jessica Chastain (Zero Dark Thirty)
Overlooked: Rachel Weisz (The Deep Blue Sea) and Ann Dowd (Compliance)

Best Supporting Actor

Will Win: Tommy Lee Jones (Lincoln)
Deserves to Win: Christoph Waltz (Django Unchained)
Overlooked: Leonardo DiCaprio (Django Unchained) and Matthew McConaughey (Magic Mike)

Best Supporting Actress

Will Win: Ann Hathaway (Les Miserables)
Deserves to Win: Helen Hunt (The Sessions)
Overlooked: Emily Blunt (Looper)

Best Original Screenplay:

Will Win: Quentin Tarantino (Django Unchained)
Deserves to Win: Mark Boal (Zero Dark Thirty)
Overlooked: Rian Johnson (Looper)

Best Adapted Screenplay:

Will Win: Tony Kushner (Lincoln)
Deserves to Win: David O. Russell (Silver Linings Playbook)
Overlooked: Ben Lewin (The Sessions)

Predictions for Secondary Categories

Animated Feature: Brave
Foreign Language Film: Amour
Documentary Feature: Searching for Sugarman
Cinematography: Life of Pi
Costume Design: Anna Karenina
Production Design: Les Miserables
Film Editing: Argo
Makeup and Hairstyling: The Hobbit
Original Score: Lincoln
Original Song: Skyfall

Sound Editing: Zero Dark Thirty
Sound Mixing: Les Miserables
Visual Effects: Life of Pi

For photos, visit: http://zerodarkthirty-movie.com/
And: http://silverliningsplaybookmovie.com/
And: http://unchainedmovie.com/
And: http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/argo_2012/pictures/39/#5
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