

Sláinte Mhaith (Good Health)

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. MCKINNON LOUNGE - NIGHT

Heavy rain. A sign in front of a staircase reads:

THE MCKINNON LOUNGE

TONIGHT ONLY!

OPEN PERFORMANCES!

MUSICIANS WELCOME!

Down the stairs to a door. It begins to open.

PRELAP: FEINT JAZZ MUSIC

INT. TOILET, MCKINNON LOUNGE - NIGHT

Hands with painted nails smooth a creased dress.

Lips are painted with matching lipstick, then pucker.

A designer handbag is opened, a pipette-topped vial is removed, there's liquid inside. The hand swirls the vial, drops it into a woman's cleavage.

The dress is readjusted to hide the vial.

The handbag is tucked under an arm.

OS: high-heels

A door opens.

PRE LAP: HIGH-TEMPO JAZZ MUSIC

INT. MCKINNON LOUNGE - NIGHT

A bustling club.

PATRONS at tables: chatting, laughing.

Some hover around the bar where a BARTENDER shakes drinks.

ON STAGE: CLARINET, GUITARIST, DRUMMER

CROWD are thoroughly entertained.

Sat alone is WARWICK (28) sweating through a cheap suit and clutching a trumpet case.

He watches the stage in awe whilst sipping a whiskey.

MIKAYLA'S POV: Watches Warwick.

MIKAYLA (O.S.)
His next drink's on me.

BARTENDER (O.S.)
Alright.

MIKAYLA (O.S.)
Another G&T as well please.

The hand with painted nails slides money across the bar.

Beat.

The performance comes to an end.

Rapturous applause.

The TRIO bow, basking in the glory. They go back to their table.

FRANKLIN (50) portly, wearing a clean shirt and smart trousers, takes to the stage. He steps up to the microphone.

FRANKLIN
What a fantastic performance from a fine young trio. Good evening ladies and gents, welcome to the McKinnon Lounge here on a typical English summer. My name's Franklin McKinnon. We're gonna take a break but don't worry folks, our open mic night will continue shortly.

Franklin leaves the stage and joins SMASH MALLOY (70) dressed for the sun in smart-casual clothes.

They start chatting.

Warwick's at the bar.

BARTENDER
What'll it be?

WARWICK
Another bourbon please.

BARTENDER

Coming up.

The Bartender grabs a glass.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Ice?

WARWICK

Please.

The Bartender adds a few cubes, pours bourbon.

Warwick hands over some money.

BARTENDER

It's been covered.

Confused, Warwick puts his money away.

MIKAYLA (O.S.)

You're welcome.

He turns to see MIKAYLA (25) stunning dress, red lips.

She offers a hand. Her nails match her lips.

MIKAYLA (CONT'D)

Enchanté.

WARWICK

(reciprocating)

Warwick Sampson.

MIKAYLA

Mikaylaya. What d'you play?

WARWICK

Brass... trumpet.

MIKAYLA

You any good?

WARWICK

I don't know, I think I am, but if I get a chance to perform tonight, I'll find out.

Mikayla laughs.

MIKAYLA

That's one way of putting it. Mind if I join you?

WARWICK

Be my guest.

Warwick heads back to his table. Mikayla grabs her drink and follows him. They sit at Warwick's table.

WARWICK (CONT'D)

(re: Franklin's table)

Look at that table: Franklin McKinnon and Smash Malloy. Legends. I'd do anything to be on that table.

Mikayla raises a curious eyebrow.

MIKAYLA

I'd be happy to introduce you but I want something from you in return.

Warwick is ecstatic.

WARWICK

Anything, name it.

MIKAYLA

Don't worry about it now, you'll know soon enough.

(notices his glass)

Let me get us a couple more drinks and we'll go over there.

CUT TO:

Mikayla's at the bar.

MIKAYLA (CONT'D)

Two whiskeys: one neat, one with ice, and another G&T.

BARTENDER

Coming right up.

The Bartender grabs spirits off the shelf.

CUT TO:

Three drinks on the bar. Mikayla takes the G&T and the whiskey with ice to the table.

WARWICK

Thanks.

MIKAYLA

No problem.

She heads back to collect the other drink.

WARWICK
Where are you going?

MIKAYLA
Just to pick up another drink.

She smiles at Warwick, then heads to the bar.

Mikayla reaches into her cleavage, pulling out the small vial. She sucks some of the contents into the drip.

Mikayla grabs a napkin to prevent her fingerprints forming on the glass.

She drips some liquid into the glass and puts the lid on the vial. She then slips it back in her cleavage, and again readjusts her dress.

Mikayla takes the drink to the table. Warwick sees the drink, puzzled.

WARWICK
You already got me a drink.

She laughs.

MIKAYLA
It's not for you.
(eyeing Franklin)
You're gonna give it to Frank.

WARWICK
And that'll get me in with him and
Smash?

MIKAYLA
I'm certain. Come with me.

Warwick grabs the drink, discards the napkin.

Mikayla takes Warwick's hand and leads him to Franklin's table.

Franklin peers up, feigns a smile at Mikayla.

FRANKLIN
Long time.

MIKAYLA
Certainly has been. How's the wife?

FRANKLIN
Better now that you're not around.
Still keeping up appearances I see.

MIKAYLA
(knowing smile)
Of course.

Franklin turns to Warwick.

FRANKLIN
What about you, kid?

WARWICK
(nervous)
Name's Warwick Sampson, sir. Huge fan
of yours, in fact both of you. I have
all your early albums, Mr Malloy.

Smash smiles.

SMASH
What's your favourite track?

WARWICK
(thinks)
Gotta be Supersonic, really big fan
of high-tempo jazz.

FRANKLIN
What did you think of trio that just
performed?

WARWICK
Great, loved it.

SMASH
(re: drinks)
Those for us?

Warwick looks at the neat whiskey and remembers.

WARWICK
Oh, Mr McKinnon, I brought you a
whiskey.

Warwick turns to Mikayla.

She smiles at him.

Franklin takes the drink.

FRANKLIN
Much appreciated. Have a seat.

Warwick smiles as he takes a seat.

WARWICK
Thank you.

Mikayla uses the opportunity to join them. Franklin reluctantly shifts over to let her in.

SMASH
So, Warwick, what do you play?

WARWICK
Brass... trumpet.

FRANKLIN
Studied or self-taught?

Warwick's relishing the attention, answering enthusiastically.

WARWICK
Started as a hobby, had a few lessons when I was younger and saw it as an ideal career.

FRANKLIN
That was all of us at one time.

Franklin and Smash laugh.

SMASH
Cool, you ever play for a crowd before?

WARWICK
N-no-just spent time learning.

MIKAYLA
Well, here's your opportunity.

FRANKLIN
Definitely. We're restarting open mic night soon, and I want you to perform next.

WARWICK
Are you sure?

Franklin eyes the room: a mix of musicians and casual patrons.

SMASH

Yeah, and I think you should get that drummer back on stage. There's something I like about her.

FRANKLIN

Really think you've got a shot? She looks like she could be your great granddaughter?

SMASH

Knowing my past, I wouldn't be surprised.

Franklin and Smash burst into laughter. Warwick awkwardly joins in.

MIKAYLA

I think this calls for a toast.

They raise their glasses.

FRANKLIN

Sláinte.

They all drink.

CUT TO:

Franklin's on stage, Everyone's watching.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Ladies and gents, it's that time once again. Now, I've been talking with our next performer during our little interlude, and was delighted to discover that he is both a trained and self-taught musician.

Warwick, Mikayla and Smash watch.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Please help me in welcoming to the stage, Mr Warwick Sampson.

Warwick heads for the stage, trumpet case in hand. A few people pat him on shoulder, some try to shake his hand.

Warwick's next to Franklin. A bright light shining on them.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
May I also please invite the
fantastic drummer from that amazing
trio earlier.

Franklin applauds, the crowd follows.

CORAL (25) has a pastel punk vibe, stands up. Her BANDMATES
cheer.

She makes her way to the stage, gets similar treatment:
shoulder pats, a few handshakes.

Some DRUNKEN patrons are a bit more handsy, which makes
Coral hurry to the stage.

Coral joins Franklin and Warwick.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
If you'll now kindly introduce
yourselves.

Coral steps up to the microphone. She smiles.

CORAL
I'm Coral, I play drums with my
friends over there.

She points them out. GUITARIST and CLARINET soak up the
attention.

Coral backs away from the microphone. Warwick steps up.

WARWICK
(nervous)
Hi, I'm Warwick... I play brass...
trumpet.

He steps back and retrieves his trumpet. He screws the
mouthpiece on, then tests the finger buttons. Puts his lips
to it.

Franklin leaves the stage.

CORAL
Whenever you're ready, bro.

All eyes on Warwick who surveys the room.

He puts the trumpet to his lips.

Coral lays down a soft beat that takes him by surprise and
he lets out a sound.

Some giggles from the crowd.

Warwick composes himself, shuts his eyes, begins playing.

The audience are enthralled. It's improvised but he's carrying a tune.

Warwick and Coral play off each other, both showing off their talents with solo moments.

Warwick focusses on Franklin's table. He, Smash and Mikayla are watching him with great excitement.

Franklin finishes his whiskey. a large smile on his face.

Smash bobs his head to the beat.

Mikayla watches Warwick like a hawk. Franklin cups a feel of her knee and thigh. She notices, puts her hand over his and nuzzles into him.

Franklin holds her close.

Mikayla whispers something in his ear. He smiles.

The room falls silent as the music stops.

The audience are about to clap when Warwick and Coral come together for an epic finale.

This is short-lived however, as Franklin collapses off his chair.

The music stops.

A shocked crowd.

Smash and Mikayla try desperately to wake him. Foam and liquid seep out of Franklin's mouth.

Smash has tears in his eyes.

Mikayla backs away, terrified.

Complete commotion as the crowd builds and people leave. Warwick and Coral are on stage in shock, unsure what to do.

Coral spots CLARINET and GUITARIST at their table and makes her way over.

BARTENDER (O.S.)
Hello, we need an ambulance
urgently... The McKinnon Lounge,
Soho... that's the one.

Mikayla heads towards an emergency exit.

Warwick spots her.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE

- The vial.
- Mikayla dropping a few droplets into Franklin's drink.
- Warwick discarding the napkin.
- Warwick handing Franklin the drink.
- Various moments of Franklin taking sips of his drink.

END OF FLASHBACK MONTAGE

Warwick stares at his hands, realises, back up at Mikayla, who's made it to the emergency exit. She catches his gaze.

She blows him a kiss goodbye, opens the door and leaves.

Warwick heads for the door that Mikayla left through, but gets stuck in the crowd.

EXT. BACKALLEY, MCKINNON LOUNGE - NIGHT

Heavy rain.

High-heels tapping on the ground.

Mikayla reaches into the bag, pulling out a bunched up hat and sunglasses.

She puts the sunglasses on. Followed by the hat. She reaches into her dress and retrieves the vial. Drops it in her bag.

She drops her bag in a bin.

OS: Police Sirens

Emerging blue lights flashing behind her.

FADE TO BLACK