Spiritual Connections Episode Five: Turning

By

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INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

A bustling ward filled with rows of many beds of groaning patients.

A NURSE, late forties, wheels a medication trolley around.

She stops beside IONA, thirties, pale-faced and fast asleep.

NURSE
Wake up party girl!

IONA stirs a little in her bed. One eye opens.

NURSE
I said wake up!

IONA groans and struggles to sit herself up. Her eyes scout around confused.

IONA
Oh my head. Am I... Am I in hospital?

NURSE
No shit, Sherlock.

IONA
Wha... Am I sick?

NURSE
You was. Several times.

IONA cups her hands over her mouth to check her breath. She dry heaves.

IONA
I don’t understand. Why am I here?

NURSE
You’re here because you decided to have a little binge session for yourself. You had to have your stomach pumped, young Madame.

IONA
Oh no. Really? Am I going to be okay?
NURSE
Well, you’ll have one hell of a hangover, but I think you’ll survive.

Iona pauses for a moment or two, taking it all in.

IONA
I’m so embarrassed. How long have I been here?

NURSE
Since last night. Your dad brought you in, don’t you remember?

IONA
My... My dad? Are you sure?

NURSE
Yes. He’s in the Family Room. Shall I go and get him?

IONA
Errr... Yeah, okay.

The nurse heads off the ward.

Iona’s expression grows confused. She hears footsteps.

She rubs her eyes as SAM, sixties, comes into view.

SAM
Hello love. Like mother like daughter, eh?

She struggles to speak.

IONA
Sam? What are you doing here?

SAM
I brought you in last night. You collapsed at the centre. Don’t you remember?

IONA
God! No I don’t. I don’t usually drink.

SAM
I think that was part of the problem, Iona. You were five times over the limit.
IONA
I feel so stupid. No wonder that nurse was so sharp with me. She said my dad brought me in... Why did you tell them that?

SAM
You really can’t remember anything can you? Okay, brace yourself, love.

He perches on the side of her bed.

INT. MARY’S HOUSE- KITCHEN

MARY, fifties, wearing a dressing gown, ambles in.

She picks up the kettle.

She approaches the sink. Her face adopts an enraged expression as she notices the huge pile of pots in the basin.

She yells –

MARY
Mother! Get your decrepit arse in here and sort out these bloody pots. It looks like a school kitchen in here.

She fills the kettle in a temper.

EDITH, eighties, shuffles in.

EDITH
Pardon dear?

MARY
Get these bloody pots washed, mother. I’ve never seen anything like it. What the hell have you been up to?

EDITH
I was a bit peckish, Mary. I made myself a full English.

Mary exhales, resting her hands on her hips.
MARY
And you never thought to ask me if
I wanted anything?

EDITH
I didn’t think you bothered with
solids in the day time, dear.

MARY
It’s not bloody good enough,
mother. I don’t charge you any
board. All I ask is that you tidy
up after yourself.

EDITH
But it’s my house, dear.

Mary snaps back, an air of sarcasm in her voice -

MARY
You’re just nit-picking now. Who
pays all the bills, might I ask?

EDITH
Well, the DHSS pay most of them,
dear.

MARY
Enough of your lip. Get them
washed.

Mary scowls as she turns her back.

Edith fills the sink basin with water.

EDITH
You’re in a strop today, dear...
Even more than usual. You’re not
upset about not meeting your
daughter, are you?

MARY
Well actually, It’s quite the
opposite. You see, I did meet her.

EDITH
You did? Where?

MARY
At the bloody Welfare Centre.
EDITH
How did she know you’d be there, dear?

MARY
Because she pissing well works with me, doesn’t she? It’s that bloody fat lezza Iona.

Edith contorts her face, pondering.

EDITH
Sam’s friend, you mean? You had a nickname for her didn’t you, dear? Now what was it? Remind me, Iona... Iona...

MARY
Iona Strap-on. Yes, her. Just when I think my life can’t get any worse, she comes slithering into it.

EDITH
Oh dear. Did you manage to have a nice chat?

MARY
A nice chat? She staggered in, in the middle of my service, effing and blinding, flailing her arms around like a windmill. She called me every name under the sun, upset all the crowd, and threw up into the raffle bin.

EDITH
Oh... Are you seeing her again?

MARY
What do you think? If she’s got the slightest bit of decorum, she won’t dare to show her face around there again. I’m just glad I got rid of her when I did.

Mary tries to choke back her tears.

Edith lovingly pats Mary on the back, her voice adopting a consoling tone -
EDITH
Oh Mary. She was probably just a bit upset.

MARY
Upset! Upset? She was off her bloody tits on booze. One thing I do know is that you don’t show up to work in a state like that.

EDITH
Not unless you can hide it well, eh dear?

INT. SAM’S CAR- LATER
Sam drives, Iona sits beside him.

IONA
I’m so ashamed of myself, Sam. I don’t know what I was thinking.

SAM
You had a shock and a half love. I wouldn’t keep going over and over it, you’ll make yourself ill.

IONA
You can say that again. At least one good thing came out of it.

Sam smiles.

IONA (cont’d)
I couldn’t have asked for a better dad... It’s just a shame I had to wait so long to find out. Do you think it will be a bit weird at work? The Funeral Parlour, I mean? I’m keeping away from the Wilmot centre for a while.

SAM
I don’t think so, love. We’ve always got on well. We’ve got an even better excuse to look out for each other now, haven’t we?

IONA
Yeah I suppose. You really didn’t have to wait all night at the hospital you know.
SAM
Love, I’d have been there regardless. I’ve always had a soft spot for you. Now I know why.

Iona smiles.

She places her hand over his on the gear-stick.

SAM (cont’d)
Is it a left here, love?

IONA
Yeah, onto Bourneville Boulevard. Third speed hump.

He turns into the street. After a short while he stops the car outside the house.

IONA (cont’d)
Thanks Sam. You gonna come in?

SAM
Do you think that’s wise?

IONA
Yeah why not? I’d love you to meet my mum.

SAM
Okay love. Just for a few minutes then, eh?

INT. MARY’S HOUSE- LIVING ROOM- AFTERNOON

Mary and Edith sit on the sofa watching television, tumblers in hand.

Two bottles of vodka stand on the coffee table – one premium brand, one value brand.

Edith takes a sip then purses her lips as if in pain.

EDITH
I don’t know if I like this vodka much, Mary. It’s got a funny twang to it.

MARY
Well you’ve took long enough to decide. You’ve got through nearly half a bottle.
EDITH
Well I had to make sure, dear. Have you got anything I can put in it? You know, a mixer?

MARY
Oh, there’s probably something knocking about under the stairs from Christmas. Shall I have a look?

EDITH
Yes please, dear. If you don’t mind.

Mary shakes her head.

MARY
Anything to shut you up.

She heaves herself off the sofa and leaves the room.

Edith knocks back half of her glass of vodka then shudders.

A few moments pass.

MARY (O.S.)
Ah! There we are. Found something, Mother.

EDITH
You are good, dear. Thank you.

She lowers her voice to a whisper -

EDITH (cont’d)
Nose like a Bloodhound where booze is involved.

Mary returns then thrusts a bottle towards Edith.

EDITH (cont’d)
Sherry? Will it be alright?

MARY
Of course it will. It’s still in date.

Edith pulls out the stopper using her teeth. The cork along with her dentures fly out with ease. She hastily replaces her false teeth then clumsily tops up her glass.

She sniffs, then winces.
She closes her eyes, and takes a gulp.

EDITH
Ooh! It’s quite nice is that.

She takes another sip.

EDITH (cont’d)
It’s lovely, Mary. Try some.

Mary pours a little into her glass and swills it around with her finger.

She takes a swig.

MARY
Mother! That’s beautiful. It’s like one of them fancy cocktails, isn’t it? What shall we call it?

EDITH
What about ’Satan’s balloon knot’?

INT. IONA’S HOUSE—LIVING ROOM

Sam, Iona and BARBARA, fifties, sit on the sofa. Iona nestles under Barbara’s arm.

BARBARA
I’m just happy you’re okay, love. It could have been much worse.

IONA
How could it have been any worse? I’ve just found out that I’ve got an alcoholic freak as a birth mother.

BARBARA
Yes but you’re okay, headache aside. And you’ve got a lovely biological dad, haven’t you?

Sam smiles at the compliment.

IONA
You make him sound like a washing powder, Mum! Yeah he’s lovely... We’ve always got on, haven’t we, Sam?
SAM
Yes. Yes we have, love.

BARBARA
And I can see why. He’s an absolute gentleman.

Sam blushes then looks away.

SAM
Well, I’d better be off now, love. Cats to feed.

BARBARA
Oh, won’t your wife have fed the cats, Sam?

SAM
No Barbara. I live on my own, love.

BARBARA
A lovely man like you, still unattached? Where’s the justice in this world?

Sam ignores the compliments as he heads to the door.

SAM
You sure you’re going to be okay, Iona?

IONA
Yeah, I’m fine... Err Sam. I was wondering...

SAM
What love?

IONA
Do you want to meet up later? I’ll buy you some dinner as a thank you. That’s if you think you want to?

SAM
You sure you’re up to it? Don’t you feel a bit off it, love?

IONA
I’m not on about going on the piss, Sam. Just for a meal.
SAM
Well, I’ve got nothing planned, love, if you feel up to it.

BARBARA
Oh lovely. It’d be nice to get to know you a little better, Sam.

Iona scowls at her mother.

IONA
I meant just me and Sam, Mum. We’ve got a lot to talk about.

BARBARA
Oh yes. Of course. Another time maybe?

Barbara smiles hopefully at Sam. No reaction from him.

SAM
Where do you want to go, just around Wilmot?

IONA
No let’s head into Derby, Sam. Everybody knows everybody’s business round here.

SAM
Okay love. I’ll pick you up about seven, that alright? I’ll let myself out.

IONA
Sound! I’m going to get a few hours kip. See you later... Dad.

Sam giggles, a look of pride upon his face.

He waves as he leaves. The front door clunks shut.

IONA (cont’d)
Mum...?

BARBARA
Yes, dear?

IONA
You weren’t...hitting on Sam, were you?
Barbara forces a smile as she strokes Iona’s hair.

INT. MARY’S HOUSE—LIVING ROOM—EVENING

Mary and Edith sit giggling on the sofa—laughing at an inappropriate news report.

MARRY
Another Satan’s balloon knot, Mother?

EDITH
I don’t mind if I do!

Mary grabs the bottles from the coffee table.

MARRY
Oh, we’re down to the dregs, Mother.

EDITH
What a shame. I was getting the taste for that as well.

MARRY
I’d nip and get us some more, but I can’t hardly go in the car, can I?

EDITH
Why? Because you’re drunk?

MARRY
No. It’s still in Tesco’s car-park, isn’t it. It’s probably been clamped by now.

EDITH
Can’t you ask Roy to nip?

MARRY
Good thinking, Batman.

Mary stands then heads to the living room door.
She shouts up the stairs -

MARY (cont’d)
Roy? Roy my love?

A slight Dutch accent peppers the response -

ROY (O.S.)
Yes Mary, what is it?

MARY
Are you busy, Roy? I need some things from the shop. Can you nip on your bike?

ROY (O.S.)
I was just about to head out, Mary. Is it important?

MARY
Yes dear, it is.

ROY (O.S.)
Okay. I’ll finish getting ready first, I’ve got to nip to the bank anyway.

MARY
Thank you, dear. You’re a star.

INT. SAM’S CAR- LATER

Sam drives with Iona at his side.

The headlights illuminate the dark road ahead.

SAM
You feeling better, love?

IONA
My stomach’s a bit achey, but other than that yeah.

SAM
Good. Where do you want to go?

IONA
I dunno. Do you fancy Tapas? I’d probably be better off with something light.
SAM
Yep! Sounds great. Where’s the Tapas restaurant, Friar gate?

IONA
Yeah, that’s the one.

Sam looks down at the flashing light on the dashboard. He double takes.

SAM
Is there a garage around here, love? I’m running on fumes.

IONA
No, I don’t think so. Have you not got enough petrol to get us into Derby? There’s loads of garages there.

SAM
No, love. I don’t think so.

Iona glances out of the window. She notices a sign.

IONA
Sam! Take the next right. There’s the Devonshire Hotel just down there. They do nice food.

SAM
The dirty Dev? You sure? What about the Tapas?

IONA
We can go there another time, let’s just go to the Dev eh?

EXT. THE DEVONSHIRE HOTEL

The large car-park is nearly at full capacity. Spot-lights shine upwards, illuminating the large, old building.

Sam’s car pulls in and after many attempts, finally manages to park in a space.

Iona and Sam exit the vehicle.
INT. DEVONSHIRE HOTEL- RECEPTION

A large, tastefully decorated room. A smartly dressed RECEPTIONIST, twenties, stands behind the huge oak counter.

Sam and Iona enter.

RECEPTIONIST
Can I help you?

IONA
Yeah. Are you still doing meals?

RECEPTIONIST
We are, but it’s one of our theme nights tonight. It’s a two pound entry fee per person.

SAM
That’s okay, not a problem.

He digs into his pocket then slams the money into the counter.

RECEPTIONIST
That’s lovely. The door on your left please.

They head towards the door.

INT. DEVONSHIRE HOTEL- FUNCTION ROOM

The huge room is packed full of people. Big groups of men and women loiter around the bar. A handful occupy the dance-floor.

A misspelt sign hangs over the bar which reads ‘Single’s Night’.

Iona and Sam enter then head towards the bar.

SAM
Oh no! It’s singles night, love.
What shall we do?

IONA
We’ll be okay. No-one will bother us if we’re sitting together will they?
SAM
No, I suppose not.

Iona links arms with Sam. They near the bar.

SAM (cont’d)
What are you having to drink, love?

IONA
I’ll just have a lime and soda please, Sam. Best not have any booze eh?

SAM
Yeah, good idea. Tell you what. You go and find a nice table and I’ll get the drinks.

INT. DEVONSHIRE HOTEL– FUNCTION ROOM– LATER

Sam and Iona sit at a table in the corner, finishing off their meals.

Sam looks discreetly to the side.

SAM
I think you’ve got an admirer, love. He’s not taken his eyes off you all night. Haven’t you noticed?

IONA
No! Who?

SAM
Him over there, at the far side.

She turns her head.

IONA
Really?

She turns away, toying with the scraps of food on her plate.

SAM
You’re not interested I take it?

IONA
No, Sam. I’m not.

Sam pauses for a moment, looking deep in thought.
SAM
Can... Can I ask you something personal, love? You can tell me to sod off if you want.

IONA
What?

SAM
All these rumours about you, is there any truth behind them?

Iona sounds surprised.

IONA
Rumours?

SAM
Yeah, you know... About you batting for the other side.

IONA
I don’t follow, Sam.

SAM
No offense love, but are you a... how can I put this delicately? Are you a... lemon?

Iona squirms uncomfortably in her seat.

IONA
I... I... Don’t mince your words, Sam, will you?

SAM
It wouldn’t make the slightest bit of difference to me, love. I just wondered, that’s all.

IONA
If I’m perfectly honest, Sam, I’m a little confused... I did have a fling at college with a woman.

SAM
Never been with a bloke then?

IONA
Yeah, a few actually. Mainly when I was drunk.
SAM
So you’re bi, Iona... Biona!

IONA
Very droll. I don’t know, Sam. I’m not really attracted to anyone, if I’m truthful.

SAM
Not even him?

He points towards the STUD, mid-forties, handsome, muscular, wearing a tight white T-shirt and leather trousers.

SAM (cont’d)
He fancies you, Iona. Look at him, he looks like a film star. Jesus, I’d even turn for him!

She laughs.

IONA
He is gorgeous, isn’t he? God, and look at the size of his... Shall I go and talk to him?

SAM
Go for it, Iona. You’re only young once.

IONA
But what if he’s married or something?

SAM
It’s a singles night isn’t it? Now go on, stop making excuses.

Iona blushes as she gets up from the table.

Sam watches as Iona nervously approaches the stud.

She offers out her hand. He takes it, raises it to his face and kisses it gently.

Iona turns towards Sam and smiles bashfully.

The stud and Iona chatter for a few minutes as Sam spectates drinking alone.

They move over onto the dance-floor. The stud rests his hands on Iona’s bottom as they gently move in time to the music.
They kiss.

After a few moments the stud exits the dance-floor and leaves the room.

Iona scurries back over to join Sam at the table.

    SAM (cont’d)
    You okay, love? He hasn’t gone and left you already, has he?

    IONA
    No! He’s gone to see if they’ve got any rooms available!

    SAM
    Jeez, Iona. You’re a fast mover! What’s he like?

    IONA
    He’s amazing. He’s a bit older than me, but what the hell eh?

Sam nods.

    IONA (cont’d)
    You... You don’t mind, do you, Sam?

    SAM
    No, love. Like I said, you’re only here once.

    IONA
    Yeah, but I came out for a meal with you.

    SAM
    And we’ve finished our meal, had a lovely chat, and now it’s time for dessert... Well for you anyway!

    IONA
    Thanks, Sam. You’re amazing, you know that?

    SAM
    I know someone who’ll be even more amazing.

    IONA
    Really? Who?

Sam nods towards to doors to reception where the stud waits impatiently.
The stud smiles as he beckons her over.

IONA (cont’d)
Ooh! Looks like we got a room! Wish me luck.

SAM
Good luck! Have fun, love. And remember to use a blob.

IONA
A blob? You make it sound sooo romantic.

She smiles, winks and heads to the door straight into the arms of the stud.

Sam finishes his drink, puts on his jacket and gets up to leave.

INT. MARY’S HOUSE- LIVING ROOM- LATER

Mary and Edith sit slumped on the sofa.

A loud noise on the television startles Edith awake.

She checks her watch then nudges Mary.

EDITH
Mary, It’s gone twelve. I’m going to call it a night, dear.

MARY
Okay, Mum. Make sure you have a slash before you go to bed won’t you? We don’t want to have to get the hair-driers out in the morning again do we?

EDITH
Yes dear. No dear.

Edith leaves heading upstairs.

Mary pours herself another cocktail.

A call from upstairs -

EDITH (O.S)
Mary! Roy’s not back yet. Shall I leave the front door on the catch?
MARY
I’ll do it, Mum. You get your beauty sleep. You bloody need it.

EDITH (O.S)
Okay, dear. Night.

Mary checks her watch. She mutters to herself.

MARY
I don’t know where the bloody hell he is... He’s normally back by now.

She heads over to the telephone.

She dials a number.

INT. DEVONSHIRE HOTEL- ROOM 69

The stud demounts Iona, kissing her neck as he does so.
He leans over to grab a packet of cigarettes and a lighter.
He takes a cigarette, lights it and lies back, nestling up to Iona.

IONA
My God, That was amazing. How do you manage three times in the same night?

The stud smiles and takes a drag from his cigarette.

IONA (cont’d)
And I’ve got muscles aching that I didn’t even know I’d got.

She leans over, kissing him on the neck.

IONA (cont’d)
You’ve opened my eyes, I can tell you... And a few other things as well.

She twiddles with the hairs on his chest, looking content.

A harsh ringing sound ruins the moment.

The stud jumps up to reach for his trousers which rest on the floor.
INT. MARY’S HOUSE- LIVING ROOM

Mary stands with the phone to her ear.

She taps her foot impatiently.

MARY
Roy! Where the bloody hell are you?
Have you seen the time?

INT. DEVONSHIRE HOTEL- ROOM 69

The stud sits on the edge of the bed, his phone pressed to his ear.

He speaks with a slight Dutch accent -

STUD
Hello?... Yeah I’m sorry, love.
I’ve been to the motorbike rally
and I’d had a bit too much to drink.

Iona strains to hear both sides of the conversation in vain.

STUD
Yeah, I’m stopping at a mate’s house. I’ll see you in the morning... Right, I’m going to get my head down.

He hangs up then drops the phone on the floor.

He smirks at Iona then disappears under the quilt.

Iona’s legs jerk high up into the air. She giggles.

IONA
Oh yeah big boy, that’s it. Kiss me where it stinks.

A muffled response from between her legs -

STUD
Can’t we just stay here? I don’t think I’ve got time to take you to Hull, love.

FADE OUT