

INT. NEW ORLEANS - BAR - NIGHT

A parade of jazz. Hypnotic colour. And in its centre, a Downtown club. It's engulfed by the Merci Gras festival, brimming with costumed patrons drinking until their livers curdle.

Two girls enter, dressed-up and stumbling through the doors. They cackle. The crowd bustles. The air's thick with sweat. Out of sight, a dance-floor rumbles. The belly to the club's beast.

One of the girls, IMELDA, puts the arm around ALANNAH. She yells into her ear above the music.

IMELDA:  
Wanna dance Alannah?

ALANNAH:  
I'm going to have a few more drinks first!

IMELDA:  
Cool! You can blame your bad dancing on the rum instead!

ALANNAH:  
I hate rum!

IMELDA:  
Sure you do. See ya!

IMELDA beelines for the dancefloor as ALANNAH saunters to the bar. She leans on the counter, crowded by other festival goers.

Then, a wave of commotion erupts. ALANNAH turns around to see a twerking woman being clapped and cheered by the crowd. A man stands behind her grinding in matching rhythm, glass in hand. With every thrust, drink spills everywhere.

He grins and howls, having the time of his life.

Finally, the dancer stands to peck him on the cheek. He returns the favour... but continues down her neck, shoulder, arm and ends with a mockingly chivalrous peck on the back of her hand.

Leaving the circle, THE MAN eyes his empty glass with a pout. ALANNAH holds her breath as he approaches.

THE MAN:  
Kijan w santi w aswe a cheri?

She blinks blankly, clueless.

THE MAN turns to THE BARTENDER, immediately grabbing their attention.

THE MAN: (cont'd)  
Komon ou ye?

BARTENDER:  
Muy bien, muy bien.

THE MAN:  
Glass of rum for me and de girl.

He looks at ALANNAH, who catches on.

ALANNAH:  
Ah, no - I don't like rum, thanks.

THE MAN:  
Ey? What is wrong wid you? Everybody  
like rum.

THE BARTENDER pours, several customers leave and THE MAN takes a seat.

ALANNAH studies him: the ornate, black top hat perched on his head, the tailcoat of matching colour draping his body. Beads dangle from his neck and rub against a pair of spectacles missing their lenses. She stares at his face and how it's painted as a skull.

THE MAN takes his drink, and gives ALANNAH hers. His hands are filthy.

THE MAN: (cont'd)  
Don't mind de soil, bin a crazy few  
'ours.

ALANNAH begrudgingly accepts her drink.

ALANNAH:  
Nice costume.

THE MAN smiles, pulling a cigar and matches from his pocket.

THE MAN:  
You going to stand up all night?

ALANNAH:  
I don't see any stools free.

THE MAN:  
*(striking a match)*  
 Why nid a stool when my face is right  
 'ere?

ALANNAH barely stops her jaw hitting the ground. THE MAN smirks, taking a puff of the cigar and shaking out the match.

ALANNAH:  
 Jesus - it's not even midnight and  
 you're talking like that?

THE MAN drags over a stool, patting it.

THE MAN:  
 No matter de 'our, dere's always fun  
 to be 'ad.

ALANNAH remains standing. She sips her drink, grimacing.

THE MAN: *(cont'd)*  
 Fucking strong, ey?

ALANNAH:  
*(spluttering)*  
 You don't say.

THE MAN:  
 You from 'ere?

ALANNAH:  
 My friend and I are spending the  
 weekend here. What about you?

THE MAN:  
 I'm a regular

ALANNAH:  
 What? To the bar or to Downtown?

THE MAN:  
 Bod.

ALANNAH:  
 And the festival?

THE MAN:  
 A fucking spectacle. I come when I  
 can --

He gives ALANNAH a dirty look

THE MAN: (cont'd)  
 -- which is never usually an issue  
 for me.

ALANNAH:  
 Really? How much rum have you had?

THE MAN:  
*(slamming the table)*  
 Not enough! Anoder round for me and  
 dis ravishing woman!

ALANNAH huffs a laugh, turning to leave.

ALANNAH:  
 Alright, that's enough, I'm leaving  
 now --

THE MAN:  
 Wait! Let us list finish our drinks  
 togeder.

ALANNAH:  
 My friend is waiting for me!

THE MAN:  
 Damn your friend! On de dance floor,  
 time slips away! Poof! You 'ave time!  
 Give it till midnight.

ALANNAH:  
 Are you going to keep hitting on me?

THE MAN:  
 Maybe. Depends on 'ow 'ard you slap  
 me. Dat's always de fun part.

She ponders for a moment, then takes a seat.

ALANNAH:  
 Fine, fine, one more drink but it  
 better not be --

Two glasses of rum are put in front of them. She groans as  
 THE MAN guffaws.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - 10 MINUTES LATER

Empty shot glasses surround ALANNAH's half-drunk rum and THE  
 MAN's empty equivalent.

ALANNAH:  
So what's with the accent?

THE MAN:  
What accent?

ALANNAH:  
You. You speaking. It sounds sort of French.

THE MAN:  
Kisa?! 'ow dare you insult me in such a way! Calling me French! I am far too pretty.

ALANNAH:  
Careful or the French are having another revolution. Ever seen Les Mis?

THE MAN:  
I would rader fuck a pig.

ALANNAH:  
Well then. Poor pig.

THE MAN:  
You are welcome to take it's place.

ALANNAH:  
I don't know, the pig might be more into it.

THE MAN:  
But de pig doesn't 'ave your beautiful, godly, swelling breasts for me to enjoy!

ALANNAH chokes on her rum.

ALANNAH:  
That slap is looking more and more likely sir. I'll leave --

THE MAN:  
But what about de poor pig?

ALANNAH:  
Fuck the pig.

THE MAN:  
Wi! Now you're getting it.

ALANNAH hides her chuckling behind her glass before giving up, succumbing to the obscene image in her head.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

THE MAN is standing, clapping, as ALANNAH downs another shot.

ALANNAH:  
Okay, now you, now you.

THE MAN picks up his shot. Downs it. He picks up his rum. Downs that too. Then he takes a huge puff of his cigar and thrusts to the right, to the left before leaning back and exhaling smoke everywhere.

ALANNAH laughs and applauds. He bows, returning to the stool.

THE MAN:  
So what was your name again?

ALANNAH:  
Al - lah - nah!

THE MAN:  
Alannah! Mezanmi! Pretty name for a pretty woman, ey?

ALANNAH:  
It's Irish.

THE MAN:  
You're Irish?

ALANNAH:  
No, my family's Irish.

THE MAN:  
How interesting!

ALANNAH:  
Really? Have you never met an Irish person before then?

THE MAN:  
Don't be silly.

ALANNAH:  
So you have?

THE MAN:  
My wife is Irish - I dink.

ALANNAH chokes on her rum for the second time tonight.

ALANNAH:  
You're married?!

THE MAN:  
Of course! Why wouldn't I be?

ALANNAH:  
Because I just say you gyrate on a  
twerking, single woman! Kiss said  
woman! Multiple times!

THE MAN:  
My wife loves it! She loves me! I  
love her! We love to fuck, drink and  
bring terror to de family.

ALANNAH:  
I - Okay! Okay. This has given me a  
headache before the alcohol. I need  
to eat something before I drown in  
this stuff.

She signals to the empty glasses.

THE MAN:  
I 'ave dese if you want dem.

THE MAN reveals a bag of grilled peanuts from his pocket.  
ALANNAH sees them, jumping back as if he'd just pulled out a  
gun.

ALANNAH:  
Get them away from me.

THE MAN:  
Poukisa? You afraid of nuts?

ALANNAH:  
No, I'm allergic. Like I'm really,  
really allergic. Please throw them  
away.

THE MAN:  
Padone mwen, I should know better.

He looks at the peanuts then throws them behind him.

ALANNAH:  
Did you touch them? Eat any?

THE MAN shakes his head.

Slowly, ALANNAH walks back to her stool.

THE MAN:  
You allergic to all nuts?

ALANNAH:  
Yeah, but peanuts are the worst of them.

THE MAN:  
(*pointing down*)  
Would you be allergic to any other kind of nuts?

ALANNAH:  
Ha-ha. You're not the only guy to have used that line before.

ALANNAH takes a shaky exhale.

ALANNAH: (cont'd)  
Damn, I need another drink.

Behind them, the bag of peanuts is kicked around in the dancing frenzy. They skid to the feet of a costumed man.

He too wears a suit, a skeleton face, beads, but his top hat is bright purple. He picks the peanuts up, reading the label only to shrug and start eating.

INT. BAR - ALMOST MIDNIGHT

ALANNAH stumbles back to her stool.

THE MAN:  
Dat your friend?

ALANNAH wobbles as she sits, slightly slurring her words.

ALANNAH:  
Yeah, she said we gotta go soon but she seems pretty happy with that guy she's dancing with! But anyway! You! Creole! Teach me!

THE MAN:  
What you want to say?

ALANNAH:  
I wanna call someone bald!



THE MAN:  
'ow rude! It's perfect! Listen close,  
Teht --

ALANNAH:  
Teht

THE MAN:  
Kal - ley.

ALANNAH:  
Kal- lay --

THE MAN:  
Kal - LEY.

ALANNAH:  
Kal - LEY!

THE MAN:  
Bo - Biss! Tèt Kale Bobis.

ALANNAH:  
Teht Kalay Boobies!

Shaking his head, THE MAN reaches for his rum.

THE MAN:  
You are very lucky Alannah.

ALANNAH:  
Why?

THE MAN:  
Because I find women who butcher my  
language fuckable as well.

ALANNAH:  
It was not that bad! Give me one more  
chance.

THE MAN:  
I'm afraid dat's all you're getting  
from me tonight cheri.

ALANNAH:  
Okay fine, can I try on your hat  
then?

THE MAN pouts, contemplating, before smoothly removing his hat and handing it to ALANNAH. She puts it on eagerly and starts posing.

ALANNAH: (cont'd)  
*(exaggerated British  
 accent)*  
 Oi oi Oliver Twist! Get up da  
 chimney!

As ALANNAH continues her antics, THE MAN's gaze becomes distant. Looking past a veil only he can see.

THE MAN:  
 Always felt sorry for dose kids...

He zones back in, tutting, signalling for the hat back.

THE MAN: (cont'd)  
 Ban, ban.

ALANNAH hands it back, whining.

ALANNAH:  
 The hat was helping me speak Creole!

THE MAN:  
 Not even voodoo could 'elp you dere.

Both he and ALANNAH chuckle before her purse starts to buzz.

ALANNAH:  
 Oh shit --

Taking it off her shoulder, she roughly rummages through. We hear something hit the floor, but she ignores it. Eventually, she pulls out and answers her phone.

ALANNAH: (cont'd)  
 Why are you calling me?

(beat)

ALANNAH: (cont'd)  
 Already? Immy!

(beat)

ALANNAH: (cont'd)  
 I am not drunk! Liar! Tell her I'm  
 not drunk!

She holds the phone up to THE MAN, who speaks in his best, headmasterly impression.

THE MAN:  
 She is completely and utterly sober!  
 Manti!

ALANNAH:

Yes.

(beat)

ALANNAH: (cont'd)

Let me say goodbye to my friend  
before I meet you. See you bestie  
bye!

She hangs up.

ALANNAH: (cont'd)

I gotta go.

THE MAN:

Kisa?

ALANNAH:

I know.

THE MAN:

You haven't even twerked on me yet!

ALANNAH:

I know!

THE MAN:

What am I supposed to do?

ALANNAH:

You could see if there are any pigs  
around.

They both laugh at the stupidity of it all.

ALANNAH: (cont'd)

I might be drunk, and big-titted and  
twerkless but can I have your number?

THE MAN smiles and takes a napkin from the bar counter.

THE MAN:

Plim!

THE BARTENDER hands over a pen and THE MAN starts neatly  
writing out a number. He hands it to ALANNAH, who squints at  
it.

ALANNAH:

You know, this would be a lot more  
romantic if I could read.

She giggles, stuffing the napkin in her cleavage.

ALANNAH: (cont'd)  
 This has been so much fun. We should  
 do it again. I don't care when or  
 where but we should.

THE MAN sips at his rum.

THE MAN:  
 Oh I'm sure we'll be doing dis again  
 soon Alannah.

ALANNAH:  
 Promise?

THE MAN:  
 It would be my 'onour.

THE MAN stands.

THE MAN: (cont'd)  
 Can I 'ug you?

ALANNAH nods, arms wide.

THE MAN: (cont'd)  
 (hugging her)  
 Mwen pral wè ou talè, Alannah.

ALANNAH:  
 Huh?

Smiling, THE MAN points at her top.

THE MAN:  
 I like your shirt.

He swaggers off, swallowed by the chaos and shadows of the club.

ALANNAH starts walking towards the door, IMELDA sneaking up behind her - pouncing.

IMELDA:  
 Hey Ally!

ALANNAH:  
 Immy!

IMELDA:  
 Have you had a good time?

ALANNAH:  
 Yep! I've been living it up with  
 boneface over there!

ALANNAH points towards the bar to find it's empty, suddenly remembering that THE MAN walked off.

IMELDA:  
You scared off a man before your  
first date Ally, that's impressive!

ALANNAH:  
Still got his number!

She pulls out the napkin, handing it to IMELDA who reads it with confusion. She pulls out her phone as ALANNAH dances to the exit.

As they near the doors, ALANNAH catches sight of a man wearing a suit and hat. A bright. purple. hat.

ALANNAH: (cont'd)  
Ah, what the heck.

She turns and grabs the man, kissing him on the lips.

IMELDA:  
Ally! No!

IMELDA pulls her away, apologising profusely.

IMELDA: (cont'd)  
You idiot, how drunk are you?

ALANNAH points to the napkin then at the man.

ALANNAH:  
I got his number!

IMELDA:  
You didn't get shit! These are just  
some coordinates to a crossroad!

They leave the bar, but as they do, ALANNAH's hand starts going to her throat.

INT. BAR - AFTER MIDNIGHT

THE PURPLE-HAT MAN sits at the bar while THE BARTENDER kneels beside him, sweeping up a broken glass.

THE BARTENDER:  
(*from the floor*)  
Hey bud!

He calls over to his colleague behind the bar.

THE BARTENDER: (cont'd)  
You know what this is?

He holds up an epipen.

His colleague shakes his head, but THE PURPLE-HAT MAN answers.

PURPLE HAT MAN:  
Yeah, uh, they're one of those jabby things.

THE BARTENDER:  
What?

PURPLE HAT MAN:  
Yeah, you know, when someone seizing on the floor and they need that jabbed in them and shit.

THE BARTENDER looks at the epipen

THE BARTENDER:  
Shit.

Putting it in his pocket, he turns to the PURPLE HAT MAN

THE BARTENDER: (cont'd)  
Nice costume.

PURPLE HAT MAN:  
Thanks man, ain't nobody talked about it yet.

THE BARTENDER:  
It's cool, it's cool. You supposed to be that Death God, huh?

PURPLE HAT MAN:  
Baron Samedi. I got his top hat, rum and everything. I like top hats. I like drinking. So, here I am.

THE BARTENDER:  
Yeah, well, just don't go round killing nobody Mr. Death God.

PURPLE HAT MAN:  
Not mine or his thing. He just dig graves, do afterlife stuff, and get women.

BARTENDER:

I see you're not doing too good on that last one.

PURPLE HAT MAN:

Wanna bet? A drunk chick literally just kissed me! My breath stinks! I ate a load of peanuts earlier.

THE BARTENDER laughs.

Meanwhile, by the exit, a shadowy figure with a tailcoat and top hat fixes his clothes.

He takes a swig of his rum, a puff of his cigar before opening the doors. They swing as he leaves, wafting the shrill of distant sirens and death into the club.

FIN.