

TITLE:
BANJO

WRITTEN BY:
Asimwe Philip

BASED ON:
True Events

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CONTACT:+256767832281

INT-MUSIC STUDIO-EVENING

Banjo 27 is in his home studio, surrounded by musical instruments and recording equipment, he takes a puff and as he blows out the smoke, Maria 25 his girl friend appears at the door and quickly disappears behind the door.. Banjo gets up and dashes out of the studio and chases after Maria.

CUT TO

INT-BEDROOM-EVENING

Maria throws herself on the bed as Banjo follows her.

(Maria confronts him)

MARIA

Ive noticed your smoking alot lately, iam worried.

BANJO

(Softly)

Why? Am still getting my work done and my music better than before?

MARIA

(With concern in her eyes)

Honey we talked about this, you need to stop smoking that thing and its my responsibility to help you.

BANJO

(calmly)

Look, Maria, you are my Girlfriend not my counselor .

Maria stands up, moves closer, holds his hands while squeezing them.

MARIA

Iam a woman i can do both.

BANJO

(With assurance)

Honey this is me, it is part of me, it makes me think, it makes me more creative, it helps my concentration and desire to give my best and my craft becomes better.

Maria studies him as he speaks.

BANJO (CONT'D)

it gives me inner peace that sometimes no person can give me, sorry to say. Its part of my mental health. I love cannabis and it loves me too.

MARIA

(Calmly)

But what about our plans? Starting a family? I don't want our kids around this.

BANJO

(Leans back)

I can be a good father and still enjoy cannabis responsibly, they aren't mutually exclusive.

MARIA

I kindly ask you to look for the side effects as well. Be Wiser and smarter!!!

BANJO

Look, there are side effects to everything, Good and bad with everything, if you weigh your options and find that cannabis helps you more than the standard western medicine, it doesn't matter what a stranger thinks. Not everyone needs to take pills for anxiety not even drink herbs for cancer. Others choose cannabis over tobacco.

MARIA

With such great praise you talk of it, why is still restricted by the law in most countries.

BANJO

(Banjo's face changes and hardens)

Thats where we all go wrong, sorry
thats where you all go wrong and this
is all politics, if Cannabis .was
legalized, planet earth would benefit
greatly, mentally spiritually and
physically, it is a crime to keep
medicine illegal

(Maria looks at him with concern)

BANJO (CONT'D)

Banjo's voice hardens

especially a medicine as diverse as Sativa with all its
potential benefits for people with different
illnesses. Furthermore, the health of the planet will increase
because people will be planting more trees. I am not going to
get started on the benefit to the economy because the
monetary system is just a method of human enslavement. The
other day my Friend's Dad was diagonised with a cancer and
guess what they prescribed for him?

MARIA

(Mockingly)

Did they prescribe 4 smoking joints
per day?

BANJO

You really have never went through the
miserable pains those quack doctors i
call them butchers give you when they
goof up on Surgeries and the pain is
unbearable. I think you should try it
rather than give wrong information
about it.

(maria's face Changes)

MARIA

This drug is dragging down to hell.

BANJO

(shrugs his shoulders)

A drug that makes me more creative?

MARIA

But isn't there any risk of dependency? Not everyone uses it responsibly.

BANJO

(Looks disturbed)

Like anything, there's always moderation and intent.

MARIA

(nods)

Is it even proven by science?

BANJO

historically, natural alternatives have been used trusted and effective, modern Medicine seems to discredit so much of what history proved to be helpful and healthy. Modern medicine is healthy but we do not have to be all Meds or all Homeopathic. More Gray, less black and white!!!

Maria looks him deep in the eyes with a look of concern.

MARIA

There you go, how do i even tell my friends that my boyfriend is a proud stoner?

BANJO

(Pinches the bridge of his nose while pacing)

Oh now its about your friends Maria?

MARIA

They are part of us. This smoking will take a toll on you, everyone will notice. you need get behind that smoke..

BANJO

With pride

(MORE)

BANJO (CONT'D)

I exercise regularly, I have a really good skin and I don't have the discomfort some people associate with it.

MARIA

But...

Interrupted

BANJO

But what Maria, what do you prefer, a chronic drunkard that drinks himself stupid till morning or a stoner that locks up and meditates?

MARIA

(Nods)

Her eyes look tearful

Evil is Evil my dear. I choose none.

BANJO

(softly)

You will have to make up your mind Maria. Either love me for who I am or leave me for what I am.

A sense of concern, worry and resistance lingers in their faces.

CUT TO

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The shop is cozy and quiet only for coffee machines humming in the background. Sunlight cuts through the windows. Lucy and Maria sit at a corner table, each with a steaming cup of tea. Maria stares at hers, lost in thought.

LUCY

(softly)

You're quiet.

MARIA

(sighs)

It's Banjo.

(MORE)

MARIA (CONT'D)

He's smoking too much of late And not
just casually. It's... a thing now.
It's who he is.

Lucy leans back, her eyes steady on Maria. She picks at the
edge of her cup but says nothing at first.

MARIA(CONT'DD)

I'm scared he's choosing it over
everything else. Over me.

Lucy nods slowly. She takes a sip, then sets her cup down
carefully, like she's preparing herself.

LUCY

My brother, Joel...

He started with weed too.

Maria glances at her, surprised. She's never heard Lucy talk
about her family before.

LUCY (CONT'D)

He was funny. Charming. The life of
every room he walked into. And when he
smoked, at first... he was just more
of that. You know? Laid-back.
Creative. Everyone loved being around
him.

Lucy's voice hardens, but she keeps it calm.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Then he needed it to be those things.
And after a while, the weed wasn't
enough. He started mixing. Pills. Then
harder stuff.

(shakes her head)

He said it helped him "find himself."
But he got so lost, Maria. So lost we
couldn't reach him.

Maria watches her friend quietly, sensing something deeper
coming.

LUCY (CONT'D)

He stopped coming home. Mum couldn't
sleep anymore she was always waiting
for the phone to ring. You know, that
call.

(Voice tightening)
 Dad left. Said he couldn't watch Joel
 destroy himself. Said we were enabling
 him.

(she stares at Maria)
 And maybe we were.

Maria reaches across the table and squeezes Lucy's hand. Lucy
 doesn't cry, but her grip tightens.

LUCY (CONT'D)
 We buried Joel two years ago.
 Overdose.

They said it was heroin in the end.
 But to me? It was the first joint.
 That's where it started. That's where
 we lost him.

Silence lingers between them. Only the faint clink of cups
 and the hum of the coffee machine in the background.

MARIA
 (softly)

I didn't know.

LUCY
 I don't talk about it much. But you
 needed to hear it.

Maria nods, her face pale but resolute. She looks out the
 window at people passing by, thinking about Danny.

MARIA
 Banjo isn't Joel.

LUCY
 I hope not.
 (Softly)
 But don't tell yourself it can't
 happen.

Maria closes her eyes for a moment.

MARIA
 I have to help him. Before it's too late.
 Lucy leans in, voice gentle again.

LUCY

Help him. But protect yourself too.

They sit in silence. Maria's tea has gone cold but no one notices.

MARIA

(waking up from the silence of the moment)

Oh my world, i forgot he had an event tonight, i need to do my pedicure.

She quickly gathers herself and leaves Lucy staring back at her with concern.

CUT TO

EXT- BANJO'S BACKYARD LIVE SHOW

A string of warm, amber lights dangles between tall trees, casting a soft glow over a makeshift wooden stage. Friends and family gather on picnic blankets and fold-out chairs, drinks in hand, while the scent of barbecue drifts through the air. The vibe is relaxed, laughter blending with the low hum of conversation. Maria, sits up front, her eyes shining with pride.

Banjo steps onto the stage, guitar hung over his shoulder. He's wearing a loose linen shirt, sleeves rolled. A couple of people cheer, and someone whistles.

He strums a few chords, lets the sound settle over the crowd, then steps to the mic.

BANJO

(smiling, taking a breath)

Hey, everyone. Wow... this is wild. I didn't think half of you would actually show up, but here we are. So first—thank you. Seriously. It means everything to me.

A murmur of support ripples through the group. Maria claps quietly, mouthing, You got this.

BANJO (CONT'D)

You all know me. Some of you have known me since I was that kid writing lyrics in the margins of his homework. Others, well, you're newer to the ride. But whether you've been around forever or just found your seat on this crazy train I'm grateful.

(pauses, thoughtful)

I've always believed in making space for creativity. Music, writing... it's not just what I do. It's who I am. And yeah, part of that journey for me has included embracing something that's still kinda taboo in a lot of places—weed.

There's a slight shift in the crowd, a few heads nod in understanding.

BANJO (CONT'D)

For me, it's about connection. Reflection. Inspiration. I'm not saying it's for everyone, and I'm definitely not saying it should be used without thought. But I do believe it deserves acceptance. That we can have honest conversations about responsible use, without shame or fear.

(smiles faintly)

And I love that you all accept me for who I am a guy who writes love songs at midnight, gets lost in melodies, and believes the world's a little better when we open our minds.

(glances at Maria)

Especially you, Maria. Thank you for believing in me when I wasn't sure I believed in myself.

Maria wipes her eyes, smiling.

BANJO (CONT'D)

So, tonight's about music. About honesty. And about community. Let's make some memories, yeah?

The crowd erupts and Banjo grins as he strums his guitre.

DANNY AND MARIA'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

The door clicks shut behind them. The echo of laughter and music from earlier still lingers Banjo's mind. He sets his guitar case down by the couch, exhaling a deep breath like he's finally let the weight of the night go.

Maria's already slipped off her shoes, moving quietly through the small, cozy space lit only by the soft glow of a lamp in the corner. She glances back at him, her dark eyes warm, thoughtful.

MARIA

(softly)

You were incredible tonight.

Banjo gives her a crooked smile.

BANJO

Yeah? You're not just saying that because you're biased?

Maria walks over and slips her arms around his waist, resting her cheek against his chest. She can feel the steady beat of his heart, still a little fast from the adrenaline.

MARIA

I mean, I'm definitely biased. But you were incredible. You spoke your truth, Banjo. And you played your heart out. I've never seen you so... you.

Banjo wraps his arms around her in return, his chin resting lightly on her head. They stand there for a moment, quiet.

BANJO

I was nervous. Saying all that... about me. About weed. I wasn't sure how it'd land.

Maria leans back just enough to look up at him.

MARIA

You don't need to be nervous with me. I get you. I love you for all of it the music, your wild ideas, your belief that weed can make people connect deeper when it's used right. I see you, Banjo. And I'm in.

His eyes soften. There's a shine there, gratitude mixed with something deeper.

BANJO

You're in?

MARIA

I'm in. All the way.

He kisses her slow, grateful. Like he's letting her words settle into his skin. After a moment, Maria pulls back just enough to smirk.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Roll one?

Banjo laughs quietly, already moving toward the table where his little wooden box sits. He rolls with practiced ease, the ritual calming. They sit together on the couch, legs tangled, passing the joint between them. The smoke curls lazily around them as they relax, the silence comfortable.

A few minutes later, Maria shifts, her fingers tracing lazy patterns along his forearm. Her touch is light, but it sparks something deeper.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You feel different. Lighter.

BANJO

Because I am. You make me feel safe.
Like I don't have to hold back.

She kisses him again, deeper this time. The joint is forgotten, as their hands explore familiar paths with new urgency. Clothes slip away, slow and deliberate, as if undressing each other of the last of their fears.

They make love on the couch first, bodies entwined, movements soft but hungry. It's more than physical it's connection. Afterward, they lay tangled together under the blanket, his fingers absentmindedly playing with her hair.

BANJO (CONT'D)

We should do this more often.

MARIA

Which part?

BANJO

All of it. The music, the honesty, the
smoke, us.

Maria smiles, pressing a kiss to his shoulder.

MARIA

Deal.

Danny grins into the dim light, pulling her closer.

BANJO

Deal.

And in the quiet hum of their space, they drift together at
peace, accepted, and in love.

END

Note: This film rated 20 advocstes for responsible use only.