

ON MY MIND

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Draft 11 - (4/19/18)

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

MARCUS (80), an overweight African American man, stands in his living room. His hands are large, calloused, and arthritic. These hands are the result of a physically demanding life.

He anxiously watches his son, JACKSON (48), look through moving boxes. With tired eyes, Jackson looks as if he's had a long day inside a cubicle. He continues to hunt for whatever it is that he is seeking.

The apartment is small, but homely. It's late. The front door is open, with an "Estate Sale: Everything Goes" sign. WILL (65) enters the room. A taller man, he wears a fancy suit, sports a well trimmed graying beard, and exudes the sense of wealth.

He waves to Jackson, who nods. The room has emptied of buyers, it's just the three of them now. Jackson begins to look more urgently.

JACKSON  
Where is it, Dad?

MARCUS  
You can't do this.

Jackson pulls out an old trumpet case from a box. He opens it, revealing a badly damaged horn with a signature on the bell that reads "Dizzy". Marcus reaches for the case, but Jackson resists.

JACKSON  
Dad, we're getting rid of it!

MARCUS  
It's not yours to give away!

JACKSON  
After everything it's done, you  
want to keep it?

Will looks over, intrigued. Jackson and Marcus whisper.

JACKSON (CONT'D)  
That man over there is willing to  
pay a lot of money for it. Besides,  
we're selling *all* of this. Marie  
and I have everything you need at  
our place.

MARCUS

My trumpet stays with me, Jackson!  
How does *he* even know about it?

JACKSON

I posted an ad online.

MARCUS

What!?! Without telling me?

JACKSON

We talked about this, but you would  
have never agreed, so I posted it!  
I can't pay those medical bills,  
and neither can you.

Jackson smiles to Will.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

(softer)

We both need this. Let's just see  
if he's even going to buy. Dad,  
please?

Marcus fumes at Jackson, but relents. Jackson gives Will the  
horn. Will removes the keys, mouthpiece, and valves. He  
examines its dents, and his smile fades.

WILL

The ad didn't really cover these  
uh, bumps did it?

Will sees the signature on the bell. His eyes light up.

JACKSON

Well, it's an antique! And to show  
you how valuable it is, here's the  
photo to confirm its authenticity.

Jackson reaches into a box and pulls out a framed photo of  
Marcus (30's) and a YOUNG JACKSON (11) standing next to DIZZY  
GILLESPIE (64) outside a jazz club. Will examines the photo,  
and then the trumpet as well. He nods.

WILL

Well, the dents are concerning, so  
I'm going to have to lower my  
offer. But, I've done my research,  
and everything looks to be in  
order. Does it still work?

Will places a blank check on the coffee table.

WILL (CONT'D)

I can offer you the seven thousand, minus some for the damages, if you show me that it works. If it doesn't, then the best I can do is eight hundred.

Marcus tenses up, displaying a look of anger and disbelief on his face.

MARCUS

Of course it still works!

Marcus grabs the trumpet. He starts to instinctively assemble it as a marine would with his rifle.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

This is a 1948 Conn 80A horn. It's a Rolls Royce!

Will looks taken aback. Jackson approaches Marcus. He calmly places his hand on Marcus's shoulder.

JACKSON

Dad, why don't you show him it works?

(to Will)

Trust me, it's worth seven thousand.

Marcus looks down at the trumpet in his hands. He investigates every bump and scratch on the bell. He has a worried look on his face. He looks at Jackson, and sighs.

MARCUS

Sure.

Marcus goes to a box and pulls out a record player and some records. Will reaches for a Charlie Parker record, and Marcus gives him a dirty look.

Marcus finds the record he wants and plays it. As the music starts, he looks at Will and Jackson. Marcus reluctantly brings the horn up - his hands fitting perfectly to the shape of the horn - and plays along to upbeat jazz.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. JAZZ CLUB - NEW YORK CITY - DAY (1947)

A TRUMPETER jams onstage to the same upbeat jazz song. A YOUNG MARCUS (10) looks from the crowd. As THE TRUMPETER nails a high C, Marcus leans forward and smiles.

INT. YOUNG MARCUS'S HOME - NEW YORK CITY - DAY (1947)

Young Marcus tears away at the wrapping paper which reads "happy birthday!" on it. Young Marcus's jaw drops as he sees his Conn 80A horn for the first time, in its full pristine glory.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1961)

Marcus, now twenty-four, plays his trumpet on the street. A young woman, LAURA (23), walks past Marcus with her friends. Laura stops and bobs her head to the music.

Laura smiles. Her friends leave, but Laura stays listening. She and Marcus smile at each other, as Marcus continues to play.

INT. CHURCH RECEPTION HALL - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1965)

Marcus stands in front of his wedding reception, holding the horn. In front of him is a stand with a piece of music. The title of the piece reads, "For My Love".

Marcus looks at the bride, Laura. She gives him a dorky thumbs up, and he returns the gesture. Marcus brings the mouthpiece to his lips, and performs for the crowd.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - DAY (1965)

Marcus and Laura move into an apartment. They hug.

INT. LOCAL JAZZ CLUB - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1966)

Marcus plays his trumpet on stage, in. The room is packed. He looks out and sees Laura dancing. He grooves to the beat, waving to Laura. Laura cheers and waves back.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - DAY (1969)

Marcus and Laura enter their home, with a BABY JACKSON in Laura's arms.

EXT. JAZZ CLUB - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1981)

Marcus and a YOUNG JACKSON wait outside of the club's back entrance. From the entrance emerges Dizzy Gillespie. Marcus comes near Dizzy with his trumpet, marker, and camera.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

With a smile, Marcus stops playing. Will claps politely, checks his watch, walks towards Marcus, and reaches for the horn.

WILL

Sounds like everything works!  
Thanks for that, but I need to get  
home.

Marcus brings the horn closer to his body. Will looks confused. Jackson looks as confused as he is annoyed.

MARCUS

You know, the pitch of a horn can  
change as it warms up. How about  
one more, just to be sure?

WILL

(sighing)  
Sure. Um, how about a slow one?

Will steps back, still confused. Marcus avoids his son's glare. Marcus puts on a record and a sad melody starts. Marcus once again feels the dents on the horn. He plays a slower, melancholic tune.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1987)

Marcus sits with the family at the table. He wears a frown, and a construction uniform...music can't pay the bills. As TEENAGE JACKSON (18) and Laura argue, Marcus picks up his dishes and leaves the room.

EXT. JAZZ CLUB - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1987)

Marcus walks home from work. He peeks in through the window of his favorite jazz club. Marcus sighs longingly and continues to walk past the club.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - LATE NIGHT (1987)

Marcus sits, fidgeting on the couch alone. He has his trumpet case and a jacket on. Marcus looks between his bedroom and the front door until he decides to go out the front.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NEW YORK CITY - LATE NIGHT (1987)

Marcus plays his trumpet happily on a new corner. People stop to listen, enjoying the music. Marcus opens his eyes to some people smiling back at him. His eyes light up.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY DAYBREAK (1987)

Marcus sneaks into his home, and climbs into bed with Laura.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - DUSK (1987)

Marcus and Laura sit at the table, not saying a word. As Laura gets up from her seat, she kisses Marcus on the forehead, and moves into the back room. Marcus watches her go. After she closes the door, he gets up, grabs his horn, and goes out to play.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1990)

Marcus tries to sneak in. A light turns on. On the couch, Laura sits in her pajamas. With bags under her eyes and a scowl on her face, Laura and Marcus angrily whisper. A nervous Teenage Jackson peaks out of his bedroom to watch.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1993)

Marcus (56) and his family watch TV in their living room. He gets up off of the couch and walks outside with his trumpet-not daring to look at his family. They watch him with contempt. Laura coughs, looking unhealthier than before.

INT. CHEMOTHERAPY CENTER - NEW YORK CITY - DAY (1994)

Marcus and an ill Laura sit next to each other as she receives treatment. Both avoid each other's gazes, but when Marcus goes to turn on the radio, Laura stops him.

LAURA

No music, Marcus. Please?

Marcus nods his head. He kisses her hand, and they smile.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1994)

Jackson and Marcus surround Laura in her bed. Marcus sits down next to her and takes her hand. Laura's hair has fallen out. Laura smiles weakly at her husband and son.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NEW YORK CITY - LATE NIGHT (1994)

Marcus wakes from a nap; Jackson is gone, Laura is asleep. Marcus watches Laura's heartbeat monitor and sees that she's stable. Marcus goes to touch his wife's cheek, but pulls away with tears in his eyes. He goes out into the hall and paces.

After calming down, Marcus starts to enter the room, but freezes. He steps away, and walks down the hall.

EXT. NEW STREET CORNER - NEW YORK CITY - LATER

Marcus plays his trumpet on the corner, happy. After he finishes, the crowd claps, and Marcus takes a deep bow.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAYBREAK

Marcus reenters Laura's room with his horn, and a smile. But he sees Jackson, and then he sees Laura. His smile fades. The heartbeat monitor has stopped. With tears in his eyes, Jackson runs over and shoves his father.

Marcus puts the case down, and kneels by his wife's bedside. He touches her cheek, and breaks down sobbing. Jackson sees the case on the ground and kicks it. Marcus doesn't react.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1994)

Marcus opens his closet door and violently throws his trumpet case inside. He pauses, then picks it up and throws it in again. Marcus does this over and over, as Jackson watches.

After five throws, the trumpet flies out of the case. Without hesitation, Marcus throws the horn. Its metal hits the wall, ringing out. Marcus stops. He looks at the horn, now horribly abused. He takes deep breaths, and shuts the closet door.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

Now, Marcus opens the closet door. He and Jackson rummage around the closet, putting stuff into moving boxes. He finds the horn and case. Marcus takes the horn out of the closet and holds it, while Jackson observes him.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Marcus stops playing, as he wipes away tears. Silence permeates the room. Jackson comforts his dad. Marcus looks inside the box and sees his original wedding song.



MARCUS

Just one more - for good.

Jackson smiles and Will nods. Marcus composes himself, and plays. A beautiful ballad emits from the bell of the horn.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (1961)

Marcus and Laura are on the corner, on that first night. The streets are quiet as he plays. Suddenly, Laura dances like a beautiful fool. Marcus laughs. She encourages Marcus to keep playing. He continues to play, and she continues to dance.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Marcus finishes, and no one moves. He smiles, tears in his eyes. He walks over to Will, and hands him the trumpet. Jackson goes to stop him, but Marcus holds up his hand. Will has a bewildered look.

MARCUS

Here, she's all yours.

WILL

Are you sure?

MARCUS

Yes, I am. She's given me a lot, so please, treat her well.

FADE TO BLACK.