

# MND Matters: Episode 34: Behind the curtain with Michael Patrick and Oisín Kearney

## **Domonique**

So welcome to MND Matters, brought to you by the MND Association and sponsored by Toyota GB and Toyota Financial Services. I'm Domonique, and I'm delighted to be joined today by actor and writer Michael Patrick and writer and director Oisín Kearney. Together, Michael and Oisín have worked on a number of incredible television, radio and theatre productions. And some of you may be familiar with their television series, My Left Nut, which was based on their award-winning play and aired on BBC Three in 2020. Thank you both so much for joining me this afternoon. Michael Oisín, welcome. I just want to start off by saying how much I really enjoyed researching your work. I've watched a couple of clips. I've had a look on your website and your Michael, your willingness to share so openly, share your experiences and tell your story through your own humour, is a real joy to experience. Is there something you've always found has helped you manage difficult situations and kind of see the lighter side of things in life using that humour.

## **Michael**

Yeah, well, it's two things. One, it definitely is true what you're saying, you know, it does help you get through difficult things. But also, you know, a man needs paid like and a lot of the time, if you use your own life, people are more inclined to give you money. But I know I'm only joking, I'm not really, but it does definitely help. I do think that like to to laugh at bad things that happen in your life. Oisín do you want to jump in there?

## **Oisín**

Thanks for having us on. Yeah. I mean, I think, like, it's, it's the whole gamut of human emotions, isn't it? It's a lot of stuff happens in life that's very hard to process and to deal with. And, you know, we use humour as a way to get through it, and I think that's an important thing to bring to the equation. When, when you've, when you've got these difficult dramatic subjects, being able to to laugh about them is very important in the process of, you know, just getting on with it.

## **Michael**

Yeah. So a bit of context people who might not know My Left Nut is a was a play originally, and then a TV series about me having a swelling on my testicle, and turns out to be nothing. But I thought it could have been testicular cancer. But turns out it was fine. It was a thing called a hydrocele. All this is a collection of fluid, but the number of men who came up to me after the play we performed it, and said, You know, I've got something going on down there, and I'm going to go to the hospital now. You know, it did seem to and even one of my very close friends, two of them, two of my very close friends, had testicular swellings after the show and immediately went to the doctor and things like that. So it can make a difference, even if you are laughing and joking about it.

**Domonique**

Absolutely it's that vulnerability when you open up and you allow people in to those experiences, whether that is free humour or, you know, in a different way, it brings people along on the journey, so they feel more related to you. They feel like they're part of that experience as well. When it's it just flows a bit easier, doesn't it?

**Michael**

Yeah, absolutely. And I think it's always if you have a point to make, especially in theatre or TV or film, it's always easier to get people's guards down. If you make them laugh, you know, you make them laugh, they're sitting there, they're more comfortable, and then they're more receptive to hearing what you have to say.

**Domonique**

Yeah, yeah, that's a really good point. And in terms of, you know, bringing in that humour, having that vulnerability, and sharing your experiences and elements of your life, to bring people along on those journeys. How have you found, or have you found that that's helped you with processing your own MND diagnosis Michael?

**Michael**

Yeah, so I was diagnosed with motor neurone disease on 1st February last year, 2023 now, and sometimes it helps, but sometimes it definitely goes against me, like my instinct is to make jokes about things, and some people can joke about it, but some people can't, which is absolutely fair enough as well, because, you know, it is a horrible disease and a horrible illness, and you're essentially joking about dying. But I think it helps me anyway, even if it doesn't always help those around me when I make jokes like that.

**Domonique**

Absolutely. And you know, in some respects, it's your diagnosis, it's happening to you, and if it helps you, then absolutely do what do what helps you in those situations and those circumstances. And obviously you've got a very personal connection to MND yourself, and you lost your dad at a very young age. And I watched a clip of the BBC Three show My Left Nut that we've just spoken about, and the character that plays your mum, she talks extremely candidly about the impact MND had on your family, and it was a really emotional scene, and it was a really beautiful scene, wonderfully written. Did you find putting scenes like that into the show kind of helped you offload some of those emotions and those experiences kind of through your own writing?

**Michael**

Oh 100% and the scene you're talking about, actually, my mom wrote that scene essentially because I interviewed my mom before I went to write My Left Nut the stage play. I interviewed her about that whole time in our lives, and I just wrote down word for word, what she said and put it in the play and then put it in the TV show. So, um, you know, it did help, because the whole point of the the play and then the TV show was, I've got something wrong with my testicles, but my dad's not here. What do I do? Who do I talk to? But it actually really did help our family talk about dad again, it wasn't, it wasn't that we weren't talking about him, but, but we weren't really talking about it wasn't a conscious thing, I

don't think, but, but we didn't really talk about him as much as we could have. And yeah, it was actually lovely. Started talking to him a lot more, and what he was like and what he used to do and stuff. And it definitely, definitely helped us process some grief that was still, still there

**Domonique**

Absolutely. I mean, who knew that an enlarged testicle could bring you so close to your dad? You know, I know things, all the large things in life, but that's really beautiful to hear that you kind of had your mum involved in that process, and she was able to to share her experiences and her thoughts as well. And ultimately, it kind of opened up that conversation for you again, it's really beautiful that you're kind of, your art has allowed you to do that. And in some respects, you're, I know that yourself and Oisín working on something very exciting in the pipeline, which I believe is due to start rehearsing in just a couple of weeks. Did you want to tell me a little bit more about that?

**Michael**

Yeah, sure. Or do you want to go Oisín I've been speaking for a while.

**Oisín**

Yeah, no, I can tell you a bit about it. So whenever Michael got his diagnosis, we were working on a few things, but it became quite difficult to work just even processing it, and we were thinking forward to what we wanted to do. And, you know, Michael is primarily an actor, and myself a director, and we've kind of fallen into writing together, but we sort of looked at each other and we were kind of like, we want to go back to what we what we started doing together, which was Michael acting and myself directing, and then Michael put out a post on social media. Do you want to mention that Michael?

**Michael**

Yeah. So I got to, I was diagnosed first of February, and I got to, like, end of March, start of April, and all my best friends knew about it, all my family knew. But there was a lot of people around. I live in Belfast. You go down the shops and people see you with a bit of a limp or a stick, and they're like, what's the stick? And you kind of have to tell them then. And I got the point that I was sick of the wee dance you do when you look at people and you're like, do you know, have you heard? Like, what's going on? So I was like, like, I'm gonna put it on social media. So I put a big post on social media saying, Look, I got this disease. Now it's terrible. But if anyone wants to cast me as Richard III, my limp is very authentic, just a little joke well I said, Richard the Third, or Tiny Tim from A Christmas Carol, my limp is very authentic.

**Oisín**

Or other other Irish plays, there's always like a limp character with a limp, and lots of you know old Irish players as well. So basically, we were looking for a bit of work.

**Michael**

Yeah, just a joke, luck, really. But Jimmy Fay, who's the head of the Lyric theatre in Belfast, messaged me immediately. And was like, you serious, but Richard III? I was like, Well, I wasn't, but I am now, because Richard III being one of the few sort of canonically disabled characters, and probably the only one in Shakespeare that I know of. I mean, hopefully no one's gonna write in and complain, but, uh,

yeah, so he had scoliosis in real life, but in Shakespeare's version, you know, it's a lot of 'he's deformed' 'he's crippled' this is the way he talks about himself in the piece. So we thought, well, let's do it. So Jimmy the Lyric, very kindly gave us the slot and and now we're going to be doing Richard III pretty soon. Yeah,

**Oisín**

No, it's, it's, it's exciting because it's, you know, Michael's acted at the RSC, and he's a big Shakespeare head, and I've always wanted to direct a Shakespeare play. So it's a, I think it's maybe Shakespeare's second longest, possibly after Hamlet.

**Michael**

It depends on what your source is.

**Oisín**

In any case, it's a bit of a long play. So I think we've approached it not as a history play about King Richard, but rather as a tragedy that Shakespeare has written about this character, Richard. And it's kind of freed us up a lot to interpret the play as if Richard himself has been given a diagnosis and is kind of reeling from that, and is figuring out what he wants to do with his life, and that that's how he when he talks about reaching for the crown, it's kind of about legacy, and it's about what you want to do with your potentially your dying days. And I think on that reading, it kind of opened up the play lots, you know, to make Richard quite empathetic and more human. And I think that was really exciting when we started looking at it.

**Michael**

Yeah I mean, it was kind of the same thing that I did with Oisín. Was, like, I got my diagnosis, and I didn't want to stop working, because I love writing and I love acting. I didn't want to stop that, but it kind of made us rethink, like, what do we actually want to do? There's no point in doing every job that comes in for a bit of money. You know? We need to kind of try and be of try and be a bit more selective. What do we want to do with the short time that I might have left? And then that's kind of the same with Richard, you know, at the start of the play, Richard's eldest brother becomes king, and he's sitting there like, well, I've got this diagnosis now, so what am I going to do with the time I have left?

**Domonique**

Well, it's really, it's really poignant, and it's, it's so kind of, like you said already, it's very parallel to your own, I imagine your own thoughts and your own kind of situation at the moment. So being able to work together on something like this that means so much to you in that respect. And it's also something Oisín that you've wanted to do for a long time. It you know, what's that done for your friendship? Do you feel like that's brought you closer together? Do you feel like that's kind of, you know, been a bit of a nightmare sometimes with creative clashes. How's it been for you both working together on such a, you know, a passionate and heartwarming project for you both?

**Michael**

Yeah, it's good. You know, we've working together since what, 2017 professionally, roughly, before that, 2015 2016 and the to be fair it is always the projects that we're not as passionate about, that leads

to us getting annoyed because it's stuff that we don't really care about. And it's like, oh, we have to get it done, though, because we're going to get paid to do it. So it's always nice to work on something that we really care about together.

**Oisín**

We'll see. We'll see how rehearsals go, though, we haven't started rehearsals yet. We might have a few falling outs. No, I doubt it, it will be alright.

**Michael**

As long as I don't fall out of my wheelchair I'll be alright.

**Oisín**

Yeah, it's, it is gonna be a weird one, you know, because it's, it's, it's a great play. But obviously it is, it is, there is a mirror being held up to real life, and it is drawing on Michael's very personal experience. And I think that's, that's a double edged kind of sword, isn't it? Sort of on one end, it's, it's extremely exciting and liberating, and it means we can do something really, really artistic and really turn, turn everything around, and try and make some something really great out of, out of this really terrible situation. And it's a role that, you know, you wouldn't have got to play had not, you know, you've been diagnosed like this, but you know it's it obviously is going to be quite close to the bone, and it probably will be tough with stages.

**Michael**

Yeah okay, it'll be hard. I'm not denying it won't be hard, but it'll also be slightly different, because previously Oisín directed me in a lot of one person plays with just the two of us, but now there's going to be a whole cast of other people, and I can't just tell him to piss off, because he needs to make sure that he has the has the room, as it were, so I can't undermine him, and he can't shout at me too much either.

**Oisín**

Although, in fairness, we've never actually done that to each other, I don't think.

**Michael**

No, we haven't. No, we work well together.

**Domonique**

That's amazing. And the fact that you know it's, it's a passion project for you both is just like you said, it means that hopefully you'll be so much more aligned when you're thinking about how you can tweak this and change that, because Shakespeare's descriptions of of King Richard, as you kind of alluded to already, Michael, they're pretty savage, and he's very much painted as a villain. So with your version, shall we say? Is it? Are you going to bring that same kind of villain energy to the to the theatre, or are you looking to present Richard a little bit differently?

**Michael**

I don't buy that he's a villain. I think he's only a villain in so much that every single British monarch was a villain. Well, any monarch with absolute power, you know, the man has absolute power as the king. Why is that make him evil? Henry the Eighth beheaded half of his wives. And no one thinks that he's evil, but he is. They're always evil with each other. I have to say that, because I'm playing the character. But yeah, there is a lot of fun to be had in relishing the villainy as well. You know, lot of fun.

### **Oisín**

I think that's where the joy in Richard comes from. It's like, at one point, he's talking to the audience, and he's saying, you know, I'll, I'll play the devil. And we kind of enjoy that. And then in the next scene, he's been a really nice guy to, you know, Buckingham, or one of his friends. And you're kind of, you know that he's playing all these different levels and but I think I find Richard much more interesting if he's not just a mustache twirling villain that has two sides to him, but rather he's he's a human with multiple sides to him. And like we live in an age now where so much, so many terrible things are being done by human beings, and they're not evil, but maybe the acts that they do might be seen as that. And I think it's more interesting to for a play to sort of illuminate the different aspects of a human character and what drives people to do bad things. And I think that's where Richard's really interesting, because you really like him at the start, but he does some really, really terrible things in the play, and by the end, I don't know, can you still like him? Can you still on his side? It's, it's, that's what I find really interesting about him.

### **Michael**

Richard III is the only Shakespeare play that opens with the protagonist speaking to the audience. So it starts off, Richard III, walks on stage by himself and talks directly to the audience. So it's a really nice early way to get the audience on your side. And he's on he's like, Look, I've been passed over for the crown. My brother's the crown. He's the king. Now maybe I could be king. And he's playing with the audience, and then he tells the audience, I'm gonna do some pretty evil things to get the crown. But the audience are kind of still on the side, because he's talking directly to them. And then as the play goes on, he talks the audience less and less as he becomes more isolated, and you see the sort of impact of all his evil deeds on him. And it's always interesting to see the moment. If it's it's always coming different every show and different for every audience member. What is the point at which the audience turned against Richard? And I think I know in my head what it is, but that's just for me. You know, it's always all to play for

### **Domonique**

Amazing that's that's going to be an incredible reception, like you've said, each each kind of night, or each time you do it, there's the feel, and the vibe in the in the audience is going to be slightly different than the previous show that you've done, and that's fascinating, like you said, it's really drawing on that human, human experience and how people perceive others, and being able to kind of lean into your own kind of MND journey with that Michael, in terms of you've you've kind of adjusted the script slightly so Richard is diagnosed as part of the play. Will you be leaning into your own experiences, to try and draw some of that emotion and maybe even use one of those experiences as an example in the play, perhaps?

### **Michael**

Absolutely, you know, so I was diagnosed, what, year and a half ago, last February. I'm now full time in a wheelchair. I'm fortunate that the disease doesn't seem to be present in my upper body yet, just in my legs. But I've only been a full time wheelchair user since about Christmas there. But the annoying stuff you notice, like, if say, you're out for dinner, my wheelchair is quite high, and my knees often, like, hit into the edge of the table. All the tables are very low. So it's just like you're living in a world that hasn't been designed for you. And so we're gonna bring some of those things in. You know, Richard goes to your banquet, but his knees hit off the edge of the table, and he's reaching for water, but he can't reach it, and stuff like that. Just trying to make him relatable.

### **Oisín**

It makes it makes him kind of relatable, because you see the the sort of ableism, the able world that he lives in and and how it's not designed for him. And that was something that I have to say, I wasn't really I knew that, you know, it was a problem that we need to do more work. But I didn't really realise until I had the experience with Michael and seeing how, you know, there are steps everywhere, and it's just, it's just, it's a really, it's a real eye opener, isn't it?

### **Michael**

Yeah, we were in Manchester there, when was that, January, doing some work, and I have my wheelchair with me, and the number of places that just have a single step up into them, and you're like, there's no ramp there because it's just a single step. So they're like, most people take steps like, I can't, I'm in a chair unless Oisín hauls me over the step. You know, it's a it's been a bit of a nightmare.

### **Oisín**

Or places that say they're accessible, because you can enter them, but then there's not an accessible toilet, the toilets downstairs. And it's that disconnect. It's just we're not there yet in our society that people actually understand it enough. And it's, I think, that's bringing it that into the play, and understanding Richard's frustrations is a great way to sort of come on side with him and understand what he's really against.

### **Michael**

But also, a lot of a lot of Shakespeare is about dealing with death and mortality as well. You know, the Hamlet speech to be or not to be is the most famous one, but there's a lot of stuff in Richard III as well. And I think just me, sort of coming face to face with my own mortality, in a way, has really helped me as an actor get through those speeches, in the sense that you can kind of imagine them, but like, it's like, no, I've, I've had these conversations with myself or my wife, or whatever, but so it's, you know, just happened to that, in a way.

### **Domonique**

That's amazing. Amazing. And I think, you know, the the way that you're able to bring that awareness, that kind of, you know, disability access, awareness to theatre, to the arts, to this creative setting, people aren't - like you kind of alluded to earlier Oisín - you don't really realise it until you know someone very close to you is going through it, or you're going through it yourself. So that audience, they're not even going to know you're going to take them on that journey, and things are just going to start clicking for them, and they're going to start realizing, oh, okay, he can't get his legs under the

banquet table. And it's those really subtle nuances that you're weaving into the story that really bring that awareness through without it being so in your face, have you found there have been elements where you've kind of thought, or that might be, that might be a little bit too far, kind of sharing that part of the journey so far, or that might not land right? You know, trying to bring that MND into it, or probably bring your own kind of journey into it?

**Michael**

Yeah. So like one of the ways, one of the most famous lines from Richard III, is Richard's final line, 'a horse, or horse my kingdom for a horse', which is the final battle. Richard gets knocked from his horse and is walking through the mud, and eventually he gets killed by Richmond, who is the future Henry the seventh. But in our version, we're kind of thinking that he shouldn't get killed in battle. Then maybe it's the motor neurone disease that kills him, that as the play progresses, it reaches his arms, reaches his lungs, and that he'll be with like a an oxygen mask or a CPAP machine or something. And my horse, my horse kingdom for a horse. I'll have said that after I've fallen out of a wheelchair, I'll be lying on the ground struggling to breathe. All seems fine now when we're talking about it in the abstract, but I'm a bit worried that it'll be, oh no, I'm not worried it will be, it will be hard emotionally. But I think that's good in a way, because it you know...

**Oisín**

We will get into the rehearsal room and we'll see what makes sense. It might be that we try that, and, yeah, you know, it's...

**Michael**

You know, too grim, or horrible.

**Oisín**

Yeah, or it might not work with the story, but we're gonna have, you know, there's gonna be lots of great actors there who are gonna be contributing ideas. There's gonna be a fight kind of stunt choreographer who's going to figure out ways that we can do things safely, and basically, we want it to tell Shakespeare's story through this lens in the best way we can. And I think a lot of it will, you know, you can talk about it and have ideas going into the room, but you never know until you're actually playing with playing with it, you know, in a room with other people to how it will best shape up.

**Domonique**

Absolutely. Are you are you expecting your mom to come and see the play Michael?

**Michael**

My mom will be there every single night. I don't know she's a fan, but she comes to see shows I'm in. Don't think she sees many shows I'm not in, but, yeah, we did My Left Nut for two weeks in Belfast. I think she was there nearly every night.

**Domonique**



Love that. How does she feel about or how does she kind of process you, you know, having these moments of sharing, especially your dad's MND experiences and your own now MND, experiences. How do you think your mum has she spoken to you about how she's processing that?

**Michael**

Yeah, she finds it very, very difficult. I'm not sure if she likes it, but she likes that I get from it, you know, sort of way, like she can tell that it really helps me process what I'm going through. But I know she finds it very difficult. There was a time we went away and we wrote My Left Nut at like a writing retreat, and I came back and I read it out to her, and she didn't speak to me for like three days, just because she was well, it was about teenage boys and testicles. There were certain jokes in it and all this type of thing. And she didn't like that, the blue nature of it. But also, she thought that I thought she was a bad mum. She thought that was the message people are gonna take from it. Because she said, like, sorry. She was like, people are gonna think that I was a bad mum because you couldn't come to me to talk about your problem. And I was like, That is not the case. Like, you know, sorry, Oisín, you take over there, getting a bit emotional.

**Oisín**

Yeah, I think it's the thing about my left note was we were, we started looking at that as, like, you know, a comedy about, you know, testicles and you know not, and you know, silly boys not be able to talk about their problems and stuff. And what became really clear when we started going into it in Michael's story, was that it was about family, and it was about, you know, relationship between a boy and his mom, and it became a real it was a very specific relationship between Michael and his mother, but it was very universal, because it's kind of every family talk, you know, like every sort of relationship between a, you know, a son on their on their mother and all those things that you want to say, and especially if the father figure isn't there. So it's a, yeah, I suppose it's like you go in via the humour, and then there's all this, there's all this pain and love underneath all of that. So I can only imagine how difficult it must have been for Michael's mother to to see the play for one, which was quite silly. But then, you know, obviously the TV show as well, it became a very personal story that sort of played out in a semi fictionalised way. But you know, all, all of the facts were true. It was just the character. Certain things were different. It's a lot to share. And and I think with Richard III, it's, it's going to be separated again, because it's through the lens of Shakespeare's Richard III, but, you know, there's still a lot of, there's going to be a lot of Michael in it. And I think that's what's going to be really exciting about it.

**Domonique**

Definitely, have we, have we got mum right in any scenes from Richard III or are we keeping her on My Left Nut?

**Michael**

No, she doesn't turn her hand to the ambic pentameter. To be fair, she didn't know she was gonna be writing in my left nut, like she didn't realize I was recording her when I was interviewing her. And then I read back, and she was like, I said that. I never said that you're putting words in my mouth. And I'm like, no, no, I've got it right here recorded.

It's also lovely to because things we've written have been on the Lyric theatre before, and I performed in the studio with the Lyric, but I've never performed on the main stage, and, like, I grew up about half a mile away from the Lyric. You know, my mom used to work box office there. Like, it's a real special place for me. And to be able to do Shakespeare, which I love, on that stage, means a lot, you know,

### **Domonique**

Oh, my goodness, that's so beautiful. Oh, as if that goes, you get to do that, and you get to do it with such a good friend. You get to do it in your hometown. You get to do it on your own terms, in terms of, you know, rewriting and adjusting the story to fit around your kind of narrative. And you know, you just get to have fun with it. For the last, you know, for the last production perhaps you put together, you just get to have fun, let loose and enjoy it, and enjoy that time together and working together so closely, and being able to bring in people to your journey and bring them along with you on, you know, the rewrite of King Richard III, it's amazing. Are we doing the full length version, or are we going to abridge it?

### **Michael**

No our version is about an hour and 45 minutes. Yeah, it's probably not so but two hours, yeah, so

### **Oisín**

it'll be just over two hours. Two hours probably bang on, and which is probably, I think I've done longest I ever wanted to sit not very good. I think it's 40% we've cut 40% of the original, the longest version of the play, but we actually haven't cut that much of the story. We've only cut like you see extraneous characters and things like that.

### **Michael**

You know, there's two things. Back in Shakespeare's day, people would have wandered in and out of the theatre all the time. There was no such thing as an interval. They would have left, they would have grabbed a drink or something, and then come back in. So Shakespeare has to repeat himself a lot to make sure people don't miss any of the plot. But also so this Richard III, the events that are happening would have happened about 100 years prior to when it was staged. It's kind of like someone now writing the play about World War One, you know, you kind of are expected to know the main players, so you don't need to them explained. So Shakespeare just launches in. It's like, oh, here's this guy, here's this guy, here's this guy. You kind of know who they are. We just cut all those people. It's like, no one knows who these people are, and no one cares anymore. So they're cut, you're cut, you know. So they're the two main things in terms of shutting it down, making it shorter.

### **Oisín**

I think we've just tried to make it really clear. So everything is everything that you need to know for the story is there, and if there's stuff that you don't need to know in terms of the real history of it, or even Shakespeare's like view of history. We've just kind of freed ourselves to let that go and keep the stuff that helps the drama and the tragedy of it.

### **Michael**

But it's still Shakespeare's play, like it's still Shakespeare's lines, his text is his poetry.

**Domonique**

Of course, of course, I never knew that about people wandering in and out of the theatre. That's that's blown my mind. To be honest. I was gonna say, don't forget the intervals when everyone goes and stocks up on the old beveraginos , isn't it?

**Michael**

Oh, there's definitely still an interval. You need an interval in Shakespeare, we've cut just long scenes. Just been like, yeah, you can do this in one page rather than 15.

**Domonique**

Absolutely it was your time to shine the monologue. So keep going!

**Michael**

If anything it could do with a few more monologues.

**Domonique**

I was gonna say. Oisín, come on. Let's be writing some more, please. Thank you.

**Oisín**

Well, maybe we could. We could save on budget if we just make it a one man show. You could just do the whole play.

**Domonique**

You've been there before. You can do it again. Amazing. So just before we kind of round off today, I'm hoping I can ask you to share if you were to give one piece of advice to someone who is going through what you're going through at the moment. Michael, what might that piece of advice be?

**Michael**

That's a big question. You know, I'm very lucky that I can't throw myself into my work and put my pain into my writing and my acting, which isn't a thing a lot of people are fortunate enough to do. But suppose, eat good food, drink, good drink, and hang out with people you love.

**Domonique**

Beautiful and Oisín. The same question for you, for someone who's very close friend is going through this, what advice would you give to that person to help them support their friend?

**Oisín**

Just be there and be kind and try and try and enjoy life as much as you can.

**Domonique**

Absolutely, and if you can get down to the, what theatre was it?

**Michael**

Lyric theatre in Belfast from the 11th of October

**Domonique**

Amazing, perfect. Well, hopefully we can even see if we can pop a link in there in the bio of the episode for people to find out more and look at getting tickets and things like that. And, yeah, I wish you all the luck. I hope you both break your leg and all of the other theatre good luck kind of phrases that we have. And, yeah, thank you so much for joining us today. It's been a real pleasure to talk to you both. Thank you coming on and. Sharing your story and being so open and honest with us. It's, it's really lovely to get the opportunity to sit down with you know, people like yourself. So yeah, thank you for taking time out of that busy schedule to lend to the to the podcast today. So yeah, massive thank you from me.

**Michael**

No. Thank you so much. You know, talking about how brilliant my mother was. My mother raised £100,000 pounds over the years for the MND Association. So, um, yeah, just wanted another shout out to my mom.

**Domonique**

Wow. What an incredible lady. £100,000 that's Wow. That's a lot, isn't it? Is there anything in particular she's done that's like a fundraiser she's done that's been a bit out there are a bit quirky.

**Michael**

She ran four half marathons in four days in Cuba, and then four half marathons in four days in North Africa as well. And she was well into her, 40s, 50s, when she was doing those as well.

**Domonique**

Wow, wow. Yeah, pick the really warm countries for sure.

**Michael**

I know she's very Irish as well, like so she can't handle the sun.

**Domonique**

Oh my goodness. Well, yeah, definitely shout out to your mum for all the love and support over the years and for those incredible fundraising efforts. That's insane. So yeah, do you fancy getting your running shoes on Oisín, doing a few marathons in just a couple of days?

**Oisín**

I may, I may do. We'll just, we'll get through Richard the Third first, and then I'll get the running shoes on.

**Michael**

You can borrow my wheelchair.