

Review of *100 LITERS OF GOLD (100 Litraa Sahtia)*, Teemu Nikki, FI 2024

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How can a car accident caused by an alcoholic give birth to a funny story? We can find the answer to this question in *100 Liters of Gold*, a comedy that follows the adventures of two sisters united by alcoholism and a dramatic event of their past.

The movie, directed by Teemu Nikki, is set in Sysmä, the little Finnish town where the director grew up. Here lives Pirkko (Elina Knihtilä) and Taina (Pirjo Lonka), two middle-aged sisters that brew Sahti, a typical Finnish farmhouse ale. One day, the two protagonists receive a visit from Päivi (Ria Kataja), their sister who, years ago, after a night out drinking, lost a leg in a car accident caused by Taina. The news is that Päivi is about to get married, so she asks the two sisters to make 100 liters of Sahti for the ceremony. Pirkko and Taina have three weeks to do so and, in the end, they brew the best Sahti of their lives. The problem for them is, of course, their alcoholism: the beverage brewed for the marriage is so good that they drink all the 100 liters during the night. In the morning they realize that they have only a day to get the 100 liters of Sahti asked by Päivi.

The movie results in an entertaining comedy that brings to the screen a lot of physical sketches, mostly linked with absurd alcoholic situations. The performance of Elina Knihtilä and Pirjo Lonka is the strongest point of the movie as they succeed in bringing to the screen two strong and at the same time funny characters. The performance of the actor was also recognized at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival where the two protagonists of the movie won together the best actress category. The sketches are also well constructed and respect all the right comedic time.

But this must not lead us to think that the movie is set on a simple comic register as it shows not only a funny story, but a complicated relationship between two sisters that is slowly destroying each other. Taina appears as the most problematic of the two as she caused the accident that took off the leg of Päivi, a scene that she has seen many times in her nightmares. However, later in the movie, Pirkko admits that she was the person driving that night, revealing that Taina has no fault.

This is the turning point that changes Taina, who was behaving exactly like Pirkko: all drink and no work. From now on Taina takes the lead and tries to resolve the mess that she created together with her sister. At the end the two manage to resolve the situation, but the movie does not have the typical happy ending.

During all the film, we can notice a lot of moments that resemble western movies. That is the case of the interactions between the two sisters and their competitors in the field of brewing. There is no difference for the final scene of the movie, where Prikko starts to show the signs of an advanced disease caused by the excessive consumption of alcohol. Here Taina tells Prikko that she has closed with her and leaves. The two cowgirls split up to start a new adventure. One of them seems to have changed, not in a good or a bad way, just changed; the other one will probably continue to live her life just like she did until now.