

A STORY IN SEVEN CHAPTERS

# The Quiet Craft of M.I. Rony

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*“Every drink begins with a story. Mine started in Dhaka,  
with a boy who carried plates between tables — and ended up  
shaping bars across four continents.”*

FOOD & BEVERAGE SPECIALIST · MIXOLOGIST · CONSULTANT  
Kuala Lumpur · Naantali · 2008 — Present

PROLOGUE

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*“A bar is not a counter.  
It is a stage.”*

*What follows is the story of a craft built one shift, one guest, one cocktail at a time — told the way Rony tells it himself: slowly, honestly, with respect for the people who taught him.*

# I

## CHAPTER ONE

# A boy from Dhaka, a tray of tapas

2008 · Kuala Lumpur

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He didn't arrive in Malaysia with a plan. He arrived with a willingness to work — and Pinchos Tapas Bar, a tiny Spanish room on Changkat Bukit Bintang, needed a runner. The job was simple: carry plates, stay invisible, watch everything.

Rony watched. He watched how the chef seasoned, how the bartender measured, how a regular's shoulders dropped the moment a familiar drink appeared. By the time anyone thought to promote him, he had already taught himself half the menu.

# II

## CHAPTER TWO

# From the kitchen to behind the bar

2010 — 2015

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Commis. Chef de partie. Then a quiet pivot: the bar. He kept the cook's instinct for balance — acid against sweetness, heat against herbs — and brought it to the bottle.

Seven years at one address. Most people change cities in less time. Rony changed disciplines instead, rising from food runner to head mixologist without ever leaving the doorway he first walked through.

# III

## CHAPTER THREE

# Carrying flags for distant distillers

2016 — 2023

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A Spanish gin from Zaragoza called *NTC & Sons* needed a face in Malaysia. Then Australia's colour-changing *Ink Gin* needed an ambassador for Malaysia and Thailand. Rony said yes to both.

The work meant translation more than promotion: explaining a small distiller's intention to a guest in another country, in another language, without losing what made the bottle worth pouring.

# IV

## CHAPTER FOUR

# Canvass — a bistro built on sustainable hedonism

2020 — 2023

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With Danish chef Nikolaj Lenz, he opened *Canvass Bistro & Cocktail Bar* in the worst year to open anything. They called the philosophy *sustainable hedonism* — pleasure that doesn't cost the earth.

Critics noticed. KL's best new eatery of 2020. One of Malaysia's top four sustainable bars. Bartender of the Year, 2023. The accolades arrived; Rony kept showing up at 4pm to set the room.

INTERLUDE · BY THE NUMBERS

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**16+**  
YEARS BEHIND THE BAR

**10+**  
BRANDS CONSULTED

**5**  
COUNTRIES

**1**  
QUIET PHILOSOPHY



## CHAPTER FIVE

# North — the Naantali chapter

2024 — Present

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Finland was not on the map. Then it was. *Sunborn Saga Oy*, the Naantali Hotel & Spa, asked him to lead beverage. He packed warmer clothes and a notebook, and began again — this time with birch, sea buckthorn, and the long blue light of the north.

The arc of his career, in retrospect, has the shape of a slow tide: tropical, then Mediterranean, then Nordic. The same hands; new water.

## CHAPTER SIX

## VI

**What he believes**

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*“I’ve spent over a decade in the food & beverage world, building a career on creativity and a genuine love for hospitality.”*

*“From leading bars and restaurants to consulting on new concepts, my work is driven by a commitment to sustainability, innovation, and making every guest feel at home.”*

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— M.I. RONY

**EPILOGUE**

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# The next chapter is unwritten.

New concepts, consulting, ambassadorships, openings — if you're building something worth telling a story about, there's room on the page.

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