

= Black Coffee (All Saints song) =

" Black Coffee " is a song recorded by English @-@ Canadian girl group All Saints for their second studio album , Saints & Sinners (2000) . It was released by London Records on 2 October 2000 as the second single from the album . The track was initially written and recorded under the working title , " I Wouldn 't Wanna Be " , by Swiss model and singer Kirsty Bertarelli , after she met Swiss entrepreneur Ernesto Bertarelli in 1997 . All Saints ' later recording was produced by William Orbit who , together with group members Shaznay Lewis and Melanie Blatt , gave it a new arrangement and renamed it " Black Coffee " . A moderately fast ambient , electropop and R & B song , " Black Coffee " has a distinctly production @-@ laden and hazy sound , with obscure and breathy keyboard instruments , guitar , synths , and glitching electronics throughout . It is a sad love song about Kirsty 's love at first sight feelings for Ernesto .

The track has received universal acclaim from critics who have cited it as among the group 's best releases , commending Orbit 's obscure electronic production , and the group 's wistful harmonies . " Black Coffee " marked All Saints ' fifth number @-@ one single on the UK Singles Chart and , at the time , made them the girl group with the second most number @-@ one singles in the UK after the Spice Girls , surpassing B * Witched . It was certified silver by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) and is the group 's fourth best @-@ selling single in the UK . " Black Coffee " also achieved success internationally , reaching the top 10 in Ireland , Italy , the Netherlands , New Zealand and Sweden , and the top 20 in Australia , Finland and Norway .

The song 's accompanying music video was directed by Bo Johan Renck . It made use of bullet time @-@ like effects and featured the group at a high rise apartment block , serenading an arguing couple . All Saints promoted " Black Coffee " with live performances on Top of the Pops , Children in Need , Later ... with Jools Holland and at the Smash Hits Poll Winners Party . Despite the single 's success , its release happened during a bitter rift within the group . This became visible publicly during tense live renditions of the song . As well , each member purposefully avoided the others filming their scenes separately during the making of the music video .

= = Background = =

Swiss model and singer Kirsty Bertarelli (then Roper , stage name : Kirsty Elizabeth) based " I Wouldn 't Wanna Be " on her first experiences and feelings for Swiss entrepreneur Ernesto Bertarelli . The pair had met at a dinner on his yacht off the coast of Sardinia in 1997 , and fell in love . The track was later produced by Kirsty 's recording partner , and BBC Radio 1 DJ , Gary Davies who passed it on to songwriter Tom Nichols for input , in an attempt to establish " I Wouldn 't Wanna Be " as a single for Kirsty . Nichols and Alexander Von Soos further modified the song and Kirsty later recorded the demo . Nichols developed it as a quirky pop song , something " slightly left of centre , not completely mainstream " and " slightly out of the ordinary " . While searching for a major label deal for Kirsty , Davies played the " I Wouldn 't Wanna Be " demo to London Records executive Tracy Bennett who wanted the group All Saints to record it instead .

= = New arrangement and recording = =

Davies accepted Bennett 's offer , though much time had passed since their meeting leaving him and Nichols unsure if the song was going to be recorded at all . However , after the success of All Saints ' single " Pure Shores " in February 2000 , Bennett handed " I Wouldn 't Wanna Be " over to musician William Orbit who was approached for the production of the group 's 2000 album Saints & Sinners . Orbit and All Saints members Shaznay Lewis and Melanie Blatt did a new arrangement for the song and renamed it " Black Coffee " .

" Black Coffee " was recorded at Guerilla Beach and Larrabee West studios in Los Angeles , and at Sarm West and Olympic Studios in London . The recording sessions took place during a complex period for All Saints ; they had been developing Saints & Sinners for three years , having written over 40 songs for the album , and had to work around Orbit 's busy schedule for studio time with him

. The " Black Coffee " sessions with Orbit were viewed by Blatt as beneficial for the group as he helped them to explore more experimental genres than those on their previous releases . Nichols found Orbit 's production " fantastic " and vastly different from that of the demo .

For group member Natalie Appleton , the " Black Coffee " sessions were more frustrating . She was optimistic that the song could feature her own lead vocals as well as those of her sister and fellow group member Nicole Appleton as it was the group 's first original single not written by Lewis . According to Natalie , before the Appletons arrived at the session , Lewis was already present and " staking her claim " to sing lead vocals on " Black Coffee " because Blatt had the lead vocals on " Pure Shores " . Natalie then suggested that each member should have a chance at the song as they were all fond of it . Eventually , the group 's management let Natalie cut a lead vocal , but she was nervous during the session and believed they were placating her . In the Appletons ' autobiography Together , she recalled : " Without support , it is hard to do your best . " Lewis was ultimately chosen as the track 's lead vocalist ; Natalie found this unsurprising , but felt " used and slacked off " .

= = Composition and lyrical interpretation = =

" Black Coffee " is composed in 4 / 4 simple time with a moderately fast tempo of 120 beats per minute . It is an ambient , electropop , R & B song . The track has an unconventional sound ; it is complemented by being more production @-@ laden in comparison to other pop songs . The production is indebted to the genres of electronic and techno music with welding , clipped dance rhythms . It includes obscure and breathy keyboard instruments as well as guitar , synths , and glitching electronics throughout . The verses have a mellow , hazy , and sinister sound and are dislocated from one another with All Saints using eerie harmonies in the build @-@ up to the chorus . These segments generally follow a chord progression of Bm7 ? E ? Bm7 ? E . In the chorus , the song becomes more wistful and changes to a sequence of E ? Bm ? D ? A .

" Black Coffee " is a sad love song about Kirsty 's love at first sight feelings for Ernesto . It recalls how they met , during a time where they were frequently sailing and did not want to be elsewhere . The hook , " I wouldn 't want to be anywhere else but here , anywhere at all " , explains how Ernesto made Kirsty feel . The song 's first verse and outro narrates their romance : " Night swimming / Beach walking / Always silent / Never talking / Then you call my name / And I know inside I love you ... " The second verse details more domestic scenarios during their relationship : " Brush your teeth / Pour yourself a cup of black coffee . " Mary Ann A. Bautista of the Philippine Daily Inquirer opined that the lyrics manifested a role reversal in a romantic relationship : " Not only does the girl make the first move , but she also reveals her true emotions by saying ' I love you ' first ; along the way , she hopes to be loved and nurtured . "

= = Release and reception = =

" Black Coffee " was released on 2 October 2000 as the second single from Saints & Sinners . London Records commissioned the single in CD , cassette , 7 " and 12 " formats . It was accompanied by a B @-@ side , " I Don 't Wanna Be Alone " , written by Lewis , Ali Tennant , Wayne Hector and Karl Gordon , and produced by Gordon . Remixes by ATFC , the Shadow Snipers and Wideboys were also made available , as well as a remix by The Neptunes which featured a rap by American duo Clipse . The single 's cover art was photographed by Ellen von Unwerth . A second version of the song accompanied the release of the group 's 2001 single " All Hooked Up " .

= = Critical response = =

" Black Coffee " has received universal acclaim from critics . Sean O 'Brien of The Sunday People gave the song a rating of eight out of ten , opining that it was poised for great commercial success . David Brinn of The Jerusalem Post called the track " wistful " and " radio @-@ friendly " . Tim de Lisle of The Mail on Sunday considered it a " wispy but beguiling piece " and wrote that Orbit 's "

floaty atmospheres proved to be perfectly suited to the girls ' slender voices " . Simon Evans writing in the Birmingham Post described the song as a " beautiful slice of haunting , hypnotic pop " . John Mulvey of The Scotsman praised its " sleek , scrupulously mature sound " . Siobhan Grogan of the NME found the track " almost perfect " and complimented its " mellow , glossy haziness " , adding that it was if the group recorded the track lying down . Grogan concluded : " It 's wistful in all the right places and makes sadness sound rather alluring like only the bitterest love songs can . " John Walshe of the Hot Press deemed the group 's harmonies " so saccharine they could have been copyrighted by NutraSweet " .

A Sunday Herald critic opined that the song was " impressively @-@ lacquered " and " undoubtedly [helped] tentpole the album proper " . Samuel McGuire of the same publication viewed the track as a " gem of a truly wondrous lustre " . Nigel Packer of the BBC News considered it to be a highlight of Saints & Sinners , complimenting its " pure pop " and " liquid techno sound " . Lindsay Baker of The Guardian cited " Black Coffee " as the album 's " particularly infectious " track . R.S. Murthi writing in the New Straits Times described it as " the most endearing " song on Saints & Sinners , deeming it " tasty " and " redolent of the Cocteau Twins " . Eva Simpson of the Daily Mirror regarded the track as " sassy " and a " curtain raiser " for Saints & Sinners , noting that Orbit 's production " brought the same high @-@ gloss sheen " as " Pure Shores " . Adrian Thrills of the Daily Mail named " Black Coffee " , together with " Pure Shores " , as the two best tracks on the album , deeming them " brilliantly produced " . Russell Baillie of The New Zealand Herald considered " Black Coffee " , along with " Pure Shores " and " Surrender " , to " put most [of the album] in the shade " . A Western Mail critic said " Black Coffee " was as " equally tremendous " as " Pure Shores " .

Julie MacCaskill of the Daily Record believed that the song was a testament to the group 's " pop power " . Jon O 'Brien from AllMusic felt that " Black Coffee " was among All Saints ' most accomplished and mature work , praising its " lush electronic landscapes " . " Black Coffee " placed among 2000 year @-@ end lists compiled by Dotmusic (number three) , and the NME (number 26) . In 2016 , Lewis Corner from Digital Spy placed the song at number three in his ranking of All Saints ' singles , commending its " euphoric " chorus and concluding : " It quite literally is pop @-@ form caffeine . "

== = Chart performance == =

" Black Coffee " debuted at number one on the UK Singles Chart for the week @-@ ending 14 October 2000 with first @-@ week sales of 60 @,@ 000 copies . At the time , this was the second lowest first @-@ week sales tally for a number @-@ one single in 2000 , beating only Westlife 's " I Have a Dream " / " Seasons in the Sun " . In spite of low sales , " Black Coffee " sold nearly 25 % more copies than the number @-@ two single that week - Mariah Carey and Westlife 's " Against All Odds " . It marked All Saints ' fifth number @-@ one single and , at the time , made them the girl group with the second @-@ most number one singles after the Spice Girls , surpassing B * Witched . The song was also Orbit 's third UK number @-@ one single as a producer in 2000 , following " Pure Shores " and Madonna 's " American Pie " . " Black Coffee " dropped to number three in its second week and went on to spend a total of 21 weeks on the chart . On 20 October 2000 , the single was certified silver by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) , denoting UK shipments in excess of 200 @,@ 000 copies . By 2008 , " Black Coffee " had sold 230 @,@ 000 copies . It is the group 's fourth best @-@ selling single in the UK according to the Official Charts Company .

The song also had success across Europe , peaking at number five on the European Hot 100 Singles chart for two consecutive weeks . It reached the top 10 in Ireland , Italy , the Netherlands and Sweden , and the top 20 in Finland and Norway . In Australia , the track entered the ARIA Singles Chart issued for 15 October 2000 at number 29 and went on to peak at number 20 for two consecutive weeks . " Black Coffee " debuted at number 40 on the New Zealand Singles Chart dated 29 October 2000 and reached number seven in its seventh week , becoming All Saints ' fifth top 10 single there . The success of " Black Coffee " launched both Nichols and Kirsty 's musical careers . In an interview for HitQuarters , Nichols explained : " I owe a lot to the All Saints and to Tracy Bennett at London [...] they are a large further reason why I have a career because suddenly

when that song was released , the opportunities that [I got] certainly in the UK , but also Europe @-@ wide , [were] absolutely huge . " Kirsty received royalties of over £ 12 @,@ 000 .

= = Music video = =

The accompanying music video for " Black Coffee " was directed by Bo Johan Renck . It was filmed at Ealing Studios in London on 17 August 2000 . Special effects , similar to the bullet time from the 1999 film The Matrix , were used as they were considered state of the art at the time . The video was specially edited as each All Saints member filmed their scenes separately . The members requested that they not be put in the same room as each other because they were not on speaking terms during this period . The Daily Mirror reported : " The girls have formed camps with sisters Nicole and Natalie sticking together while Mel and Shaznay are the other duo . There are definitely tensions . " The video aired on 4 September 2000 .

The video opens with a view of a high rise apartment block at night and All Saints , in individual scenes , dancing and singing from its rooftop . An interracial couple is shown arguing in various rooms in their apartment as different members of the group appear invisible beside them at various points . Each time the pair engages in aggressive behaviour , their actions are frozen while All Saints serenade them . These actions include : throwing pillows , leaves , a suitcase full of clothes , splashing bathwater , and breaking a mirror . The girlfriend later sits in a corner and cries during her boyfriend 's rage . The video ends with frozen , individual visuals of each group member throughout the now empty apartment .

The music video received heavy rotation from MTV Europe . Corner noted that it signified when " cracks were initially starting to show " within All Saints , explaining : " There 's a reason they don 't appear alongside each other in the music video : by then , they couldn 't physically stand each other . " CBC Television placed " Black Coffee " at number five in its ranking of the group 's music videos , praising its special effects and the combination of " an angelic serenade during an argument " . Jon Stewart , author of Oh Blessed Holy Caffeine Tree : Coffee in Popular Music , felt that the music video 's " opulent location " identified " strongly with the culture industry 's image of coffee as a luxurious beverage whose consumption signifies prominent social status " . Stewart further opined that the visual put emphasis on the " romantic disharmony " of the song 's lyrics .

= = Live performances = =

To promote " Black Coffee " , All Saints first performed it at BBC 's People 's Awards on 6 October 2000 . The group also performed the song on Top of the Pops on 13 October 2000 , the Pepsi Chart Show on 15 October 2000 , and at G @-@ A @-@ Y on 11 November 2000 . The group also performed the song for BBC 's Children in Need telethon on 17 November 2000 . Prior to this performance , there was much backstage tension between the group 's members because Nicole had revealed her pregnancy to the other members the previous day . Spice Girls singer Melanie C described the atmosphere as " icy " , while Nicole 's then @-@ boyfriend Liam Gallagher recalled : " Nic and Nat are working really hard , but it doesn 't matter what they do ? the other two have got it in for them . You don 't treat people like that , trying to control their lives . " All Saints performed " Black Coffee " along with " Pure Shores " and " Whoopin ' Over You " on Later ... with Jools Holland on 18 November 2000 .

The group next performed the song at the Smash Hits Poll Winners Party on 10 December 2000 . By this time , tensions within the group had become visible on stage ; and the Appletons , along with their make @-@ up artists and hairdressers , were ignored by Lewis and Blatt . Natalie recalled : " It was as if Nic and I were not there . " The performance received a negative review from Betty Clarke of The Guardian who wrote : " Only All Saints let the side down , going through the motions ... " All Saints performed " Black Coffee " and " Pure Shores " at Capital Radio 's Christmas Party later that month . However , a rift between the members was now palpable on stage with Lewis and Blatt on one side of the stage and the Appletons on the other . The tension was prompted by a row which erupted backstage between Lewis and Natalie over who would wear a particular jacket for the

performance and nearly led to the two coming to blows . The rift ultimately caused All Saints to split up the following year .

In 2000 , Kirsty sang " Black Coffee " at her wedding to Ernesto . In an interview for The Daily Telegraph , she said : " Hearing my song on the radio brought mixed emotions , I have to be thankful to All Saints , they were so popular at the time they could make the song number one , but I knew the emotions behind that song . I wanted to sing it myself because there 'd have been real meaning behind it , which was my love for Ernesto . " In 2014 , All Saints reunited and performed " Black Coffee " as part of their set list for five dates as special guests on the Backstreet Boys ' In a World Like This Tour in Ireland and the UK (26 March ? 5 April 2014) . The group dressed in tracksuit jackets , and casual leggings and trousers for their renditions . They also reprised the song at G @-@ A @-@ Y on 12 April 2014 , and performed it at the V Festival (16 @-@ 17 August 2014) . The group then performed " Black Coffee " at Manchester Pride on 25 August 2014 , dressed in matching military shirts , bomber jackets , leggings and trainers .

= = Legacy = =

According to Clem Bastow of The Sydney Morning Herald , " Black Coffee " , in particular , won All Saints " major critical points " over the Spice Girls and complemented the group 's " impeccable back catalogue " . Graeme Virtue of the Sunday Herald hailed it as one of " the best pop singles ever " . Kathy McCabe of the Herald Sun deemed the song " the benchmark of sassy , harmony @-@ laden pop " . Christie Leo of the New Straits Times wrote : " The aromatic shimmer of ' Black Coffee ' alone is all the evidence you 'll need to know that All Saints were truly heavenly . " Ian Sturges of the Daily Mirror said the track : " boasts one of the most infectious pop choruses of all time " . Caroline Sullivan of The Guardian found " Black Coffee " superior to " Pure Shores " , praising its " beguiling treatment of a domestic scenario " and citing its lyrics as " easily the most alluring depiction of a bleary @-@ eyed morning routine ever recorded . " Q magazine placed " Black Coffee " in their list of 1010 Songs You Must Own .

In 2007 , " Black Coffee " was included in the competitive music video game series SingStar . According to Fiona Shepherd of The Scotsman , the " smart @-@ pop attack " of the song " paved the way " for later girl groups Girls Aloud and the Sugababes . Neil Hannon of the Irish band The Divine Comedy expressed admiration for " Black Coffee " , commending its production @-@ heavy sound which " adds to the sound of it , rather than taking anything away " , and noted that its sound later became apparent in singles by Girls Aloud : " Girls Aloud do pop like that now : songs like ' Biology ' are a bit weird , and they flout the general rules , and I admire that . But ' Black Coffee ' is better . " Writing for Metro in 2013 , Seamus Duff stated that " Black Coffee " still sounded as " fresh and relevant " .

= = Formats and track listings = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Saints & Sinners .

= = Charts = =

= = Certification = =