

BREAKING HIPS & CRACKING CASES

"PILOT"

"A sitcom following the exploits of a foolhardy pensioner with two hip replacements, and her oddball friends as they fight crime in the seaside town of Penarth, Wales."

written and created by

James Klonowski

TEASER

INT. CARLA'S COFFEE LOUNGE - MORNING

We enter the cosy coffee shop, with homemade cakes on display, and people sitting at tables. We move to one table which features a perplexed MARIE POWERS, a young seventy-three-year-old. She is vivacious with a passion for life and a curiosity for the unknown. A determined woman who refuses to let a hip replacement hinder her. We are CLOSE-UP on her face.

MARIE

I've spent all these years polishing my detective skills by watching every murder mystery on TV, and where's it gotten me? Bloody nowhere. I'm stumped. There, I said it.

JOAN (O.S.)

What on earth are you babbling about?

The camera pans back to show Marie in conversation with her best friend, JOAN SHORT, a 72-year-old technophobe burdened by anxiety, savouring a cup of tea.

MARIE

I'm racking my brain here but for the life of me I can't figure it out.

She glances at the table, and we see they're playing CLUEDO.

MARIE

(bites into a cake)

Joan? Any ideas?

JOAN

I don't even know how to play the stupid game.

Marie angrily puts the pieces back in the box as Joan surveys the other customers and smiles at CARLA, a cynical and artistic twenty-something behind the counter.

MARIE

(to Joan)

Between you and me, I think she's up to something.

JOAN

Oh, for crying out loud, Marie. You've
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN (CONT'D)

gotta stop this. Not everyone is a criminal.

MARIE

A common mistake to make.

(putting Cluedo box in her bag)
This place could easily be used as a drug smuggling thing. Or money laundering. God knows what goes on back there.

JOAN

Or, it's just a nice family run coffee shop on the beach.

MARIE

Sorry, but there's just no talking sense to you. Gullible old Joan.

JOAN

And you're bleeding paranoid.

MARIE

I've lived my entire life here. Watching, observing, overseeing everything. I don't miss a trick. And my senses are telling me something is off here.

Suddenly, a brick is hurled through the glass window, carrying a note. Everybody is screaming. Carla runs over, grabs the brick. She reads the note, while:

MARIE

You know what that is, don't you? A warning. A threat. A ransom... no, that's just abduction, isn't it?

Carla frowns and gives Marie the note.

MARIE

(reading)
Sell up or else...
(to Joan)
We've got a case to solve!

Off Joan's look of despair, we head to the:

MAIN TITLES.

EXT. THE BIG SLEEP RETIREMENT COMPLEX - AFTERNOON

Our gaze is fixed on the six-storey building covered in graffiti. Several elderly individuals meander around the premises. A welcome sign nearby reads "Where Our Residents Come To Sleep The Big Sleep."

INT. THE BIG SLEEP. LOUNGE AREA - AFTERNOON

The Big Sleep's manager, TINA STERLING, a selfish, condescending, fitness fanatic in her mid-thirties, dressed in a tracksuit, jogging on the spot, is looking at a roomful of Elderly Residents including: Marie, Joan, GERALD, mid-80s, a short-fused blind man, with a GUIDE DOG on the seat beside him. And DENZEL (75), an eccentric, flirty black man.

RODNEY POWERS (25), Tina's assistant, is seen grappling with plugging in a projection screen, showcasing his gawky and anxiety-riddled nature.

TINA

Okay, Rodney if you could get us started. And don't stammer too much, we don't know how long they're gonna stay awake.

RODNEY

Right, okay... Well, firstly, we've had a box of medication brought in with all your new prescriptions. Unfortunately, I can't remember where I put it.

(laughs nervously)

But nothing a few phone calls to the local doctor won't cure...

RODNEY

Also, I've just set up a new Instagram account so please give me a follow.

(off their blank looks)

No? That was a long shot.

Tina steps in front of him, mercifully ending his speech.

TINA

Good afternoon everyone, another glorious day is upon us here at The Big Sleep retirement complex...

Tina struggles with the remote before eventually locating the correct button for the screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIE

Is this gonna take much longer? I have important things to be doing.

(to Joan)

Have you drawn up a list of suspects yet?

Joan refuses to entertain the notion, rolling her eyes.

MARIE

Carla and her family are a vital part of this community. We can't just let some lowlife bully them into selling the business.

She pulls out a small list with peoples names written on it.

MARIE (CONT'D)

I wrote down the names of every customer in the coffee shop for us to interview. Colombo would be proud.

Denzel gazes at Marie with a loving and proud smile.

DENZEL

I think he would, too. I know I am.

MARIE

Denzel, for the thousandth time you can not share my bed with me.

ON SCREEN: A senior citizen is enjoying a picnic by the river. She removes her dentures to eat.

TINA

People, why do you do this? It's just plain gross. Nobody wants to see you sucking on a prawn sandwich but enough of my nitpicking. I want you to stop living life as an elderly person. Experience it to the fullest. Live each day as if it's your last... because for many of you that could very well be true.

ON SCREEN: An elderly person lies in an open coffin during a funeral with no attendees.

TINA

When your time here with us ends, I don't want your final resting place to
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TINA (CONT'D)

be that sad. The power is in your hands to turn your lives around and make a difference so your family will want to pay their respects to you. Leaving large sums of money in a will always goes down a treat, too.

ON SCREEN: we are now at a funeral packed with attendees for the deceased ELDERLY PERSON.

TINA

See, it is possible to be elderly and liked. You just have to work with me on some things. But here at The Big Sleep, we pride ourselves on injecting life into the seemingly lifeless.

(quickly)

That's just a metaphor. I would never inject you with anything.

TINA

And if anyone does try to jab you with a needle, report it immediately.

ON SCREEN: Actors in The Big Sleep are seen enjoying various activities like spa treatments, swimming, hiking, and horse riding.

TINA

Now, how great is that? And it's all yours! Your path to true happiness begins right now!

ON SCREEN: elderly actors joyfully laugh, dance, jump, and celebrate life.

TINA

One of the main rules here is to embrace every opportunity life throws at you, no matter how daunting it may seem which is hard to fathom considering most of you witnessed a couple of wars.

ON SCREEN: A happy elderly couple skips through a meadow, holding hands under the blue sky.

Marie glances at Joan, tapping her watch in frustration - how much longer will this last? Joan just smiles, unsure what she's trying to say...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tina turns off the projection screen. Her beaming smile is met with confusion from the residents.

TINA

Alright, any questions or opinions?

JOAN

(pulls out a notepad)

I have some suggestions to make this place more user friendly starting with adding an elevator. I mean, most of us can't walk up a curb let alone a flight of stairs.

MARIE

Oh, so you're fine with making notes about sodding lifts but when it comes to a case to solve you have no interest?

DENZEL

(leans in)

I'll help you with your mystery, Marie. What can I do?

MARIE

You can back off a few inches for a start.

DENZEL

Playing hard to get, I like that.

TINA

Please, stop that. I can feel my breakfast bubbling to the surface... Now, who's ready for a little jog outside to keep those brittle bones from completely deteriorating?

(no response)

Alright, I'll lead.

She jogs off. Nobody moves. Rodney looks around awkwardly, smiles.