

West Saxon

by
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A Comedy Thriller

Salmon Works
2 THE COURTYARD
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EXT. A LONELY ROAD IN THE NORFOLK COUNTRYSIDE- EVENING

The scene opens in the late evening of a grey dismal day sometime in winter with an aerial shot of a line of four cars winding their way in a sort of convoy along a lonely two lane road somewhere in the depths of the Norfolk countryside. The lead car is a smart Range Rover. The view moves into the interior where DR BARNABY PIPER is taking a swig from a smart pig skin and silver hip flask. He is an ageing playboy. Once handsome, he is now starting to run a bit to fat. He has a bleary eyed look about him and is clearly the worse for wear for drink. He looks at his reflection in the rear view mirror and the scene fades into a flash back.

INT. A SCREENED OFF BED IN A HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

DR BARNABY PIPER and a distinguished looking Asian CONSULTANT surgeon, are stood dressed in green scrubs around the bed of a very fat lady who is looking rather embarrassed. Dr Piper is looking a bit flushed and the consultant is giving him anxious looks as he makes a very clumsy examination of the hapless woman.

DR BARNABY PIPER

Well I, I think, I think
everything looks fine Mrs, er
Mrs, I say what's, what's your
name? Eh?

CONSULTANT

(exasperated but trying
to remain professional)
This is Mrs Lankaster, Dr Piper,
surely you remember? You operated
on her this morning.

DR BARNABY PIPER

Oh my God, yes, Mrs Lankaster,
how could I forget. Well it was a
very, er straightforward
procedure; quite routine. Is
everything OK?

Mrs Lankaster looks about her in acute embarrassment. She is clearly upset about something. She motions with her head for both doctors to come nearer to her so that she can speak in confidence.

MRS LANKASTER

(In a low voice)
Well Doctor, no, everything is
not OK.

CONSULTANT

(Also in a low voice as both doctors have bent their heads down to listen to her. He catches a whiff of Piper's breath and grimaces)

What's the matter?

DR BARNABY PIPER

Yes, how can we help?

He hiccups gently and has to smother a giggle.

MRS LANKASTER

I don't know how to describe it, I mean I've been widowed for five years and, well, there has been nobody else.

Both doctors look at her in mystification.

CONSULTANT

I'm sorry Mrs Lankaster, you'll have to be more specific

DR BARNABY PIPER

Yes, look just come out with it, we're both doctors after all

He has to cut off another silly giggle. Mrs Lankaster is obviously having some sort of inner battle which she eventually resolves.

MRS LANKASTER

OK, well it's like, oh dear, it's like something is, well you know, up there.

CONSULTANT

Up there?

Barnaby and CONSULTANT exchange perplexed glances before Barnaby speaks to Mrs Lankaster

DR BARNABY PIPER

By there, do you mean, well there, where I was this morning?

Mrs Lankaster positively squirms with embarrassment but gives him a nervous smile.

MRS LANKASTER

Yes exactly, that's exactly where I mean. I would check myself but, well, you know how it is.

Her hands make a rather sad reference to her huge bulk. Barnaby gives a theatrical gesture of reassurance.

DR BARNABY PIPER

Mrs Lankaster, that is perfectly normal after the gynecoler, the gyner, er the.

CONSULTANT

The gynecological procedure?.

Barnaby acknowledges the help.

DR BARNABY PIPER

Exactly, just so, well after such a thing such a reaction is to be expected. Now if there's nothing else?

Mrs Lankaster seems rather crushed and shakes her head. Barnaby and CONSULTANT leave the curtained off bed but not without Barnaby almost knocking the partitions over. They walk off down the ward.

CONSULTANT

Barnaby, I mean it, your drinking is getting worse. I can no longer cover for you.

DR BARNABY PIPER

Imran, you are an old woman. I'm fine, I can handle it. I've just been through it a bit lately. You know that.

CONSULTANT reluctantly agrees then Barnaby starts to check his pockets.

CONSULTANT

What is it? What have you lost?

DR BARNABY PIPER

(Slightly abstracted)

My mobile, I cannot think where I put it. I know I had it this morning.

CONSULTANT

Why don't I call you, maybe you'll hear the ring?

He reaches into his breast pocket and produces his own mobile.

DR BARNABY PIPER

Good idea but I had it on vibrate only so we won't hear it unless it is very close.

CONSULTANT

In the state you are in it's probably in your own pocket.

He dials Barnaby's number.

CONSULTANT (CONT'D)

It's ringing.

Suddenly from behind them Mrs Lankaster who has had the partitions removed from round her bed starts to thrash around emitting orgasmic shrieks. Consultant gives Barnaby a look of total outrage whilst Barnaby puts his hands over his head. Scene fades back again.

EXT. A LONELY ROAD IN THE NORFOLK COUNTRYSIDE - EVENING

In his car Barnaby Piper shakes his head in shame and takes another swig of his hip flask. The scene travels back to a beaten up old VW Beetle that is following his car. It goes into close up on ZOE WHITE. She is rather a feisty looking red head in her early thirties who is clearly not flush with money. She bites her lip as the scene fades to another flash back.

INT. A CLASSROOM IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL - DAY

Zoe White is bending down confronting a little black girl of about eight who is looking very belligerent and grips a rather battered looking teddy bear under her right arm. Behind her are a rather scared group of about ten other eight year old children all dressed in paint splattered pinafores.

ZOE WHITE

Chantal, I've told you for the last time. Go and put your pinny on because we all want to go and do some nice painting.

CHANTAL

No!

ZOE WHITE

Chantal, everyone else is in their pinnies and they all want to do some painting, don't you.

There is silence from the others.

ZOE WHITE (CONT'D)

(screaming) Don't you!

CLASS
 (Terrified, some are
 openly weeping with
 fear)
 Yes Miss White.

ZOE WHITE
 So Chantal, let's not let all
 your nice friends down. Go and
 put on your pinnie.

CHANTAL
 No!

ZOE WHITE
 Why not Chanatal?

CHANTAL
 Because Teddy doesn't like
 painting.

ZOE WHITE
 Is that right, so all this
 trouble is because Teddy has a
 hang up about painting lessons?

CHANTAL
 (Uncertainly) Er I think
 so.

ZOE WHITE
 Right!

She rips Chantal's Teddy from under her arm and gripping it
 by the throat holds it pressed against the blackboard. Her
 back is now to the classroom and all her attention is on
 the Teddy. Chantal is pathetically whimpering as she tries
 to jump and rescue her toy.

ZOE WHITE (CONT'D)
 Right Teddy Boy let's get a few
 things straight round here. I'm
 in charge, I'm the head honcho,
 the gaffer, the one who calls the
 shots not a sawdust stuffed fire
 hazard like you.

She reaches a hand over to her desk drawer which she opens
 and extracts a staple gun. The children particularly
 Chantal are becoming hysterical.

ZOE WHITE (CONT'D)
 So, if you decide to mess me
 about I'm afraid I have to take
 drastic measures.
 (MORE)

ZOE WHITE (CONT'D)

You see I may not be able to beat
your spoilt snotty little
mistress because she's a girl,
but you, you are just a reject
from a fairground arcade, a cheap
tatty little piece of nylon and
you will not get in my way.

Placing the staple gun centrally in Teddy's face, she pulls the trigger several times so he is riveted to the wooden blackboard surround. Behind her the class have fallen into an appalled silence. Zoe whirls round to confront Chantal.

ZOE WHITE (CONT'D)

So, Teddy's not so cocky now is
he? Can't hear him telling you
not to put your pinny on now
Chantal can we? Chantal?

She suddenly realises that Chantal is not looking at her neither is the rest of the class. They are looking towards the door where Zoe looks and sees her headmaster with a very severe looking man and woman who look like they are from the Gestapo.

ZOE WHITE (CONT'D)

Oh, Headmaster, I didn't hear you
come in.

Headmaster looks appalled at the teddy nailed to the blackboard and then at Zoe.

HEADMASTER

Er Zoe, I mean Miss White, let me
introduce Mr Sturm and Miss Drang
from Ofsted, a snap inspection,
just to see if we are, er, on the
ball.

MR STURM

Very good, HEADMASTER, you have,
I think, hit the nail on the
head?

Fade back.

EXT. A LONELY ROAD IN THE NORFOLK COUNTRYSIDE - EVENING

Back in the VW Zoe White wipes away a tear of shame at the recollection. The scene shifts back to the last car, an old battered Rover, driven by the REVEREND PYM. He is a sprightly sixty year old with a shock of white hair but a rather sour expression on his face. He is dressed in an old tweed jacket and tie. As he drives along the scene fades to another flashback.

INT. AN ENGLISH COUNTRY CHURCH - DAY

The scene opens with a shot of the Reverend Pym this time stood at the altar rails in his stole and robes in the process of conducting a Church of England marriage ceremony. In front of him we see two heads, the happy couple.

REVEREND PYM

First, I am required to ask
anyone present who knows a reason
why these persons may not
lawfully marry, to declare it
now.

There is a rather long and awkward silence. The Reverend Pym is looking at the congregation in an air of anticipation. The shot now changes to one of the body of the Church. The congregation are seen to be a bunch of sharp suited and scantily dressed chavs and chavesses. The BRIDE and GROOM look like a cheap imitation of Posh and Becks except that she is clearly heavily pregnant. The Groom looks nervously behind him before turning back to the Bride.

GROOM

(stage whisper)
Cor Doll, that's a let down! I
thought at least one of me ex's
would have turned up.

BRIDE

Oh you are a one!
(She breaks into a
braying laugh)

REVEREND PYM

(Addressing the
congregation in
general)
I see, well if none of you are
prepared to step in and stop this
madness then it seems I must.

The Bride and Groom look at each other in mystification whilst the congregation stir uneasily. Pym leaves the wedding party and ascends the pulpit.

REVEREND PYM (CONT'D)

(he fixes the
congregation with eyes
blazing with a
messianic fervour)
You lot have some nerve coming
here and pretending to enter into
a Christian marriage.

GROOM

'ere what are you on about? Come
back down, we've not done our
vows yet!

REVEREND PYM

Bugger your vows young man!

He points an accusing finger at the pregnant bride.

REVEREND PYM (CONT'D)

That's how much notice you take
of vows.

The bride colours and looks at her bump. She dissolves into
tears.

BRIDE

That's not fair, I just got drunk
one night and forgot myself.

REVEREND PYM

Of course you did you silly
little tart! The same with the
rest of you, you just got drunk!
That's why I never see one of you
in a Sunday, you all just got
drunk!

The mother of the bride, a stout battleaxe of a woman in a
huge hat and pouring out of her dress stands up.

BRIDE'S MOTHER

We come here at Christmas and put
a score in the plate for you, you
ungrateful old goat.

REVEREND PYM

Oh yes, bloody Christmas, but I
never see you at Easter, the most
important Christian festival.

Congregation look puzzled.

GROOM

Duh! We're skiing at Easter!

Congregation mutter their approval. Pym throws up his hand
in exasperation.

REVEREND PYM

Oh right, silly me, so spending a
fortnight sliding down hills on
planks of wood and getting
smashed on gluwein each night is
more important than your
redemption is it?

He flings out an arm pointing to the door.

REVEREND PYM (CONT'D)
Get out, get out the lot of you,
as far as I am concerned for you
God is dead.

Everybody looks bewildered. Pym dashes down from the pulpit and grabs the large processional cross from one of the altar boys and starts whirling it round his head as he drives the wedding party and the congregation before him.

REVEREND PYM (CONT'D)
Begone, I'm conducting no more
services for the likes of you.
I'll turn this place into a
mosque, at least they are serious
about their religion.

The choir set upon him from behind and start to over power him. Just as he's dragged to the ground.

REVEREND PYM (CONT'D)
And I'm cancelling bloody
Christmas!

(CONT'D)

INT. THE BISHOP'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

Bishop Williams is sat behind his desk looking very uncomfortable. In front of the desk sits the Reverend Pym who is staring intently at the Bishop. He has a black eye and cuts and bruises.

BISHOP WILLIAMS
This is really not a very
pleasant duty I have to undertake
Hugo.

REVEREND PYM
Oh really Bishop, I would have
thought this will be the high
point of your year. You've always
wanted to be rid of me.

BISHOP WILLIAMS
Hugo, I will agree we have not
always seen eye to eye but..

REVEREND PYM
Oh come on, get it over with

BISHOP WILLIAMS

Hugo, you are expecting me to defrock you and ordinarily I should but after what happened with your wife I feel you deserve another chance.

REVEREND PYM

(after a pause)

Go on.

BISHOP WILLIAMS

Yes I can see how much of a shock it must have been for you. Do you think that she will ever come back from Africa?

Pym shakes his head sorrowfully and Williams waves his hands in exasperation.

BISHOP WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Well let's not dwell on that. I have been asked to find somebody at very short notice to fulfil a pastoral role for the Ministry of Defence.

REVEREND PYM

Oh where?

EXT. A LONELY ROAD IN THE NORFOLK COUNTRYSIDE - EVENING

The lead car is a police car. The camera zooms in on it so that one can see the two persons inside. They are WPC BANKS and PC LUNA. She is a slightly tubby but attractive blonde and he is a tall and athletic looking Afro-Caribbean. They are silent; glumly staring ahead of them. They both exchange haunted looks and then continue their glassy eyed vigil. The scene fades into a flash back.

INT. SUPERINTENDENT ASH'S OFFICE - DAY

Banks and Luna are stood stiffly at attention in front of SUPERINTENDENT ASH'S desk. She is a smart and attractive black woman sat holding an open file with a stern expression on her face. SGT CLOUGH is stood behind the two constables. All are in uniform and hatless.

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

Have you anything to say?

PC LUNA

I, er, I think that we have been misunderstood ma'am

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

Oh really? Well here's your chance. Tell me where we have got things wrong.

PC LUNA

Ma'am WPC Banks and I joined the Force together to help people. But we never seem to get the chance. Sgt Clough has us filling in forms all the time.

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

I see, so when you get this information about a possible drugs bust you decide here is a chance to do some real policing and you go it alone.

WPC BANKS

(Defensively) Our informant had always been very trustworthy in the past

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

But not this time

PC LUNA

Well, to be fair. When he told us there was a load of coke hidden behind Snowy Dean's house he was strictly speaking spot on.

SGT CLOUGH

Yes, strictly speaking, strictly speaking the real thing; not bloody cocaine!

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

So the two of you start doing a finger tip search through two hundred weight of nutty slack. At the end of it you looked like something out of the Black and White Minstrels

SGT CLOUGH

Meanwhile Snowy Dean was out flogging the real drugs with nobody to touch him. He then phones the press and the whole Force is a laughing stock.

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

Look what the papers are saying!

She throws down a copy of the Sun with the headline: "What a Load of Coke Sackers!" It sits over a picture of the two constables, black faced and dressed in blue overalls. Banks and Luna wince with embarrassment. The scene then fades back again.

EXT. A LONELY ROAD IN THE NORFOLK COUNTRYSIDE - EVENING

The scene returns to the police car and the two constables. They exchange another haunted glance before the view moves back to the following car which The line of cars has now reached a military style barrier manned by uniformed guards. One peers into the police car and then nods to his mate who raises the barrier and the line of cars drives on. As the pass through they pass a huge sign that says "Welcome to the Saxon Training Area SANTA. This is a live firing range. No entry when the red flag is flying." As the camera pans back a red flag flaps at a flag pole. The cars drive on into the gloom. The camera continues to follow them as they drive into the low heathland country of the training area as the voice overs proceed.

BISHOP WILLIAMS

(VO)

In Norfolk, the Saxon Training Area to be precise.

ZOE WHITE

(VO)

What the hell are you sending me there for?

HEADMASTER

(VO)

Look at it as a chance to recharge batteries, get your enthusiasm back.

DR BARNABY PIPER

(VO)

What the hell am I to do on a military training area?

CONSULTANT

(VO)

Apparently there is a village in the middle of this training area that was evacuated during the last war when the whole area was commandeered to train troops for D Day. Once a year the Ministry of Defence let the old inhabitants and their descendants return to revisit and reoccupy their old homes for a weekend.

WPC BANKS

(VO)
Where do we fit in?

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

(VO)
To make them feel truly at home
the Ministry provide some
professionals to give the place
more of the feel of a proper
village. There's a vicar, a
doctor, a teacher and you'll be..

WPC BANKS

(VO)
The village bobbies?

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

(VO)
You've got it.

SGT CLOUGH

(VO sotto voce)
Yeah, you'll be the Dicks of Dock
Green!

SUPERINTENDANT ASH

(VO)
Thank you Sergeant. Well any
other questions?

PC LUNA

(VO)
Yes ma'am. What's the village
called?

SUPERINTENDANT

ASH/CONSULTANT/HERRING/WILLIAMS

(VO in unison)
West Saxon

At that moment the line of cars enters a darkened village
and pass a broken sign on which is written "West Saxon
Welcomes Careful Drivers"

(CONT'D)

(MORE)

(CONT'D)