

Alternative medicine

In the homeopathy section of the public library, the benefits and hazards of alternative medicine are debated between an old hipster and the long arm of the law.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

An old fashioned library - oak panelled walls and floor to ceiling shelves, stacked high with books. It's quiet - you could hear a bookmark drop. Stately librarians glide around the shelves, straightening books and casting steely glances towards anyone making a sound. Into this come:

HARRIET and ELSIE, two old dears in their 80s. They shuffle through the corridors, bickering.

ELSIE

Slow down Harriet, my hip's going to give out at this rate.

HARRIET

You're years younger than me! I don't want to be late.

ELSIE

I may be younger than you, but unlike some, all MY body parts are still original.

HARRIET

More fool you. You want to get a pair like mine. Titanium alloy, good for twenty years.

ELSIE

If I had the money, dear...

EXT. LIBRARY - SAME

Outside on the marble steps of the library loiter TERRENCE and HARV, two 20-something hoodlums dressed in American football shirts, the back pockets of their baggy jeans slung around their knees. Precision-cut facial hair and designer trainers - but something about their look isn't quite right.

Terrence glances at his blinged up watch.

TERRENCE

Right. Remember. Look street.

HARV

You sure about this? You got enough on them?

TERRENCE

They won't be any trouble. The old dears have no idea what's going on.

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Harv grunts, tugging at the waistband of his jeans.

HARV
(under his breath)
Nor do you. Fucking jeans.

INT. LIBRARY CORRIDOR - SAME

In the deathly silence of a long corridor, the SQUEAK SQUEAK SQUEAK of designer trainers on highly polished floors. Terrence and Harv's faces grimace with every step. They try tip-toeing. It makes it worse.

A librarian glares.

INT. LIBRARY - HOMEOPATHY SECTION - SAME

Harriet and Elsie sit at a small table, upon which sit a few open books on alternative medicine. Harriet has an oversized handbag on her lap, through which she rummages impatiently.

Footsteps. They both look up. Terrence and Harv arrive - all swagger and gangster indifference.

HARRIET
Terrence, darling, how are you?

TERRENCE
Alright, Mrs P. Looking glam as ever.

He gives her a wink, which she returns.

HARRIET
Who's this handsome young man you've brought along today?

TERRENCE
Harv. New associate. Harv, this is Mrs P, and what was it again?

ELSIE
Elsie.

HARV
'Sup.

TERRENCE
What you got for us then?

Harriet up-ends her bag, and out spill dozens of plastic pill bottles, and cardboard packets.

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HARRIET

Let's see... Oxycontin,
Biphetamine, Fentanyl citrate...
they're good these ones. A few
Roxanols, and the last of the
Ritalin.

TERRENCE

(to Harv)

Bennies, Black beauties, China
Girls, Skippies.

HARV

Cool. Reem.

He makes an unconvincing 'gangster' gesture.

HARRIET

What'll you have today, pet?

TERRENCE

All of it.

HARRIET

Smashing.

Terrence takes off his rucksack and pulls out a fat brown envelope. He slides it on to the table, and gestures for Harriet to put the bottles inside the bag. Harv approaches the table and casually inspects the loot.

HARV

How often can you get this amount
of gear then? Weekly?

HARRIET

Oh, as much as you like lovey. Half
the old codgers at the Home don't
have a clue what they're taking
anyway. You want it, I'll get it
for you.

TERRENCE

Dunno how you do it Mrs P,
you're a legend. You too, Lizzy.

Harriet beams proudly. Elsie tuts.

HARV

So, you want your weed then?

Terrence looks at him in shock.

HARRIET

(to Terrence)

Oh! You texted to say we weren't
getting any this week.

HARV

Nah. He's got some. Haven't you,
Terrence?

HARRIET

Oh marvellous, the girls will be SO
pleased. Great for our aches and
pains, isn't it Els?

ELSIE

Yes. Even at your exorbitant rates.

TERRENCE

Uh, I don't...

HARV

Two ounces, in the rucksack, where
it always is.

Terrence rummages at the bottom of the bag and pulls out a couple of baggies of grass. He's dumbfounded.

HARRIET

Wonderful. Normal sum?

She fishes some notes out of the brown envelope. Harv takes them - and pulls out a pair of handcuffs.

HARV

Thanks very much. You're under
arrest for possession and intention
to distribute prescription
narcotics. Game's up, Mrs P.

HARRIET

What? I don't understand. Terrence?

HARV

We've had our eye on this little
operation for a while now. One of
the most prolific and profitable
prescription drug rackets in the
south-east, finally caught. Mrs P,
in the library, with a handbag.

He turns to Terrence.

HARV

And as for you... Sergeant Terry Foster, you're under arrest for the possession of and intention to supply marijuana to... well. The elderly. Cuff him.

ELSIE

With pleasure.

Elsie produces a pair of handcuffs from her bag. With a swift kick to Terrence's shins, she has him on the floor and cuffed in seconds.

TERRENCE

Fuck's sake Harv, the weed was your idea! I was undercover!

HARV

Selling enough grass to knock out an entire nursing home was never part of the plan, Tezza. Especially when your best customer turned out to be my sodding ex-boss. Elsie, you're gonna have to knock that little habit on the head love.

ELSIE

Ah, life's so boring in retirement. I only did it to fit in. And to put up with old Harriet here.

HARRIET

You double-crossing old bag!

HARV

Wish I could have you back on the Force, Els. But I'll find another Home for you to bust soon. Let's get these two down the Station.

Elsie picks up the bag of medication, and links her arm through Harriet's cuffs.

ELSIE

C'mon Harriet love. Let's test that new hip out. Quick march.

And she frog marches her down the corridor.