



Better Off Dead

Transcript for season 2 trailer

[MUSIC: Percussion, ambient beats and keys]

Andrew Denton: It's 2021, and just over a year ago, a mother of three made history in Victoria.

Newsreader voice: *Kerry Robertson died peacefully in a Bendigo nursing home. She made Australian medical history as the first person to utilise Victoria's new Voluntary Assisted Dying law.*

Andrew: In season one, I investigated the arguments for and against legalising voluntary assisted dying. I looked at the powerful combination of Church leaders, and mostly Christian doctors, trying to block such a law from ever being passed. Now, that same alliance is seeding doubts about what happened once it was. In this season, I ask, who are the people seeking help to end their lives?

Katie Harley: ... his oncologist said ... it's in your bones, now, it's in your spine ... you know, you're dying Phil ...

Kristin Cornell: ... he took off all Dad's clothes and ... his muscles are twitching ... and he said ... well you've got Motor Neurone Disease, Allan.

Jean Caliste: Robbie ... just didn't want to be literally that prisoner in the body and looking at you with his eyes ...

Andrew: Who are the doctors stepping forward to help?

Dr Greg Mewett: I've seen bad deaths. And I've heard of bad deaths ... in specialist palliative care units.

Cam McLaren: ... if you do things right you really do leave a piece of yourself in that room.

Andrew: I speak with the pharmacists delivering life-ending medication.

Michael Dooley: ... You have to be absolutely direct, this medication, will result in you dying, and I think ... saying that the first time to someone sitting two feet in front of you is probably the hardest part ...

Andrew: And with those making sure the law is being upheld.

Betty King: ... it's not an easy process. But neither it should be, this is the ending of a life. And it ought to be treated in a serious manner – because it's a serious thing to do.

[BEAT]

Andrew: I look at the debate raging within palliative care.

Molly Carlile: ... how can we say ... 'Yes, you can make your choices – so long as it's not voluntary assisted dying.'

Andrew: And how the Church continues to resist a law it describes as 'evil'.

Archbishop Coleridge: Whatever the talk about dignity and compassion, there are deeper and darker things at work in all of this.

Andrea Bendrups: ... he was completely legally within his rights ... and then to have those buggers refuse ... was just so not right.

Andrew: I discover unexpected moments of humour.

Katie Harley: ... he looked straight at the priest and he said, 'Look, mate, I think I speak for Phil, when I tell you that he just wants enough holy shit to get him in the gates.'

Andrew: Moments of heartbreak.

Jean Caliste: It certainly hit me that this is my son's life in my hand, you know?

Kristin Cornell: He was dying ... he was suffering ... he was ... begging me ... 'Where are they, Kristin? Where are they? Where are they?'

Andrew: And deep acts of humanity.

Lisa Hogg: ... she had my brother on one side holding her hand, and my sister on the other and they were just telling her they loved her.

Jean Caliste: ... and you know ... the look on his face ... you know he's like suddenly ... there was [no pain], no pained look on his face, you know always had this pained look, as you can imagine and ... it just disappeared

Katie Harley: ... and we're crying and laughing and then Dad ... just looked at us and he said, 'Be happy,' and that was it.

[Echo out, music stops]

Andrew: I'm Andrew Denton, join me, for season two of *Better Off Dead*. Subscribe wherever you get your podcasts, and look out for episode one on March 16th.

[MUSIC: 'Loydie's Angel', written and performed by Jordan Laser]

Katie Harley: ... till the day I die, it'll be the most courageous thing I've ever seen anyone do.