

= One Foot in the Grave =

One Foot in the Grave is a British BBC television sitcom series written by David Renwick . There were six series and seven Christmas specials over an eleven @-@ year period , from early 1990 to late 2000 . The first five series were broadcast between January 1990 and January 1995 . For the next five years , the show appeared only as Christmas specials , followed by one final series in 2000 .

The series features the exploits of Victor Meldrew , played by Richard Wilson , and his long @-@ suffering wife , Margaret , played by Annette Crosbie . Wilson initially turned down the part of Meldrew and David Renwick considered Les Dawson for the role , until Wilson changed his mind . The programmes invariably deal with Meldrew 's battle against the problems he creates for himself . Set in a typical suburb in southern England , Victor takes involuntary early retirement . His various efforts to keep himself busy , while encountering various misfortunes and misunderstandings are the themes of the sitcom . Indoor scenes were filmed at BBC Television Centre with most exterior scenes filmed on Tresillian Way in Walkford on the Dorset / Hampshire border . Despite its traditional production , the series subverts its domestic sitcom setting with elements of black humour and surrealism .

The series was occasionally the subject of controversy for some of its darker story elements , but nevertheless received a number of awards , including the 1992 BAFTA for Best Comedy . The programme came 80th in the British Film Institute 's 100 Greatest British Television Programmes . The series , originally shown on BBC One , is now available on DVD and is regularly repeated in the United Kingdom on Gold . Four episodes were remade for BBC Radio 2 The series inspired a novel published in 1992 featuring the most memorable moments from the first two series and the first Christmas special .

= = Plot = =

The series features the exploits and mishaps of irascible pensioner Victor Meldrew , who after being forced to retire from his job as a security guard , finds himself at war with the world and everything in it . Meldrew , cursed with misfortune and always complaining , is married to long @-@ suffering wife Margaret , who is often left exasperated by his many misfortunes .

Amongst other witnesses to Victor 's wrath are tactless family friend Jean Warboys , and next @-@ door couple Patrick (Victor 's nemesis) and Pippa Trench . Patrick often discovers Victor in inexplicably bizarre or compromising situations , leading him to believe that he is insane . The Meldrews ' neighbour on the other side , overly cheery charity worker Nick Swainey , also adds to Victor 's frustration .

Although set in a traditional suburban setting , the show subverts this genre with a strong overtone of black comedy . Series One 's " The Valley of Fear " is an episode which caused controversy , when Victor finds a frozen cat in his freezer . Writer David Renwick also combined farce with elements of tragedy . For example , in the final episode , Victor is killed by a hit @-@ and @-@ run driver , and although there is no explicit reference that Victor and Margaret had children , the episode " Timeless Time " contained a reference to someone named Stuart ; the strong implication being that they once had a son who had died as a child .

A number of episodes were also experimental in that they took place entirely in one setting . Such episodes include : Victor , Margaret and Mrs Warboys stuck in a traffic jam ; Victor and Margaret in bed suffering insomnia ; Victor left alone in the house waiting to see if he has to take part in jury service ; Victor and Margaret having a long wait in their solicitor 's waiting room ; and Victor and Margaret trying to cope during a power cut on the hottest night of the year .

Despite Margaret 's frequent exasperation with her husband 's antics , the series shows that the couple have a deep affection for one another . This is demonstrated several times throughout the series .

= = Characters = =

= = = Main characters = = =

Victor Meldrew (Richard Wilson) ? Victor is the main protagonist of the sitcom and finds himself constantly battling against all that life throws at him as he becomes entangled , like the pawn he is , in machiavellian plots . Renwick once pointed out in an interview that the name " Victor " was ironic , since he almost always ends up a loser . From being buried alive to being prosecuted for attacking a feisty pit bull terrier with a collection of coconut meringues , Victor tries to adjust to life after his infamous replacement by a " box " at his place of employment , but to no avail . He believes that everything is going wrong for him all the time , and he has the right to be upset because it is always someone else 's fault . Victor is a tragic comedy character and sympathy is directed towards him as he becomes embroiled in complex misunderstandings , bureaucratic vanity and , at times , sheer bad luck . The audience sees a philosophical ebb to his character , however , along with a degree of optimism . Yet his polite façade collapses when events get the better of him , and a full verbal onslaught is forthcoming . " Victor @-@ isms " include " I do not believe it ! " , " I don 't believe it ! " , " Un @-@ be @-@ lievable ! " , " What in the name of bloody hell ? " , " In the name of sanity ! " . Despite his grumpy demeanor Victor isn 't totally devoid of compassion ? in " Hearts of Darkness " he liberates elderly nursing home residents that were being mistreated by the staff and in " Descent Into The Maelstrom " he calls the incident room number and gives the location of an emotionally disturbed girl that abducted a baby and stole Margaret 's pearl earrings , which resulted in the girl getting picked up by the police . However , because the girl was a friend of Margaret 's and knowing she meant a lot to her , Victor never said anything . Victor has also shown a vast amount of loyalty to Margaret as , throughout their entire 38 years of lifelong marriage together , not once has the thought of infidelity ever occurred to him . In " Rearranging the Dust " , Victor and Margaret recollect the days of their courtship at a party after which Victor says " You were always my first choice " , which leaves Margaret stunned . In another episode , Margaret recounts the time Victor took her to the funfair and they ended up getting stuck in the hall of mirrors for over an hour . Victor had said he didn 't mind as he was happy to stay there and look at all the reflections of her . Victor 's very best act of compassion came in the episode " The Wisdom of the Witch " in which he ends up saving Patrick 's life from his new secretary 's psychopathic boyfriend by forcing Patrick 's would @-@ be murderer , with himself along with him as well , out the window of the house in which they were trapped during a snowstorm .

Margaret Meldrew (née Pellow) (Annette Crosbie) ? Victor 's long @-@ suffering , tolerant and kind @-@ hearted wife . Margaret tries to maintain a degree of calmness and to rise above her husband 's antics . However , she is often engulfed in these follies , mishaps and confusion and often vents her anger at Victor . In early episodes , her character acts more as a comic foil to Victor 's misfortunes . Examples include fearfully asking if a cat found frozen in their freezer is definitely dead and mentioning a friend who died of a terminal illness . When Victor reminds her that the woman actually fell from a cliff , Margaret retorts she only did so because " she went to the seaside to convalesce " .

In later episodes , Margaret develops into a more complex character . She is shown to be fiercely protective of her marriage to Victor by becoming easily suspicious and jealous . For example , of a Dutch marionette that Victor becomes occupied with repairing in the episode " Hole in the Sky " , eventually leading her to destroy it . In " The Affair of the Hollow Lady " , a greengrocer (played by Barbara Windsor) develops a soft spot for Victor and tries to convince Margaret that he has been unfaithful to her . In revenge , Margaret assaults her with a pair of boxing gloves . However , Margaret herself is shown to have contemplated infidelity with a man called Ben whom she met on holiday in the episode " Warm Champagne " . She decides against cheating on Victor . In this episode , she sums up her relationship with Victor by telling Ben , " He 's the most sensitive person I 've ever met , and that 's why I love him and why I constantly want to ram his head through a television screen . " She also began to develop a sense of cynicism , slowly beginning to see the world the way her husband Victor sees it . This is especially evident in " Things aren 't simple

anymore " where she voices that the world is " all speed and greed " and that " nobody does anything about anything " . In " Rearranging the Dust " , Margaret recounts the time she first chose Victor at a party and , during a power cut , " shared their bodies " in the garden . After this moment of passion , they went back inside and when the lights came back on Margaret realised that she had " grabbed hold of the wrong person " . Margaret 's demeanor seemed to stem from an incident she had at school when she was a child . When she was five , she had two budgies and one day when she opened the door to their cage one flew straight out and hit the window killing itself while the other stayed in the cage despite her best efforts to get it to come out . The next day at school her teacher asked the class to write a story about something that had happened to them so Margaret wrote her story about about the budgies . Her teacher made Margaret read it out loud in front of the whole class which resulted in everyone laughing at her . She then realized that the teacher had done it deliberately just to be cruel to her and knew why the other budgie never wanted to leave its cage .

Margaret could be said to have a catchphrase - typically a long , exasperated use of the word " God " , usually when making a realisation about the reasons behind one of Victor 's mishaps . These are occasionally inadvertently aided by herself in some way , such as leaving the phone off the hook or giving permission to someone to enter the Meldrews ' house when she isn 't there .

Jean Warboys (Doreen Mantle) ? Mrs Warboys is a friend of Margaret (and a rather annoying one in Victor 's eyes) who attached herself to the Meldrews , accompanying them on many of their exploits . In the early series she was married to (never seen) Chris , but eventually he left her for the private detective she had hired when she suspected him of having an affair , and they divorced .

She often bears the brunt of Victor 's temper due to muddled misunderstandings and in part due to her aloof nature . One such occasion saw Victor asking her to pick up a suit of his from the dry @-@ cleaners , only for her to return with a gorilla costume . Another occasion saw her persuading Victor to take on a dog whose owner had just died . Victor spent time building a kennel in the garden and when Mrs Warboys arrives with the dog , she forgets to mention that the dog is stuffed - much to Victor and Margaret 's consternation . On another occasion she won a competition where the prize was either to earn £ 500 or to have a life @-@ size waxwork model made of herself , which had to be delivered to the Meldrews ' house ; she chose the waxwork . As it turned out , she hated it as much as Victor and Margaret did , and the waxwork ended up in the dustbin .

Despite being friends , she has driven Margaret to distraction on several occasions . Most notably in " Only a Story " , when she stayed with the Meldrews after her flat had been flooded and drove Margaret to the point of distraction with her complaining and laziness . Jean was also shown as a somewhat absent @-@ minded character , as she has a pet cockatiel despite having a lifelong allergy to feathers . She would often bore the Meldrews by showing them her complete collection of holiday pictures at the most unwelcome times . A running joke is her beating Victor at board @-@ games , including Trivial Pursuit and chess , while having a conversation with someone else . Doreen Mantle described her character as " wanting to do the right thing but always finding out that it was the wrong thing " .

Patrick Trench (Angus Deayton) ? Patrick and his wife Pippa live next door to Victor , and often catches Victor engrossed in seemingly preposterous situations , all of which in context are perfectly innocuous . The couple 's relationship with their neighbours begins badly after Victor mistakes Patrick and Pippa for distant relations when they arrive outside with three suitcases ? not realising that they are his next @-@ door neighbours , having been on a lengthy holiday from the day Victor and Margaret moved in . Victor subsequently invites the bemused pair to stay ; this and later incidents cause Patrick to suspect that Victor is quite insane , possibly bordering on malicious .

However , Patrick 's rift with Victor eventually transforms him into a rather cynical character (much like Victor) , and he often responds to him in similarly vindictive ways as a means of trying to settle the score . For example , writing complaints and grievances on post @-@ it notes . This aspect of Patrick 's character came to a head in the episode " The Executioner 's Song " where his face temporarily morphs into that of Victor 's as he looks into a mirror .

It is mentioned several times that Patrick would like to have children . After Pippa miscarries and Patrick is , so he claims , rendered infertile by a freak accident (for which he unfairly blames Victor)

, he adopts a dachshund called Denzil , which Pippa describes as his " baby substitute " . Denzil frequently appears with Patrick through series 3 @-@ 5 . Despite their animosity towards each other , Victor ends up saving Patrick 's life in " The Wisdom of the Witch " .

Pippa Trench (née Croker) (Janine Duvitski) ? Patrick 's wife sought friendly relations with the Meldrews and , after a while , became good friends with Margaret . The two women usually attempt to get the men to make peace with each other at least once per series . Eventually Patrick proposes that the Trenches move house , but they soon realise that the Meldrew curse has followed them : Victor sent workmen to their home , thinking they were removal men who had initially come to the wrong house . They were in fact from a house clearance firm Margaret had employed to clear her late cousin Ursula 's country mansion . The workmen consequently cleared Patrick and Pippa 's house of their entire furniture and sold it for a mere four hundred and seventy five pounds . Pippa is slightly dim @-@ witted (once described by Victor as a " gormless twerp " on an answering machine message , unaware she was listening) ? for example , believing Victor had murdered an elderly blind man simply because the victim had been found clutching a double @-@ one domino in his hand , and Victor had two pimples on his nose .

New neighbours Derek and Betty McVitie replaced the Trenches for the 1997 special " Endgame " , however this turned out to be their only appearances in the series and they were said to have emigrated by the penultimate episode which caused Nick Swainey to leap straight in with the offer for their old house . Series six saw the Trenches return as prominent characters , albeit living in a house some distance from the Meldrews . Despite appearing in five out of six series and three Christmas specials , neither of the Trenches ever share a scene with Mrs Warboys .

Nick Swainey (Owen Brenman) ? The excessively cheerful and often oblivious Mr Swainey appeared in the first episode , encouraging Victor to join his OAPs ' trip to Eastbourne , and being greeted with Victor 's trademark abuse . When the Meldrews move house , they discover he is their neighbour , living on the other side of the Meldrews from the Trenches . He remains continuously optimistic ; even his being told to " piss off " by Victor is laughed off . Despite this run @-@ in he later befriends Victor , and they frequently chat in their gardens , where Victor is often surprised by Mr Swainey 's activities , ranging from archery and preparing amateur dramatics props , to bizarre games he arranges for his bedridden senile mother , whom the audience never actually see . Despite his cheery demeanour , he does occasionally drop his guard , once displaying apparent depression at being nothing more than " an overgrown boy @-@ scout " . Following his mother 's death , he moved house near the end of the series , but only went as far as the Trenches ' / McVitie 's old house , claiming he 'd always wanted to live in an " end house , without leaving the area " . This took Victor by surprise ; he did not learn where Mr Swainey was moving to until , while reminiscing in the garden about his departure , Mr Swainey suddenly appeared from the other side .

= = = Other characters = = =

Ronnie and Mildred (Gordon Peters and Barbara Ashcroft) ? Ronnie and Mildred were a constantly cheerful , but incredibly boring , couple who provided yet another annoyance to the Meldrews , who dreaded any upcoming visits to them ; Victor once said that he had hoped they were both dead . In " The Worst Horror of All " , when the couple attempted a surprise visit , the Meldrews hid in their house to give the impression they were away on holiday , and then took the phone off the hook for several days afterwards , though these efforts to avoid them were in vain . They are referenced a number of times in the series for giving the Meldrews bizarre and always unwanted presents that are seldom opened , usually involving a garish photograph of themselves . In the final series , however it was clear that their cheerfulness was a façade and , in a particularly dark scene , Mildred hanged herself " during a game of Happy Families " . The shot of Mildred 's feet dangling outside the window is usually cut from pre @-@ watershed screenings .

Alfred Meldrew (Richard Pearson) - Victor 's absent @-@ minded brother , who lives in New Zealand . During the episode " The Broken Reflection " , he comes to visit after 25 years , to the disdain of Victor . Alfred is an eccentric character , often walking around with his hat on fire , and bringing over his and Victor 's great @-@ grandfather 's skull . He is a clumsy character too ,

mistaking the table @-@ cloth for a napkin and dropping the contents over the floor when he stands up , and breaking a mirror in the middle of the night after mistaking his own reflection for a burglar . Victor starts to warm to Alfred towards the end of his visit , but Alfred leaves early the next day after finding an unpleasant message about him that Victor had accidentally recorded on a dictaphone . He is not seen again , but keeps in touch with the Meldrews , as Victor is seen looking at some photographs Alfred had sent over in " The Trial " .

Cousin Wilfred (John Rutland) ? Mrs. Warboys ' cousin , Wilfred , appeared twice in the series , and was considered to be a fairly boring middle @-@ aged man . In the final series , the effects of a stroke rendered him mute , and forced him to " speak " with the aid of an electronic voice generator . His poor typing on the generator led to several misunderstandings , such as asking Victor for a " bra of soup " (as opposed to a " bar of soap ") and describing a visit to his " brothel " (as opposed to " brother ") .

Great Aunt Joyce and Uncle Dick - Unseen characters , they are often mentioned by Victor and Margaret , as an aging and grim couple and Victor and Margaret dread having anything to do with them . Great Aunt Joyce is mentioned as having a glass eye and has the habit of knitting bizarre items (such as six @-@ fingered gloves) for Victor . Uncle Dick has a wooden arm ; in the final Comic Relief (2001) episode , it transpires that a nurse had mistakenly placed a drip in the false arm for 18 hours after a trip to hospital after trying to remove a kidney stone with a wire coat hanger .

Mimsy Berkovitz - Another unseen character , she is the local agony aunt , whom many of the characters turn to for advice . In the episode " The Secret of the Seven Sorcerers " , Patrick is heard talking to her on the radio , seeking her advice on how to cope when Victor and Margaret invite him and Pippa around to dinner .

Martin Trout (Peter Cook) - A paparazzo in " One Foot in the Algarve " . He manages to take a number of compromising photographs , involving a high @-@ ranking politician . Trout compares the potential impact of the photos to the Profumo affair. On his way to sell the images , he loses the roll of film whilst arguing at a phone box with the Meldrews and subsequently pursues them across the Algarve to retrieve it . He suffers a number of disasters both related and unrelated to Victor and Margaret 's own misfortunes , only to find that the film had actually fallen into the lining of his jacket and had been with him for much of his journey . He lost it in the door of the Meldrews ' car . Retrieving the roll after a brief spell in hospital , Trout attempts to leave the Algarve in a taxi but is involved in a car crash .

= = Production = =

The production of the show was in a conventional sitcom format , with episodes taped live in front of a studio audience , interposed with pre @-@ filmed location material .

Most of the first five series of One Foot in the Grave were produced and directed by Susan Belbin , the exceptions being " Love and Death , " which was partly directed by veteran sitcom director Sydney Lotterby , and " Starbound , " for which Gareth Gwenlan (who in fact had originally commissioned the series in 1989) stepped in to direct some sequences after Belbin was taken ill . Belbin retired due to ill health afterwards , and the final series was produced by Jonathan P. Llewellyn and directed by Christine Gernon . Wilson and Renwick felt that Gernon 's experience of working with Belbin on earlier series of One Foot as a production secretary and assistant , as well as other shows , meant that her style was similar to Belbin 's , aiding the transition between directors .

One Foot used Bournemouth to film some exterior sequences because of its favourable climate , easy access to London , and economical benefits relative to filming in the capital . After the first series was filmed , the house ? near Pokesdown , Bournemouth ? which had been used for the Meldrews ' house in location sequences , changed hands and the new owners demanded nearly treble the usage fees that the previous owners had asked for . Rather than agree to this , the production team decided to find a new house , and the first episode of the second series was rewritten to have the Meldrews ' house destroyed in a fire (Filmed on waste ground in Northcote Road , Springbourne) . This also gave the opportunity for a new interior set to be designed , as

Belbin had been unhappy with the original set designed for the series , which she felt was too restrictive to shoot in .

Since series two , the exterior scenes of the Meldrew 's home were filmed at Tresillian Way , Walkford , near New Milton in Hampshire . These later series make extensive use of specific street and garden locations in most episodes , particularly for scenes involving the Meldrew 's neighbours . Most outside locations were filmed in and around Bournemouth and Christchurch . These include Richmond Hill , Undercliff Drive and Boscombe Pier , Bournemouth Town Hall , Lansdowne College , Christchurch Hospital and the former Royal Victoria Hospital (Boscombe) . Later episodes , such as " Hearts of Darkness " , were filmed entirely on location . Victor 's death by a hit and run driver in the final episode was filmed at Shawford railway station , Hampshire . Fans left floral tributes at the site .

Over the show 's history , it featured a number of notable comic actors in one @-@ off roles . These included Susie Blake , John Bird , Tim Brooke @-@ Taylor , Peter Cook , Diana Coupland , Phil Daniels , Edward de Souza , Hannah Gordon , Georgina Hale , Jimmy Jewel , Rula Lenska , Stephen Lewis , Brian Murphy , Christopher Ryan , Barbara Windsor and Ray Winstone . Two of Angus Deayton 's former Radio Active and KYTV co @-@ stars , Geoffrey Perkins and Michael Fenton Stevens were cast , in separate episodes , as respectively the brother and brother @-@ in @-@ law of Deayton 's character . A few then little @-@ known actors also appeared in one @-@ off roles before going on to greater fame , including Lucy Davis , Joanna Scanlan , Eamonn Walker and Arabella Weir .

The show was produced with an aspect ratio of 4 : 3 from 1990 @-@ 1997 . Three years later , the show returned to television for its final series , which was produced with an aspect ratio of 16 : 9 . All episodes are of Standard Definition 576i .

= = Music = =

The One Foot in the Grave theme song was written , composed and sung by Eric Idle . A longer version was produced for the special " One Foot in the Algarve " , released as a single with five remixes and a karaoke version in November 1994 . Idle included a live version of the song on his album Eric Idle Sings Monty Python . It is preluded by a similar adaptation of " Bread of Heaven " to that used in the episode " The Beast in the Cage " by disgruntled car mechanics . The music on the TV series is accompanied at the beginning and end of each episode by a tortoise . The series also made extensive use of incidental music , composed by Ed Welch , which often hinted at a particular genre to fit the mood of the scenes , frequently incorporating well @-@ known pieces of music such as " God Rest You Merry , Gentlemen " or Intermezzo from Jean Sibelius ' Karelia Suite . In the Christmas special " Endgame " during Margaret 's alleged death scene , a compilation of clips from past episodes are accompanied by the song " River Runs Deep " performed by J. J. Cale . The final episode ended with a montage of some of the mishaps Victor encountered , which were mentioned in the episode ? backed by " End of the Line " by the Traveling Wilburys .

= = Awards = =

The programme received a number of prestigious awards . In 1992 , it won a BAFTA as Best Comedy (Programme or Series) . During its ten @-@ year run , the series was nominated a further six times . Richard Wilson also won Best Light Entertainment Performance in 1992 and 1994 , and Annette Crosbie was nominated for the same award in 1994 .

The series also won the Best Television Sitcom in 1992 from the Royal Television Society and the British Comedy Award for Best Sitcom in 1992 , 1995 and 2001 .

In 2004 , One Foot in the Grave came tenth in a BBC poll to find " Britain 's Best Sitcom " with 31 @, @ 410 votes . The programme also came 80th in the British Film Institute 's 100 Greatest British Television Programmes

= = Controversies = =

A number of complaints were made during the series ' run for its depiction of animal deaths . For example , in the episode " The Valley of Fear " , a dead cat is found in the Meldrews ' freezer ; in another , a tortoise is roasted in a brazier . However , this was later cited as a positive feature of the programme 's daring scripts in Britain 's Best Sitcom by its advocate Rowland Rivron . The programme was censured , however , for a scene in the episode " Hearts of Darkness " in which an elderly resident is abused in an old people 's home , and following complaints , the scene was slightly cut when the episode was repeated . In the DVD commentary for the episode , David Renwick stated his continued opposition to the cuts . Another controversial scene in the episode " Tales of Terror " saw the Meldrews visit Ronnie and Mildred on the understanding that Mildred had gone upstairs during a game of Happy Families and not returned ; Ronnie then shows her feet hanging outside of the window , revealing that she has committed suicide . The Broadcasting Standards Commission received complaints about this scene .

When the final episode , " Things Aren 't Simple Any More " originally aired on 20 November 2000 at 9pm , it coincided with the broadcast of the first jackpot winner in the UK version of Who Wants to Be a Millionaire ? , which had been filmed the Sunday before the broadcast . ITV was accused of engineering this in order to damage the final episode 's expected high ratings , but was later cleared by the Independent Television Commission .

= = Cultural impact = =

Due to the series ' popularity , people who constantly complain and are irritated by minor things are often compared to Victor Meldrew by the British media . Renwick disputes this usage however , claiming that Victor 's reactions are entirely in proportion to the things that happen to him .

Renwick integrated some of the plots and dialogue from the series into a novel , which was first published by BBC Books in 1992 . Renwick also adapted four episodes for BBC Radio 2 , which first aired between 21 January 1995 and 11 February 1995 . The episodes are " Alive and Buried " , " In Luton Airport , No One Can Hear You Scream " , " Timeless Time " and " The Beast in the Cage " . They are regularly repeated on the digital speech station BBC Radio 4 Extra and are available on audio CD .

Wilson dislikes saying his character 's catchphrase (" I don 't believe it ! ") and only performs the line for charity events for a small fee . This became a joke in the actor 's guest appearance as himself in the Father Ted episode " The Mainland " , where Ted annoys him by constantly repeating his catchphrase . The situation was conceived when Father Ted writers Graham Linehan and Arthur Mathews sat behind Wilson at a performance of Le Cirque du Soleil at the Royal Albert Hall . They considered how " tasteless and wrong " it would be to lean forward to him every time that an acrobat did a stunt and yell the catchphrase , and then they realised that that 's exactly what their fictional priests would do . This was also played upon when Wilson made a guest appearance on the comedy TV quiz show Shooting Stars , in which Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer purposefully misquoted his catchphrase by referring to him as " Richard ' I don 't believe you ' Wilson " .

= = VHS and DVD releases = =

All six series and specials were initially available on BBC Worldwide VHS video tapes during the late 1990s and early 2000s . The Comic Relief Shorts from 1993 and 2001 have not been released on DVD . A One Foot in the Grave Very Best Of DVD featuring five of the greatest episodes was released on 22 October 2001 in Region 2 . Then on 8 July 2004 , a One Foot in the Grave Very Best Of was also released in Region 4 . Each series was gradually released on DVD in Region 2 between 2004 and 2006 , with a complete series 1 @-@ 6 box set towards the end of 2006 . A slimmer series 1 @-@ 6 box set was released in 2010 in Region 2 .

= = Foreign versions = =

German version was made of the series in 1996 @-@ 97 , Mit einem Bein im Grab , directed by Thomas Nennstiel and Frank Strecker . It starred Heinz Schubert as " Viktor Bölkhoff " , Brigitte Böttrich as " Margret Bölkhoff " and Irm Hermann as " Lisbeth Albermann " .

Swedish version , En fot i graven was made in 2001 . Produced by commercial television channel TV4 , it starred Gösta Ekman as " Victor Melldrov " and Lena Söderblom as his wife . A total of 12 episodes were broadcast .

In 2006 a Dutch version was made under the title Met één been in het graf . It starred Serge Henri Valcke as Victor Monter . The series was directed by Zdenek Kraus , who had directed the highly successful series Toen Was Geluk Heel Gewoon and was adapted for Dutch television by Ger Apeldoorn and Harm Edens , who also wrote Het Zonnetje in Huis . The series only lasted one season .

The American sitcom Cosby starring Bill Cosby , which ran on CBS from 1996 to 2000 , was loosely based on this series .