

PENDULUM

The action of this tightly spun one-hour drama revolves around a woman who has touched bottom, who has a unique gift that is also her burden. People of all kinds, often in grave danger or in desperate need of truth or release, seek her out.

Galina Macrae (a.k.a. "Mac") is a middle-aged recovering alcoholic and drug addict who found her way to a tenuous sobriety by way of hypnosis. While undergoing this arduous, mind-altering process, Mac discovers rare footing in the realm of the subconscious, and with it, the uncanny ability to effectively put people under herself.

Week to week, representatives of all walks of life, confronting a crisis of one kind or another, find their way to Mac's dimly lit loft. Tense, probing, dialog-driven scenes eventually give way to the moment when each of Mac's visitors are placed under hypnosis. The viewer is abruptly launched, unbound by time and place, into their inner workings. Repressed memories, and elusive clues lead to the unseen crux of each client's life-and-death plight.

Although a grounded, street-wise lady and a skilled hypno-therapist, Mac is by no means a placid or elevated sage. She is a woman who struggles with her own combustible temperament as much as her newfound sobriety. She is guided by a compulsion to come to terms with her origins, and with her capacity for self-destruction. It is this drive that forces Mac to recognize each encounter as a reflection of her own demons- and each episode reveals a fresh glimpse into her complex, enigmatic back-story.

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The narrative structure of **PENDULUM** inhabits a similar terrain to where **"In Treatment"** might meet **"Inception"**. Meanwhile the *tone* of the show adds significantly to its authenticity and singular identity.

**PENDULUM** is framed by a stark urban setting and is largely rooted in Mac's POV, that of a confirmed loner, echoing classic films of the 70's like **"The Conversation"** and **"Taxi Driver"**. In keeping with these examples, the isolation experienced by both Mac and her visitors, is palpable. Meanwhile, the sound, the look, the feel of the world surrounding them is stunningly lush. This contrast, reminiscent of many paintings by Edward Hopper, can also be seen in the Hong Kong of Wong Kar Wai's **"In the Mood for Love"**.

The realism with which **PENDULUM** is captured, established both in Mac's sessions and in her environment on the street, is absolutely essential. This slice-of-life perspective forces the viewer to part with any suspension of disbelief, as each episode shifts into the metaphysical realm, and the human drama expands to include the psychological thriller poised beneath the surface.

The **world** of PENDULUM, and the majority of the screen time is dominated by the guest subject's tete-a-tete with Mac and the inward journey that follows. Therefore much of each episode is made up of its own secondary locations and supporting characters specific to that journey. There are however certain characters and defining story elements that appear on a consistent basis:

**MYRA:** A wise and peculiar Jamaican, specialized substance-abuse nurse in her late thirties. Mac was in Myra's care in a rehab clinic. She introduced Mac to hypnosis and remains her fast friend and ally. Myra acts as sponsor to Mac, as well as her confidante and frequent voice of reason.

**IRINHA SOLYONY-MCRAE:** Mac's Russian-born mother. She is a permanent patient in a nearby psychiatric facility. Mac's regular visits are often as disturbing as they are riveting. Irinha's complex, paranoid diatribes serve to illuminate the mystery of Mac's identity and the genesis of her gift.

**VARIOUS NEIGHBORHOOD FOLK:** Beyond Mac's little rent-controlled loft, the safe harbor of her contained, outer-borough neighborhood and the small ensemble that inhabits it, give the impression of *one single character*. Her immediate surroundings lend a solid frame and a personal context to the wide scope of the rest of the show. This subtle layer acts as a pitch-perfect, simple, even predictable anchor lending a sense of milieu, populated by colorful people:

~Mac's Hasidic landlord forever trying to wrap his head around what "illicit business" she's engaged in.

~Her Chinese-American photographer/neighbor is a single mom, always dropping her children in Mac's care without warning-- "...just ten minutes".

~The Sikh keeper of the corner newsstand bends the law and sells Mac single cigarettes, ever pitching her on his numerological breakthroughs that lead to his losing lottery tickets.

~Marina is the short-tempered Peruvian owner of the local old-school rice and beans joint, where she and Mac connect through their comically minimal interactions.

This neighborhood element keeps an essential part of the show rooted in a familiar, but dynamic setting that allows the central plot of each episode to be uncommonly far-reaching week-to-week without feeling off center.

## **EPISODES:**

~FREEMAN OF THE ESTATE

Ata, an African UN delegate experiences a radical shift in personality- a "spiritual rebirth" in the wake of witnessing genocide in his homeland. Ata's newfound "irrepressible happiness" brings him to the edge of homelessness. Mac is asked to help manage this dilemma with hypnosis, and when she does, new and frightening facets of Ata emerge.

~PILLOW TALK

Gary and Henrietta are an eccentric crack newspaper-editing, husband and wife team. They find their way to Mac when Gary's usual benign talking in his sleep, abruptly takes on a frightening intensity. Mac's intuition leads her to put them both under simultaneously, and ultimately to interpret Gary's cryptic nocturnal rants to be clairvoyant insights into the news the night before it happens.

~MAGIC

Maurice, a slippery, untrusting card-shark and magician is falling apart on account of chronic, splitting headaches that no physician has been able to cure. Through a Lynchian series of hypnosis sessions, Mac finds herself on the internal trail of what may prove to be a brutal murder.

~SNOW ON THE HIGH ROAD

Gabe, is a one-time Buddhist monk who lost his faith long ago following a bizarre incident in the jungle of Southeast Asia. Now, years later, he finds himself compulsively repeating a passage (...or message?) in Russian, over and over. In an attempt to exorcise this creepy phenomenon, and restore for Gabe a sense of peace, Mac discovers the he is on the receiving end of a "possession".

~THE FIGHTS

Nicky, a volatile and streetwise man with nowhere else to turn, comes to Mac after several incidents of finding himself "suicidally sleepwalking." Mac must navigate Nicky's layers of defenses and help him confront the cause of his life-threatening condition.

~A MILE ABOVE T' IEN

Huan Mei, heiress to an ever-expanding Chinese corporation, becomes stricken by a sudden and extreme case of acrophobia, or "vertigo". Led to Mac by Huan Mei's secret lover, Beatriz, a brazen Latina, together they explore the power of our unseen threshold for success, and the immense difficulty that arises with the prospect of breaking family tradition.

~ENCYCLOPEDIA DYSTOPIA

Glenn, a fiercely argumentative elderly university librarian finds himself suddenly having waking visions of the end of the world, and becomes obsessed with what they could mean. Mac induces several of these visions and leads us to what may be at the bottom of this unrest of Biblical proportions.

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These are examples within the spectrum of PENDULUM'S "A-story" driving each episode. Meanwhile, the "B-story" is the ever-present, slowly gathering puzzle of Mac's personal makeup, seen in flashes to her own life, mirroring each of her client's struggles as they unfold. Her parallel ongoing investigation into her mother's condition, slowly reveal her profoundly perplexing family history at the root of her own troubles.

The "C-story", framing all of this, is Mac's simple daily life. That of a recently sober woman coming to terms, season to season, with her unique perspective on a realm where the world within us meets the world before our eyes, and is ever-informed by the one just out of sight.