

WATCH: The Powerful Burt Reynolds Clip You've Probably Never Seen

As the world mourns the death of veteran actor Burt Reynolds, many are fondly looking back at the performer's sweeping, six-decade-long career. Reynolds, who was 82, inspired and entertained audiences for the majority of his life, playing roles in iconic films and TV shows like *Deliverance*, *Smokey and the Bandit* and *Evening Shade*.

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Among the many Hollywood actors and producers fondly remembering Reynolds' life and legacy is Pure Flix founder David A.R. White, a performer who got his start working alongside Reynolds on CBS' hit show *Evening Shade*, which ran from 1990-1994.

White took to social media on Thursday to release a heartfelt statement about Reynold's passing, dubbing the actor a true "legend."

"So sad to hear of the passing of the #legend and the man who gave me my start in Hollywood. I always appreciated his kindness to me, so glad I had the gift to see and work with him one last time as he played my father on 'Hitting the Breaks,'" White wrote on Instagram. "It was like my career came full circle. God Bless your loved ones."

Reynolds and White had recently reunited in 2016 for the original series *Hitting the Breaks*, with the two sitting down at the time for an on-camera, heart-to-heart discussion during which Reynolds revealed fascinating details about his career in Hollywood.

"I've had an amazing career in terms of the people I have met," Reynolds said, telling White that he entered the industry in 1958 when he signed a contract with Universal—a decision that forever changed his life.

Reynolds continued, "It was an incredible time for me. I don't quite understand my career, but I sure had a great time in my life and I was very lucky. Very lucky."

The actor also revealed that he was perhaps at his "happiest" while filming *Evening Shade*.

"It just was an amazing time for me. I wish that I could have done *Evening Shade* for 10 years. I really do," he said. "It was a wonderful time. I think the happiest I was were those years ... and the second happiest was *Gunsmoke*."

Watch Reynolds discuss his career:

At the end of the exchange, White expressed his thanks to Reynolds for giving him his start on "Evening Shade," saying he'd "be forever grateful."

White reflected these same sentiments and dove even deeper during an interview on Thursday night with Pure Flix Insider.

"I met [Reynolds] when I was 19," White said, noting that he landed the "Evening Shade" gig just six months after he arrived in Hollywood. "I went on that show ... as an extra and I stuck my own line in, and Burt was in the scene with me and he liked it."

The actor appreciated White's improvisation so much that he created a recurring role for him. What followed was nearly four years of success for White on a highly popular CBS program.

At the time, White was incredibly starstruck, as he had grown up in a strict Mennonite household and had, to that point, only seen one movie in a theater. He had, however, watched

Smokey and the Bandit and was more than familiar with Reynolds' work.

White said it was an honor simply to audition for Reynolds, and an even greater privilege to star alongside him, getting to know the legendary performer on a much deeper level.

"He really took me under his wing—from Day One," White said. "I would always look to Burt for approval in anything I did ... he was like a superhero to me ... he was just bigger than life."

Read Also: "Modern Family" vs. "Hitting the Breaks"

Reynolds' intense loyalty is also something that has stuck with White, as he observed how the actor would keep close friends around him, routinely and intentionally giving them work. Reynolds' deep value in friendship is something White has sought to replicate in his own life.

"He was so loyal to his friends, and that was the thing that stuck out to me," White said. "That he was still able to be with his friends and give them work."

White was elated to reunite with Reynolds for *Hitting the Breaks*, and continues to credit him with helping usher along his entrance into Hollywood.

"Hiring him and being able to write him an email saying what [he] meant to me ... I wanted to give back to him," White said, noting that Reynolds was gracious and appreciative of the chance to work with him on the project.

You can read more about Reynold's life and legacy [here](#).

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