



Paradise retained

THE TV spin-off gods are fickle beasts. For every Frasier, there must be a Joey. For every Better Call Saul, a Baywatch Nights. The good news for Death In Paradise fans is that Beyond Paradise is a winner. It tells the story of what happened to DI Humphrey Goodman (Kris Marshall) and café owner Martha Lloyd (Sally Bretton) after he proposed to her on the fictional murder-filled Caribbean Island of Saint Marie in series six.

The crime solving, romance and comedy has relocated to Devon and the fictional town of Shipton Abbott, but the sun is still shining and the DNA that has made its mothership show such a ratings winner is very much in place.

'The puzzles are very "south-westerly",' says Marshall, who knows the area well having once owned a self-catering business up the road from Looe, where the series is filmed.

'The crimes are uniquely of that area. The first episode has this haunted puzzle. We've got a family that just disappears off the face of the earth, an art theft which is like a caper, a man who is seemingly abducted by aliens found dead in the middle of a crop circle and an arsonist who is obsessed with the story of the Three Little Pigs.' Yup, sounds like a night out in Plymouth.

There is plenty happening with Humphrey and Martha. The path to true love is no longer impeded by a 4,100-mile expanse of land and sea. Instead, they



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KRIS MARSHALL AND SALLY BRETTON TELL PAUL SIMPER ABOUT THE RETURN OF DEATH IN PARADISE'S GREAT ROMANCE IN AN ALL-NEW DEVONIAN SETTING

find themselves almost too close for comfort crammed into the spare room of Martha's mother Anne's tiny cottage and having to deal with the sort of uncomfortable returns to the nest many may recall from lockdown.

'It's an interesting dynamic,' says Bretton, no stranger to comedy after starring with Lee Mack in Not Going Out. 'It's small and you're back home in the back bedroom.'

'There is that feeling of your grown-up self and your child self all in the same place at the same time. That's difficult to navigate. They are keen to support Anne and to set up this dream of Martha's [running her own café] where she grew up, so she wants to be there but nearby, not in the house. They are feeling crowded but also very grateful. It's all of it.'

One of the high points of the opening episode is a Sunday lunch shared by Anne (Barbara Flynn), Martha, Humphrey and Anne's slightly incontinent mother played by a scene-stealing Anne Lester. It was as hilarious to film as it is to watch.

'Anne was only there for that one scene,' says Marshall, 'but I found it hard to get through. It was the way she says, "Thank you!" after she's passed wind. To me it was just genius. There is also a wonderful look that Barbara does during the scene. If you looked up the hashtag #FML it would have a picture of that look.'

On a sadder note, this series has the last TV performance of Ruth Madoc, Hi-de-Hi's beloved Gladys Pugh, who died at the age of 79 after surgery for a fall last December.

'I grew up watching Hi-de-Hi with my family when I was young,' says Marshall. 'We used to light a fire and toast crumpets watching it, which does sound a bit twee but it's true. Ruth's relationship with the actor Simon Cadell was so integral to that show. It's a tragedy what happened but she is wonderful in this.'

Beyond Paradise starts on BBC One and is available on iPlayer on Friday