

BENNY FIX

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8 x 60' drama series. Contemporary. Main locations are London and 'Stowbay'. Timespan is several months (one year through to end of series three).

LOGLINE

Benny was the PR company man for a crisis. But ambition has the better of him. Now he's the problem, and seeking triple redemption.

STORY

Dashing, charming, obliging. What's not to like about BENNY PORTER (35)? His restless, debonair spirit sets the series tone. His resourceful desperation drives it.

Stowbay estuary. Benny is on a modest boat, doing art gallery business by phone. A child falls from a passing luxury yacht. Screams for Mikey. Benny leaps into action, saving Mikey from drowning. Back on his boat Benny makes another rescue, searching for his phone. It splashes into the bilge, lighting up as he grabs it. Exhausted, Benny gazes at the home screen - at a smiley woman and girl.

Little Mikey's grateful father ANTON (30) hosts Benny on his yacht. He's panicky. He fears media gossip of negligence, and the wrath of his own father DMITRI (70), a self-made hotels tycoon. "The old lion dotes on Mikey. I'll never hear the end of it." Benny uses his PR skills, steering Anton into pre-emptive action.

Dmitri owns Stowbay Football Club, just promoted to the Premier League. He's put Anton in charge to test him, away from his playboy friends. Visiting, Benny silences fire-brand football agent 'Gobbo' with improvised persuasion. Anton sorely needs Benny as "PR guy, fixer, whatever. And keep the lion off my back." Dmitri needs him too, as 'eyes and ears' on Anton, and with other dynasty challenges.

Benny resists the poisoned chalice. Says he's too busy in London with the gallery, and he's no fan of football. But his situation is precarious.

His boat is a secret refuge. Not secret enough. He sees off a debt-collector with assurances of profitable deals in play. He's bought the boat from his parents to help with their retirement plans, intending a quick renovation and sale. He observes his parents with dutiful bemusement. His dour father snubs him. His queen-bee mother fusses about his split from ALICE (35) and daughter DAISY (10).

Dashing, charming, obliging? Spirited Alice might say Benny is stubborn and frustrating too. An enigma, driven by high hopes and demons. Just too distracted from proper family life. So she's returned from London to hometown Stowbay, taking Daisy with her.

Alice now works at Sophie Fashions shop while setting up again in graphic design. She and Daisy have the flat above. Benny visits, though Alice is resolved about their separation, unless Benny curbs his business ambitions. But he's in too deep and his pride is at stake. He assures he'll come good soon.

Their back story teases out. Benny was the 'go to' guy at a top PR firm. But endless commitments and "sorry, sorry" apologies drove Alice to despair. So he abandoned his career. With his new-found freedom he opened Alice Gallery for her to run. But against her advice he bought modern art on impulse, a crazy spree. And speculated with other enterprises too. More "sorry, sorry" distractions than ever.

In London, Benny's despairing accountant warns he's on borrowed time - a brilliant company man but a novice at hands-on business. He's 'bet the house' and headed for ruin. And how could he have lost delightful Alice and Daisy? Benny blithely

assures things will work out. But he's rattled. He's obliged to accept the Dmitri dynasty poisoned chalice.

Dmitri needs to secure his legacy. Eldest son Nikolas is elusive, expanding the hotels empire in the Far East. Dmitri suspects he's gay, and plotting a takeover of the football club. Headstrong Anton neglects family duty and is entangled in a corrupt YuBet sponsor deal. Dmitri's hopes rest on little Mikey. Meanwhile he fears scandal from secret love-child Cass. Recovering from scuba-diving brain-damage, she has incriminating tales to tell of Dmitri, her mother and a Greek police inspector's murder investigation. Dmitri's smiley physio is a lurking hitman.

Dmitri entertains mistresses on his classic schooner yacht. A bad example to Anton, but at least he's discrete. Poised dynasty matriarch MAUDE (55) gains payback for her tolerance with an expanding nature reserve. Her great passion.

Benny relishes the dynasty challenges to his skills, while resenting the demands on his time. He plays improvising puppet-master, deft or audacious as required.

Women are drawn to Benny. He's an attentive listener, key to his PR success. Too distracted to initiate affairs, but capable of 'politely obliging'. He's wary of Anton's frustrated ex girl-band wife GISELLE (30) and Alice's needy boss SOPHIE (40).

Alice shares surprised intimacy with voluptuous Sophie. She admits guilt about leaving Benny. They were teen sweethearts. She believes he's forever haunted by his parents' tensions. And maybe she's been too much a reminder of a youthful folly that estranged his father. She witnessed Benny's desperate, impulsive act of fraud. Maybe he's dodging demons by keeping relentlessly busy. Addicted to living on the edge, understanding others while still a mystery to himself.

Alice's lingering concern for the gallery gives Benny hope for reunion - if he can run it sensibly. But he loses key paintings to a 'private viewing' scam and is determined to track them down. He spies a dusty Renaissance portrait in a modest private collection. A 'lost masterpiece' Vinticelli? It could bring financial salvation and sweet revenge on the art world. But concerted attempts to obtain it at bargain price are frustrated. And the art crime underworld gets wise.

Daisy is a cheerful, coping go-between, growing up fast. She admires Alice's resilience, while enthusing with Benny on visits to his dicey projects - Chateaux Mirande conference development and Classic Cars e-Born among others.

Benny shares hopes and fears with confidantes. Tenderly so with Daisy. Tactically so with Maude. Tantalisingly so with private soul STEFFA (40), Anton's Olympian yacht skipper. She helped save little Mikey from drowning. She encourages Benny's attentions, while only letting him go so far. Abused by a sailing mentor in her teens, she's secretly set on lethal vengeance. Anton's jealous lust for Steffa puts him in peril too.

Daisy discovers Benny's boat, and something inside that deeply compromises his father. It helps mitigate Benny's fraud shame. Alice is attracted to an RAF pilot recovering from combat stress. Daisy admires him but her resilience snaps over divided loyalties. She runs away. Benny and Alice are brought together in dismay, while Daisy finds sanctuary with Steffa.

Benny attempts a candle-lit reunion with Alice on his boat. Anton disrupts in high alarm. Little Mikey has vanished. Benny is pulled deeper into dynasty turmoil. He fears losing Alice forever.

(Series Two reveals Dmitri as the instigator of Mikey's abduction. A harsh scare tactic on Anton and Giselle to enforce better security. And indicator of Mikey's legacy value to Dmitri.)