



PHOEBE WALLER-BRIDGE AS  
FLEABAG: WELL IT'S MARGINALLY  
BETTER THAN RATBAG

TELEVISION

## TUNE IN TO BRITAIN'S ANSWER TO *GIRLS*

**BBC3's new series *Fleabag* is a proverbial comfort blanket to the car crash many of us call our 20s**

It's 2am on a Tuesday night in London, 2016. After a call from a fling asking to come over, a woman in her late 20s has spent the last hour constructing the façade that she didn't spend the evening alone, in bed with her laptop. She shaves, gets dressed, applies make-up, and downs half a bottle of wine. He arrives. They have sex. "After some pretty standard bouncing," she explains, "you realise he's edging towards your a\*\*hole. But you're drunk and he made the effort to come all the way over here so you let him. And he's thrilled."

This is the raucously funny yet achingly inappropriate world of *Fleabag*, your new anti-heroine and the star of BBC3's new eponymous six-part series, hailed as the British answer to Lena Dunham's *Girls*. Written

by 31-year-old Phoebe Waller-Bridge (the lead character's name is based on her childhood nickname), who also wrote and starred in Channel 4's hit sitcom *Crashing* and appeared in the second series of *Broadchurch*, it's a peek into the searingly honest, often rude, often unlikeable mind of a semi-single, skint, dry-witted, cafe-owning feminist who watches porn and masturbates over Barack Obama on the news.

Born out of Waller-Bridge's critically acclaimed, Olivier-nominated one-woman show of the same name, the series boasts a dream cast, with *Outlander*'s Bill Patterson as her widowed father, and fellow *Broadchurch* alumna Olivia Colman as her curt new stepmother.

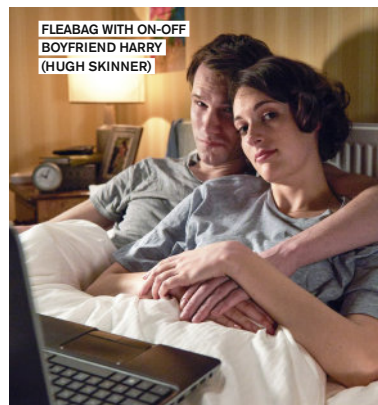
### DARK COMEDY

While it won't be to everyone's taste, *Stylist* couldn't help relating to *Fleabag* and the almost imperceptible undercurrent grounding the gags. Besides seeing the funny side of the

calamity that sex and dating, family and friendships can bring, it also reveals what those relationships sometimes can't fix – loneliness. Grief. And holes in hearts that are patched up with little more than bravado.

Most of all, it feels fitting that *Fleabag* is only available on the BBC's online channel – because it's undoubtedly the only sitcom that will make you feel wholly validated watching it in bed, wearing an ex's T-shirt while swigging questionable white wine from a mug. And if that's not something to celebrate, we're not sure what is.

Episode one of *Fleabag* is available on BBC3 from 21 July at 10am



FLEABAG WITH ON-OFF  
BOYFRIEND HARRY  
(HUGH SKINNER)

### DRINK

## Upgrade your hydration

### CACTUS WATER



**£1.69 for 330ml, True Nopal (boots.com)**  
The latest trend from LA, this is packed with antioxidants and rumoured to cure a hangover's dry mouth and

nausea. Made with prickly pear puree (which grow on cacti) then blended with filtered water and natural flavourings, a *Stylist* staffer described it as tasting like "weak pineapple juice". Not unpleasant, but not enough to rival the trusty old tap.

### BAMBOO WATER



**£2.17 for 250ml, Sibberi (vitaminbay.com)**  
Having already introduced birch water to the UK market last year, Sibberi have now added bamboo water to their fold.

Bamboo can't be tapped like a tree as you would for birch water, so the cane is pressed to release its juice. It contains high levels of silica, which helps support healthy skin, hair and nails, so is being tipped as a natural anti-ager. It's refreshing, with a slight green tea flavour.

### MAPLE WATER



**£2.50 for 250ml, Drink Maple (planetorganic.com)**

Essentially maple sap – the clear liquid that flows naturally through maple trees – maple water is refreshing, sweet and a whole lot lower in sugar than maple syrup (although not quite so good on pancakes). It contains 46 different nutrients, including calcium, malic acid to help fight tiredness and more manganese than a cup of kale.