



The Beiderbecke Affair (BFI TV Classics)

William Gallagher

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With as little plot as its creator Alan Plater could get away with and as much jazz as he could manage, the 1985 television drama *The Beiderbecke Affair* had a far-reaching impact, inspiring sequels, novels, albums and even jazz tours. Much like its Bix Beiderbecke-style soundtrack, Plater's quietly joyous drama was unconventional, free: its narrative following the lives and relationships of its leading characters – teachers-turned-amateur detectives Trevor Chaplin (James Bolam) and Jill Swinburne (Barbara Flynn) – with a gentle, whimsical humour.

William Gallagher's illuminating study is the first critical account of this much-loved series. Drawing on interviews with cast members and musicians, the production team and Yorkshire TV executives, as well as on insights from Plater himself, Gallagher explores *Beiderbecke*'s origins in Plater's 1981 tv drama *Get Lost!* before moving on to an in-depth analysis of the series itself, to reveal why such an unassuming series remains one of the best-loved examples of British television drama.

The book also includes a previously unpublished BBC Radio 4 short story featuring the character of Jill Swinburne, 'A Brief Encounter with Richard Wagner'.

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