THE RIG Series One

Anything but boring

★★★★☆

UK/US **Prime Video, 6 January**

Creator **David Macpherson**

Cast **Martin Compston, Mark Bonnar, Rochenda Sandall, Owen Teale**

EPISODES 1.01-1.06 **Given the number** of *Line Of Duty* alumni here (Martin Compston! Mark Bonnar! Rochenda Sandall! Owen Teale!) – and its gritty, greasy, *Vigil*-like setting, you'd be forgiven – certainly for the first half hour at least – for thinking that *The Rig* has Jed Mercurio's fingerprints all over it.

But as the plot settles in, it becomes clear that writer David Macpherson's creative reference points are more horror than white-knuckle TV thriller, and by its end *The Rig* feels more like some lost John Carpenter movie. Or John Carpenter if he came from Aberdeenshire, anyway.

It's amazing, really, that British TV has waited this long to set a big-time drama on an oil rig. With all those workers living on top of each other in such an intense pressure cooker environment, it'd be dramatic enough even without the added layer of the end of life on Earth as we know it – yes, you can't accuse Macpherson of low-stakes drama here. What looks, at the beginning of the series, like a deadly but localised threat ends up being as apocalyptic as a Russell T Davies *Doctor Who* season finale.

“Its reference points are more horror than white-knuckle TV thriller”

“Oh god... pretty sure I left the oven on.”

“We know more about the surface of the moon than we do the bottom of the ocean,” says Kinloch Bravo's improbably wise chef, and it appears that's true. Macpherson's central idea feels like something Nigel Kneale might have come up with, except given an extra 21st century environmental punch.

It's a shame that Amazon announced a second series before this one even started, meaning that we know not to expect a full stop here. The finale points to a massive expansion of the story. But *The Rig* works because of its one-location focus; is series two destined to be a common or garden end-of-the-world drama? Time will tell. **Steve O'Brien**

The Rig was shot at FirstStage Studios in Leith. Formerly a wave power plant, it was co-founded by Jason Connery.