

coverstory

BY GEORGE DICKIE



Bob Odenkirk
and Rhea Seehorn

Jimmy's transition to Saul picks up steam as **'Better Call Saul'** opens penultimate season

It's been one of the great questions since "Better Call Saul" premiered in 2015: When will Bob Odenkirk's con artist-turned-small-time Albuquerque lawyer Jimmy McGill make the transition to criminal-for-hire Saul Goodman from "Breaking Bad"?

And the answer is: It starts in Season 5 and ends with a series-concluding Season 6. This according to the producers of the AMC drama.

Kicking off with a two-night premiere event Sunday and Monday, Feb. 23-24, the 10-episode fifth season of the "Breaking Bad" prequel finds Jimmy's decision to practice law as "Saul Goodman" – a play on the phrase "It's all good, man" – creating unexpected and profound waves of change for those in his orbit, including fellow lawyer, girlfriend and confidante Kim (Rhea Seehorn), private investigator and cleaner Mike (Jonathan Banks), law-firm partner Howard (Patrick Fabian) and meth distributor Gus (Giancarlo Esposito).

That's about all the information available about the upcoming season, though Odenkirk did admit to a recent gathering of journalists in Pasadena, Calif., "I do feel like we go faster in Season 5. More happens, it's a bigger season. ... The snowball is coming down the mountain and breaking up."

Adds co-creator and showrunner Peter Gould, "During the breaking of Season 5 ... I think the fog started to lift a little bit," he says. "The headlights started to reach that much further down the road. We started to see where we think it ends, and I have to say none of it is what I would've expected when we started. So, I'll leave it at that ... But the end of it, I think, when this season is over, I think you'll have a better understanding of kind of where this is all going."

One thing that is certain about Season 5 is the romance between Jimmy and Kim will continue and intensify. A scene early in Season 5 teases what may happen in that relationship, showing two people who are clearly in love standing in a kitchen and bantering.

"A lot of people ask, 'What does Kim see in Jimmy?'" Odenkirk says. "And a scene like that tells you a lot about the two of them just liking each other, liking hanging out together."

"And what he brings out in her," Seehorn adds, "... Kim is witty and they have witty repartee often, but she's not a performer the way he is, and so it is nerve-racking for her to be vulnerable in that moment. If you've ever tried to be funny in front of someone that's very funny, then it can be very vulnerable. And she tries, and he sees her trying, and I think that it is ... a scene about being in love with each other."

"Better Call Saul" goes into production this month for Season 6, which will air in 2021.

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