

IMAGINATION FOR HIRE PRESENTS



NECROPHYTE

LIMITED SERIES



Six Days to Redemption

Mayor James Riley, like most of the wealthy 1% in his city, thinks the local zombie epidemic is an urban myth, but when a spirited young activist orchestrates an attack that gets Riley bitten, he's left with just six days to save himself from the debilitating zombie disease, and to save his crumbling city from the diseased hoards, all while fighting his ever growing hunger for flesh.



A six part
modern
gothic
crime
thriller

Set in a gritty city, crumbling under the weight of poverty and the apathy of the wealthy, Necrophyte follows the path of its most powerful citizen, Riley, and its gutsiest homeless teenager, Chase, whose fates are woven together by a zombie bite.

Chase, while pushing her own agenda to expose the ignored hoards of downtrodden diseased, puts Riley on the path to uncovering the truth behind the city's dirtiest secret. But as each new day brings with it strange urges, blackouts, psychotropic visions and fits of uncontrollable aggression, Riley is rapidly running out of time.

Necrophyte is a character driven drama with the intrigue of a crime thriller, that combines the potent fear of debilitating disease with our childlike fear of creatures lurking in the darkness.



World The



Necrophyte takes place in a city whose heyday of prosperity has long passed. With wealth no longer coming from the industries upon which the city was founded, its once beautiful structures and hubs of life are left to decay, and its poor are left to face the same fate. A huge wealth gap puts a privileged few in shimmering security blocks, supposed symbols of the city's new prosperity, but in which only the wealthiest can afford to live. Beautiful but long abandoned buildings contain any form of life that will find safety within their crumbling walls. Streets ignored by the police become stages for underground activity. If this weren't frightening enough, hoards of the city's downtrodden, suffering from an uncontrollable zombie-like disease, walk the streets each night searching for healthy people to taste. Far more dreadful than the fear of encountering one of these zombies, is the thought of becoming one.



Necrophyte combines our fear of what lurks in the shadows of our everyday urban lives, and our deep seated fear of losing hold of what makes human.

As the events of the story unfold, our characters will discover that both of these horrors were, in fact, their own creations.



"The Morning After"

Episode 1

Sunrise in a city full of once elegant but now crumbling structures, where a few glittering towers, testaments to modern wealth, throw shadows over streets littered with shanty towns. Behind one of those floor to ceiling glass windows high above, lies James Riley. After awakening from a sweat soaked nightmare, he goes about getting into his usual designer attire. There's just one thing disrupting his routine this morning, the gruesome, human-shaped bite, deep into the flesh of his forearm. He's going to have to keep that well hidden, his reputation as the always calm and controlled Mayor relies on it.

Despite his staff being alarmed by the Mayor's less than stellar appearance that morning, it's not long before Riley is diving straight into the business of the day. First up, how he will respond to the young protesters hounding his public appearances and demanding his admittance that the zombie epidemic is real. Riley throws the "believers" a bone by agreeing to meet with Joe Zeffer, head of the controversial anti-zombie lobby. Behind closed doors, he is much more interested in getting the scoop on the protester's leader, a high spirited 15 year old girl named Chase. Leaving that task to Dean, his in-house council and long term friend, Riley tries to continue on with his work and keep up appearances, while ignoring the psychotropic visions that appear every time he closes his eyes.

Meanwhile, Chase gets a rude awakening as a building next to her squat is demolished in the name of progress. With yesterday's protest seeming to have little effect on the Mayor and his continued support of private developers taking over what little housing is left for the poor, her friends are starting to lose hope. But Chase knows something about the Mayor that they don't, something she assures them will change everything in time. What exactly happened last night when Chase spotted Mayor Riley chasing tail at a seedy nightclub? And why won't she reveal her secret to her friends?



As another day in the city ticks away, Chase and her friends go about the task of finding enough food to keep them going, while Riley begrudgingly takes his meeting with Joe Zeffer. Appearing nothing short of zealous, Zeffer takes advantage of this opportunity, not to hound the Mayor for support, but to pose questions about the city's rising number of murders and missing persons. Riley leaves the office convinced of nothing more than Joe Zeffer's insanity.



Shaking off the odd events of the day, Riley heads to his obligated dinner with Dean and his wife Sasha. Finding out that Sasha, an emergency room nurse, is about to start shifts at a hospital frequented by zombie bite victims, Riley is willing to admit for the first time that the stories just might be true. Despite being finally relaxed amongst friends, Riley's nightmare visions soon return. Dismissing his abrupt reactions to the disturbing illusions as a lack of sleep, he rushes home.



That night, as Chase silently contemplates her next move, Riley attempts to sleep away his fear, but memories soon flood back to him. Chase was there, the moment he was bitten, and she shared this warning; "Six days. That's all you have left. I hope you know how to use them." Those were words he could ignore until the moment he woke up with his teeth sunk into a raw steak.



The clock is ticking.



RILEY



Mayor James Riley is a self made man and proud of it. Riley (as most of his friends call him) through force of personality as much as hard work, made his way up the political ladder, from corporate defender to progress pushing politician. Riley is the friend you don't want to admit that you like, but that you want to invite to every party. He's smooth, smart, always in command of the room, and charmingly full of himself, a total guilty pleasure. He's the kind of man that says what everyone else was thinking, but was too afraid to say out loud. It's admirable... and aggravating.

His current plans don't involve much more than holding his office long enough for it to benefit his next career move. After all, he knows his city is well past its prime, though that's the one thing he would never say out loud.

When confronted with his greatest fear, a slow debilitating loss of control, Riley's facade wavers between thickening and cracking. His desperate search for a cure will force him to confront a myriad of wrongs that his own privilege and complaisance made possible. Riley's arc is one of redemption. In order to find his cure, he must seek out help, admit to his wrongdoings, and do everything that he can to heal his broken city.

Chastity "Chase" Christensen will probably deck you if you call her Chastity. She's left that name and every hint of her roots in the upper crust Christensen family behind. She was always sure there was a less trifle, less self important way of life out there, and started seeking it out from a very early age by regularly running away. The last time was for keeps. Now, with over a year of street smarts under her belt, she's found friends amongst the city's young down and outs and encouraged their activist spirits.

Chase is gutsy, outspoken, doggedly stubborn, and smarter than she lets on. Driven by emotion before thought, she's both brave and impulsive to a fault. Though tiny, her emotional fits also provide her with surprising physical strength. It makes her a great asset to her friends in their near daily defence against the zombie hords, but great liability when it comes to dealing with the uninfected human population.

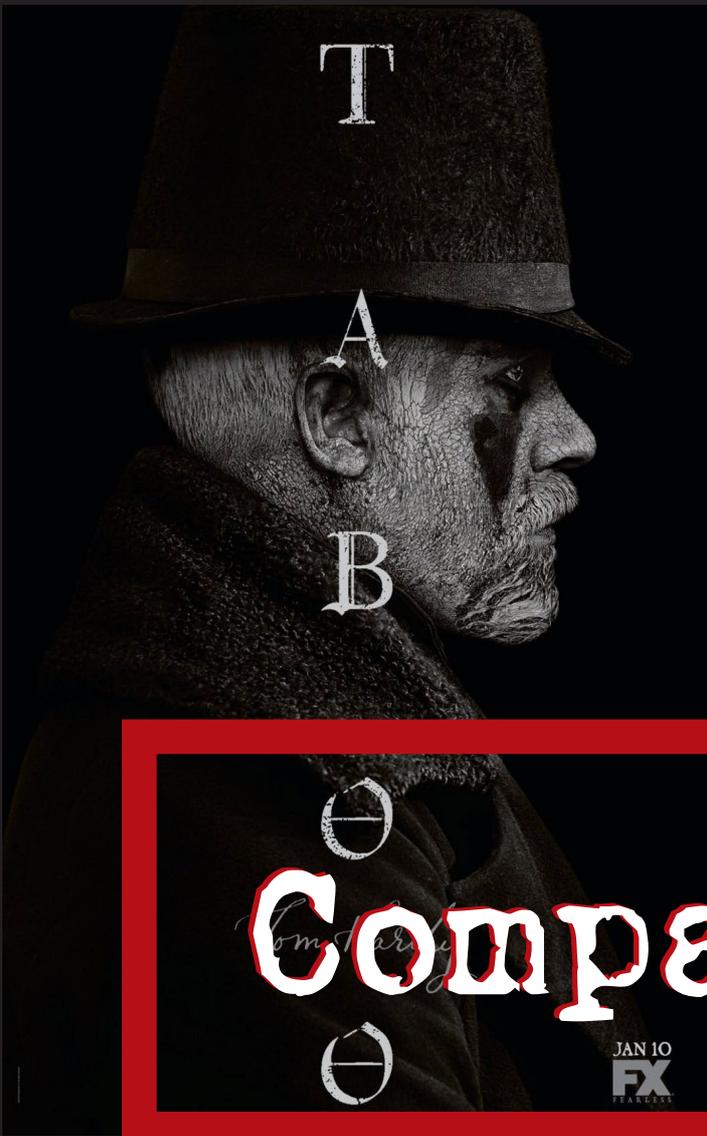
She has a grand plan in mind at all times, but doesn't always think about the immediate consequences of each action. It's through this impulsiveness, that Chase may finally force a change for the good, even if it comes with some unplanned sacrifices.

Chase is a character with enviable qualities that come along with her flaws. She will have to learn to look further, to dig deeper, and to see the human side of everything, even her greatest enemy, Riley.



CHASE





Necrophyte takes place in a dark setting, that feels as if it exists in isolation from the rest of the world, and has the power to determine the fate of those within it.

Our characters will find those fates tied together through a drama that reveals long kept secrets, hidden crimes, and haunting mysteries as it unfolds.



The Story Continues

Episode 2 "Denial"

Chase makes her next move before dawn that morning, leaving a note at Riley's door inviting him to a secret meeting that night. Riley attempts to exercise away his ailments, but his visions have become more disturbing and even harder to explain. How can he be seeing vicious zombie attacks as if he was one of the monsters in the hoard?

Chase returns to her precious squat house just in time to save her friends from yet another zombie attack. Her incomparable marksmanship can bring any zombie to a swift end. Meanwhile, Riley discovers that Chase is the missing daughter of the Christensen's, local pharmaceutical moguls, and that their company, Torpyd Pharmaceutical, is reportedly looking into a cure for a disease they still won't publicly admit is "zombieism."

Chase helps her friends clean up after the attack, not hesitating to take on the task of burning the bodies. Her friends begin to wonder about her cryptic behaviour which began that night at the club. What is she hiding? Riley meets with Chase's family but his probes into both their pharmaceutical operations as well as their continued search for their daughter, yield closed doors and very few answers.

As night arrives, Riley and Chase finally confront each other again. She demands he go public with his condition to once and for all confirm the zombie myth, but he's not yet convinced he will turn. In an effort to show him how prevalent the zombie hoards really are, she takes him to a place where he can observe another gruesome attack. But when Riley suddenly finds himself seeing and feeling the zombie attack as if he was one of them, Chase is forced to take him out of commission.



Episode 3 "Bargaining"

Riley wakes up with a headache befitting the hit from the rifle butt Chase administered last night. Chase sticks around only long enough to tell Riley about his sudden and uncontrollable zombie-like behaviour. She's convinced he's beyond hope and that it doesn't matter whether he goes public or not, time will reveal the truth regardless. As she leaves him to his fate, she fails to notice that one of her friends is watching them.

Finally admitting to himself that he does need help, Riley turns to Sasha and her medical knowledge. After forcing the full truth out of him, she agrees to do whatever she can to help, and to keep his secret. With plans to meet Sasha at the hospital that night, Riley attempts to get through another day, but it's not going to be easy with the press hounding him. Riley's support of private developers has spurred public criticism. Todd Everton, the local rag's most infamous muckraker, is determined to get the full story.

Meanwhile, Chase arrives at her squat to a barrage of questions. What is she doing with the Mayor. What really happened that night at the club? When accused of having let zombies into the club, risking the lives her friends and other innocents, just to make a point to the Mayor, Chase takes off. As she wanders the streets alone, Riley holes up in his office fighting, once again, against his horrid visions.

As night arrives, Sasha is able to offer Riley some hope, a treatment used on the worst bitten victims that come through the hospital, a shot of pure adrenaline. Once she administers this supposed cure, Riley instantly feels like a new man, and starts to believe that this horrible nightmare will soon be behind him.

It's not long before Chase gets picked up by the police and, as requested, the first call they make is to Mayor Riley. In their closed door meeting, which Riley is sure will be their last, he makes it clear he will reveal nothing about the zombies and will soon be healed himself. Before he can leave, Chase drops one last piece of information; "There's a reason you find more of them by the river. If you care about this city at all, you'll do everything you can to find out why." But Riley is still too relieved to let her words resonate for long. He pulls away from the juvenile detention centre, unaware that Todd Everton is sitting nearby in his idling car, photographing Riley's every move.

Episode 4 "The Pit"

Chase's forced homecoming is met with a lukewarm and well practiced reception from her parents. With her father proudly announcing that her room is exactly as she left it, she chooses to retreat into it and hide from the world. By contrast, Riley's morning couldn't be better. With renewed energy and health, he confidently strides through the gauntlet of reporters haranguing him for a comment about his upcoming meeting with the CEO of Cornerstone, the city's biggest private property developer.

Chase is awoken by a familiar sound, the whistle for shift change at her parent's pharmaceutical plant, just across the grounds. Sneaking out the window, Chase stealthily makes her way onto the property. Her destination, to secretly meet one of the plant's lead chemists and her dear friend, JoJak.

At Riley's meeting with Cornerstone he assuages every doubt, strokes every ego and masterfully talks his way into a marginally legal slice of the pie. Nothing is left but the handshake to seal the deal, but the touch of skin awakes the budding monster inside of him. Though only a matter of minutes, Riley's relapse into animal like behaviour is enough to send the CEO of Cornerstone running, and force Riley back into isolation.

Meanwhile, as Chase and JoJak reunite over burgers, Chase pries into the activities at the plant, asking if she can get another tour for old time sake. JoJak seems more than a little spooked when she says security is just too tight there now. As Chase is about to grill her for more information, the Christensen's driver shows up to escort Chase home. Back at City Hall, Dean digs deeper into Torpyd Pharmaceutical and what seems like a well cloaked history of human trials.

Riley escapes to his penthouse, where Sasha attempts to administer another shot as he struggles with lapses of consciousness. When the adrenaline doesn't work, she manages to save him from the brink with a guesstimated mix of dopamine, serotonin and oxytocin, chemicals which not only bring him back, but replace his nightmare visions with beautiful memories from his past. But why?

Determined to know what's really happening in the plant, Chase makes a bold move and, using her finely honed street skills, breaks into Torpyd Pharmaceutical. After a long night of approaching locked doors and empty rooms at every turn, the hint of groans and screams in the distance leads her to a horrific discovery; a locked, windowless chamber, filled to the brim with ravenous zombies.

Episode 5 "Acceptance"

Driven by the renewed hope from yesterday's treatment, Riley leaves before sunrise to begin his search for answers. Heading to Police Headquarters, he ploughs through missing persons and unsolved murder reports. Making a city map, the pattern becomes more than obvious; it all starts on the riverbanks. Riley's next stop, Joe Zeffer's office, with Todd Everton trailing not too far behind.

Riley's appearance at Zeffer's door takes his staffers by surprise, but not Zeffer. He reveals that Riley's predecessor denied all requests for testing of the city river's water quality, stating that it was an unnecessary expense for just a spillway. But did his predecessor's denial have anything to do with his connections to Torpyd Pharmaceuticals and the fact that their plant is upriver from the city centre?

Chase, having hidden in JoJak's car, confronts her about their stash of zombie prisoners. JoJak defends their methodologies, saying they needed test subjects, that it was the only way to know if their drugs might work. JoJak reveals what they've discovered; that the zombie hoards are not animated corpses, but living humans suffering from a brain disease that traps them into a walking coma, and that given high doses of chemicals found naturally in the human body, the personalities trapped inside the zombie forms will start to emerge. Finally realising what the Mayor is about to become, Chase takes off, determined to reveal what she knows before it's too late.

Riley returns to City Hall only to be confronted by Todd Everton and his photos of Riley's mysterious activity of the last few days. Todd's questions pry at the core of Riley's search. Was it Chastity Christensen he was seeing at Juvenile Hall, and what did he have to do with her mysterious reappearance? Who was the woman who drove him home from City Hall after the cryptic end to his meeting with the director of Cornerstone and what were they doing behind closed doors during the hours spent in his penthouse? And what was this morning's back door meeting with Joe Zeffer about?

Riley cuts off their meeting only to be confronted by one of Chase's friends with some information to share. Willing to chance meeting Chase with the hopes that it will reveal more about Torpyd Pharmaceutical. He sneaks out of City Hall undetected. Finding Chase in the abandoned nightclub where all his zombie trouble started, she finally reveals all. Her knowledge of the epidemic dates back to the start of her parents' secret search for a cure. But her reason for running away?... the discovery that leakage from the pharmaceutical plant into the river was the cause of the epidemic. When her parents refused to come clean, Chase turned to her own brand of vigilante justice. She admits that it went too far the moment she unlocked the back door of the nightclub so that the Mayor would get a first hand look at a real zombie attack.

The emotional weight of this reveal, awakens the monster inside Riley. Faced with the danger of being bitten, Chase takes him out with a solid hit to the head. In his drifting state of consciousness, Riley manages to pull out his phone, and utter Sasha's name. Riley awakes to find himself saved by Sasha, but the last dose of chemicals is just keeping him on the edge of consciousness. Riley is going to need a super dose of chemicals, and the help of more allies, if he is going to make it through another day. It's time to gather his team and go public.

Sunrise on day 6. "I don't know how much longer I have but I know it's enough time to make things right. That's why you're here." Riley and Chase sit in his office, Todd Everton sitting across from them, having recorded every word of their story thus far. His next question; "So what are you going to do today?"

Episode 6 "The Future"

How will Riley and his team expose Torpyd Pharmaceutical? Have their chemists managed to find a cure? How will Chase reconnect with her friends from the squat and are they still safe from the zombie hordes? Will Riley allow the city to be bought up by Cornerstone? What will happen when his story goes public? Can they get the epidemic under control before it's too late? Will Riley make it past day six?

Dean Sampson

Riley's in-house council who also happens to be his best friend, right hand man and long term confidant. Their relationship started with the boys club style bond they established as competitors in law school and hasn't changed since. He may not be consciously aware of it, but Dean is attached to this reminder of days past, and very willing to overlook Riley's less than moral attributes in order to hold onto this vestige of his youth. Under the surface they are still competing to be the head of the class.

Sasha Sampson

Genuinely honest, self sacrificing, hard working and no nonsense. Her qualities make her an ideal nurse. It would seem her bond with Dean is based on the attraction of total opposites, but having always been excited by a challenge, she's actually quite attracted to the one she faces in their relationship, a challenge which Riley also presents in spades.

The Squat Crew

A mix of teenagers from all walks of life with one thing in common; they've all been forcibly ejected from "normal" society. Armed with the energy of youth, and an undercurrent of anger, they approach life with the exuberance that only teenagers with something to prove can muster. It was only after connecting with them that Chase found a place she could finally call home.



SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Joe Zeffer

Doesn't notice when he's acting "crazy" or care that anyone ever thinks he is. As far as he's concerned, the fate of the world rests on his shoulders. Getting his message to the people and unravelling the mystery behind the growing zombie hoards is his all consuming mission.



Todd Everton

Never trusted Mayor Riley. Who voted that crook into office anyway? He's hounded him since his last and most controversial win as a lawyer, and pops up every once in a while to do it again. He's sure that one of these days Riley will slip up and he will be there to do the story unequivocal journalistic justice. One big story might also finally get him hired at an international publication. That certainly helps his motivation.

Writer Margaret M. MacDonald



Having lived and worked in Los Angeles, New York and Sydney, my twenty years of experience spans several roles in filmmaking and the arts. A background in production design has helped me to hone a uniquely visual voice, which conveys a tangible sense of place, inviting readers into the story world.

My body of written work includes twelve features, three series and a novel trilogy. I have written on spec, on assignment, and adapted my own material to suit production and publication. I have also directed three short films and am working toward directing my first feature. I've been lucky enough to earn a few laurels along the way, and hope to earn more in the future.

I love telling stories that are character driven, and enjoy the challenge of infusing them with a mix of genres and a twist of the fantastic. I am passionate about creating films which transport people into other worlds, and help to make this one a little more extraordinary.



**Thank
You**

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