**The Escape Artist**

**International Synopses**

**Episode One**

Will Burton is a junior criminal defence barrister who specialises in spiriting people out of tight legal corners, hence his nickname – The Escape Artist. Will is in high demand, as he has never lost a case, much to the chagrin of his courtroom nemesis, Maggie Gardner. He works by the simple mantra that everyone deserves a defence, allowing his genius to blossom without being impeded by conscience.

Before leaving for a short break in the country with his wife Kate and their son Jamie, Will is handed a brief. Thanks to Will’s spotless track record, he has been asked for personally. The case is a murder of a young woman and looking through the brief, Will is horrified by the brutality of the crime.

When Will first meets the defendant, Liam Foyle, he cuts a sinister figure: psychologically invasive and physically imposing. The trial begins and despite a shaky start, Will successfully dismantles the prosecution’s main evidence: the judge is forced to acquit Foyle on a technicality. As Will leaves the courtroom, Foyle thanks him and reaches out his hand but Will refuses to shake it. Will is tortured by what he’s just done; there’s a significant part of him that feels Foyle was guilty.

Although Foyle has just walked free, he is a serial killer. His next victim is only a matter of time. And, sure enough, he kills again. Riled by Will’s courtroom snub, he’s hungry for revenge and goes for Will’s Achilles heel: Kate. He tracks down pregnant Kate at their country cottage and brutally kills her. As Will discovers her murdered body he catches sight of Foyle in the window.

Will is utterly destroyed. The legal process begins. Foyle is back in the dock and Will’s courtroom nemesis, Maggie Gardner, is leading his defence. After years in Will’s shadow, Maggie is out to prove a point and Will’s mantra that everyone deserves a defence comes back to haunt him.

With no meaningful physical evidence, Will’s chambers need all the help they can get to guarantee Foyle’s prosecution. But their most brilliant legal brain is unable to help: as the lead witness, Will is not allowed anywhere near the trial preparation and if discovered to be involved, could risk a mistrial.

While Foyle continues to terrorise those close to Will, Maggie ignores her instincts about him and is determined to let Foyle free again.

**Episode Two**

Maggie and Will go to even greater lengths to win the case, finding themselves ever closer to the dangerous and cunning Liam Foyle. As pressure from lack of evidence builds, Will is faced with the sickening prospect that Foyle may walk free. Meanwhile, Maggie’s ambition trumps her conscience, as well as any concerns for personal safety.

When Will and Jamie go back to the country cottage for the first time since Kate’s death, it’s an emotional and cathartic experience. While clearing up their belongings, Will finds Kate’s positive pregnancy test. Jamie tells him that his mum swore him to secrecy – it was supposed to be a nice surprise. With dad so upset, Jamie opens up about the night his mother was killed -- he should have tried harder to fight off the killer. Shocked, Will learns that Jamie had scratched the man and then hid. This new information presents Will with the missing DNA the prosecution so badly needs.

News of his DNA at the cottage unsettles Foyle and even unshakeable Maggie momentarily loses her composure. In the end however it only serves to fire up her ambition even more. This is her opportunity to defeat Will when it matters to him most.

The trial begins and Maggie’s performance is brilliant as it is chilling. She is a woman possessed and clinically and systematically dismantles the prosecution. She successfully discredits Will’s eyewitness testimony as well as the DNA evidence, echoing Will’s ability to have cases dismissed on technicalities, and Foyle walks free again, gloating.

The justice system having failed him, Will must now take matters into his own hands. Armed with an encyclopedic knowledge of law and an impressive address-book of criminal contacts, Will must create “the perfect crime” and pull off his most audacious escape yet.

The bloody and thrilling conclusion to The Escape Artist asks the question what happens when law has been practiced but no justice served. We see Will reject the profession that has sustained him all his adult life and seek the ultimate justice.