



IMTA ALUM RILEY SMITH IS “PROVEN INNOCENT”

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“*Proven Innocent*” premieres at 9 p.m., February 15 on FOX

“*Chicago has grown so much. It's blown my mind. I've always said like, Chicago is my first home. I've been trying for 20 years to get series to last here, and so I'm like, maybe this is the one, that way we can settle down and make some roots in Chicago.*” — Riley Smith

IMTA alum Riley Smith returns to prime time TV as one of the stars of the new FOX courtroom drama “*Proven Innocent*.” The series centers on Madeline Scott (Rachelle Lefevre), a passionate attorney who focuses on overturning wrongful convictions. Her work is personal to her as she was wrongfully convicted, along with her brother, Levi (Smith), of murdering her best friend. Madeline runs a firm committed to such cases with her partner, Easy Boudreau (Russell Hornsby), the attorney who helped set her free after 10 years in prison. Kelsy Grammer also stars.



“You see two very different sides of the result of being wrongfully convicted of a crime and spending time in jail, which is Madeline is proactive and takes control of her life and becomes a lawyer to defend people like herself, and Levi, he's had a tougher road,” Smith told the Chicago Tribune. “He's had a dark cloud kind of following him throughout his life since getting out of jail. He was the kind of guy who had a lot going for him, and then this really stunted him. He's dealt with substance abuse issues that he's battling and has now, I think, gotten over. Yet everybody in town still thinks he's guilty.”



Smith said the pilot script hooked him, but he was really on board when he found out “*Proven Innocent*” was filming in Chicago. The Iowa native said filming here has brought back memories of “*The Playboy Club*” and other projects he has shot here over the years. Smith was most recently seen in The CW series “*Life Sentence*” and “*Frequency*.”

When not on set, Smith spends his time in the recording studio to work on his music. He recently told Billboard.com that he is planning to release a song and accompanying video each month in 2019. “I thought it would be less work and kind of easier to do one song a month, but it's not. Putting it all out at once, that's a hard deadline to make, but then it's done. Doing it this way the music thing has been a full-time job. As soon as I get done with the song I've got to start the video, and then as soon as I'm done with that I have to do the next song. But it's fun.” He added, “People can only focus on one thing at a time, I think, so this way we'll make each song its own little event and keep 'em from getting lost.”

In January, Smith released the song and video for “Radio,” which narrates the story of wanting to get the attention of the girl you're on a road trip with, realizing you could make this happen if you just get on her radio. “The vision I had for video was simple,” said Smith. “A guy who's just playing to an empty room, waiting for that chance to get on his girls radio. We shot it in a loft in Downtown LA with these big windows that cast a really warm kinda light and vibe on the shoot. I think it captured the mood that the song portrays. Relaxed, hopeful and optimistic. The underdog story.”

Smith sent an early Valentine's Day gift today to his fans with the release of “Hard to Kiss.”