

ONE-HOUR DRAMA · CRIME / PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER

TELL ME ABOUT IT

SERIES BIBLE

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*"In this game, truth isn't power. It's **leverage** — and the more
you uncover, the **deeper you sink.**"*

SERIES OVERVIEW

PREMISE

Tell Me About It follows **Mac Allen**, a **gambling-addicted therapist** with an almost supernatural ability to read people, as he's forced to infiltrate a Macau casino empire. What begins as survival — working undercover for both an Irish mobster and the FBI — evolves into something far more dangerous: a battle for Mac's soul.

Mac discovers that **Ho Chan**, the **going-blind casino magnate** he's meant to deceive, is his intellectual equal and spiritual mirror. When Chan exposes Mac's deception but chooses to spare him, an alliance forms that will **cost Mac everything he loves**. As Mac helps Chan consolidate power against rival casino bosses and eliminate common enemies, he realizes his gift for reading people isn't a superpower — it's a curse that destroys everyone he touches.

The series is structured around therapy sessions that serve dual purposes: legitimate psychological work and covert intelligence gathering. Each episode contains a patient (often a target), a personal crisis for Mac, and criminal intrigue — all intersecting to reveal deeper truths about power, control, and the cost of seeing too much.

THEMATIC CORE: At its heart, *Tell Me About It* explores **control versus acceptance** — the fundamental human struggle between trying to control outcomes and accepting what we cannot change.

MAC'S ARC

Learning to stop controlling (gambling, relationships, outcomes) and finally accept his gift without punishing himself for it.

HO CHAN'S ARC

Desperately trying to control everything (empire, legacy, mortality) as his sight fails and his world crumbles.

The central question: Can a man who sees everyone's pain finally see his own? Can Mac stop gambling with lives and collect what he's already won — or will his gift consume him entirely?

SECONDARY THEMES

The gift as curse

Talent that isolates and destroys

Fathers and sons

Absent fathers, chosen families, masculine grief

Gambling as metaphor

Betting on people, relationships, and futures

Secrets as currency

Information is power, truth is weapon

THE SERIES QUESTION

| *Will Mac lose his soul, or discover his gift can save it?*

SEASON ONE Mac thinks his gift makes him powerful.

SEASON TWO Mac realizes his gift makes him dangerous.

SEASON THREE Mac learns to use his gift without destroying people.

MAIN CHARACTERS

THE PROTAGONIST

MAC ALLEN

LEAD · 40S · THERAPIST · FATHER · GAMBLING ADDICT

Overview: Licensed therapist, gambling addict, human lie detector. Mac can read micro-expressions, vocal patterns, and body language with uncanny accuracy. What should make him a healer has made him a weapon — and a man who can't stop punishing himself for being **"chosen."**

Backstory: Discovered his gift at age 10 at a horse track, picking winners with preternatural accuracy. Uncle Billy pulled him away, but the damage was done — Mac learned that seeing people clearly meant both power and isolation. A track regular told young Mac: *"When it's goin' good, she'll love ya, make you think you're God. Gambling ain't life, kid. It's just a streak."* Mac has spent his adult life unable to distinguish between the two.

Present Day: Divorced father of two (Jake, 6 and Ruby, 4) who he rarely sees. Pays \$20K monthly to Jimmy Flynn for protection after Flynn's daughter Tina was traumatized in Mac's office. Struggling therapist who uses his sessions to pay debts. Ex-boyfriend of FBI Agent Maria Garcia, whom he destroyed through his addiction. **Mac reads everyone perfectly — except himself.**

THREE-SEASON ARC

SEASON 1 — "THE GIFT"

Mac believes he can control everything through his gift. He infiltrates Chan's operation thinking he's the smartest guy in the room. When Chan exposes him but spares his life, Mac realizes: there's always someone who can see deeper. Alliance with Chan feels like control — it's actually the beginning of his descent. Major gambling relapse under pressure reveals: he wasn't gambling to win, he was gambling to punish himself. Season ends with Maria exposed and in danger.

Question: Will Mac finally sacrifice for someone else?

SEASON 2 — "THE DEBT"

Mac saves Maria but loses Chan's full trust. Flynn's prison revenge plot forces Mac to choose sides. Edwin Lee's death (yellow socks moment) destroys Mac — he realizes he never even asked Edwin what he wanted from therapy. Mac was so busy using people as chess pieces, he forgot they were human. Chan's son dies, and Chan becomes a father figure to Mac, which makes everything more complicated. Mac finally understands: he's been gambling with lives, not cards.

The question shifts: Can he stop before everyone he loves is gone?

SEASON 3 – "THE RECKONING"

All-out war. Mac's kids are threatened. Chan loses his sight completely, becoming more dangerous in his desperation. Maria and Mac's relationship fractures as she watches him slip toward darkness. Mac has his revelation: **the gift was never a curse. He made it one by punishing himself for having it.** He can read people to help or to harm — the gift doesn't choose. He does. Final episodes: Mac uses his gift to protect his family, extract himself from Chan's world, and finally stop running.

EPILOGUE: Mac and Maria in the US with two daughters. Blue Hot Wheels hits a wall, stops. Above it: crayon drawing of their family. The chase is over. Mac collected his winnings.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Maria	The love he destroyed and might redeem
Ho Chan	The mirror / mentor / monster
Edwin Lee	The friend whose death changes everything
Jimmy Flynn	The captor who represents Mac's past
Jake & Ruby	The children who represent Mac's future

THE MIRROR

HO CHAN

ANTAGONIST / MENTOR · 60 · CASINO MAGNATE

Overview: CEO of Queen's Palace Casino, Macau. **Going blind but more perceptive than anyone with perfect vision.** A cultured philosopher-king who quotes Jung and Confucius while breaking bones. Chan sees Mac as both weapon and surrogate son — someone who understands what it means to see too much.

Backstory: Built his empire from nothing after finishing his education in London, where British Tories "extorted my family at every opportunity." Learned early: information is power, and everyone has a price. Married with two children (son, 6 and daughter, 4), but his wife left him years ago. He calls her disconnected voicemail every day — twenty-three years and counting. Progressive vision loss (genetic condition) has accelerated. He has perhaps 2-3 years before total blindness.

THE WOUND

Abandoned by his wife, losing his sight, terrified of leaving his son in a world Chan can't protect him from. Chan's need for control stems from the ultimate lack of it.

THE NEED

To leave a legacy his son will be proud of. To control his empire before darkness takes it. To be remembered as a father who provided.

THREE-SEASON ARC

SEASON 1 – "THE MANIPULATOR"

Chan is in full control. He exposes Mac's deception (Ep. 4-5) but spares him because Chan sees potential: a human lie detector is the ultimate weapon in a world of deception. Their alliance is transactional. Chan begins to see Mac as the son he wishes he had — brilliant, damaged, useful.

SEASON 2 – "THE FATHER"

Chan's son dies (mysterious circumstances — Flynn? Casino rivals? Both?). Chan is destroyed; his vision worsens under stress. Mac becomes surrogate son, confidant, the one person who truly sees Chan (ironic, since Chan is going blind). By season end, Chan realizes: he's losing Mac's loyalty just as he lost his son. The pattern repeats.

SEASON 3 – "THE BLIND KING"

Chan loses his sight completely. Operates entirely through sound, touch, and intuition — which makes him MORE terrifying. He's Lear on the heath, raging against the dying of the light. Chan demands Mac's full loyalty: *"You are my eyes now."* Final episodes reveal Chan's tragic nobility — he genuinely loved Mac, genuinely wanted to protect him, but couldn't stop trying to control him.

CHAN'S FINAL SCENE: Alone in darkness, calling his ex-wife's voicemail one last time. She's finally deleted it. The number no longer exists. Chan sits in silence, truly blind now in every way.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Mac	The surrogate son / ultimate weapon
His son (deceased)	The ghost that drives everything Season 2-3
His ex-wife	The absence that defines him
Edwin Lee	Loyal soldier he sacrifices
Jimmy Flynn	The debt that started everything

THE ONE MAC CAN'T READ

MARIA GARCIA

CO-LEAD · 30S · FBI CRISIS NEGOTIATOR · FORMER LOVE

Overview: FBI agent, Mac's ex-girlfriend, and the woman who can't stop trying to save a man who keeps destroying her. Shot in the line of duty (damaged hip), addicted to pills, caught between duty and love. **Maria's wound is both physical and emotional** — she literally can't move the way she used to, metaphor for being stuck in the past.

Backstory: Grew up in a tight-knit Latinx family (sister Olivia, various relatives). Met Mac ten years ago, fell hard. Mac's gambling addiction destroyed them. She moved on professionally (FBI rising star) but never emotionally (still wears the blue sapphire ring he gave her). Got shot during a bust, developed pill dependency during recovery. Now assigned to the Flynn case — which means investigating Mac.

THE WOUND

She sacrificed everything for Mac once and he threw it away. Now she's doing it again — going undercover in Macau, risking her career, lying to her superiors.

THE NEED

To choose herself. To realize that loving Mac doesn't mean losing herself. To either fully commit or fully walk away — no more half-measures.

THREE-SEASON ARC

SEASON 1 — "THE PROTECTOR"

Maria is assigned to the Flynn case, discovers Mac is involved, makes the impossible choice to help him instead of arresting him. Goes to Macau undercover (red wig, fake identity). She's trapped: betray Mac or betray her badge. Season ends with her cover blown.

Cliffhanger: Mac must choose to save her or save himself.

SEASON 2 — "THE COMPROMISED"

Mac saves Maria, but she's burned — can't return to FBI without arrest. She watches Mac slip deeper into Chan's world and suspects he's gambling again. Edwin Lee's death horrifies her: *"This is what you're becoming, Mac. You're getting people killed."* By season end, she delivers an ultimatum: **"Choose me or choose this. You can't have both."**

SEASON 3 — "THE SURVIVOR"

Maria and Mac's relationship fractures completely mid-season. She finds strength to leave — returns to the US alone, faces FBI consequences, begins rebuilding. Mac's kids are threatened, and Maria returns (against her better judgment) to help protect them. She realizes she never stopped loving him — but she loves herself more now.

EPILOGUE: Together, with two daughters, in the US. Maria finally free of pain (both physical and emotional). She got what she always wanted — but only after she was willing to walk away from it.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Mac

The love that defines and destroys her

FBI (Cox, etc.)

The career she sacrificed

Olivia (sister)

The family that grounds her

Ho Chan

The monster she understands Mac might become

THE THREAT

JIMMY FLYNN

ANTAGONIST · 50S · MOB BOSS

Overview: Irish mob boss in a wheelchair. Paralyzed from the neck down but can feel everything — a cruel irony that mirrors his emotional state. **Flynn is rage incarnate**, a man who lost control of his body and compensates by controlling everyone around him through fear, debt, and violence.

Backstory: Rose through Boston/LA Irish mob ranks through brutality and strategic thinking. Accident that paralyzed him happened five years ago. Since then, he's ruled through Dozier and Scar Face (his hands). Tina is his daughter — his brother's daughter — who came to Mac for therapy. Flynn suspected she was keeping secrets (she was — about Flynn's abuse). He interrogated Mac violently, got nothing, destroyed Mac's office and back. Tina fled to France, though Flynn doesn't know this — he assumes she's dead or deep in hiding.

THE WOUND

Total loss of physical control. Flynn feels everything but can move nothing. It's torture. He's a prisoner in his own body, which makes him a tyrant over everyone else's.

THE NEED

To feel powerful again. To control something — anything. To make others feel as helpless as he does.

THREE-SEASON ARC

SEASON 1 — "THE CAPTOR"

Flynn holds Mac's debt (\$20K/month) and uses it to force Mac to spy on Ho Chan. Flynn owes Chan \$5M plus blackmail leverage — Chan is the only man on earth he fears. Season ends with Flynn arrested, seemingly defeated. But the rosary beads that spilled during his medical procedure? Flynn collects them. Even broken, he's planning his next move.

SEASON 2 — "THE PRISONER"

Flynn in federal prison becomes MORE dangerous. He makes a deal: expose Chan's operations (and Mac's complicity) for reduced sentence. Mid-season power move: Flynn orchestrates Chan's son's death from behind bars. This is Flynn's revenge — take what Chan loves most. By season end, he's not defeated — he's regrouping.

SEASON 3 — "THE RECKONING"

Flynn gets early release. He's back on the streets, with an army of loyalists and a vendetta. He discovers Tina is alive — this should soften him, but it enrages him: she ran from him. Final

confrontation: Flynn and Mac face-to-face. Mac must choose: kill Flynn (become the monster) or show mercy (risk everything). **Mac chooses mercy.** Flynn dies anyway, clutching his rosary, finally numb to everything.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Mac	The therapist he tortured and controls
Tina	The daughter whose escape defines his guilt/rage
Ho Chan	The creditor he fears and betrays
Dozier / Scar Face	The hands that do his will

THE ANCHOR

EDWIN "BIG MAN" LEE

SUPPORTING · 30S · DRIVER · PROTECTOR · FRIEND

Overview: Ho Chan's driver/muscle and Mac's unlikely friend. A gentle giant (Chinese/Portuguese heritage) who wears **yellow socks** every day for the daughter he lost in Typhoon Hato eight years ago. Edwin Lee represents everything pure in a corrupt world — and pays the ultimate price for it.

Backstory: Lost his wife and daughter (age 4) in Typhoon Hato (2017). Has been grieving alone ever since, working for Chan out of loyalty and lack of alternatives. Yellow was his daughter's favorite color — he wears the socks as memorial and penance. When Chan announces free therapy for employees, Edwin Lee signs up immediately: *"I would like to ease my sorrow."*

THE WOUND

Survivor's guilt. He lived, they died. He can't move forward, can't move back. He's stuck.

THE NEED

To talk about his daughter. To grieve properly. To ease his sorrow.

ARC

SEASON 1 Edwin Lee befriends Mac organically. He signs up for Mac's therapy program, but Mac never asks what Edwin Lee actually wants from it — never lets him talk about his daughter. Mac is too busy gathering intelligence. Edwin Lee's loyalty to Mac grows stronger than his loyalty to Chan.

SEASON 2 Edwin Lee becomes Mac's true ally. Mac FINALLY asks about his daughter (mid-season, after Mac's own kids are threatened). They have one genuine therapy session — the most real moment in the series. One episode later, Edwin Lee is murdered.

THE DEATH: Episode opens with a slow camera push across a floor — overturned furniture, signs of struggle. The camera reaches a body face-down. Past the torso, past the arms. Finally: **yellow socks.** Cut to black. At the funeral, Mac realizes he never even asked Edwin

Lee his daughter's name. This is Mac's turning point — the moment he understands he's been gambling with lives.

Legacy: Those yellow socks become a symbol of everyone Mac has destroyed through his gift. In the series finale, Mac's daughters wear yellow hair ribbons — Mac honoring Edwin Lee's memory by being present for his own kids.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Mac	The friend he trusted completely
Ho Chan	The boss he served loyally
His daughter (deceased)	The ghost he carries

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

DOZIER (60S)

Flynn's enforcer. Hulking but frail, arthritic but dangerous. The muscle with a conscience — he hates what he does but doesn't know how to stop. Mac's therapy actually helps him, which creates conflict with Flynn. *Arc: Tries to leave Flynn's organization, possibly dies trying (or succeeds and becomes the one person who got out).*

THOMAS "SCAR FACE" O'DONNELL / TOMMY (20S)

Flynn's other enforcer. A box of muscles with a scar and a bat he carries like Linus's blanket — protection from himself, not others. *Arc: Tommy slowly humanizes across the series; the bat gets left behind more and more. By series end, Tommy is the one who doesn't kill Mac when Flynn orders it — because therapy worked.*

TINA FLYNN (16, FLASHBACKS AND FINALE)

Jimmy Flynn's daughter, who fled to Paris. The ghost that drives Mac's guilt — **she writes to Mac in purple**. *Season 3 reveal: she's been alive all along, studying, healing. Final season: Tina returns (now 19) to testify against Flynn, having become a therapist herself, inspired by Mac's brief help.*

CONGRESSMAN ADAMS (50S)

US Congressman in Chan's pocket. Plaque psoriasis triggered by the stress of deception. Chan uses Mac to therapy-intel him. *Arc: Eventually flips on Chan to save himself, becomes a witness in the federal case.*

COX (50S)

FBI Special Agent in Charge. Maria's boss and a father figure who knows she's compromised but protects her as long as he can. *Arc: Eventually forced to cut her loose to save the case — the system Maria betrays for love.*

JAKE (6) & RUBY (4)

Mac's children. Seen mostly through windows, FaceTime calls, and crayon drawings. They represent everything Mac is fighting for and everything he's failed at. *By series end, they're teenagers (time jump) who Mac finally gets to know.*

SEASON BREAKDOWN

SEASON ONE — "THE GIFT" (10 EPISODES)

Mac infiltrates Ho Chan's Macau casino operation while working for both Jimmy Flynn and the FBI (via Maria). When Chan discovers the deception and spares Mac's life, an unlikely alliance forms. Mac helps Chan eliminate rivals and consolidate power, believing he's in control. He discovers his gambling addiction isn't about winning — it's self-punishment for being "chosen." Season ends with Maria exposed as FBI, in mortal danger.

THEMATIC FOCUS: Mac believes his gift gives him power and control.

EP 1 — "PILOT" [WRITTEN BY JACK MAXWELL]

A: Mac's life in LA, forced to Macau by Flynn

B: Mac's gambling relapse, kids he can't see, Maria returning to his life

C: FBI builds case against Flynn; Flynn's debt to Chan

Intersection: Mac gets a letter from Paris (Tina — alive), uses it to threaten Flynn, boards a plane to Macau. Maria follows undercover. Patient: Congressman Adams.

EP 2 — "THE FIRST SESSION"

A: Mac's first therapy session in Macau, with a cheating casino dealer

B: Mac settles into Macau, clashes with Edwin Lee, misses a FaceTime call

C: Maria establishes cover identity, makes secret contact with Mac

Intersection: the session reveals casino-security intel both Flynn and Maria want. Mac realizes he's being pulled in three directions.

EP 3 — "TELL ME ABOUT YOUR MOTHER"

A: Mac therapizes a high-roller who's actually a rival casino's spy

B: Edwin Lee opens up over another dinner — bonding deepens

C: Flynn pressures Mac for results; Maria digs into Chan's background

Mac's lies are multiplying; he's losing track of who he's playing.

EP 4 — "EXPOSED"

A: Chan calls Mac in for a "session" — reveals he's known about the deception all along

B: Mac panics, prepares to run, can't reach Maria

C: Flynn escalates threats; Maria's handler demands results

Mac's worst fear realized — someone saw through HIM. Chan turns the tables and therapizes Mac.

EP 5 – "THE BLIND LEADING"

A: Chan spares Mac's life: *"You're the most interesting person in Macau"*

B: Mac tries to understand Chan's motives; Maria warns him it's a trap

C: Flynn suspects something is wrong — Mac's intel has stopped flowing
Chan proposes an alliance. Mac makes a deal with a different devil.

EP 6 – "FATHER KNOWS BEST"

A: One of Chan's executives (therapy reveals a loyalty test)

B: Mac's kids' birthday — he misses it, sends presents, hates himself

C: Maria investigates Chan's family, discovers his wife left and his son is vulnerable
Mac starts to see Chan as more than a monster — as a broken father figure.

EP 7 – "RELAPSE"

A: A fellow gambling addict — Mac sees himself reflected

B: Mac's major gambling relapse under pressure; Maria finds him at dawn, confronts him

C: Flynn discovers Mac is working with Chan, feels betrayed

Mac wins big at rigged tables — realizes Chan's been fixing games for him. Gambling was never about winning.

EP 8 – "THE FIX"

A: Flynn's inside man, identified through therapy

B: Mac processes the revelation, talks to Edwin Lee about purpose and guilt

C: Flynn sets a trap for Chan using information Mac provided weeks ago

Chan admits the fix: "I wanted you to see winning isn't the point." Mac chooses Chan over Flynn.

EP 9 – "THE TAKEDOWN"

A: Congressman Adams — Mac gets him to flip on Flynn

B: Mac and Maria's relationship complicates — working together, trust broken

C: Flynn's arrest — wheelchair-tipping scene, diary revealed, his scream of rage
Hollow victory — Mac got revenge but lost himself.

EP 10 – "THE SACRIFICE" (SEASON FINALE)

A: Maria's own therapist, revealed to have been reporting to Chan all along

B: Maria's cover is blown; Mac must decide: help her escape or keep his position

C: Flynn in prison, making deals, planning revenge

Chan's test: "Choose loyalty to me or her." Mac chooses Maria — his first selfless choice.

CLIFFHANGER: Maria is safe, but Mac has lost Chan's full trust. Chan's son is threatened.
Flynn, on a prison phone: *"It's just beginning."*

SEASON TWO — "THE DEBT" (10 EPISODES)

Flynn orchestrates revenge from prison, revealing Mac and Chan's alliance to the FBI. Chan's son dies mysteriously. Edwin Lee becomes Mac's true friend, then dies (yellow socks moment). Mac realizes he's been gambling with lives. Maria is burned — trapped in Macau, watching Mac slip toward darkness. Season ends with Mac forced to choose: protect Chan's empire or save Maria's soul.

THEMATIC FOCUS: Mac realizes his gift makes him dangerous, not powerful.

KEY EPISODES

Episode 3	Flynn makes his deal with the FBI (exposes Chan and Mac)
Episode 5	Chan's son dies (Flynn's revenge, or rivals?)
Episode 7	Mac and Edwin Lee finally have a real therapy session
Episode 8	Edwin Lee dies (yellow socks cold open)
Episode 9	Edwin Lee's funeral — Mac breaks, realizes he never asked his daughter's name
Episode 10	Maria's ultimatum: "Choose me or this." Mac hesitates too long. She leaves.

EXAMPLE — EPISODE 2.07 "YELLOW"

A-Story: Mac finally gives Edwin Lee a real therapy session. Edwin Lee talks about his daughter for the first time — her favorite color (yellow), her laugh, the day she died. Mac actually LISTENS.

B-Story: Mac's daughter Ruby calls, tells him yellow is her favorite color too. Mac breaks down — realizes he's been so absent he didn't even know this about his own child.

C-Story: Flynn (from prison) orders a hit on someone close to Chan as a message. We don't know who yet.

Intersection: next episode opens with yellow socks. Edwin Lee is dead. Mac spent two seasons using him for information, and only now — one episode before his death — did he actually see him as human.

SEASON THREE — "THE RECKONING" (10 EPISODES)

All-out war between Chan's organization, Flynn (released), casino rivals, and the FBI. Chan loses his sight completely, becoming more dangerous in desperation. Mac's kids are threatened. Maria returns to help protect them, against her better judgment. Mac has his revelation: **the gift was never a curse — he made it one**. Final episodes: Mac uses his gift to protect his family, extracts himself from Chan's world, chooses healing over power. Series ends with the Hot Wheels finale.

THEMATIC FOCUS: Mac learns to use his gift without destroying people.

KEY EPISODES

Episode 2	Flynn released from prison (early release, witness protection deal)
Episode 4	Chan loses sight completely — operates in darkness, more terrifying than ever
Episode 5	Flynn discovers Tina is alive — rage that she chose exile over him
Episode 7	Mac's kids threatened (Flynn's endgame)
Episode 8	Maria returns to help Mac — fractured relationship, but she still loves him
Episode 9	Final confrontation with Flynn — Mac chooses mercy, Flynn dies anyway
Episode 10	Series finale — Mac and Chan's final conversation; Mac escapes to the US with Maria; epilogue with the Hot Wheels ending

EPISODE STRUCTURE TEMPLATE

Each episode of *Tell Me About It* follows a three-story structure that intersects by episode's end:

A-STORY — THE SESSION (PATIENT / TARGET OF THE WEEK)

A therapy session with either a legitimate patient seeking help (humanizes Mac, gift used for good), a target Mac needs to intel for Chan/Flynn/FBI (gift weaponized), or often both at once — a patient unknowingly revealing information. The session provides a thematic mirror to the B-story and reveals information critical to the C-story.

B-STORY — MAC'S PERSONAL STAKES

- Struggles with gambling addiction
- Relationship with Maria (love / betrayal / redemption)
- Fatherhood (guilt over absent parenting)
- Friendship with Edwin Lee (genuine connection)
- Moral descent/ascent — is he becoming Chan? Can he stop?

C-STORY — CRIMINAL INTRIGUE

- Flynn's machinations (debt, revenge, prison power plays)
- Chan's consolidation of power (rivals, expansion, going blind)
- FBI investigation (Maria's divided loyalties, Cox's pressure)
- Macau casino politics (East-West tensions, corruption)

INTERSECTION: By episode's end, all three stories connect. Information from the session (A) impacts Mac's relationships (B) and the criminal plot (C). Mac's emotional state (B) affects how he conducts therapy (A) and makes strategic decisions (C). Criminal pressures (C) force Mac into morally compromising therapy situations (A) that damage his relationships (B).

WORLD-BUILDING

MACAU AS SETTING

Macau is the only place this story can happen — a unique collision of East and West, legality and corruption, ancient tradition and modern excess.

KEY ELEMENTS

- **"Vegas of the East"** but with Portuguese colonial architecture and Chinese cultural foundations
- Legal gambling monopoly — the only place in China where casinos operate
- Triads and international crime operate openly alongside legitimate business
- Wealth disparity between the glittering casino strip and the Lao Han slums
- Cultural collision creates moral gray zones — therapy is less stigmatized in the West, more taboo in traditional Chinese culture; Chan offering it represents both progressiveness and manipulation

VISUAL PALETTE

Casino interiors

Gold, red, neon — wealth, luck, danger

Lao Han district

Dusty, wilting, colonial decay — poverty, forgotten history

Chan's world

Warm tones, dark wood, jade — old money, culture, refinement

Mac's spaces

Muted, clinical, fluorescent — American sterility in a foreign land

RECURRING LOCATIONS

Queen's Palace Casino

Chan's empire, gaudy and powerful

Lao Han café

Where Chan meets adversaries on neutral ground

Mac's office in the casino

Clinical space in a corrupt building — visual irony

Edwin Lee's favorite restaurant

Minchi and ginger milk, bonding space

Chan's study

Books, jade tigers, a magnifying glass — Chan's intellectual lair

THERAPY AS STRUCTURE

LEGITIMATE THERAPY SHOWS

- Mac's gift used for good
- Glimpses of the man Mac could become
- Thematic mirrors — patients reflect Mac's struggles

WEAPONIZED THERAPY SHOWS

- Mac's gift corrupted by circumstance
- The cost of secrets — extraction destroys trust
- Mac's descent — each session makes him more Chan, less himself

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS — recurring motif, Mac's office poster

Pride	Chan — believes he can control everything
Greed	Mac's gambling — never satisfied, always chasing
Wrath	Flynn — rage incarnate
Envy	Maria — envies who Mac used to be
Lust	Various targets — Chan exploits sexual weaknesses
Gluttony	Dozier — excess as armor
Sloth	Characters who enable rather than act

VISUAL MOTIFS

THE BLUE HOT WHEELS

- Pilot: rolls across Mac's desk, loses a wheel at the airport — broken, incomplete
- Throughout the series: in Mac's pocket, reminder of his kids, symbol of chaos in motion
- Finale: hits a wall, stops — the chase is over, finally complete

YELLOW SOCKS

- Edwin Lee wears them every episode — memorial to his daughter
- The death reveal uses them — visual gut-punch
- Finale: Mac's daughters wear yellow ribbons — honoring Edwin Lee's memory

THE UNOPENED LETTER

- Tina's letter from Paris that Mac threatens Flynn with
- Represents gambling on unknown information
- Mac's relationship to truth — would rather bet than know

ROSARY BEADS

- Flynn's beads — clicking, spilling, collecting
- Symbol of control lost and grasped
- Religious imagery inverted — Flynn prays but doesn't repent

CHAN'S MAGNIFYING GLASS

- Used to examine things as his vision fails
- Symbol of perception enhanced and failing
- Final season: sits unused — he's fully blind

TONAL REFERENCES & COMPARABLES

PRIMARY COMPARABLES

THE SOPRANOS — therapy structure, moral complexity

Therapy sessions structure episodes · protagonist as sympathetic monster · family vs. "family" tensions · dark humor amid violence · no easy answers, only human complexity.

OZARK — family man in a criminal world, escalating stakes

Normal person forced into criminal enterprise · every solution creates a bigger problem · international setting, cultural collision · muted colors, oppressive atmosphere · marriage under impossible pressure.

THE AMERICANS — relationship under pressure, double lives

Central couple torn between love and duty · secrets destroying intimacy · both sides of conflict humanized · period/location detail matters · tragedy baked into the premise.

SECONDARY TOUCHSTONES

Patriot

Protagonist using skills in the wrong context; absurdist humor amid genuine pain; sympathetic bumbler doing terrible things

Better Call Saul

Watching someone become their worst self; profession corrupted; every choice narrows options until trapped

Breaking Bad

"I did it for my family" rationalization; protagonist becomes antagonist; each season darkens tone

TONAL BALANCE

Season 1

70% drama, 30% dark comedy — Mac's sarcasm, absurdity of the situation

Season 2

80% drama, 20% dark comedy — stakes rise, humor becomes gallows humor

Season 3

90% drama, 10% dark comedy — near-pure tragedy with occasional relief

HUMOR COMES FROM

- Mac's therapeutic jargon used as a weapon
- Cultural misunderstandings (East-West collision)
- Absurdity of situations (mob boss in a wheelchair, blind casino magnate)
- Character quirks (Edwin Lee's food joy, Dozier's aging body, Scar Face's bat)

DRAMA COMES FROM

- Genuine human pain (Edwin Lee's grief, Mac's absent fatherhood)
- Impossible choices (Maria choosing love or duty)
- Escalating danger — threats become real, people die
- Moral complexity — no clear heroes or villains

CASTING & AUSPICES

DREAM CASTING

MAC ALLEN — brilliant, broken, and charming, simultaneously

Vibe: Matthew McConaughey (*True Detective*), Jason Bateman (*Ozark*), Oscar Isaac (*A Most Violent Year*) · *Age:* early-to-mid 40s. Must convey intelligence, addiction, and warmth despite damage.

HO CHAN — terrifying and tragic, cultured and brutal

Vibe: Mads Mikkelsen (*Hannibal*), Hiroyuki Sanada (*Shōgun*), Chow Yun-fat · *Age:* late 50s to mid-60s. Must convey power, vulnerability, intelligence, and fading control.

MARIA GARCIA — badass FBI agent and heartbroken ex-girlfriend

Vibe: Zoe Saldaña, Eva Longoria, Stephanie Beatriz · *Age:* mid-30s. Must convey strength, vulnerability, and torn loyalties.

JIMMY FLYNN — menacing from a wheelchair

Vibe: Brendan Gleeson, Liev Schreiber, Ray Stevenson · *Age:* 50s-60s. Must convey rage, intelligence, and physical constraint as fuel for menace.

CREATIVE AUSPICES

Created by	Jack Maxwell
Genre	Crime Drama / Psychological Thriller
Format	10 episodes/season, 55-60 minutes each
Network profile	Premium cable (FX, AMC) or prestige streaming (Netflix, Apple TV+, Amazon)
Showrunner profile	Experience with morally complex antiheroes; understanding of therapy/psychology; comfort with international production; track record with ensemble casts
Directors	Pilot establishes visual language (muted colors, oppressive atmosphere, intimate therapy sessions vs. expansive casino); later episodes can bring in international directors familiar with Macau/Asian cinema

WHY THIS SHOW WORKS

*"What is the cost of **seeing too much**?"*

In an age of oversharing, surveillance, and social media transparency, Mac's gift for reading people is both superpower and curse. We all know someone who sees through everyone — and we've watched them self-destruct because of it. Mac's journey from isolation to connection, from using his gift as weapon to using it as balm, is a story about learning to live with extraordinary perception in a world that punishes honesty.

THE SHOW COMBINES

- Procedural accessibility — therapy sessions provide a patient-of-the-week entry point
- Serialized depth — criminal intrigue and character arcs reward long-term viewing
- International appeal — Macau setting, East-West themes, global cast
- Thematic resonance — fathers and sons, addiction, the cost of secrets
- Emotional catharsis — an earned ending after three seasons of darkness

MOST IMPORTANTLY: it's a show about what we do with our gifts. Do we use them to help or harm? To connect or control? Mac spends two seasons using his gift destructively before finally learning: **the gift was never the problem. His guilt about having it was.**

THE HOT WHEELS STOPS ROLLING.

THE CHASE ENDS.

MAC FINALLY COLLECTS HIS WINNINGS.

Created and written by **Jack Maxwell**

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