

# Snow White for generation Z

Local author's dark fantasy series

By TIM WALKER

**What** happens when you combine a love for off-the-wall fairy tales, comics and old-time Universal Studios monsters, a penchant for fantastic fiction, and a real talent for storytelling and world-building?

Well, in local author Rob E. Boley's mind, you wind up creating a new series of novels, which he has called *The Scary Tales*. In the first book of the series, "That Risen Snow," Snow White – yes, *that* Snow White – is awakened by the kiss of a handsome prince after eating the poisoned apple.

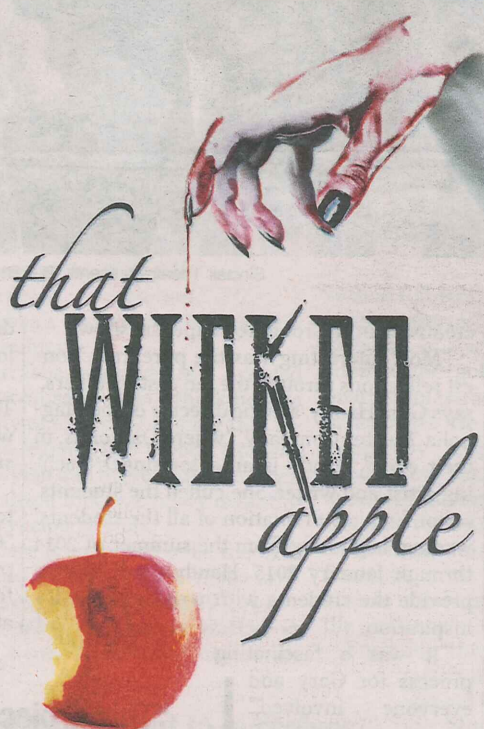
"Of course," you may be saying. "How else would Snow White be revived?" But in Boley's *Scary Tales* version of the classic fairy tale, Snow White rises from the dead transformed into a ravenous zombie, hell-bent on destruction and devouring living flesh, starting with the prince who kissed her and continuing on to the dwarves.

Immediately, the reader realizes this is not your old-fashioned Snow White. Zombie armies abound. The dwarves curse, fall in love and get jealous. People die, horribly. The dark underbelly of our childhood fantasy lands is laid wide open as future books in the series incorporate werewolves, Red Riding Hood, Sleeping Beauty, the Phantom – a heady, surrealistic mash-up of pop culture horror tropes and bedtime stories that leaves the reader shell-shocked, but longing for more. Rob Boley's twisted fairy tales may out-grim the Brothers Grimm.

Thirty-eight-year-old author Rob Boley was raised in Enon, "a little town with a big Indian mound" according to the author bio on his book jacket. He graduated from Greenon High School and now works for his alma mater, Wright State University. When asked about his upbringing here in the Miami Valley, he mentioned Bookery Fantasy, a specialty comics shop in Fairborn, as being instrumental in his growth as a writer.

"I started going there in 1989 when I was 12, and I went in every Friday for several years – this was back when the new comics came out on Friday each week. The late Steve Bates, who was the manager there

A SCARY TALE OF SNOW WHITE & EVEN MORE ZOMBIES



ROB E. BOLEY

Rob E. Boley's celebrates his latest release, "That Wicked Apple" June 4 at Eudora Brewing Co.

**"Rob Boley's twisted fairy tales may out-grim the Brothers Grimm."**

at the time, was always challenging me to read new things and expand my horizons. The first book in the series, "That Risen Snow," is actually dedicated to him. He was really an amazing guy."

When asked about any authors who may have influenced him or his work, Rob is quick to point out Neil Gaiman as a big inspiration.

"I read a lot of his early *Sandman* series, then later his novels," he says. "He is a really big influence. I love his imagination, and I think his novel 'American Gods' is the best of his imagination. It is him at his peak. His

new book of short stories, 'Trigger Warning,' I've been picking away at that and it's just a blast, as well. And here lately I've been all about Joe Hill, who is Stephen King's son. I think he is an amazingly poignant writer. I think he's a great example that there doesn't have to be a divide between literary fiction and genre fiction. I



Local author Rob E. Boley is in the process of releasing a nine-novel series, *The Scary Tales*

would stack his work up against any of what is currently considered 'literary' fiction."

What got Boley interested in being a writer himself?

"I've always been pretty good at writing," he says. "I really trace it back to Julie Johnson, a teacher at Maumee High School, where I went for two years. We were doing a poetry unit during a sophomore year English class, and she gave us this assignment where we had this sheet of terms, and we had to come up with a metaphor for each term. The next day in class, she was calling randomly on us to read what we had, and she had called on me early on, and then she called on me again, and eventually she had me read all of my answers. It was a moment where I really shined in class and it made me think – maybe I've got something here."

Indeed. The *Scary Tales* series will eventually comprise nine novels, with the fifth book in the series slated for an October e-book release.

"So far they've been about five months apart, more or less," Boley says. "The paperbacks come out less frequently, because there's a little more behind the production of those. As of right now, the first four books in the series – 'That Risen Snow,'

"That Wicked Apple," "That Ravenous Moon" and "That Malicious Storm" – are all available as e-books, and the second book is just now coming out in paperback. But there will be nine total when it's all said and done."

If you are interested in books of dark fantasy, adult fairy tales or zombie fiction with a bedtime twist, Rob Boley's *Scary Tales* series might be just what you're looking for.

Rob Boley will celebrate the release of his latest book, "That Wicked Apple," Thursday, June 4 from 6-9 p.m. at Eudora Brewing Co., 4716 Wilmington Pike in Kettering. Fittingly, *Zombie Dogz* food truck will be there. For more information, please visit [robboley.com](http://robboley.com).



Reach DCP freelance writer Tim Walker at [Tim.Walker@DaytonCityPaper.com](mailto:Tim.Walker@DaytonCityPaper.com).