

## **MAJOR ISSUES TO DEAL WITH SOON!**

*(MAYBE THEY ARE TOO MUCH ALIKE??)*

### **Who Is Madelyn?**

She is practical and optimistic and engaged  
STUDYING (LATE in life) to be  
an EMT or a doctor  
or A THERAPIST

### ***What does she WANT?***

to change her life - to grow and be better  
NOT to stay stuck and decaying  
never give up - keep trying

### ***What happened with her marriage?***

it was a LONG TIME ago -  
she didn't even know George had become a podcaster  
this whole thing is making her REFLECT on her life  
It tells us she is open to change -  
REALLY CONVENTIONAL And less so now

*HOW OLD WAS SHE when she married - what world is she from?*

*Or maybe she was LIKE NORMAN - intellectualizing*

*and defensive - but has grown out of that OR IS TRYING TO*

## **WHY has NORMAN failed at work & love??**

Has NEVER HAD a GOOD romantic relationship.

Has many stories of EPICALLY bad relationships

Norman feels WRONGED in his work AND relationships

*What does that tell us about him?*

- *Self-centered?*
- *Over-critical?*
- *Unable to accept happiness? WHY NOT?!*
- *too idealistic? Unable to compromise?*
- *afraid of change?*
- *Lack of faith? (Fear)?*

***Is he AWARE he's at fault?** (Does he TALK about them RELUCTANTLY? Or openly?)*

*has to ACKNOWLEDGE HIS PART?*

**He has GIVEN UP on the idea of a good relationship**  
maybe GIVING UP is the CAUSE (not the effect):  
Maybe in the course of this he comes to REALIZE HE  
GAVE UP SO EARLY HE DOOMED HIMSELF

**Why are the police NOT ON this case???**

*when it is a clear MO of a serial killer who was being  
INVESTIGATED by the VICTIM!!*

=====

**Meet The Serial Killer (The Case) - AS we see  
George Podcasting**

a **poisoner**. poisons strangers.  
using a distinctive signature poison

*really invasive and creepy*

***but then - why haven't they been after him? COLD CASE. He couldn't be caught because he picked people TOTALLY AT RANDOM.***

**They would have looked for the sources/suppliers of the poison...maybe he made it himself...**

## **George Dies - POISONED!**

a minor true-crime podcaster

(This is actually committed by Zack - FRAMING the Serial Killer)

### **Inciting Incident!**

*Do we SEE this? Is this the OPENING - or is it offscreen before the story begins?*

***What was the SPECIFIC reason ZACK chose George?***

*It should be petty and absurd.*

*Did George open up to him, personally? Reveal how vulnerable and alone he was - someone you could get away with killing?*

*Or did George really have some new insight into the killer?*

## **MeetSite & Team - Zack Proposes Taking Over Podcast And Finding The Killer**

REACTING to Death

an online community for amateur detectives - handful of offbeat characters: very different lives / in very different places

trying to crowdsource criminal investigations

How do they communicate - something GOOD TO WATCH

Zack: (we need to LIKE him until we hate him)

Takes over the podcast

hypes the investigation

ALSO tremendously insightful ROMCOM SIDEKICK for BOTH Madelyn & Norman

Zack is loveable because HE TELLS THE TRUTH -

**come to believe it was a murder by a serial killer**

that the George was trying to identify in their podcast.

*George has died mysteriously?*

*Or they KNOW right away?*

## MAKE UP CRIME SOLVING SITE NAME

*(Websleuths is taken!)*

CrimeSource (TAKEN!)

CrimeClub is a podcast  
time for THESAURUS!!!

## Meet Norman

LURKING in the group because he is writing about online crackpots - to analyze and mock them

but sees there is more

A pissed-off former-journalist who is working through his resentment at being forcibly-retired from the changing journalism-industry (and world) by writing a big book analyzing what's gone wrong with the entire world since crowdsourcing was

invented.

Dealing with the fact that he couldn't adapt to changing times by writing a book **CRITIQUING** changing times.

For Norman, this community is just a single example/chapter in his major book surveying how wrong all of the 21st century is - how crowdsourcing ruins everything.

*What are other chapters??*

*(Models for the book: Evil Geniuses, Anti-Social)*

## **Madelyn & Norman discuss his book (his philosophy, his life)**

*Madelyn points out it also sounds like the Unabomber Manifesto.*

thinks/knows he is the smartest guy in the room

I think Norman TALKS TOO MUCH

Secretly ENVIES the amateurs

*a skeptic who comes to believe*

## WHERE DOES HE LIVE?

He has to live **SOMEWHERE NEAR** Podcaster's home

*a rural area - went there to try to write his book?  
(cheaper? inherited?) Pine woodsy? Desert?*

*Or is he nomadlanding it - living in an RV?*

*Or lonely-in-a-crowd in a city?*

**Zack asks Madelyn for George's "case files" -  
She REFUSES**

*This may be seen as he REPORTS it*

## Meet Madelyn

*ex-wife of George who has died mysteriously.  
divorced and NOT looking for a new relationship.  
NOT trusting*

Madelyn is living in the dead Georges home to deal with the estate for a brief time - on leave from her job. She also might be doing it remotely.



## *What job? !*

Not part of the community.

She was married to the George, and left him because of the obsession with the community?

She hates the whole thing.

Madelyn gets drawn in because SHE is the executor for her ex - and so SHE controls the case files.

George was married to her young wild self -

she gave up on that person when she left him (for GOOD reason at the time!)

but now she is questioning that decision after a too-safe life

But does that square with her being a therapist or EMT student?

If she only decides to do it NOW...

The podcaster's home is a central location because it is ground zero for the mystery - the FILES are there, and it's the crime scene -

- and it's the spot where some of the crowdsleuths converge -
- **but it's also haunted for Madelyn: it's the burial place of her marriage.**

*(did she used to live there and left, so it's old-home-week for her? That seems juicy and ripe with dramatic possibilities.)*

***What is the story of Madelyn's marriage?***

***Who changed, why, how?***

***How long has it been?***

***Does she get involved because she stumbles on a clue no one else has noticed - OR because Zack brings Serial Killer down on them?***

*and NO ONE believes her?*

***Or no one in this club is GOOD ENOUGH to match her at the work***

*The idea of someone who is abruptly energized and*

*changed by discovering a gift or strength*

*all the risks she will take is motivated by her SHOCK at ACTUALLY DOING IT*

## **Zack assigns (SOMEONE ELSE) to get the box from Madelyn**

she has refused to work with them and so they are planning a con/scam/theft

Someone aggressive is the one to actually go to her.

Norman feels it is unfair or wrong to try to get the stuff from her - stepping in to PROTECT her

## **Norman Falls for Madelyn from “afar”**

Norman FALLS IN LOVE with Madelyn when he sees Zack’s info on her and her refusal to turn over the files

he sees a pictures of her, hears audiotape of her conversations with Zack (or records of Skypes?)

***WHY EXACTLY does he fall in love?***

*How she responds to the cracpots who want the files*

## **Norman Goes To Protect Madelyn From Zack & Group - interferes with the con/theft**

Norman Reveals His REAL Agenda to Madelyn  
Someho

## **Zack is fawning over Norman once finds out who he is**

Disarming  
But talking like they are doing the same thing

## **A CLUE provokes Norman/Madelyn To Suspect Serial Killer Murder**

A SPECIFIC CLUE - discovered by Norman or Madolyn  
*WHAT is the Clue?!*

PLANTED by Zack

ONE of our characters needs to get them and go

through them

(they could have discouraging info as well - revelations of the sadness and untrustworthiness of the George...  
issue of do they publicize material that discredits them?

## Norman & Zack Conflict over Journalism:

what even defines a journalist? Can't anyone be one?  
what's the difference between a "crusading investigative outsider" and a crackpot?

**Zack should DEFINITELY be calling themselves an investigative journalist**

making all these great high-ideal arguments  
that are also justifying the worst of random crowdsourcing

**the killer contacts them - saying: stop**

**the end of the pilot**

they ALL need to be in danger from the killer

= = =

## **BEYOND THE PILOT**

romance of getting-to-know-you

working together on a shared project

**Killer Tries to Convince them He was framed**

the new interest stirred up by this frame threatens to identify him

So he has to scare, intimidate, threaten them to stop

**They come to BELIEVE him - but also realize  
his denial of George's murder includes a  
CONFESSION THAT HE IS THE ORIGINAL  
SERIAL KILLER**

they believe him, but think -

holy shit, he's basically confessed to the ORIGINAL  
string by DENYING he did this one!

**So they have a NEW LEAD! They can't let THAT go.**

**They ask: but then WHO FRAMED THE KILLER (and killed George)**

**Zack MOVES the frame to George**

When the group believes the killer was framed -

Zack does something to Make it look like George did himself in to frame the killer!!

At which point: they know who killed George (George did) but they are HOTTER ON THE TRAIL of the original killer

**When they don't stop hunting - he has to kill them**

**Meet The Serial Killer (The Person)**

**The idea of the killer as an old man**

The changes of age

the question of justice carried over decades  
the “execution of nature” as not enough

Killer as old man: article in NY times about getting killer  
Cottingham to talk:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/13/nyregion/long-buried-secrets-the-serial-killer-and-the-detective.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage&section=New%20York>

*Questioning Mr. Cottingham was complicated. He had no relationship to his victims. His murders were not the outcome of stalking or planning but of fleeting encounters. He did not know the names of those he killed. “He remembers certain aspects of a person,” Mr. Anzilotti said. “One would remind him of a TV actress. ‘Look her up, she looks like her.’ Others he remembered from a haircut.”*

**Norman and Madelyn have to go to the home or workplace of an EX in order to get a bit of the puzzle or hide out**

Midnight Run

**IN A LATER EPISODE:**



## Norman and Madeline go on a road trip together:

In the later part of the story (?)

this is a big deal because they are physically together and for most of the rest of this story I think people are relating online

*They are either on the run  
or hunting*

the getting-to-know-you part of working together  
romance comes from

### Third Act: Low Point - They Break Up / Separate...making each VULNERABLE

*something is likely to break them up/separate them in  
the romcom in the start of the third act -  
which would make them more vulnerable in the thriller*

*side!*

The clue that makes Norman and Madelyn realize  
Zack framed the killer - and thus IS the killer -

*what is it?!*

That is a final twist

**At the end of E6** We want to process and enjoy it

*HOW DOES IT END?*

Physical fight?

Exposure - podcast her villainy?

Getting her to confess

Serial kill kills her and they let him?

**POSSIBLE end**

**final crisis: killer has a gun**

they're facing an ELDERLY serial killer. He's not going to be physically scary - no real threat.

the great equalizer, the lethal weapon...

enough of this fancy elaborate killing mystique.

We can be REALLY scared of him then.

**The ending: THEY frame the original killer?**

Or rather they CONTINUE Zack's frame - to cover for they fact that THEY kill Zack?

And the very end is them saying to each other: "I can live with that."

*I can live with that* being the acceptance and goal - living, faulty and failed but alive and able to start their life together.

they agree to let the old man murderer go - basically a trade for him not killing them and eliminating the villain...

But then as soon as he's gone they both want to forget the bargain: ah hell - yeah, I'm not gonna do that.

and call the cops

Like the end of Harper

Aw hell

Somehow I like that feeling of them saying: *I just want to live as I believe*

screw it - I'm gonna face something hard to retain my integrity

## **THE BROOMSTICK BIT (possible end?)**

Maybe Norman or Madelyn does that

**this romance ENDS with a BEGINNING:**

they get to the point where they want to try -

To go out on a date, or something