

Untitled Podcaster-Killer Story

a thriller SERIES

about a couple who fall in love when
they get involved with an online
amateur crime-solving community
whose hunt for a serial killer
provokes the killer to come after them

Madelyn & Norman

- Madelyn needs to change and grow
- Norman needs to let go of the past and his ego

each of them helps/provokes the other to do the thing they need

(Madelyn POKES HOLES IN Norman's ego)
she SEES THROUGH him

Norman comes to BELIEVE in Madelyn and SUPPORT her (a new role for
him)

Madelyn is somewhat more central in the MURDER PLOT but in the
RELATIONSHIP PLOT they are equal.
And the HEART is THE RELATIONSHIP...

this romance ENDS with a BEGINNING:
they get to the point where they want to try -
To go out on a date, or something

WHAT IS THE OBSTACLE TO LOVE?!

she

The central action is

SOLVING:

- investigating
- puzzling
- reasoning

*They want to solve the mystery/find the killer
BECAUSE the killer is after THEM*

story is a cascade of FUMBLES
the characters are all MAKING MISTAKES
based in their needs
that force them into
CONFLICT

STRUCTURE

A limited hour-long series
(potential for sequels/other seasons...?)

Models

Fargo
Midnight Run
Charade
North By Northwest
Slither
Black Monday

CHARACTERS

Norman Murch

a bitter forcibly-retired journalist..
in his 50s.
out of touch with the changed reality

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.

What Does Norman Want?

To FIX The Past

make it NOT HIS FAULT

to get the world to agree he was not wrong

(He THINKS he's SAVING the FUTURE by EXPLAINING how others were
WRONG IN THE PAST)

**NORMAN'S STORY IS ABOUT
learning to LET GO of undoing the past
and DOING BETTER IN THE PRESENT**

Madelyn

Dead George's Ex

Skeptical of Group but then gets ON the case

practical and optimistic and engaged
never give up - keep trying

What does she WANT?

to change her life - to grow and be better

NOT to stay stuck and decaying

Has just decided to study to be EMT or THERAPIST

Zack

Zoomer

Takes over the podcast

hypes the investigation

turns out to be the killer

saw an opportunity and took it, selfishly.

Out of DESPAIR: *world is a mess, so I want for me.*

SAYS trying to MAKE A DIFFERENCE - to do Something GOOD
for the world

but

his secret motive is ANGER

“You (older) people fucked up the world and we are going to take
over and fix it!”

Pre-Post-Apocalyptic

ALL ABOUT ATTENTION

it is in fact THE MURDER that makes George interesting to the public! (like a dead painter)

ALSO ROMCOM SIDEKICK
for BOTH Madelyn & Norman
loveable because HE TELLS THE TRUTH - insightful

Zack is the only one who is FULL TIME into the podcast and the case.
He has bet everything on it

But it is not his first media project - so his past should be revealing of his nature
He was an influencer for a while
Maybe also into prank and outrage?

DISCOVERY of his past online identities is a turning point? Or it is known from the start and helps make him seem ridiculous and HARMLESS?

George

Dead podcaster
a sad desperate nut

Serial Killer

Actual retired serial killer
who is being FRAMED for the George's murder

And the new interest stirred up by this frame
threatens to identify him
So he is trying to scare them
threaten them
and when that doesn't work he has to KILL THEM

The Group

an online community for amateur detectives - handful of offbeat characters: very different lives / in very different places trying to crowdsource criminal investigations

WHY are these people hunting killers?

It's a club

It's a hobby

Is one of them a crime VICTIM? so trying to TAKE BACK their confidence?

That might be too powerful a story to make a secondary character...

DETECTIVE 3 - LOON

a conspiracy theorist

they turn out to be a good person, though

DETECTIVE 4

Sleuthing to **distract** from personal unhappiness

because in life there is something bad that has NO supervillain

? disease? Or is caring for someone?

Or it's the JOB: is a nurse? Team Member: Crime Victim

DETECTIVE 5

someone who is OUT FOR JUSTICE

believe that good people getting together can stop bad people.

The Major Moves

Episode 1

George Is Killed (Madelyn's Ex)

Meet Norman, lurking in the Group to critique

Meet the Killer/Cold Case

Zack steers Group to rob Madelyn for Ex's Files

Norman Falls for Madolyn from a distance

Norman intervenes to protect Madelyn

Madelyn gets on the case, despite disliking Group

Norman gets on the case to be with Madelyn

End with Killer Coming After Them

Episode 2

Episode 3

Episode 4

Episode 5

Episode 6

N&M split up - emotionally/bad choice strategically making them vulnerable to the killer.

Episode 7

Reveal: serial killer is innocent (of THIS) - Zack killed George, to advance career by creating a buzz for podcast
Confrontation with the killer & Zack

George's House

almost all of the story takes place there.

slowly over episodes more & more of the group decide to GO there, meeting for the first time.

kind of a fun concept, this gradually-filling house, full of junk (George was nuts)
but also full of data about the killer

so in the last couple of episodes they have to go on the run, a road trip is a big deal, some fresh air.

THEMES

CONFRONTING this awful thing that we think is entertaining

We Love Serial Killers: WHY the fuck?

They're uniquely evil: a human monster.

They're a story.
They're UNLIKELY to be our real problem.

Respecting Victims

The difference between spectators and people involved: not fun and games
for those who loved the victims.
The new layer of true-crime recently has been reckoning with this.

I can live with that

the acceptance and goal - living, faulty and failed but alive and able to start
their life together.

online intimacy

reaching-out-of-strangers

dishwasher safe

a character wants to be THAT safe or realizes they do - Madelyn?

Crowdsourcing

ordinary people wanting to DO something
in a world gone crazy
the power of coming-together
(but the loss of individual power..)

Questions & Things To Work On

PODCASTING & TRUE CRIME FORMAT

Writing Notes

This is a COMEDY. Even though it's an hour-long.
Make sure it's funny