

Meet George, Working on a Podcast

a fakeout where he seems COOL until the reveal of his garage studio

BUT - I also want to break this up with bits of HIS LIFE
so maybe he does MORE THAN ONE BIT?

***NOT BE ABOUT THE FIRST VICTIM
(dummy!) It should be about the LAST!!***

RESEARCH: 9.21.21 article "Social Media Detectives" re: podcasts/
websleuths!

The Process: stop-and-start, he's not doing a live show, so we see his life while he is rewriting, thinking, recording.

(Then - How does he make a living??)

We also see it in the hoarder-density of his work space, a mess of file cabinets, shelves crammed with file boxes, etc.

He tells us HOW he got into it:

What Brought This memory back to trigger the hunt?

Something CHANCE and TRIVIAL!

(George was born in 1972.)

WOVEN-INTO this "meet George" scene:

Meet The Chemistry Set Killer - CSK - In The Podcast

George Promises Reveal - then Dies - POISONED!

Meet Madelyn - At Work Turning Down A Promotion

see what will get DISRUPTED:

she is content, happy in her small, SAFE life.

Madelyn arrives and meets Det. Elmes At Crime Scene

The POINT: Mad's been THROWN IN THE DEEP END

And she WANTS TO GET BACK HOME to SAFETY

Elmes is driving the scene - Mad is on the defensive

(is it legally possible to make someone the executor of your estate without their knowledge?) (If not: how did that work?)

How was the body found?

After Police Leave: Madelyn Starts to COPE WITH George's Death -

Zena calls back - asking to come visit - Mad says NO

Meet Norman Murch

Shop Scene / Reminder / Zoom starts there

A pissed-off journalist in his mid-50s.

Lives in Akron, Ohio (site of his last job)

Lives in a one-bedroom apartment: sleeps in the living room (fold-out sofa), uses the bedroom as an office

He IS writing a LOT on his book

- broke? What does he do for money? Severance?

Unemployment?

Does he drink a lot? Cliche of newspaper reporter - which might be attractive to him. Functional but drunk?

but he has messed up his schedule and so he does it by phone while leaving the shop and driving home

THAT EVENING: CrimeCrowd Zoom: Zena Proposes Taking

Over Podcast & Finding CSK

Beat: BEAT: George only had 4 subscribers - when Zena says it, people in the group give their excuses (No time/He tells us everything personally/I was going to...) Which means none of them were among the 4

Meet Carl Dundoski - the meth dealer

Zena on Dundoski - she is very flattering to Dundoski because she thinks he is an idiot - but also he is scary a meth dealer (and addict) with a personal desire to bring killers to justice, a feeling for victims and the underdog. "Why can't a meth dealer have a sense of justice?"

Meet Arvin McLean - wall st conspiracy nut

a genuine conspiracy nut
hyped and busy - needs group to help with the stress of high-demand (low in company) financial-industry job

Meet Nurse Shrimpton: she's out

only in this to relax and forget her troubles

Norman tries to convince Zena NOT to rob Madelyn

Norman heads out to intercept - to PROTECT her

later - Madelyn, mourning alone, gets drunk/stoned

She DOES NOT WANT TO LET IN FEELINGS

doesn't ALLOW herself to GRIEVE or even really THINK
(about George - safety - her narrow life)

INERCUT! Dundoski Tries To Get Files - STEP I: Reconnaissance.

Dundoski waits outside. She doesn't leave. He goes in.

(she's smashed and in for the night.)

Norman interrupts D's Breakin - Fight!

Norman Ends Up Staying The Night - In Bed Together - CHASTE

Zena heads out to PA, leaving parents baffled

Near dawn - they wake and make love

SO FAR, SO GOOD

INTERCUT SEQUENCE
of the OTHER WebSleuths
IN SCENES WITH PEOPLE FROM THEIR LIVES
it all happens in the same MORNING

see in each life why this teaming up
is something they NEED

Dundoski - (justice man)

dundoski gets home to his drug empire to discover someone has done them wrong and a minion is clamoring for justice - but really meaning REVENGE

(Or maybe Dundoski has to GET revenge but is aware it's NOT justice)

Nice to see him being truly kill here

Arvin McLean - LONELY

he believes in online crowdsource power...

because he is LONELY

See him attempt to make a friend/romance and FAIL

See him ALONE a lot

We need to see him being a FAILURE and an OUTCAST here (later he will shine)

(Charles Martin Smith in the Untouchables)

Meet Nurse Shrimpton: she's out

someone RAGGING on sleuthing (now that she's OUT) - makes her STRUGGLE - provoked to DEFEND it she's RESISTING DEFENDING...

does she **confess/complain/describe** to someone

does she **try to SHUT OUT** the sleuthing? (**REPLACE?**)

debating the value of websleuthing with someone in her life who doesn't get it

REGRETTING being out

considering NOT staying out
going through withdrawal

AFTER: - Mismatched Strangers With A Lot to Talk about

This is pretty LATE IN THE DAY

Norman wakes up and it's like near NOON and she let him sleep

Madelyn Tells Norman about Marriage To George

DECISION: so much backstory here? Or HINT and HOOK for later episodes? (For THIS lesson...write it in NOW...but...)

She was young and free-spirited. 18 when she married

what world is she from?

Their marriage was a frightening disaster.

Why?

It scared her straight: she became REALLY CONVENTIONAL.

How?

Had NO contact with George - didn't even know he had become a podcaster.

Now: George's death and this whole plunge into his unstable world is making her REFLECT on her life.

Making her want to be free-spirited and brave again.

Has just decided (or is just deciding) to change her life and study to be an EMT or a THERAPIST

The USE of George is to tell us about MADELYN!

He is what she SHUT DOWN in herself.

He was a musician when she met him: punk and grunge. Romantically, attractively “all or nothing” - which seemed very “rock and roll”

“He puts it all on the line” - DEVOTION, DETERMINATION - NOT CARING WHAT ANYONE THINKS

those are things she loved and admired - then got scared off of but what he REALLY was was addictive, obsessive -
- and as a teen, he just happened to lock into music.

(Figure out the full story of his obsessive nature by telling his life AFTER the divorce TO Madelyn)

George’s STORY: after his rock and roll 20s -

He went from musician to DJ - late night DJ, one of those who talked all night at an FM college station - and thats how he transitioned into podcasting!

he had OTHER obsessions (NAME THEM!)

the start of the internet

orY2K

Madelyn left him TO SAVE HERSELF

Norman Explains About His Book (& Life)

Now that she’s able to hear it - we finally get the backstory on Norman in the group

For Norman, this community is just a single 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)

He has something of a “pitch” that he falls into when he talks about the book

We will NOT get WHOLE norman story (or whole Madelyn) here - it's just the FIRST STEP

Norman's Romantic (& Journalistic) Past

Norman has NEVER HAD a GOOD relationship.

feels WRONGED in his work AND relationships

Has many stories of EPICALLY bad relationships

BECAUSE he CHOOSES women who are CLEARLY DISASTERS

because he has GIVEN UP on the IDEA of a good relationship

because He is DEFENSIVE - AFRAID OF BEING HURT

- Over-critical
- over-analytical
- too idealistic Unable to compromise
- Lacks faith (operates from buried Fear)

He does NOT admit this is his fault

Why Madelyn likes Norman

Because SHE SEES THROUGH HIM

now doesn't EVERYBODY? No...he actually must be GOOD at his analytical stuff

Madelyn points out **GIVING UP** is the CAUSE of his problems (not the effect): **HE GAVE UP SO EARLY (Defensively) HE DOOMED HIMSELF**

(therapist in training! a natural)

realistically...this would be obvious...if he had friends BUT HE DOESN'T

Zena SHOWS UP

Upset about Norman interfering -
- tries to talk to Norman PRIVATELY FIRST.

Madelyn lets Zena Look At The Files

How does Zena get this permission?

By disarming them by being PERSONAL - in fact, Mad partly does it just to get Zena OFF the personal stuff...

ZENA IS WORKING THEM - her chipper manipulative likeable self

HER MAIN ACTION is to GET INVOLVED IN THE LOVE STORY! This is where she "reads the room" and realizes that there is a romance blossoming between these two

OBSTACLES to her mission - so she ASSUMES THE ROLE of “RomCom Friend” and confidante!

Zena discovers George’s Plan: LURE Killer with Fake claims

There IS NO NEW Evidence: George just figured he would PROVOKE the killer

*Problem: time...how is this info quickly available to Zena?
HOW does she discover this? Did he write it down?
Podcast-record it?*

How does everyone react to this news about George?

Mad is pretty pissed at him - the cop was right: George GOT HIMSELF MURDERED

Some of the Sleuths might rather ADMIRE this move. He risked his life to lure the killer - and it worked! So to them: bravo George you are a hero.

Norman is INTENDING TO LEAVE when the killer calls

Much as he likes Madelyn - he can’t just STAY here and get into this craziness

Deakins calls Madelyn to say I DIDN’T DO IT

calls to say: I did NOT kill George.

That’s the most important message - the ACTION of this contact.

NO THREAT YET - he is only ASKING them to be KIND
asks: Let sleeping dogs lie

We MEET Elmore Deakins (The Serial Killer)

INTERCUTTING -

in theory he would call on a burner cell, in a public place NOT near his home (so he can't be tracked; they can locate cell towers where calls came from)...BUT then we don't get to see his life yet...

Something gentle, sweet. NOT “making up for what he did”
- just **RETIRED**.

He is an artisinal-soap maker

(possibly uses fat from victims for soap...

possibly names his soaps things like “innocence”)

In his 70s, wrinkled, weathered, white-haired. Wears simple workmanlike but artsy clothes - denim, cotton. Listens to “Americana” and folk music.

He says he STOPPED: **(a lie, he's still doing it just not with poison)** tells some story that makes him seem noble, changed, sympathetic.

what is this story?

He is a MONSTER

kills to FEEL POWER

BUT WE DON'T GET THAT HERE!

Here we get the “retired killer”

TWIST: Killer Is ON THEIR TEAM - trying to find out who killed George

Deakins Has To Prove He is Real

Sleuths are SKEPTICAL: demand that the killer PROVE he IS THE KILLER to make his denial believable

On the call in George's house are Mad, Norman and Zena.

Who exactly is skeptical? Norman? Zena?

in order to convince them of innocence re-George, the killer has to PROVE he IS the killer.

He's startled: He did not PREPARE proof. Theoretically "things only the killer would know"

But then how could they know if it was TRUE?!

(That's a great beat - when they realize/say that.)

He has to get unexpectedly HONEST and VULNERABLE

*MAYBE HE REVEALS THAT he is PART OF THEIR GROUP
(under a screen name, anonymous)*

We need to unexpectedly feel: *gosh, this intelligent, reasonable retired killer has been unfairly dragged back into the spotlight by George's murderer*

They Believe Him

He has alibi - but telling them what it is would expose his new life...

Maybe he says: listen, it looks bad for me!

He knows about the Evidence Claim (but not what the evidence is...) and so -

he KNOWS A LOT ABOUT GEORGE. He WAS defensively researching. And now that George is dead, that research looks like murder-prep.

(He KNOWS A LOT ABOUT THEM ALL - so they are vulnerable -- but THEY WERE HUNTING HIM and he is reasonable and apologetic

Please help me, trust me.

that leads directly to them HELPING HIM BY:

They tell him the truth: there IS no evidence

they tell him George was just baiting him -

AFTER: everyone is relieved - but then they realize THIS CALL is evidence...

He HAS to come after us now...and therefore WE HAVE TO go after him

This is going to be a SERIES of STEPS/REALIZATIONS

a SET PIECE - one long call (on speaker for them) - or maybe it's actually a series of calls

He doesn't say he's got to kill them: THEY say it to each other

“we are already IN OVER OUR HEADS -

the only way OUT now is catch this killer...AND whoever killed George

Madelynn Norman & Zena Realize They're All In This Together Now...

BECAUSE they are ALL THREATENED

They can't CONVINCED the murderer they will keep his secret - he is after all, despite his apparent reason & humanity in the calls...a serial murderer, a monster.

they ALL need to be in danger from the killer

the end of the pilot

*now we need to get to - the end of episode:
they have agreed not to hunt/expose the killer
and the killer has agreed not to kill them
...and BOTH SIDES privately realize they can't TRUST the
other keep their word*

SPARE PARTS

**SHOW PEOPLE IN THE STORY LISTENING TO
OLD EPISODES OF GEORGE'S PODCAST!~!!
(Including cops at crime scene and Mad later...)**

Killer lets loose: what is wrong with you people? Who made YOU the sword of justice?! SELF APPOINTED AMATEURS?!
(Norman's point)

SPARE PART:

Norman - we were a bunch of people who talked about serial killers like people talk about sports. And the all of a sudden - the ball is in OUR room, it's bouncing around - and it kills

people.