

Transcript

00:00 You're listening to the My Simplified Life podcast and this is episode number 228. Welcome to the My Simplified Life podcast, a place where you will learn that your past and even your present don't define your future. Regardless of what stage of life you're in, I want you to feel inspired and encouraged to pursue your dreams, simplify your life, and start taking action. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac, author of How to Get on Podcasts, the podcast matchmaker

00:30 and CEO and founder of the MLG Collective. I'm excited to share my stories and life lessons with you while taking you on my own journey. This is my simplified life. Hey friends, welcome back to another episode. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac. Today, this one's gonna get emotional and I'm just giving you this morning because I met Marcy McCreary, who is our guest.

00:56 on Instagram through my good friend, Steph Hawkersmith, the Pie Lady Books. And we connected because she created this pie that was the book cover for a book that is not out yet by Lew McCreary. Lew is an author, he's had an amazing career, he's had a book adapted to a movie which starred Owen Wilson, and Lou now has dementia.

01:23 And there is a Kickstarter campaign that is raising funds to make sure that Lou's latest book is something that can get into all of our hands. And so I connected with Marcie so that we could talk about what that looks like, what it looks like to be a caregiver to Lou, to someone who has dementia, what her career as an author and her past career in the corporate space has looked like. And I want you all to...

01:52 really sit and think about what goes into creating your legacy. What happens when you're diagnosed with something in the middle of a project you're working on and you can no longer see that come to light? So I appreciate that Marcy was so willing to share her story and Lou's story with all of us. And at the end, I hope that you please consider contributing to Lou's Kickstarter. The link is in the show notes.

02:21 notes on ways on how to contribute at the end of the episode as well. Hi Marcy. Hi Michelle. I am so excited to get to meet you today and share you and your story with everybody. Can you take a moment to introduce yourself please? Yes, and thank you Michelle for inviting me onto your podcast. I'm pretty excited to be here to tell you not only about, you know, my writing journal, but sort of how we connected and how it's related to my husband's writing.

02:50 So my name is Marcy McCreary, and I am the author of the Ford Family Mysteries series. So I write traditional mystery that pairs a detective daughter and her retired detective father, so Susan Ford and Will Ford. And the way that I set up these, so there's three novels in this series right now, and the similarities among them is that,

03:17 Susan is working on a case that has some connection to her father's past cases. So he seems to, I don't know, interject himself into her cases, sometimes because she asks for his help, but sometimes because he just forms his way into her case. So it's a really interesting, not

only mystery to solve, but to also follow them through typical family dynamics, because it's not only.

03:45 Susan and her father, but it's also, there's a lot about the relationship Susan has with her mother, which is a more tenuous relationship, a more sort of a relationship that is frayed at the edges, let's put it that way. And throughout the three novels, you sort of see the ebb and flow of their relationship, whereas Susan has a tighter relationship with her father, so you see that dynamic throughout the book. So that's what makes it kind of.

04:11 fun different mystery is that it's not just about the case, it's about this family. I love that. And I love that there's more than one. So you don't have to just wrap it all up. You can leave everybody hanging for a little bit on something and then come back to it in the next book. And because I always feel like when you finish a book, there's always more I find, especially with my clients, like, so what happened next? But the funny thing about this, Michelle, is that I, the first book is called The

04:40 I wrote it as a one-off. I did not plan to write a series. I wrote the book, I submitted the book, I sold the book to a publishing company called Camp Cap Books. A few months before the book came out, I got a publisher's weekly review that said, an enticing series launch, Detective Susan Ford is a strong protagonist who can carry a series. I was like, wait, what? No pressure. What? I don't have a series deal with my publisher.

05:10 So I get in touch with the publisher and my editor and I'm like, I'm in the middle of writing another book. What do I do? And they're like, well, that's up to you. And I said, you know what? I got an idea in my head. I love the Ford family. I'm going to put away what I'm writing and go back to writing another, you know, Susan Will Vierup book. And that's what I did. So I was a little bit delayed. So did most series come out like,

05:39 know, every 12 months. They sort of want to make sure that they're back to back so that readers can quickly get into the next book. But I didn't have that luxury. So while the first book came out in September 2021, The Murder of Madison Garcia came out in March 2023. So because I had now written two, the editor says, well, a series is at least three. So do you have another idea for a third book? And I said, yes, I do. Because now I am thinking of sort of

06:09 you know, what else can I do that's different, interesting, whatever. So I was like, I think I'm already set with at least the kernel of an idea for a third book. And that's the Summer of Love and Death, which comes out this summer. So it's August 13th, 2024. And again, it's a year and a half because, well, for a few reasons, but the main one was it should be a summer release. It is called the Summer of Love and Death. And it is because there are a lot of scenes that take

06:37 place at Woodstock in 1969, we thought it'd be really cool to have it come out on the 55th anniversary of Woodstock. That's perfect. The timing just made more sense not to release in March, but to release in August. We also needed more time on the developmental edit with this book. I did read through that part last night. I was skimming and looking. I have a question

because you refer to them as mysteries, and yet we're talking about death and we're talking about the murder. To me, that's kind of thriller. What's the difference between?

07:06 what would be considered a mystery versus a thriller? So I always consider a thriller sort of more action packed, like edge of your seat, like you turning pages really quickly. And there's sort of like an element of more action than say sort of like intellectual, slowed down contemplative kind of thinking about the clues you're being given and the red herrings you're being given. So although people have

07:34 describe my book as page turners, I just think that means that I leave them hanging at the end of every scene or every chapter to want to read on. But I don't think my books are thrillers in the sense that you're like sweating it out. Because when I read a thriller, I am sweating it out. So I like to think of mine as traditional mysteries in the vein of Agatha Christie.

08:00 specifically her Hercule Perot series, where you have a detective who sees everything the reader sees so that you are essentially in Susan's shoes. You see everything she does. Her interiority is your interiority, and you get to follow along and kind of think about it. And I think that's the difference between a traditional mystery and a thriller. And the reason I would say it's not a cozy, even though there are elements of cozy, that small town, a father, daughter.

08:30 a lot of quirky characters. There are darker subjects in my book, so I would not characterize it as a cozy, although some people say it again straddles cozy mystery and then some people say it straddles mystery thriller. So I don't know. If you like any of them, they're all for you. It's all for you. Yes. My book is for you. If you want to hallmark mystery. Exactly.

08:58 with some dark elements to it. With a little bit of a lifetime twist. I like it. That could be a whole new channel that we could just create for everybody. Exactly. So if your first book was out at 2021, what were you doing before then? I was working the nine to five in marketing and sales roles. Mostly I started in the publishing, magazine publishing, in marketing communications, you know, writing ad copy, writing...

09:28 you know, brochure copy. And then I moved into ad sales and then into sort of more like technology content marketing. I would say through the later part of my life, even I had a, one of my favorite jobs was I was the sponsorship director of America's Test Kitchen. Oh yeah. You know, like, the Cooks Illustrated magazine. And so it was my job to bring in those sponsors that you see at the beginning of a PBS program, you know, this is brought to you by, and they get 15 seconds to say their two cents.

09:57 That's what I did for a while. I loved it, but you know, moved on. My last job was very tech-oriented and I really missed being creative. And actually when I was once between jobs, I wrote a novel. I wrote *The Deep You Dig*. It's available on Amazon. I had no intention of selling it. It was really just, can I do this? Like, can I write? And that's more of like a family secrets and lies. It didn't really feel like it fit any particular genre. It wasn't the direction I wanted to go.

10:27 But COVID hit and my kids convinced me that I should throw it up on Amazon because if anything happens to me, at least I'd have a book out there. I'm like, okay, that's kind of morbid,

but why not? I have a little legacy. So I got an editor, I got it prepared, and I put it up there, but I was already writing *The Disappearance of Trudy Solomon* at that point. And I was actually quite far with it. So.

10:53 I like the Debuting. I think it's a great first book. Everyone who reads it, I've got tons of strangers on there praising it. So I think I'm proud of it. And so I put it up there. I did not want to just stick it in a shelf like a lot of authors do with their baby novels. I really wanted it out there. But that's not what I wanted. When I wrote *The Disappearance of Judy Solomon*, I truly had a vision of going the traditional route with it. So.

11:22 I felt like I was writing a book that had a clear genre and a clear marketing path. Although you have to admit that there has to be a market for your book in order for agents or publishers of business to take you on. I had that clear vision in my head when I sat down to write *The Disappearance of Trudy Solomon*. Let's talk about how you are writing it. What goes into writing these novels? How do you do it?

11:49 What rituals do you have? Give us some of those details. So I generally get a spark of an idea from like a real life experience. So the *Disciplines of Trudy Solomon*, I was reading the *Boston Globe* and I came across an article about a woman named Flora Stevens who went missing in the mid 1970s. She was a waitress at the Concord Hotel in the Catskills region of New York. And I spent my summers, every summer of my life in the Catskills, my father was the...

12:18 activities director at the Hotel Brickman. So I have a really fond memories, very fond memories of the area, very fond coming of age experience and a very great relationship with my own dad, which I think sort of helped the idea process about a daughter father detective team. Anyway, so Flora Stevens goes missing in the mid 70s. And fast forward 2018, skeletal remains are found on the side of the road.

12:46 And everyone assumes it's Flora Stevens. And one of the detectives, I don't know, on a whim decides to put her social security number in the database. And he gets a ping in a memory care facility in Lowell, Massachusetts. And he decides to track it down. He brings her old ID and he travels with his partner.

13:10 They meet her and they establish that she is indeed Flora Stevens. They don't know who the skeletal remains belong to. And I read this article and I was like, oh, first of all, I was in the cat schools in the mid 1970s. I never heard this story of a woman gone missing. And at the time I would have been like 13 years old. I mean, I think I would have like, that's interesting. I would have stuck with you. Yeah. But anyway, so I called the Monticello police and I was like, so what's the story? Like...

13:39 Did anything happen to her? Like, why did she disappear? They don't know, and she can't tell them because she has dementia. So I was like, this is really interesting. I'm just really curious. What happens to a woman who disappears for 30 years and shows up and the detectives find her in memory care? So I decided I would fictionalize the story. Like, okay, and

tie the skeletal remains into the story as well. I was like, so it was the seed of the idea. I changed Flora Stevens' name to Trudy Solomon and just made it up.

14:09 So my process is I'm a panzer, as I like to say, an intuitive writer. I just, I sit down every day and I let the characters lead me along the way. And I think like writing a detective novel, but as a panzer, to me, it's like they find a clue. And so where does that lead them? So it's sort of, it's taking them along. It's taking me along on a journey, but I get to make it up as I go along. And then when I finished

14:39 the novel, so I know who did it. I know who did it, so I know where I'm going. I know I have beats in my head, where I want there to be a change in the story, a twist, a reveal, so I pepper those in. And then when I finish writing the first draft, and I usually am an underwriter, I aim for about 72,000 words on a first draft. When I'm finished with that first draft, and I edit along the way, every day I come to my novel, I read, I...

15:08 I read the scene I wrote the day before, I kind of clean it up a little bit and I move on. And when I get to the end of the novel, I quickly go back and read it again without doing any edits whatsoever. I just read it, I get it in my head, then I put it away for like a couple of weeks. And I don't think, and I'm like, okay, just, I need a break. And then I go back to it with pure editing in mind.

15:35 and I'll feather in clues and read herrings and add subtext and see a fixed dialogue and read it out loud and make sure it sounds realistic and that there's no plot holes and all the things that you have to do when you're editing a novel. And I reverse outline. So also after I finish writing, then I outline what I wrote. So I can go back to it and say, okay, this happened six days ago. So this needs to happen now. Right? So I keep track.

16:05 after I write it. This is fascinating. I love it. And I greatly appreciate that you edit as you go because that's how I am. If I see the squiggle line, I have to edit and I will go back and, okay, no, no, this doesn't make sense. I'll make notes to myself. Whereas I've heard other authors tell me, no, you just got to do the shitty rough draft, you know, and just get it up there and don't edit as you go. And I'm like, okay, but no, I'm very type A. I have to edit as I go. It also helps me.

16:34 get reinvigorated for the day. So I have this, I hear this from a lot of authors that a lot of ideas come to them in either the point where they're falling asleep or the point where they're waking up. And for me, it's the waking up, although I do think about it when I go to sleep. My scene ends, I usually write to the end of a scene. I try not to sort of end in the middle of a scene. I write to the end of a scene and then I'm in either my sleeping state, going to sleep state or waking state, I'm thinking through the next scene, what is happening next.

17:04 to actually come to writing in the morning with some ideas to where this is going from that waking state. I don't have to write anything down. If I repeat it in my head enough, it actually kind of sticks. Sometimes I'm mad at myself. I'm like, oh my God, I know I thought of some really great dialogue, but I can't think what it was. But I have a general idea in my head. And so that's generally how it goes. Now.

17:28 And we'll get into this a little bit later, but when I was writing *The Disappearance of Trudy Solomon* and *the Murder of Madison Garcia*, and even *The Summer of Love and Death*, I was easily writing a thousand words a day. My goal was a thousand words a day, and I would usually go over that. And I had all morning, I was leisurely, I would write from seven in the morning till noon and have lunch. And if I wanted, I'd go back to it. And I had all this time, and now not so much. So it's sort of...

17:57 where my husband's dilemma comes into play here. So he's a writer, a critically acclaimed writer of literary fiction and crime fiction. And he was my sounding board. He was my early editor for both *The Disappearance of Trudy Solomon* and even a little bit for *The Murder of Madison Garcia*. When I handed him *The Summer of Love and Death* and he gave me his notes back.

18:27 They were superficial, they weren't clear. And I really, there were other stuff going on at the time and I was like, okay, this is a little strange, what he's saying, the comments that he's providing. And that was the beginning, that was about two and a half years ago and sort of early indications that he was in cognitive decline. He's up until the summer of love and death, he was very integral.

18:56 in making me a better writer. He would read stuff and say, oh, Marcy, you could do better than that. Or that is one tortured metaphor, please. So he would go through it and he would really say, you need more interiority here. You need to let the reader know what Susan is feeling, thinking, seeing. And he would hand it back to me and I would write that scene, hand it to him. And he would say, you did it.

19:25 When that was not happening anymore, when he couldn't communicate at that level anymore, that was one of the many signals I was receiving that there was something terribly wrong. And so you bring us to the perfect point of where we want to talk about Lou and how we connected. Thankfully, we connected through, of course, our friend, the Pi Lady books, staff Parker Smith.

19:54 And I saw that she had created a pie out of Lou's upcoming book and the story behind it. And of course, when I saw what she was doing, I'm like, I have to reach out, let's do something together too. So that's how we've connected. And why don't you start by sharing with us who Lou is, what his background is, what he's written before and what's going on now.

20:21 So Lou McCreary is my husband. Like I said, he is a critically acclaimed author. I mean, he's had reviews by John Banville and Anne Rice and the *New York Times* for his first two books, *Mount's Mistake* and *The Minus Man*. And *The Minus Man* was adapted to a film starring Owen Wilson and Jeanine Garofalo and Mercedes-Rue Ryan Cox. So, and it's also considered like a cult classic. So it didn't do, it was at Sundance Film Festival.

20:50 It didn't do well in the theaters, but it somehow, you know, is one of those movies that when we mentioned it, they're like, oh my God, the minus sign, like people like know it on this other level. So anyway, so, but when he wrote those books, he was also the editorial director of

a magazine company called CXO Media, which was like a business technology magazine. And that was his full-time job. So after he wrote those two novels, he was really...

21:18 writing novels as a hobby on the weekends. He wasn't interested, I shouldn't say he wasn't interested in getting them published, but he really wasn't focused on getting them published. And he wrote several novels. And when he finally retired, and actually he worked at Harvard Business Review, and then he did ghost writing for other authors, generally like academics who were writing business books and needed.

21:42 And she did these books to sort of appeal to readers. So Lou would help with getting a natural narrative around them. So when he retired, he was actually writing two books, The Thirteenth Step, the one that we're going to talk about, and Adopted Country. So he actually has another book in the drawer that if we can figure it out, we'll do the same thing.

22:06 But this has to be successful, and this has to sort of work for me to consider Adopt a Country, which is literary fiction. So this book, The 13th Step, clearly fell into the crime fiction category. It's so brilliantly written. Definitely, it needed to be edited, and he just, like he couldn't help me edit my own book, he couldn't edit his own book. He couldn't even get it to a point where he felt comfortable getting it out to agents and publishers, because it wasn't ready yet. And I met...

22:36 an editor of a publishing company, and she said she'd be happy to read it, at least to evaluate if it was ready for publication. And she got back to me after a few months, she says, again, brilliantly written, original, unique, and it needs a developmental edit. But a developmental edit is where an editor is still telling you what to do. I mean, they're giving you guidance and advice, and you still have to do it. And he just did not have the capacity anymore to do that. So.

23:04 Lou is squarely in mild dementia at this point, meaning his short-term memory, I mean, just to lay it out there, shot to hell. And he just can't plan ahead. He can't problem solve, he can't troubleshoot. He can no longer drive. He can no longer write an email. He could dictate an email to me, but he can't get it from his brain to his fingers. It's sad. Dementia robs you. I'm gonna cry. I mean, it robs you.

23:33 of everything, your livelihood. And it meant everything to get this book out, is quite possibly his last book. It was done to a point where there's no reason this should not be out in the world. So I went to another conference, spoke to a number of editors, met John Didakis, really hit it off, connected him with Lou over Zoom. Lou felt the guy.

23:58 got his vision, what needed to be done with this book. We also provided to John all of the feedback that we had gotten actually from agents and editors regarding what needed to be done with the book. So, I mean, it wasn't some huge fix, but you know, you wanna go out there with the best product you can go out with. So John edits the book and he actually took out a lot of scenes and a lot of characters that I...

24:22 And a lot of people who had critiqued the books said that if you could shave it down a bit, it would certainly help with propulsion and focus and pacing. So those were the three things that he was looking for. And we took those vignettes that ended up on the cutting room floor and we created short stories out of them. So that I was able to help with. So I am not an editor. Everyone said to me, well, Marcy, why don't you edit the book? Okay, wait, what? No, I'm a writer.

24:50 Editing is a completely different skill set. It just so happens that Lou is a writer and an editor. I think that's like a rare breed. I think John Didakis is a writer and an editor, which I think is one of the reasons why he connected with Lou and why we really thought he was the right person for this job. But as it turns out, not a single word was added, changed in the novel. There was no reason for that. It was merely...

25:14 a fix of pacing, propulsion, deleting. So you have like the director's cut and you have the editor's cut. The editor's cut is what's up on Kickstarter. We might do director's cut, you know, author's cut where the entirety of the original book is also made available. Maybe we'll do that for stage two when we go to Amazon. But a friend of mine, Dana Claire, who happens to be an author with Campcat Books, I saw her give a marketing talks.

25:42 I can't even remember where, some webinar, and she mentions Kickstarter. It never even occurred to me that Kickstarter is a place to fund a book. Getting a book out there is expensive. I thought, okay, maybe we can fund this and not only do a paperback and an ebook like we would do on Amazon, but get a special edition hardcover, get an audiobook, get those short stories out, package them in a really cool way.

26:05 Giveaway copies of the Minus Man signed. Giveaway another short story. He's got short stories in his computer that I found and I was like, oh my God. Oh my God, this short story is so great. So I threw that in. And so we created packages around his novel. And I spent months with Dana sort of understanding how Kickstarter works, how to make it, and how public should we go with Lou's dementia diagnosis? He is a private person.

26:34 But you know what, the more he thought about it, the more he read about how he can advocate for Alzheimer's Association, we're gonna do the longest day fundraiser. We're actually going to choose an audio book to listen to the entire day. That's gonna be our longest day challenge, the longest day being the longest day of the summer. So we're gonna start fundraising for that after this Kickstarter thing is over. So you're gonna see more requests for money from me. So I'm, so.

27:04 So once we understood how Kickstarter worked, we just decided to go ahead and we'll see. I mean, there's a lot of work ahead of me when this, if this gets funded, and we're just shy of getting funded, but if this gets funded, you know, then the hard work starts. I have to get everything manufactured and produced. So I'm actually, we asked for enough funding to sort of subsidize the project.

27:32 So I am, so even though someone says to me, well, you hit your goal, you're golden. I'm like, nah, not really. I mean, that was just so that we can get it off the grounds. It really needs, you really need so much more than that to, you know, first of all, to compensate Lou, you know, in some respect. But also there are things that are just more expensive than just the \$5,000 that we're looking to raise. So I'm, my goal is to raise 12 grand. So we'll see.

28:01 What are we at today? That would make, we're at 4,800. Oh, okay. With, we're halfway there. So and we're going to a big party where all of his ex colleagues are, all of the people that he mentored are there. So I'm going to hand out postcards with a QR code. Yes, yes, I love it. Like hey, you know, think of all the things Lou did for you. I love it. And this is how we connected as I saw the Kickstarter and I was like, well,

28:28 outside of the Kickstarter, which I contributed to, you know, how else can we connect and get this? Yeah, I want some signed copies. No, this means a lot to me. You know, I believe in what you're doing for Lou and, you know, other people have to be listening and think about what does happen when you're in the middle of something and then you get a medical diagnosis or you don't even have the diagnosis, but something goes wrong.

28:58 I've shared on my show before, I had a pulmonary embolism after my 41st birthday. I luckily went to the ER in time and spent five days there, but if I had waited, then I wouldn't be here talking to you now. I had a book in the works. What happens when we are in the middle of something? Because we don't know what's going to happen tomorrow. We absolutely don't know. You are taking on this project of making sure that Lou's legacy.

29:27 continues and the words that he's written down are accessible to the rest of us, you know, while he's still here too. While he's still here and can enjoy it. Like, yes, he's a mild dementia, borderline mild, moderate. He'll not, I mean, he, he, first of all, he is by my side while I work on all of the marketing materials. If you go to the Kickstarter page, you will see that he has recorded a video. I mean, that was not easy. He's doing sentence by sentence and I'm...

29:56 editing it together, but he is very excited about this. And he works with me on all of the marketing campaigns that we've put together. I'm not just working in a vacuum. We discuss everything, what the emails are gonna say, what the marketing message is going to say. I read it out loud to him and he still, first of all, he can still spell. Like, this is just me. Lou, how do you spell interloper? Some of the other day, he just rattles it off. But.

30:25 his vocabulary is beginning to fade a little bit and he can't finish a sentence. So you have to be very patient. Like you have to be very, I am not a patient person and it's really, and I have, you have to be very practiced. I mean, some things that people like, one of the things, one of the interesting things about to mention, I don't think people know this unless they're like living with someone, especially the early stages, what it looks like. And it's funny, in my first book,

30:55 I have the whole subplot is about this woman with dementia, right? Lew was not diagnosed with dementia when I wrote that book. It wasn't even on my mind. In this book, in the Summer, Love, and Death, I told you that we spent more time on the developmental edit. I

needed to come up with a new subplot because the original subplot wasn't working in the original story. My editor wanted me to find a different way for Susan and Vera to interact. So I gave Vera.

31:24 mild cognitive disability, because she was an alcoholic, Susan misinterprets it as a sign. She thinks her mother is drinking because that's what it looks like. It's just, it's baffling. You're constantly saying to yourself, like, what the hell? Like, what? Like, is he listening? Like, how many times do I have to say this? It's, in the beginning, it's not that you're in denial. It's just that it's, you don't know what to look for. One of the early things he did, so, you know, if you're

31:54 audience out there is wondering. I might say, Michelle and I had a great talk on her podcast. She is such an amazing person. Who's she? I mean, all I was talking about was Michelle. There wasn't another person in that. So I have to say, Michelle and I, we just had a great podcast. Michelle is an amazing person. Michelle knows how to ask questions. Michelle, you have to use proper nouns all the time.

32:24 I have to use proper nouns all the time. And that's hard for you. Let's talk about you too, because as hard as this is for Lou, this is, I almost wanna say it's gotta be harder for you. I think, you know, my father has dementia, cortical dementia, and so my mom is going through the same thing. My mom is 83, my dad is 83. My mom, thank God, is sharp as a tack, physically fit. I mean, she can exercise me under the table.

32:53 But she looks at my life and her life and she says, look, I'm 83, I've been married to your dad like for right from the day, you're 61. I mean, so, you know, it's isolating. I can't go anywhere unless I have someone to sort of cover for me because Lou can no longer cook or drive, but he can take care of himself. And so I want people to understand that too. He can take care of himself, but he can't.

33:22 he can't help out in any way and he can't do certain chores. So that falls on me. And you might say, well, you know, it's, how hard can that be? But I don't have the luxury. So to go back to the beginning of our conversation about my writing these days, I maybe get to write for one to two hours. I maybe get to write 300 words a day. It is not consistent anymore. And it's taking me a really long time to write.

33:51 my new novel, which is not a Ford family novel. It is a completely standalone, different police procedural set in Boston. And I don't have the time anymore, uh, to dedicate to it. That's how much time is taken away. Because you're a caregiver. I'm a caregiver and I have no problem with that. I just wish other people would understand sometimes. Yeah, no, I'm serious, but I need a break. I need a break. So.

34:18 So his family comes, like his sister just came so that I can go to the Hamptons who done it. And his daughter came last year so I can go to BoucherCon. So things like that, that needs to be done for my sake as well as his sake, for my sake, because the caregiver needs a break. I mean, it's just a really hard thing. So, and I'm also like...

34:39 I shouldn't say like I'm not writing just because of him. I'm also not writing because I'm doing the Kickstarter campaign. So I have this other project, which I'm really loving. So it's not like it's a whole day of caregiving. It's also doing this Kickstarter project that's taking me away from writing my own novel. I am so okay with that. That is a passion project. So if that's what takes me away from writing, great.

35:06 What's burdensome is sort of like thinking about how much harder this is going to get. And I'm just being honest. I mean, I'm just saying, I'm just being honest when I say it's, it is harder, I think, than I would ever have imagined or that anyone could imagine. And, you know, I love Lou, but he's not Lou, you know? I'm just, to be really honest here, I mean, it's just, and that's crazy hard to deal with.

35:36 We had a neighbor who recently moved away. We've lived here for 13, 14 years. And I started seeing some signs of, oh, she's telling me the same story that she told me yesterday. And it happened over and over. And finally her daughters, because they lived a few hours away, came and said, oh, we're gonna move her because she needs help. I took her to the bank and she had gotten something in the mail that it was an acronym for like...

36:03 when you have an estate and my husband's name is Ted, and it said like Ted et al or something like that, right? And she told the bank manager, I think that you've messed up my neighbor's mail with mine. And I went, oh no, and you brought me here? Like what is going on? And you don't realize how much more there is and when they can't drive and when they can't go to the grocery store and somebody needs to be there to help them. And...

36:29 Thank God the woman has you, that you're there. This woman was all by herself. The grocery store thing is so like, Lou went shopping every day or every other day because he would say, what are we having for dinner? And I would say, apricot chicken. Off he would go. He knew all the ingredients and he'd come back. He just enjoyed it. He enjoyed going shopping. So when that stopped, in the very beginning, it was like he just couldn't remember what to get at the grocery store and even lists weren't helping. You'd come back with either half this stuff or all this crazy stuff.

36:58 There was one point I opened up the pantry and there's like 10 jars of apricot jam because he kept thinking I was making apricot chicken. So there's some funny stuff. So you take that stuff for granted because all of a sudden I have to go grocery shopping. I had to learn how to go grocery shopping. I was doing what he was doing going every day. And I was like, I can't do this. It took me like, I went to four or five different grocery stores to kind of find a grocery store that I at least felt at peace at.

37:26 There's this local little grocery store near me that go at eight o'clock in the morning on Mondays. I'm pretty much there by myself and I take my time and I get a week's worth of groceries, which I'd never done my entire life. I mean, like Lou would go out and he would get whatever we were having for dinner. I was like, you know. So all of a sudden this stuff is thrust upon me that I took for granted how he cleaned up after dinner or, you know, or just.

37:56 did the laundry or we were very split or I would just be able to walk out the door and go wherever I wanted. And I just don't have that luxury or freedom anymore. So you really have to kind of figure out how to compartmentalize your life. So for these couple of hours I'm going to write and these couple of hours I'm going to do Kickstarter and these couple of hours I'm going to do marketing.

38:25 and then I gotta go shopping and do chores and. While ensuring that he's okay and taking care of it at the same time. Right, yeah, I don't think I have to entertain him all day. Right, but you wanna make sure he's okay and especially if his short-term memory isn't there, then you know. Yeah, yeah, I mean, not only is his short-term memory not there, but he also has no idea of what's.

38:52 supposed to happen in the future. You mentioned a lot of dementia patients do repeat themselves over and over again. He actually doesn't do that. What he does is he just doesn't know what's going on. So he might say, when is my sister leaving? When she left two days ago? Or is Molly going to be showing his daughter, oh, is she showing up today? Is she coming this morning? Do you have to go to the airport? I'm like, there's no, she's not coming. I mean, there's no plan for it.

39:21 And if he does ask me the same question a few times in a row, I just answer very directly and short, like just like, oh yeah, you know, John Smith said that he really liked whatever. So, and that's it. And then I try to end the conversation. I am not gonna say, oh God, we just talked about this. He doesn't know.

39:42 Oh, God bless you. That's hard. I understand how hard that is. Yeah, I just frustrated. I think I'm definitely getting better at it. Like in the beginning, you do all the wrong things and everybody has to accept that. I belong to a caregiver group. We meet every Thursday. It's wonderful because it's all of us in the same boat. And we usually just, it's a bitch and bone session and we're laughing and...

40:07 This other woman comes by and she goes, what is this group? What are you guys doing in here? And we're like, oh, we're a dementia caregiver group. And she's like, what? You guys are all laughing in here. I'm like, what are we supposed to do? Like, sit near and cry? That makes me happy to hear that you have a group to get together with every week. And I have my mom. So my mom and I call and trade stories and it's helpful. So.

40:33 My dad, my dad, I mean, like I said, like my dad was my inspiration for the Will Ford character. And again, he started showing signs of dementia around the same time as Lou, interestingly enough. And I wanna also tell people, one thing that I learned, my father was hard of hearing for quite a while, it didn't do anything about it. It exacerbates dementia. So I just wanna tell your audience right now.

40:59 If someone you love has trouble hearing, like you notice they're saying what a lot, for the love of God, get hearing aids. I tell my children, the minute I start saying what, or it seems like I'm, get hearing aids, because lack of hearing does exacerbate dementia. Brings it on faster, or

it triggers it, or there is tons of research behind this. Have your ears checked when you're older. Get hearing aids. It is not, having hearing aids is less of a stigma than having dementia. I mean,

41:28 Now, Lew doesn't really have hearing issues. This is my father and my belief about what happened to my dad. So I just throwing it out there that it's just something that I recognized and I wish we were more forceful in getting him hearing aids much earlier than we did. Isn't it funny when you're in school, I remember in childhood, like elementary school, they check your ears and then it's like it goes away. It's not like going to the dentist or the eye doctor where...

41:56 or the OB-GYN where every year you're supposed to go and you get reminders, you just don't. It's crazy because when Lou was having a little bit of difficulty hearing, he was saying what a lot, it was really annoying me. Well, he went for a general. He asked to see a specialist and we went to an audiologist and it turns out they were like, well, you have the, he was born in 1947, you have the 1947 model, so you're pretty good, but you have wax, a lot of wax in one ear. They removed the wax.

42:25 and he stopped saying what. So it wasn't a physical loss of hearing issue, it was something, wax in his ear. And I'm noticing it again, so I have a feeling there's a buildup of wax again. So he took care of this like a year and a half ago. Having your hearing tip-top, because you're taking information, you're storing information, you need to hear, and if you're not hearing and you're faking it,

42:52 you're not using your brain. I mean, I think that's probably tied to it in some way. I mean, I'm not Dr. McCreary here, but it just, it certainly feels that way. So can you share where everybody can find the Kickstarter, where they can find your book, where they can learn more about you and Lou and what's going on so everyone can stay updated and support you?

43:12 So if you go to [kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com), because the URL is long, so I'm not gonna say it here. Well, it'll be in the show notes. Okay, so all you have to do is go to [kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com) and you just search on Lou McCreary or the 13th step, and you will see his campaign. The campaign ends on April 30th. It was a 30-day campaign, started April 1st, ends April 30th. And although I believe that we will meet our funding goal, I mean, all contributions after that are still going to the manufacturing distribution.

43:42 of this book, it means I can get a better narrator for the audio book. It means I can do more marketing when we do, when we try to promote the book in other ways. So really every dollar helps. And also to compensate Lou for the work he did. And he spent years on this book. He should be paid like any other author gets paid. So, you know, I'm hoping to raise enough money so that, you know, kind of he gets paid for his work. So yeah, so I mean, that's.

44:11 It's a really easy thing to do. I think people are very scared of Kickstarter. I hear that a lot. Oh, I don't know what to do. I went on, it seemed intimidating. It's easy. Just take your time. Read through it. You could pledge a dollar and you could pledge as little as five for an ebook. And I think the highest price thing is like \$75 for the package. And then there are add-ons like

the short stories and you can get a signed copy of the Minus Man. You can contribute more than, you know.

44:41 Well, you know, more than just what to get the physical package. So yeah, there's a lot of ways to participate in the campaign. Thank you so much, Marcy. Thank you for sharing your story, Lou's story, and for really educating all of us, you know, on your journey and what we need to look for and how we can help others, yourself included. I appreciate you very much.

45:04 Well, thank you, Michelle, for having me on the show. But really, if I help one person, one person to recognize what is happening to a loved one, the earlier you get intervention, the better. There are medications out there. They just slow the progress. It is inevitable what's going to happen. But really, you know, really don't feel that this is a stigma in any way. Every day there are more breakthroughs that I'm reading about. Maybe too late for Lou.

45:34 but not too late for our generation. So, you know, really pay attention to the fact that we have an aging population and this is a real problem, not just the US, but I mean around the world, for young people to really pay attention to what's happening to their parents and making sure that there's an intervention plan early on. Thank you, Marcy.

46:03 Thank you, Michelle. Friends, I hope that if you take anything away from this conversation, it's that life is short, life is precious, and we all deserve to have a part of us left with the world, a legacy. And that's what Lou's book is doing. That is what Marcy is ensuring by being his caregiver and by writing her own books as well.

46:30 So I really encourage you to contribute to this Kickstarter, to follow Lou and Marcy and their story, and to take care and compassion for those who are the caregivers and those who are struggling with dementia, and to pay attention to any signs or signals that you might see as well, because you can help slow down the process of this diagnosis.

46:56 And although we don't have a cure and it isn't going away anytime soon that we know of, we should all be more patient with one another. We don't know what's going on in someone's life. We don't know what it's like to be a caregiver in a lot of instances or to be that person who has to be cared for. So take all of these life lessons and cherish what you have today and look differently at those around you. Have some patience.

47:25 and contribute where you can. Be supportive whenever you can. And if you have a dollar, \$5, whatever it may be, I encourage you to join the Kickstarter so that we can all see Lou's work come to fruition.