SERIAL KILLERS

EPISODE 1: WHAT ARE THEY? WHO ARE THEY? WHY DO THEY DO WHAT THEY DO?

A serial killer is broadly defined as a person who has murdered three or more people, to satisfy various motives, usually their abnormal psychological or sexual gratification, with the murders taking place over a long period of time, with a significant “cooling period” between two consecutive incidents. Now, the definition of this “cooling period” varies from place to place and authority to authority, an average time-span of 10 days to 1 month can be considered as convention.

Speaking about motives, the motive for a serial killing ranges from visionary, mission-oriented killings to killings on hedonistic grounds or for assertion of power/control over the victims. For example, a serial killer can make you a victim of their attacks out of pure anger or after examining you for many days. The way in which serial killers select their victims varies from case to case, but mostly we see that all the victims have something or the other in common, like, demographic profile, appearance, gender, or race. This is also one point that kind of differentiates them a little from a mass murderer, or a spree killer. Most serial killers had a specific motive behind their doings, but there are some cases, like in the Zodiac killer case, where the exact motive behind the killings is yet unknown to any man.

Moving forward to the psychological outlook of a serial killer, the way in which a serial killer views the world is quite different than any normal man. Many serial killers were found to be mentally unstable and psychologically weaker or lesser matured than a normal adult after being brought in and tested. But there were quite a few who were considered mentally “sane” as per modern psychological rules of testing, leading to the generation of the idea that such people suffered from psychotic breaks with reality, sometimes swapping their personalities or believing they are compelled to kill by entities such as the Devil or God. Others were often compelled to commit murders for their drive for “lust”, “thrill” or “comfort”.