

= Adrian Monk =

Adrian Monk is a title character and the protagonist of the USA Network television series Monk , portrayed by Tony Shalhoub . He is a renowned former homicide detective for the San Francisco Police Department . Monk has obsessive @-@ compulsive disorder (OCD) and multiple phobias , all of which intensified after the murder of his wife Trudy , resulting in his suspension from the department . He works as a private police homicide consultant and undergoes therapy with the ultimate goal of overcoming his grief , taking control of his phobias and disorder , and being reinstated as a police detective .

Series co @-@ creator David Hoberman says that he based Monk partly on himself , and also on other fictional detectives , such as Lt. Columbo , Hercule Poirot and Sherlock Holmes . Other actors considered for the role included Dave Foley , John Ritter , Henry Winkler , Stanley Tucci , Alfred Molina and Michael Richards . The network eventually chose Shalhoub because they felt he could " bring the humor and passion of Monk to life . " Stanley Tucci and Alfred Molina had guest appearances on Monk , with Tucci appearing in season 5 episode " Mr. Monk and the Actor " , and Molina appearing in season 6 episode " Mr. Monk and the Naked Man " .

Both Monk and Shalhoub have garnered many accolades . Monk was included in Bravo 's list of The 100 Greatest Television Characters of All Time , and Shalhoub has won various awards for his portrayal , including a Golden Globe Award , three Primetime Emmy Awards and two Screen Actors Guild Awards .

On The Best Show on August 18 , 2015 , former Monk executive producer Tom Scharpling confirmed that the character has died of " natural causes " since the ending of the show .

= = Character development = =

= = = Creation = = =

Monk was originally envisioned as a " more goofy and physical " Inspector Clouseau type of character . However , co @-@ creator David Hoberman came up with the idea of a detective with obsessive @-@ compulsive disorder . This was inspired by his own bout with self @-@ diagnosed obsessive @-@ compulsive disorder ; in a Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette interview , he stated that , " Like Monk , I couldn 't walk on cracks and had to touch poles . I have no idea why ? but if I didn 't do these things , something terrible would happen . "

Other fictional inspirations include Columbo and Sherlock Holmes , and his obsession with neatness and order may be an homage to Hercule Poirot . Like Holmes , and occasionally Poirot , Monk is accompanied by an earnest assistant with little or no detective ability , similar to Doctor Watson and Captain Hastings , respectively ; Monk 's two major allies from the police department , Captain Stottlemeyer and Lieutenant Disher (credited as " Deacon " in the pilot episode) , are reminiscent of Inspector Lestrade and Chief Inspector Japp , Holmes 's and Poirot 's well @-@ meaning but ineffectual respective police counterparts . In addition , Monk has a brother whose abilities of deduction are even more amazing than his , yet much more geographically limited due to his own personal problems , somewhat in the style of Mycroft Holmes (who is more adept than Sherlock but also notoriously lazy) .

When trying to think of a possible name for the character , co @-@ creator Andy Breckman decided to look for a " simple monosyllabic last name . "

= = = Casting = = =

Co @-@ creator David Hoberman revealed that the casting sessions were " depressing " . USA Network 's executive vice president Jeff Wachtel stated that looking for the right actor to portray Monk was " casting hell " . After two years of developing , the producers still had not found an actor to play the part . Although Michael Richards was considered , distributors of the show ABC and

Touchstone worried that the audience would typecast him for more comedic roles after his previous work as Cosmo Kramer on the sitcom series Seinfeld . After Richards dropped out of the project , he went on to star in another series about a private detective , The Michael Richards Show , which was canceled after six episodes .

= = Personality = =

= = = Phobias = = =

In the script for the pilot , " Mr. Monk and the Candidate " , Monk is described as being " a modern day Sherlock Holmes " , only " nuts . " In the introductory scene of the episode , he is examining the scene of Nicole Vasques ' murder , and picks up several important clues , but frequently interrupts himself to wonder aloud whether he left his stove on when he left the house that morning . In the season 6 episode " Mr. Monk and the Daredevil " , Monk mentions that he has 312 phobias . The strongest of these phobias are : germs , dentists , sharp or pointed objects , milk , vomiting , death and dead things , snakes , crowds , heights , fear , mushrooms , and small spaces , as Monk also mentions in the season 2 episode " Mr. Monk and the Very Very Old Man " . In addition , new phobias develop at seemingly random intervals , such as a temporary fear of blankets at the end of the season 5 episode " Mr. Monk Gets a New Shrink " . Though it is impossible to determine his strongest phobia , there does appear to be some form of hierarchy between them : in the series finale " Mr. Monk and the End " , it is made clear that his fear of vomiting is greater than his fear of death . He has also stated , " Snakes trump heights ! " .

Due to his overpowering fear of germs , Monk refuses to touch door handles and other common objects with his bare hands , avoids contact with anything dirty , and always uses sanitary wipes after human contact , including basic handshakes . He is also unable to eat food that other people have touched , as shown in the season 7 episode " Mr. Monk Falls in Love " when he and Leyla Zlatavich go out to a Zemenian restaurant .

= = = Assistants = = =

Monk 's phobias and anxiety disorders make him depend on personal assistants , who drive him around , do his shopping , and always carry a supply of wipes for his use , as shown in episodes like " Mr. Monk Meets the Playboy " , " Mr. Monk Goes to the Carnival " , etc . They also take an active role in organizing his consultancy work , and sometimes investigate cases themselves . His first assistant , Sharona Fleming (Bitty Schram) , is a single mother and practical nurse by profession , hired by the police department to help Monk recover from the three @-@ year catatonic state he lapsed into after Trudy 's death . After several years of loyal service , Sharona leaves the show in season 3 to return to New Jersey and remarry her ex @-@ husband Trevor . After her abrupt departure , Monk has a chance meeting with Natalie Teeger (Traylor Howard) , whom he hires as his new assistant starting in " Mr. Monk and the Red Herring " .

= = = Fixations = = =

Monk carries out futile and endless attempts to make the world " balanced . " Monk is fixated with symmetry , going so far as to always cut his pancakes into squares . He strongly prefers familiarity and rigorous structure in his activities . Monk only drinks Sierra Springs water throughout seasons 1 ? 5 and a fictional brand (Summit Creek) throughout seasons 6 ? 8 , to the point that in the season 2 episode " Mr. Monk Goes to Mexico " , Monk goes without drinking for several days because he cannot find any Sierra Springs . Monk also has great difficulty in standard social situations , so much so that he must write down common small talk phrases on note cards in an attempt to successfully socialize . While his obsessive attention to minute detail cripples him socially , it makes him a gifted detective and profiler . He has a photographic memory , and can reconstruct entire crime scenes

based on little more than scraps of detail that seem unimportant to his colleagues . His trademark method of examining a crime scene , which Sharona used to call his " Zen Sherlock Holmes thing , " is to wander seemingly aimlessly around a crime scene , occasionally holding up his hands , as though framing a shot for a photograph . Shalhoub explained in an interview that Monk does this because it " isolates and cuts the crime scene into slices " and causes Monk to look at parts of the crime scene instead of the whole .

Monk 's delicate mental condition means that his ability to function can be severely impaired by a variety of factors . One example is shown during the season 5 episode " Mr. Monk and the Garbage Strike " , in which the smell of garbage prevents Monk from being able to easily identify the murderer of sanitation union boss Jimmy Cusack . Another example : when entering a chaotic murder scene in the episode " Mr. Monk Meets Dale the Whale " , his first impulse is to straighten the lamps , though he is frequently able to hold off his fixations when examining bodies or collecting evidence . Even though Monk 's mental state in the series is said to be a result of his wife 's death , he shows signs of OCD in flashbacks dating back to childhood . To deal with his OCD and phobias , Monk visits a psychiatrist ? Dr. Charles Kroger (Stanley Kamel) in the first six seasons and Dr. Neven Bell (Héctor Elizondo) in the last two seasons ? weekly , and at several points , daily .

Over the course of the show (roughly 8 years) , Monk overcomes many of his phobias and some aspects of his OCD . Though he hasn 't been cured of many of them , if any at all , he has been able to put them in the back of his mind when involved in case work . His most notable breakthrough is shown in the season 8 episode " Mr. Monk Goes to Group Therapy " , when Adrian is locked in a car trunk with his fellow OCD patient and personal rival , Harold Krenshaw . During the terrifying trip , both men overcome their longstanding case of claustrophobia (fear of small spaces) , as well as their own differences , resulting in them becoming friends . Possibly due to this , as well as the many cases Monk has solved over the years , he is reinstated as detective first class by Stottlemeyer in the season 8 episode " Mr. Monk and the Badge " . Though he is very excited about his reinstatement initially , Monk realizes that becoming a detective again didn 't mean that he would be happier . In a session with Dr. Bell , Monk realizes he was always happy as a private detective and consultant to the SFPD as his own boss . After overcoming his fear of heights and singlehandedly capturing a killer window @-@ washer , Monk turns in his badge . In the series finale , he learns that his late wife , Trudy , had given birth to a daughter before they had met . The knowledge and events of the episode lead to positive changes in his personality .

= = Character background = =

= = Childhood and family = =

Monk is of Welsh ancestry and was born October 17 , 1959 . This is shown in the episode " Happy Birthday , Mr. Monk " , which takes place on a Wednesday of the week of October 16 , 2009 (It is stated that his 50th birthday is the next day , which would be Thursday , October 17 , 2009) . Interestingly , this makes Monk almost exactly six years younger than his actor , as Tony Shalhoub 's birthday was October 9 , 1953 .

It is known he was born in the fictitious Marin County town of Tewksbury , to parents Agnes and Jack Monk , Sr. His parents were very strict and over @-@ protective . Adrian 's father , Jack Monk (Dan Hedaya) , abandoned the family when Adrian was eight years old when he went out for Chinese food and did not return . Adrian has an agoraphobic brother named Ambrose (John Turturro) , from whom he was estranged for seven years following Trudy 's death . Monk states that his mother died in 1994 . The episode " Mr. Monk and the Marathon Man " reveals that Monk ran track in high school , but quit when he entered college . The episode " Mr. Monk and the Other Detective " reveals that his alma mater is the University of California , Berkeley . In " Mr. Monk and the Class Reunion , " it is revealed that Monk had the nickname " Captain Cool " in college , and Natalie is amused to find that he got it from the fact he spent every weekend defrosting the student lounge refrigerator in his dormitory .

In the episode " Mr. Monk and the Three Pies , " it is revealed that Monk was angry at his brother for never contacting him after Trudy 's death . When the two are reunited , Ambrose admits he did not call Adrian because he believed that he was responsible for the incident . Trudy was getting Ambrose cough medicine and was in the store 's garage when she was killed .

Their father , Jack , remained unseen in the series until the season 5 episode " Mr. Monk Meets His Dad . " Jack explains that he did not return to his family because the message in his fortune cookie read " Stand by your man , " which he interpreted to mean that he should follow his own path . Adrian does not forgive his father at first , but warms up to him while assisting him on his duties as a truck driver . Jack mentions reading Sherlock Holmes stories to Adrian , who eventually learned to solve the mysteries before hearing the stories ' endings . At the end of the episode , Jack teaches Adrian how to ride a bike ? something he was not there to do when Adrian was a child . Jack also mentioned that he has a son from another wife , named Jack Jr . (Steve Zahn) . Monk later meets Jack Jr. in the episode " Mr. Monk 's Other Brother " , and helps to clear him of murder .

= = = Trudy 's death = = =

Throughout the series , Adrian mourns his wife Trudy (Melora Hardin / Stellina Rusich) , who was killed by a car bomb he believes was meant for him on December 14 , 1997 . The death of his wife exacerbated Monk 's already existing obsessive @-@ compulsive disorder (OCD) . One year later , the San Francisco Police Department granted him a psychological discharge . Monk calls it " a temporary suspension " and hopes to be reinstated . His grief over Trudy 's death is intense and with him every day of his life ; he has stated more than once that he is never truly happy and never expects to be truly happy ever again . Since Trudy 's death , Monk has been consulting with San Francisco police detectives on various cases .

As the series progresses , Monk makes several discoveries in his ongoing search for the man who killed his wife . He discovered that the car bomb was indeed meant for Trudy and was built by a man named Warrick Tennyson (Frank Collison) , who was hired by a six @-@ fingered man named Frank Nunn (Courtney Gains) . In the sixth @-@ season finale , he finally catches up with Nunn , who claims to be yet another pawn with no idea why Trudy was killed . This turns out to be part of a larger plot to have Nunn set up another bombing and then frame Monk for killing him ; he is shot before Monk can have him arrested or convince him to surrender the name of his employer in Trudy 's murder . Once Monk is cleared in Nunn 's death , the police find correspondence from Nunn dating back to the era of Trudy 's death . There are no names discovered , but there is a reference to the person responsible , referred to as " The Judge " . In the two @-@ part series finale , " Mr. Monk and the End " , it is revealed that " The Judge " is Ethan Rickover , an actual courtroom judge portrayed by Craig T. Nelson .

Trudy gave birth to a daughter , Molly Evans , on January 2 , 1983 . Had she not been adopted out and Trudy not murdered , this would technically make Adrian Molly 's stepfather .

= = = Music = = =

In the pilot episode " Mr. Monk and the Candidate " , Monk plays the clarinet during his visit of Trudy 's grave . His clarinet abilities show up again in " Mr. Monk and the Red @-@ Headed Stranger " when he is invited to play the clarinet with Willie Nelson . Though Monk is not seen playing the clarinet afterwards , it occasionally is brought up in conversation (such as during a conversation with Kris Keddar in " Mr. Monk Goes to a Rock Concert ") .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical reception = = =

Critical reviews of character Adrian Monk have been positive . Howard Rosenberg of the Los

Angeles Times called Monk " TV 's most original sleuth ever " . In a review of the show 's pilot , Tim Goodman of The San Francisco Chronicle stated : " With his history and his sympathetic but funny ' problems ' , he [Monk] becomes one of television 's most likable characters and floats a show that is , to be frank , riddled with improbability and simplicity " . Monk is ranked number 99 on Bravo 's list of The 100 Greatest Television Characters of All Time . He was named one of TV 's Smartest Detectives by AOL .

Shalhoub 's performance in the series has also been praised . Michael Sauter of Entertainment Weekly called Shalhoub 's performance " original and splendid " . Nancy Franklin of The New Yorker said that Shalhoub is " brilliant at conveying the tension between Monk 's desire to conquer his disorder and his dug @-@ in defense of his behavior " . Michael Abernethy of PopMatters describes Shalhoub 's performance as " exceptional " , and Melanie McFarland of the Seattle Post @-@ Intelligencer states that Shalhoub is a " careful and nuanced actor " . Alan Sepinwall of the Star @-@ Ledger described Shalhoub as " the perfect fit " for the character .

= = = Awards = = =

Shalhoub has earned various awards and nominations for his work in Monk . He has been nominated for the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series each year from 2003 to 2010 , winning in 2003 , 2005 and 2006 . In 2003 , Shalhoub won the Golden Globe Award for Best Actor ? Television Series Musical or Comedy ; he was nominated for the same category in 2004 , 2005 , 2007 and 2009 . He received the 2004 and the 2005 Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Comedy Series , with nominations in the same category in 2003 , 2006 , 2007 , 2008 and 2009 .