Plot Springs from Character

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First **describe** your character (gender, age, appearance, education, etc.):

Next **define** your character's **traits** (honest, quirky, fickle, charming):

Next explain how your **character's strengths** and **weaknesses** could contribute to your **plot** (Keen reasoning ability or too quick to judge? Physically strong but emotionally weak? Suspicious of others but fiercely loyal when someone is trusted? Any nervous tics or physical flaws?):

Finally, describe your character's **primary motivation(s)** (Greed, jealousy, revenge, love, attraction, fear, rage, anger, generosity, loyalty…):

Add Layers: Plot Points & Conflicts

Define the **main story line** (What is the protagonist after**?)**:

Describe one **subplot** (What else is impeding the protagonist):

Describe a **second subplot** (What else prevents progress?):

Describe exterior and interior impediments in certain scenes/chapters:

Exterior Impediments (Walls, rivers, locked doors, fences, traffic, etc.):

Interior Impediments (Fear of heights, of spiders, emotional trauma, PTSD, dyslexia, lack of knowledge, lack of judgment, lack of will power):

USE DIALOGUE TO REVEAL CHARACTER & ADVANCE PLOT

Joe inspected the detective's face. His large, clean-shaven face made him appear earnest. He looked like someone who had worked his way up through the ranks.

"Tell me what you know, first," Joe said. "Then I'll feel like you're being honest when you say that you don't think I'm guilty."

"It doesn't work that way."

"Then call my attorney and we'll set up an appointment. I have Thursday off."

The detective's face reddened. "All right. I'll tell you a couple things to show you why I don't like you for this. There's a former acquaintance who used to slap Patricia around a little. There's also been one or two other cases of missing girls in this area. You just don't look like a serial rapist to me. It ain't your style."

Joe smiled. "What is my 'style,' Detective?"

Marino grinned. "You read poetry to women, you don't strangle 'em. They might gag on your bullshit, but you don't kill 'em," he said.

Joe laughed. "Okay, Detective, ask me a few questions. I'll answer until I think you're trying to trip me up."

Do you know a young lady named Autumn Smith?"

Joe's smile faded. "Yes," he admitted. "She's a former student of mine. Why do you ask?"

"Have you ever visited Autumn Smith at her apartment off campus?"

Joe tried to act calm.

"Yes, Detective. Earlier this semester she asked me to help her with an application for a scholarship. I agreed to help her, but we couldn't find a convenient time to meet on campus. So she invited me over for dinner as a way of thanking me. I met with her for approximately one hour, during which time I edited her letter, gave her some advice, and ate the spaghetti she had cooked for us."

"You were inside her apartment for an hour?"

"Yes. I think so. Maybe less than an hour. It was before my night class, so I couldn't stay very long. Even if I had wanted to," Joe added. "What does this have to do with Patricia Miller's death, anyway?"

Detective Marino looked up slowly from his notepad and stared stone-faced at Joe.

"Did you know that Autumn Smith had a roommate?"

"Yes," Joe said. "Her roommate was in the bedroom watching television the entire time I was there. Sort of like a chaperone."

Joe still hadn't guessed.

"Autumn Smith's roommate was Patricia Miller."