

THE BOY CODE

PITCH DECK

A Romance Mystery

Written by Jack Kenny · 2026

The background image is a detailed, atmospheric photograph of a vintage room. In the foreground, a wooden desk holds a typewriter, a lamp, a record player, and various papers. The wall behind the desk is covered in patterned wallpaper and features eight framed wedding photographs arranged in two rows of four. To the right, tall wooden bookshelves are filled with books. On the left, a window looks out onto a snowy day, and a newspaper rack holds several old newspapers.

TITLE

THE BOY CODE

A Romance Mystery

THEMES

Breaking toxic male silence, the power of chosen family, turning personal history into art, and the romance of second chances. A warm, funny, heartfelt dramedy with one devastating mystery reveal that pays off beautifully.

LOGLINE

PRIMARY LOGLINE

A historical book project becomes a personal investigation when a young writer realizes his mentor's fascination with 1949 may be the key to solving a 50 year-old mystery.

EXTENDED LOGLINE

On the eve of Y2K a recently fired ad copywriter finds employment helping an eccentric professor write a book comparing 1949 to 1999. Suddenly this historical book project becomes a personal investigation when the young writer discovers the professor's fascination with 1949 may be the key to solving a fifty-year old mystery.

PICTURE SYNOPSIS

Cash Shiladay is fired from his ad agency on the same week the Letton account collapses. His girlfriend Phyllis pushes him toward another corporate job in the city; his Aunt Mae quietly arranges something stranger — a one-year gig assisting Professor Jake Landry on a coffee-table book that compares everything from 1949 to 1999.



Jake's house is a museum to 1949 America: typewriters, 78s, wedding photos, yearbooks, radios. Cash recruits an old high school classmate, Devalara "Dev" Fairbanks an engineer at a dot-com, to help synthesize Jake's archive.



Meanwhile, Jake—a man with an interesting past who grew up in foster homes—is set up with Mary Holden, a divorced colleague and single mother raising her eight-year-old son. Together, Mary and Jake fall in love at the pace of two people who have already been hurt.



Jake's historical book project becomes a personal investigation when Cash realizes his mentor's fascination with 1949 may be the key to solving a 50-year-old mystery.

SYNOPSIS

Set on the brink of the new millennium, *The Boy Code* follows Cash Shiladay, a young advertising copy writer, whose life is upended when he's suddenly laid off from his agency job. Frustrated with the shallow world of disposable media and pressured by his ambitious girlfriend, Phyllis, to stay on a conventional career track, Cash feels increasingly disconnected from his work and uncertain about his future.

Through his slightly eccentric Aunt Mae— a former obituary writer who sees meaning in the stories of ordinary lives — Cash lands an unusual one year job as a research assistant to Jake Landry, a thoughtful college professor writing a book that compares the year 1949 to 1999. Jake has transformed a room in his home into a living archive of 1949 artifacts, newspapers and memorabilia. As Cash researches parallels between the two eras—births and deaths, music, technology, culture, and everyday life— he becomes drawn into a deeper reflection on time, legacy, and what gives life value.

Working with Jake exposes Cash to a different model of adulthood. Jake's stories about his late wife, his foster home upbringing, and his unusual path through life reveal a man shaped by memory and meaning rather than status. At the same time, Jake cautiously opens himself up to new love with Mary, a warm, grounded, teacher, and single mother, proving that connection and renewal are possible at any stage of life.

Meanwhile, Cash's own relationships shift. His bond with Phyllis, strains as their priorities change, and he forms a growing friendship with Devalara, a former classmate working in the fast pace, tech world, who quietly questions the cost of nonstop ambition. Through these relationships and his research into the past, Cash reevaluates work life and relationship with his mentor Jake.

As 1999 marches towards 2000 Cash slowly begins to realize this book project and Jake's fascination with 1949 may be the key to solving a 50-year-old mystery.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

CASH SHILADAY

Protagonist · 25

Fired junior copywriter looking for work with meaning. Discovers Jake’s secret on the first morning of the new millennium.

JAKE LANDRY

Mentor / Mystery · Late 50s

College professor and lifelong foster kid whose obsession with 1949 is the year his life broke. Sheds the “boy code” on screen.

DEVALARA “DEV” FAIRBANKS

Female Lead · 25

High-school classmate turned brilliant dot-com engineer. Quick-witted; the partner Cash didn’t know he needed.

MARY HOLDEN

Emotional Lead · 40s

Widowed professor raising her 8-year-old son alone. Falls for Jake at the pace of someone who’s been hurt and survived.

PHYLLIS

Antagonist (Romantic) · Mid-20s

Status-driven girlfriend, an ad-agency careerist who wants a city power couple. Not a villain — the life Cash chooses not to live.

AUNT MAE

Catalyst · Late 60s

Cash’s aunt and a former obituaries columnist whose Rolodex connects him to Jake. Tart, beloved, the wisdom voice.

GAIL LABOSCO

Best Friend · 40s

Mary’s sharp-tongued colleague who engineers the Jake-and-Mary setup. The audience’s laugh-line proxy.

CLAUDIA

Antagonist · Late 40s

Mary’s superstar sister, an accomplished author and speaker who unknowingly sets standards for Mary that she does not want.