

# Moments That ‘Nancy Drew’ Took Too Far

Book-to-screen adaptations are never perfect.

By Rebecca Carlyle | Last modified: August 31, 2023



Nancy (Kennedy McMann) looks through a dark attic with a flashlight in hand. (Image: CBS Television Studios)

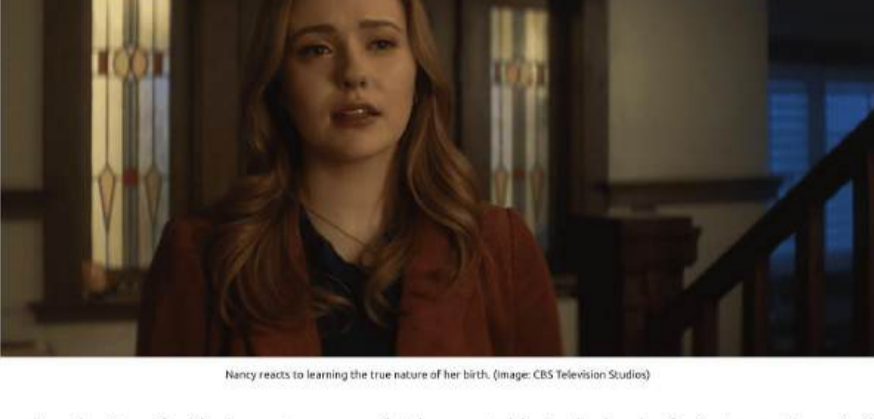
Although “Nancy Drew” has maintained a lot of themes and plots from the Carolyn Keene novels, it has strayed quite far from the original material. The show added new characters, relationships, locations, and magic, which have all been welcome changes since they added to the story in a positive way.

I’ve embraced those changes, but a few moments left me either squirming with discomfort or scratching my head, wondering if they were really necessary. Here are a few moments that the CW show “Nancy Drew” took too far.

What moments took you by surprise? Share them with us in the comments!

Spoilers Ahead

## Nancy Isn’t a ‘Drew’



Nancy reacts to learning the true nature of her birth. (Image: CBS Television Studios)

Most changes regarding the Drew family dynamic were perfectly acceptable. In the books, for instance, Nancy’s (Kennedy McMann) mother died when Nancy was young, but in the show, her mother died when Nancy was a high school senior. It derails Nancy’s college plans, and she remains in Horseshoe Bay, working as a waitress at a restaurant called the Claw.

I appreciated the change, since it humanizes Nancy. Instead of having a teenage girl with superhuman sleuthing skills (which she does), we’re focused on her grief and wondering if she can pull herself out of it. But that isn’t the only familial change made to the Drews.

Throughout Season 1, the ghost of Lucy Sable (Stephanie Van Dyck) haunts Nancy for unknown reasons. Lucy (Lizzie Boys) is infamous in Horseshoe Bay for falling off a cliff to her death shortly after being crowned Sea Queen. Her death is incorrectly ruled a homicide, and there’s even a children’s ditty to go with it: *Lucy Sable once was able to look upon the sea/But someone got her in the water/and that’s where she’ll always be/Count to five/enjoy the view/And hope the killer doesn’t get you.*

Through lots of snooping, Nancy learns that the Drews are not her biological family. Nancy’s father, Carson (Scott Wolf), is forced to tell Nancy the truth: Lucy was pregnant with the child of Ryan Hudson (Riley Smith) and had become a social outcast. After becoming close to Katherine (Sara Canning) and Carson, Lucy begs them to keep her child safe and then throws herself off the cliff. Nancy is Lucy’s daughter, and also a Hudson.

Don’t get me wrong — I loved Lucy’s haunting of Nancy and her storyline. I just don’t see the point of making Lucy Nancy’s mother. Nancy is already dealing (not very well) with Katherine’s death; the show didn’t need to add another layer. The extra twist didn’t add anything to the show other than give Riley Smith a reason to remain in the regular cast.

## Bess’ Romance With Odette



Controlled by Odette’s (Anja Savic) spirit, George (Leah Lewis) and Bess (Maddison Jaizani) go on an ice-skating date. (Image: CBS Television Studios)

Long story short, George (Leah Lewis) is sharing her body with another spirit — the ghost of Odette (Anja Savic). By day she’s George, by night she’s Odette, and George has zero control. Odette was a French heiress put to death aboard the Governance, the boat that brought settlers to Horseshoe Bay. Her wrongful execution turned her into a vengeful sea spirit — thus, the Aglaeca was born.

The Drew Crew defeated the Aglaeca by confronting her with her past and swearing to document the history properly. They reminded her that she was more than her trauma. Odette is restored to a human spirit and no longer dangerous, but she indirectly kills George. Odette’s spirit is accidentally bound to George’s body when Nancy uses an ancient shroud to save George’s life. It takes a while for anyone to notice that something is amiss. It’s Bess’ (Maddison Jaizani) job to keep an eye on her when Odette is in possession.

During their time together, Odette and Bess bond, falling for each other and hiding their secret relationship from the rest of the Drew Crew. Bess is dating a spirit that doesn’t have a body of its own, and there’s clearly no future in which they end up happily ever after. Plus, George is dating Nick (Tunji Kasim). With or without that relationship, separating Odette from George’s soul is tricky and endangers George. It’s a sticky situation that doesn’t add anything to the storyline.

## Nick and George Almost Get Married



George can’t contain her happiness as Nick (Tunji Kasim) proposes. (Image: CBS Television Studios)

One of my favorite things about the show is that the writers took notice of the natural chemistry between the actors and let that dictate the show’s relationships. *Nancy and Ned* (who also goes by Nick) didn’t have chemistry, but George and Nick did. They made a wonderful couple, bringing out the best in each other. They both grew a lot due to their coupling and learned how to communicate and have a healthy relationship.

You’re probably wondering what my problem is with them almost getting married. Due to George’s spirit being entwined with Odette’s, she has a much shorter life expectancy. George and Nick allow it to speed up their personal timeline and get engaged. It may not seem that short, since their relationship is drawn out over two seasons. If you go by the show’s timeline, though, they’ve only been dating for a few months before George moves in with Nick and they start planning a wedding. Talk about a whirlwind romance.

## Nancy’s Ancestor Bathes in Blood



Temperance (Bo Martynowska) prepares a ritual to renew her youth. (Image: CBS Television Studios)

With spirits and hauntings a regular occurrence on the show, I didn’t question the inclusion of witchcraft. It would’ve been unnatural to exclude it. The show, however, just dives right into the deep end. Nancy’s ancestor Temperance Hudson (Bo Martynowska) introduces the audience to magic.

Temperance used to be a member of the Women in White, a group in Horseshoe Bay that practiced the occult. The Women in White cast out and cursed her when she expressed interest in drawing magic from the evil underneath the town. The group instilled a barrier that kept Temperance out of Horseshoe Bay and could be broken only by a seventh-generation Hudson — the generation Nancy just so happens to be.

The Women in White surround Temperance. She’s presumed dead and buried, but she uses a one-time protection spell, returns to life, and claws her way out of her grave. The spell has aged her, and she decides to go by the name Myrtle (not confusing at all!). When Nancy is in desperate need of magical help, Temperance bargains for some of Nancy’s blood (red flag, anyone?).

When Temperance is left alone, she pours Nancy’s blood into a bath and soaks in it. It’s part of a ritual that restores her youth, and she no longer has to go by Myrtle. First of all, that’s just gross! Did that really need to be the ritual? Second, that isn’t the only time Temperance alters her physical form. She later uses another spell to walk around in her daughter’s body (Olivia Taylor Dudley). It’s like the writers sat in a room and tried to make it as confusing as possible.

If you aren’t up to date on the current season, skip the next section.

## Ace Falls in Love With a Ghost



Ace (Alex Saxon) backs away from a ghost in the morgue. (Image: CBS Television Studios)

The end of Season 3 left Ace (Alex Saxon) and Nancy cursed and unable to unite their star-crossed love. After a failed attempt at breaking the curse leaves Nancy in a coma for a few days, Ace refuses to try again. He insists they go their separate ways and throws himself into his work at the morgue.

When an unidentified body comes in, it’s burnt to a crisp with no way to figure out who it is. Ace notices the thermostat is broken, leaving the room in a chill. The lights start to flicker, and the radio keeps turning itself on. He isn’t a stranger to the supernatural, and deduces that the ghost of the unidentified girl is trying to talk to him — so he does what any sane person would do and acquiesces.

Throughout a few episodes, Ace and the ghost begin to bond. The ghost even refuses to speak to Bess when she catches Ace with his hands plunged into a sink full of ice. Bess worries it may be a malevolent spirit, since only angry ghosts attach to a single person. She also reminds him that out of everyone in the Drew Crew, she would be the one to understand his situation due to her emotional entanglement with Odette.

Ace ignores Bess’ advice (of course) and continues to bond and communicate with the ghost. Honestly, what does he think he will get out of the relationship? Couldn’t the writers have let him mourn the loss of Nancy as a significant other without adding something extra? They could have easily brought in the unidentified body and had the same storyline without Ace’s weird attachment. It’s just an odd added-on twist that’s completely unnecessary.

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