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THE

DEEP COVER DOSSIER

200 Advanced Psychological Thriller Prompts

20 Under-Served Sub-Niches · Low Competition · High Demand

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SUB-NICHES:	20 Advanced Categories
TOTAL PROMPTS:	200 Engineered Concepts
OVERLAP WITH OTO1:	Zero

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[OPERATIONAL BRIEFING]

How to Deploy This Dossier

This Dossier contains **200 precision-targeted prompts** spanning 20 advanced, under-served sub-niches in the psychological thriller market. Every prompt was developed from personal research by Andreas and Erika Quintana — not generated from trend lists, but sourced from direct examination of Amazon reader reviews, bestseller gap analysis, and forum research identifying what readers want and can't find.

Each sub-niche opens with an **Intelligence Briefing**: a short operational summary of who reads this category, why they buy, and what makes a book in this space succeed. Read it before you use the prompts. It contains targeting intelligence that changes how you brief your bot.

Operational Procedure: Open your Psychological Thriller Royalties Bot in ChatGPT. Browse the sub-niches and select a target category. Copy the prompt — title and description both — and paste it directly into the bot. The briefs are engineered to activate the bot's full capability: character psychology, plot tension, atmosphere, and commercial hook are already built in.

You do not need OTO1 to use this Dossier. If you have both, you now have 300 prompts across 30 sub-niches with **zero overlap**. That is a publishing catalogue, not just a prompt collection.

Start wherever the market tells you to start — or wherever your instinct pulls you first. Both are valid. Either will produce books.

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SUB-NICHE 01 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ INSTITUTIONAL BETRAYAL

FILE: DCD-01-INSTITUTIONAL_BETRAY

Institutional Betrayal

Hospitals, schools, churches, police departments — the systems people trust most hiding the things they fear most. Readers flock to this sub-niche because it validates a suspicion they already carry. The institutional setting gives the conspiracy scale and credibility.

PROMPT #001 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The nurse who documented everything — and whose records disappeared the night she was suspended"

A veteran ward nurse files an internal complaint about patient safety violations and is placed on administrative leave within 48 hours. When she returns to retrieve her personal effects, every digital and paper record she maintained over the previous nine months is gone. Her manager has no knowledge of any complaint.

PROMPT #002 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The school that quietly reassigned the same teacher three times in seven years"

A journalist writing a profile on a beloved retiring teacher discovers that, decades earlier, he was reassigned from three separate schools in the same district within a seven-year span. No disciplinary records exist. Several students from those schools are impossible to locate.

PROMPT #003 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The parish that moved its records offshore the year before the inquiry began"

A survivor of institutional abuse discovers that the diocese responsible for her care as a child moved its historical administrative archives to a foreign entity two years before a national inquiry was announced. She traces the paper trail across three countries and finds she is not the only one who has been following it.

PROMPT #004 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The hospital that knew about the wrong prescription — and covered it up for eight years"

A woman whose husband died of an unexplained reaction receives an anonymous message pointing to a medication error that was buried. The deeper she digs, the more people with the power to stop her appear in her path — and the clearer it becomes that the cover-up involved more people than the original mistake.

PROMPT #005 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The police unit whose evidence logs have a consistent gap every third week"

A defence attorney reviewing discovery documents notices a statistical impossibility in the evidence logs of a specialist police unit: certain categories of evidence are consistently absent from reports filed on specific weekdays. She begins to understand the pattern is not accidental — and that several of her past clients may have been convicted on evidence that was curated.

PROMPT #006 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The university that settled eleven complaints in private — and never told its students"

A final-year student discovers, through a freedom of information request, that her university has settled eleven formal complaints against the same faculty member over eight years, each under a non-disclosure agreement. She is currently in that faculty member's advanced research programme and has nowhere to go.

PROMPT #007 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The social care system that lost a child — then lost the paperwork that explained how"

A journalist investigating a child's death in state care discovers that the case file has been systematically stripped of the decision points that would establish who was responsible for each failure. She must reconstruct the file from the memories of people who were there — before the inquiry date makes those accounts legally privileged.

PROMPT #008 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The financial regulator whose investigators kept getting promoted away from their cases"

A junior analyst at a financial regulator notices that the three investigators who have come closest to completing a major fraud case have each received significant promotions within months of their progress, reassigning them away from the file. She is now the most senior person left working on it.

PROMPT #009 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The care home that billed for residents who had already died"

An accounts clerk at a local authority discovers invoices from a care provider for residents who, according to death registry records, died weeks or months before the billing period. When she raises it internally, her manager tells her the discrepancy is a known administrative issue. It is not an administrative issue.

PROMPT #010 / SUB-NICHE 01

"The government inquiry that was designed to find nothing"

A barrister appointed to a public inquiry into institutional failures begins to realise that the terms of reference she was given make it structurally impossible to reach findings of individual culpability. She must decide whether to operate within the constraints she was given, or use the public platform of the inquiry to ask questions that fall outside her official remit.

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SUB-NICHE 02 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE COERCIVE CONTROL THRILLER

FILE: DCD-02-THE_COERCIVE_CONTROL

The Coercive Control Thriller

Not domestic violence in the traditional, visible sense — but the slow, invisible architecture of control that readers only recognize in retrospect. This sub-niche resonates deeply because it describes something many readers have experienced without having language for it.

PROMPT #011 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The woman who didn't know it had a name until she was already out"

A woman rebuilding her life in a new city begins reading about coercive control as part of a support group's resource list. With mounting horror, she recognizes every item on the list. The story is about naming what was done to her — and what happens when the person who did it discovers she has named it.

PROMPT #012 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The relationship that looked perfect in public and felt like a prison at home"

A man who leaves a long-term relationship is disbelieved by everyone who knew the couple — because to outsiders, the relationship was a model of warmth and devotion. The story follows his attempt to be believed, and the process of understanding how the performance was constructed and maintained.

PROMPT #013 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The financial control that left her with nothing she could call her own"

A woman who has never had a bank account in her own name, who cannot access the household finances, and who must account for every purchase, leaves her marriage and discovers that financial autonomy is something she must learn from the beginning. The thriller is about what she finds when she finally gains access to the accounts.

PROMPT #014 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The isolation that happened so gradually she never noticed the exits closing"

A woman's social life contracts over five years: first the friends her partner didn't approve of, then the family events that created tension, then the work opportunities that would have taken her time away. By the time she realises she is isolated, she is also financially dependent and without any mechanism to leave.

PROMPT #015 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The one who left — and the system that kept sending her back"

A woman leaves a coercive relationship three times over seven years. Each time, the combination of shared children, financial entanglement, legal manoeuvring, and a partner who performs perfectly for professionals conspires to return her to the same situation. The thriller is about the fourth time.

PROMPT #016 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The man who controlled her schedule, her appearance, her sleep"

A woman whose partner dictates what she wears, when she sleeps, which appointments she may attend, and what she may eat explains, in therapy, that she experienced none of these as control at the time — she experienced them as caring. The story is about the moment the caring revealed itself.

PROMPT #017 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The digital leash: the apps, the location sharing, the access she agreed to"

A woman discovers, in the process of leaving a relationship, that the 'family security app' her partner installed on her phone has been logging her location, reading her messages, and sharing her contacts without her knowledge. She must use the data she now has access to in order to build a case — and get out safely.

PROMPT #018 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The controlling parent who makes the adult child believe they cannot survive alone"

A woman in her late thirties who has never lived independently enters therapy for anxiety and gradually discovers that the anxiety was manufactured — systematically installed through a childhood and early adult life designed to make her believe she was incapable without her mother's management. The thriller is about what the mother has done to prevent her from finding this out.

PROMPT #019 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The coercive controller who was also the most respected person in the community"

A woman whose former partner is a respected public figure begins speaking about her experience and is met with comprehensive disbelief, reputation damage, and legal threats. The story follows her attempt to find other people with the same experience — and the mechanism he has put in place to prevent them from ever finding each other.

PROMPT #020 / SUB-NICHE 02

"The support worker who recognized the pattern — and became a target"

A domestic abuse support worker identifies a client's situation as a textbook coercive control case and begins working with her through the process of building a safety plan. When the perpetrator discovers the support worker's role, he begins a methodical campaign to have her professionally discredited — using the same techniques he used on his partner.

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SUB-NICHE 03 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ TECH & SURVEILLANCE HORROR

FILE: DCD-03-TECH_&_SURVEILLANCE_

Tech & Surveillance Horror

Smart home devices, data brokers, social media tracking — the paranoia of modern technology weaponized by a character who understands exactly what data reveals. This sub-niche has explosive relevance right now, with readers living inside the exact technology being weaponized against protagonists.

PROMPT #021 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The smart speaker that kept recording after she asked it to stop"

A woman who works in data privacy discovers that her home assistant has been sending audio files to a third-party server she cannot identify. When she traces the data stream, she finds recordings that include conversations she had in rooms where no device was present. Someone added something to her network that she didn't put there.

PROMPT #022 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The fitness tracker that told someone exactly where she would be"

A woman notices she is being followed, but cannot understand how — she has taken every precaution. A security researcher friend examines her devices and discovers that her fitness app, set to public, has been broadcasting her running route, her resting heart rate pattern, and her location history for eight months. Someone has been using it as a real-time schedule.

PROMPT #023 / SUB-NICHE 03

"She found her ex's voice in her smart home assistant — recorded there intentionally, three months after she changed the locks"

A woman discovers audio clips buried in her home device logs that suggest someone has been inside, hearing her conversations, long after the relationship ended. Her data is being weaponized against her and she doesn't know how to make it stop — or whether the person listening can also see.

PROMPT #024 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The data broker who sold her address to the wrong buyer"

A woman who has spent two years keeping her location secret from an abusive former partner discovers her current address listed on a public data broker site. Tracing the source, she finds her information passed through eleven different data companies, each technically compliant, before arriving in the wrong hands.

PROMPT #025 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The app that required camera access — and never gave it back"

A security researcher who downloads a productivity app notices unusual network traffic from her device at regular intervals. When she investigates, she finds the app has maintained intermittent camera access since installation six months earlier, and that the captured images have been stored on a server registered to an individual, not a company.

PROMPT #026 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The facial recognition database that placed her somewhere she had never been"

A woman applying for a sensitive government position is rejected based on a facial recognition match placing her at a location she has never visited on a date when she was verifiably elsewhere. Clearing her name means understanding how the error was made — and whether it was an error.

PROMPT #027 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The deepfake that ended her career before she knew it existed"

A senior executive discovers a video circulating in her industry that appears to show her in a compromising situation. The video is fabricated. Proving it is fabricated, while the video continues to spread and her company begins internal proceedings, becomes a race against the technology itself.

PROMPT #028 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The neighbour's doorbell camera that captured something nobody was meant to see"

A woman reviewing footage from her neighbour's shared security network discovers that, on the night of a local incident, a camera she didn't know existed captured a sequence that contradicts the official account. The person in the footage is powerful enough to have had the footage deleted everywhere else.

PROMPT #029 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The email drafts folder that someone else had been reading for years"

A political journalist discovers that an email account she used for sensitive source communications was compromised at the account level — not the device level. Everything she wrote, including drafts never sent, was visible to whoever had access. She begins to understand which of her stories were killed before publication, and by whom.

PROMPT #030 / SUB-NICHE 03

"The Internet of Things attack that made her look unstable"

A woman begins experiencing events in her home that she cannot explain: lights switching on at 3am, thermostats resetting, alarms triggering at random. She reports them to the police, who note her mental health history. A security consultant she eventually hires confirms that her entire home network has been remotely accessed for six months by a single IP address registered to her ex-husband's new property.

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SUB-NICHE 04 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE GRIEF THRILLER

FILE: DCD-04-THE_GRIEF_THRILLER

The Grief Thriller

Loss as a doorway into obsession, delusion, or danger. Protagonists who cannot stop asking what really happened — and where the answer changes everything about their understanding of the person they lost and their own life with them.

PROMPT #031 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The wife who kept finding evidence that her husband was not who she thought he was — after he died"

Six months after her husband's death, a woman finds a phone she didn't know he had. The messages on it describe a life running parallel to the one she shared with him for twenty-two years. She must decide how far she is willing to go to understand who she actually married — and whether knowing will be survivable.

PROMPT #032 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The father who couldn't accept his son's suicide — and was right not to"

A man whose son was ruled a suicide spends three years being counselled toward acceptance. In his fourth year, he finds something that makes acceptance impossible — not grief, but evidence. The thriller follows his investigation and the growing danger as the people who ruled it a suicide realize he is no longer willing to stop.

PROMPT #033 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The widow who began receiving messages she could only explain one way"

A woman grieving the sudden death of her husband begins receiving messages through platforms he used, at times and in patterns consistent with his habits. She knows it cannot be him. But whoever it is knows things about her husband that are not publicly available — and seems to be warning her about something.

PROMPT #034 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The mother who turned her daughter's cold case into a podcast — and found the killer listening"

A woman who has spent ten years advocating publicly for her daughter's unsolved murder case launches a podcast. Within four episodes, she receives listener feedback that contains details only the killer could know — framed as corrections. She must decide whether to engage, knowing that engagement may be exactly what this person wants.

PROMPT #035 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The man who inherited his brother's debt — and his brother's enemies"

When a man's younger brother dies under circumstances ruled accidental, he inherits not only the estate but a collection of encrypted documents, an unexplained debt to people he cannot identify, and a sequence of visits from individuals who clearly expected his brother to still be alive.

PROMPT #036 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The grief counsellor who realises her client's loss was staged"

A therapist working with a man grieving the death of his wife begins, over months of sessions, to notice inconsistencies — not in his grief, which appears genuine, but in the story of the death itself. When she begins gently probing, the inconsistencies multiply rather than resolve.

PROMPT #037 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The daughter who moved back into her mother's house to mourn — and found the diaries"

A woman returns to her childhood home after her mother's death to prepare it for sale. In clearing the house, she finds thirty years of personal diaries written in code. Decoding them takes three months. What they reveal about her mother, her father, and her own early childhood transforms every memory she has.

PROMPT #038 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The journalist who was assigned her own brother's obituary"

A journalist at a regional newspaper is assigned to write an obituary for a local man who died in a hiking accident. The name is not published in the commission. When she receives the details, the dead man is her estranged brother. In writing his obituary, she must decide how much of what she discovers to include — and how much of it to pursue.

PROMPT #039 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The support group member who suspects another member killed their spouse"

A woman attending a spousal bereavement group becomes increasingly convinced that one of the other members — charming, composed, processing his grief with apparent insight — was responsible for his wife's death. She has no evidence. She cannot stop attending the group. And he is beginning to show interest in her.

PROMPT #040 / SUB-NICHE 04

"The child who grew up told her mother was dead — and found her"

A woman in her thirties who was raised believing her mother died when she was three years old submits a DNA sample to a consumer ancestry service. A match returns: a living woman who is a 99.9% maternal match. Her mother is not dead. She is 140 miles away. And someone went to considerable trouble to ensure the daughter never found out.

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SUB-NICHE 05 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ INHERITANCE & ESTATE SECRETS

FILE: DCD-05-INHERITANCE_&_ESTATE

Inheritance & Estate Secrets

A death in the family triggers a web of buried histories, falsified documents, and people who will do anything to keep the truth about where the money came from — or where it went — from surfacing. Readers love the combination of family drama, legal complexity, and buried crimes.

PROMPT #041 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The will that had been rewritten three times in the final six months"

A family gathers after a patriarch's death to hear a will that none of them expected. Their solicitor informs them that the document presented is the fourth version produced in the last six months — the previous three being legally valid at the time of their creation. The family must now establish which version represents their father's genuine wishes, and who was with him when each was signed.

PROMPT #042 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The estate that turns out not to belong to the family that lived in it"

A family instructed to prepare a large country estate for sale discovers, during the conveyancing process, a title discrepancy suggesting the property was never legitimately transferred to the family in the first place. Tracing the original transfer means going back to a period no living family member will discuss.

PROMPT #043 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The offshore account that appeared in the estate and can't be explained"

The executors of a prominent businessman's estate discover a series of offshore accounts that do not appear in any disclosed financial statements. The accounts are substantial. They are also clearly structured to be found after his death — and each one is linked to a different person with a different connection to the deceased.

PROMPT #044 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The secret second family that had been provided for in the same will"

The adult children of a deceased man discover that the will they are inheriting under also provides for a second family — a woman and two adult children the executor apparently knew about and the legal family did not. The two families' investigations into each other reveal that the deceased constructed a second life with architectural precision.

PROMPT #045 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The letter left with the solicitor to be opened twenty-five years after death"

A letter sealed by a deceased woman and held by her family's solicitor for twenty-five years is finally opened by her now-adult grandchildren. The letter describes the location of assets, the existence of people the family was never told about, and a specific warning about a family member who was trusted with the estate — and shouldn't have been.

PROMPT #046 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The artwork in the estate that turns out to have been stolen during the war"

The children of a collector discover, while researching the estate for auction, that three significant pieces in the collection carry provenance gaps consistent with wartime looting. Researching further, they find the families of origin — and must confront what their grandfather was, where he was, and what returning the works would mean for their inheritance.

PROMPT #047 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The beneficiary who died three days before the testator — and who inherits instead"

When a woman's primary beneficiary predeceases her by three days, the will's substitution clause activates, passing the estate to an alternate beneficiary the family has never heard of. Tracing this beneficiary — and the relationship that would explain their inclusion — opens a history the deceased spent decades keeping private.

PROMPT #048 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The executor who has been managing the estate for forty years without ever closing it"

An adult grandchild discovers that a substantial estate, notionally in probate since her grandmother's death forty years earlier, has been administered continuously by the same firm — and that the assets, while technically belonging to the estate, have been generating income that has never been formally distributed. Someone has been living off the delay.

PROMPT #049 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The estate that includes a property no one in the family knew existed"

In cataloguing a deceased parent's assets, the adult children discover the title to a property in another city — a flat, fully furnished, with utility accounts in the parent's name, maintained continuously for fifteen years. The neighbours knew the deceased well. The family did not know the flat existed.

PROMPT #050 / SUB-NICHE 05

"The contested will that reveals the family had been lying to each other for a generation"

A disputed will requires all parties to produce evidence of their relationship with the deceased. In the process, each branch of the family must disclose correspondence and encounters that the others were unaware of — and a picture emerges of a patriarch who told each part of the family a different version of their history, and of themselves.

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SUB-NICHE 06 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE SUPPORT GROUP THRILLER

FILE: DCD-06-THE_SUPPORT_GROUP_TH

The Support Group Thriller

Grief groups, addiction recovery, trauma survivor circles — intimate spaces built on vulnerability, where someone is using other people's confessions as weapons. This sub-niche is virtually untapped on KDP and taps into something readers find viscerally unsettling: betrayal in a sacred space.

PROMPT #051 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The addiction recovery group where someone was selling members' employers their attendance records"

A man in long-term recovery discovers that his employer received a notification of his attendance at an addiction support group — a group he attended under an assumed first name, at a location he kept deliberately vague. Someone inside the group has been identifying and exposing members for financial gain.

PROMPT #052 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The trauma survivors' group whose facilitator was collecting material for a book"

A group for survivors of violent crime discovers that their facilitator — who they trusted with the most private details of their experiences — has published a novel whose characters are clearly based on members of the group. Some details could only have come from sessions. The book is dedicated to 'the brave ones who let me listen.'

PROMPT #053 / SUB-NICHE 06

"Everyone in the group thought they were healing. One of them was taking notes."

A grief support group for parents who have lost children is infiltrated by someone collecting their stories — not to empathize, but to use their specific traumas against them. When the facilitator realizes what's happening, she can't go to the police without exposing every member.

PROMPT #054 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The bereavement group where two members independently realize their losses were connected"

A man and a woman in the same bereavement group realize, gradually and without being able to say anything in the group setting, that the people they lost knew each other. The circumstances of both deaths, examined together, suggest something that neither of them can process alone — and that someone in the group may already know.

PROMPT #055 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The group for partners of sex addicts that the sex addict joined under a different story"

A woman attending a support group for partners of sex addicts begins to suspect that one of the other members is not a partner but an addict — attending for access, not support. The evidence is subtle, behavioural, and impossible to prove. But the woman he has been sitting next to each week is recently vulnerable and beginning to trust him.

PROMPT #056 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The eating disorder recovery group whose most inspiring member had never had an eating disorder"

A woman who has been attending a long-term recovery group for disordered eating discovers, through a chance encounter outside the group, that its most vocal success story — a woman who described her recovery journey in detail over two years — has no history of an eating disorder. She is researching something. The question is what.

PROMPT #057 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The PTSD group whose therapist was the source of one member's trauma"

A veteran attending a group therapy programme for post-traumatic stress begins to recognize, through the facilitating therapist's language and techniques, specific phrases and approaches that were used against him during an abusive assessment process years earlier. He cannot be certain. But the more sessions pass, the more certain he becomes.

PROMPT #058 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The domestic abuse survivors' group that was being monitored by one survivor's abuser"

A support group coordinator discovers evidence that the group's closed online forum has been accessed by someone using a member's login credentials — credentials that member says she did not share. The access has been ongoing for four months. The person using it has been reading every post, every resource shared, and every safety plan discussed.

PROMPT #059 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The cancer survivors' group where one member's diagnosis was not what they said"

A woman in a cancer survivor support group notices that a recently joined member's account of her diagnosis and treatment contains inconsistencies that a group moderator — a retired oncology nurse — eventually identifies as medically impossible. The member is not a survivor. But something about the way she listens to the group's most vulnerable members raises a different concern entirely.

PROMPT #060 / SUB-NICHE 06

"The online support community whose moderator sold its data to an insurance company"

Members of a private online mental health support community discover that their pseudonymous posts have been cross-referenced with their real identities and sold to a health insurance data broker. The moderator, who had access to both registration data and post content, is no longer reachable. Several members have begun receiving insurance denials citing conditions they only disclosed in the group.

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SUB-NICHE 07 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ MEDICAL GASLIGHTING

FILE: DCD-07-MEDICAL_GASLIGHTING

Medical Gaslighting

Doctors who dismiss, misdiagnose, or manufacture illness. Protagonists fighting to be believed by the very people meant to help them. This sub-niche has seen explosive readership growth, driven by high-profile real-world cases and a readership who have personally encountered dismissal in medical settings.

PROMPT #061 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The woman whose symptoms were treated as anxiety for nine years"

A woman who has spent a decade being told her physical symptoms are psychological finally receives a diagnosis that explains everything — a condition that has been well-documented in medical literature since before her first appointment. She begins to trace which of her doctors knew and what they chose not to say.

PROMPT #062 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The patient who was prescribed more medication every time she asked for a second opinion"

A woman attempting to query her psychiatric diagnosis finds that each time she raises the possibility that her treatment plan may be incorrect, her medication is adjusted upward. When she begins documenting the pattern, she discovers she is not the only patient on this clinician's list whose notes describe 'resistance to treatment' at intervals that correlate with appointment requests.

PROMPT #063 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The husband who convinced doctors his wife was mentally ill"

A woman is admitted to a psychiatric facility on the testimony of her husband, supported by medical notes that, she later discovers, were based entirely on his account. She has no history of mental illness. Her husband is a charming and credible man. The doctors she encounters are sympathetic and absolutely certain of her diagnosis.

PROMPT #064 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The rare disease patient who knew more about her condition than her consultants"

A woman with a rare autoimmune condition who has spent years researching her diagnosis is told by a new consultant that her self-research is a symptom of health anxiety and should be discouraged. She discovers the consultant has never treated a patient with her condition. She discovers this because she has read every paper he has ever published.

PROMPT #065 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The man who was kept in hospital longer than necessary for insurance billing purposes"

A man recovering from surgery is told he requires extended monitoring for complications that, a nurse who eventually speaks to him privately, do not appear in his clinical notes. He begins to understand that his continued admission is generating billing codes that have nothing to do with his health — and that the hospital has a documented history of this pattern.

PROMPT #066 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The woman whose pain was undertreated because of her race"

A woman who has sought treatment for severe chronic pain at multiple facilities over years has been consistently under-medicated relative to her documented pain scores. A medical advocate she eventually works with helps her build a case by comparing her records against those of similarly diagnosed patients — and the pattern is stark and consistent.

PROMPT #067 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The child whose parents were told their concerns were Munchausen by proxy"

A mother whose child has a complex, undiagnosed condition is reported to child services by a paediatrician who concludes she is fabricating the child's symptoms. While she fights to keep her family together, the child's condition continues to progress. The thriller follows her race to find a correct diagnosis before the family is permanently separated.

PROMPT #068 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The patient who discovered her clinical notes had been altered"

A woman reviewing her medical records under subject access rights discovers that several notes have been amended after the fact — dates changed, symptom descriptions modified, and a complaint she filed removed entirely. The alterations were made by a single user account on the records system. She needs to prove the original notes existed.

PROMPT #069 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The clinical trial participant who was not told about the known side effects"

A man enrolled in a clinical trial begins experiencing a side effect he later discovers was documented in the internal trial data months before his enrolment. The informed consent document he signed made no reference to it. He is now in contact with seven other participants who describe the same experience and the same omission.

PROMPT #070 / SUB-NICHE 07

"The doctor whose career depended on not finding what was in front of him"

An occupational health physician contracted by a large employer to assess workers' compensation claims begins to notice that his assessments, when they find in favour of claimants, are reviewed by a senior colleague and overturned at a rate he cannot explain clinically. When he investigates, he discovers the financial relationship between the clinic and the employer — and what the employer has been doing with the assessments.

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SUB-NICHE 08 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE TRUE CRIME OBSESSIVE

FILE: DCD-08-THE_TRUE_CRIME_OBSES

The True Crime Obsessive

A character deep in the true crime community who begins to realize their podcast or forum research has put them dangerously close to a real, active case. Meta, current, and magnetic to core thriller readers who are themselves true crime consumers.

PROMPT #071 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The true crime podcaster who realizes the killer has been a loyal listener from episode one"

A woman whose podcast on an unsolved murder case has grown to a significant audience receives a detailed listener email that could only have been written by someone with insider knowledge. As she investigates the sender, she finds a listener account that has been present in her community from before the show launched — and that the case she is investigating may not be as cold as the police believe.

PROMPT #072 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The Reddit thread that was getting too close — and was quietly deleted"

A true crime forum moderator notices that a thread investigating a recent disappearance case has been deleted not by any moderator but by a user account that appears to have administrative-level access the account should not have. Before it was deleted, one post — now gone — appeared to contain information that had not been publicly released.

PROMPT #073 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The amateur sleuth who found the suspect — and became the next victim"

A woman who has been conducting civilian investigation into a cold case publicly identifies a suspect on her blog. Within two weeks, the suspect has made a formal complaint, her employer has been contacted, and she has received a legal threat. She is now certain she has the right person — and equally certain that person now knows where she lives.

PROMPT #074 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The true crime author who discovered the wrong conviction she was writing about was her own family's doing"

A writer researching a wrongful conviction case for a book discovers, four months into the research, that the witness whose testimony convicted the defendant was her own uncle — who has been deceased for six years. She must decide whether to proceed with the book, and whether the truth she has found is hers to publish.

PROMPT #075 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The case that went viral — and the family that paid the price"

The family of a missing woman watches helplessly as their daughter's case becomes a true crime phenomenon — her photos everywhere, her private life dissected, theories about her character and choices circulating among millions of strangers. The story follows the family's navigation of public attention that is simultaneously generating real leads and destroying the daughter's dignity.

PROMPT #076 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The cold case the police closed — that the community never did"

A tight-knit online true crime community has spent twelve years investigating a death that was ruled accidental. When a new member joins and contributes evidence that changes the direction of the investigation, the community is divided: some believe she is a genuine researcher. Others suspect she is something else entirely.

PROMPT #077 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The true crime journalist who became the story"

An investigative journalist whose long-form true crime pieces have a wide readership begins receiving tip-offs about a specific case. The tips are detailed and accurate. Following them leads to significant discoveries. Following them far enough leads her to realize the tips are not being sent to help her find the story — they are being sent to put her inside it.

PROMPT #078 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The documentary crew filming the wrong case"

A documentary production team making a film about a historical murder comes to believe, four months into production, that the case they were commissioned to document is a decoy — and that the production itself is being used to distract from a current situation involving the same parties. They are already on record, already embedded, and already in danger of becoming part of the story they were never meant to find.

PROMPT #079 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The victim's sister who knew the true crime community was right — but couldn't say why"

The sister of a murder victim watches a true crime community piece together the correct account of her sister's death, down to details the family has kept private. She cannot confirm anything — it would compromise the investigation. But she can see the community is one piece of evidence away from naming the right person, and that person is watching the same thread.

PROMPT #080 / SUB-NICHE 08

"The true crime obsessive who realizes the case she is researching is her own missing memory"

A woman who has been researching a twenty-year-old disappearance case for her podcast begins experiencing visceral physical responses to specific case details — a location, a name, a date. In therapy, she and her therapist begin to explore whether her obsession with the case is research — or memory.

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SUB-NICHE 09 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · EXPAT ISOLATION THRILLERS

FILE: DCD-09-EXPAT_ISOLATION_THRI

Expat Isolation Thrillers

Far from home, language barriers, no local support network — the psychological thriller set abroad where the protagonist's outsider status is both their greatest vulnerability and, ultimately, their only advantage. A loyal, underserved readership of international travellers and expats.

PROMPT #081 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The English teacher in a small European city who saw something she cannot report"

A British woman teaching English abroad witnesses what she believes is an assault in the apartment building across from hers. When she goes to the police, the language barrier is the smallest obstacle. The officer who takes her statement is the brother of the man in the apartment. She is very far from home.

PROMPT #082 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The expat wife who realizes her husband's relocation was not a career move"

A woman who relocated with her husband to Southeast Asia for what was presented as a professional opportunity begins to suspect, over months of isolation and carefully managed access to information, that the move served a purpose for him that had nothing to do with his career. She does not have her own visa, her own bank account in the country, or anyone she can trust.

PROMPT #083 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The gap year student whose travel documents are being held by the wrong person"

A young woman whose passport is held 'for administrative processing' by the person who arranged her work placement abroad discovers, when she asks for it back, that the replacement they offer is a different document entirely. She is in a country whose language she does not speak, without her own identity documentation, and the embassy she contacts has no record of her registration.

PROMPT #084 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The NGO worker who found evidence she was never meant to find"

A humanitarian aid worker deployed to a conflict zone discovers financial documentation in a project office that suggests the NGO she works for is being used to launder money linked to the same actors whose victims she is meant to be helping. She cannot contact her organisation's headquarters — she cannot trust that they don't already know.

PROMPT #085 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The retiree abroad who realizes her visa sponsor is not who they said they were"

A retired woman who arranged her residency in southern Europe through an agency discovers, when attempting to renew her visa, that the agency is not registered with the authority it claimed, and that her legal status in the country has never been what she was told. She is a widow. Her adult children are across an ocean. She has eight weeks before her unofficial status becomes deportable.

PROMPT #086 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The foreign correspondent who realizes the source who trusted her has been identified"

A journalist stationed abroad receives a message from a source inside a government ministry — a source who has taken extraordinary risks to provide documentation. Before she can act on the material, she receives a second message: one word, from a different address, suggesting the source's identity has been compromised. She must decide what to publish, what to protect, and whether she can get the source out.

PROMPT #087 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The language student who becomes a translator for a criminal proceeding she doesn't fully understand"

A graduate student studying abroad is recruited as an informal interpreter for a legal proceeding because no qualified court interpreter is available. As she translates, she begins to understand that what is being said bears no relationship to what she is being asked to say in the record. She cannot walk out — she has already been told she cannot leave.

PROMPT #088 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The chef who took a private residency on a remote island — and couldn't leave when she wanted to"

A talented chef accepts a six-month private residency cooking for a wealthy family on a remote island accessible only by the family's boat. Two months in, she asks to take her scheduled break. The boat is unavailable. When she asks again, the reason given changes. She begins to realise that the position she accepted is not what was described in the contract she signed.

PROMPT #089 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The academic researcher whose university lost her records while she was abroad"

A doctoral researcher conducting fieldwork in a foreign country discovers that her university registration appears to have lapsed while she was away, leaving her without institutional affiliation, without research clearance, and without the legal basis for the interviews she has been conducting. When she contacts the university, no one can explain how it happened — but someone can explain what it will take to fix it.

PROMPT #090 / SUB-NICHE 09

"The woman who married abroad and discovered the marriage had different terms in the local jurisdiction"

A woman who married her partner in his home country discovers, when the relationship ends, that the marriage contract she signed — translated by his family — contained terms that bear no resemblance to what she was told she was agreeing to. In the jurisdiction where she is currently living, those terms are enforceable. She has no access to legal aid in this country and no right to remove herself or her children without her husband's written consent.

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SUB-NICHE 10 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE ONLINE PERSONA UNRAVELS

FILE: DCD-10-THE_ONLINE_PERSONA_U

The Online Persona Unravels

Influencers, content creators, anonymous accounts — when the curated identity someone built online begins to collapse and what's underneath is far darker than the feed ever suggested. Timely, resonant, and magnetic to readers who live in the same digital ecosystem.

PROMPT #091 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The lifestyle influencer whose perfect home was the scene of a crime"

A woman with a highly followed home lifestyle account is interviewed when a crime occurs at her home. Investigators reviewing her content discover that images posted months before the crime inadvertently document evidence of planning. She was not aware of what her own photographs showed. The person who was aware was in every room with her.

PROMPT #092 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The anonymous account that knew things only an insider could know — and disappeared the day before the news broke"

A financial journalist tracks an anonymous account that has been posting specific, accurate predictions about corporate events — earnings surprises, executive departures, regulatory decisions — for eighteen months. The account deletes itself twenty-four hours before a major story breaks. She has four hours of cached content and no identity.

PROMPT #093 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The wellness influencer who was manufacturing the illness she claimed to be recovering from"

A health content creator who built an audience of hundreds of thousands around her chronic illness recovery is investigated by a journalist who cannot reconcile the clinical details in her content with any known condition. What the journalist finds — and what the creator has been doing with the donations her community sends — is significantly worse than fraud.

PROMPT #094 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The gaming streamer whose fans started noticing things in the background of his streams"

A popular live streamer's audience, analysing recordings of his content, begins to notice details in his apartment's background that don't align with the person he presents himself as online. The community's investigation, conducted entirely in public, escalates from curiosity to something more dangerous when one of the details they identify relates to an unsolved case.

PROMPT #095 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The catfish who became more real than the person they were pretending to be"

A woman who built an elaborate false online identity to escape her real life finds, over three years, that the false identity has developed genuine relationships, genuine responsibilities, and one genuine complication: someone in her fake life has discovered something about her real life that she cannot allow to surface.

PROMPT #096 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The anonymous whistleblower account that was compromised from inside"

A secure platform for anonymous document submission receives a significant leak from inside a major institution. Before the submission can be acted on, the submitter contacts the platform to say they believe their anonymity has been broken. The platform's own security logs suggest the breach came from inside the platform's own administration team.

PROMPT #097 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The mommy blogger whose children grew up and started asking questions"

A woman who documented her children's entire childhoods on a widely read parenting blog watches her eldest child reach adulthood and begin asking to read the archive. As the daughter reads through years of content, she begins to identify a pattern of events described in the blog that she does not remember — and several that she remembers differently.

PROMPT #098 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The troll account that turned out to be operated by someone the victim knew"

A woman who has been targeted by a vicious anonymous online harassment campaign for two years discovers, when the account is finally identified, that it was operated by someone in her immediate professional circle — someone she had, at points during the two years, gone to for support about the harassment.

PROMPT #099 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The influencer couple whose breakup announcement wasn't entirely voluntary"

A couple who built a large audience around their relationship announces, with apparent mutual warmth, that they are parting ways. Behind the announcement is a negotiated settlement whose terms include a content agreement, an NDA, and an arrangement about custody of the audience's data. One of them signed under conditions they are not yet able to describe.

PROMPT #100 / SUB-NICHE 10

"The creator who found their entire content archive being used to train an AI — and what the AI learned"

A content creator discovers that years of their publicly posted video and written content has been used, without consent, to train a commercially available AI model. The model generates responses that closely reflect the creator's communication style and stated beliefs. When she begins testing the model's outputs, it reveals things about patterns in her own content she was not consciously aware of.

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SUB-NICHE 11 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE RECOVERED MEMORY THRILLER

FILE: DCD-11-THE_RECOVERED_MEMORY

The Recovered Memory Thriller

Therapy surfacing memories that may or may not be real — and the terrifying question of whether recovering the truth will heal the protagonist or destroy everyone around them. The science is contested, the emotional territory is vast, and the thriller possibilities are profound.

PROMPT #101 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The memory she recovered in therapy that her family says is impossible"

A woman undergoing EMDR therapy for chronic anxiety surfaces a vivid, detailed memory of an event involving a family member. The family, when confronted, denies it completely and presents evidence of their whereabouts at the relevant time. She is now caught between the undeniable vividness of the memory and the equally compelling evidence that it did not occur.

PROMPT #102 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The hypnotherapy session recording that disappeared from the therapist's files"

A man who underwent a series of hypnotherapy sessions as part of treatment for an unrelated condition requests his records and finds that session recordings from a specific three-week period are missing. He has his own recordings — he made them on his phone. They contain material neither he nor his current therapist can fully explain.

PROMPT #103 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The woman who recovered a memory that was actually her sister's"

A woman working through childhood trauma in long-term therapy surfaces a memory that she gradually comes to believe is not her own — the details, the physical perspective, and the emotional register don't match her own body. When she describes it to her sister, the sister goes white. The memory belongs to her sister. How her sister's memory ended up in her own mind becomes the central mystery.

PROMPT #104 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The false memory implantation study that used real participants who didn't consent"

A psychology researcher reviewing archived data from a 1990s study on memory malleability realizes that the study, which was published under a standard consent framework, appears to have used a subset of participants who were not informed they were participating in research. The false memories implanted in that subset were never cleared.

PROMPT #105 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The detective who recovered a memory of a crime — and cannot use it as evidence"

A detective who underwent trauma therapy following a violent assault during duty surfaces a memory that places a specific person at the scene of an unsolved crime. The memory is vivid and internally consistent. It is also legally inadmissible, professionally unmentionable, and directly implicates a colleague.

PROMPT #106 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The siblings who recovered the same memory in separate therapy programmes years apart"

Two adult siblings who have not spoken for fifteen years are put in contact by a mutual friend after each, in separate therapeutic contexts, recovered substantially the same memory of an event from their shared childhood. They meet to compare accounts — and discover that the memory, if accurate, implicates a third sibling who is currently a public figure.

PROMPT #107 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The recovered memory that got the wrong man convicted"

A man serving a sentence for a crime he did not commit traces his conviction to a recovered memory testimony. The witness who testified against him later recanted but the conviction stood on other evidence. Now, twenty years on, new information has emerged that links the original event to a different person — and the witness has memories again, of a different kind.

PROMPT #108 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The woman who remembers something that science says cannot be remembered"

A woman insists on a memory from before the age of two — an event she describes in specific, accurate detail that could not have been derived from family stories or photographs. A neuroscientist researching the case cannot explain the memory's content or its specificity. A criminologist looking at the same information has a different explanation entirely.

PROMPT #109 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The recovered memory that is accurate — but misattributed to the wrong person"

A woman who recovered memories of childhood abuse in therapy correctly remembers the location, the circumstances, and many specific details. But the person she identified in therapy was not the person who was there. In the years since she made the accusation, the correct perpetrator has been in her life — watching the wrong person face consequences.

PROMPT #110 / SUB-NICHE 11

"The therapist who doesn't know she implanted a false memory until it becomes a police matter"

A therapist of thirty years' experience is contacted by police in connection with a complaint made by a former client who claims her recovered memory testimony — testimony she provided to police on the therapist's encouragement — led to the wrongful prosecution of her father. The therapist believes the memory was genuine. She begins reviewing her clinical notes — and her methodology.

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SUB-NICHE 12 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ PARENTHOOD & PARANOIA

FILE: DCD-12-PARENTHOOD_&_PARANOI

Parenthood & Paranoia

Not domestic suspense broadly, but specifically the terror of a parent who believes something is wrong with their child's environment and no one will take them seriously. Primal emotional hooks, high stakes from page one, and a readership who will read through the night.

PROMPT #111 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The mother who knew something was wrong at the nursery — before she knew what"

A woman whose toddler attends a well-regarded day nursery begins noticing changes in her child's behaviour: nightmares, regression, flinching at specific sounds. The nursery staff reassure her. Her paediatrician suggests a developmental phase. The story is about what she finds when she stops accepting reassurance and starts gathering evidence.

PROMPT #112 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The father whose children were being coached to say specific things about him"

A man going through a custody dispute begins noticing that his children, when they return from their mother's home, use specific phrases and describe specific events in a way that sounds rehearsed. His solicitor tells him it is a common allegation. When he begins recording the children's unprompted statements, the pattern becomes impossible to dismiss.

PROMPT #113 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The mother who believed her child was being slowly poisoned — and was right"

A woman whose child has recurring, unexplained illness and whose repeated concerns are dismissed by multiple medical professionals undertakes her own investigation. Her child's symptoms improve every time they are separated from a specific person. She has no proof, no medical ally, and a partner who believes she is experiencing health anxiety.

PROMPT #114 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The parent who found their child's location being tracked by someone outside the family"

A father reviewing his family's shared location app discovers a device logged into the family account that he does not recognise. When he traces it, the device is linked to a person who has had no disclosed role in his children's lives — but whose access to the location data goes back fourteen months.

PROMPT #115 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The school that was protecting the wrong person"

A parent whose child makes a disclosure about a teacher at their school goes to the head teacher and is told the matter will be investigated internally. Six weeks later, she is informed the investigation found no evidence to support the disclosure. She requests the investigation report. She is told it is confidential. She is also told the teacher has been promoted.

PROMPT #116 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The playdate that produced a bruise no one could explain"

A child returns from a playdate with a bruise that the hosting parent attributes to rough play. The child's account of how the injury occurred changes each time they are asked. The child has also stopped mentioning the friend whose house they visited, despite previously asking to go back regularly. The mother does not know how to ask the question she needs to ask.

PROMPT #117 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The parenting forum that was being used to identify vulnerable families"

A member of an online parenting community realizes that the most helpful, sympathetic account in the forum — the one everyone goes to for support — has been systematically collecting detailed information about children's routines, schools, and home circumstances under the guise of offering advice. The account has no profile photograph and was created the week before it started posting.

PROMPT #118 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The postnatal depression diagnosis that was used against her in family court"

A woman who sought help for postnatal depression is, two years later, facing a custody hearing in which her medical records — specifically, her voluntary disclosure of depressive symptoms during a difficult period — are being used to argue she is an unstable parent. The story is about navigating a system that punishes people for asking for help.

PROMPT #119 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The language the child used that could only have come from one place"

A primary school teacher hears a young student use language and describe a concept that the child should have no access to. When the teacher reports the concern, the child's parents are called. Both parents are shocked — but one of them, she notices, is performing shock rather than experiencing it. The story is about what the teacher does next.

PROMPT #120 / SUB-NICHE 12

"The adoption agency that knew something about the birth family and didn't disclose it"

A couple who adopted a child discover, when the child is a teenager and begins searching for their biological family, that the adoption agency was aware of a significant medical and criminal history in the birth family that was not included in the disclosed information. The question is not whether the agency knew — the question is why they withheld it, and who told them to.

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SUB-NICHE 13 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ SMALL COMMUNITY CONSPIRACY

FILE: DCD-13-SMALL_COMMUNITY_CONS

Small Community Conspiracy

Villages, island communities, insular neighbourhoods where everyone knows something they are not saying. The slower, creepier burn of collective silence protecting something monstrous. Readers love the contained world, the gradual revelation, and the horror of community as organism.

PROMPT #121 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The village that has had no reported crime in forty years"

A journalist assigned to write a human interest piece about a village with an impossibly clean crime record discovers, the more she investigates, that the statistic is not a result of community safety — it is a result of community management. Things happen in the village. They are simply never reported in a way that reaches the national record.

PROMPT #122 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The island community that has a rule about asking questions"

A woman who relocates to a small island community after a personal loss finds the residents warm, generous, and quietly consistent about one thing: certain questions are not asked. The specific questions she cannot ask become apparent only gradually. By the time she understands what the community is protecting, she is already part of the arrangement.

PROMPT #123 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The neighbourhood watch that became something else entirely"

A man who joins his neighbourhood's watch scheme notices, over several months, that the scheme's activities have expanded beyond monitoring. Members are sharing information about residents' private lives, financial situations, and relationship difficulties in ways that suggest surveillance rather than safety. When he raises a concern, he discovers the scheme has been in this form for twelve years.

PROMPT #124 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The small town where everyone agreed to forget one summer"

A woman who grew up in a small town and left at eighteen returns for her mother's funeral and discovers that an event from the summer she was sixteen — an event that was the reason she left — has been excised from the town's collective memory. No one who was there will acknowledge it happened. The story is about finding the one person who cannot quite maintain the performance.

PROMPT #125 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The village fête that has run uninterrupted for sixty years — and what it's actually for"

A folklorist documenting rural traditions is invited to research a village's annual festival, which has run continuously since 1962. As she researches the festival's origins, she finds that it began the year following a disappearance that was never solved — and that the specific rituals of the fête map precisely onto the details of the case.

PROMPT #126 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The rural community whose water supply was contaminated — and who knew first"

A woman in a rural community begins investigating after her child develops an unexplained condition. She discovers that the community's water supply has been contaminated for years — and that the local council, the water company, and several prominent residents have been aware of this for significantly longer than they have disclosed.

PROMPT #127 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The estate where the tenants all know something is wrong but no one will say it to each other"

A journalist investigating a housing story on a large estate interviews twenty residents over three months. Each one, independently, describes the same vague sense of wrongness about the estate management company. None of them will say what they know when they know others are present. When she interviews them alone, away from the estate, the story is different.

PROMPT #128 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The farming community that closed ranks after the accident"

A death on a farm is ruled an accident. The community, which has faced several similar 'accidents' over thirty years, produces consistent testimony for every inquiry. A solicitor appointed to review a compensation claim discovers that the consistency is too perfect — the testimonies use the same phrases in the same order — and begins to trace who prepared the witnesses.

PROMPT #129 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The village where houses sell in a single day and no one discusses the price"

A property journalist investigating a rural housing market discovers that a single village has seen twelve sales in three years, all at prices significantly below market value, all transacting within 24 hours of listing. The buyers are all connected to the same individual through a corporate structure. The sellers, once she finds them, all give different reasons for the speed of their sale — and none of them will tell her the real one.

PROMPT #130 / SUB-NICHE 13

"The small community that protected a child predator for two generations"

An adult survivor of abuse in a close rural community writes a personal account that is read by a journalist who grew up in the same area. Comparing their accounts — separated by thirty years — reveals that the same pattern of protection, silencing, and community reputation management was operating across two generations. Together, they begin to map the network.

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SUB-NICHE 14 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE WRONGFUL CONVICTION SPIRAL

FILE: DCD-14-THE_WRONGFUL_CONVICT

The Wrongful Conviction Spiral

Someone just released from prison for a crime they did not commit — and now someone is trying to ensure they can never prove it. Urgent, propulsive, criminally under-served on KDP, and carrying the kind of righteous fury that keeps readers reading through the night.

PROMPT #131 / SUB-NICHE 14

"Twelve years out, someone is still following her"

A woman exonerated after twelve years in prison for a murder she did not commit returns to a life that no longer exists. As she tries to rebuild, she becomes aware that she is being monitored — by someone who needs to ensure she never finds the evidence that would not just clear her name but convict the person who planted the case against her.

PROMPT #132 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The evidence that would have changed everything is still locked in a police storage unit"

A wrongful conviction review lawyer discovers that physical evidence from a thirty-year-old case — evidence that the defence was never told existed — is still in storage. Getting access to it requires a court order. Getting the court order requires proof of its relevance. Proving its relevance requires access to it. Someone designed the loop deliberately.

PROMPT #133 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The eyewitness who identified the wrong person — and has spent twenty years knowing it"

A woman who provided eyewitness testimony that convicted a man she now knows was innocent makes contact with an innocence project. The man has been in prison for twenty years. She is prepared to recant. What she discovers is that recanting requires navigating a system that has significant institutional investment in the original conviction remaining intact.

PROMPT #134 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The prosecutor who built the case — and now has to dismantle it"

A senior prosecutor, reviewing a case years later, realizes that the conviction she secured involved evidence she now recognizes as improperly obtained. The investigation that led to the original arrest was driven by a detective she later learned was corrupt. She is the only person with the full picture — and the only person who can undo what she helped build.

PROMPT #135 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The DNA result that should have ended it — but someone made it disappear"

A man awaiting DNA results that are expected to confirm his innocence is told by his lawyer that the results are inconclusive — a finding that contradicts the lab's own preliminary assessment. When an independent expert reviews the chain of custody documentation, it becomes clear that the sample was handled in a way that was not accidental.

PROMPT #136 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The journalist who broke the original story — and now has to break the real one"

A journalist who wrote the original coverage of a high-profile criminal case — coverage that contributed to the atmosphere in which a wrongful conviction was secured — is approached years later by an innocence project. She must now write the story that corrects her earlier work, which means examining her own role in what happened.

PROMPT #137 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The man whose conviction was safe — except for the one thing his lawyer never found"

An exonerated man, now working with an innocence project, reviews his own case and identifies the single piece of evidence that, had his original lawyer found it, would have prevented his conviction entirely. The question the story investigates is not whether the lawyer missed it — but whether the lawyer was meant to miss it.

PROMPT #138 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The woman who served her sentence and was never exonerated — but never stopped"

A woman who completed her sentence for a crime she did not commit and was never formally exonerated continues, from outside the prison system, to build the case for her own innocence. She has no legal support, no public profile, and no resources — but she has been corresponding for years with a law student who is about to graduate.

PROMPT #139 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The victim's family that has to accept that the wrong man was punished"

A family that campaigned for years for a conviction in their son's murder is approached by an innocence organisation with evidence that the convicted man did not commit the crime. They must now navigate the loss of the certainty that has organized their grief for fifteen years — and confront the possibility that the person responsible has never been held to account.

PROMPT #140 / SUB-NICHE 14

"The cold case unit that keeps finding the same detective's fingerprints"

A cold case detective reviewing old case files notices that a specific former colleague's name appears in the investigative logs of a disproportionate number of cases that resulted in convictions later challenged on appeal. She begins to map the cases and finds a pattern not of incompetence but of deliberate construction.

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SUB-NICHE 15 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ DARK ACADEMIA SUSPENSE

FILE: DCD-15-DARK_ACADEMIA_SUSPEN

Dark Academia Suspense

Universities, private schools, academic rivalries, mentor obsession — intellectual environments where power dynamics breed the most sophisticated kinds of manipulation and betrayal. Readers are drawn to the aesthetic and the specific cruelty that can hide behind the prestige of knowledge.

PROMPT #141 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The research that would end his career — written by his most devoted student"

A doctoral student who has spent five years under the supervision of an eminent academic discovers, in the final stages of her thesis, that her supervisor's foundational work contains data that cannot have been collected in the way he described. She must decide whether her degree, her career, and her loyalty are worth more than the truth.

PROMPT #142 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The professor who made his protégé's career — and now wants something she can't give back"

A tenured academic discovers her celebrated mentor has been systematically taking credit for students' research for decades. When she tries to expose it, she realizes he anticipated exactly that — and has been preparing for years, accumulating leverage against everyone who might speak against him.

PROMPT #143 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The private school where the old boys' network starts before graduation"

A teacher at a prestigious boarding school uncovers evidence that a group of sixth-form students are operating a secret society that facilitates relationships between students and alumni. The relationships are not sexual — they are financial and reputational, laying the groundwork for adult lives before the students have left school. The school's governors are alumni. Several of them are aware.

PROMPT #144 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The academic who faked her fieldwork — and the person who was there"

A celebrated anthropologist's landmark research is challenged by a junior colleague who was present during the fieldwork period and whose account of what happened in the field contradicts the published record in ways that cannot be explained by differing interpretation. The junior colleague has been attempting to publish his account for six years and has been blocked every time.

PROMPT #145 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The plagiarism case that was dropped for reasons no one would explain"

A postgraduate student files a plagiarism complaint against a senior professor after finding her unpublished thesis draft reproduced, with minor alterations, in the professor's new book. The complaint is investigated, then quietly closed. When she requests the investigation outcome, she is told the documentation is not available. She is also told her funding has been reviewed.

PROMPT #146 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The student who disappeared during exam season and the university that managed the story"

A student disappears from campus during the examination period. The university's communications are careful, measured, and consistent. A student journalist covering the story for the campus paper discovers that the university's crisis communications team was engaged before the student was reported missing — and that the team's previous engagements include three other student welfare incidents at the same institution.

PROMPT #147 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The reading list that contained a code no one was supposed to find"

A graduate student who has been studying a deceased professor's archives finds that the professor's carefully curated reading lists — required texts for decades of students — contain a pattern across the page numbers, the edition years, and the marginal annotations that appears to be intentional. What the pattern encodes leads to something the university would not want found.

PROMPT #148 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The academic rivalry that ended in a retraction — and then in something worse"

Two competing researchers in the same department publish contradictory findings on the same topic. One is forced to retract. Years later, the details of how the retraction was engineered — which reviewer was used, who had access to the pre-publication draft, and who made the first call to the editor — become relevant to a criminal matter.

PROMPT #149 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The university that marketed its prestige while knowingly passing students who shouldn't have graduated"

An external examiner reviewing degree standards at a prestigious university discovers a pattern of grade adjustments in the final years of students whose families have made significant donations to the institution. The pattern is statistically impossible to attribute to coincidence. She must decide what to do with findings that will damage the institution — and that the institution's leadership clearly already knows about.

PROMPT #150 / SUB-NICHE 15

"The tutor who was made to disappear from the academic record"

A researcher tracing the intellectual history of a theoretical framework discovers that an early contributor — a woman who appears in contemporaneous correspondence and conference records — is absent from every published account of the work's development. Tracking the woman down, she finds someone who gave thirty years to an institution that erased her from its history — and who has kept records of everything.

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SUB-NICHE 16 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE INHERITANCE IMPOSTER

FILE: DCD-16-THE_INHERITANCE_IMPO

The Inheritance Imposter

Someone who has been living as a different person. Assumed identities, forged pasts, and the moment the person they replaced — or whose identity they borrowed — tries to come back. Identity theft at its most personal and psychologically rich.

PROMPT #151 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The woman who took her dead sister's identity — and lived it better than her sister did"

After her identical twin sister's death in a remote accident, a woman makes a split-second decision to assume her sister's identity. The sister's life was, by every external measure, more successful. The story follows the impersonation's perfect years — and the event that ends them.

PROMPT #152 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The man who has been someone else for so long he can no longer remember who he was"

A man who assumed a false identity following a crisis in his twenties has now lived under that identity for thirty years. He has a family, a career, a community. The story begins when someone from his real past makes contact — not to expose him, but because they need his help, and they need the person he used to be.

PROMPT #153 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The identity thief who fell in love with the person whose life she was living"

A woman who assumed the identity of a deceased acquaintance to escape her own circumstances finds, five years later, that the acquaintance's family — who believed the daughter was alive and estranged — has located what they believe is their daughter. She must now choose between maintaining the identity she has built and protecting people who have loved her as someone else.

PROMPT #154 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The patient who was admitted under a false name — and cannot be discharged without one"

A man admitted to hospital unconscious, without identification, is treated and recovers. When the hospital attempts to process his discharge, his identity cannot be verified — because the name and details he provided upon regaining consciousness belong to a man who has been officially dead for six years. Someone is missing. Someone has been living as that person. The two things may not have a simple relationship.

PROMPT #155 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The inheritance that only goes to the eldest child — who has not been seen in decades"

A wealthy individual's estate passes to the eldest child, who disappeared without explanation twenty years earlier. When a person comes forward claiming to be the eldest child, the other siblings' investigation into the claimant's identity reveals not just questions about who this person is, but questions about what happened to the person they are claiming to be.

PROMPT #156 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The diplomat whose identity was constructed from scratch by a government programme"

A career diplomat who has operated under a constructed identity for twenty years is told that the programme that created his cover no longer exists — and that his official identity has been quietly decommissioned. He must now re-enter a world that has no record of who he actually is, while certain parties from his diplomatic history have very strong reasons to find him.

PROMPT #157 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The woman who discovered her husband had been someone else before she met him"

A woman whose husband dies suddenly begins the administrative process of settling his estate and discovers that his identity — the name, the history, the family he described — was assumed approximately fifteen years before they met. She was in love with a person who did not exist. She must now decide whether the man she loved was real, even if the identity was not.

PROMPT #158 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The impersonator who was better at the job than the person they replaced"

A woman hired to temporarily impersonate a minor public figure during a sensitive period finds, when the original person is ready to return, that the professional relationships built during the impersonation are not transferable. She has been more effective in the role than its original occupant. The original occupant is aware of this — and has decided she cannot be allowed to continue.

PROMPT #159 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The identity document forger who built the false identity for someone who later committed a crime"

A skilled forger who produced identity documents for people escaping dangerous situations is contacted by investigators following a serious crime. One of the identities she created was used by the perpetrator. She must navigate the tension between her own liability, her principles, and her knowledge of who this person was when they came to her — and why.

PROMPT #160 / SUB-NICHE 16

"The woman who realizes she has been the subject of an identity assumption — while she is still alive"

A woman discovers that someone has been using her identity online — not to defraud her, but to build a parallel professional and social life under her name. When she investigates, she finds that the person impersonating her has been doing so for four years, has built relationships and a reputation, and has access to her credentials she cannot explain. The impersonator is not her enemy. Something has made this person need to be her.

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SUB-NICHE 17 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE SLEEPWALKER'S NIGHTMARE

FILE: DCD-17-THE_SLEEPWALKER'S_NI

The Sleepwalker's Nightmare

Dissociative episodes, sleepwalking, fugue states — characters who lose hours or days and wake up to evidence of things they may have done. An endlessly compelling unreliable narrator variant with built-in ambiguity and the deepest possible stakes.

PROMPT #161 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The woman who woke up outside her house — and the neighbour who said she'd been standing there for an hour"

A woman with a history of sleepwalking wakes one morning to find she is standing in her garden, barefoot, in winter clothing. Her neighbour, coming home from a night shift, says she has been standing in the same position for over an hour. The garden gate is unlocked. The woman's feet are clean. She has not been standing in the garden.

PROMPT #162 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The man whose car had been driven forty miles while he slept"

A man with a history of dissociative episodes wakes to find his car warm and the mileage forty miles higher than it was the previous evening. There are no other signs of a disturbance. His phone shows no activity. He tells no one. Three days later, a woman's body is found forty miles away, and the time of death matches the gap in his night.

PROMPT #163 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The sleepwalker who sent emails she cannot remember writing"

A woman discovers, checking her sent folder, emails dispatched at 3am that she has no memory of writing. The emails are coherent, detailed, and describe situations and knowledge she does not consciously have access to. When she investigates the content, she finds references to events from her childhood that she has no waking memory of.

PROMPT #164 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The nurse who couldn't rule out that she had done something during a dissociative episode"

A nurse with a diagnosed dissociative condition wakes to find she cannot account for forty minutes during a night shift. A patient on her ward has received an incorrect medication dosage — not dangerously, but incorrectly. She does not know if she administered it. She cannot report the incident without reporting herself. The patient is declining.

PROMPT #165 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The man whose wife says things happened between them that he has no memory of"

A man seeks therapy after his wife, who is leaving him, describes incidents of behaviour during his sleep — incidents he does not remember and that, if accurate, are seriously concerning. A sleep specialist confirms a disorder that would make the described behaviour physiologically possible. He cannot determine whether the incidents occurred. His wife's fear is genuine. His own terror is of a different kind.

PROMPT #166 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The sleepwalker who documented herself — and what the footage showed"

A woman who has installed cameras throughout her home to document her sleepwalking reviews footage from the previous night and finds herself doing something she cannot explain and cannot watch in its entirety. She cannot determine what she was doing. She cannot determine whether what she sees explains or creates the problem she woke up to.

PROMPT #167 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The fugue state that lasted three days and ended in a different city"

A man with no prior psychiatric history loses three days of his life and is found in a city four hundred miles from his home with no wallet, no phone, and no memory of anything after sitting down to eat dinner on a Tuesday evening. What happened to him in those three days, and what he did or was made to do, forms the spine of a story that is as much thriller as it is psychological horror.

PROMPT #168 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The child who was sleepwalking the night the family's house burned down"

An adult survivor of a childhood house fire has no memory of the events of that night. She was found outside the house and was told she must have walked out in her sleep. As an adult, reviewing the fire investigation report for the first time, she finds details that suggest the fire did not start where the report says it started — and that someone else was in the house that night.

PROMPT #169 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The student who woke up in the library with twenty pages of writing she didn't remember"

A graduate student with a history of dissociative episodes finds herself, early one morning, in the university library with twenty pages of handwritten text in her own handwriting, in a notebook she does not recognise. The text is not random — it is structured, argued, and references sources she does not consciously know. It also appears to be a confession.

PROMPT #170 / SUB-NICHE 17

"The woman whose sleepwalking episodes correlate precisely with her neighbour's absences"

A woman whose sleepwalking has never caused concern begins, on review of her sleep tracker data, to notice that her episodes cluster on specific nights. When she cross-references those dates with other information, she finds they correspond exactly to the nights her next-door neighbour is away from home. She does not know what this means. She is beginning to be afraid of finding out.

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SUB-NICHE 18 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ RETIREMENT COMMUNITY NOIR

FILE: DCD-18-RETIREMENT_COMMUNITY

Retirement Community Noir

Older protagonists. Gated communities. Long-buried pasts resurfacing decades later. An almost completely untapped sub-niche on KDP with a built-in readership of millions of older thriller fans who are hungry to see themselves as the hero of a story.

PROMPT #171 / SUB-NICHE 18

"Three residents have died in two years. The management calls it natural causes. One 73-year-old woman doesn't."

A retired former investigator moves into a luxury senior community and notices patterns her neighbours have stopped seeing. She begins an investigation that puts her at odds with management — and then in real danger.

PROMPT #172 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The retired judge who recognises, at a new-residents' dinner, the man she sent to prison thirty years ago"

A woman who spent a career on the bench attends a welcome dinner at her new retirement community and finds herself seated next to a man she put away for a serious crime in 1991. He was released eighteen years ago. She does not know if he recognises her. The story begins the next morning, when she finds a note that makes it clear that he does.

PROMPT #173 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The long-married couple who finally have nothing to distract them from what happened"

A couple who have spent fifty years in careers, children, and the maintenance of a successful public life retire together to a quiet coastal community. In the quiet, without the noise, they must finally sit with a secret they have kept from each other — and from themselves — since the first year of their marriage.

PROMPT #174 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The retired spy who cannot stop working — because she has found a real target"

A woman who spent a career in intelligence retires to a comfortable community where she finds, over her first year, behaviour patterns she has been trained to read. She could be projecting. She knows she could be projecting. The discipline she spent forty years developing will not let her dismiss what she is seeing.

PROMPT #175 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The grandmother who knows where the body is buried — because she put it there"

A woman in her late seventies, preparing to enter palliative care for a terminal diagnosis, contacts a solicitor about making a specific provision in her will. The provision concerns a property she owned decades ago and a request that requires the solicitor to understand something about the property's history that cannot be in the official record.

PROMPT #176 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The retirement home administrator who is skimming the residents' assets"

A resident of a senior living community who spent her career as a forensic accountant begins reviewing the community's financial statements — available as a member of the residents' committee — and identifies a pattern of small, regular deductions from individual residents' accounts that, aggregated, represent a significant ongoing fraud. She reports it. Nothing happens. She reports it again.

PROMPT #177 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The reading group that discovers one of its members wrote the true crime book they are discussing"

A retirement community reading group selects a true crime account of a thirty-year-old case for their monthly meeting. As the discussion progresses, one member — who has been in the group for two years — becomes increasingly specific and emotionally invested in defending the convicted person's innocence. Someone recognises the name on the book's dedication page. It is the same as the group member's maiden name.

PROMPT #178 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The man who moves into the community to find the person who ruined his life — and finds two of them"

A man in his late sixties selects a retirement community after identifying that the person he holds responsible for a career and family catastrophe has retired there. He arrives with a plan. What he does not expect is to discover, within weeks, that a second person connected to the same events is also a resident — and that neither of them is entirely who he believed them to be.

PROMPT #179 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The night-care worker who is the only one who knows what happens after lights out"

A night-care worker at a senior living facility witnesses things she cannot report without losing her job and her professional standing. She begins keeping records — times, dates, observations — in a notebook she keeps at home. The story follows what happens when the notebook goes missing, and what she must do to protect both herself and the residents she has been watching over.

PROMPT #180 / SUB-NICHE 18

"The woman who spent sixty years keeping a secret and dies with it unresolved — and her granddaughter who won't let it go"

A woman's deathbed confession to her granddaughter provides the beginning, not the end, of a story. The confession names a person, an event, and a location — but not the thing the granddaughter needs to know: whether what her grandmother did was a crime, an act of survival, or something that still needs to be corrected. The granddaughter is the only person left who can find out.

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SUB-NICHE 19 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE ADOPTION SECRET THRILLER

FILE: DCD-19-THE_ADOPTION_SECRET_

The Adoption Secret Thriller

Searching for biological family and finding something that was never meant to be found. The intersection of identity, DNA databases, and the people who want certain bloodlines — and certain truths — to stay permanently hidden.

PROMPT #181 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The DNA result showed a sibling she was never told about — who died the same year she was given up for adoption"

A woman searching for her biological family runs a consumer DNA test and surfaces a match the algorithm flags as a deceased twin. What she discovers about why the adoption was arranged — and why one child was given away — unravels a family conspiracy spanning forty years.

PROMPT #182 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The birth mother who had been looking for her child for thirty years — and had been prevented from finding her"

A woman who gave up a child for adoption under extreme pressure in her twenties discovers, at fifty-two, that the closed adoption agreement included a clause that legally prevented the intermediary from forwarding her contact requests. She has submitted seventeen contact requests over thirty years. Her child has never received one.

PROMPT #183 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The adoptive family that knew the truth about the birth family and never told"

An adult adoptee discovers, after the death of their adoptive parents, that their parents knew considerably more about their birth family than was disclosed. The sealed letters in the estate reveal a history the adoptive parents decided to keep from their child. The question is whether the decision was made to protect the child — or to protect themselves.

PROMPT #184 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The sperm donor whose children have found each other online"

A man who donated anonymously to a fertility clinic in the 1980s has been contacted by a genealogy platform: he has thirty-seven DNA matches consistent with biological children. The platform has connected several of these individuals to each other. Some of them are looking for him. Some of them are looking for information about a medical history he would rather they not have.

PROMPT #185 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The international adoption that was not what the adoptive parents were told"

A couple who adopted a child internationally in the 1990s discover, decades later, that the adoption agency they used was connected to a network of facilitated adoptions in which children were not voluntarily relinquished. Their child — now an adult — has begun searching for their biological family. What the adult child finds leads back to their adoptive parents' own choices at the time of the adoption.

PROMPT #186 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The birth father who was never told he had a child"

A man receives a DNA match notification from a platform he joined to trace his own family history. The match is categorised as a probable child. He has no knowledge of any biological child. Tracing the match requires understanding a relationship from thirty years ago that he believed ended without consequence — and confronting a decision that was made for him without his knowledge or consent.

PROMPT #187 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The adoption record that has been deliberately falsified"

An adult adoptee who submits a subject access request for their adoption file receives documentation that, on examination, contains details inconsistent with each other and with publicly available records. When they show the file to a specialist, they are told the records appear to have been altered. The purpose of the alteration — and who would have had the means and motive to make it — becomes the central question.

PROMPT #188 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The celebrity whose adoption history is about to be revealed by a DNA site they never used"

A minor public figure's half-sibling submits a DNA sample to a consumer genealogy platform and receives a match. The match is flagged by the platform as a notable name in its database. Neither party consented to this intersection. The half-sibling has no desire for money or exposure — only a medical history question they need answered. The public figure has no idea the match exists. Their publicist is about to find out first.

PROMPT #189 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The closed adoption that turns out to be connected to a historic abuse scandal"

An adult adoptee researching their biological family finds that their birth mother's entry in the records is linked to an institution that was the subject of a significant historical abuse inquiry. The birth mother's name appears in testimony submitted to the inquiry — not as a perpetrator, but as a child who was in the institution's care. Understanding what happened to the birth mother is now inseparable from understanding why the adoptee exists.

PROMPT #190 / SUB-NICHE 19

"The identical twins separated at birth by a private adoption agency — and the agency's reason"

Two women who discover through a DNA platform that they are identical twins, separated in infancy and placed with different families, begin researching the agency that arranged both adoptions. The agency, no longer operating, was run by individuals with connections to a research programme from the relevant period. The question of why twins would be deliberately separated — and who would want that research — drives the story.

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SUB-NICHE 20 OF 20 · 10 PROMPTS · ■ THE INHERITANCE OF TRAUMA

FILE: DCD-20-THE_INHERITANCE_OF_T

The Inheritance of Trauma

Generational secrets. Patterns passed down through families. A protagonist uncovering the source of their own psychological damage — and discovering that the source is still very much alive, aware, and invested in not being found.

PROMPT #191 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The woman who realized her anxiety had a name — and that name was her grandmother"

A woman in therapy for a lifelong anxiety disorder begins, at her therapist's suggestion, to map her family history. What she finds is a pattern — the same fears, the same responses, the same specific triggers — running through four generations of women on her mother's side. The origin point is a woman still living. When she visits her, something in the old woman's face tells her she has been expecting this conversation.

PROMPT #192 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The family that passed down a rule nobody could explain"

An adult woman who grew up with a specific, seemingly arbitrary family prohibition — never discuss finances with relatives outside the immediate household — begins tracing its origin after her father's death. Following the rule back through the family's history, she finds an event three generations earlier that the rule was designed to prevent from recurring — and evidence that the event did recur, once, and was covered up.

PROMPT #193 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The brother and sister who have the same nightmare — and always have"

Two adult siblings discover, in a conversation triggered by the death of a parent, that they have shared the same recurring dream since early childhood — the same setting, the same sequence, the same figure. Neither has ever told the other. The dream, described to a specialist in trauma psychology, is consistent with a specific type of indirect traumatic exposure. Their parents are the only people who could explain the source.

PROMPT #194 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The inheritance of silence: a family that never spoke about anything important"

A woman whose family operated under a code of complete emotional silence enters therapy at forty and begins to understand that the silence was not temperamental — it was structural, and it was protecting something specific. Working backwards through the family's history, she and her therapist identify the generation and the event at which the silence became a rule, and what speaking would mean for the people still living by it.

PROMPT #195 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The man who inherited his father's enemies without knowing why"

A man who has always had the vague sense that certain people in his professional and social sphere were inexplicably hostile to him begins, after his father's death, to trace the source of the hostility. What he finds is a wrong his father did, decades earlier, to people whose families have quietly maintained the grudge across a generation — and a debt that, in their view, he has inherited along with everything else.

PROMPT #196 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The family whose patterns of control repeated generation after generation until someone named them"

A family therapist working with a couple in difficulty recognizes in their dynamic a pattern she has encountered before. When she asks about the couple's families of origin, both describe childhoods with identical structures of control and silence. Tracing the pattern backward through the families leads to a convergence point that neither the couple nor the therapist expected — their families are connected by an event neither family has ever acknowledged.

PROMPT #197 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The child who was never told what happened to her father — and who finds out at forty"

A woman who grew up being told her father died when she was three discovers, in her forties, that he is alive. He chose not to be in her life — or was prevented from being in it. The investigation into which of these is true, and what drove the decision, forms the story — as does what she decides to do with a father who is now old, regretful, and genuinely unsure of his own history.

PROMPT #198 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The photograph that appears in two family albums — from families who have never met"

A woman researching her family history for a genealogy project finds a photograph in her family's archive that she later recognizes in the published memoir of a person from an entirely different background with no apparent connection to her family. The same image. Different annotations. She begins to understand that the overlap is not a coincidence — it is the point at which two family histories intersect.

PROMPT #199 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The trauma researcher who discovers she has been using her own family as her unconscious case study"

A psychologist who has built a career researching intergenerational trauma attends a conference at which a colleague presents findings that closely mirror her own family history. Returning home, she examines her research archive with new eyes and realizes that her subject selection, her analytical frameworks, and the conclusions she has drawn over twenty years of research have been unconsciously shaped by a family history she never fully processed. Her next research project is herself.

PROMPT #200 / SUB-NICHE 20

"The family home that has never been sold — and the reason no one will sell it"

A family has owned and maintained a rural property for six generations without ever selling it, despite multiple financial pressures that would make selling the rational choice. An adult member of the family who needs the equity from a sale begins researching the history of the prohibition and discovers a condition attached to the original property deed — a condition that, if the history it references is accurate, means the family cannot sell without surfacing something they have spent six generations keeping buried.

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END OF DOSSIER · DCD-200-PSY-2026

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