



COMPROMISED

A NOVEL

YOUR NAME

Thank you for your interest in Plot Prompts! I hope this framework for a novel or short story sparks your imagination and jumpstarts your best writing yet.

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Proposed Title

Compromised

Genre

Thriller

Themes

Identity - What makes us who we are? Our thoughts, ideas, emotions, memories, bodies? If any of these were taken away or involuntarily altered, could we retain our sense of self?

Corruption - Mankind's insatiable need for power ensures that corruption is prevalent in every aspect of life. What would you do if you uncovered corruption within your sphere of influence?

Betrayal - Explore how we come to trust the wrong people. Are there clues or red flags that we miss? If so, why are we blind to them? Do we fear the truth about ourselves and others?

Description

A woman notices calluses on her hands but has no idea how she got them. Delving into her past reveals unsolved mysteries.

Synopsis

One morning, Beverly Connell notices calluses on her hands that weren't there the day before. Strangely, the calluses are rough rather than tender, as though they developed over a long period of time. She thinks back, but can't recall what caused them. Bev begins getting ready for work and notices more strange things when she looks in the mirror—graying hair, deep crow's feet, weathered skin. She's aged ten years overnight. She goes to work, but her office looks as though it's been closed a while—even though she remembers being there the day before. Going home, she knocks on her neighbor's door and learns her best friend

moved away without telling her. Desperate to figure out what's going on, Bev begins an odyssey to recover her past.

Setting

Present day Washington DC.

Main Characters

Beverly Connell - She is a mid-forties single woman living her dream life as a political consultant. Together with her business partner, she has a thriving business. She's dating a university professor and thinks she's found true love for the first time in her life. When suddenly everything changes, her confidence is shaken to the core as she struggles to put herself back together.

Mike Quinn - In his mid-fifties and recently divorced, he's a former US Congressman who was forced from office due to a bribery scandal. Having remade his image as a university law professor, he's looking forward to rebooting his love life with Beverly.

Cory Torres - Beverly's business partner is a former lobbyist. He and Bev were law school classmates whose brief romance mellowed into an enduring friendship. Happily married, he introduced Bev to Mike in the hope she would find the personal satisfaction he has.

Christina Brown - As Beverly's neighbor and best friend, Christina encouraged Bev to start her own business when she became frustrated in her job as a legislative aide. Christina is a divorced single mom with a teenaged daughter who views Bev as an aunt. Though Christina has a good job as a nursing supervisor, she's developed an online gambling habit that's wrecking financial havoc.

Plot Outline

ACT 1 (Exposition):

I. Setup (revealed through flashbacks or dialogue)

- Bev has a happy life with a flourishing business and a promising love life. Though she and Mike have only been dating six months, she believes he's close to proposing and she plans to say yes. They've even talked of adopting a child together.
- Bev senses something is up with Christina, but her friend is unusually close-mouthed about whatever is bothering her.
- Cory lands them a big client—a political newcomer with presidential ambitions. An ideological moderate, the client is considering changing party affiliations to broaden his base.

II. Inciting Incident – Story opens with Bev realizing some unexplained changes in her physical appearance. Over the course of a day, she learns that Christina and Cory have disappeared, and that Mike is remarried to someone else. She begins to understand that her memories of yesterday may be of a much earlier time.

III. Plot Point #1 – Bev begins investigating the last thing she remembers—Cory's news about their latest client—and uncovers disturbing details about the client's past, including rumors of espionage and treason. She discovers that the client has since become Vice President of the United States, though she has no memory of his campaign.

ACT 2 (Rising Action):

IV. Subplots that facilitate character development:

- With no family or friends to lean on, Bev's emotional state is precarious. Terrified that she's going insane, she seeks the help of a therapist. Together they learn that

Bev has been in a dissociative fugue for ten years. Bev's memories of this other life are hazy, but through hypnosis they learn she worked as a California longshoreman under an assumed name.

- Though Bev is unable to determine the catalyst for her fugue or how she ended up back in DC, she believes her problems trace back to the corrupt client. She wonders what she knew ten years ago and who she told.
- Bev finds Christina but her friend won't say much other than that she was paid to keep up Bev's property and told not to file a missing person's report.
- Bev learns that Cory was a senior aide to the Vice President but died under suspicious circumstances after the election.

V. Plot Point #2 (Confrontation) – Christina is found dead and Bev is arrested for her murder.

ACT 3: (Falling Action):

VI. Climax – Bev represents herself at trial and says she's been framed. She presents her theory that the US Vice President is a murderer and Russian spy. She offers compelling evidence, including details of a plot to assassinate the US President.

VII. Resolution – The Vice President commits suicide and Bev is acquitted of murder. Bev sells her house in DC and moves back to California.

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