

# BRAINSTORMING PROMPTS FOR WRITERS

## **What if I add a trope I know I'm a sucker for?**

What are those attractive, addictive qualities that you see in your favorite stories? Can you find a pattern? Is there a trope or a story element that always turns you on? Make a list of your favorite tropes/story elements, then ask yourself: is there a way to include one or two or ALL of these elements in my book?

## **What if I change/add a POV character?**

What would happen if you told the story through a different characters' perspective? Or what if you just added a POV and switched back and forth? Or what if you wrote from the villain's POV?

## **What if I made it a sequel or spin-off for a different book?**

What if you borrowed some characters that you've already written and already love and make this a story about them? Or what if it follows a SIDE CHARACTER from the book you've already written and love? Or what if you made it a next-generation story that takes place twenty years AFTER the other book and it's about your characters' children all grown up? Or what if you made it a *previous*-generation story that takes place twenty years BEFORE the other book and it's about your characters' parents?

## **What if I turn it upside-down?**

What happens if you rearrange events? What happens if you change the entire starting point of your story? What happens if you take the end of the story and put it at the beginning? Or what if you START the story at the game-changing midpoint or disaster moment and make THAT the inciting incident?

*Example: if you're writing a dark fantasy romance where the female MC is forced into an arranged marriage with the evil king and that's your game-changing midpoint... what would happen if you moved that to the beginning and we start page one on her dreaded wedding day?*

### **What if I make it a retelling?**

Maybe you're writing a sci-fi adventure and it just feels bland to you... what if it was a retelling of *Around The World In 80 Days*? With time travel instead of a geographical race? Or what if your dark academia magical realism was a retelling of *The Secret Garden*? With evil magical plants and mysterious portals to other dimensions? Or what if your thought-provoking contemporary coming-of-age story was a retelling of *Black Beauty*? With people instead of horses? DON'T COMPARE or criticize yourself. Just let your imagination run wild.

### **What if I change the genre?**

Maybe you're writing a genre that—let's face it—is not your cup of tea. Maybe you just need to go back to that comfort food genre, the one that feels like home! Or maybe you've been writing in the same genre for too long and it's time to change it up, surprise yourself, try something you've NEVER tried before.

### **What if I combine this story idea with another story idea?**

If you've had this problem once, chances are you've had it twice. Maybe you've got TWO Problem Stories simmering on the back burner at the moment. Have you ever thought about mixing them together and cooking them on one burner??? It's worth considering. Even if one story doesn't have the same setting or theme...would that be an issue? Or would it only make the story more dynamic and unique?

### **What if I change the theme?**

What do you care about right now? What is the truth you want to scream from the rooftops? What do you catch yourself crusading about at the dinner table until your family is like, "okay, okay, you're preaching to the choir"? Theme is the backbone of a good book, and in order to write a compelling theme, it has to mean something significant to YOU in this season of your life.