

Episode 203

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SPEAKERS

Carissa Andrews



Carissa Andrews 00:04

The indie author revolution has been around for more than a decade, the Wii indies continue to push the boundaries of what we're capable of. From getting over initial prejudices, to staring down perfectionism and author impostor syndrome. We've become a force to reckon with. Now after years of hustling, grind, we indies are rebelling again. Gone are the days of publishing a book a month until we drop, and in its place, we're sowing the seeds of a better way away with more ease, abundance and flow. Get ready to learn about indie authorship from a whole new perspective. We're about to cover everything from releasing your poverty mentality, to manifesting your millionaire author destiny. I'm Carissa Andrews, and this is the Author Revolution Podcast. Well, hi, there, everybody. Welcome back to the Author Revolution Podcast. This is our first Preptober 2023 conversation that we're going to be having. It's my favorite time of the year, well, okay, not my favorite, favorite time of the year, but pretty darn close. Because it's close to Halloween. We're prepping for Nano. There's a lot of creativity and fun stuff in the air, and people are doing neat things. So maybe it is my favorite. Plus the leaves are beautiful. My birthday was last month. So there's a lot of fun things that are happening right now, right? For those of you who don't know, maybe you're new to writing, maybe you're new to being an indie author, prep Tober is the month before NaNoWriMo, which is National Novel Writing Month, and that's November. Now the concept with Nano is that you're going to write 1600 67 words every single day, and you're going to at the end of the month, then have a 50,000 word, start to your novel. Ideally, it'd be like a first draft. So what's really interesting is Preptober kind of evolved over the years, right? It became this thing that in order to hit the ground running and really know what we're doing come Nano, we had to sit down and think about it a little bit. It's kind of like segment intending. We're sitting down we're thinking about, you know what this next segment has to do for us what we're going to intend for it, if we're sitting down to write, we're intending the words to flow fast, we're thinking about our strategy or our chapter, the scene that we're going to do, we're taking a few minutes to just live in it, to imagine it will Preptober is the same kind of thing. You're you're sitting down with your story, you're thinking about how it's going to flow, you're planning out, if nothing else, a skeleton outline. So you have some direction, and you're running with it come November 1. What's been really interesting is starting October 1, I kicked off 4 Books 5 Days, that's my new course, it's about planning a series of four books using the help of Chat GPT. And what's been really fascinating about all of this, is that we are planning faster, we're getting more excited about

our stories, the characters are coming to life in new ways that we as authors maybe haven't always had the ability to do like not everyone loves to sit down and create characters for hours and hours, right. And sometimes we just want to have, you know, the creative guidelines to the creative box, so to speak, to be able to start writing quicker, will tattoo Beatty does this for us. The planning phase is probably one of the most fun aspects of utilizing this tool. So today, I wanted to bring a new level of Preptober planning to the mix, I wanted to talk about 10 different types of prompts that you can ask Chat GPT, as you're doing and working through your Preptober details. And maybe you've already started a book, that's okay, too, you can still ask some of these questions, or you can dig in a little bit deeper into how it works. Now, if you are interested in joining the four books, five days course, the course is constantly open, I'm not going to close the doors to this particular course, because I want you to be able to have the opportunity to happen whenever you need. That being said the current live cohort is ongoing. We are currently in it. So we're on day three right now, if you're hearing this on October 4. So we're doing all the work and as a lot of fun. Now for you if you joined, let's say today, you'll get like the intro stuff, you'll get the first part of the course and then tomorrow, you'll get day one, and then the next day, you'll get day two. So it'll be a little bit off center based off of where we're at. But that's okay, it's fine. And you can still join us on Saturday, if you want for the live q&a. It's going to be a lot of fun. Now, prepping for your novels, to me at least has always been such a fun part. But adding this element of having this co-creator helped me to ideate and think about ways things could work in new and unusual and interesting ways has been really fascinating. And so I want to give you 10 In different prompt ideas that you can use as you're prepping as you're planning, as you're going through this process of getting all of your stuff ready for November. But don't just leave it there. I want you to be thinking about these questions how I'm phrasing them. And I want you to take it to the next level, continue asking questions until you get answers that you feel satisfied with. Continue to have that conversation back and forth with Chat to see if you can get it to refine the answers into a place where you're like, holy cow, this is really friggin cool. Does that make sense? Okay, so let's get started. As we're trying to create our concepts, our characters, a lot of people start with the character creation. And so this isn't where I start in for books five days, I actually start a little bit more basic, where it's like, let's figure out where we really want to write what we really want to write the kinds of themes we want to write in, but we're doing it by brain dumping. If you're new to Chat GPT, I think a good place to start is character creation because it gets us excited about the types of roles and the way that people can interact in our stories. So here's a Chat GPT prompt example on character creation. Okay, so Hey, Chat GPT help me brainstorm a unique backstory for a space pirate who's afraid of the dark. Or, you know, give it your own interesting information, like Chat GPT help me brainstorm a unique backstory for x. Just whatever your story idea is, it'll help to create it. I'll also go in as far as if so if you're in my rapid release roadmap, course, you have a character template, there's a list of things that we want to know about our characters, you know, what do they look like? Do they have any scars? What do they drive? What's their deal? What's their internal and external motivation? What is their biggest fear? What's their most inner hope? You know, what Enneagram type? Are they in a bunch of questions like, you know, what's, what's in my character's fridge right now, whatever. You can put in literally as much of that sheet as you want to Chat GPT and say, Hey, Chat, help me brainstorm all of this information for a character who is going to do XYZ in this book. So whatever you know about your book, put it in there, give it as much detail as you can. And I kid you not, you're going to be amazed at the way the characters will flow. Now, if you want to create more characters, continue doing it in the same chat. Okay, do your love interest next and say, Okay, this love interest is going to have this kind of impact helped me figure out how to mesh these together, whatever, I need to create a villain here's the sheet helped me create a villain that's going to work really well with character one, or whatever the person's name is that the character creation, brainstorm, gave you. There's so many different ways to be able to

prompt Chat and give you some dynamic characters and some really cool information that will help you level up your writing. Okay, so number two, world building, obviously, right? We need to have fleshed out worlds. Readers love when the worlds feel alive when they feel descriptive and wonderful and gorgeous. And so if you have ideas in your head about how the world is going to look, or if you're looking for descriptions, or you want to just understand how a dynamic could be, you could say something like, Chat, can you describe a world where the oceans are made of liquid crystals, and the beaches are silver? And it will give you information about how that'll look and how that will be? And then you could say, what would be the reasoning for this? How could scientifically this happen? Or magically, could this happen? And Chat will continue to go on? Or you can ask about, you know, what kind of magic systems could exist in an XYZ type world? Or what would happen if magic was extinct. But yet one person all of a sudden had it, like ask questions about, you know, government about the way that the world works the way the world looks. Maybe you could say, hey, Chat, describe a world that's completely different from Earth, what would it look like? Because I want to describe a planet that has never been inhabited before. And let it go through some ideas with you converse with it and find out exactly what types of things exist out there and how they could come to be mean. If you're treating your conversations with Chat GPT, like you're talking to the biggest multicast expert on the planet, you're getting pretty close to understanding what Chat GPT is capable of when it comes to ideating. It's amazing. So number three, you can ask for plot twists. So you know, maybe you're in a genre that the red herrings and the plot twists are super important. Or maybe you just like them and you want to put them into your story but you're not quite sure how. One of the best things you can do is asked how to be t give it as much information as as possible about your story. And then you can either say, hey, Chat, I would love to have a plot twist in this, what ideas could you give me? Or you can get specific and be like, I have a detective story Chat, where the main lead is close to solving their case. But what unexpected twist Can I introduce here? And if it knows the information about your story, because you've either given it a small paragraph, or maybe you've been feeding it the chapters to understand that particular story, I do that sometimes where I will feed the whole chapter when I'm done and say, Hey, can you give me a three sentence? Synopsis for this chapter? And I'll keep the whole thing in one chat. And then I'll ask questions about it when I'm done. And or ask questions when I'm getting stuck or ask questions when I just want a little bit of help. And then it has that information to be able to work with it's really incredible. Okay, so number four could be conflict creation. Because we, as authors, at least myself, work like this. I'm a number nine Enneagram. I like things to be copacetic. So I find conflict. Horrendous, I don't like conflict, I don't do things personally, in my own life, to actively bring about conflict, now of conflict, where to find me, I can rise up to the challenge that I can do. But I'm not going to go looking for it. Okay, that's not my MO. And so I want sometimes my protagonist to be someone who is going to do things that are a little bit crazy. So you could say something like, Hey, Chat, my protagonist really needs some more conflict in this act to what kinds of conflict can we bring into this particular part of the story? And it'll bring it up. Or you could say, my protagonist is a young mage or a witch or something who've who's just discovered her powers? What kind of challenges or enemies could she face in this part of the story, and see what comes up, allow it to generate some ideas to get your brain moving to get your enthusiasm for the story going? It's incredible. I kid you not when you try these things, you're going to wonder how you ever worked without Chat GPT before? It's, it's so cool. Okay, so number five, dialogue and interactions, maybe you're not really versed in how to have dialogue, or have those interactions between characters that are very different from each other, or you are creating tension in certain ways. So you could say things like, hey, Chat, my protagonist is in this conversation. Maybe, maybe he or she is a rebellious teenager. And there's an ancient ghost, and they're stuck together. So what kind of dialogue would you have between these two characters? And if you ask that question, Chad is going to be like, well, this is kind of what I would think was would

be going on between a rebellious teenager and a ghost, and have the conversation go forward, and you can be like, Ooh, I like little elements of this. Now, you're not having to take everything Chat GPT says you could look at it and go, my idea was sparked. I liked the concept. They did here Chat, but can you make it more acts like let's say they created a dialogue between the two characters, the rebellious teenager and the ghost. And it wasn't funny enough, let's say you're doing a paranormal romcom or a paranormal, women's fantasy fiction with humor, right? Ask it to be more funny. And so now all of a sudden, the dialogue is going to be more funny. It's really fascinating how much and how granularly you can change and tweak the way that the information has been generated for you. So it's so cool. So cool. Okay, number six, is you could do genre mashups. So Personally, myself, I've always loved the genre mashup. I blame Joss Whedon. He's kind of a horrendous human being. But his writing and his worldviews for writing is on point. It really has been all the time. And so it was probably back in the day of Firefly when I was like, Oh, my gosh, this is so genre bendy. It's so cool. I love it. And so when I did pen Domus, it was without meaning to actually, it was a genre ban between science fiction and fantasy. And so I put those two things together, and I loved it. But it didn't always make sense in my brain. Like, to me it was a fantasy novel. But to my readers, it was a sci fi novel with fantasy elements. You know what I'm saying? And so, if you're confused, or if you want a genre match, but you're not sure how to do it, you could be like, hey, Chat, describe a story that combined some elements of steampunk and classical mythology, and see what happens, or hey, Chat, describe a story that combines elements of urban fantasy with cozy paranormal mystery and see what happens. Or hey, Chat, combine elements of small town romance with mm, romance. To just see what happens, like see what kind of things come about because you might get some ideas that you have never thought before and you can follow the rabbit hole like you can continue the conversation as you're brainstorming with Chat GPT and it's giving you information. You can just keep refining it until your story becomes concrete. So much fun. Okay, number seven, story themes, morals. You can also ask questions about reader expectation about, you know, cliches to avoid, like all the things that you want to understand about your story tropes. You know, you can say, hey, Chat, I want to write a story that deals with loss and recovery. Can you give me a setting and a brief plot about it or for it, and to see what kind of story it creates? Or you could say, hey, Chad GBT, I'm writing an urban fantasy story that has a psychic who is the Oracle of Delphi, and she's working against this big bad conglomerate called Sentinel that is trying to take over the supernatural world as we know it. My themes are about redemption and rebirth and like the whole concept of being immortal, what kinds of tropes, what kinds of cliches? What kinds of interesting things do I need to know about a story like this, and it will start giving you more information. It's going to tell you things like reader expectations and things to avoid and your cliches if you ask it and prompt it to it is that good at giving you information about our genres and getting that specific and granular? I wish we had this when I was first starting in urban fantasy I kid you not because it would have helped me understand the writing process and the planning process so much faster. I mean, I use it now for the wrong common understanding like What do romance readers expect from a friends to lovers story? What do romance readers expect from it and enemies to love her story? Even though I'm reading it even though I myself am becoming Chat GPT, I'm feeding my brain with books and stories that go along with this. It's making sense of my brain because I myself am doing it. But having the ability to brainstorm with Chad GBT, while understanding that same information and seeing how it comes back. It's remarkable. It's there's no other word for it. Remarkable. It's absolutely astounding. Alright, so number eight unique settings. Now, I don't know about you. But when I'm trying to come up with areas or towns or something different, I don't always envision them first, for some reason. It's like the story thread that I see first. So I understand the plots. I understand the subplots, I understand the romantic beats and those plots. But I don't always understand or want to dive into the setting part of it. So what it's been helping me do is go, you know, Chat helped me envision a city that, let's say, floats in the sky

and is powered by dreams, or helped me envision a city that is similar to Duluth, Minnesota, but slightly different, or helped me envision a city that is on a huge grave site, but no one knows about. It's an ancient catacombs. And there's a mystical energy here that has been there for centuries helped me envision, like what kinds of buildings would be here and what it would look like, and it gives you information to work with. I mean, I don't know how to tell you how much time is spent trying to figure out like, what do I want to do here, when your brain isn't quite there, like your processes, your neural pathways, they're not in that place. The second Chat GPT gives you unique information like that. Bam, you are in it, you are understanding how this could work. You're coming up with your own ideas. You're refining it. Oh my gosh, guys, seriously, it's amazing. Okay, so prop number nine could be about the character relationships themselves. So like I kind of alluded to earlier, it could be like, I have two main characters that start off as enemies. But how could we create a relationship to evolve organically into a deep friendship? Or a lovers situation? Right? How can I create tension in this scenario if my main character is married, but she's falling for another man? How can I create tension when this protagonist is falling in love with another woman? And she didn't realize she was bi? Or like all sorts of things like well, you can create an ask questions specific to what would this person be feeling? You could say, hey, my characters in Enneagram, two, how would they react under stress in this type of situation? And guess what's going to happen? Chad's going to tell you, Chad's gonna be like, Hey, this is what I think you should do. This is what that type of person will respond as, because this is their core fear. This is their core motivation. Here's all the information. I kid you not the sky is the limit when it's you trying to figure out your characters and the way that it works, right? You can also talk about plots and story endings. So when you're in there, and you're trying to figure out like, how am I going to outline this thing book? How am I going to create the story? Give Chat GPT as much information about it as possible, as much, as much as you already have have brainstorm as much as you know, and say, okay, Chat. Maybe you've gone through all those other prompts first, in the same Chat, just be like, Okay, thanks, Chat. I really appreciate this. I like the concept of the first thing I want to include the characters that are, you know, the angsty and rebellious teenager against the ancient ghost, I want to include, you know, the elements of steampunk in classical mythology, I want to have the story that deals with loss and recovery in a city that floats in the sky and is powered by dreams. I want to have a dynamic where it's going to be enemies to lovers. And now I want you to help me figure out how to plot this thing for X genre. It's going to be in let's say paranormal fantasy, just straight up paranormal fantasy, with a touch of paranormal romance. And it will give you the information you need. You could say, how many chapters specifically do you want it to be? Like, you could go I want this to be 30 chapters. Give me a chapter by chapter synopsis for each chapter, using an understanding the story arc of redemption or the story arc of the hero's journey are the stories, the story arc of, let's see, like the voyage and return, you can pick an archetype and let it try to mix and match together and give you a timeline, give you a story, premise, all the things is so amazing. You can ask it about your story endings, you know, you could be like, okay, my story is about a time traveler, let's say they're trying to fix the past, and it's broken, and something went horribly wrong. How can I end it with a mix of hope? But just a little bit of melancholy? Or how can I create a story ending that is better than this? Or can you give me an idea of how to create a better hook at the end of this chapter. So feed it the whole chapter and just say, helped me figure out this hook better. And it will give you ideas, it will come back with like 10 different options for you to work with. And you can be like, oh, yeah, I liked that one, or none of these quite fit Chat. Can you make it scarier? Can you make it more ominous? Can you make it more happily ever after whatever, right? You can ask it to do all of those things within your story dynamic. So if you're like a lot of authors that I found, and you're not the best person at outlining a story, and you kind of pants it, but you still want to have a framework to work with. Have Chachi Beatty create the outline for you get it to the point where you feel like the story vibes with what you want to write, and

then write it and just know that that's it. You can change it, you can alter it, but at least it's holding you to an idea. It's giving you the structure for it. And now you can hit the ground running come November. It's it. I don't know. I can't even describe to you how exciting and how cool using Chat GPT is this is not the scary thing, guys that so many people are talking about. This is not, you know, end of time stuff. And I talked about this before on the podcast. You know, there's the whole lawsuit thing happening with the Authors Guild and authors. Being in arms about using Chat GPT and feeding it their their works, right? But it's no different from you reading a story. You're reading hundreds of stories, you're reading 1000s of stories. The more information you're cramming into your brain, the more it becomes a part of you and your operating system and how you view your world. Chat GPT is no different and what it's doing is helping us do what we do better. It's helping us do what we do faster in it's inspiring us and exciting us. I have had so many students inside this course already say this is the most amazing, incredible, remarkable thing I have ever used. And they were scared or they were leery about trying it out before they ever dip their toes in it. And I'm telling you right now, this is a game changer. This is the revolution, the author revolution that's come back around like this is revolution number two guys, this is that incredible. It truly is. And you don't have to use it in any way, shape or form that you don't feel comfortable. If you don't want it to help you figure out how to make that ending more powerful. Don't do it. If you don't want to ask it like how can I have this Hook be more of an exciting chapter ending? Don't ask it that because it's gonna give you information. If you don't want to ask about dialogues or ask about how to flush out something and create a more dynamic scene setting, don't ask those questions if you don't want to, that's on you. You don't have to use anything catchy Beatty is telling you are giving you but as a tool to ideate as a tool to brainstorm your stories. There is nothing, nothing out there better than this. I'm telling you right now, even sudo. Right. I love the program. It's great. But it's operating off of Chat GPT 4. And the only thing that makes Sudowrite different is that they have their own dashboard, their own user interface that is helping authors to, in a sense, prompt better. But once you understand the concept of the chat, and once you understand that, like if you're talking to Chat GPT, like you're talking to the most high level expert in whatever it is that you're asking that question on. You have no problem asking those questions like you'll you'll get better. You can even ask how with Chat. I'm trying to figure out how to prompt you about writing a story and about, you know, brainstorming my stories, but I'm not quite sure how to prompt you can you tell me how, guess what it'll do. it'll prompt you and give you a whole bunch of information, a whole bunch of problems to be able to use and test and play around with until you feel comfortable utilizing it. It's guys, seriously, this is a game changer, it I just can't put it any other way. So now remember, when you are more specific with your prompts, Chat is going to be better, it's going to be better at giving you the details you really want. Versus like some broad thing. Now if you don't know what you want yet, and you're just like, hey, I want to create an urban fantasy story that has these elements avoids these tropes. And it's fun to write because I like XYZ type things. Chad's gonna give you a story, it's gonna give you a premise that you can work with, you can be like, hey, Chat, I really liked these elements. But how will we add in ghosts? Or how about we add in a steampunk character? Or how will we add in a technology savvy 12 year old who is afraid of spiders, like whatever, prompt it in whatever way you want, and get more specific and go deeper into the mix. But the more specific, the more information you can give it, the better results you're gonna get in your answers. And like I said, Remember, if you don't like those answers, ask it to keep refining based on what you know, like, if you get the information you're like, dang it, man, I really wish it was more, you know, funny. Tell it give you know what Chat, this is great. But I need some more humor. This is going to be for a rom com, what kind of funny things could go on here. If this is the story, this is the setting, this is the overall plot. What other funny things could I add here? It's gonna give you more information. It's gonna be amazing. And of course, you can continue to do this as your writing could continue with prompting as you get stuck. If

you're, you know, in writer's block, and you're like, Man, I have a chapter. And I know something funny has to happen here. But I don't know what I'm not feeling overly hilarious at the moment. Check, give me some ideas. Here's what's happening in the story right now, what kind of funny situations could be happening to make this chapter more interesting, guess what's gonna happen, you're gonna get inspired, you're gonna get information that's gonna blow you away. And you'll be off and running, writing like nobody's business. It happens to me every single time I've asked questions, and I've needed more information. So incredible. Just remember, continue conversing in the same chat to get the full benefit, like you can do. If it's all about one story and one story alone, just keep going in the same chat, because it's going to understand more about what's happening because you're in that chat dialog. And you can just continue saying, hey, go back to that information we talked about earlier about XYZ. Can you give me more information on but you know, whatever. It's going to understand what you're talking about, because it's got the memory of the conversation. So play around with it. Don't be afraid to try it out. Don't be afraid to witness the magical powers I kid you not have ideating and brainstorming with tattoo Beatty, especially this Preptober you are going to be so far ahead of yourself ahead of the game, head of the curve. And really honestly knocking people's socks off come NaNoWriMo when you're utilizing this tool is that friggin awesome. It's so good. All right, guys. Hopefully you understood what I was talking about. Hopefully it made sense if it doesn't reach out and ask questions like I'm always here guys. So you can always go over to authorrevolution.org and fill out the contact form there. You can reach me at Carissa at authorrevolution.org and I will answer you as best I can. But just remember there's so much that we can do together and so much that we can continue to expand our fun elements of this and enjoy the process of writing and planning our books, our series, our next year's worth of books, like so much cool stuff can come from this. And it's not limited to just books, right? It's not limited to just your story idea. Any question that you have tumbling around your head, and you haven't had answered properly yet. Ask it. Don't understand how to create an enticing author newsletter, ask it. Not sure how to create a fun and engaging social media post, ask it. Not sure what a newsletter subject line could be for this week. Ask it like, whenever you're feeling creatively stuck, or just need a little pick up the butter push, asked yet to be teed to give you some ideas to work with. And the more you do this, the more it becomes second nature to ideate this way. Now, do I feel like we're gonna get lazy and not want to brainstorm? You know what? No, I feel like this is the exact opposite. When you utilize something like this, your brain innately want to bounce ideas off of it. It innately gets the information goes, Oh, I like that, or I don't like that. And all of a sudden, you're creating your own unique mix of questions, your own unique mix of things that you want to brainstorm and dig into and have fun with. And the process becomes fun. The ideas flow faster. It's it's exactly the opposite. Like I have so many ideas flowing about a storyline that I have no intention of writing. I'm like, dang it. Now I want to write this story. All because I've been prompting it for the four books five days course. So I'm telling you, there's so many different things that you can do with this program that with everything that you're trying to do as an author, why not make something easier? Why not make something fun, right? It's so cool. It's so cool. All right, if you'd like to download the transcript to today's podcast episode, you can head over to authorrevolution.org/203. And if you want to enroll into 4 Books, 5 Days at any point in time, the website is authorrevolution.org/4Books5Days. And the link will also be inside the show notes for today as well. So authorrevolution.org/203, if you'd like to get signed up, but it's so much fun, guys. It seriously is and I hope the more you try it out, the more you play around with it, the more you realize this is not the scary, world ending thing people are trying to say it is yes, it's shaking things up. Yes, it is revolutionizing the industry. Yes, jobs could hypothetically be altered because of it. But if we don't continue to evolve, we're gonna wither and die, right? That's our job. As humans, we're here to evolve, we're here to continue to expand and grow. And this is just another phase of it, what cool things are behind this door once we really understand how to

work with it, and make this a part of our process? What new jobs are now going to be created and have room for that didn't exist beforehand. People forget about that. Like they think about oh, no, this job is ending. No one's gonna want to do XYZ anymore because of whatever. Well, people are always going to have to figure out how to prompt stories. They're always there's always a person going to be behind the thing, right to create this, this whole process uploaded at least for the foreseeable future. And we're always evolving the job descriptions anyway, we're always changing with the times, what new things are going to come about because of this. Let's look to the things we want. Look to the things that bring fun. How good could it get, like ask that question instead? How freaking awesome could it get if Chat GPT becomes a part of our process and a lot of things? How much fun could it be asked those questions instead of like world shattering, everything's ending kind of questions, right? Anyway, that's my take. That is my 2023 Preptober. Let's kick this thing off with a bang talk. And I hope you've enjoyed it. So have a wonderful rest of your week. Have fun playing with Chat GPT and prepping for October and go forth and start your Author revolution.