LIGHT IS THE BRIEF — 8 Light Prompts + the Rules

The exact prompts behind every photograph in this carousel, pulled from the generation receipts written by `generate_pcl_plate.sh` at the moment each plate was made (Codex built-in image_gen, portrait 4:5, no reference images). Each is listed against the plate it produced and that plate's SHA-256, so you can tell which prompt made which frame.

These are records, not defect-free recipes. Every plate was asked for a calm surface where the headline would go; the type was set afterwards in Remotion. Nothing was retouched.

The rules (one light per frame; say what the light does, not what it is called)

1. Candle — one source, below the face, everything else black. Name the colour temperature.
2. Neon — let the sign light the face. Two colours, one from each side; put the sign outside the frame.
3. Noon — ask for the shadow, not the sun. A hard black shadow proves noon.
4. Storm — shadowless and cold. Flat light is a choice, not a failure.
5. Tungsten — name the bulb. Amber, deep brown shadows, chrome catching it.
6. Blue hour — one even blue, one warm window. That contrast is the whole frame.
7. Flash — on-camera, direct, hard shadows on the wall behind. Ugly is the look.
8. Fire — from below, moving, with sparks. Light that moves needs a still face.

1. Cover + 01 Candle

- Plate: `01-candle.png` · SHA-256 `bbf9dac9146932f15247c16946503445384f6a8c98cf7aceda1e54a6d1ddacca`
- Route: Codex built-in image_gen · returned size 1122x1402 · attempt a1 · references attached: no

Exact executed prompt:

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An ultra-realistic editorial photograph, portrait 4:5, shot at ISO-grain night levels. A woman's face at a dark dinner table lit only by a single candle just below the frame, warm 1800K light climbing her jaw and cheek, everything else falling to black; catchlights from the flame in her eyes, a faint wisp of smoke. She looks slightly off-camera, hands out of frame. Compose her face in the upper-right two thirds and leave the entire left third and lower third as true near-black so giant numerals can later sit there. Anatomy is non-negotiable: any visible hand has exactly five fingers with correct joints and natural nail beds; if a pose makes hands awkward, hide them (in pockets, under a cape, wrapped around a cup, behind the body) rather than inventing them. Faces natural, undistorted, real pores. Whole-frame physical realism: one place, one light source doing what that light really does, correct colour temperature and falloff, contact shadows, real material response, one motivated focal plane with natural lens falloff, small scene-native imperfections. No plastic skin, no CG sheen, no fake starbursts. Absolutely no text, lettering, logos, signage words or graphic overlays anywhere in the image.
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2. 02 Neon

- Plate: `02-neon.png` · SHA-256 `c4f497d3255c9c0ec5c3f908f66fcb68f0b707494a326ec3e17695e46e00f495`
- Route: Codex built-in image_gen · returned size 1122x1402 · attempt a1 · references attached: no

Exact executed prompt:

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An ultra-realistic editorial photograph, portrait 4:5, night in a rainy Asian street. A young man sits at a ramen counter seen through a rain-streaked window, his face lit half magenta and half cyan by unbranded neon tubes outside the frame, reflections of the neon sliding across the wet glass, steam rising from the bowl; his hands are wrapped around the bowl. Keep the lower-left third of the frame as dark wet glass with only soft neon reflections so giant numerals can later sit there. Anatomy is non-negotiable: any visible hand has
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exactly five fingers with correct joints and natural nail beds; if a pose makes hands awkward, hide them (in pockets, under a cape, wrapped around a cup, behind the body) rather than inventing them. Faces natural, undistorted, real pores. Whole-frame physical realism: one place, one light source doing what that light really does, correct colour temperature and falloff, contact shadows, real material response, one motivated focal plane with natural lens falloff, small scene-native imperfections. No plastic skin, no CG sheen, no fake starbursts. Absolutely no text, lettering, logos, signage words or graphic overlays anywhere in the image.

3. 03 Noon

- Plate: `03-noon.png` · SHA-256 `20db33dad5444a96b8491230397f3e7c60548de35dc14322a7bcf091909d275f`
- Route: Codex built-in image_gen · returned size 1122x1402 · attempt a1 · references attached: no

Exact executed prompt:

An ultra-realistic editorial photograph, portrait 4:5, harsh Mediterranean noon. A woman in a white linen dress and a wide straw hat stands on a whitewashed staircase against a whitewashed wall, the sun directly overhead so the hat throws a hard black shadow across her face and her figure throws a short, crisp shadow at her feet; blown white surfaces, deep black shadows, a strip of cobalt sea at the top. Her hands are behind her back. Compose her at the right; leave the left half of the frame as flat sunlit white wall so giant numerals can later sit there. Anatomy is non-negotiable: any visible hand has exactly five fingers with correct joints and natural nail beds; if a pose makes hands awkward, hide them (in pockets, under a cape, wrapped around a cup, behind the body) rather than inventing them. Faces natural, undistorted, real pores. Whole-frame physical realism: one place, one light source doing what that light really does, correct colour temperature and falloff, contact shadows, real material response, one motivated focal plane with natural lens falloff, small scene-native imperfections. No plastic skin, no CG sheen, no fake starbursts. Absolutely no text, lettering, logos, signage words or graphic overlays anywhere in the image.

4. 04 Storm

- Plate: `04-storm.png` · SHA-256 `c56ec98481ce9a8306bc20914a6f760ddc534d93950ecc6b5489263dd695f0f1`
- Route: Codex built-in image_gen · returned size 1122x1402 · attempt a1 · references attached: no

Exact executed prompt:

An ultra-realistic editorial photograph, portrait 4:5, minutes before a storm. A grey horse stands alone in a wet moorland field under a bruised, low storm sky, the light flat, cold and shadowless, its mane lifted by wind, rain just starting to fleck the lens; heather and wet grass in muted greens. Compose the horse in the lower-right two thirds and leave the upper-left third as smooth storm cloud so giant numerals can later sit there. Whole-frame physical realism: one place, one light source doing what that light really does, correct colour temperature and falloff, contact shadows, real material response, one motivated focal plane with natural lens falloff, small scene-native imperfections. No plastic skin, no CG sheen, no fake starbursts. Absolutely no text, lettering, logos, signage words or graphic overlays anywhere in the image.

5. 05 Tungsten

- Plate: `05-tungsten.png` · SHA-256 `eb425f81456366a093993981b633184c93c887262767f5352f982f623bf08914`
- Route: Codex built-in image_gen · returned size 1122x1402 · attempt a1 · references attached: no

Exact executed prompt:

An ultra-realistic editorial photograph, portrait 4:5, in an old barbershop at night. A man in the barber's chair under a white cape, eyes closed, face lit by warm tungsten bulbs in a mirror frame, amber light with deep brown shadows, the barber's hands out of frame, chrome and worn leather catching the bulbs; his hands are hidden under the cape. Compose him in the right half and leave the left half as dark wood-panelled wall with one bulb's soft glow so giant numerals can later sit there. Anatomy is non-negotiable: any visible hand has exactly five fingers with correct joints and natural nail beds; if a pose makes hands awkward, hide them (in pockets, under a cape, wrapped around a cup, behind the body) rather than inventing them. Faces natural, undistorted, real pores. Whole-frame physical realism: one place, one light source doing what that light really does, correct colour temperature and falloff, contact shadows, real material response, one motivated focal plane with natural lens falloff, small scene-native imperfections. No plastic skin, no CG sheen, no

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fake starbursts. Absolutely no text, lettering, logos, signage words or graphic overlays anywhere in the
image.
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6. 06 Blue hour

- Plate: `06-bluehour.png` · SHA-256 `8dbc228e7f97fd5c649f052b845be7dd9cfcd6fbc6e698d5e39cf539754d1046`
- Route: Codex built-in image_gen · returned size 1122x1402 · attempt a1 · references attached: no

Exact executed prompt:

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An ultra-realistic editorial photograph, portrait 4:5, blue hour on a city rooftop. A lone figure in a long
dark coat stands at the parapet seen from behind, small in the frame, the city below a field of tiny warm
windows, the sky a deep even blue with one thin band of orange at the horizon, a single warm window light on
a rooftop shed beside them. Hands in pockets. Compose the figure lower-right and leave the upper two thirds
as smooth blue sky so giant numerals can later sit there. Anatomy is non-negotiable: any visible hand has
exactly five fingers with correct joints and natural nail beds; if a pose makes hands awkward, hide them (in
pockets, under a cape, wrapped around a cup, behind the body) rather than inventing them. Faces natural,
undistorted, real pores. Whole-frame physical realism: one place, one light source doing what that light
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fake starbursts. Absolutely no text, lettering, logos, signage words or graphic overlays anywhere in the
image.
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7. 07 Flash

- Plate: `07-flash.png` · SHA-256 `9954dbeeb0ebfeae9efe133f1886e7df2111d42f39ab2856068155129dbfe96d`
- Route: Codex built-in image_gen · returned size 1122x1402 · attempt a2 · references attached: no

Exact executed prompt:

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An ultra-realistic photograph, portrait 4:5, a direct on-camera flash snapshot at a house party at night:
two friends laughing close to the lens, skin lit flat and bright by the flash with hard black shadows thrown
onto the wall right behind them, slight red-eye glint, flash-lit sweat and hair flyaways, the room behind
falling to black. Their hands hold nothing and hang out of frame below the crop. Compose them in the lower-
right two thirds and leave the upper-left third as the flash-lit blank wall with their hard shadows, so
giant numerals can later sit there. Anatomy is non-negotiable: any visible hand has exactly five fingers
with correct joints and natural nail beds; if a pose makes hands awkward, hide them (in pockets, under a
cape, wrapped around a cup, behind the body) rather than inventing them. Faces natural, undistorted, real
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8. 08 Fire (and the ask)

- Plate: `08-fire.png` · SHA-256 `9e2c5c79c3ede34370aa2d2a544bf70aaa9fa6e6e2ab0bdfca807cd60e2b06f8`
- Route: Codex built-in image_gen · returned size 1122x1402 · attempt a1 · references attached: no

Exact executed prompt:

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An ultra-realistic editorial photograph, portrait 4:5, a beach bonfire at night. A young woman's face and
shoulders lit from below-left by orange firelight, embers and sparks drifting up through the frame, the
flame itself out of frame at the bottom-left, her hair moving in the sea wind, deep black night behind.
Hands out of frame. Compose her face in the upper-right and leave the upper-left third as black night with a
few drifting sparks so giant numerals can later sit there. Anatomy is non-negotiable: any visible hand has
exactly five fingers with correct joints and natural nail beds; if a pose makes hands awkward, hide them (in
pockets, under a cape, wrapped around a cup, behind the body) rather than inventing them. Faces natural,
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image.