

SERIES TREATMENT

# UNCHANGED

---

*“She found the system.  
The system found her first.”*

FORMAT	TIMELINES	TONE	TRADITION
Six-part drama series	2026 — and 1973	Literary political drama	le Carré lineage

A GCHQ signals analyst discovers that a 1973 Cabinet Office programme — classifying British citizens by genetic heritage — has been running, uninterrupted, for fifty years. CORVUS, its digital successor, is fully operational. She is on the list. She has been on it since she was twenty-six.

*The algorithm didn't inherit the prejudice. It rediscovered it, independently, from the data — because the data was always already the prejudice.*

WRITTEN BY KEN SWAYNE — KENSWAYNE.COM

This document is freely available. No request needed.



## The dual timeline is not an adaptation device. It is the mechanism.

*Unchanged* is a six-part institutional surveillance drama written as a series from its first structural decision. The dual timeline — 2026 and 1973 — is not a technique applied to pre-existing material. It is the mechanism by which the central argument becomes visible. Two people, fifty-three years apart, inside the same institutional system. One built it. One found it. The series asks whether that distinction matters any more.

*“The system doesn’t imprison dissidents. It exhausts them, or it elevates them past the point where they can do anything they are not authorised to do. It has been doing this since 1973.”*

This is not speculative fiction. The BritCard mandatory digital identity scheme was announced by the UK government in September 2025. *Unchanged* is already inside this conversation — not ahead of it. The surveillance architecture in the series is real. The institutional behaviour is real. The only thing that is fiction is the names.

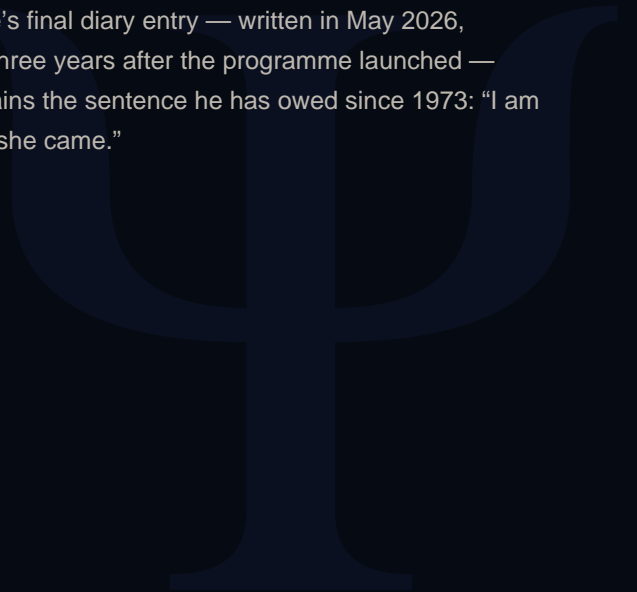
### WHAT THE SERIES DOES

**The 1973 strand** is narrated as diary entries by Sir Edmund Crale, the Cabinet Office civil servant who designed QUIET SHEPHERD — the programme that became CORVUS. First person. Past tense. Balliol register. Self-justifying. Definitely period-accurate.

The ending refuses catharsis. Seren is promoted. The system continues. The final image is Yemi Adeyemi’s record: *Status: unchanged*.

The present strand follows Seren Pryce in close third-person present tense. Analytical. Emotion oblique. The mask slips twice. The two timelines never share narrative space.

Crale’s final diary entry — written in May 2026, fifty-three years after the programme launched — contains the sentence he has owed since 1973: “I am glad she came.”



## The moral stakes escalate in one direction only.

---

01

### The Anomaly

Seren notices a sub-classification code on seventeen regional dataset triggers. The code leads to a Cabinet Office archive reference marked CENTENNIAL — sealed for one hundred years. She opens the window. She does not close it.

PARALLEL — Crale accepts the chairmanship over dinner at the Athenaeum.

---

02

### Her Own Score

Seren searches her own CORVUS record. Tier 5. Active management since she was twenty-six. A retroactive audit finds nineteen separate interventions across her career — applications rejected, promotions delayed, one relationship that was not what it appeared.

PARALLEL — Crale reads the scoring matrix. Ferris names the groups. The room goes quieter.

---

03

### Section Cipher

Seren watches a civil engineer's job application rejected in seventy-four seconds. Case officer Owen Vane's CORVUS score: Tier 1. Unexplained. She has been watched since January. The watcher was watched.

PARALLEL — Crale reads the first monthly operational summary. Two hundred and seven names.

---

04

### Crale's Archive

Seren reads Annex D. She finds Thomas Adeyemi — Treasury economist, 1973, Tier 5. His granddaughter Yemi: Tier 3, active management, NHS Manchester. Then she finds her own boyfriend's file. He was real. The operation targeted her.

PARALLEL — Crale tries to write the diary entry about Thomas Adeyemi. He cannot finish it.

---

05

### The Baseline Data

Seren drives to Tetbury. Crale is eighty-four. He tells her about 2018 — when he was commissioned to validate the 1973 methodology for its digital successor. He signed the assessment. He kept it in a drawer for six years. He gives it to her.

PARALLEL — December 1982 — programme mothballed. "I will not write about this programme in this volume again."

---

# 06

## Promotion

Seren sends Owen Vane the consulting assessment and Crale's name. Five days later: four words. *Received. This will hold.* Three weeks later: a promotion letter. Deputy Director (Strategic Analysis). No operational access. She accepts it. Yemi Adeyemi's record, last reviewed June 2026: Status: unchanged.

PARALLEL — Final entry, May 2026: Crale writes the sentence he has owed since 1973. "I am glad she came."



## Two protagonists. Fifty-three years apart.

CORVUS 847 · TIER 5 · ACTIVE MANAGEMENT SINCE 2013

### SEREN MAIR PRYCE

GCHQ Signals Analyst · Cheltenham · 38 years old

Welsh-born. Brilliant lateral analyst. On active management for thirteen years without knowing it. Close third-person present tense throughout. Analytical. Emotion oblique. The mask slips twice — once when she finds her own record, once at the end of Episode 4 when she finds her boyfriend's file. Both moments are silent. Neither is explained to the viewer.

ARCHIVE STRAND · 1973-2026

### SIR EDMUND CRALE

Cabinet Office 1973 · Age 84 in 2026

Balliol. Cabinet Office from 1964. Programme chair for QUIET SHEPHERD 1973. First-person diary, past tense, period-accurate. Self-justifying — but not dishonest. He understood what he was building and built it anyway. In 2018 he validated it again. Kept the consulting assessment in a drawer. Gave it to Seren the morning she came to his garden in Tetbury, May 2026. His final diary entry is the emotional resolution the present strand refuses to provide.

CORVUS 1 · TIER 1 · CLASSIFICATION: UNEXPLAINED

### OWEN VANE

MI5 Section Cipher · Retired · Case officer assigned September 2020

Twenty-three years running managed contact operations. His Tier 1 score is never explained in the series — its inexplicability is a structural element, not an oversight. Ambiguity made active in Episode 4. Final communication to Seren: four words. *Received. This will hold.* Whether that is a reassurance or a warning is left open.

TIER 3 · ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

### YEMI AISHA ADEYEMI

NHS Manchester · Junior Doctor · DOB 14 March 1997

Granddaughter of Thomas Adeyemi, Treasury economist, Tier 5, 1973. She never appears in the series. Her record does. The final image of Episode 6 is her file, last reviewed June 2026: Status: unchanged. She is the measure of everything the system has done and continues to do.

## The surveillance architecture in this series is not invented.

### **BritCard / UK Digital ID**

In September 2025, Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced a mandatory national digital identity scheme — stored on the GOV.UK wallet, required for Right to Work checks by the end of the current Parliament. Over 2.9 million signatures on the opposing petition. Cross-party opposition. Concerns about surveillance, data breaches, and digital exclusion. *Unchanged* was written before the announcement. The BritCard is now government policy.

### **Genetic heritage classification**

The 1973 QUIET SHEPHERD programme classifies citizens by genetic heritage. This is the Panel One error. The Panel Two argument is that CORVUS, its digital successor, was trained on fifty years of intervention data — and rediscovered the same classifications independently, from the data, without being told what to find. The data was always already the prejudice.

### **Algorithmic classification**

The CORVUS scoring system — which classifies citizens by risk tier and applies managed interventions — is extrapolated from existing UK risk-assessment frameworks used in immigration, benefits, policing, and employment. The Panel Two argument at the centre of the series — that algorithmic systems rediscover human prejudice from historical data — is documented in peer-reviewed research.

### **Dual-timeline mechanism**

The 1973 strand is written in Crale's voice: Balliol English, first person, past tense, period-accurate. No anachronisms. The 2026 strand is Seren's: close third-person present tense, analytical, the language of surveillance systems. The two timelines never share narrative space. The connection is structural, not scenic.



## Accurate genre positioning.

### le Carré Adaptations

BBC / PARAMOUNT+

The direct tradition. *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, *A Perfect Spy*. Institutional intelligence work. Moral weight accumulated slowly. Endings that refuse catharsis. *Unchanged* positions itself within this lineage explicitly — not as homage but as continuation. The le Carré audience exists, is international, and is underserved.

### Slow Horses

APPLE TV+ · MICK HERRON

The closest contemporary register. Institutional intelligence work. Moral complexity. The British quality of watching capable people inside systems that have already decided the outcome. The audience is substantial and demonstrably international. *Unchanged* shares the institutional intelligence setting but operates at a slower register — closer to le Carré than to Herron's thriller pace.

### Years and Years

BBC ONE / HBO · RUSSELL T DAVIES

The near-future British political drama that asks what institutional power does to ordinary lives across time. Demonstrated that serious political subject matter with human stakes at family level finds substantial audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. *Unchanged* operates at the same level of political seriousness but with the procedural discipline of intelligence drama.

### The Capture

BBC ONE

The near-future UK surveillance state made intimate and personal. Demonstrated that audiences engage with serious political subject matter when human stakes are visible and specific. *Unchanged* goes further in its institutional scope — the surveillance architecture is not a set piece but a fifty-year structural argument.

## Why this series belongs in that tradition — and what it adds.

The le Carré tradition is not a genre category. It is a moral register: the institutional betrayal of individuals by systems that were never designed to protect them, rendered with the procedural patience of someone who knows how those systems actually work. *Unchanged* operates in this register from its first structural decision.

The key addition *Unchanged* makes to this tradition is the dual-timeline mechanism as argument rather than device. le Carré's institutional critique is horizontal: a world of present betrayals, viewed from inside. *Unchanged* makes the critique vertical: Panel One (1973) and Panel Two (2026) are the same panel. The error is not that the system continued. The error is that it was correct in its own terms throughout.

*The tagline — the data was always already the prejudice — is the series' central argument in seven words. It is not a metaphor. It is the technical description of what happened.*

### THE ENDING AND WHY IT MATTERS

Seren is promoted. She accepts. The system continues. This is not a failure of nerve. It is the only honest ending available to this material. The le Carré ending does not provide catharsis because catharsis is a lie the subject matter cannot support. What it provides instead is precision: the exact description of what institutions do with people who find out too much and cannot be discredited.

Crale's final diary entry provides the emotional resolution the present strand refuses: "I am glad she came." It is four words of moral reckoning from a man who understood what he built and built it anyway. It lands because it has been withheld for six episodes.



## Ken Swayne

Ken Swayne (legal name Kenneth Swain) is a Manchester-based author with a fifty-year background in emerging technology: VR, AR, three-dimensional visualisation, defence, medical, and entertainment sectors. He spent twenty-two years in Western Australia, returning to the United Kingdom in 1995.

He grew up on the Alderley Edge escarpment in Cheshire. The landscape runs through his fiction as memory, not atmosphere.

He was present at the Manila Hotel during the 1986 Tolentino coup attempt against the Aquino government — the on-site coordinator managing the evacuation of a large Australian contingent through service exits while armed rebels moved through the building. He has been writing about hidden systems ever since.

*The systems in these novels are real. The surveillance architecture is real. The institutional behaviour is real. The only thing that is fiction is the names.*

### PUBLISHED WORK

#### **The 1510 Superposition**

Leonardo Codex Thrillers, Novel 01 · ASIN B0GQ6941PV

Leonardo da Vinci encoded quantum mechanical principles five centuries before the discipline existed. A private conclave has been suppressing this knowledge ever since.

#### **The Reluctant Codex**

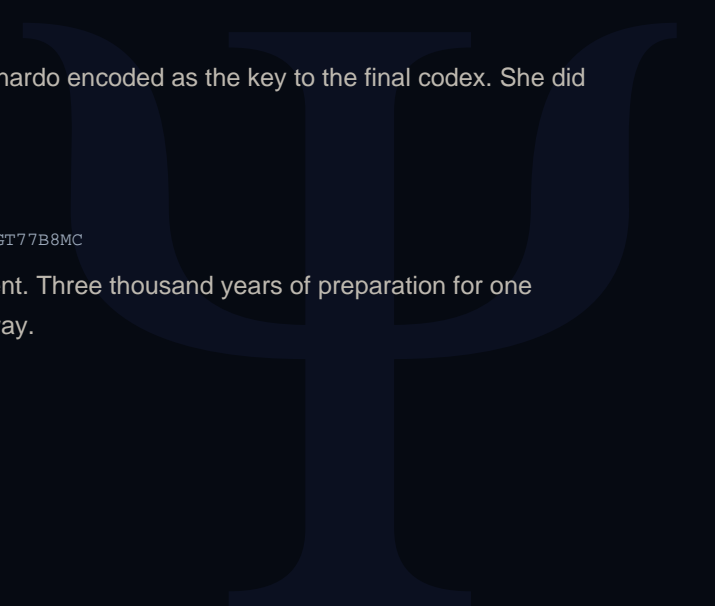
Leonardo Codex Thrillers, Novel 02 · ASIN B0GKR3H2KV

Elena Voss discovers her DNA carries the marker Leonardo encoded as the key to the final codex. She did not choose this inheritance.

#### **The Edge Protocol**

Standalone · British Archaeological Thriller · ASIN B0GT77B8MC

A Bronze Age warning on the Alderley Edge escarpment. Three thousand years of preparation for one reader. He understands it perfectly. He proceeds anyway.



## This treatment is freely available. Development enquiries are welcome.

This series treatment is published openly as a calling card for *Unchanged* as a television proposition. It may be shared freely. All intellectual property rights in the work — the series structure, characters, dialogue, and all associated materials — are retained by the author.

© 2026 Ken Swayne (Kenneth Swain). All rights reserved.

WEBSITE	SERIES PAGE	CONTACT	RESPONSE
<a href="https://kenswayne.com">kenswayne.com</a>	<a href="https://kenswayne.com/unchanged-series/">kenswayne.com/unchanged-series/</a>	<a href="https://kenswayne.com/contact/">kenswayne.com/contact/</a>	All enquiries within 48 hours

For rights enquiries, adaptation interest, or an initial conversation about *Unchanged* as a television proposition, please use the contact form at [kenswayne.com/contact/](https://kenswayne.com/contact/) — or write directly via the website. All enquiries receive a personal response within forty-eight hours.

*The full series bible — including complete episode treatments, character arcs, structural notes, and thematic analysis — is available on request for serious development enquiries.*

