

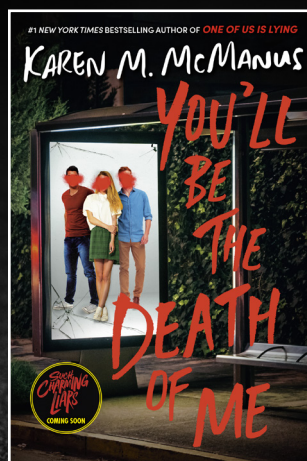
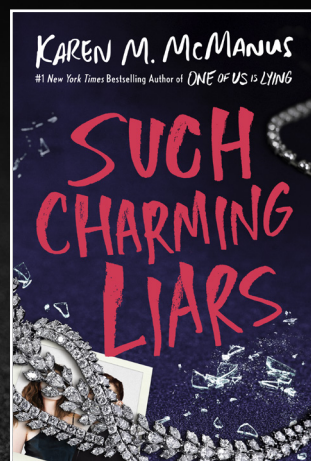
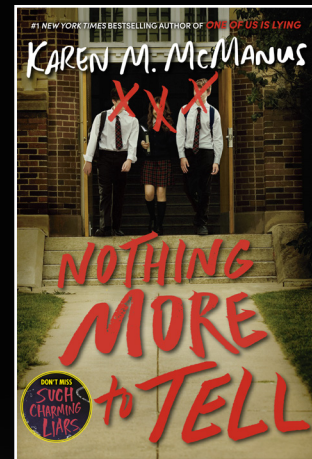
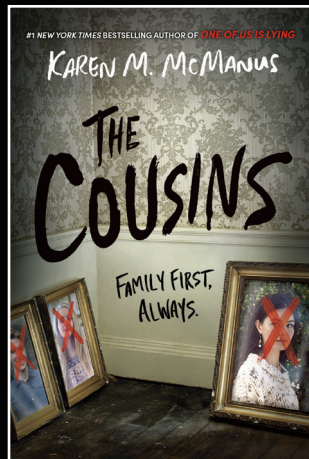
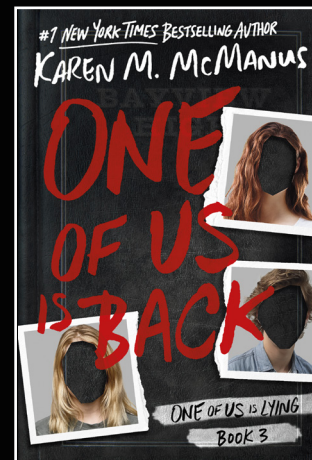
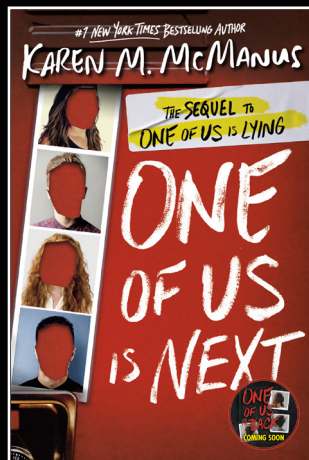
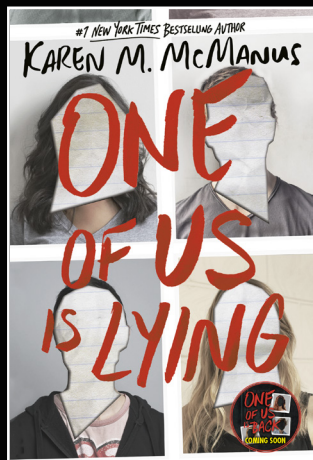


GET WRITING!

CLICK HERE TO HEAR TIPS AND TRICKS FOR
WRITING THRILLERS FROM KAREN M. McMANUS,
AND THEN USE THE PROMPTS BELOW TO
PLOT OUT YOUR OWN TRILLER!

- What effect do the multiple perspectives have on each story? When brainstorming your own story with multiple perspectives, create detailed outlines for each main character, including notes on their personality, their family, how they look and dress and talk, their likes and dislikes, and anything else that pops into your head.
- Many of Karen M. McManus's books include psychological manipulation. How do the characters manipulate one another? How does McManus manipulate the reader? What devices do other authors use to manipulate their readers? Share examples from books you've read or shows you've seen.
- When plotting thrillers, it is important to create a sense of urgency. This can be done with a countdown. It doesn't have to be a literal ticking clock—any looming threat will work. For example, in *Such Charming Liars*, Kat and Jamie must pull off one last heist before going clean, but their cover story is only good for that specific weekend, so when Jamie falls ill, Kat is forced to step in, and her fears and suspicions are magnified as she scrambles to keep their plan on track.
- In *Such Charming Liars*, Kat creates an alias for herself when she and Gem go to scope out a jewelry store for a potential job. What backstory would you create for one of your characters so they could infiltrate the Sutherland compound? In McManus's books, multiple characters are driven by a need for revenge. Why is revenge a strong motivator, especially in thrillers?
- Writing tip: Use different types of tension. While you're escalating toward whatever your big reveal is, you can keep audiences invested by creating tension between or within characters and by creating smaller sub-mysteries that support the ultimate resolution.
- The One of Us Is Lying Series has been described as *Pretty Little Liars* meets *The Breakfast Club*. What is it that makes high school dramas universal? Why do they continue to be relatable and entertaining? Is there a book or film or show that inspires you to create your own version of its story?
- In *Two Can Keep a Secret*, multiple members of one family are hiding things and lying. How do the different family members react when the truth is uncovered? Come up with a story that centers around one family, with each member having different motives or goals. *The Cousins* is full of characters pretending to be people they're not. Which reveal surprised you the most? Why? And when did you figure it out? Think about how the timing of the reveal impacted your reading. Think of a story in which a character's true identity is hidden.
- In *The Cousins*, Abraham Story's philosophy was "Family first, always." Do his children live by this motto? Brainstorm a story that references a specific motto. How will you incorporate the motto into the story? In *Such Charming Liars*, Kat creates an alias for herself when she and Gem go to scope out a jewelry store for a potential job. Think about one of the other characters from McManus's books. What back story would you create for them so that they could infiltrate the Sutherland compound.

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