

Writing Beyond The Novel

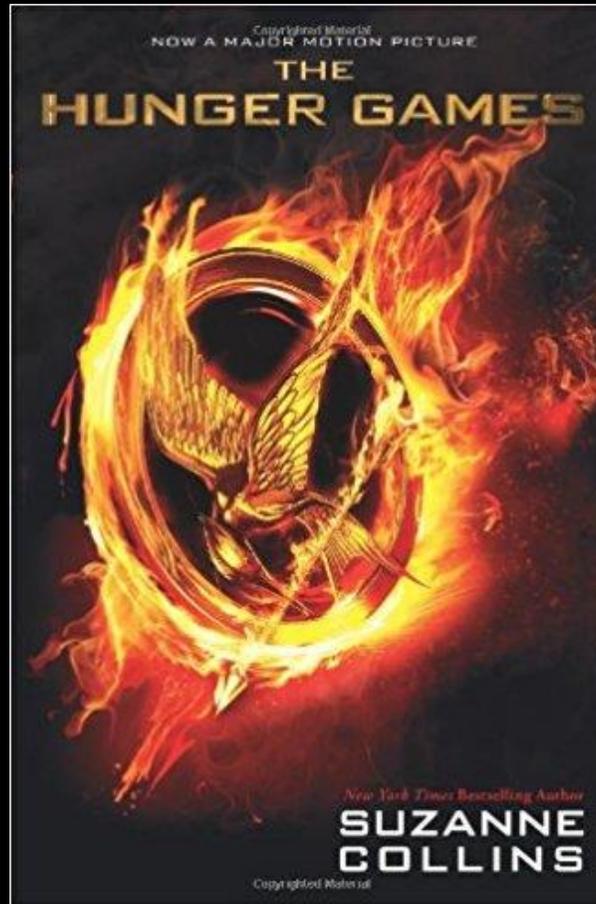


StephanieMorrill.com/OYANer

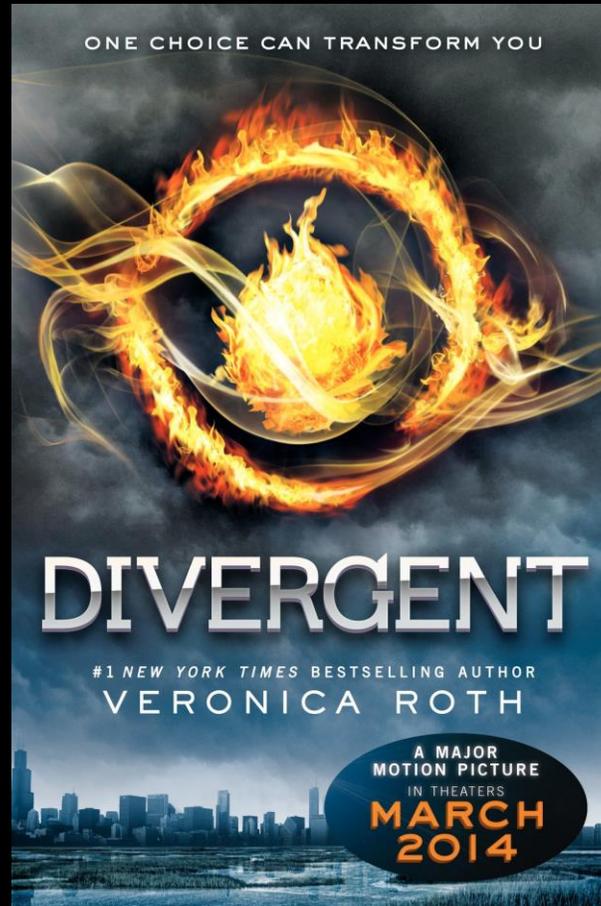
Topics we'll cover

- Hooks
- Backcover copy
- Novel Synopsis
- Author bio
- Social Media
- Query emails
- Favor-asking emails

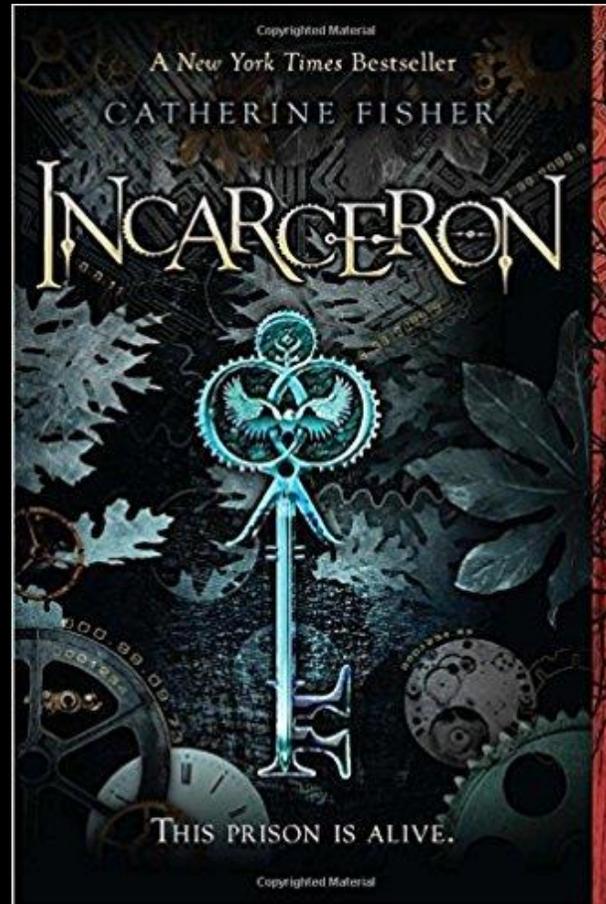
Winning means fame and fortune.
Losing means certain death.



One choice can transform you.



This prison is alive.



“Romeo and Juliet with vampires.”



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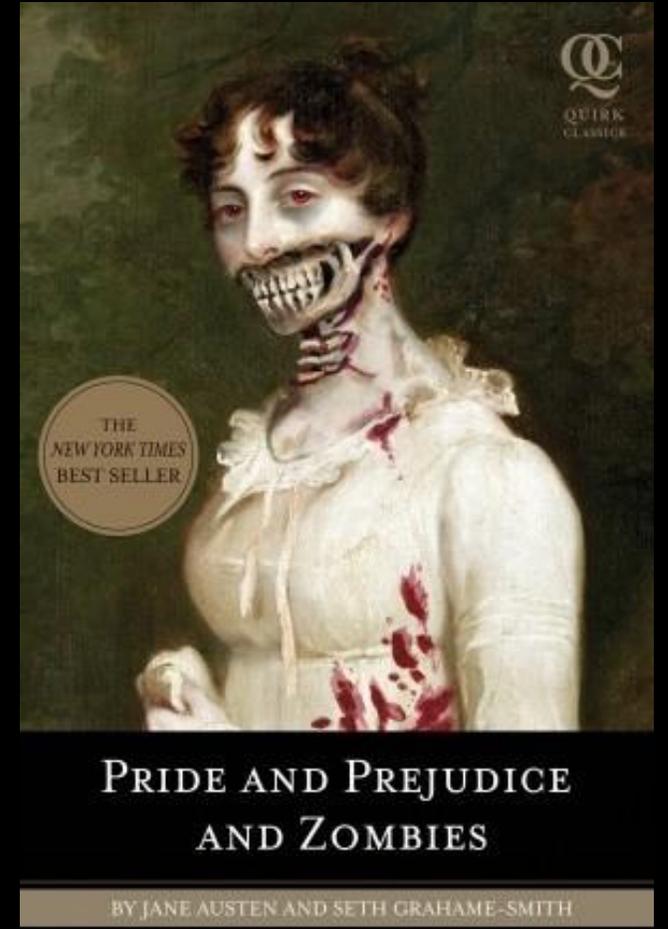
“Pride and Prejudice with zombies.”



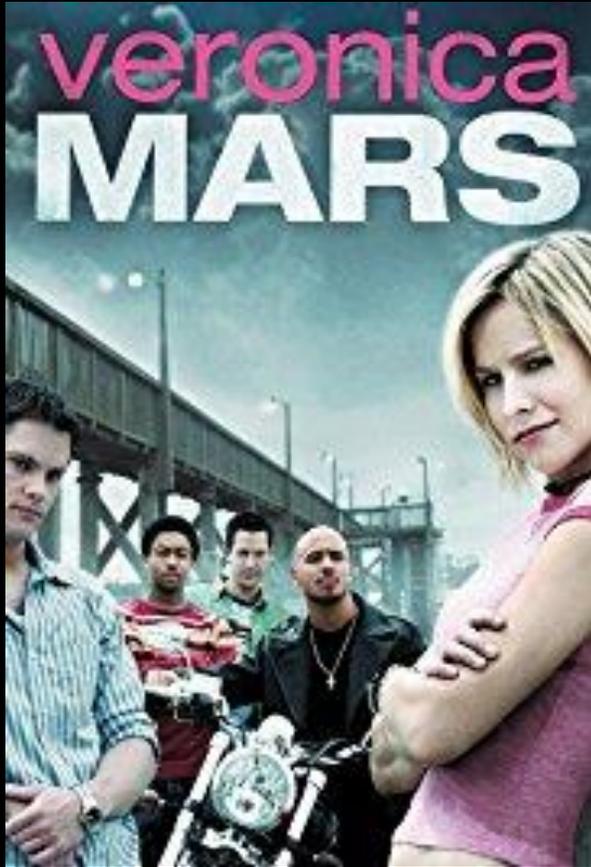
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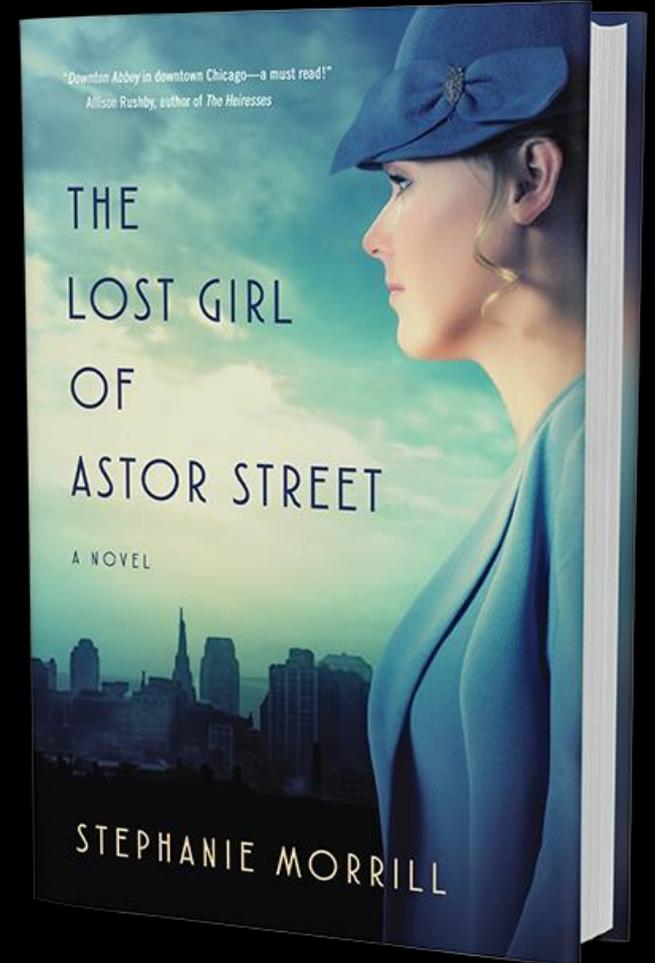
“Veronica Mars set in the 1920s.”



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What makes a good hook?

- Short
- Emotional
- Genre-specific
- Incites curiosity

Hook Formula

1. Inciting incident
2. Character + adjective
3. The hero's (primal) story goal
4. What's at stake

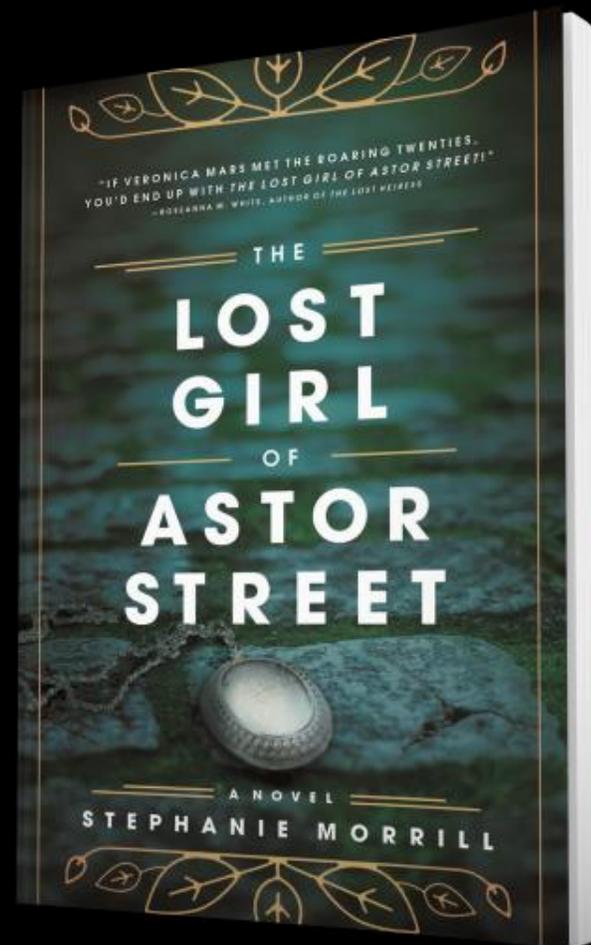
When ____1____ happens to ____2____ he must ____3____ before ____4____ happens.

Or this:

A(n) ____2____ does/experiences ____1____ and must ____3____ before ____4____ happens.

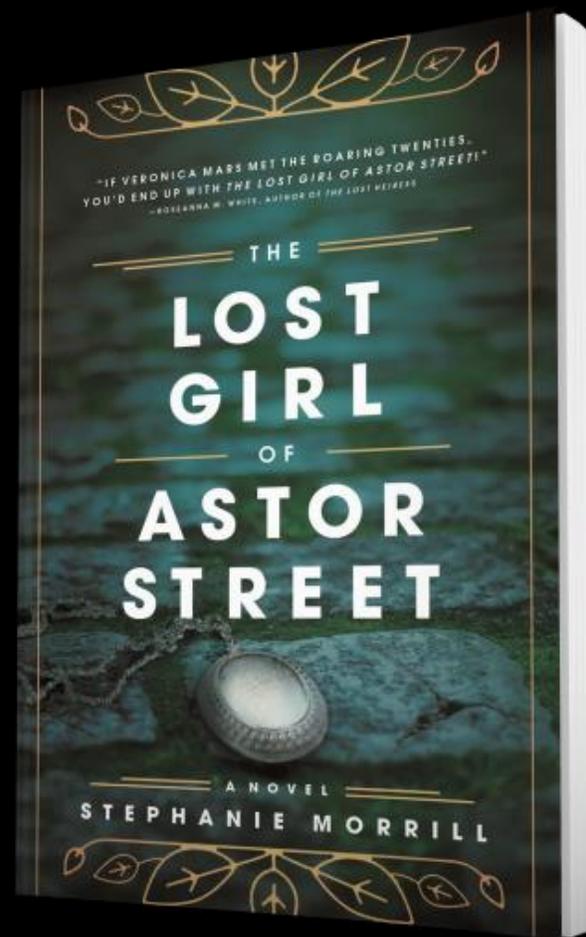
The Lost Girl of Astor Street hook draft one

In Jazz age Chicago, a spirited teenage girl's best friend goes missing, and she must find her before it's too late.



The Lost Girl of Astor Street hook final draft

When her best friend is abducted during the summer of 1924, seventeen-year-old Piper Sail hunts for answers amidst the corruption that strangles Chicago, but she has to decide just how much she's willing to sacrifice for the truth when her amateur sleuthing skills lead her back to her own front door.



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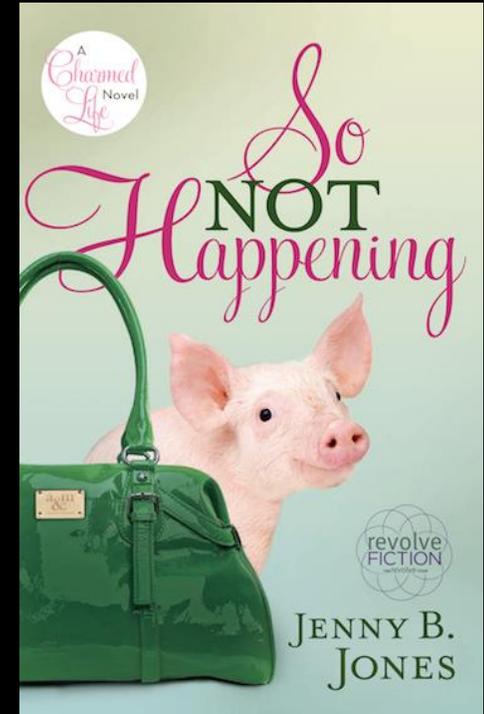
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- **Mystery – What will happen?**

So Not Happening, Jenny B. Jones

Isabella Kirkwood (CHARACTER) had it all: popularity at a prestigious private school in Manhattan, the latest fashions, and a life of privilege and luxury. Then her father, a plastic surgeon to the stars, decided to trade her mother in for a newer model. (CONFLICT)

When her mother starts over with her new husband, Bella is forced to pack up (ACTION also CONFLICT) and leave all she knows to live with her new family in Oklahoma. (SETTING) Before her mother can even say “I do,” Bella’s life becomes a major “don’t.”

Can Bella survive her crazy new family? Will the school survive Bella? How can a girl go on when her charmed life is gone and God gives her the total smackdown? (MYSTERY)

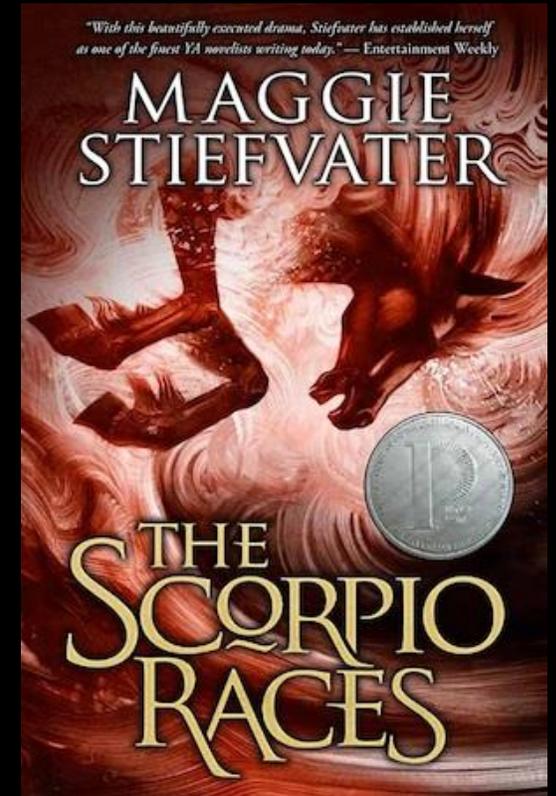


The Scorpio Races, Maggie Stiefvater

It happens at the start of every November: the Scorpio Races. Riders attempt to keep hold of their water horses (UNIQUENESS) long enough to make it to the finish line. Some riders live. Others die. (ACTION, CONFLICT)

At age nineteen, Sean Kendrick (CHARACTER) is the returning champion. He is a young man of few words, and if he has any fears, he keeps them buried deep, where no one else can see them. (MYSTERY)

Puck Connolly is different. (CHARACTER) She never meant to ride in the Scorpio Races. But fate hasn't given her much of a chance. So she enters the competition — the first girl ever to do so. She is in no way prepared for what is going to happen. (MYSTERY)

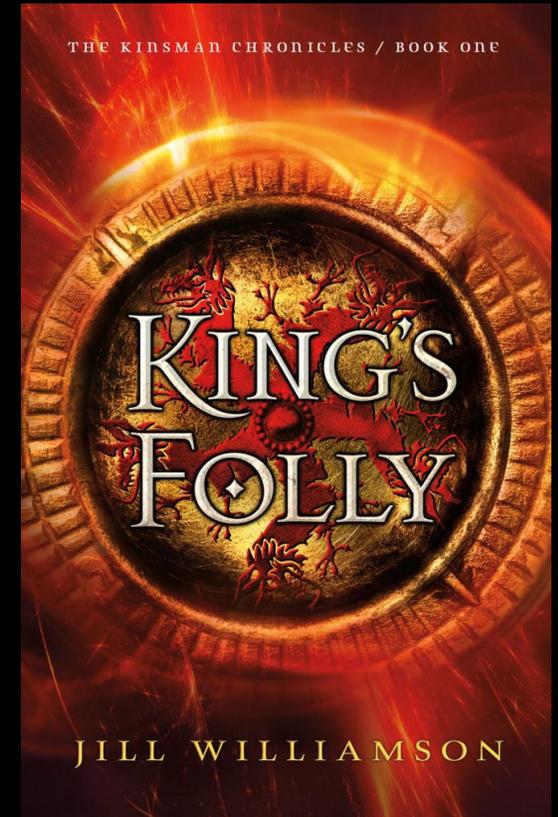


King's Folly, Jil Williamson

The gods are angry.

Volcanic eruptions, sinkholes, ground shakers--everything points to their unhappiness. (CONFLICT, SETTING) At least that is what the king of Armania (SETTING) believes. His son, Prince Wilek, (CHARACTER) thinks his father's superstitions are nonsense, though he remains the ever dutiful heir apparent to the throne.

When a messenger arrives and claims that the town of Farway has been swallowed by the earth, the king sends Wilek to investigate. But what Wilek discovers is more cataclysmic than one lost city. Even as the ground shifts beneath his feet, Wilek sets out on a desperate journey to save his people and his world. (ACTION) But can he do it before the entire land crumbles? (MYSTERY, UNIQUENESS)



Synopsis Writing Basics

- Aim for 2-3 pages, unless otherwise specified

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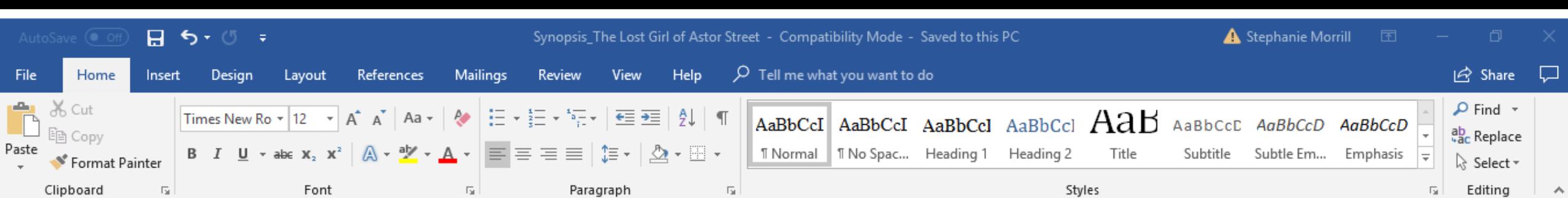
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- Third person, present tense

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- Single space, Times New Roman or Arial

Formatting:

- Single space, Times New Roman or Arial
- 1-inch margins
- Header: Last name/Title (Morrill/*The Lost Girl of Astor Street*)
- First line: Center the Title and word synopsis (*The Lost Girl of Astor Street* synopsis)



Morrill/*The Lost Girl of Astor Street*

The Lost Girl of Astor Street synopsis

As the summer of 1924 approaches, seventeen-year-old PIPER SAIL dreams of one last carefree season before the reality of adulthood settles in. Since her best friend, LYDIA LEVINE, is everything a well-bred girl should be, Piper knows that it won't be long until Lydia is a wife and mother and everything will change between them.

That is, once Lydia gets over her attraction to her family's chauffeur, JACOB. And once Lydia is cured. Piper has only recently discovered that Lydia suffers from epilepsy. Her parents have struggled to keep it a secret because Lydia's father, DR. LEVINE, is a prominent physician in Chicago. How would it look if his own daughter had a disease he didn't know how to cure?

After Piper comes across Lydia having a seizure on a public sidewalk in their neighborhood, Lydia's parents realize it's time for drastic measures and decide to send Lydia to a doctor in New York City for treatment. Lydia tells Piper she doesn't want to go, that Jacob has finally shown interest in her, and Piper can hardly believe that her normally sensible friend is actually considering eloping.

Piper wishes more than anything that she could talk to her mother, who died five years ago in the flu pandemic, leaving Piper the lone girl in a house of men. Piper has never told anyone her mother's disturbing final words. "Don't trust anyone." Those words have resounded

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- Include all POV characters

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- Tell it all

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- Should answer, “Who are you?”
- Should feel unique to you.
- Should answer, “Why are you qualified to write this?”

Ideas for what to include:

- What you write
- Why you write it
- Any awards you might have won for your writing or articles you may have had published
- Your blog
- Any special education you have
- Something that qualifies you to write this book
- A few things you're passionate about, particularly if they're unusual
- Any writing societies you're a member of

Example 1: Lydia Howe

Lydia Howe is a twenty-something adventurer who grew up traversing the globe, first through the pages of books, and then in reality. Nowadays she's living the clichéd life of working at a coffee shop and writing. When she's not surrounding herself with words you can find her riding through the fields on Chadwin, her trusty lawnmower. She enjoys blogging and recently joined the worlds of Booktube and Bookstagram.

Example 2: Caitlyn Eha

Caitlin Eha fell in love with books at a young age and never recovered. Today she is pursuing her dream of being a published novelist and screenwriter, in between the multitudinous demands of adult life. She is also a staff writer for the website Geekdom House (geekdomhouse.com). When she has a free moment, she enjoys reading, fencing, archery, cosplay, and time with her Lord. Caitlin can be found on her blog, caitlineha.wordpress.com, and on Wattpad @authorcaitlineha.

Guiding thoughts for social media

- Who is my audience?

Guiding thoughts for social media

- Who is my audience?
- Will this serve them?

Guiding thoughts for social media

- Who is my audience?
- Will this serve them?
- 80/20 rule

Guiding thoughts for social media

- writing
- reading
- cooking
- parenting
- baseball
- travel
- history
- podcasts

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- Will this serve them?
- 80/20 rule
- Voice matters
- Post regularly

Agent and Editor Query Emails

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- Start with why you've picked them to query.

Agent and Editor Query Emails

Dear Ms. Manning,

I really enjoyed the blog post you wrote on your agency's site, "What I Wish More YA Fantasy Novels Had." Your comment about the need for more characters who love cats made me think you would enjoy my YA fantasy novel.

Agent and Editor Query Emails

Summarize your book in a sentence:

THE CAT'S MEOW is a 95,000 word urban fantasy novel about Katrina Collins, who discovers an alternate life in which she is actually a cat.

Then insert backcover copy.

Agent and Editor Query Emails

After backcover copy, **a few applicable lines about you and your writing experience.** (Taken from bio, but written in first person.)

Thank you for your time and consideration.
I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Morrill

Always include:

- What you're asking for

Favor Asking Emails

Hi Joanne,

I'm currently looking for endorsements for my upcoming release with Blink/HarperCollins, and you immediately came to mind because of how much I love A Quiet Sky.

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Hi, McCall,

This summer on Go Teen Writers, we are featuring a “guest author panelist” and I would love to have you one week.

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- What you're asking for
- How much time it will take
 - Word count of your manuscript
 - How many interview questions
 - Expectations about replying to comments, promoting on social media, or participating in a giveaway

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 - Expectations about replying to comments, promoting on social media, or participating in a giveaway
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- Acknowledge that you're asking for a favor and you appreciate who they are regardless of their answer.

One last thing...

Be YOU.
Use YOUR voice.