CHARACTERS

1. Know your characters

   Keep a bible with information about DOB, hair/eye color, height, favorite foods, allergies, favorite songs, first loves, job histories … all of the FACTS that make up a person’s life

   Now, go deep:

   What is your character’s deepest secret, the thing they would never ever disclose (maybe even to themselves)?

   What is your character most deeply afraid of? (I don’t mean snakes …)

   What is your character’s greatest desire?

   How does your character express love, anger, frustration?

   What is her greatest flaw? His greatest strength?

   What’s in her purse, his pocket, her backseat, his desk drawer?

2. Use your characters to create conflict

   What is the one thing your protagonist(s) would never, ever willingly do? Now figure out how to force them to do it.

   Spaghetti Bowl

   Create a visual representation of the network of relationships between every major character in your novel. There should be a line between each dyad.

   Relationships do not have to require that they know each other: the characters might be related by the roles they play (good angel/bad angel, for example)

   Minor characters: Anyone with a name should be pulling their weight. List what purpose each character fulfills.

   Provide a clue

   Tell us something about our protagonist

   Set up a scene

   Reveal a secret

   If the character doesn’t do at least three things, the character needs to be (1) eliminated; (2) demoted to an unnamed character; (3) combined with another character into someone more robust