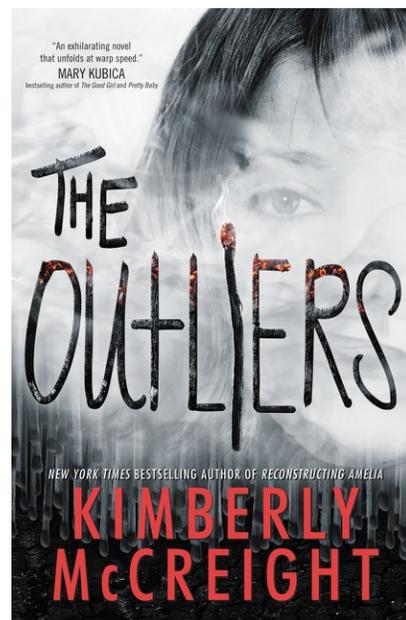


THE OUTLIERS

ABOUT THE BOOK:

It all starts with a text: *Please, Wylie, I need your help.* With that simple message, Wylie sets off on a dangerous journey in search of her troubled ex-friend Cassie. As Cassie's text messages become even more cryptic, Wylie struggles to control her growing sense that something is really wrong. As the mystery unfolds, she realizes that not everything is as it seems and the people she thought she could trust might just be the people she should fear the most.

In this breakneck tale of intrigue, betrayal, and deeply buried secrets, *New York Times* bestselling author Kimberly McCreight brilliantly chronicles a fateful journey that begins with a single decision—and ends up changing everything.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. *The Outliers* opens with a question: “Why are the bad things always so much easier to believe?” Why do you think Wylie feels this way? Is it a result of so much tragedy in her life? Or is this something broader, and more general?
2. Wylie’s grandmother was committed to an institution for mental illness; Cassie’s father is an alcoholic; Jasper’s father is in prison. What role does inheritance play in the novel? Is it inevitable that these teenagers will fall into the same fate as their relatives? Or does the knowledge of these histories allow room for prevention?
3. Grief hovers over the Lang household after the loss of Wylie’s mother. Examine the methods Wylie, her father, and Gideon use to deal with—or not deal with—their loss. What are the benefits and downsides of their coping mechanisms?
4. Is Wylie’s initial impression of Jasper justified? Does it stem from something beyond Cassie’s spiraling out of control?
5. Why do you think Wylie’s friends in Middle School really turned against her, and why does Cassie join them, despite knowing this? What does this say of teenage “group dynamics”?
6. What kind of role do you think anxiety plays in the lives of teenagers today? Do you think there are differences in the ways girls and boys experience anxiety? Do you think these differences are real, or are more a matter of perception?
7. A major theme in *The Outliers* is intuition. Before she learns the truth about her identity, how does going with her gut help Wylie? How does it work against her?
8. Wylie’s dad tells Gideon that “what a scientist *wants* is irrelevant. The only thing that matters is the truth.” Even though he stresses this, what do you think Dr. Lang really wants to come from his work?
9. Do you think *Outliers* will change the world? Should their powers be smothered, or utilized?
10. Do you believe in intuition yourself? Do you rely on it in your everyday life? If so, how? If not, why not?
11. If you could be an Outlier would you want to be?