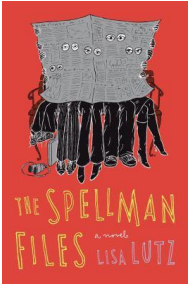


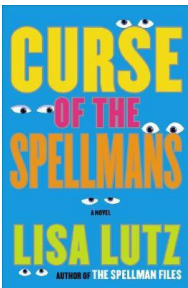
The Spellman Family novels

by Lisa Lutz



The Spellman Files [2007]

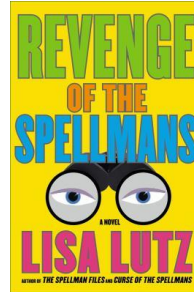
Meet Isabel "Izzy" Spellman, private investigator. This twenty-eight-year-old may have a checkered past littered with romantic mistakes, excessive drinking, and creative vandalism; she may be addicted to Get Smart reruns and prefer entering homes through windows rather than doors -- but the upshot is she's good at her job as a licensed private investigator with her family's firm, Spellman Investigations. Invading people's privacy comes naturally to Izzy. In fact, it comes naturally to all the Spellmans. If only they could leave their work at the office. To be a Spellman is to snoop on a Spellman; tail a Spellman; dig up dirt on, blackmail, and wiretap a Spellman. Part Nancy Drew, part Dirty Harry, Izzy walks an indistinguishable line between Spellman family member and Spellman employee. Duties include: completing assignments from the bosses, aka Mom and Dad (preferably without scrutiny); appeasing her chronically perfect lawyer brother (often under duress); setting an example for her fourteen-year-old sister, Rae (who's become addicted to "recreational surveillance"); and tracking down her uncle (who randomly disappears on benders dubbed "Lost Weekends"). But when Izzy's parents hire Rae to follow her (for the purpose of ascertaining the identity of Izzy's new boyfriend), Izzy snaps and decides that the only way she will ever be normal is if she gets out of the family business. But there's a hitch: she must take one last job before they'll let her go -- a fifteen-year-old, ice-cold missing person case. She accepts, only to experience a disappearance far closer to home, which becomes the most important case of her life.



Curse of the Spellmans [2008]

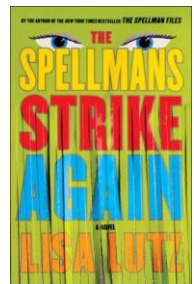
THEY'RE BAAAAACK. The Spellmans, a highly functioning yet supremely dysfunctional family of private investigators, return in a side splittingly funny story of suspicion, surveillance, and surprise. When Izzy Spellman, PI, is arrested for the fourth time in three months, she writes it off as a job hazard. She's been (obsessively) keeping surveillance on a suspicious next door neighbor (suspect's name: John Brown), convinced he's up to no good -- even if her parents (the management at Spellman Investigations) are not. When the (displeased) management refuses to bail Izzy out, it is Morty, Izzy's octogenarian lawyer, who comes to her rescue. But before he can build a defense, he has to know the facts. Over weak coffee and diner sandwiches, Izzy unveils the whole truth and nothing but the truth -- as only she, a thirty-year-old licensed professional, can. When not compiling Suspicious Behavior Reports on all her family members, staking out her neighbor, or trying to keep her sister, Rae, from stalking her "best friend," Inspector Henry Stone, Izzy has been busy attempting to apprehend the copycat vandal whose attacks on Mrs. Chandler's holiday lawn tableaux perfectly and eerily match a series of crimes from 1991-92, when Izzy and her best friend, Petra, happened to be at their most rebellious and delinquent. As Curse of the Spellmans unfolds, it's clear that Morty may be on retainer, but Izzy is still very much on the case...er, cases -- her own and

that of every other Spellman family member. (Re)meet the Spellmans, a family in which eavesdropping is a mandatory skill, locks are meant to be picked, past missteps are never forgotten, and blackmail is the preferred form of negotiation -- all in the name of unconditional love.



Revenge of the Spellmans [2009]

Private investigator Isabel Spellman is back on the case and back on the couch—in court ordered therapy after getting a little too close to her previous subject. As the book opens, Izzy is on hiatus from Spellman Inc. But when her boss, Milo, simultaneously cuts her bartending hours and introduces her to a "friend" looking for a private eye, Izzy reluctantly finds herself with a new client. She assures herself that the case—a suspicious husband who wants his wife tailed—will be short and sweet, and will involve nothing more than the most boring of PI rituals: surveillance. But with each passing hour, Izzy finds herself with more questions than hard evidence. Meanwhile, Spellmania continues. Izzy's brother, David, the family's most upright member, has adopted an uncharacteristically unkempt appearance and attitude toward work, life, and Izzy. And their wayward youngest sister, Rae, a historic academic underachiever, aces the PSATs and subsequently offends her study partner and object of obsession, Detective Henry Stone, to the point of excommunication. The only unsurprising behavior comes from her parents, whose visits to Milo's bar amount to thinly veiled surveillance and artful attempts (read: blackmail) at getting Izzy to return to the Spellman Inc. fold. As the case of the wayward wife continues to vex her, Izzy's personal life—and mental health—seem to be disintegrating. Facing a housing crisis, she can't sleep, she can't remember where she parked her car, and, despite her shrinks'* persistence, she can't seem to break through in her appointments. She certainly can't explain why she forgets dates with her lawyer's grandson, or fails to interpret the come-ons issued in an Irish brogue by Milo's new bartender. Nor can she explain exactly how she feels about Detective Henry Stone and his plans to move in with his new Assistant DA girlfriend...



The Spellmans Strike Again [2010]

Edgar-finalist Lutz's entertaining fourth and final novel about the eccentric Spellman PI clan has arrived. At the ripe old age of thirty-two, former wild child Isabel "Izzy" Spellman has finally agreed to take over the family business. And the transition won't be a smooth one. First among her priorities is to dig up some dirt on the competition, slippery ex-cop Rick Harkey. Next, faced with a baffling missing-persons case, Izzy hires an actor friend to go undercover as a butler. Meanwhile, at Spellman headquarters, it's business as usual.