

# Novelist's Boot Camp

Get it written—Get it done



# Our agenda--Session 3

Hands-on “boot camp”

- BIC
- Master Story Summary
- Get control of your calendar



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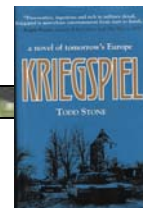




A really, really important idea



“Tools not rules”



# Novelist's Boot Camp Battle Plan Phases

1. Mental Preparation and Mission Planning
2. Invention
3. Development
4. Drafting
5. Revision and Rewriting
6. Editing and Proofreading
7. Staying Battle Ready



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# The BIC—your Book on an Index Card

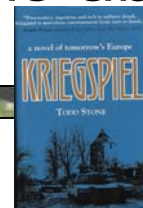
When a causal event happens, an (adjective)  
character does [or must do] something in the  
face of opposition,

and so (the character does something), and  
then (the character or opposition does  
something), and so.., and then..it works out.

+

genre

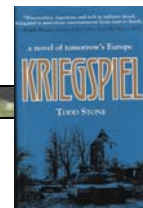
This is what your book is about!



# For example

When a member of her bomb squad is killed defusing explosives, a cynical, physically and emotionally scarred female police bomb tech must solve the crime to stop a serial bomber from striking again.

So what happens?



So...

So against official resistance, she deciphers the clues from bomb fragments, traces the components, and finally confronts the bomber in a personal life-or-death struggle.

What book is this?

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# Doin' da D's

**And so = D (+O!)**

Discovers

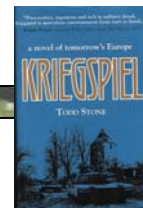
Does something

Deals with

Decides (requires one of the above)



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# Drafting the D's

Brainstorm list of all possible D's

Draft list

Check for genre consistency

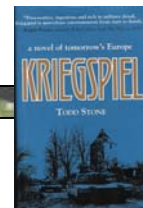
Add something new

Add in O/O

Remix/trim

Check logic

Revise list



# The master story summary

I **hate** outlining

The master story summary organizes your story

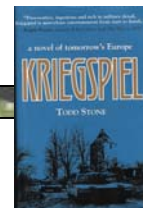
List of scenes from first to last

Comes from your business card description

Scenes = place, time, characters, action—no  
dialog

Written in present tense

All telling!



## **Betrands' Bedroom— morning**

(Murderer name) ambushes Susan Bertrand as she comes out of the shower. He lies in wait for Pastor Thomas Winston, Susan's lover, kills him too, and poses the bodies.

## **Kraag's ADMS office— afternoon**

Kraag receives a call from Mayor Dorland about the murder, blows off an executive meeting with corp. bigwigs to respond.



**Betrands' Bedroom— morning**  
**Kraag's ADMS office— afternoon**  
**Outside Kraag's house—evening**  
**Parking lot of Kraag's employer—morning**  
**Hallway to Kraag's office—morning**  
**First body dump site—morning**  
**Next place where hero/heroine has a  
conflict and AM/PM/Night**  
**Next place where hero/heroine has a  
conflict and AM/PM/Night**



Can be expanded into one page, 4 pages, or 20 pages—eventually 300!

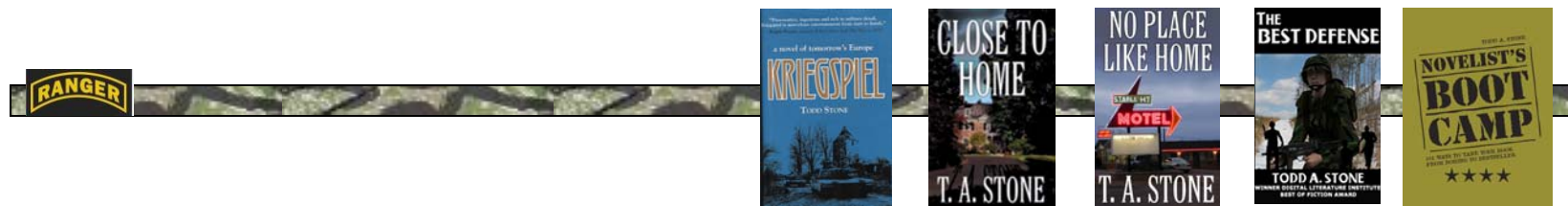
Keeps time/events straight

Keeps you focused on what happens, on moving the story along

Helps keep the main characters in the foreground

Lets you move events around

Gives you basis for a synopsis



# Controlling your calendar

## Truths:

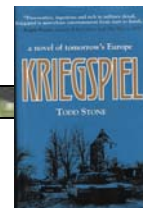
There IS time to write

Managing time is a skill

There will **always** be unanticipated interruptions

Work with scenes and tasks, not words, chapters, or pages

Size matters: smaller is better in both task and time block



# Key elements

1. Plan the use of available time
2. Trust the process
3. Monitor your progress
4. Cheat forward, not back

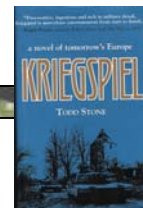
Leverage small chunks of time to chip away at big tasks and “get ahead”

5. Adjust as necessary

Creativity comes from discipline

Novel is a **part** of your life, not your life

6. Like riding a motorcycle, focus on where you want to go, but be in the moment



# Steps in Time Planning

Use a big calendar

Establish a deadline (consider 12-18 mo.)

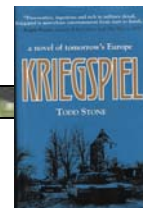
Block out vacations, time with family, work, religious activities, exercise, weekends, etc.

Divide remainder into 1/3's and mark

1/3 = Prep., Invention, Development

1/3 = Drafting

1/3 = Revision, editing, proofing



# Verbs are important

The right verbs help get the right results

**Invent...**

**Develop...**

**Draft...**

**Revise...**

**Rewrite...**

**Edit...**

**Proof...**

**VS.**

*Write*

*Work on*

*Look at*

*Go Over*

*Review*



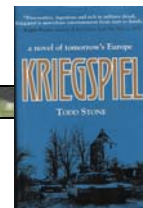
# The 4 Paths to "*Published!*"

NY or "traditional" major presses

Specialty or small presses

Micropresses/Indie/e-publishing

Self-publishing



# 5 "Secrets" to a Higher Quality Draft

1. Thorough preparation, invention, and development
2. Smaller chunks!
3. Everybody is in the here and now
4. Use all the senses to show
5. Be deliberately creative (override the editor)

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