

Confessions of a Mid-Lister

30 lessons from one novelist's journey in publishing



By Craig DiLouie

Lesson #1

**Success in commercial fiction
is about the right book at the
right place at the right time.**

Lesson #2

**Success is also
how *you* define it.**

Lesson #3

Dream big.

Lesson #4

“Read and read to find out what kind of writer you want to be. Write and write to find out what kind of writer you are.”

—Colson Whitehead

Lesson #5

Writing is a discipline.

Lesson #6

If you are always writing, you are a better writer than you were last year and will be a better writer next year.

Lesson #7

**Be willing to experiment.
Know the rules. Break the
rules.**

Lesson #8

Never stop dreaming.

Lesson #9

**There is no shame in
moments of desperation,
but don't let them own you.**

Lesson #10

**Find a way to make peace
with bad reviews.**

Lesson #11

Even God gets bad reviews.

Lesson #12

**If you want a deal badly
enough, you get a bad deal.**

Contracts

- What rights granted (AI?)
- Term of rights acquisition
- Advance, royalty rates, reporting, payment
- Exclusive option next work (60-90 days)
- When do they publish
- Can you publish elsewhere and when
- Can you self-publish

Lesson #13

A good agent is invaluable.

Lesson #14

Writing is a long game.

Lesson #15

**Film/TV options are a
lottery ticket.**

Lesson #16

**The best marketing you can
do is write a good book.**

Lesson #17

**The best way to get True Fans
is to stick with one thing that
hits big.**

Lesson #18

Success is a ladder with many rungs, and it can be fleeting.

Lesson #19

Self-publishing can be very profitable and build brand.

Lesson #20

**Do not marry a publishing
path.**

Lesson #21

KDP is well, *it*.

Lesson #22

Audiobooks are huge.

Lesson #23

**Study the market but be
prepared to be surprised.
Original is not always rewarded.
Familiar with a twist often is.**

Lesson #24

**Networking can be immensely
valuable.**

Lesson #25

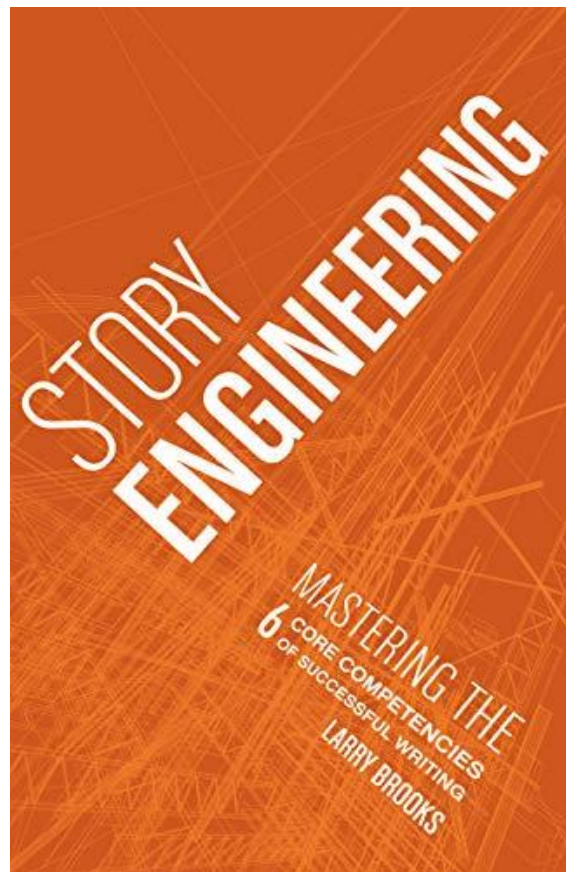
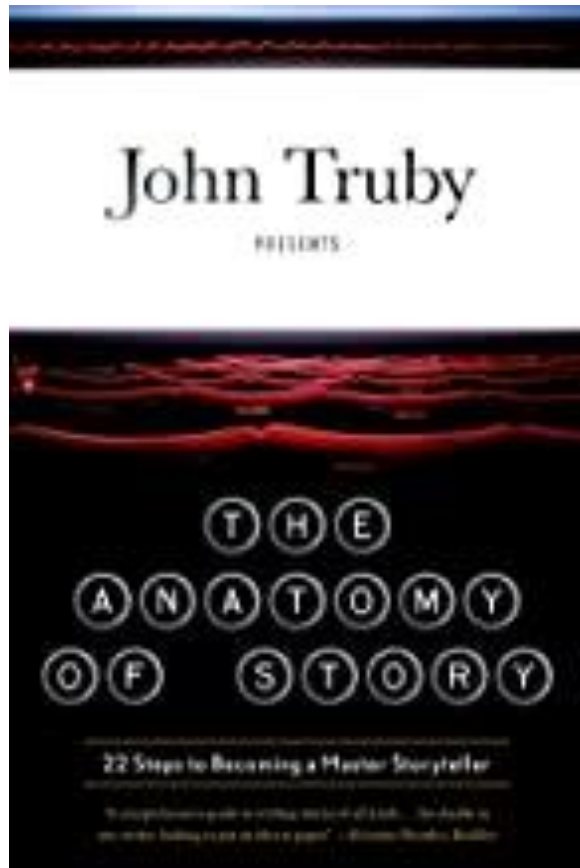
Find an Ideal (gentle) Reader.

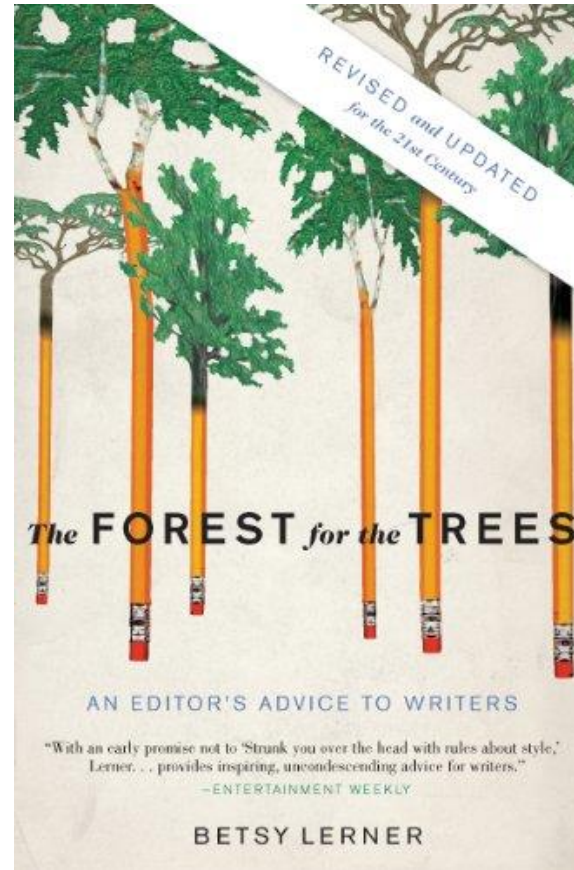
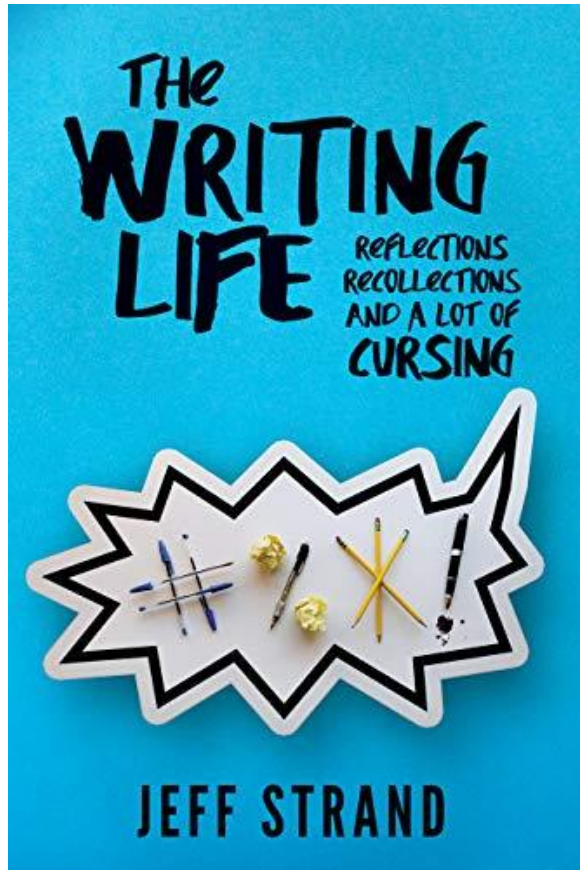
Lesson #26

**Be professional to readers
and supportive of writers.**

Lesson #27

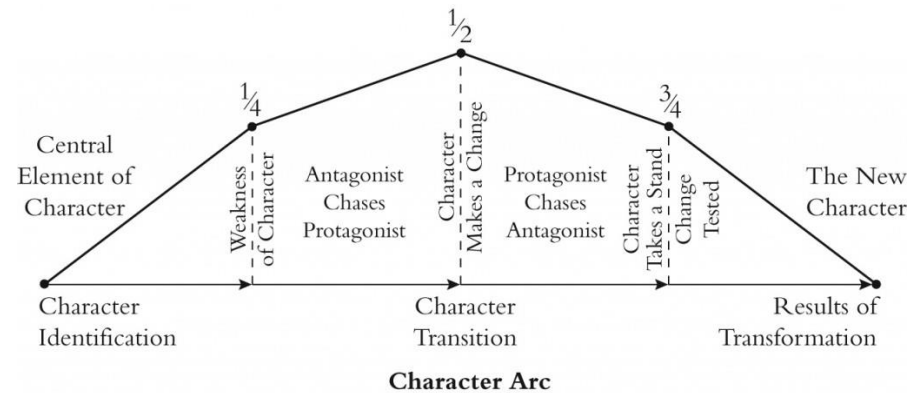
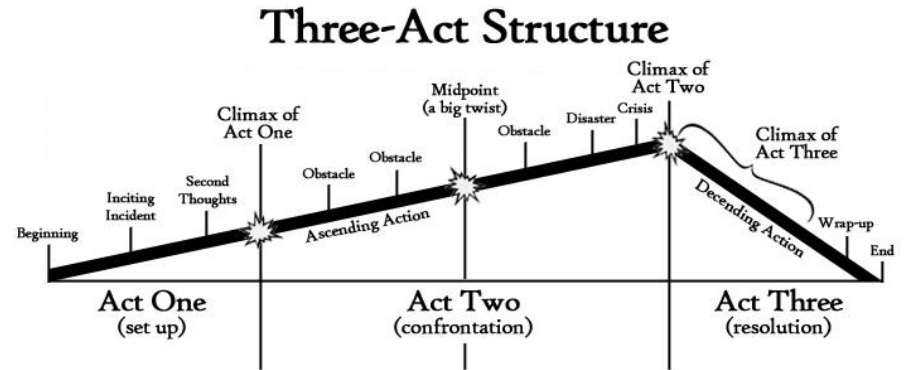
Always level up on craft.





Level Up

- “Plan like an engineer, write like an artist”
- Premise
- Plot structure
- Character arcs
- Theme
- Deep POV

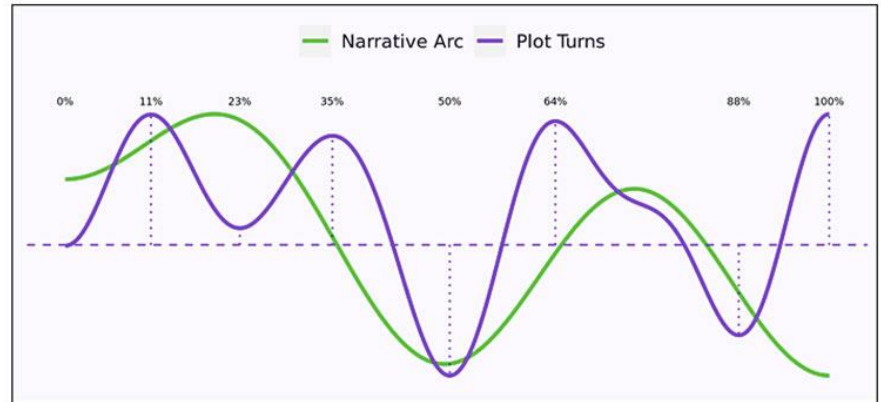


Lesson #28

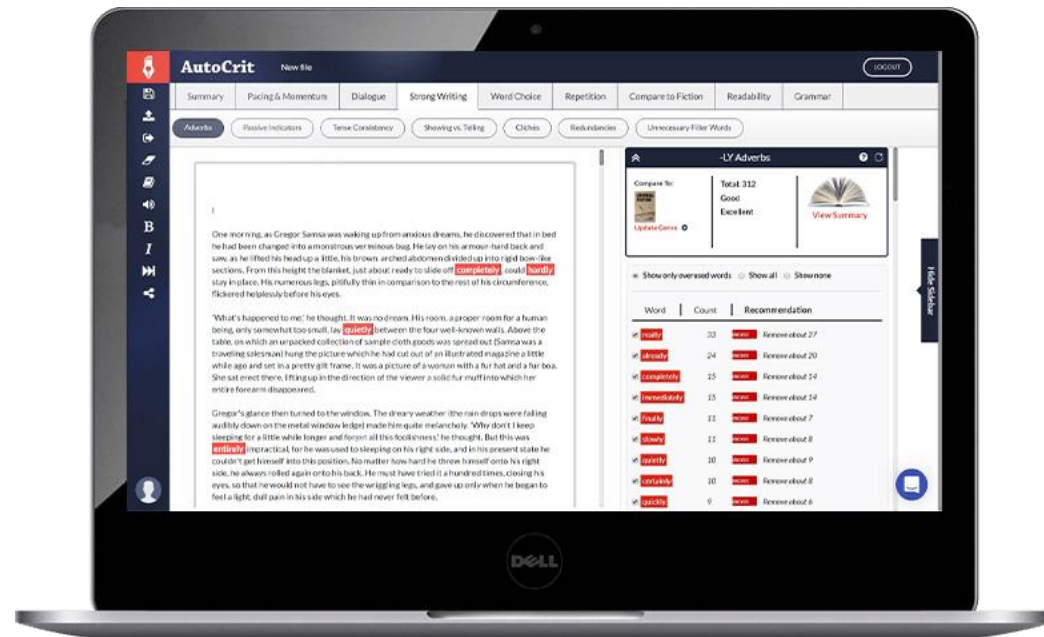
**Writing tools can be
very helpful.**

Interesting Tools

- Marlowe



- Autocrit



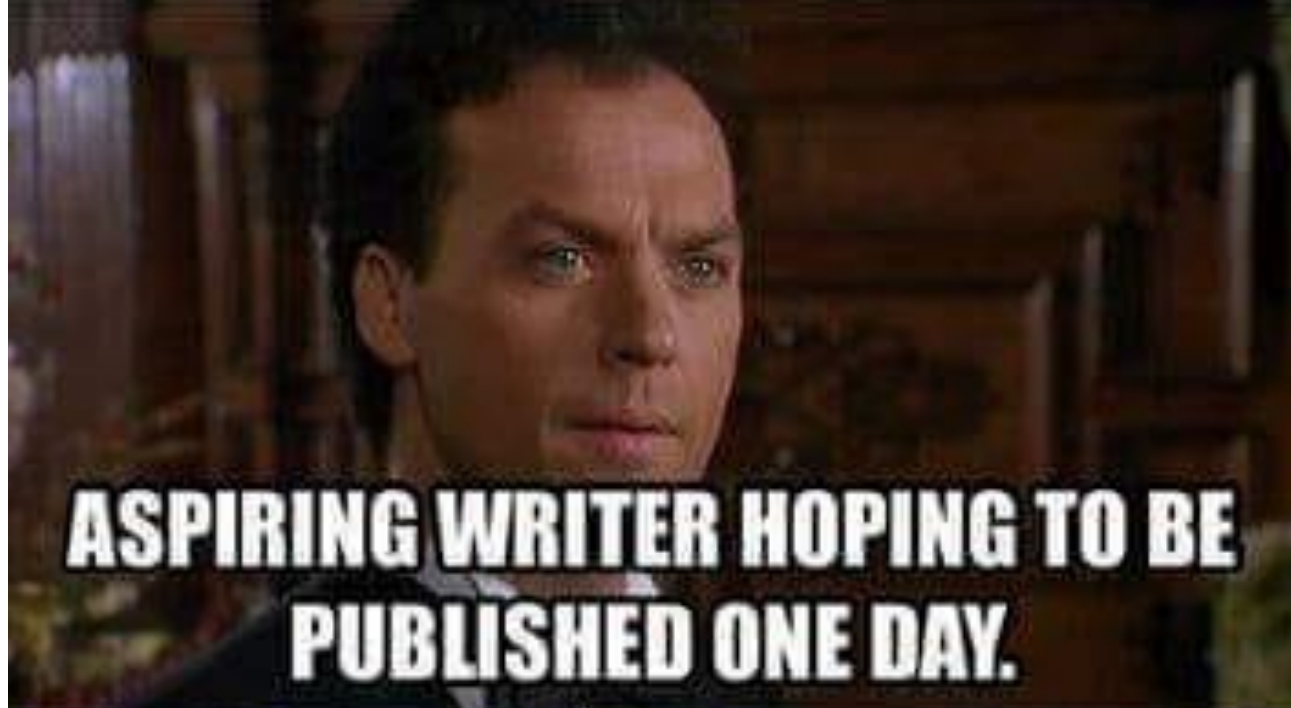
- Hemingway App

Lesson #29

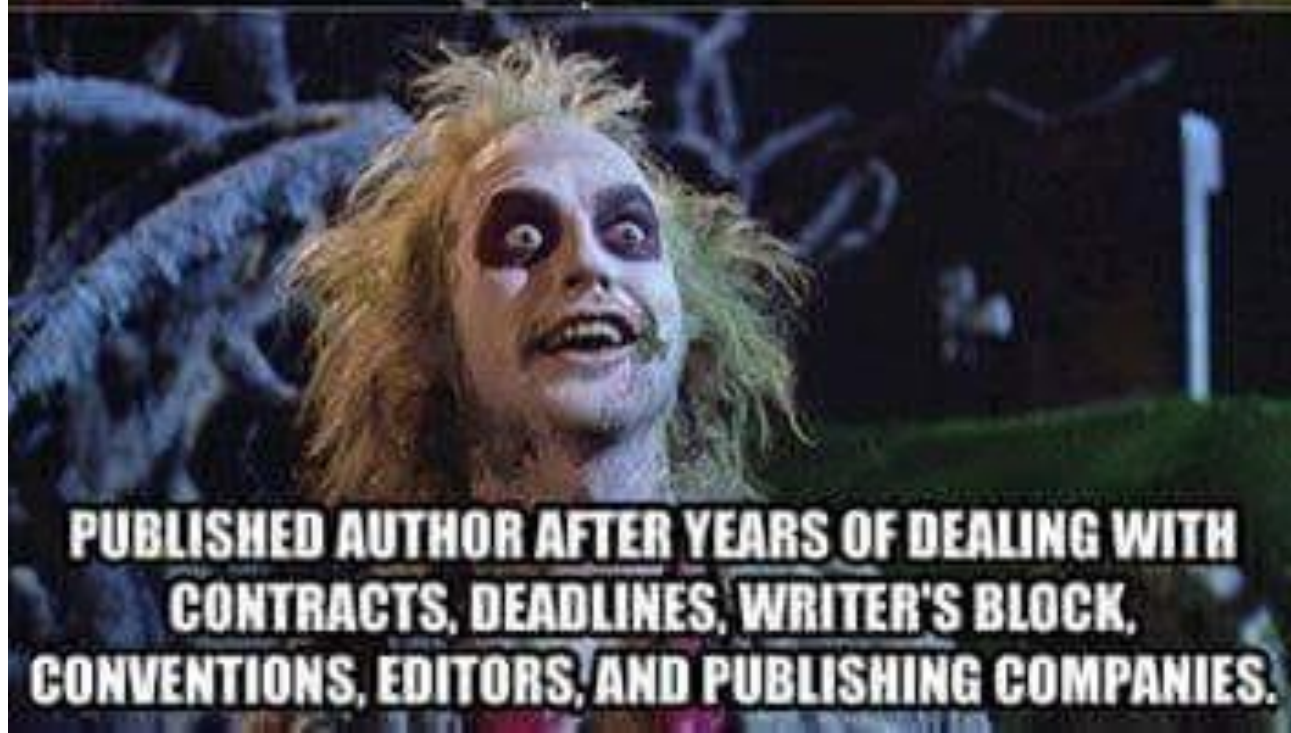
**If I could go back in time, I'd
tell myself to network.**

Lesson #30

**If you are a writer, you can do
nothing else. Find *your*
success.**



**ASPIRING WRITER HOPING TO BE
PUBLISHED ONE DAY.**



**PUBLISHED AUTHOR AFTER YEARS OF DEALING WITH
CONTRACTS, DEADLINES, WRITER'S BLOCK,
CONVENTIONS, EDITORS, AND PUBLISHING COMPANIES.**

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