

Janet Evanovich, best-selling author of Stephanie Plum mystery series, shares how she writes. It may strike a chord with some of you:

I drag myself out of bed around six, shove myself into the clothes lying on the floor and plod down the road after the dog. I eat a boring breakfast of skim milk, orange juice and healthy cereal because when I wake up I always think I'm Christie Brinkley and it seems like something Christie would do. Then I shuffle into the office I share with a really rude parrot. The dog follows after me and flops onto his bed to take a nap. (Next time around I want to be my dog.)

I stare at the computer screen for about four hours, sometimes actually typing some sentences. I chew gum and drink green tea to keep myself from falling out of my chair in a catatonic stupor. At noon I'm suddenly filled with energy and rush to the refrigerator, hoping a pineapple upside-down cake with lots of whipped cream has mysteriously appeared. Finding none, I make a tuna or peanut butter and olive sandwich.

I go back to my office and visualize myself getting exercise. I play an amazing game of mental tennis. In my mind's eye I look great in the little tennis dress. Very athletic. When I'm done playing tennis I stare at the computer screen some more. When nothing appears on the screen I drive down to the local store and buy a bag of Cheez Doodles. I eat the Cheez Doodles and manage to actually write several pages. When I'm done with the Doodles and pages I wander out of my office looking for someone to whine at because I just made myself fat. (I'm only Christie Brinkley in the morning. In the afternoon I'm Roseanne.) I alternate typing and whining for the rest of the afternoon until about five when I emerge from my office once again hoping for the pineapple cake.