

methods

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 15 May 1999

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Patri10629 — 15 May 1999, 19:13

Dear vizcacha, Tony, et all

I guess I didn't get the joke:) Sincere apologies. And I didn't mean to come off as the Thought Police: "Topic Off Limits--Go No Further." Honestly, I didn't.

I too love THE CASTLE OF THE OTTER. I thought we were talking about the actual "how" Wolfe does it--not his ideas, forms, symbols, tactics, aesthetic, theology--all of which I find fascinating too. But speculating on useless things. Like what brand of computer I'm typing on now. Or what I'm smoking. Know what I mean? Oh never mind. I was probably just tired.

On the topic of "line-editing:" It is disgruntling to see sloppy, stupid mistakes in a book as a reader. It is even more alarming to the writers I know--trust me. So I doubt Wolfe's statement about how much finding mistakes of the "Marble/Mint" sort disturbs him is an exaggeration. In my experience, usually by the time it's published, a novel has been spellchecked and proofed many times. By the writer, friends, assistant editor, the editor, the proofreader. And yet entropy rules.

My editor is also Wolfe's: David G. Hartwell. An extraordinarily careful and critical reader. He, too, is dismayed by the sloppy line-editing he sees. He told me that he read the ms. to Citadel of The Autarch twice, and found, after all that, One Word he could suggest that Wolfe change. (No idea whether or not Gene took his advice.) But this tells you a lot about the care Gene takes with his writing. On a typewriter no less!

Whoops! I've slid off topic!

best as always

Patrick