

## Oh No! It's Typo!

I hate typos. Despise them. They are vermin to be wiped from the face of the planet, ranking just below tapeworms and just above spammers trying to sell me herbal V1@gr@. The irony is that, as I have discovered this past week, typos love me. They can't get enough of me. Apparently, they get so distraught if they do not appear in my novels that they insert themselves without my knowledge just so they don't feel left out of the fun.

After I posted my complete, polished novels to my web site and the Kindle, several alert readers notified me that they'd come across a few typos, which I'm grateful to know about so I can go back and fix them. That doesn't mean I don't need a moment to gather myself after finding out about them, because my reaction is usually something like this:

ARRRRRRRRRRGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHH!

I add in some very bad words if I want to be even more articulate.

The reason for my frustration is that I proofread my books very carefully to make sure they are as error-free as possible. I spend hours reading and rereading the novels until my eyes glaze over and I can't see straight. I don't see how that method can fail.

And yet, it does. My most frequent typos are of the mixed-up variety. I type "their" instead of "there" or "your" instead of "you're." Of course, this kind of error can lead to some amusing outcomes. A few years ago, when some striking union workers felt they were being taken advantage of by management, they didn't help their cause by carrying placards saying, "The managers think your stupid!"

But I can see how I might miss something like that. What I can't understand is how I used a word like "valediction" in place of "valedictorian." I've never used "valediction" in a sentence in my life. In fact, I had to look up what it meant (Val\*e\*dic\*tion: a word Boyd never uses).

The worst typo I found, all by myself, was when I used "astronomist" instead of "astronomer." Now, "astronomist" is not, technically, a word, so how both I and spellchecker missed it is a mystery, although some other people in the same situation might make wild accusations. For example, I would never start the rumor that Microsoft Word randomly inserts nonsense words into a person's writing just for the enjoyment of programmers who get hilarious emails every time someone sends out a document with the word "squatful" inserted into it. That

would be irresponsible.

Besides, I can't depend on spellchecker because it's not always reliable. It hasn't happened lately, but it used to be that when I typed "Boyd Morrison" into Word, it would underline the words in red, diligently alerting me that I had misspelled my own name. When I asked spellchecker for a better suggestion, it came up with what should have been so obvious to me: "Body Moron." Perhaps it was suggesting a new pen name for me.

I can take comfort in the fact that even NY Times bestselling authors have books with typos. My friend, James Rollins, whose books are epic action-adventure stories that I gobble down in about a day, wrote *The Last Oracle*, the cautionary tale of what happens if you stand too close to a molten nuclear reactor (hint: it involves the words "brain" and "tapioca").

Toward the end of *The Last Oracle*, I found the sentence, "Her entire form shook as teats spilled in shining streaks of joy." Jim, of course, meant "tears", but when I tried to imagine the scene as written, I laughed so hard that the person sitting next to me on the airplane thought I had a medical condition.

When I wrote an email to Jim with praise for the book, I also told him of the typo. He emailed back just one sentence: "I read your kind words with teats in my eyes."

So I suppose, like Jim, I should keep a sense of humor about typos and their affection for me. I mean, what's the worst that could happen? It's not like I could get saddled with some kind of ridiculous nickname just because of typos.

Sincerely,

Body Moron