

## Brrrrr

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It is cold in Maine this morning. After weeks of unseasonably warm weather...and no snow, though there is a storm predicted next week, FINALLY....this morning when I walked the dog at 6 AM it was COLD! He loves it, of course, being a breed from the mountains of Tibet. He grabbed and chewed at frozen leaves, crunching them like potato chips. Me, I just plodded along thinking *hurry up hurry up* and wishing I had brought my gloves.

It is a good time, though, to think about about what I'm working on...that early morning very-quiet time when I know I will shortly be sitting down at my desk. The book I am currently writing has reached the point where many different situations are happening and it is time to start pulling them together. So (thinking as I walk): *How will I get the boy out of Switzerland? At what point will the Commander remember the note with the name in it?*

Continuity, pacing, and consistency are important aspects of fiction-writing. Each event must be well-grounded in the previous events, must flow logically from them; each character must act according to the personality the author has created. The boy, for example...the one who must flee Switzerland shortly... is somewhat fragile and timid, yet determined. So he must behave accordingly, and I have to get him out of the Alps in a way consistent with that.

As for the Commander: he is forgetful and distracted, and he has probably tucked that note away someplace as a souvenir. What is the likelihood of his re-reading it, recognizing the name, etc.? I have to find a logical reason for that note to re-surface.

All of that sounds somewhat profound, as if written by John Le Carré, but it is actually a romp of a book, light-hearted and silly. Fun to write.

I emailed the first section of the manuscript home to Martin, who is a great proof-reader because he reads slowly...every word (and always cringes listening to me flip pages very fast while "reading" a novel ... I skim); then he emailed me back a list of typos and I was able to

correct them while it is all still in the computer: very handy, and no waste of paper; no printing-it-out.

This morning came an email from my daughter in San Francisco asking if Alfie had liked his Xmas-gift hedgehog (see photo) ... and he DOES; in fact this morning he insisted on carrying it outside, and now I can see it lying at the foot of the hawthorne tree, where he dropped it. But I fear I thanked my brother for the hedgehog. Grrrrr. Not enough that I have to keep track of my OWN gifts but I have to be social secretary for a puppy as well!

And I must notify my friend Kay of sad news about the gift of a stuffed rooster that SHE sent Alfie. (another photo here) *Le coq, c'est mort.*

He loved it so much that it is in tatters.

Now to get that boy out of Switzerland.



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