

Author Intrusion

By Azalea Dabill

Author intrusion, or the author's voice in a work, can be done well—on purpose, or done ill—in which case the intrusion slips around messily under the writer's radar.

In poorly crafting my author voice, I've done a wretched job at times when I forget whose tale I am telling and put down something like "Sarah stared at the door. This night is perfect, for the plan she had in mind." "This night is perfect" is unwanted author intrusion, and mixing my POV with Sarah's. Another form of author intrusion is when the author preaches at the reader through a character, or uses the story as a direct teaching or preaching platform.

I've noticed that C.S. Lewis gets his voice across well in omniscient POV in the Chronicles of Narnia with interesting, important, and necessary asides to the reader. Such as,

Lucy immediately stooped down and crawled in after him. Then she heard noises of scrambling and puffing and panting behind her and in a moment all five of them were inside.

"Wherever is this?" said Peter's voice, sounding tired and pale in the darkness. (I hope you know what I mean by a voice sounding pale.)

"It's an old hiding place for beavers in bad times," said Mr. Beaver, "and a great secret."

Consistency in the way you craft a story makes all the difference. Not that you can't have an occasional deviation for interest, as long as it fits your voice, such as J. R. R. Tolkien's omniscient dip into the fox's mind in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. And you will find that the chaos of character-driven events, chaos that is somehow controlled, through a chosen POV, from the gamut of first person to omniscient, works. And works well.

In this flyer where I use block quotes (if applicable), I have changed to single-spacing for readability.