

## Back in the Saddle

Written by Vincent J. Shuta Jr.  
Saturday, 24 May 2014 12:14 -

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It is with great annoyance that I am going to miss this year's [Liberty States Fiction Writers Conference](#). Forgive me Caridad, but circumstances are keeping me home this year. Even so, it's acting as a catalyst for my writing. Somehow the combined energy of all those creative people gathering in one place is reaching me, getting me moving again.

It's been a particularly turbulent year for my writing. At the last #LSFW I was introduced to a wonderful agent who was willing to give me feedback on my work. (I will let this person stay anonymous for now, lest said wonderful agent be pelted with similar requests.) Every bit of it was on mark and helpful, but one particular comment put me in a bind.

She said I was writing in third person omniscient, which while it is a legitimate writing style, it's considered archaic. I would engage the reader more effectively if I shifted to first person or third person deep.

Now I can't just open a menu box and check a different radio button. This meant a complete rewrite. Worse, it meant I had to change my writing style, which apparently leans to third person omniscient.

Remember that scene in *The Empire Strikes Back* when Luke is all smug because Leah kisses him in front of Han? Imagine if someone leaned in at that moment and said, "Oh by the way, that's your sister." That's about the feeling I was running with here.

I'm not going to lie. I had my moments of looking at my authors of inspiration, and noting that they wrote some of their stuff in third person omniscient. In Sci-Fi it's particularly useful for world building. Can you imagine *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* from only Arthur's point of view? None of it would make sense. Arthur doesn't get a handle on things until the fourth book or so.

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But I had to admit one fact to myself: most of those inspiring me were dead. My strongest influence was probably Asimov's *Foundation*. But many would consider it an acquired taste.

If, as a hobby, I want to try to write like Asimov there's nothing wrong with that. (Notice the word "try." I've not earned the right to make claims like that.) But if I want to be published in a modern era I've got to write in a way that my readers will accept.

Attempting to do that proved problematic. I just didn't have the creative energy to start over. I was wasting my time trying to patch what I had.

Eventually things started to come together. Slowly I started to see all the patches. I had patched it several times before this, with ideas inspired by feedback from readers and from conferences and courses. And as I tried to rework it again, I kept finding more and more areas I needed to smooth out.

Luckily, a bunch of other projects came up that forced me to work on something else for a while. This allowed me to think of it once again as a long term project as opposed to a short term goal. I had to realize that I'm not limited to patching problems. I can re-cut it from new cloth.

I still have the luxury of taking my time and perfecting this.

Plus it is the *Tales of the Black Knight*. If you don't feel like the Black Knight is telling it, then haven't I missed the point?

If I'm a writer, should I really mind writing? Yes it's a lot to go over, but it's not wasted effort. Now I know the story I want to tell in detail. I just need to tell it the right way.

It's going to take some time to develop. I've got as much reading to do as writing. You may notice me using to blog to experiment with styles from time to time. But that's a good thing. A

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writer has to write, even if it seems daunting.

John Wayne said courage is being scared to death but saddling up anyway.

Scared? Never. Daunted for a while? Perhaps. It matters naught.

I'm back in the saddle.