One of my favorite stories from my days as the editor of the San Diego Jewish Press-Heritage, z’’l, was the time two of its reporters met each other at a social occasion.

“Gerry Greber,” said one. “I know that name from somewhere.”

“Perhaps from the Heritage,” responded Greber. “I write for the Heritage.”

“You do?” asked I. Gerry Burstain incredulously. “I write for the Heritage too. “

“Really?”

“Yes,” said Burstain, “and you know what that means? We have the same butcher!”|

Ahem, well, we editors have to learn to grin and bear some of our writers’ complaints.

But, sometimes, and very rarely at that, an overeager editor does indeed mess up what otherwise would have been a great story by a writer.

In fact, that was what happened to my friend Dan Bloom, who lives in Taiwan, where each year, in the guise of “Zadie” he answers Chanukah-wish letters from Jewish kids who, of course, don’t write to Santa.

In his wonderful tale, *Bubbie and Zadie Come to My House: A Story for Hanukkah,”* Bloom—using the more formal byline of Daniel Halevi Bloom—appears to introduce his story’s main characters with the words: “Yes, Bubbie and Zadie, whose names mean ‘grandma’ and ‘grandpa’ in the Hebrew language, are two magical friends who always reminded me of my very own grandparents.”

Poor “safta” and “saba”—have they been replaced as the “grandma” and “grandpa” of the Hebrew language?

Of course not. In his original manuscript, Bloom wrote that Bubbie’s and Zadie’s names mean ‘grandma’ and ‘grandpa’ in the Yiddish language. But some nameless editor, who may have thought Yiddish and Hebrew were one and the same, changed Yiddish to Hebrew.

The story was published without the error when it first came out in 1985, but in this reissue by a different publisher, and with intriguing full-color illustrations by Alex Meilichson, Yiddish was incorrectly changed to Hebrew.

When I asked Bloom by e-mail about the error, he wrote back that he was shocked when he saw it—but what could he do, the books had already been printed.

Except for a moment of linguistic indigestion, the error really doesn’t hurt the charming story about Chanukah visitors who come floating into a Jewish home, and play with the children who proudly prove to the ethereal “bubbie” and “zadie” that they know all about the origins of the Chanukah holiday.

Situations like Bloom’s gave rise to the joke about the difference between doctors and journalists. Doctors bury their mistakes. Journalists publish theirs.

Since 1981, in the guise of zadie, Bloom has been answering children’s Chanukah-wish letters and he is still at it.

If children write to Bubbie and Zadie's Hannukah Mailbox, 115 Herricks Road, New Garden City, New York 11040, the letters will be forwarded to Zadie at the Far Eastern Pole (Taiwan), and he will answer them, in the guise of Zadie, free of charge. As he has a great sense of humor, his answer to your child may well be a keepsake.

Hopefully, no one will edit his correspondence, or your child’s.