

## - WRITING PIECE 1 -

Section 1:

#1 "She felt the ridges of the map she was carving and wondered if the storms below still whispered secrets to those who dared listen. Her eyes glinted with zeal and intrigue." Strengths:

- Vivid sensory details that engage the reader's imagination
- Strong use of personification with storms whispering secrets

Weakness: Limited emotional depth → Your description focuses mainly on physical actions without diving into Amelia's thoughts about the map's significance. The phrase "her eyes glinted with zeal" tells rather than shows her feelings. Exemplar: ***Her fingers traced the ridges of the ancient map, each groove holding whispers of storms past, while her mind raced with possibilities of what secrets lay hidden within its weathered surface.***

#2 "The deafening crack of timber, the rough shouts of incoherent ramblings, the foul and pungent odour radiating from the entrance; it could only mean one thing, squatters." Strengths:

- Effective use of multiple sensory details
- Creates tension through building atmosphere

Weakness: Rushed revelation → Your build-up of tension suddenly drops with the simple conclusion "squatters." The phrase "it could only mean one thing" doesn't match the dramatic setup you've created. Exemplar: ***The deafening crack of timber and rough shouts echoed through the ship, while a foul stench crept in from the entrance - signs of the dreaded raiders who'd been terrorising these waters.***

#3 "Should she risk a revolutionary insight into the ancient history of the land to help the crew of pirates and misfits that had adopted her – made her truly happy for once and gave her a real home; a real family." Strengths:

- Strong emotional conflict
- Clear stakes established

Weakness: Underdeveloped dilemma → Your presentation of the choice feels sudden. The phrase "revolutionary insight" needs more context about why this map matters so much to both sides. Exemplar: ***The map held secrets that could change everything they knew about these waters, but was that worth betraying the pirates who'd given her the family she'd always yearned for?***

■ Your narrative shows promise in creating atmosphere and tension. The central conflict between loyalty and discovery offers rich ground for character development. You could strengthen your writing by giving more weight to Amelia's emotional journey throughout the scene. Consider deepening the relationship between Amelia and her crew earlier in the story to make her final choice more impactful. Try showing more of her internal struggle through her actions rather than stating her feelings directly. Adding specific details about the map's importance would help readers understand the true weight of her decision.

Actionable task: Rewrite the final paragraph focusing on showing Amelia's internal conflict through her physical reactions and memories of specific moments with her crew, rather than telling readers about her dilemma.

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**Score: 40/50**

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Section 2:

#1 She felt the ridges of the map she was carving and wondered if the storms below still whispered secrets to those who dared listen. Her eyes glinted with zeal and intrigue.

#2 The coarse paper of the map, buried in the sand long before this era, bristled and wafted in the fine, salty breeze – shaking off sand like a dog shaking off water. As she was about to place it back in the glass bottle, the ship was hit with a trembling force – sending Amelia and the map flying. ~~The deafening crack of timber, the rough shouts of incoherent ramblings, the foul and pungent odour radiating from the entrance; it could only mean one thing, squatters.~~ [The deafening crack of timber split the air, followed by rough, incoherent shouts and a foul, pungent odour radiating from the entrance - it could only mean one thing: squatters.]

Amelia winced, slowly recovering from the momentary shock. She knew she shouldn't have come to the abandoned 'building' or if you could even call it that. Fear ran through her body, as she saw bloodshot eyes – burning with fervent fury – from the malignant shadows. She desperately clawed at the ground, needing to find the ancient scroll. Suddenly, her calloused fingers skimmed across the surface of tempered glass: curved intricately into a bottle. As she lunged for it, millions of thoughts scampered through her mind – digging at the walls of her consciousness – desperate to escape.

#3 Amelia careened on the precipice of trepidation and indecisiveness. ~~Should she risk a revolutionary insight into the ancient history of the land to help the crew of pirates and misfits that had adopted her – made her truly happy for once and gave her a real home, a real family.~~ [Should she risk a revolutionary insight into the ancient history of the land to help the crew of

pirates and misfits that had adopted her, who had made her truly happy for once and given her a real home, a real family?] Or should she run away with the scroll – leaving her crew to eminent death? She shivered with the overwhelming decision upon her hands – unsure whether she wanted to burden this responsibility.

## - WRITING PIECE 2 -

### Section 1:

#1: "In the soft glow of the alien sunset, the crowd gasped at the intricate sculpture, unaware it was created by the one thing they feared most. The statue was beautiful, so realistic that it felt...unreal. Alien perhaps."

#### Strengths:

- Your opening creates an immediate sense of mystery and intrigue
- Your use of sensory details effectively sets the atmosphere

Weakness: Limited Scene Development → Your opening could benefit from grounding readers in the setting. While you mention a crowd and sculpture, you haven't established where exactly this is taking place or what makes this particular moment significant.

Exemplar: *In the soft glow of the alien sunset, the desperate crowd in Central Square gasped at the intricate sculpture towering before them, its metallic surface reflecting their hollow faces—unaware it was created by the one thing they feared most.*

#2: "Like penicillin among viruses, he was like a flashlight in a dark room. Compared to his fellow peers and colleagues, who were meek and submissive; listening to everything that their master said; he was defiant and proud, and he would always get chastised for that."

#### Strengths:

- Your metaphors help paint a clear picture of Jake's character
- Your contrast between Jake and others adds depth to the society

Weakness: Character Depth → Your portrayal of Jake relies heavily on telling rather than showing. The comparisons feel forced, and we don't see examples of his defiance in action.

Exemplar: *Jake stood tall among his hunched colleagues, his paintings hidden beneath his coat—each stroke an act of defiance against the masters who had banned all forms of creative expression.*

#3: "Breaking the trance, his mother coughed violently – that's when he remembered. He still had to pay for her hospital bills, and he still had a toy to give to his son for his birthday."

#### Strengths:

- Your inclusion of personal stakes makes the conflict more meaningful
- Your ending creates genuine tension about Jake's choice

Weakness: Rushed Resolution → The sudden introduction of family obligations feels abrupt. These important details about his mother's illness and his son would have more impact if mentioned earlier in the story.

Exemplar: *The violent cough pierced the silence, and Jake's heart twisted as he watched his mother double over—the same mother who had sold her prized possessions to pay for his art supplies, now depending on him for her medicine.*

■ Your narrative shows promise in building an interesting dystopian world, but needs stronger connections between different story elements. The alien's arrival could be better linked to the earlier descriptions of the oppressive society. Consider developing Jake's relationships with his family throughout the story rather than just at the end. Try showing the daily struggles of living in this controlled society through specific examples rather than broad statements. Your ending presents an interesting moral choice, but would be stronger if the stakes were established earlier.

Actionable Task: Rewrite the scene where Jake first sees the statue, incorporating his thoughts about his sick mother and young son to build tension from the start.

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**Score: 43/50**

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Section 2:

In the soft glow of the alien sunset, the crowd gasped at the intricate sculpture, unaware it was created by the one thing they feared most. The statue was beautiful, so realistic that it felt...unreal. Alien perhaps. The citizens of the dystopian city glanced up in a blend of awe and amusement at the magnificent piece of art they had been kept from. Yet despite its glory and beauty, the statue resonated with a profound feeling of uncertainty – like a daunting shadow that looms over you, forecasting horrors to come.

~~One person in the starving, flesh-stripped, crowd stood out—Jake.~~ [Among the starving, flesh-stripped crowd, one person stood out—Jake.] He was an artist, an inventor, and a 'rising revolutionist' – all of which self-acclaimed. ~~Like penicillin among viruses, he was like a flashlight in a dark room.~~ [Standing apart from the masses, Jake shone like a beacon in the darkness.] Compared to his fellow peers and colleagues, who were meek and submissive [,] listening to everything that their master said [,] he was defiant and proud, and he would always get chastised for that. The higher-ups despised creativity, not believing in new inventions, arrogantly illustrating that conventional methods were the best. Yet even they, people who dominated this city and struck down every revolutionary piece of art, gazed at the intricate piece of craftsmanship

– but unbeknownst to their dull minds [,] it wasn't really a 'man' who had crafted this, but something much more far off.

Suddenly, the sunset slowly turned a shade of green. As if someone was dipping a paint-filled brush into water. In the spur of the moment, the statue opened up revealing a slim red creature that crawled out, its tendrils latching onto the ground and spreading like fungi. Some may call it an alien, but it wasn't the childish one that you would see in children's books – instead, one that radiated fear, but also comfort. One that was scorching hot yet frozen. As it solidified into a vessel reminiscent of a human, it stood defiantly in the center of the town square. It dripped from red goo, with no bodily or facial features.

It beckoned for the civilians to leave this horrible city, to be free of the totalitarian rule. That on their world, people were equal. That where they lived, there was adequate food and water, real showers and hot baths. The civilians ~~guant~~ [gaunt] eyes gleamed with hope and longing, but still were they under the mesmerising trance of their leaders. The government spoke up, their voices tinted with mocking words trying to conceal fear. They spoke in the language of punishment and weaponry, their dialect a boast of their military power. Their words were filled with false promises and treacherous lies – yet still the civilians walked back into the prison.

The creature shook its blobby head, but at last, extended a warm hand out to Jake. 'I know that among all these people, you have a hope for retribution and redemption. You are the only one that hasn't been brainwashed by these dominating figures you praise as your leaders.' It rasped. Jake looked back at his parents, at his friends, at his colleagues and at his own life. He would be free, yet not free. Liberated yet constrained. His eyes flicked back and forth from his old life and friends to his new life. Breaking the trance, his mother coughed violently – [—] that's when he remembered. He still had to pay for her hospital bills, and he still had a toy to give to his son for his birthday. Should he risk all he knew and everyone that needed him, from a new freeing reality? His mind raced, incapable of processing the magnitude of the situation.