

- WRITING PIECE 1 -

Section 1:

#1 "She traced the raised edges of the map with trembling fingers, the brass plate cool against her skin. Each ridge she carved felt like a question, echoing the restless storms below." Strengths:

- Vivid sensory details that engage touch and temperature
- Strong metaphorical connection between physical carving and questioning

Weakness: Limited emotional context → Your opening focuses heavily on physical actions without revealing Maren's emotional state. The trembling fingers hint at something deeper, but you could explore why she trembles - fear, anticipation, or determination? Exemplar: *Her fingers trembled against the brass plate, each carved ridge echoing her growing resolve to uncover the storm's secrets.*

#2 "Her mother was one of them. A storm chaser, driven by an unshakable belief that the Tempest Plains held the key to Earth's healing, she had vanished five years earlier." Strengths:

- Clear establishment of personal stakes
- Strong motivation for the protagonist

Weakness: Underdeveloped background → Your introduction of the mother feels sudden. The shift from general description to this personal revelation needs more build-up. The five-year timeframe floats without context of how it has shaped Maren. Exemplar: *For five long years since her mother's disappearance into the Tempest Plains, Maren had carried the weight of her final words: "The storms hold Earth's salvation."*

#3 "Whether the storm would reveal its secrets or claim her, as it had claimed so many, she didn't know. But Maren was ready to listen." Strengths:

- Powerful closing that balances uncertainty with determination
- Effective use of parallel structure

Weakness: Rushed resolution → Your ending moves too quickly from uncertainty to acceptance. The leap between facing possible death and being "ready to listen" needs more emotional scaffolding. Exemplar: *Though the storm might claim her as it had so many others, Maren welcomed its electric whispers - each crack of lightning might lead her to truth, or to her mother.*

■ Your narrative builds an intriguing world with strong potential for deeper exploration. The connection between the physical map-making and emotional journey creates a compelling framework. However, you could strengthen the emotional arc by weaving more of Maren's personal history throughout the piece. The stakes feel high but somewhat distant - bring them closer by showing how the past five years have changed her. Your storm metaphors work well but could be pushed further to reflect Maren's internal state.

Actionable Task: Rewrite the second paragraph focusing on how Maren's map-making skills and knowledge of the Tempest Plains developed during the five years since her mother's disappearance.

Score: 42/50

Section 2:

#1 She traced the raised edges of the map with trembling fingers, the brass plate cool against her skin. Each ridge she carved felt like a question, echoing the restless storms below. Did the Tempest Plains still whisper their secrets to anyone brave—or foolish—enough to listen?

~~#2 Maren's hands faltered for just a moment as she etched the final line, her lantern flickering to cast fleeting shadows over the delicate labyrinth of peaks and chasms.~~ [As Maren etched the final line, her hands faltered, the lantern's fleeting shadows dancing across the delicate labyrinth of peaks and chasms.] Below, the Tempest Plains raged on—a merciless expanse of lightning and fury that had swallowed the Earth's surface long ago. Above, the Skyward Arcs hovered in safety, shielding what was left of humanity. Yet the storms' murmurs persisted, carried in half-forgotten stories by the few who dared descend. Most never returned.

#3 Her mother was one of them. A storm chaser, driven by an unshakable belief that the Tempest Plains held the key to Earth's healing, she had vanished five years earlier. Maren had spent every day since chasing fragments of her legacy—tattered journals, indecipherable maps, and whispered rumors. Now, as the final coordinates were etched into brass, Maren realized her task had never been about maps or memory. This was a promise. A vow to follow where her mother had gone.

The hum of the storm below seemed almost alive, a low, hypnotic melody that tugged at her resolve. It wasn't just noise. It was language—crackling, electric words that hinted at truths buried beneath centuries of ruin. Tomorrow, she would descend alone in the Skyglider, plunging into the chaos that had consumed her mother. Whether the storm would reveal its secrets or claim her, as it had claimed so many, she didn't know. But Maren was ready to listen.

- WRITING PIECE 2 -

Section 1:

#1: "The alien sunset bathed the plaza in violet and gold, its light catching on the sculpture's surface like fire trapped in stone. The crowd stood frozen, their gasps breaking the silence as they took it in."

Strengths:

- Vivid sensory details create an immersive atmosphere
- Effective use of metaphor with "fire trapped in stone"

Weakness: Limited emotional depth → While your description paints a striking visual picture, you could deepen the emotional impact by showing the crowd's individual reactions beyond just gasps. The scene feels somewhat distant from the human experience.

Exemplar: *The alien sunset bathed the plaza in violet and gold, its light catching on the sculpture's surface like fire trapped in stone. The crowd stood transfixed - some with hands pressed to their mouths, others reaching out as if to touch the impossible beauty before them.*

#2: "For months, she had worked alongside the Nokar—an alien species humanity feared instinctively. Their towering, insect-like forms and chattering language made them easy to dismiss as monstrous, unintelligent, dangerous."

Strengths:

- Strong character motivation shown through Tess's actions
- Clear establishment of conflict between fear and understanding

Weakness: Underdeveloped alien perspective → Your portrayal of the Nokar relies heavily on physical description but offers little insight into their culture or thoughts. The phrase "chattering language" feels surface-level.

Exemplar: *For months, she had worked alongside the Nokar—their complex mathematical poetry and dedication to beauty challenging humanity's instinctive fear. Though their towering forms and crystalline voices frightened others, Tess had discovered minds that dreamed in colours humans couldn't see.*

#3: "As the crowd erupted into applause, Tess exhaled, her relief tinged with unease. The Nokar's message was clear, etched in stone for all to see. But humanity wasn't ready to listen."

Strengths:

- Effective use of internal conflict
- Strong thematic conclusion

Weakness: Rushed resolution → Your ending moves too quickly from the crowd's positive reaction to Tess's doubt. The shift feels sudden, particularly with phrases like "humanity wasn't ready to listen" coming right after their applause.

Exemplar: *As the crowd erupted into applause, Tess watched their faces carefully - seeing wonder war with confusion, acceptance teetering on the edge of understanding. The Nokar's message was there, etched in stone, but she knew that wonder could curdle into fear at any moment.*

■ Your narrative tackles complex themes of prejudice and understanding through a compelling sci-fi lens. The world-building shows promise, but you could strengthen the story by diving deeper into the personal stakes for both Tess and the Nokar. Consider expanding on specific moments of connection between Tess and the aliens to make their collaboration more meaningful. The contrast between public reaction and private truth needs more development to fully land its impact. Try adding more subtle details about how fear manifests in daily interactions between humans and aliens. Your metaphors work well but need more grounding in emotional reality.

Actionable task: Rewrite the second paragraph focusing on a specific memory of Tess working with one Nokar artist, including details about their communication process and a moment of mutual understanding.

Score: 41/50

Section 2:

#1 The alien sunset bathed the plaza in violet and gold, its light catching on the sculpture's surface like fire trapped in stone. The crowd stood frozen, their gasps breaking the silence as they took it in. The sculpture—a spiralling column of shimmering, iridescent stone—seemed too intricate, too perfect, to be the work of human hands. And that, of course, was the truth they weren't ready to face.

#2 ~~From the shadows,~~ [Hidden in the deepening shadows,] Tess watched, her pulse quickening as awe began to ripple through the crowd. They didn't know what she knew. For months, she had worked alongside the Nokar—an alien species humanity feared instinctively. Their towering, insect-like forms and chattering language made them easy to dismiss as monstrous, unintelligent,

dangerous. But Tess had seen past the fear. Beneath their exoskeletons were minds capable of extraordinary creativity. The sculpture standing before the crowd was proof.

#3 Hidden in the cavernous space beneath the plaza, the Nokar artist had worked tirelessly, guided by Tess. She had smuggled materials and ideas between their worlds, piecing together a fragile collaboration. The sculpture told a story of unity—its spiralling design ~~symbolizing~~ [symbolising] two ~~civilizations~~ [civilisations] interwoven. But Tess knew the crowd wasn't ready for the truth. Fear would smother wonder the moment they learned who had crafted the piece. Tensions were already high; whispers of Nokar spies and sabotage had stoked panic.

As the crowd erupted into applause, Tess exhaled, her relief tinged with unease. The Nokar's message was clear, etched in stone for all to see. But humanity wasn't ready to listen. For now, the secret was safe. The question was how long beauty could outshine fear.