

Section 1

#1 - Opening paragraph describing Lief's journey through the forest

Strengths: Your piece creates a mysterious atmosphere with phrases like "spine tingled at the absence of sound" and builds tension effectively. The discovery of the locket provides a compelling hook that connects to the story's larger mystery.

Weakness: Choppy sentence flow → Your sentences feel disconnected and don't flow smoothly together. Notice how "He stepped in and walked around, feeling the stones and their smooth or rough surfaces. Suddenly, he tripped over something" creates abrupt transitions that interrupt the reader's experience.

Exemplar: *He stepped into the clearing and walked around, carefully feeling the stones' varied surfaces—some smooth, others rough—when suddenly he tripped over something hidden in the grass.*

#2 - Jasmine's introduction and attack on Lief

Strengths: Your writing shows Jasmine's fierce, independent character through her actions and dialogue. The physical description comparing the two characters helps readers visualise them clearly.

Weakness: Unclear character motivations → Your piece doesn't explain why Jasmine immediately attacks Lief or why she's so suspicious. The phrase "She really did not trust him" comes after the attack without showing what made her feel threatened. **Exemplar:** *Jasmine's heart raced as she spotted the fresh footprints—strangers meant danger in her forest, and she couldn't risk being discovered by Grey Guards.*

#3 - Lief's reaction to learning about Jasmine's dependence on the locket

Strengths: Your writing captures an important character moment where Lief's perspective shifts dramatically. The contrast between his initial sympathy and later disappointment creates realistic character development.

Weakness: Sudden personality change → Lief transforms from sympathetic to angry too quickly without proper reasoning. Your phrase "Angrily, he turned away" doesn't match his earlier caring response to her tragic story about losing her parents.

Exemplar: *Lief felt confused and slightly disappointed—he had admired her strength, but now wondered if there was more to her survival story than pure courage.*

■ Your piece tells an engaging adventure story with interesting characters who have clear personalities. The magical elements like the floating key create excitement, and the forest setting feels mysterious and dangerous. However, your story would benefit from smoother connections between events and clearer explanations of why characters act certain ways. Additionally, you could develop the characters' emotions more gradually instead of having them change feelings so quickly. Also, some of your sentences could be combined to create better flow throughout your writing. Furthermore, you might consider showing more of Jasmine's daily survival skills to help readers

understand her strength better. Your dialogue feels natural and helps reveal the characters' personalities effectively.

Overall Score: 43/50

Section 2

~~#1 Tentatively, Lief stepped through the quiet forest, the wind blowing his blonde curls against his crystal blue eyes. [Tentatively, Lief stepped through the quiet forest, the wind blowing his blonde curls across his crystal blue eyes.] His spine tingled at the absence of sound. He had never been in a place so noiseless before. [Never before had he experienced such complete silence.] He reached a clearing, bordered with huge boulders that loomed over him. He stepped in and walked around, feeling the stones and their smooth or rough surfaces. [When he reached a clearing bordered by enormous boulders that loomed overhead, he stepped inside and began exploring, running his hands along the stones' varied surfaces—some smooth, others rough.] Suddenly, he tripped over something. He crashed hard onto the ground, grazing his knee, and painfully sat back up. He looked back and saw a silver locket shaped like a shell. [Looking back, he discovered a silver locket shaped like a shell.] A shimmering pearl sat on it, winking in the light. As Lief picked it up, he saw a name engraved on the top of the clam shell. Jasmine, it read. With trembling fingers, Lief held it up and opened it. Inside was a silver key with an opal embeddened [embedded] in it. He put it in his pocket, stood up, dusted himself off, and climbed over a boulder.~~

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~~#2 Jasmine sat in her home up in the thick treetops. Filli, a tiny furry creature, hopped up onto her shoulder and nuzzled her. Jasmine's raven, Kree, perched himself on a small branch above Jasmine's home, tilting his feathery black head at an interesting-shaped [interestingly shaped] leaf. Jasmine was more bored than ever. She yawned, then lifted the curtains at the entrance of her home and slipped down a vine. She dashed across the quiet, rustling forest, leaping over gnarled roots and ducking under stray branches. When Jasmine reached the clearing, she spotted fresh footprints on a boulder. She inspected it. [She inspected them carefully.] Then she climbed over the boulder and dropped down – right on top of a young boy. Filli's eyes narrowed, his fur standing on end. [Immediately, Filli's eyes narrowed and his fur stood on end.] Kree screeched and frantically flapped back to the clearing. The boy yelped and doubled over; soon she was seated on his back, his limbs pinned down to the ground. 'Who are you?' Jasmine demanded. 'I – I'm Lief,' the boy managed to splutter out. 'Who are you, attacking me like this in the middle of nowhere?' 'I'm not saying my name until I gain more trust,' snorted Jasmine, tossing her head. 'Come with me.' She really did not trust him. [Her years of solitude had taught her that strangers brought danger.] He was about the same age as her,~~

with blonde hair and crystalline blue eyes. His skin was of a pale complexion and he wore a beautiful cloak that changed colour as it moved. In contrast, Jasmine's dark olive hair ~~contemplated~~ [complemented] pretty well with her slightly darker complexion and emerald eyes. She had a simple sash around her with a belt of items. As Jasmine shoved Lief into her home, she couldn't help but wonder why a young boy would be in the forest – her forest. Jasmine herself had lived in the forest her entire life, without anyone else, surviving. 'Tell me about yourself,' she ordered. 'Well, fine. I'm Lief – I think I already told you that, but never mind – and anyways, I came here to look for something. I can't tell you what it is, because I don't necessarily trust you. So that's pretty much it,' he explained. 'And no, I'm not a Grey Guard! You can calm down now,' Lief added at the sight of Filli trembling. Jasmine rolled her eyes. 'Well, I will tell you about myself. I lived in this forest my whole life, surviving without any company except for Filli and Kree. Filli –' she gestured at the creature clinging onto her shoulder, '– is this little guy here. The raven is Kree. I can also speak to trees.' Lief ~~inquired~~ [enquired] hopefully, 'And what is your name?' 'I won't tell you, I said!' cried Jasmine, exasperated. He was such a pain!

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#3 Lief watched, irritated, as the girl pulled out fruits and nuts from her bag. She still was not willing to let him know her name. All he wanted to know was who she was! Lief sighed with frustration and allowed the girl to continue ~~babble~~ [babbling] on about her ~~lifestory~~ [life story]. 'And the Grey Guards – they took my mother and father,' the girl said. Those words jabbed Lief very hard. Living here, in this wild forest, without anybody taking care of her? Sympathy welled up inside him. She must be strong – way stronger than he could ever be. The girl's mouth tightened and turned slightly downwards at the corners, but no tears leaked out from those emerald eyes. Lief stared, stunned. She didn't even cry, not even at the memory of her lost parents! His hatred for the Guards grew stronger. 'By the way, Lief...I trust you now,' the girl whispered. 'Then what is your name?' Lief asked eagerly. The girl took a deep breath, her voice, as quiet as the rustling of the trees, slipped into his ear: 'My name is Jasmine.' Stunned, Lief fumbled around in his pocket as Jasmine watched questioningly. Then, he pulled out the locket he had found earlier and thrust it in front of her. Jasmine's eyes widened as she held it up in the light. It sparkled knowingly, and opened. The key whirled out and hovered in front of her. Lief breathed in its magic. 'What is that?' Jasmine gulped hard. 'It...it's what I have relied on. I dropped it yesterday, and I couldn't find it.' ~~Relied on? Lief stared. So...she wasn't as strong as he thought she was. It was simply a lie. She was weak, and depended on that locket for survival. Angrily, he turned away.~~ [Relied on? Lief stared in confusion. The girl he had admired for her incredible strength and independence wasn't quite what he had imagined. A wave of disappointment washed over him as he processed this revelation.] A weak little girl, relying on a locket to survive in the most terrifying forest of the continent. He himself was a blacksmith, trained to create many valuable items out of pure strength. What a huge difference there was between Jasmine and Lief!