

Section 1

#1: Opening Scene (First Paragraph)

Strengths:

- Your description creates a lovely image of the attic with "dusty, but had a radiant light shining through, like a forgotten room that still had hope" – this sets a magical mood for discovering the violin.
- You've built intrigue by mentioning the violin's age (587 years old) and making it feel special and important to the story.

Pacing and Flow → Your opening moves too quickly from discovery to decision. When Joanne finds a 587-year-old violin, she barely reacts before deciding to use it for her concert. You write "Startled, she went and picked up the violin" and then immediately "I do need a violin to play for the concert, so I might as well use you." This moment deserves more space. Show us Joanne's emotions – is she amazed? Curious? Hesitant? Let readers feel the weight of this discovery by adding her thoughts about the violin's history or why it's been hidden away.

Exemplar: *Joanne's breath caught. A 587-year-old violin, passed down through generations of her family, and here it sat forgotten. She reached out slowly, her fingers trembling as they touched the smooth wood. Could something this old still sing?*

#2: Middle Section (Paragraph about Lucy's note and family messages)

Strengths:

- You show conflict well by including the note from Lucy and the messages from Joanne's siblings, which adds tension to the story.
- The detail of Lucy's note shows you're thinking about how characters would realistically communicate.

Character Development Through Action → Your writing tells us Joanne's feelings rather than showing them through her actions. You write "Joanne felt tears well at her eyes" and "anger building

up in her," but we don't see what she does with these emotions. Does she crumple the note? Pace around the room? Stare out the window? Additionally, the phrase "Days went by. Joanne never was late for a single lesson" tells us what happened but doesn't let us experience those days with her. Show us one specific moment of her determination instead.

Exemplar: *Joanne's hands shook as she read Kylie's message. She slammed her phone face-down on the desk and stood up, walking to the window. Outside, students hurried to their lessons. She would prove them wrong. For the next three days, she arrived at school before sunrise, her violin case already in hand.*

#3: Final Performance (Last Paragraph)

Strengths:

- Your ending brings the story full circle by having the violin "speak" to Joanne, connecting back to it being silent in the attic.
- You've recognised that the story is about both Joanne and the violin growing together, which shows thoughtful planning.

Sentence Structure Variety → Your final paragraph relies heavily on short, similar sentences that make the climax feel choppy. Notice: "Joanne sat on a chair." "A hour went by." "Joanne walked onto the stage." "She gave her intro." These brief statements don't build the excitement this important moment deserves. Your readers need to feel Joanne's anticipation and the power of her performance. Combine some sentences and vary their length to create rhythm. The improvisation – which is the heart of your story – gets only one sentence: "She gave her intro and started playing what her heart called to play."

Exemplar: *As Joanne lifted her bow, the stage lights warmed her face, and the audience fell silent. This wasn't the piece she'd practised for eighteen hours. Instead, her fingers found new notes, weaving a melody she'd never played before – one that told of dusty attics and forgotten treasures, of late nights and doubting siblings, of a girl and a violin learning to shine together.*

■ Your piece tells an engaging story about finding confidence through music, and you've included good plot elements like the time pressure of the concert, the conflict with family, and the special connection between Joanne and the violin. However, your writing would benefit from slowing down

at the important moments. Right now, you rush through events that deserve more attention – the discovery of the violin, Joanne's emotional journey, and especially her final performance. Think about where your story's heart truly beats. Is it when she finds the violin? When she reads her siblings' hurtful messages? When she performs? These moments need space to breathe.

Also, work on showing rather than telling. Instead of writing "Joanne felt tears weld at her eyes," describe what tears actually do – maybe they blur her vision or slide down her cheeks. Additionally, your dialogue needs more variety in how characters speak. Irwin's joke about the timing feels a bit confusing as written. Consider how real people build up to a joke or tease someone.

Your story structure is sound, but the middle section feels rushed. You write "Days went by" to cover Joanne's practice time, but this is where we should see her relationship with the violin deepen. Pick one or two specific practice sessions to describe in detail. Furthermore, the improvisation at the concert is your story's climax, yet it receives less description than packing the violin case. Expand this section significantly – let us hear the music through your words, show the audience's reaction, and reveal what makes this performance special. Your final score reflects a good foundation with room to develop depth and emotional resonance.

Overall Score: 42/50

Section 2

#1 Soaring Melodies

Joanne stepped forward. The attic was dusty, but had a radiant light shining through, like a forgotten room that still had hope. In the attic, in a small corner of the room, was a violin. Joanne gasped. Was the violin still truly there? It was 587 years old, yet it still shone. Startled, she went and picked up the violin, reluctantly plucking ~~it's~~ [its] strings. Each ring was a whisper in the dark, the violin singing, wishing to be played once more. "Alright then!" Joanne sighed [.] "I do need a violin to play for the concert, so I might as well use you."

#2 Joanne set the violin down on her dining table. First, she needed to tune the discordant instrument. The violin sung a weak song as the pegs were turned. "Ah, well, I might as well change all of the

strings," Joanne sighed [.] ~~"and~~ ["And I should] get the bow rehired." Joanne began packing up the old violin, passed down from mother to daughter, mother to daughter, and so on. She packed it in her safest case, a muted magenta hard travel case, with a silk cover for her violin, and one extra light blue cover on top of the travel case. ~~Now that I think of it, that just sounds so complicated. Oh well, it is the safest! She thought.~~ [Now that I think of it, that sounds rather complicated, she thought. Oh well, it is the safest!] AND the concert is in just one week! She gripped her violin case handle [and] began walking to her favourite violin shop, Irwin Violins.

#3 "WHAT! IT MIGHT TAKE 8 DAYS? BUT THE CONCERT IS IN 7 DAYS!" Joanne shrieked, furiously frowning. She couldn't believe her ears. Joanne continued to panic, shooting Irwin with ~~bullet~~ [bullets] of questions. At last, she calmed down, looked Irwin dead serious in the eyes [and] said, "Okay[ay], I know you are probably stressed [—] because of me [—] but can you please try to get it done in 3 days? I need 4 days to get used to the violin, so please?" Irwin raised his eyebrow, before sighing and agreeing. "BUT Miss Huey, I may not be able to make it come by 3 days." Joanne gasped as if she was having a stroke. "Hahahaha! It might take 2 days. I was joking!" he laughed [.] "I'll have ~~to~~ [it ready for] you in around 3 days, hopefully." Joanne smiled. Irwin was always very funny. They started talking about how much time Irwin would have. In the end, they both decided that Irwin would change the strings and the bow hairs as Joanne had to teach.

Joanne began walking away towards the school. It was 8 ~~am~~ [a.m.], and she was already late. "Oh no! I'm late! Oh well [—] ~~My~~ [my] first lesson is at 8:30... ~~No~~ [no] big deal!" Joanne whispered [.] "If I walk a bit faster, I should be there by 8:25. Wait, it's already 8:05? I need to walk even faster." Joanne continued, hurrying ~~while still being cautious~~ [whilst remaining cautious]. After 30 minutes, Joanne was running ~~for~~ [out of] time. Her first lesson was ~~her~~ [with her] best student, who also had a concert the next day. Joanne knew ~~if~~ [that if] she was any later, she would be fired, or at least that her student would not be successful the next day. Fortunately, Joanne made it ~~one~~ [on] time. But when she went to her classroom, her student was not there. Instead, on her desk, ~~read~~ [lay] a note:

Dear Miss Huey,

You are late, so I left to go to Irwin ~~violins~~ [Violins] as that is where I expect you to be.

I left this here to let you know, as on Mondays you usually travel by car.

If we don't have a lesson, I will be pleased to have one either tomorrow at

7:00 ~~am~~ [a.m.] or today at 4:00 ~~pm~~ [p.m.]. – Lucy Monostrosi

Joanne sighed. How could this get any worse? Joanne sat at her desk and spun on her chair, checking her emails and messages. She read one ~~against~~ [from] her siblings, Kylie and Luca. Kylie said: † ["I heard you were late for your violin lesson with Lucy. Don't ask [—] her mother, my employee [] told me. How can you nail a full concert if you can't even go to your lesson on time [?"] Luca replied: ~~Really? That is bad. But honestly, how?~~ ["Really? That's bad. But honestly, how?"] Joanne felt tears ~~weld~~ [well] ~~at~~ [in] her eyes. They were supposed to support her, always have her back, never give up on her. But now they didn't. Days went by. Joanne never was late for a single lesson, nor did she reply to them. Now her phone was blowing up with messages from Luca and Kylie asking her what was wrong. ~~They already know. They started it, she~~ [They already know. They started it, she] thought, anger building up ~~in~~ [inside] her. At last, her violin was ready [.] ~~she~~ [She] had practised for 18.5 hours [and] and her concert was in ~~a~~ [an] hour.

Joanne sat on a chair behind grand curtains, trembling. Not with fear, but ~~an~~ [with an] urge to play a song ringing in her head. A new song, an improvisation telling her story and how she was. ~~A~~ [An] hour went by. It was finally ~~the~~ [] time to show her skills. Joanne walked onto the stage. She gave her intro and started playing what her heart called ~~to play~~ [her to play]. Everyone was amazed. Especially Luca and Kylie, who sat there gaping at ~~Joannes~~ [Joanne's] beautiful sound. "I'm just playing what I am now, and no one can change that [,"] ~~Joanne~~ [she] thought. Suddenly, something came to mind. It was now like the violin was speaking to her as she played. "I told you. I gave you hope. Now we can both shine together," it whispered. Once a silent voice in an attic, broken on the inside, now a shining star with a master to play with ~~it~~ []. It wasn't just a journey for Joanne [:] it was also for the violin.