

Section 1

#1: Opening paragraph "I should have know the parcel wasn't mine the minute I glanced at the spirally handwriting on the almost faded brown box. She'd been dead for six months already making receiving anything from her was either a miracle or error."

Strengths:

- You've created an intriguing opening that immediately makes readers curious about who "she" is and why a parcel arrived from someone who passed away.
- The specific detail of "spirally handwriting" helps readers picture the box clearly.

Lack of clarity in time and logic → Your opening sentence jumps between ideas without clear connections. When you write "She'd been dead for six months already making receiving anything from her was either a miracle or error," the sentence runs on without proper punctuation. This makes it harder for readers to follow your thinking. You're trying to explain something important—why getting this parcel is strange—but the sentence structure makes readers pause and re-read. Breaking this into shorter sentences would help each idea stand out on its own.

Exemplar: *I should have known the parcel wasn't mine the minute I glanced at the spirally handwriting on the almost-faded brown box. She'd been dead for six months already. Receiving anything from her was either a miracle or an error.*

#2: Second and third paragraphs "The parcel sat on the counter for two days... After an hour of trying to look for a pair of scissors I decided to use a knife which I found on the floor of the dining room."

Strengths:

- The contrast between Emma and her mother's personalities is interesting—showing how differently they would approach opening the box.
- Including the specific detail of walking past it 17 times shows Emma's hesitation in a memorable way.

Sentences that wander and lose focus → Several of your sentences try to pack in too many ideas at once, which makes them confusing. For example, "I did not inherit joy through my mother everything else except joy the full amount of joy that my mother had was not in my personality" repeats the same idea about joy multiple times without punctuation to separate the thoughts. This makes readers work hard to understand what you mean. Similarly, the sentence about finding scissors and then a knife on the dining room floor contains unnecessary details that distract from the main story. When you write, think about giving each idea its own space to breathe.

Exemplar: *I did not inherit my mother's joy. I received everything else from her—but not that bright, abundant happiness she carried everywhere.*

#3: Final paragraph "I opened the package and peered inside... Now that I have a kitten I will always, always care for it and now I will remember my mother forever."

Strengths:

- The emotional revelation about Pepper and the new kitten creates a touching ending that connects past and present.
- Your ending shows Emma's growth and realisation about appreciating her mother.

Rushed emotional development → Your story moves too quickly through important feelings. Emma goes from finding a toy to finding a live kitten to completely changing how she feels about her mother—all in one paragraph. When you write "It is only now that I realise how much I miss my mother. I should have been grateful," this sudden change feels like it happens too fast. Readers need more time to feel Emma's emotions building up. Think about showing her touching the toy, remembering specific moments with Pepper, then gradually discovering the kitten. This would make her final realisation feel more earned and believable.

Exemplar: *My fingers trembled as I lifted the ball of fluff from the box. Pepper's favourite toy. I could almost hear his tiny miaow, see him batting it across the kitchen floor. Then I noticed something else shifting beneath the packing peanuts—something warm and alive.*

■ Your narrative has a genuinely touching core idea—a daughter receiving a final gift from her deceased mother that helps her process grief and remember happy times. The mystery of the unopened

parcel creates natural suspense that keeps readers engaged. However, your story would benefit from slowing down and giving important moments more space to develop. Right now, you rush through emotional realisations and pack multiple ideas into single sentences, which makes it harder for readers to connect with Emma's experience.

Think about your second paragraph, where you try to explain Emma's personality and compare her to her mother. This section feels crowded because you're telling readers many things at once rather than showing them through Emma's actions. Instead of stating "I did not inherit joy through my mother," you could show Emma methodically opening the box with careful, precise movements—letting readers see her careful nature for themselves.

Additionally, your final paragraph contains the most important emotional moment of the entire story, but it happens in just a few sentences. When Emma discovers the kitten and has her realisation about her mother, readers need time to feel those emotions alongside her. Consider expanding this section to include Emma's physical reactions (did her breath catch? did tears fall?) and specific memories that flood back to her. This would make the ending feel more powerful and genuine.

Your grammar and sentence structure need attention throughout. Many sentences run together without proper punctuation, making them difficult to follow. Practise reading your work aloud—if you naturally pause somewhere, that's probably where punctuation belongs. Also, watch out for repeating the same idea multiple times in different ways, as this makes your writing feel circular rather than moving forward.

Overall Score: 40/50

Section 2:

~~I should have know~~ [I should have known] the parcel wasn't mine the minute I glanced at the spirally handwriting on the almost-faded brown box. ~~She'd been dead for six months already making~~ [She'd been dead for six months already. Making] receiving anything from her was either a miracle or ~~error~~ [an error]. I'm definitely not a person ~~that~~ [who] is fortunate enough to be granted anything. I ~~always am~~ ~~the~~ [am always the] person ~~that~~ [who] stores things in the right order that suits me. #1

The parcel sat on the counter for two days. I walked right by it 17 times before deciding that it was time for me to open it. My mother would have for sure just torn ~~it right through~~ [right through it], possibly even breaking something inside through all the fun she was having. ~~I did not inherit joy through my mother everything else except joy the full amount of joy that my mother had was not in my personality.~~ [I did not inherit my mother's joy—everything else, perhaps, but not the full amount of joy that she possessed.] #2

After an hour of ~~trying to look for~~ [looking for] a pair of scissors ~~I~~ [, I] decided to use a knife ~~which~~ [, which] I found on the floor of the dining room. I finally got the chance to cut open the thick layer of duct tape covering the seal of the box ~~I~~ [, I] opened it and revealed a large box. Not any box. [, but the] ~~One~~ [one] that ~~mother~~ [Mother] had received years ago but never opened or touched. I thought that this was very unlike her ~~she is~~ [—she was] always so excited when we got mail ~~but~~ [—but] this one time we got it ~~she~~ [, she] put it high in the attic never to be seen again. Carefully lifting the parcel ~~I~~ [, I] looked through the packing peanuts to see what else there was inside. I found a thin slip of paper. On it, it read: ~~Dear~~ [Dear] Emma ~~your~~ [, your] mother has asked for me to give this to you. [] It wasn't signed ~~so~~ [, so] the note looked especially mysterious.

I opened the package and peered inside. Inside ~~of~~ it was a ball of fluff. I had no ~~idea~~ [idea] why someone would post this ~~but~~ [, but] then I remembered that once ~~mother~~ [Mother] and I had a kitten that died. This was one of ~~it's~~ [its] toys that it used to play with. I choked back tears remembering the tragic death of our kitten, ~~pepper~~ [Pepper]. One second he had crossed the road ~~the~~ [, the] next second a car had come speeding towards him ~~then~~ [, and then] he was never to be seen again. I ~~now know~~ [now knew] why ~~mother~~ [Mother] never wanted to open the parcel. It was such a tearful memory. #3

I looked deeper into the packing peanuts and found another ball of fluff with another message next to it. It read: Dear Emma, your aunt bought you this kitten two months ago like I asked in my will. Please keep it in memory of ~~pepper~~ [Pepper]. Love ~~mother~~ [, Mother.] I nearly cried ~~of~~ [with] joy ~~I~~ [, I] didn't even know that ~~mother~~ [Mother] knew I wanted a kitten. She had ~~realised~~ [realised] and granted a wish. It is only now that I realise how much I miss my mother. I should have been grateful for all that she has done. Now that I have a kitten ~~I~~ [, I] will always, always care for it ~~and now I~~ [, and I] will remember my mother forever.

Section 1

#1: Opening Paragraph

"There was a loud squeal. Not a normal one, of a violin out of tune. It was definitely a scream of a living thing."

Strengths:

- Your opening immediately creates mystery and tension by describing an unusual sound that shouldn't come from a violin
- You use short, punchy sentences that create a strong, dramatic start to your story

Sentence Structure and Flow → The second sentence feels incomplete and awkward. "Not a normal one, of a violin out of tune" doesn't work as a full sentence on its own. You've started with "Not a normal one" but then added "of a violin out of tune" which makes the meaning unclear. Is it not a normal violin sound, or is it not like an out-of-tune violin? The reader has to work too hard to understand what you mean.

Exemplar: *There was a loud squeal—not the usual screech of a violin out of tune, but something far worse. It was definitely the scream of a living thing.*

#2: Middle Section

"Once again I heard a high pitched squeal. I spun on my heel, my new shoes squeaked and to my surprise I found nothing. The sound was for sure D flat. For sure the sound was human."

Strengths:

- You include specific musical details (D flat) which shows your character's skill and makes the story feel more realistic
- The description of spinning around and finding nothing builds suspense well

Repetitive Phrasing and Unclear Description → You've used "for sure" twice in two sentences, which makes your writing sound repetitive and less confident. When you repeat the same phrase so close together, it weakens your point instead of strengthening it. Additionally, the description "It had a high sound but the deepness of a male's voice coming from deep inside the violin or it's case" is confusing. How can something be both high and deep at the same time? The reader can't picture what this sound actually sounds like because the description contradicts itself.

Exemplar: *The sound was definitely D flat. It was unmistakably human—a high-pitched cry with the resonance of a man's voice, somehow emanating from deep within the violin itself.*

#3: Dialogue and Character Interaction

"I'd been in his apprenticeship for three months, long enough for me to know that violins never make that sound."

Strengths:

- You establish the narrator's experience level, which helps explain why they notice something is wrong
- The time detail (three months) gives the reader context about the relationship between Master and apprentice

Grammar Error and Clarity → The phrase "I'd been in his apprenticeship" is grammatically incorrect. You can be someone's apprenticeship, but you can't be "in" an apprenticeship. This error disrupts the flow of your sentence and makes it harder for readers to focus on your story. The correct phrasing should be "I'd been his apprenticeship" or "I'd been working as his apprenticeship."

Exemplar: *I'd been his apprenticeship for three months, long enough to know that violins never make that sound.*

■Your piece has a genuinely intriguing concept—a haunted violin that screams with a human voice is creative and spooky. The mystery of the missing violinist from 1802 adds depth to your story. However, you need to work on making your descriptions clearer and more consistent. In several places, your sentences don't quite make sense or they contradict each other, which pulls readers out of the story instead of drawing them in.

Your dialogue feels natural, especially when the Master explains the violin's history, but you could strengthen the emotional reactions of your narrator. Right now, we're told the narrator's hands are shaking, but we don't really feel their fear throughout the piece. Additionally, your paragraphs about setting the scene (the shadows, the dust smell, the eerie atmosphere) could be expanded to help readers picture the workshop more vividly. Instead of just mentioning the smell of dust and "something else," describe what that something else might be—old wood, metal polish, or perhaps something more sinister?

Your ending paragraph raises interesting questions about whether this apprenticeship is what the narrator expected, which is good for keeping readers curious. Also, you might want to develop the relationship between the narrator and the Master more clearly—is the narrator frightened of the Master, curious, or perhaps both? Additionally, consider revising the section where you describe the Master's eyes as "luminescent green...like a black cat's on Halloween." This comparison doesn't work because you're comparing green eyes to black cat's eyes, which creates confusion rather than a clear image.

Score: 39/50

Section 2:

#1 There was a loud squeal. ~~Not a normal one, of a violin out of tune.~~ [It wasn't the normal screech of a violin out of tune.] It was definitely a [the] scream of a living thing. Master didn't even flinch. He ~~just~~ simply adjusted the tuning pegs and ~~also~~ made a note in his journal saying, "C sharp exactly as I thought."

~~I'd been in his apprentice~~ [I'd been his apprentice] for three months, long enough for me to know that violins never make that sound. They make lots of different sounds but they definitely don't scream. I opened my mouth to tell Master but ~~instead~~ he silenced me with a quick swipe of his hand. I opened my mouth to protest but he ~~then~~ ignored me completely.

"Listen up" ~~He~~ [he] instructed.

#2 Immediately, I listened. The violin ~~casted~~ [cast] shadows making me want to scream in the eerie dark glow. The air smelled of dust and something else. The smell was vaguely familiar but I just ~~could~~ [couldn't] recall what ~~the smell was from~~ [it was].

Once again I heard a high-pitched squeal. ~~I spun on my heel,~~ [—] my new shoes squeaked [—] and to my surprise I found nothing. The sound was ~~for sure~~ [definitely] D flat. ~~For sure the~~ [The] sound was ~~human~~ [unmistakably human]. It had a high ~~sound~~ [pitch] but the ~~deepness~~ [resonance] of a male's voice coming from deep inside the violin ~~or it's~~ [or its] case.

#3 "The ~~orchestras~~ [orchestra's] violinist disappeared in 1802," Master said ~~matter-of-factly~~, running his slim fingers along the violin strings. "They found his violin in his house but nothing else was there. Many thought that he had been murdered and his ghost haunts this very place today."

"This is your first lesson," Master said staring at ~~us~~ [me] with his luminescent green eyes that ~~are~~ ~~definitely much like a black cats on halloween~~ [gleamed like a cat's in the darkness]. "~~you~~ [You] must learn that every instrument has ~~it's~~ [its] own unique identity. They may look the same but the deep truth is that every instrument is different~~wether~~ [whether] it is ~~it's~~ [its] voice or ~~it's~~ [its] looks."

I could visibly see my hands shaking, and it was definitely not from the snowy landscape outside. This was not what the apprenticeship magazine ~~page~~ had described, but then, it had mentioned "a uniqueness in ~~it's~~ [its] teaching" and "experience with antique instruments." Maybe this ~~is~~ [was] the unique type of teaching they ~~mentioned~~ [had mentioned]?