

Section 1

#1: "When I saw the package I should have known it didn't belong in my hands as soon as I saw my mother's sloppy cursive handwriting. She had been dead for six months, which made receiving mail from her either some sort of error or an interesting phenomenon."

Strengths:

- You've created an immediate hook that makes readers want to continue. The mystery of receiving mail from someone who has passed away is compelling.
- Your opening sentence establishes the emotional weight of the situation efficiently.

Repetitive sentence opening → You begin with "When I saw the package" and then repeat "as soon as I saw" in the same sentence, which creates unnecessary wordiness. This makes the opening less punchy than it could be. The phrase "I should have known it didn't belong in my hands" also feels vague—what specifically should the character have known? Tightening this would strengthen your opening considerably.

Exemplar: *As soon as I recognised my mother's sloppy cursive handwriting on the package, I should have left it unopened.*

#2: "Normally, miracles like this don't occur when I'm around, because I'm the type of person who doesn't eat something a minute over the expiry date, and keeps their house spotless and organised. I even keep all my important files in folders labeled in order of the dates I obtained them."

Strengths:

- You're establishing character traits clearly, which helps readers understand your narrator's personality.

Disconnected character description → The link between being organised and not experiencing miracles isn't clear or logical. Why would keeping a clean house prevent miracles? This connection feels forced rather than natural. The examples you provide (expiry dates, spotless house, organised files) tell

us about the character's habits, but they don't show us how these habits relate to the package or the emotional situation. Your writing would be stronger if you connected the character's personality more directly to their reaction to receiving the package.

Exemplar: *I don't believe in miracles, and my life reflects that practical mindset—everything has its place, every expiry date matters, every file sits in chronological order.*

#3: "After I carefully ripped open the plastic sealing with my hands, I found a delicate map. However it was not regular, it was an intricately illustrated map, with symbols in the corners of the parchment paper. A rose that had floral patterns carved in its thorns, an octopus with tentacles that pointed in the directions of a compass. and some seaweed curled across the borders of the map."

Strengths:

- Your descriptive details about the map's illustrations are vivid and help readers visualise what the character is seeing.
- The list of symbols creates intrigue about what the map might mean.

Fragmented and unclear descriptions → Your sentences are choppy and contain several grammar errors that interrupt the flow. You write "a found" instead of "I found," and "it's" instead of "its." The phrase "However it was not regular" is vague—what makes a map "regular"? Your description also lacks smooth transitions between ideas. The sentence about the rose is incomplete (beginning with "A rose that had..."), and you use "and" at the start of the final phrase without proper capitalisation. These technical issues distract from your otherwise interesting imagery.

Exemplar: *Inside, I found an intricately illustrated map on parchment paper, adorned with mysterious symbols: a rose with floral patterns carved into its thorns, an octopus whose tentacles pointed like compass directions, and seaweed curling across the borders.*

■ Your piece shows promise in creating an intriguing mystery and establishing a clear narrator's voice. The contrast between your organised, practical character and the magical element of receiving a package from beyond is a strong foundation for a story. However, your writing needs more focus on connecting ideas smoothly and showing rather than telling. When you describe your character as

someone who "doesn't eat something a minute over the expiry date," you're listing traits rather than weaving them into the story naturally. Try showing your character's personality through their actions and reactions to the package instead. Additionally, your piece would benefit from smoother sentence construction—many of your ideas are interrupted by grammar issues or awkward phrasing that breaks the reading flow. The map description is visually interesting, but the choppy sentences prevent readers from fully appreciating the imagery. Work on combining related ideas into flowing sentences rather than breaking them into fragments. Also, consider developing the emotional aspect more deeply—how does receiving this package actually make your character feel? You mention thinking about your mother, but we need more insight into the character's emotional state. Lastly, check your work carefully for basic errors like "a found" instead of "I found," as these mistakes pull readers out of your story.

Overall Score: 40/50

Section 2:

~~When I saw the package I should have known it didn't belong in my hands as soon as I saw~~ [#1 As soon as I recognised] my mother's sloppy cursive handwriting ~~on the package, I should have left it unopened.~~ She had been dead for six months, which made receiving mail from her either some sort of error or an interesting phenomenon. ~~Normally, miracles like this don't occur when I'm around, because I'm the type of person who doesn't eat something a minute over the expiry date, and keeps their house spotless and organized~~ [#2 I don't believe in miracles, and my life reflects that practical mindset—I don't eat anything a minute past the expiry date, and I keep my house spotless and organised]. I even keep all my important files in folders ~~labeled~~ [labelled] in order of the dates I obtained them.

The package lay underneath my table waiting to be opened for hours. I made seven laps of laundry before I thought of opening the parcel. I thought of my mother, who would have ripped it open as soon as she saw it in the mail. The wrappers would be strewn across the kitchen counter until I came home and put them in the bin. I could imagine the smirk on her face as she scattered everything everywhere like a stray dog. I know that I was never like my mother. I may have gained her ability to

think very logically, and her hazelnut brown hair, but not her capability to bring joy into every room she stepped into.

~~After I carefully ripped open the plastic sealing with my hands, I found a delicate map. However it was not regular, it was an intricately illustrated map, with symbols in the corners of the parchment paper. A rose that had floral patterns carved in its thorns, an octopus with tentacles that pointed in the directions of a compass, and some seaweed curled across the borders of the map.~~ [3 After I carefully ripped open the plastic sealing with my hands, I found a delicate map inside. It wasn't an ordinary map—it was intricately illustrated with symbols in the corners of the parchment paper: a rose with floral patterns carved into its thorns, an octopus whose tentacles pointed like compass directions, and seaweed curling across the borders.] I traced my fingers across the soft paper, some ~~patched~~ [patches] lumpy which felt like paper once dipped in water.

Section 1

#1: "I winced as a high-pitched scream echoed through the little room which we were sitting in."

Strengths:

- Your opening grabs attention immediately with a mysterious sound that makes readers want to know more
- You've created a sense of unease right from the start, which fits well with the strange events that follow

Unclear Description → The phrase "little room which we were sitting in" feels clumsy and doesn't flow smoothly. The word "little" doesn't tell us much about the space—is it cramped? Cosy? Dark? When you write "which we were sitting in," it makes the sentence longer than it needs to be. You could make this opening stronger by showing us more about the room itself or by making the sentence flow more naturally.

Exemplar: *I winced as a high-pitched scream echoed through the cramped workshop where we sat.*

#2: "This wasn't a usual out of pitched instrument for it war it sounded like a human, paper thin and lacking that musical tingle which you feel after hearing a wrong note being played."

Strengths:

- You're trying to explain the difference between a normal instrument sound and this strange scream, which shows good thinking about how to describe something unusual
- The phrase "paper thin" is an interesting way to describe the quality of the sound

Confusing Sentence Structure → This sentence is very hard to follow because it tries to say too many things at once. The phrase "out of pitched instrument for it war it sounded" contains errors that break up the flow. Your readers might have to read this sentence several times to understand what you mean. When you write "that musical tingle which you feel after hearing a wrong note," you're describing a feeling that might not be clear to everyone. Breaking this into shorter, clearer sentences would help your readers understand exactly what makes this scream different from normal instrument sounds.

Exemplar: *This wasn't the usual sound of an out-of-tune instrument. It sounded human—paper-thin and lacking the musical quality you'd expect even from a wrong note.*

#3: "I turned to face him, ready to state my explanation, but I barely started talking before he stuck his finger in front of my mouth, signalling me to shut up."

Strengths:

- You've created tension between the two characters, showing that the master knows something the narrator doesn't
- The action of putting a finger up is a clear, visual way to show the master wants silence

Unclear Character Motivation → When you write "ready to state my explanation," it's confusing because we don't know what explanation the narrator wants to give. Has the narrator figured something out already? Does the narrator just want to complain about the noise? This makes it difficult for readers to follow what's happening in the scene. Your character seems to have an

explanation, but you haven't shown us what they're thinking or what they've noticed that would lead to this explanation.

Exemplar: *I turned to face him, ready to protest that organs don't scream, but he stuck his finger in front of my mouth, signalling me to be quiet.*

■ Your piece has an intriguing mystery at its centre—a screaming organ in a cathedral is a brilliant concept that could lead to a really engaging story. However, your writing would benefit from clearer explanations and smoother sentences. Right now, some of your ideas get tangled up in complicated phrasing, which makes it harder for readers to stay engaged with the strange events you're describing. You have good instincts about creating atmosphere and tension, but you need to work on making each sentence say exactly what you mean without extra words getting in the way.

One major area to strengthen is helping readers understand what your narrator is thinking and feeling at each moment. In your opening paragraph, for example, you mention that the narrator is ready to give an explanation, but we never learn what that explanation is. This leaves a gap in the story. Additionally, you could improve the second paragraph by giving us more specific details about what the narrator observes. Instead of telling us the roof "loomed over me, as if questioning my ability," you might describe what the narrator actually sees or feels in that moment. Your descriptions sometimes rely on phrases that sound good but don't give us concrete information. Focus on showing us exactly what's happening—what does the organ look like? What expression does the master have on his face? These specific details will make your writing come alive and help readers feel like they're right there in that cathedral workshop with your characters.

Overall Score: 39/50

Section 2:

#1 → I winced as a high-pitched scream echoed through the ~~little room which we were sitting in~~ [cramped workshop where we sat]. I stared at the pipe. #2 → ~~This wasn't a usual out of pitched instrument for it war it sounded like a human~~ [This wasn't the usual sound of an out-of-tune

instrument—it sounded human], paper thin and lacking that musical tingle which you feel after hearing a wrong note being played. My master didn't even move; he just tuned the organ and sighed. "D#, this usually happens, don't worry," his strained voice did not reassure me.

I had been working for him for almost a term which is long enough to know that no instruments scream. Alright, they occasionally produce noises that sound like dying crows. #3 → I turned to face him, ready to ~~state my explanation~~ [protest that organs don't scream], but I barely started talking before he stuck his finger in front of my mouth, signalling me to shut up. I listened for a few seconds, but nothing came. I sat up straight, ready to start speaking again, but another scream interrupted my sentence. This time I was surer of it. This was definitely human and was coming from the old, out-of-tune organ sitting in front of me. The roof of the great cathedral loomed over me, as if questioning my ability to interpret musical instruments. My master glanced at me, gesturing ~~me~~ [for me] to guess what happened with this ancient, dusty organ.