

Sample Copyedit

Walking through the canopied dimness, the trees are denser than I

Modifier error. Missing the true subject – the trees aren't walking.

remember. I find a lush spot under a tree and sit down to rest a while.

Redundant.

Butterflies criss-crossing the dusky air as the sun sets, and I find myself

Wrong form of verb.

smiling. Reflecting on the afternoon and all the good things in my life

Comma to avoid creating a hanging phrase.

; Kate, my new job. Not to mention having the cabin to escape to

Incorrect use of semicolon. Use an en dash or colon (read more on [semicolons](#)).

when city life gets too much. Being a few hundred kilometres from my

Incorrect verb tense.

parents doesn't hurt either.

Run on sentence. Use semicolon/full stop.

I hear Toby come running up to me, tired of sniffing for rabbits

and beetles. I'm still not sure about him; I've never owned a dog

Earlier referred to as "Kate".

before, but Jade refuses to give him up, so... his here we are. I guess

Insert space before ellipsis.

he's kind of cute with those piggy-like ears and whiskery face, He

Incorrect word.

nuzzles my leg, wanting a pat. I ignore him, but he insists.

"Yeah, okay. I'm not there yet, pal."

Extra space

He trots off again, then stops a few metres feet away and cocks his

Metric for consistency.

head. It's now I hear what's has distracted him – the deep thud of hoofs

Apostrophe missing on contraction.

of terfturf.

Contraction for casual tone.

I jump to my feet, but the soldiers are upon me before I get a

Homonym error.

chance to run. I'd only break an ankle in the tangle of the undergrowth

anyway. I resign myself to their scrutiny.

"Ankle" and "tangle" create assonance (rhyming), which might distract the reader.

"What have we here?!" the first guard says.

Question mark. Use exclamation marks sparingly.

I squint up at him, taking in his appearance. "Just out for a stroll,

sir." I emphasize emphasise the "sir".

Continuity: earlier you referred to soldiers.

"Name?"

American spelling.

"Jo Carter."

"ID?" he asks.

Replace single quote with double.

As I reach for my wallet in my back pocket, the second soldier

Spelling.

soldier puts his hand on his gun. I instantly freeze. "Just reaching for

my ID." I tell them.

Unnecessary adverb.

You don't need a dialogue tag when it's obvious which character is talking.