

I was waiting ~~...~~ ~~again~~. I couldn't say I liked waiting, though if I had to, I suppose

Comment [J1]: I think this statement comes out more strongly by breaking it out into a separate sentence by itself, plus it gets rid of an ellipsis, which we've discussed.

Bremerhaven was a nice enough place ~~to do it~~. The food was good, the people genial, and the

Comment [J2]: This is just a nit-picky thing, but for proper grammar usage, you're supposed to use what are called "directional" apostrophes, as opposed to the non-directional ones. If you look at them, you can see the difference.

landscape stunning. A few decades prior, the town looked like no more than an average German

Comment [J3]: This needs an explanatory statement at the end: a nice enough place to what?

coastal town. But now, even in this cool climate, Bremerhaven had bloomed into ~~the~~ a thriving,

Comment [J4]: What does this look like? Some specifics details here would really help your readers visualize the change from small town to thriving airport, especially since Bremerhaven is a real city. Also, how would Krys know what the town looked like a few decades ago? Does she know the history of the town?

bustling airport. It was most evident from where I sat.

Comment [J5]: What do you mean by this statement? What does the cool climate have to do with Bremerhaven becoming busy?

Twenty stories high, on the top-most dock of one of Bremerhaven's famous red docking

Comment [J6]: Why is this called an "airport" now instead of an "airport" when the word "air" remains in the names of the aircraft (airship, heavier-than-air craft, etc.)? If you're going to change the name of something, you should have a very good explanation for why the name changed.

towers, I had a clear view of the city ~~twenty stories below me~~. Airships, ~~and~~ solid Zeppelins, and

Comment [J7]: Again, be specific. How is this evident to Krys? Use a few specific details.

heavier-than-air craft danced and dodged through the antiquated skyline as though someone ~~were was~~

Comment [J8]: Do you mean "deck" here?

guiding them with invisible strings. A sleepy river wove its way through the bustling streets, emptying

Comment [J9]: If you take out the interrupting phrase in this sentence (the part surrounded by commas), it would read, "Twenty stories high, I had a clear view of the city," which doesn't exactly make clear sense. Putting this information here instead is less awkward and helps readers visualize a little better.

into the glistening ocean beyond.

Comment [J10]: What is an airship? What is a solid zeppelin? What are heavier-than-air craft? The first few chapters of a book, the reader expects to have the universe of the story explained to them, so make sure you don't assume that your readers already know what an airship, etc., are. Also, the ...

It was quite pretty. I hated to leave, especially because the place reminded me so much of my

Comment [J11]: What makes the skyline antiquated?

father's residence house back in England. He lived somewhere near Gillingham with his new wife

Comment [J12]: This statement is not very helpful to the readers. "Quite pretty" is not very descriptive and does not help us to understand Kr...

and new family. I'd only been there once, on holiday, but it looked something like this.

Comment [J13]: Why "residence"? It sounds like too formal of a word to me, personally, though I understand why you used it. If you want to make ...

I sighed deeply, drinking my tea as I watched the skyline and waited. Celeste was probably

Comment [J14]: This is a rather British statement. Is she English? If so, you'll want to push that in her narrative voice and dialogue, though ne...

giving him trouble again. Well, not really Celeste, per se. One of her mini-AI, I'd so fondly

Comment [J15]: It would be helpful if you mentioned what Celeste is here when you first introduce her rather than waiting until the end of t...

dubbed flexies, was probably to blame. Those little things had a habit of referring to Jel'Dhen as a

Comment [J16]: What are these? You never really explain of describe them. Also, you would need to call them mini AI somethings, such as AI ...

"jerk-faced meat-bag" and purposefully seizing the systems whenever I left the WindSong in his hands.

Comment [J17]: The other airship you're writing about, *The Helmstaar*, includes the "the" as part of the title, but here, you don't include it as a part of ...

Celeste, on the other hand, had an unnatural fondness for Jel'Dhen that bordered on the obsessive. Being an Artificial Intelligence of Jel'Dhen's own design, I suppose Celeste just wanted to meet her maker in the worst way.

Comment [J18]: Why use the abbreviation (AI) when describing the flexies but write out the words (artificial intelligence) here? If you're going to define the acronym, do it when it first appears (so, the sentence would read, "One of her mini AI (artificial intelligence), I'd..."). Also, this has the same problem as the first mention of AI. Celeste would be an artificial intelligence something, such as cyborg, or something like that.

I put down my tea cup down with a slight clink and attempted to flag down the waiter. He spotted me, but seemed rather busy. I gestured that I didn't mind waiting and turned back to the tea cup.

Comment [J19]: Whenever you can avoid the word "slight," do so. It is better to definitely say that something happened than to say it only slightly happened.

Comment [J20]: What was he doing that made him seem busy? Be specific.

Comment [J21]: What does this look like? Describe it.

It seemed waiting was just about all I did these days.

A pair of soft work gloves sat on the table, eying me. They, too, waited patiently, though I'm afraid that they looked all too upset just sitting there. Poor things. I looked at my hands. They weren't exactly cold, not really, but I didn't exactly love showing off the starburst starburst scar on my right palm either. I put on the gloves.

Comment [J22]: Personifying the gloves like this makes it seem like they're actually alive and animate. Since this is a new universe, your readers won't know what to think. If the gloves are "alive," then make that clear by explaining that clearly. If they aren't, then find a way to explain this that does not personify the gloves, such as by saying, "Though they were just sitting there, it felt to me like they too were waiting," or something like that.

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Comment [J23]: The emphasis created by the italics isn't really necessary. Whenever possible, as a writer, you should try to avoid relying on formatting such as italics, capitalizing all the letters, underlining, etc. to create emphasis. As with ellipses, instead, try to write the descriptions in a way that implies that emphasis is added, or that someone is shouting, or whatever. It forces you to write with more detail, and it's more appealing to your readers. Or, in places like this, take a moment to gauge whether or not the emphasis is even necessary.

During the process As I did so, I took note of the hash marks on my right forearm. My lip quivered slightly and I covered that up as well, with a tug of my sleeve. Satisfied that all traces of that memory were successfully hidden, I finished my tea and waited.

Comment [J24]: This seems a little too clinical-sounding to me. Make sure to keep your character's voice in the narrative and to say things the way the character would say them.

Comment [J25]: I know this wasn't your intention, but this makes Krys seem weak to me, and I know she isn't. I strongly suggest you find a better way to convey that she has bad memories associated with these scars, such as by making her grimace or wince or something instead.

It didn't bother me, the waiting. I'd been doing it for the majority of the trip waiting for the hotel room, waiting for service at the tables, and waiting for the response from our potential contract.

Comment [J26]: You might benefit from becoming more familiar with what's called an em dash. They can be used in a very similar way to how you use ellipsis in the narrative. I've put some information on your style sheet on all the different ways an em dash can be used.

On second thought, I hated waiting, and I hated all of Bremerhaven for it. I unbraided and

Comment [J27]: It's always best to complete thoughts whenever it's appropriate to do so rather than leave your reader hanging. Sometimes, this is the effect you want, but in this case, there is not much here for the reader to ponder over, and it's not really important for the reader to spend time thinking about other ways she could have been waiting.

~~rebraided~~ braided my long auburn hair in frustration.

Comment [J28]: *Rebraided* is actually not a real word. The word *braided* conveys the intended image, and it is an actual word.

And now, I was waiting on Jel'Dhen. Wasn't it enough that he had to take the adventure out of this beautiful city by *not* coming with me? That he, instead, went on an excursion to Italy *without* me?

Did he really have to take so long picking me up, ~~as well~~ too?

Comment [J29]: Again, try to keep character voice consistent. The less formal "too" works better for Kry's than the more formal "as well."

~~It was,~~ naturally, at the same moment ~~of~~ these thoughts ~~entering~~ were running through my head, ~~that~~ a vast canvas envelope rose up beside my table. The wall of ropes and nets and canvas continued to ascend until the top deck of my beautiful ~~duel~~ dual-hulled ship sat level with the dock.

Comment [J30]: My first reaction when I read this was, "How was an envelope rising up beside her table?" thinking about a mailing envelope. I'd suggest either describing what the "envelope" is or using a different word to describe it to increase clarity.

Our ship, I reminded myself. *It's* our *ship*.

Again, I called over the waiter. He responded with a smile and a wave and finally came to my table. He was a lean boy, no more than sixteen years old, and was obviously very flustered. I asked him for my check in halted German. He obliged, and I handed him the sum plus a hefty tip.

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He needs it, I convinced myself. *He's probably working through school.* The play didn't work. I still knew ~~that~~ I shouldn't have paid him ~~that so~~ much for ~~so~~ thoroughly ignoring me.

Comment [J31]: Explain what this play was: "My attempt to justify overpaying didn't work."

Then I saw him, my Jel'Dhen in all his flyboy swagger. He stood at just over two meters and was built like a Greek hero. And yet, he didn't quite look the part of a Greek hero. His hair stuck out in all directions around a set of goggles he had fused with a set of wrap-around headphones.

Comment [J32]: In many cases, you can remove the word "that" from your sentences. It helps streamline your writing and cuts out unnecessary words.

Comment [J33]: Since your primary audience is likely to be Americans, you'll want to change this to from the metric system to the United States customary units system of measurement. If Kry's is British, it would make sense to leave this in, but have her convert these meters into feet and inches so your readers can visualize this.

Comment [J34]: What color?

He'd invented them back at the Academy, and they'd become quite the fashion among our friends,

Comment [J35]: Don't capitalize this unless referring to a specific academy by name.

but he always kept his originals on him. His good luck charm, he called them.

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Comment [J36]: Since this is not a private thought from Krys, there is no reason it needs to be in italics.

He wore his usual white shirt sleeves rolled up under his black and teal work vest.

Large, clunky boots, and cargo pants covered his lower extremities. A bracer I'd made him,

Comment [J37]: "Large" and "clunky" doesn't really create a very clear image of what his boots look like. What might help is if you find a picture online of what his boots might look like and then describe them in detail. Are they a specific style of boot? Is there anything distinctive about them?

customized with a storage pouch for his knife, completed the ensemble.

Comment [J38]: Again, I'd suggest avoiding semicolons. They are better suited to a more formal writing style.

Comment [J39]: Describe it.

I couldn't help but smile when I saw him.

Comment [J40]: Is this a specific kind of knife? What does it look like?

"Krys!" He shouted.

I grabbed my bag and waved. "We've got the contract!"

"What?"

It was no use having a conversation at this distance. I ran at to him, eager to give my big, crazy co-captain a hug. He scooped me up as I reached him, spinning me in a broad circle.

"How is my Marvelous Miss Milse?" He asked once we stopped spinning, though he

somehow refused ing to put me down. The nickname made me chuckle. Gabrielle had come came up

Comment [J41]: Be specific and definitive. Also, this doesn't make very much sense. How could you "somehow" not put someone down?

with it our first year, and Jel picked it up shortly thereafter, using whatever excuse he could come up

Comment [J42]: Who is Gabrielle? You don't need a paragraph-long explanation, but give readers just a short, few-word long explanation of who this person is: "Gabrielle, an old friend of ours from the academy . . ." or something like that.

with to call me by it. It had gotten old after a while, but hearing it now simply warmed me up inside.

Comment [J43]: First year of what? And where does the nickname come from? Why did Gabrielle call Krys this?

"I missed you, Jellybean. What took you so long?"

Comment [J44]: Where does this nickname come from?

He shrugged, still holding me. "You know, flexi problems."

Comment [J45]: This seems a little strange. Krys was just going on about how upset she was because Jel' Dhen was late, but now she's acting like it was no big deal. It would make more sense if you put in a comment from her in the narrative that she was still upset, but she was too happy to see him to care, or something along those lines.

"I see." I pretended to mope mull over the thought for a second. "I'll have to do something

about that.”—I patted him on the arms, assuring him that it was perfectly safe to put me down.—I

wasn't going anywhere, after all.—“We got the contract.”—My feet touched solid ground again.

“Oh, ~~a~~ awesome!—What's it for this time? Smuggling? Escort services?—Babysitting?

Transferring small animals?—Please, don't let it be beagles again.”

I shot him an amused expression.

“Oh no... ~~It~~ is, isn't it?—We're delivering beagles again, aren't we?—Krys, I told you—”

“It's not beagles.”

He blinked in perplexed amusement.—“Well...?”

“Privateering and repossession.—But, ~~==~~” I held up my finger to cut off his next comment.

“~~Y~~ou're not going to like it.”—I began to make my way to the *WindSong*.—Jel'Dhen followed.

“What do you mean, ~~Y~~ou're not going to like it?—How often do I get to be a real-life pirate captain?”

“Co-captain,” I corrected. “And it's not pirating, it's privateering and repossession.”—I paused.

“And you get to be a pirate captain—~~I mean, ...er...co-captain—~~all the time!”

He ignored that last bit.—“What's the difference?”

“There's a big difference, you ninny.”—I smirked as we ascended the docking stairs.

“Oh, really?—And what difference might that be?”—I could just hear him put one hand on his

Comment [J46]: This seems a strange comment for her to make. It's pretty obvious that Jel'Dhen wasn't holding her because he was afraid she was going somewhere. I also find this kind of romantic greeting strange because you make it very clear later on that Jel'Dhen and Krys are not currently in a romantic relationship, though they both secretly want to be. So, I think that having a much less enthusiastic greeting would make sense here. You could have Krys tell the readers that she'd like to hug Jel'Dhen because she's so happy to see him, but then have her explain their relationship and how Jel'Dhen appears clueless to her affection for him. That way, you introduce the relationship sub-plot earlier on in your story.

Comment [J47]: This doesn't work as a dialogue tag inserted between two lines of dialogue because it's a complete sentence in and of itself. You can only do this if it is incorporated into the sentence: “I am staring at you,” he replied, “and you look scared.”

hip in that typical Jel'Dhen defense stance.

“What we do is legal.”

He stopped me as we crossed the deck by grabbing my elbow. He gave me his, “Come on-

“We don't do anything legal around here” face and I shrugged. We then continued to walk walking across the deck, heading, more or less, in the direction of the helm.

I turned, walking backwards as I addressed him. “Would you mind untying us? I want to get out of here yesterday.”

He just smiled and I knew he'd do it. With a wink and a sharp salute, I took the stairs down to the next level. I never really paid attention to this level, it mostly consisted of storage rooms and an open-air walkway. The only thing really to note was the captain's quarters. Jel slept there.

I moved over to a ladder and proceeded to descend three more levels to the living area. No, I didn't mean living as in the ship is alive. Living quarters for crew and passengers were on this level, as well as bathrooms, laundry machines, and a wreck room in the stern-side room. My room waited in the far port-side corner, and going there would have been delightful, if I didn't have to maneuver us away from the docks. I sighed heavily at the thought of sleeping in my own bed that night. Oh, how I missed it.

I walked calmly to the next flight of stairs, watching the *WindSong's* underbelly with a static

Comment [J48]: This sounds a bit strange. How can you hear someone put their hand on their hip? And what does Jel'Dhen's typical defense stance look like exactly? It would be better if you could have Kry's turn and see him to this instead.

Comment [J49]: I personally don't like excessively long hyphenated words, and *The Chicago Manual of Style* advises against it. I've suggested a different way to handle this, but I also know that this is not an uncommon thing to find in fiction writing. This would then be more of a stylistic choice than anything else.

Comment [J50]: This may be more of a personal aesthetic, but I think fiction writing works better when you avoid sounding “list-like”. We did this, then we did this, then this happened...etc. It flows more smoothly without doing that.

Comment [J51]: Here's a fun tid-bit. In American English, you actually aren't supposed to put the “s” on the end of words like “backward,” “toward,” “afterward,” etc. But in British English, you're supposed to put the “s” on these words.

Comment [J52]: Be definitive. Just tell your readers what it is without saying it's “kind of” of note, which is what the “really” implies here.

Comment [J53]: This seems unnecessary to me. As the primary captain, it makes sense that Jel'Dhen would sleep in the captain's quarters.

Comment [J54]: I think most people know what “living area” signifies without this explanation.

Comment [J55]: What crew? The only people mentioned are Kry's, Jel'Dhen, and Celeste. Are there other people in the crew?

sort of nostalgia.—Above me sat our plane, caught up in the docking nets and suspended from the series of beams that ran the length of the open-air center of our ~~duel~~dual-hulled ship.—At eye level, another array of length-wise beams spread themselves out in pairs of two across the entire width of the loading area.—Under each pair of beams rested an old-fashioned rope bridge.—These bridges were criss-crossed with additional bridges, making a grid with gaps wide enough to fit a small plane through.—The gaps in the back of the loading area were larger, big enough to fit a small cargo flier.

Comment [J56]: What do you mean by “static nostalgia”? Either explain this or use a different word to describe what you are trying to say here.

Comment [J57]: Why use rope bridges, especially if they’re old-fashioned? They don’t seem very realistic to have in an air ship that is constantly in motion since they’d sway around a lot.

Where the bridges crossed hung platforms, suspended from the beams above by thick cables.—I ~~so~~ enjoyed sitting on those platforms, my legs swinging over the edge, with nothing below me but open air.—This, more than any place I’d lived, was my home.—I’d never really had one before.—My smell scent even hung in the air: a kind of cotton smell blended with lilac.

Comment [J58]: You’ve used this term several times already in this chapter. It hasn’t become a problem, but just be aware that you use this term a lot and try to think of different ways to describe this. Here, for example, you could completely remove the phrase “but open air” and the sentence still makes just as much sense.

I’d lived on airships before, of course.—The *WindSong* certainly wasn’t my first trip around the block, simply my favorite.—I was raised on one by the name of the *Teal Morning* from the time I was six until my dad shipped me off to the Flight Academy.—Before that, I lived in Northampton, Massachusetts, with my parents.—~~But~~ my mum died, I don’t remember what of—, but she was very sick in all my memories, so it must have been something long-term.

Comment [J59]: It’s actually really hard to smell your own scent unless you use some kind of perfume or body spray. The reason for this is because you’re around yourself all the time, so you’re just so used to your smell that you don’t notice it. This is why other people’s houses sometimes smell funny to you, but they smell normal and/or like nothing to the people who live there. I do like this detail, though, so I’d include something about how she uses some kind of scented spray or something that smells like cotton and lilac.

Comment [J60]: For the last four paragraphs, you’ve done a good job of describing what’s in the ship, but you haven’t really described what any of it looks like. Right now, readers need specifics about color, texture, material, etc., in order to really visualize what the inside of this ship looks like rather than seeing it more like a map of the ship.

Comment [J61]: As before, don’t capitalize this unless referring to a specific academy by name.

Comment [J62]: Most people won’t know where Northampton is without mentioning the state specifically.

Comment [J63]: How old was she when her mother died?

My memories of the *Teal Morning* mostly consisted of studies and metal and skies.—Our captain somehow found the time to go through basic schooling with me.—It may have been that she and

Comment [J64]: Saying “studies” to refer to schooling is a bit confusing because that’s not what it’s usually referred to. Also, it’s grouped in a list that implies concrete things, metal and the sky, and studies are more of an action.

I were the only females on the ship...or it may have been that my dad married her.

Comment [J65]: This is kind of a strange thing to say. Readers will all think "of course it's because her dad married the captain," and this discredits Krysl since it's such an obvious thing to realize. It would be better to say instead, "She and I were the only females on the ship—and my dad married her."

Captain Kayl Torrent was, and still is, the closest thing I have to a mother.—She taught me how

to pilot and how to track stars for mapping, and she took me out for my first run with a wing glider.

Comment [J66]: What is a wing glider? A short explanation

When it came time for me to go to the Academy, she wrote me a letter of recommendation despite her

the fact that she'd divorced of my dad.—If it wasn't for that recommendation, I would have never have

Comment [J67]: "Her divorce of my dad" sounds a little too much like legal speak. If that's what you were going for, leave it in, but I've suggested a more casual, and more believable, way that she might say this instead.

met Jel'Dhen; I wouldn't be here.

Setting foot on the walkway at the foot of the stairs, I breathed deep and long, enjoying the scent

of fresh laundry and clean air, the smell of Jel'Dhen, as the slightest traces of it still lingered here.

So good to be back.

Without really giving much thought as to exactly how far down it was from the loading area, I

Comment [J68]: Why is this detail important? Is it because of how high up the walkway is?

crossed the grid of wood bridges and ropes until I found myself facing a my door.—It was the only door

Comment [J69]: This helps readers connect the fact that this is her bedroom door.

in the middle of a fairly large wall—the only door on that level, that is.—There were other doors

were on higher levels, but there was were no slim to no access to them from here.—The door before me,

Comment [J70]: What is a slim? Explain/describe it.

however, was quite accessible.

Comment [J71]: This is implied and does not need to be stated. The reader will be able to figure this out on their own.

I studied it.—Due to its lack of well-oiled cogs and its abnormal weight, the door was usually

Comment [J72]: By calling it a "rare opportunity," she seems to be implying that she's glad for the opportunity. I think what you meant here was more like "rare thing" or "rare occurrence." It would also make more sense if you moved this sentence before the one it's currently after (It would then read: "I studied it. This was a rare occurrence. Due to its . . .").

left open most of the time.—This was a rare opportunity.

Comment [J73]: Call it what it is. It's always better to be more specific than more general.

Double wide, the thing door slid into the wall from left to right, or at least it was supposed to.

Comment [J74]: The whole double-wide door slid into the door? That doesn't make a lot of sense to me. Does each side of the double door slide into each side of the wall, the left side into the left and the right side into the right?

A set of inlaid handles were set on the right side. Around these handles, set into the wood, I saw was plating similar to shaped like that of a cog, but with no purpose whatsoever. Similar plating covered the majority of the door, making it a beautiful thing. A thought crossed my mind: *Why don't we just properly care for this thing? It's beautiful.* But, as per usual, I dismissed it with the thought, *Jel'Dhen likes it this way.* And that was that.

Comment [J75]: What do you mean by "inlaid"?

Comment [J76]: Why would the door be made out of wood when most of the airship is made of metal? And wouldn't the door not be so heavy if it's wood?

Letting out another heavy sigh, this one more annoyed than the last, I gripped the handles and

Comment [J77]: Meaning the door or the whole ship itself?

Comment [J78]: Why does he like it this way? Is this something they've argued about before? And if she's really co-captain, why doesn't she get equal say in things? It really seems more like she's a captain's assistant, or first mate, than an actual co-captain.

pulled began to pull. The thing door didn't move.

Comment [J79]: Whenever you can remove the phrases "began to" or "started to" and replace them with an active verb, it's best to do so. It gives your story more immediacy and helps it flow better.

"Push it is!"

Comment [J80]: Who is saying this, and why is it phrased so strangely?

I pushed, but it was pointless. No avail, the thing it didn't move in the slightest.

Comment [J81]: This doesn't really sound like a term Kryns would use. It's a bit old-fashioned and fits better in a more formal context. I've made a suggestion for a different way to say this instead.

"So stupid!" I muttered. "Turn the bloody crank, Krylsorta!"

Comment [J82]: It's really hard to exclaim something while muttering to yourself.

In obedience to my own command, I moved to the large crank on the right side of the door and

Comment [J83]: What crank? Some sort of explanation/description of this before now would be helpful.

began cranking. It took a while, but eventually the crank moved a whole inch. As I continuing to

Comment [J84]: Is this her full name? If so, it would be helpful to explain that by just saying something like, "I always used my full name when encouraging myself" or something like that.

push struggle with it, the crank became easier loosened, making it easier to move. Still, the gears of the

Comment [J85]: The crank or the door?

door protested, squealing as they moved turned.

Comment [J86]: Cranking something involves both pushing and pulling, so just saying "push" doesn't make a lot of sense.

"Jel'Dhen," I groaned as I cranked. "Why in God's blue sky did you close this blasted door?"

Comment [J87]: It's more accurate to say that the gears turned.

He would hear about this later! The door came to a halt with a deafening clunk.

Comment [J88]: The ellipses here actually takes away from the power of the statement.

Comment [J89]: Why is it deafening? What made it so loud?

"Finally!"

Comment [J90]: This actually sounds to me like it got stuck, especially since you said before that it had only moved an inch. It makes more sense if you say, "The door finally came to a halt at the edge of the frame with a deafening clunk."

I dodged inside, ~~eager to be off.~~

Comment [J91]: Eager to be off where? To lift off? To get to the helm?

In front of me ~~and a little to my left~~ was my sling. ~~S~~shaped like a broken eggshell with armrests.

Comment [J92]: Personally, I find it confusing when authors use a lot of directions to describe where things are. It's easier for me, at least, when authors try to avoid using directions wherever possible.

Comment [J93]: This sounds more like a chair than a sling.

It came to about my waist and stood on a single leg, bolted to the floor. ~~Worn leather covered its~~

surface, giving it a ~~very-rustic~~ feel. ~~Cushions of varying-various sizes and colors~~ ~~arranged~~

~~themselves~~ ~~were arranged~~ in the sling's basket.

Comment [J94]: As I've mentioned before, it's best to avoid personifying objects unless the objects are actually alive.

~~Two feet in front of~~ ~~Near~~ the sling sat a control console. ~~When inert, as it was at the moment,~~

Comment [J95]: Do you mean the interior of the sling? Is it made like a basket? If so, that would be a good detail to include in the description.

the console looked like a regular desk. ~~Regular, that is,~~ ~~in every respect~~ ~~except~~ ~~for the its~~ curved

Comment [J96]: I also think it's unnecessary to include specific heights, lengths, etc. in fiction. Most people can't really picture specifics like this, so if you just say "close to" or "near" or "a short distance from," readers will get the idea.

~~shape of it,~~ the legs, which looked like those of a mechanical walker; ~~and the cogs laid under its glass~~

Comment [J97]: This is implied.

surface.

Comment [J98]: "Curved shape" is not very specific. Exactly what does it look like, and how is the curved shape unusual from regular desks?

To my right stood a large, clear screen; ~~that looking looked~~ distinctly like a chalk-board, ~~but~~

Comment [J99]: When doing a list that has interior commas, or commas that fall inside one of the parts of the list, you need to use semicolons to separate the parts of the list to keep readers from getting confused. If you don't like the semicolons, try restructuring the sentence or using parenthesis instead of the interior commas.

~~without the chalk or the board.~~ ~~The thing~~It was covered in a layer of dust. ~~Come to think of it,~~

Comment [J100]: This description is not helpful because the readers don't know what a mechanical walker is. What came to my mind was the walkers in the Star Wars movies, which is not what you meant, I'm sure.

everything ~~seemed to be was~~ covered in a thin layer of dust. ~~Even~~ the small, semi-circular terrace on

Comment [J101]: This description doesn't make any sense. You're basically saying it looks like a chalkboard, but it doesn't look like a chalkboard, which is confusing.

which it all sat showed ~~the~~ evidence of neglect.

Comment [J102]: What is the purpose of this screen? Is it like a computer monitor or a TV? Describe it.

Curious, I walked to the stairs in the center of the terrace. ~~The stairs~~They lead down to a

Comment [J103]: Be definitive in your statements.

circular observatory disk suspended in the center of a glass orb. ~~I fancied that the disk was held aloft~~

Comment [J104]: "It all" being what? The screen? What else? Again, it's better to be specific than to use generalities such as "thing" and "all."

~~up~~ by some supernatural means, but I knew full well that a lattice work of titanium held ~~the thing it~~

Comment [J105]: Why would it be made out of glass? It wouldn't be very structurally stable. Wouldn't it be something more like Plexiglass, or something much stronger and sturdier? You actually have Krysis surmise this a few sentences later, so why call it glass here, then?

~~aloft~~ up. ~~Still, it just made~~ sounded cooler to tell people ~~that it was supported by~~ supernatural means

Comment [J106]: Again, this word sounds a bit formal and old-fashioned for the tone of your story.

supported it.

The glass was ~~most likely, just actually Plexiglass~~, which was stronger and lighter by far than the ~~amount of~~ glass needed to do the same job. — A spherical titanium frame held the ~~plexi~~glass in place, and ~~upon further inspection~~, I found that dust had ~~developed~~ collected even there. — That shouldn't have happened. — This portion of the ship came equipped with specifically bred insects that fed off of dust and grime, ~~much similar to in the same way as sucker fish algae eaters~~ in a fish tank. — It saved a lot of time and money in the long run. — Whatever had happened, I was at a total loss.

Had Jel'Dhen locked the door when he left? — Had he flown from the helm this whole time? — It made sense, given the flexies' ~~dislike~~ disgust of toward him. — Even so, navigation from the helm took low-tech knowledge that Jel'Dhen ~~distinctly~~ disliked. — That, and the helm was located at the stern of the ship, above the ~~captain's~~ observatory and under the Adelaide drive, making the view significantly limited compared to that of the observatory. — Granted, he had a hammock up there and slept there on warmer nights. — and Celeste would always help if he asked, but ~~that simply did not provide enough~~ those were not excuses enough for him to wall off the bridge.

“Krys?”

It took me a moment to ~~remember figure out~~ the source of the voice's origin. — In front of my console stood a series of tubes, ~~about~~ six in all. — A flap covered the mouth of each tube, labeling where

Comment [J107]: Why wouldn't Krys know this? I'd expect her to know everything about her own ship.

Comment [J108]: Strength is the first thing I'd think of in this situation. Glass would shatter due to all of the stress put on the exterior of the ship.

Comment [J109]: Dust can't exactly develop since it doesn't grow or get created. It collects on things.

Comment [J110]: Call them by what they are, not by what people call them. Again, specifics are better than generalities.

Comment [J111]: This explanation would make more sense when she's first noticing all of the dust in her living area. Otherwise, it seems really strange for her to be focusing on how much dust has collected on things since that's just a part of life.

Comment [J112]: Why is this?

Comment [J113]: Does this drive come from the Australian city of Adelaide? If not, it probably doesn't need to be capitalized.

Comment [J114]: You have not talked about the captain's observatory or the Adelaide drive at this point, so readers have no idea what Krys is referring to.

Comment [J115]: This is phrased strangely. I've made a suggestion to make it clearer what you are saying here.

Comment [J116]: There has to be a specific number of them, so it can't exactly be “about six.”

they led to. The one labeled *helm* was swung open and a voice came out again. It sounded a little tinny, but it was definitely Jel'Dhen's.

"Krys, what's taking you so long?"

I growled, set down my bag and took a seat, activating my console. It flickered to life,

emitting a series of pastel lights.

"You locked the bridge, you ninny!" I shouted into the appropriate tube.

He paused before answering. "Well, I was kind of hoping you'd launch her from up here."

His voice, despite the tinniness, sounded bright, even hopeful. And yet, it was tinged with hesitance.

I couldn't help but wonder why.

"Sure," I answered. "The computer's going to take a while to boot up anyway."

With a heavy sigh, I returned to the *WindSong's* top deck. Jel'Dhen was waiting for me. I

gave him a puzzled look, walking up to the helm where he sat patiently in his hammock.

"Why did you lock the bridge?" I asked.

He shrugged and began sliding his way slide out to the edge of his hammock. "Well, I had a friend aboard in Italy. I didn't want them getting into your stuff."

The puzzled expression on my face washed away, replaced by one of interest. "Oh! Anyone I'd know?"

Comment [J117]: I'm not really sure what Krys is supposed to be doing right now. It was never explained, so it would help if you put in a short explanation around the middle of page 6 that says what Krys's goal is right now.

Comment [J118]: Why are the lights pastel? Aren't electronic lights usually harsh colors, like red, green, or blue?

Comment [J119]: The emphasis is not really necessary here. Your readers know how she's saying it.

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Comment [J120]: Jel'Dhen never even mentioned this before, so it seems strange that he'd expect her to do this, especially if they usually do use the bridge.

Comment [J121]: Why would it? Computers today don't take hardly any time at all, and this airship seems to be pretty sophisticated, at least from a present-day, real-life standpoint. I'd expect the technology, especially the computer technology, to be just as sophisticated.

Comment [J122]: Is Jel'Dhen's hammock the same as Krys's sling? If so, use the same word to describe both so readers know that.

“Uh...”—He scratched his head and stood.—“No, I don’t think you’d know her.”

“What?—You let a girl aboard without me?—Jel, I thought we’d agreed—”

“Yeah, I’m sorry.”—He began speaking quickly.—“So?—Where’s our heading?—You

mentioned something about me not liking it.”—Classic Jel’s defense technique number one:

change the subject and hope she doesn’t notice.—I let it slide, but he’d be hearing about it later.

With a heavy sigh, I withdrew a folded transparency from the hip pouch ~~of~~ on my belt.—I

handed it to him, and he unfolded it, snapping it rigid.—I was suddenly reminded of why I referred to

the mini-AI as flexies.—I usually stored them on one of those flexible transparencies.—The

transparency in Jel’s hand remained blank, however, and he held out his hand to me expectantly.

~~As though suddenly remembering something,~~ I removed a small clip from my hair and handed it

to him.—It didn’t seem like much; no bigger than a ~~ply wood~~ plywood nail, the clip didn’t even really

hold my hair in place.—But, when Jel’s hand snapped the clip onto the transparency, it flickered to life,

filling it with solid color.

Jel’s hand now held what looked like a piece of parchment.—He read over the words scrolling

across the page with mild interest.

“Well, it looks like I need to clean out one of the stalls in the brig—or just put a lock on one of

the quarters.—Probably the ~~latter~~ last one.—Oh!—And clear out those smuggler’s holds?—Joy.”—He

Comment [J123]: I feel like a visual is lacking here. What does he look like while he’s doing this? Embarrassed? Irritated? Does it look like he actually means it what he apologizes? What’s he doing? Is he looking at her, or away from her? Describe what’s going on.

Comment [J124]: This doesn’t seem realistic to me. If it were me, I’d be very upset. I wouldn’t just let it slide, and Krys doesn’t seem like the sort of person who would either.

Comment [J125]: What is a transparency? You never really explain what this is, so it’s a little hard to follow exactly what’s going on here.

Comment [J126]: Again, mini AI whats?

Comment [J127]: How do you store something on one of these transparencies? This is really confusing because you have yet to explain what flexies are, and have not defined what a transparency is either.

Comment [J128]: She obviously isn’t suddenly remembering something since this seems like a pretty common thing for her to be doing.

Comment [J129]: What is this clip really and how does it work?

Comment [J130]: Do they still use plywood in your universe?

Comment [J131]: The way you have this phrased, it sounds like it was the hair clip that flickered to life. The reason for this is because you use the pronoun “it” to refer to two different things in the same sentence.

Comment [J132]: But what is it? Is it a handheld, flexible computer screen of some kind? Is that how it can scroll?

Comment [J133]: This is a rather formal word for such an informal, casual character.

didn't sound the least bit enthused. I doubted his reaction would get any better as he read on.

It didn't.

"Uh—uh. No, Krys. I am *not* going back there again."

I nodded.

"No, I'm not. Not while he still lurks in those skies. You can't make me." He sounded rather final.

"Yes, we are," I insisted. "If you want to get paid we are. Besides, I bet *she's* just *dying* to see you again." I regretted saying it.

Comment [J134]: Why? It would help if you expounded on how Krys is feeling/what she's thinking right now.

"Yeah," He blinked and rolled his eyes. I didn't understand *his gesture why he did this.* Not at the time, anyway. "Yeah, I'm *sure* she is."

Inhaling deeply, I approached the helm, still *quite* eager to be underway. Its *polished wood surface* slid easily between my palms. One hand went to the controls on either side of the helm, activating the engine and *stirring-starting* up the *Adelaide drive*.

Comment [J135]: Too formal for Krys's character.

Comment [J136]: Again, why would it be made out of wood? It doesn't make sense for most of the ship to be made out of metal, but some of it to be made out of wood. It also doesn't make any sense why there would be both a bridge and a helm, especially since the helm is outside. It's not practical for them to be outside when the ship is travelling since it would be moving pretty fast.

The engine behind me popped and sizzled, growing warm as water from the boilers flooded the system. The turbines began to spin and we moved away from Bremerhaven's red towers. The wind *of ourcaused by the* movement *caught-blew* against my face, *coolinged* my cheeks.

Comment [J137]: You really need to explain what this is. What does it do? Where does the name come from? Why is it important?

We gained speed as we left the city, and I snapped on my goggles. *—whichthat*, up *til-to* that

point, had hung around my neck like some sort of misshapen necklace. —Jel'Dhen did the same.

From the upper console, I double checked a few calculations, then aimed our prow south-south-

east, toward Sky & Dese: ~~the~~ Sky Hell.

Comment [J138]: What upper console are you referring to?

Comment [J139]: For what?

Comment [J140]: I don't figure out what language this is, but if its translation is correct, then it should be two separate words not hyphenated.

Comment [J141]: The ending of this chapter seems sort of abrupt. Readers are left not understanding why Jel'Dhen doesn't want to go where they're going. And since we don't know what Sky Hell is, it leaves us hanging. It would really help to have some of Kry's thoughts/feelings about what's going on to sort of bring things to more of a conclusion.