

- Client:** Mike Kennedy
- Project:** Copyediting for espionage/thriller book – *Red Fortress*
- Objective:** Provide in-depth line edits and an editorial critique
- Key Components:**
1. Point out inconsistencies with punctuation, dialogue structure, and POV characters
 2. Provide suggestions to strengthen word flow and tighten prose
 3. Highlight strengths and offer feedback on weaknesses

Edit/Critique Close-Up #1

uncommon at a hospital. However, as soon as someone ~~had~~ used the stairwell, the pool of blood would be easily spotted and then reported. Mark silently ~~had~~ hoped that visitors would choose the elevator instead.

Mark quickly walked through the parking garage. When he approached the exit, he slowed. He quickly assessed the small security gate that had had its arm raised. He smiled and then nodded at the attendant who ~~had been~~ sitting in a small booth flipping through a magazine. After Mark stepped outside, he turned around and scanned the ~~garage~~. ~~[Then he quickly looked in both directions. Mark turned] and headed in the opposite direction of his hotel.~~ He ~~had chosen to stay~~ in one of the smaller, out-of-the-way ~~places~~. ~~[He] chose to walk, constantly picking alleys and randomly crossing the street.~~ He was relentless with checking for a tail. He entered a small shop and bought a change of clothes, then exited out of the back. He did everything he had learned over the years to shake or identify a tail, but he saw nothing. He was in the clear.

Mark ~~had~~ checked his watch. It had been two hours since he ~~had~~ left the hospital. ~~[He was faced with a] decision. Head back to the U.S or into Russia.~~ He needed time to think. However, for now, he had to eat. He discounted the Italian ~~place~~ he had passed two blocks ago. But the aroma wafting from the 'Brodwoschd,' a small ~~[out of the way] place~~ just two doors up from where he now stood, told his senses it would fit the bill.

When he walked from the cold into the warm restaurant, his body ~~had~~ instantly relaxed.

- Comment [JLC470]: "was"
- Comment [JLC471]: Add the purpose - "garage, looking for anyone who might be following him."
- Comment [JLC472]: Remove comma
- Comment [JLC473]: Combine - "When he decided that no one posed a threat, he quickly looked in both directions and then headed in the..."
- Comment [JLC474]: "would"
- Comment [JLC475]: Add the purpose here too. - "...places. The last thing he wanted to do was go back to a hotel where he could be traced and fall into the wrong hands." (or something similar!)
- Comment [JLC476]: "Despite his injured leg, he"
- Comment [JLC477]: "Now, he"
- Comment [JLC478]: "another" (first was whether or not to kill the attacker)
- Comment [JLC479]: Change to colon, then use lowercase, then reiterate - "decision: head back to the U.S. or continue into Russia."

Edit/Critique Close-Up #2

Mark ~~had~~ fought the urge to turn around and confront the young Russian officer. The Lieutenant looked spooked. His ~~[drawn and pale] features~~ ~~had~~ told Mark one ~~thing~~. He was scared. Something was terribly wrong. Mark ~~had~~ started to sense the same feeling that he had had in Rothenburg, Germany. Something had happened to Ramous.

Mark clenched his hands into ~~[fist]~~ as he walked across the street. ~~[Damn it, why didn't I stay on the motorcycle? I could have been here sooner. Damn it!]~~ Mark tried to suppress his emotions while he walked across the street, but his vapor filled the air as his thoughts had become verbal. He stopped himself. He fought to regain his composure. He let out several deep breaths and let his broad shoulders drop. He tried to relax his body. He calmly looked around the area while checking his watch. He had acquired the habit years ago, one he had ~~[picked-up]~~ from a now

- Comment [JLC1213]: "drawn, pale"
- Comment [JLC1214]: "thing: he"
- Comment [JLC1215]: "fists"
- Comment [JLC1216]: His verbal outburst seems a bit out of character - he seems pretty controlled at all times. What if the thoughts run through his head? He must know that he can't make assumptions before he has all of the facts...unless all of his bad feelings turn out to be right.
- Comment [JLC1217]: No hyphen, two words

Featured Comment (Editorial Critique):

The majority of the issues related to punctuation, manuscript layout, word flow, and passive vs. active voice. The good news is, those things can all be learned!

One big area that dictates word flow is the sentence structure. The writing becomes choppy when sentences are not varied throughout each paragraph. Instead of starting each sentence with the same word (i.e., "He"), look for ways you can vary the structure – combine sentences or start a sentence with a prepositional phrase (e.g., "Before he had a chance to run, he ___") or a gerund (e.g., "Staring up at the stars, he wondered ___").

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