

Fiction Line Edit – 225 Words

Mom came home from her sister’s funeral with a letter strangled in one hand. She was waiting beneath the overhang at the walk-on passenger terminal. ~~The terminal building stretched out behind her. The ferry had been running uncharacteristically on time, leaving me to arrive late on the scene.~~

I couldn’t help it; Sebastian and Lottie had been impossible to usher out the door, and there was no way in hell they would be staying in the house alone, ~~even for the fifteen minutes it~~ would take to drive down to the ferry and back again.

“Sorry, Mom,” I called as I rolled the passenger window down. ~~“The kids were just…”~~

Mom squinted through the drizzle with an inscrutable look on her face. I pushed the button for the minivan’s rear hatch and left the car to help Mom load her suitcase. It wasn’t until we were back in the front seat, buckling ourselves in for the short drive home that I noticed the stark white bouquet of paper clutched to her chest.

“What’s that?”

~~As it turned out,~~ that thick, crumpled sheaf of paper ~~was~~ a copy of my aunt’s will and a lengthy letter from her estate attorney. My mother ~~was~~ now the proud owner of an old farmhouse on a small island in the Pacific Northwest.

- Deleted: Based on the emptiness of the terminal building behind her, I assumed that
- Deleted: the
- Deleted: making my appearance a late one
- Commented [LS2]: Restructured sentences to reinforce the sense of isolation and reworded participle phrase to strengthen narrative voice.
- Deleted: —
- Commented [LS3]: Query: Cause and effect is shaky here. Why does the narrator trail off?
- Commented [LS4]: Replaced pronoun with proper noun for clarity.
- Deleted: into the back
- Deleted: minutes-long
- Deleted: T
- Deleted: ,
- Deleted: it turned out,
- Formatted: Indent: First line: 0.5"
- Commented [LS5]: Query: Would the mother feel proud in the aftermath of her sister's passing? Or is this the narrator's dry humor coming through?
- Commented [LS6]: Query: The rest of this sentence is wonderfully descriptive, but this adjective feels broad. Consider being more specific about the house's build date.
- Deleted: informing my
- Deleted: that she