

Dear Mary,

Thank you for your interest in having me help in your work on “The Charm”!

I have read the short sample you sent me, and I think you have a very good start to a story there. I like that you used a cold open – it does a very good job of establishing the protagonist’s goals and motivations without having to spell them out explicitly for the reader. I also think you strike the right balance between keeping the situation very grounded in mundane reality, and preparing the reader for the possibility that something unusual and magical *might* happen. Of course, from the short sample I can’t really tell where it’s going and what the full setup will turn out to be, but as a reader, I am already anticipating an unforeseen hurdle and danger to come from the charm being prepared, so if that’s what is in store, congratulations, you’ve successfully hooked me and made me want to know more!

Regarding the prose itself, I think it’s a great first draft – there are a couple places with missing words and unfinished sentences, but nothing an edit wouldn’t be able to clean up. I would recommend, however, considering a bit more explicitly what voice you want to use in different parts of your text. As it stands, I feel the narration is a little sloppy and casual, as if I was the protagonist’s schoolmate that they casually chat with about the previous day’s events during a break – which is a fine voice for in-character dialogue, but a little out of place for a lovestruck teenager with a penchant for the dramatic recounting her brush with magic. I think giving the narration a voice distinct from that of the protagonist’s words would be very beneficial, as would constructing a separate voice for the love interest, so that the reader can easily feel that two different people are talking to each other.

As for the service I recommend at this stage, this depends a bit on how you feel about it yourself. I understand that “The Charm” is meant to be an episode in a larger, more expansive story you’re working on? If you feel like the story is progressing well and you know where it’s taking you, then I think a line edit would be an excellent fit – from looking at your sample I feel it’s a solid draft that I’m comfortable

taking on at this stage, and would not expect major structural issues that such an edit cannot resolve.

If, however, you feel like you're struggling finding the story and don't think it has come to life yet, then I would recommend sending me the full draft for a complete evaluation. From there, I will be able to give you a much more in-depth feedback on where I think the story can go. This will also be an excellent starting point for either a line edit or a developmental edit, depending on how well you feel the draft is progressing.

Best regards,
Maciej from Fly Guy Editing