

Feedback - Abyssal Thrum - Chunk 3

Below is my feedback for chunk 3.

As we have already discussed, the progression and development of your novel is working well. However, one very slight concern I have is that these chapters are focus more of world-building and plot, than tension and narrative arc. I really don't feel this is a problem, however, I do think it is something we can keep in mind. The early chapters are creating the tension, and these chapter do have a sense of movement, so I don't feel we need to make any additional changes.

I am not suggesting that you make any changes but I do want you to keep this in mind. There is a point in every novel where 'story' takes the front seat and I think that this is that moment in your book. I am aware that the story is now being split into two books and I don't feel that this should be an excuse to include material that is non-essential to the plot (though I don't feel this is the case.)

I have also added a note below about the use of movement through a scene to support description. We have talked about this before but I think it is something we should revisit.

Title: Enhancing Character Description Through Movement and Scene Dynamics

When writing fiction, the way a character moves within a scene can significantly enrich their portrayal, offering subtle cues about their personality, emotions, and physical characteristics. By integrating everyday motions and their interactions with the environment, writers can provide a deeper, more nuanced understanding of their characters without relying solely on direct descriptions.

Step-by-Step Guide:

- 1. Observe Real-Life Movements:** Start by observing people in real life. Notice how emotions, personality traits, and physical conditions affect their movements. Use these observations as a foundation for your characters' actions.
- 2. Incorporate Purposeful Action:** Every movement a character makes should serve a purpose, revealing something about their personality, mood, or physical traits. For instance, a character who frequently adjusts their glasses might be meticulous or nervous.
- 3. Use the Environment:** How a character interacts with their surroundings can also offer insights. A character who navigates a cluttered room with ease might be familiar with the space or inherently graceful, suggesting comfort or a level of physical capability.

4. **Vary Movement with Emotion:** Different emotions can significantly influence how a character moves. A happy character might walk with a bounce in their step, while a sad one may drag their feet.
5. **Detail Physical Characteristics Through Action:** Instead of stating a character's physical attributes directly, use action to imply them. A character with long legs might take long, purposeful strides, while a smaller character could use more steps to keep up.

Example:

Consider a scene where a character, Alex, enters a bustling coffee shop. Instead of merely describing Alex as "nervous and out-of-place," show it through their movements and interactions:

As Alex pushed open the door, their eyes darted across the crowded coffee shop, scanning for an empty seat. The way they clutched their bag close to their chest and hesitated at the threshold revealed their unease. Navigating through the maze of tables, Alex's movements were tentative; they sidestepped and apologized profusely when barely brushing against other patrons. Finally spotting an isolated table by the window, Alex hurried over, their steps quickening with relief. As they sat down, they arranged their belongings with precise, almost ritualistic care, aligning the coffee cup with the edge of the table and smoothing out the napkin meticulously. This careful orchestration of their space hinted at a need for control and comfort amidst the chaos.

In this example, Alex's movements and interaction with the coffee shop environment amplify their character traits. Their cautious entry, the protective clutching of the bag, and precise arrangement of their space all suggest a personality that is anxious, detail-oriented, and possibly introverted, offering a richer understanding of Alex without explicit description.

Scene 13 - Kayah

Kayah in the ruins.

- There is a sections where the statue is moved by a creature. The description is too simple for the reader to form a picture. You might want to keep a level of mystery. However, the best way to do this is with a description of a creature the reader will not recognize, not a vague description that leaves the reader confused. Add details will help.

Scene 14 - Baran

Baran in city.

- You need to ensure that you add enough initial description for the reader to paint a clear picture of the location in their mind's eye. This needs to come at the start of the chapter.

- You should try to add very brief character descriptions to keep the picture fresh in the reader's mind. Often only a sentence or two. Try to match this with movement in the scene (see my note above).
- You mention garlic in the meal. That seems to tie to our world, perhaps you should give garlic a different name, one that ties it to this world.

Scene 15 - Kayah

Kayah in the ruins. Cindered Man.

- There are a couple of places in this chapters where I have split the longer paragraphs into shorter paragraphs. This helps to control the pace but also adds more engagement to the reading experience.
- I feel that 'cindered man', is his name and, therefore, should be a proper noun - 'Cindered Man'. What do you think?

Scene 16 - Baran

Baran in sewers.

- This chapter works well. I really enjoyed the description of the sewers, it gave teh reader a vivid sense of place. My only slight concern is the focus on story and world-building over plot development, but, honestly, this is just a niggle and nothing worth action.

Scene 17 - Kayah

Kayah outside palace. Cindered Man.

- You need to add in some location description at the start of this chapter.