

Proofreading Vs. Copyediting

“Faith,” Mommy said, sighing.¹ “Eat your squash. It’s good for you.”

“Yuck. I hate squash,” Faith said⁴, pushing¹ the offensive vegetable around on her plate. She looked to her left at her brother Karl and then to the right at her brother Kris. Well, at their empty chairs. They’d already finished and left the table. Even Liz, the usual troublemaker, had gotten her dessert and been excused from the table.

“You have to eat three pieces of squash before you can leave the table,” Mommy said⁴, walking toward¹ the sink with a few dirty dishes in her hand. “I’m almost done here in the kitchen. Once I finish these dishes, I’m leaving the kitchen. If you haven’t finished by then, you’ll be sitting in here until bedtime or you eat that squash.”

I am not going to eat that yucky squash, no matter if I have to sit here all night, Faith thought to herself³. It’s cold and mushy and icky. She felt like³ she’d throw up if she ate any of that yucky squash.

Mommy started to walk² to the door and flicking the switch¹, the kitchen went dark. Faith sat at the table, staring¹ at the round yellow slabs of gunky squash.

An hour later, she was pushing^{1A} and whirling^{1A} and twirling^{1A} that yellow glob over her plate, running^{1A} her fork over and over it, mashing^{1A} it to bits and plopping^{1A} it onto the plate. Her eyes started to hurt² as they first were staring² in the dark and then were being blinded² by the light turning back on.

“Faith, go to bed,” Mommy said⁴, a tone of defeat in her voice.

Ha, Faith thought to herself³. Victory is mine, and I shall never eat those yucky vegetables!

“Faith.” Mommy sighed. “Eat your squash. It’s good for you.”

“Yuck. I hate squash.” Faith pushed the offensive vegetable around on her plate. She looked to her left at her brother Karl and then to the right at her brother Kris. Well, at their empty chairs. They’d already finished and left the table. Even Liz, the usual troublemaker, had gotten her dessert and been excused from the table.

“You have to eat three pieces of squash before you can leave the table.” Mommy walked to the sink with a few dirty dishes in her hand. “I’m almost done here in the kitchen. Once I finish these dishes, I’m leaving the kitchen. If you haven’t finished by then, you’ll be sitting in here until bedtime or you eat that squash.”

I am not going to eat that yucky squash, no matter if I have to sit here all night. It’s cold and mushy and icky. She’d throw up if she ate any of that yucky squash.

Mommy walked to the door and flicked the switch. The kitchen went dark. Faith stared at the round yellow slabs of gunky squash.

An hour later, she still pushed and whirled and twirled that yellow glob over her plate. Her fork ran over and over it as she mashed it to bits and plopped it onto the plate. Her eyes hurt as they stared in the dark and then were blinded by the light turning back on.

“Faith, go to bed.” Mommy’s defeated tone echoed in the room.

Ha! Victory is mine, and I shall never eat those yucky vegetables!

1: Use fewer –ing words. Don’t hide the real action of the sentence.

1A: overuse of –ing words in one sentence can lead to a long, run-on sentence.

2: Use fewer infinitives. Don’t hide the real action of the sentence.

3: Remove character filters. Help your reader be immersed in the world and mind of your character- keep the third party out of the picture.

4: Get rid of “said.” By removing those invisible “said” dialogue tags, you can strengthen your character’s actions and add excitement and feeling.