“Art communicates passion, what does that better than poetry and literature.”

“But words don’t draw out self interpretation,” I said, taking a seat across the table from them. “You need to look at a piece of art and not know why it was created.”

“I do not know the reason why most authors write, and frankly I don’t care. I see a passage on the page, and I recognize it’s beauty, the same way you look at a painting” they argue.

“Paintings are created with passion, not with plans unlike literature.”

“How would you know? Can’t some people just write without a plan, without thinking?”

“Everything has a plan; nothing is truly random.”

“Your statements are contradictory,” they stated calmly, as the waiter walked up to the table. “Linguini Alfredo,” they said, before the waiter could utter a word.

“The Bolognese, please,” I cut in before the waiter walked off. “See even you had a plan, seeing as you get the same thing every time.”

“I do not. Once I ordered the Lasagna once.”

“Yeah, once, and only because they didn’t have anymore linguini and you refused to have alfredo with any other cut of pasta. You stared at the menu for 15 minutes.”

“At least I didn’t take as long as you take to look up from a book, which is weird since you don’t think it’s art.”

“They have beauty, which is possible without being art.”

The night sky is in utter turmoil. The darkness collides with the sun in an explosion of colour taken in by the clouds. Looking up at the sky, they felt like they were in a protective dome and the universe outside was at war.

They approached the Main Street of their small town. It wasn’t much, consisting of a run-down grocery store, the movie theatre that can only run two movies, and the bar. Much like this night, there would often be people stumbling around under the effects of drink.

Whenever they would walk home, they would try to cut through the Main Street. The scenes in front of them, presented as beautifully as poetry. They had always thought that life is art, and every small moment had its significance. They had reasons for the repetition, the same meals, the same small town. Because why disregard beauty just because you’ve experienced it before.

The alley of Main Street, beside the theatre, was always dimly lit. It was the shortcut they took many times to reach their home.

As they walk through their door, the phone of the entry table was making an ear-splitting sound, before going silent.

The phone is from their childhood. When they were younger, they ran down the stairs and collided with the table. The tone of the phone was forever changed to an insufferable shrill.

Looking at the receiver, they saw 4 missed calls. As they were about to check the voicemail box, the phone rang once again.

Snapping the phone to their ear, they waited three seconds before they said “Hello?”

The reply was from a voice they had not heard in 3 years, “I need you to send me a picture of the painting of that tree you hung in your room in college.”

Seeing as they kept the painting hung over their mantel in the living room. They saw no reason to object, simply replying by saying “okay” before hanging up.

When they were in college, they were used to unusual requests, having chosen long ago to stop asking questions on the matter as no reply is ever given.

Walking over to the painting, they got out their portable cellphone and sent the picture they took to the number displayed.

As soon as it was sent, the phone rang once more.

Picking it up, the voice on the other end simply said, “I have no need for the front of the picture, I need one of the back.”

“The back?”

“Yes,” was the reply before the phone went dead.

Taking the painting off the mantel, they sent the new photo. This time they got nothing in reply.

Figuring that this was all they were to get from their old friend, they decided to pass out on the couch.

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|  | **Got it** | **On Your Way** | **Needs Work** |
| **Quality Writing** | All are met:Dialogue, vivid word choice, stays on topic, good details, interesting/ creative, attention grabbing start, sentence variety | Some are met:Dialogue, vivid word choice, stays on topic, good details, interesting/ creative, attention grabbing start, sentence variety. Setting is included and attempts to support the plot | Few are met:Dialogue, vivid word choice, stays on topic, good details, interesting/ creative, attention grabbing start, sentence variety |
| **Conflict** | Main conflict is clear and adds to the story  | Main conflict may be attempted but is not clear/partially developed  | Main conflict is weak and not developed  |
| **Point of View / Tense** | Clear and remains consistent (1st or 3rd) throughout the story Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Theme** | Clear and well presented. The theme is purposefully supported by the plot and characters of the story  | The theme is present, but it may be simple or surface-level  | Theme may be present but is unclear or undeveloped  |
| **Format and Conventions** | Formatting of essay is perfect, and 0-3 spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors are present. Paragraphs and dialogue are used appropriately  | Formatting of essay is perfect, and 4-6 spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors are present. Paragraphs and dialogue are used somewhat appropriately  | 1 or more formatting errors exist, and/or 7+ spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors are present. Paragraphs and dialogue are not used appropriately  |
| **Postmodern Conventions** | There are elements of postmodern theory that are well placed in the narrative and is useful in finding out the meaning of the theme / purpose. (Slice of life/ dialogue/ small appearing large/ shift in focus)  | The postmodern thematic lens doesn’t work as well within the narrative. There can be instances of the narrative being forced instead of seamlessly integrated. Some elements are seen, but not naturalized. | Postmodern theory has no real use of being in the story or is not even apparent. The logic is faulty. The writer put no thought into this convention. |