EDITORIAL LETTER (COPYEDITING)

***The Gray Girl*, by Shawn C. McLain**

CreateSpace editors follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* (*CMoS*), 16th edition, for grammar, punctuation, and style guidelines, and *Merriam-Webster Unabridged* (*M-W*) for spellings and hyphenations. *The Chicago Manual of Style* is a comprehensive writing style guide that is widely used throughout the book publishing industry; *Merriam-Webster Unabridged* is the largest, most comprehensive American dictionary available.

In addition to this Editorial Letter, I’ve included comments throughout the text as part of the tracked changes. I may repeat some of those thoughts here when they pertain to the manuscript as a whole.

**Overview**

Overall the manuscript is in good shape. This book is an entertaining read for its intended audience. The narrative holds the reader’s attention through strong character development and vivid descriptions of each scene and setting.

As requested in the questionnaire, I have checked for spelling errors, especially homonyms, and grammar throughout the text.

The character of Richard has been well fleshed out. Although he seems to be decent and benevolent toward his brother, his evil nature becomes evident once the suspense in the plot builds and finally leads to the unraveling of his malicious deeds and intent.

Also, Aaron Holt, the character used for comic relief, seems to ask poignant questions at times. Hence, the serious tone of an adult, Arthur, and the somewhat immature behavior and talk of Aaron seem to complement in helping them, especially Alex, solve the mystery.

During the course of this edit, I focused my efforts on ensuring that the text of the manuscript was in line with *The Chicago Manual of Style* and with publishing-industry standards.

**Grammar**

Throughout the manuscript, I’ve worked to correct areas of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Below are some of the most common errors, along with examples from the text.

People take the relative pronouns *who* and *whom*, whereas objects and animals take *that* and *which*.

**Original**: “Um, no, it is you that shouldn’t be here,” Emily replied, placing her hands on her hips.

**Revised**: “Um, no, it is you who shouldn’t be here,” Emily replied, placing her hands on her hips.

Two words that modify each other and together modify a third word that they precede should be hyphenated (such as *third-world country*, *half-hour session*, or *little-understood rules*).

**Original**: Arnold was working on the front door lock, oblivious to his son’s fascination.

**Revised**: Arnold was working on the front-door lock, oblivious to his son’s fascination.

Misspellings and typos have been corrected in a few instances.

**Original**: “Well, he claimed he had hit a dear; see his truck was smashed up on one side.”

**Revised**: “Well, he claimed he had hit a deer; see, his truck was smashed up on one side.”

**Original**: It felt like passing through cold water buy dry.

**Revised**: It felt like passing through cold water, but dry.

**Formatting**

Overall the formatting of the manuscript is solid. As per *CMoS* guidelines, dedication and illustration credits should not be placed in the title page. The author has been advised to make changes in this regard.

In the text, ellipses are replaced by em dashes when there is a sudden break in thought or sentence structure or an interruption in dialogue. (However, they are retained when faltering speech is intended.) When the break belongs to the surrounding sentence rather than to the quoted material, em dashes are inserted outside the quotation marks.

I hope these edits and comments are valuable in helping the manuscript achieve your publishing goals. Good luck in your revision, and I wish you all the best for this manuscript and future books.

—Anton, CreateSpace Editor