Sample edit: *The Storm Outside*

THORN EDITS
Romance and fiction editing by Rose T.

This is a one-page example of how I mark up a manuscript. The scene was written just for this sample, with typical mistakes left in. In a real order you get tracked changes in Word or Google Docs, plus a clean copy. Every change is a suggestion you can accept or reject, and your voice always stays yours.

Blue = proofreading fix **Green** = line edit **Red strikethrough** = suggested cut **Wine** = editor's comment

The rain hadn't stopped for three days, and Mara was starting to think it never would. She stood at the window of the old bookshop, watching the street lamps flicker on one by one, ~~there~~ their[1] light pooling in the puddles like spilled gold.

She didn't hear him come in. She never did.

"~~Your~~ You're[2] late," Cassian said, his voice low and rough, like he'd only just remembered how to use it.

Mara didn't turn around. "I'm exactly on time. You're early. ~~Theres~~ There's a difference."

He laughed, a short, quiet sound that she felt more than heard, and ~~suddenly, all at once,~~[3] the room felt ~~very very small~~ too small. ~~She could feel him~~ He was[4] behind her, close enough that the heat of him pressed against her back, but he ~~didnt~~ didn't touch her. He never did that either.

"You shouldn't ~~of~~ have[5] come back," he said.

"You shouldn't have asked me to."

She turned then, slowly, and looked up at him. His eyes were darker ~~then~~ than she remembered, grey like the storm outside, and there was a small cut on his jaw that hadn't been there a week ago.[6] She wanted to ask about it. She wanted to touch it. She did neither ~~of those things~~.[7]

"Mara." He said her name like it was a warning and a prayer ~~at the same time~~.[8]

"Don't," she whispered~~, but she didn't move away~~. She didn't move away.[9]

1 · PROOFREAD
"There" is a place. "Their" shows the light belongs to the lamps.

2 · PROOFREAD
"You're" (you are). Also fixed "Theres", "didnt" and "then/than" below.

3 · LINE EDIT
"Suddenly" and "all at once" say the same thing and slow the beat down. Cutting both lets the tension land faster.

4 · LINE EDIT
"She could feel" is a filter phrase. Putting him straight there keeps us in her body, not watching her.

5 · PROOFREAD
"Shouldn't have", not "shouldn't of". It's a common one, even in dialogue.

6 · COMMENT
Love this detail. It hints at danger without explaining it. Make sure the cut pays off later, as readers will remember it.

7 · LINE EDIT
"She did neither." is punchier on its own and mirrors the short lines around it.

8 · LINE EDIT
"A warning and a prayer" already implies both at once.

9 · COMMENT
Ending on its own short sentence gives her refusal and her staying equal weight. Great closing beat for the chapter.

STYLE SHEET EXTRACT

Spelling	UK English
Characters	Mara (heroine); Cassian (hero, grey eyes, small cut on jaw, ch. 1)
Places	the old bookshop (lower case)
Style	street lamps (two words); one by one (no hyphens)

WHAT YOU'D ALSO GET

- Tracked changes plus a clean copy
- Comments explaining the bigger suggestions
- A style sheet to keep your series consistent
- A short summary of patterns to watch for

Original sample text written by Thorn Edits for demonstration only. Message me for a free 1,000-word sample edit of your own manuscript.