

# Writing Sample 2

*Silver Spoon*

*Season 2 Episode 11*

The end.

So often when that card is displayed, in all forms of media, I am left disappointed. This could be due to the fact that what I wanted to happen did not occur<sup>1</sup>, the budget had deteriorated to the point that it has become a lifeless husk<sup>2</sup>, and sometimes simply because I never wanted it to end<sup>3</sup>. But perhaps the number one cause of the low, descending note that occasionally emits during a slow exhalation at the end of a series, particularly an anime series, is the crushing ambiguity of the T.A.E, or Typical Anime Ending.



“Our intriguing adventures will surely continue! However you, dear viewer, can kindly rack off.”

The finale of *Silver Spoon*’s second season seems, at least on the outset, to follow the formula of a T.A.E almost exactly. We see a significant character development in a couple of the characters, they are shown doing what we’ve enjoyed watching them do for 500 bleeding episodes and then there’s a collective “yep, this is our life” sequence, usually played over the credits. This all happens in *Silver Spoon*.

And it works.

I’ve never been so satisfied with a T.A.E in my entire career. Everything put in this episode seems to fit. There’s a final confrontation with Hachiken’s father where he finally has the guts to tell the near-constant source of his angst that sometimes life happens and people should not be judged by experiences that can help make them better people. It’s fantastic.

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<sup>1</sup> Harry Potter. Shipping expectations were not met. I was disappointed, but I loved it too much to care.

<sup>2</sup> I’ll go the more accessible route here and say *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, but there have been others.

<sup>3</sup> *Shirokuma Cafe*. What? Don’t you judge me, Mr. or Mrs. Blackpot!



Testify!

This causes his mum to realise that Hachiken truly has matured, and comes to the school to see what has caused it. We follow most of the latter half through her point of view, seeing all that we've come to experience for the first time, reminding the audience once again how rare it is to truly see the hidden cultures tucked away beyond our scope of interest.



Some 'cultures' however, have their origins wisely unrevealed.

Hachiken and Mikage have more awkward romantic interludes that of course go nowhere, but there's a positive feeling as the students discuss their future. Roll credits.

But here's the thing: that fits. It works with the whole tone of the piece. Life goes on whether or not we want to watch it, and whether or not there's an audience these people exist. Yes, it would have been nice to see if Hachiken and Mikage get married or if Shinnosuke will finally overcome his haemophobia or if Komaba gets his family out of debt. Heck, if you follow the manga, maybe you'll find out, it's still going. But it isn't necessary. You've seen these people grow, you can guess the trajectory they will take, but the focus is on what *you* get out of it. Hands down, my favourite entertainment media are those that successfully help you understand another's point of view. If you had told me a year ago that the manga-ka behind Full Metal Alchemist created the most consistently educational, humorous and realistic slice-of-life comedy about the exploits of Agricultural College students... I'd ask where I could watch it. Silver Spoon is awesome and I'll hear none state otherwise.

