

## Section 1:

**#1 - Opening paragraph:** "The first crack of thunder silenced the crowd. A wave of panic rippled through the gathering. People scurried for shelter, seeking refuge from the monstrous beast that was about to strike."

**Strengths:** Your opening creates immediate tension and uses vivid imagery like "monstrous beast" to describe the storm. The short sentences build urgency effectively.

**Weakness:** Unclear setting → Your piece doesn't establish where this gathering is taking place or why people are gathered there. The reader needs more context about the location and event to fully understand the scene.

**Exemplar:** *The first crack of thunder silenced the birthday party crowd in the local park.*

**#2 - Memory sequence:** "She shut her eyes as the haunting scene replayed itself in her mind. Then, she felt something warm - not on her skin, but beside her ear. Not in the air, but in her memory."

**Strengths:** Your writing shows good emotional depth and the contrast between physical and memory sensations is creative. The transition into the flashback flows naturally.

**Weakness:** Vague descriptions → The phrase "something warm" and "beside her ear" creates confusion rather than clarity. Your readers need clearer descriptions to understand what Elise is experiencing in her memory.

**Exemplar:** *Then, she felt the warmth of her father's gentle voice, not spoken aloud, but echoing clearly in her memory.*

**#3 - Resolution:** "As the storm passed and she said her silent goodbyes, Elise and her grandma walked through the park, admiring the sky as it gave way to a golden sunset."

**Strengths:** Your ending provides emotional closure and the imagery of the golden sunset symbolises hope beautifully. The pace slows down nicely after the intense emotional moment.

**Weakness:** Rushed conclusion → Your piece moves too quickly from Elise's emotional breakthrough to walking with her grandmother. The transition needs more development to show how she processes her newfound courage.

**Exemplar:** *After taking several deep breaths and wiping her tears, Elise slowly stood up and walked towards her worried grandmother.*

■ Your piece demonstrates strong emotional storytelling and tackles the difficult theme of grief with sensitivity. The central idea of finding comfort in memories of deceased parents is touching and relatable. However, your writing would benefit from more specific details about the setting and characters. Additionally, you could develop the emotional journey more gradually rather than moving quickly between intense moments. Your dialogue feels authentic, particularly the grandmother's caring questions, but you could expand on how Elise's feelings change throughout the story. Also, consider adding more sensory details beyond just sound and sight to make the scenes more vivid. The metaphor of storms representing connection to her parents works well, but you could strengthen this by showing more of Elise's internal thoughts as she makes this realisation.

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**Overall Score: 42/50**

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## Section 2:

#1 The first crack of thunder silenced the crowd. A wave of panic rippled through the gathering. People scurried for shelter, seeking refuge from the monstrous beast that was about to strike. But Elise froze. Her palms grew clammy, her head throbbed, and her ears muffled the sounds of people urging her to move. She wanted to run—but something kept her grounded. She didn't want to cry. Not on her 13th birthday.

Fear consumed her. Elise had always been afraid of storms, but this one felt different. It wasn't just the lightning that made her shiver - it was the memory. The memory of the last time she heard thunder crack. The memory of the night her parents never came home.

#2 She shut her eyes as the haunting scene replayed itself in her mind. Then, she felt something warm - not on her skin, but beside her ear. Not in the air, but in her memory.

"All storms pass eventually," her father used to say. "It's just one single star in the wonderful galaxy of life."

~~"Remember, Elise," her mother would whisper, "when thunder strikes, think of it as our little way of saying hello."~~ ["Remember, Elise," her mother would whisper, "when thunder strikes, think of it as our way of saying hello from above."]

A tear rolled down Elise's cheek.

Just then, a soft breeze brushed her face - gentle and warm - like the way her parents used to kiss her and wipe away her tears.

"Hi, Mum and Dad," she whispered. "I miss you."

The storm had come on her birthday, but Elise now believed it wasn't a coincidence. It was a reminder from her parents - that even if she couldn't see them, they were always with her, in her heart.

Elise blinked back into the present.

"Elise! Come on!" her grandma called, rushing toward her with an umbrella.

Elise beamed and wrapped her in a warm embrace.

"Are you alright, love?" her grandma asked, surprised by the sudden affection.

"Better than ever," Elise replied.

#3 As the storm passed and she said her silent goodbyes, Elise and her grandma walked through the park, admiring the sky as it gave way to a golden sunset.

"Grandma?" Elise asked.

"Yes, sweetheart?"

"I was just thinking... I'm not scared of storms anymore."

~~Her grandma smiled. "Good for you. Why's that?"~~ [Her grandma smiled warmly. "That's wonderful, dear. What changed your mind?"]

Elise looked up at the sky and whispered,

"I don't know. They just feel like home."