

Section 1:

**#1 "One moment, Kai was walking home from the ration line, boots scuffing cracked pavement. The next, his feet were not touching anything. The street had peeled away like paper, leaving him suspended in air that smelled of static and burnt ozone."**

Strengths: Your opening immediately establishes an unsettling atmosphere. The contrast between normal walking and sudden weightlessness creates excellent tension.

Sentence fragments → Your second sentence lacks a subject and verb structure, making it read choppy. *"The next moment, he found his feet weren't touching anything."*

**#2 "Below—above—beside him, a voice echoed. "You okay?" He twisted in the air, pulse sharp in his throat. A girl hovered near a broken billboard, limbs tangled in a coat too big for her. She looked maybe fifteen, same as him. Her dark eyes shimmered with quiet panic."**

Strengths: Your description of the girl creates a vivid mental picture. The detail about her coat being too big adds authenticity to the character.

Limited sensory details → You focus primarily on visual elements when introducing this character. *"A girl hovered near a broken billboard, limbs tangled in a coat too big for her, her voice soft yet steady against the chaos around them."*

**#3 "And that simple contact—real, warm, human—felt like the first rule the world hadn't broken. Suddenly, Kai's feet found ground. Real ground. Cold and solid. Gravity returned like a heartbeat. Around them, the chaos quieted. A moment of stillness."**

Strengths: Your connection between human contact and temporary stability creates a powerful emotional moment. The short sentences effectively build the significance of this grounding.

Underdeveloped transition → The shift from floating to standing happens too abruptly without explaining the connection. *"And that simple contact—real, warm, human—felt like the first rule the world hadn't broken. Like an anchor finding its hold, Kai's feet gradually settled onto ground. Real ground. Cold and solid."*

■ Your piece creates a fascinating post-apocalyptic world where reality itself seems broken. The emotional core between Kai and Juno provides a strong foundation, but you could deepen this connection by showing more of their immediate reactions to each other. Try including small gestures or expressions that reveal character—perhaps Kai notices something specific about Juno that makes him trust her, or Juno has a particular way of speaking that feels reassuring. Also, consider expanding on how this "glitching" world affects everyday life. You mention rations spoiling quickly, but what other

adaptations have people made? Adding these concrete details will make your world feel more lived-in and believable. Your dialogue works well, but try varying the emotional tone—perhaps mixing moments of unexpected humour with the despair to create a more textured experience for your readers.

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**Score: 42/50**

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Section 2:

One moment, Kai was walking home from the ration line, boots scuffing cracked pavement. ~~The next, his feet were not touching anything.~~ [The next moment, his feet were not touching anything.] The street had peeled away like paper, leaving him suspended in air that smelled of static and burnt ozone. #1

He didn't scream. He just closed his eyes.

He was used to falling upward.

The city glitched around him. Neon signs bled colours they shouldn't have—reds that hummed like bees, greens that tasted like peppermint on the back of his tongue. A train hung sideways between buildings, its passengers floating inside like fish in a bowl. Somewhere, a child laughed. Somewhere else, someone cried.

Kai clutched his ration bag to his chest like it mattered. It didn't. Food spoiled in minutes now. Time couldn't make up its mind.

~~Below—above—beside him, a voice echoed.~~ [From somewhere—below, above, beside him—a voice echoed.]

"You okay?"

He twisted in the air, pulse sharp in his throat. A girl hovered near a broken billboard, limbs tangled in a coat too big for her. She looked maybe fifteen, same as him. Her dark eyes shimmered with quiet panic. #2

"I'm Juno," she offered.

"Kai."

They drifted, ~~tetherless~~ [tetherless], weightless.

"This world..." he started, but stopped. The sentence didn't have an end. There was too much to say, and no real words left.

"My brother disappeared yesterday," Juno said softly. "He stepped through a wall that turned to water. He looked back once. Then it froze. Solid. Like he'd never been there."

Kai didn't know what to say. His dad had walked into a mirror last year. Just vanished. His mom hadn't spoken since.

He blinked hard.

"I hate this," he whispered.

Juno reached out, her gloved fingers brushing his wrist. "Me too."

And that simple contact—real, warm, human—felt like the first rule the world hadn't broken. Suddenly, ~~Kai's feet found ground.~~ [Kai's feet gradually found ground.] Real ground. Cold and solid. Gravity returned like a heartbeat. Around them, the chaos quieted. A moment of stillness. #3

"I think," Juno said slowly, "when we remember each other, the world remembers how to hold together."

Kai stared at her, his chest tight.

Maybe the world was not broken. Maybe it was grieving.

And maybe they were not lost.

Not if they remembered what it felt like to care.