

## Section 1:

**#1 - Opening paragraph:** "I lay on my bed, silent yet still conscious, the bed smoldering like a furnace. I tossed and turned, unable to drift away. The chronic ticks of the clock, the loud clicking of cicadas outside, the stealthy spider scuttling up my bedroom window were all uncomfortable reminders of what would happen tomorrow."

**Strengths:** Your opening creates strong atmosphere through sensory details like the ticking clock and cicadas. The simile "smoldering like a furnace" effectively shows the character's discomfort.

**Weakness:** Unclear narrative focus → The paragraph jumps between different sensory experiences without clearly connecting them to the main emotion. The phrase "chronic ticks of the clock" uses "chronic" incorrectly, and "what would happen tomorrow" remains too vague for readers to understand the source of anxiety.

**Exemplar:** *I lay on my bed, tossing and turning as anxiety kept me awake. The steady ticking of the clock reminded me that tomorrow's sleepover was getting closer, filling me with dread.*

**#2 - Middle section:** "I nervously figured with my soaked hair, an earthy taste plagiarizing my nose. Shuffling towards Dylan's front door, I rang the doorbell, triggering a melodic tune from a Mozart concerto that greeted my ears. The delicious smell of his mum's lemon tarts wafting into my nose."

**Strengths:** You include specific details like "Mozart concerto" and "lemon tarts" that make the scene feel real. The sensory descriptions help readers imagine the setting.

**Weakness:** Confusing word choices → The phrase "figured with my soaked hair" doesn't make sense, and "plagiarizing my nose" is an incorrect use of the word plagiarising. The sentence fragments make the writing hard to follow.

**Exemplar:** *I nervously smoothed down my wet hair, the earthy smell of rain filling my nostrils. As I shuffled towards Dylan's front door and rang the doorbell, a melodic Mozart tune chimed, and the delicious smell of his mum's lemon tarts drifted out.*

**#3 - Conclusion:** "The next morning, I drove home, and leapt on my bed. Adventures are great, but there is no place like home, I thought."

**Strengths:** Your ending connects back to the title nicely. The simple message about appreciating home after an adventure is clear and relatable.

**Weakness:** Rushed resolution → The conclusion feels too quick after building up the sleepover anxiety throughout the story. You don't show how the character's feelings changed or what specific moments helped them feel better about being away from home.

**Exemplar:** *The next morning, as I drove home clutching my purple dragon, I realised that whilst the sleepover had been scary at first, sharing my fears with Dylan had made everything better. Adventures are great, but there is no place like home, I thought.*

■ Your piece shows good creativity in exploring the common childhood experience of sleepover anxiety. You've chosen an interesting angle by focusing on homesickness and the fear of judgement. Your writing includes lovely sensory details that help readers picture the scenes, particularly the descriptions of different rooms having distinct scents. However, your story would benefit from clearer connections between ideas and smoother sentence structure. Additionally, you could develop the emotional journey more thoroughly by showing specific moments where the character's feelings change, rather than jumping quickly from anxiety to resolution. Also, some word choices need attention to ensure they convey your intended meaning clearly. Furthermore, the middle section where the character discovers Dylan also has plushies could be expanded to show more of their conversation and friendship developing. Your ending message is heartwarming, but showing the character's growth throughout the experience would make it more powerful.

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**Overall Score: 42/50**

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## Section 2:

### No Place Like Home

#1 ~~I lay~~ [I lay] on my bed, silent yet still conscious, the bed ~~smoldering~~ [smouldering] like a furnace. I tossed and turned, unable to drift away. The ~~chronic ticks~~ [constant ticking] of the clock, the loud clicking of cicadas outside, the stealthy spider scuttling up my bedroom window were all uncomfortable reminders of what would happen tomorrow.

Dread fogging my vision, I crept down the stairs. I had to check. Just one more time. I rustled through my bag, jammed with clothes, books, a gift, my device and a carefully inserted miniature toy dragon in between a spare set of clothes for comfort. I prayed that nobody would notice it.

~~Soundlessly creeping back up the stairs, screeching in protest, as a cat would if I stepped on its tail.~~ [I crept soundlessly back up the stairs, which screeched in protest like a cat whose tail had

been stepped on.] The salty tang of sweat polluted my nose as I pulled the cover over my head, and after the everlasting fight between consciousness and drowsiness, I finally drifted off.

#2 The next morning, I woke up as the scream of the ~~alarm clock~~ [alarm clock] assaulted my ears. Today I was prey, being hunted by the icy touch of homesickness and judgement. I reluctantly swung my bulging bag of possessions into the boot and stepped into the car, feeling like a criminal being escorted into a police car. The light rain drummed an artistic rhythm on the windshield, before being swooped away by the wiper immediately.

~~I nervously figured with my soaked hair, an earthy taste plagiarizing my nose.~~ [I nervously smoothed my soaked hair, an earthy scent filling my nostrils.] Shuffling towards Dylan's front door, I rang the doorbell, triggering a melodic tune from a Mozart concerto that greeted my ears. ~~The delicious smell of his mum's lemon tarts wafting into my nose.~~ [The delicious smell of his mum's lemon tarts wafted into my nose.]

"Welcome!" ~~Exclaimed~~ [exclaimed] Dylan, showing me my appointed room for my sleepover.

#3 Dropping my bag down on the bed, I followed Dylan through the tour of his house, each room having its distinct scent, a unique personality - My room smelled of roses, Dylan's room ~~smelling~~ [smelt] of mint, and so on. Captivated by the attractions in the house, I completely forgot that I would be going face to face ~~my troubles~~ [with my troubles], a tug of war between who could crack the other first.

At night, I studied the light grey ceiling, taking in every detail, fault and layer, an unfamiliar map compared to my own ceiling. I took in the new feeling of the mattress, the new atmosphere within the room, an unfamiliar territory, weird but fresh. Maybe being away from home wasn't so bad after all, I thought.

I then took out my purple dragon. Hugging it, I quickly twisted my body so Dylan [,] who was walking past, wouldn't see, but it was too late.

"Hey, can I see your plushie?" ~~He requested.~~ [he requested.]

I froze. I anxiously nodded my head [,] and revealed it. Dylan unexpectedly nodded in approval, then complimented my plushie.

"Hey, I didn't know that anybody had ~~on~~ [one] of these anymore!"

Dylan paused [,] and showed me his collection.

The next morning, I drove home [,] and leapt on my bed. Adventures are great, but there is no place like home, I thought.