

Section 1:

#1 - Opening paragraph with the "icy finger" and mother's appearance **Strengths:** Your opening creates immediate tension and mystery with the "icy finger" metaphor. You also paint a clear picture of the mother's changed appearance with details like "smaller than I had recalled, hair streaked with grey."

Weakness: Unclear metaphor connection → The "icy finger" that "had disappeared many years ago" doesn't clearly connect to the mother's presence. Readers might wonder what this finger represents and how it relates to her return.

Exemplar: *I felt something cold touch my shoulder - a feeling I hadn't experienced since she left all those years ago.*

#2 - Leo's internal conflict and angry thoughts

Strengths: You capture Leo's mixed emotions well, showing both anger and love. The contrast between wanting to yell and seeing her "weary eyes" filled with love creates realistic internal conflict.

Weakness: Awkward sentence structure → The phrase "years of nasty things to yell at her" and "anger stabbed at my tongue" sound unnatural and interrupt the flow of Leo's thoughts.

Exemplar: *For a moment, all the angry words I'd saved up over the years rushed to my mind.*

#3 - The reunion embrace and ending **Strengths:** Your ending creates a touching moment of forgiveness and connection. The image of them embracing while everything else "fades away" shows their strong bond.

Weakness: Incomplete sentence structure → The phrase "just like before,- many years ago" has incorrect punctuation, and "could no longer let go" creates confusion about whether Leo wants to hold on or let go.

Exemplar: *I felt her warmth, just like I remembered from years before.*

■ Your piece captures a powerful moment of reunion between a son and his long-absent mother. The emotions feel genuine, and you've chosen an interesting setting with the train station. However, your writing would benefit from clearer sentence structures and smoother connections between ideas. Some of your metaphors, like the "icy finger," need clearer explanations so readers can follow your meaning. Additionally, work on making your sentences flow more naturally by avoiding awkward phrases. You could also strengthen the middle section by showing more of Leo's thoughts and feelings during their conversation. Consider breaking up some of your longer sentences into shorter, clearer ones. This will help readers follow Leo's emotional journey more easily and make the reunion scene even more impactful.

Overall Score: 39/50

Section 2:

#1 I felt an icy finger tap my shoulder – one that had disappeared many years ago. "Leo?" I turned. The voice was shaky, hesitant, but it cut right through me. My mother stood there, smaller than I had recalled, hair streaked with grey. She had a faint smile plastered across her warm face. For a moment ~~anger stabbed at my tongue, years of nasty things to yell at her~~ [angry words rushed to my mind, all the harsh things I'd wanted to say to her]. Why would she leave me? Why would she leave me... with him? But then I saw her weary eyes – full of exhaustion, but filled with love that I once knew.

#2 "Mum," I whispered [.] ~~as if the words alone were about to shatter into millions of pieces if I spoke too loudly~~ [The word felt fragile, as though speaking too loudly might break the moment]. She nodded. Her lips trembled as though she wanted to say something, but nothing came out. At that moment, I ~~gawked at~~ [looked at] her ~~a bit~~ [], noticing her weariness and ~~eyebags~~ [dark circles under her eyes]. She finally managed to find her voice. "I never stopped thinking about you," she said quietly with a slight crack ~~between~~ [in] her words. I swallowed hard, my throat burning. "Why didn't you come back sooner?" "I was afraid," ~~a lump formed in her throat~~ [she said, her voice catching]. "I was afraid of your father, and what reaction it would pull out of you."

#3 "Father died 3 years ago," I replied almost immediately. I felt her arms wrap around me, full of warmth and affection, just like before,- many years ago[, many years ago]. I couldn't help but embrace her back. I closed my eyes. The years apart had been ~~weighed down~~ [filled] with many questions, but in that moment, the answers didn't matter. What mattered was the mother ~~that~~ [who] had returned, and the son who could ~~no longer~~ [finally] let go. The station faded around us. No train, no noise, no strangers passing by ~~that~~ [who] could touch the memories ~~flood~~ [flooding] back between us. For the first time in years, I finally felt whole again.