

## Section 1:

**#1** - Opening paragraph: "The train hissed as it halted to a stop, brakes screeching like it wanted to hold onto something it couldn't. Crowds spilled onto the platform, faces blurred by years."

**Strengths:** Your vivid imagery creates an immediate emotional atmosphere. The metaphor of the train wanting to hold onto something establishes the theme of loss and longing effectively.

**Weakness: Sentence flow interruption** → The phrase "faces blurred by years" creates confusion because faces cannot literally be blurred by time passing. This makes the reader pause unnecessarily. Additionally, the sentence structure feels choppy when moving from the train description to the crowd description without smooth connection.

**Exemplar:** *Crowds spilled onto the platform, their familiar features softened by the years that had passed.*

**#2** - Dialogue exchange: "'You look older,' she said. He gave a broken laugh. 'That happens when you wait too long to see someone you love.'"

**Strengths:** Your dialogue feels natural and reveals character emotions without explaining them directly. The broken laugh shows his vulnerability perfectly.

**Weakness: Missing dialogue punctuation** → Your writing lacks proper punctuation marks after dialogue tags, particularly full stops. The sentence "Her lip trembled. She looked away, biting down the quiver in her chin. 'Why now?'" should have better connection between the actions and speech.

**Exemplar:** *"You look older," she said. He gave a broken laugh. "That happens when you wait too long to see someone you love." Her lip trembled as she looked away, biting down on the quiver in her chin. "Why now?"*

**#3** - Final paragraph: "And in the middle of a crowded station, years of absence collapsed into a single, trembling embrace."

**Strengths:** Your conclusion brings the story full circle with powerful imagery. The contrast between the crowded public space and their private moment works well.

**Weakness: Unclear time reference** → The phrase "years of absence collapsed" creates confusion about what exactly is collapsing. Time cannot physically collapse, and this metaphor becomes unclear when combined with the physical embrace.

**Exemplar:** *And in the middle of a crowded station, the weight of their years apart dissolved into a single, trembling embrace.*

■ Your piece demonstrates strong emotional storytelling with genuine feeling between the characters. The reunion scene captures the nervousness and hope that comes with reconnecting after a long separation. However, your writing would benefit from clearer connections between sentences and paragraphs. Additionally, some of your metaphors need refinement to avoid confusing readers. You should focus on making your time references clearer throughout the piece. Also, check that your dialogue punctuation follows standard rules. Furthermore, consider strengthening the middle section where the characters first speak to each other, as this part feels slightly rushed compared to your detailed opening and closing. Your character development shows promise, particularly in how you show their emotions through actions rather than just telling us about them.

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**Score: 43/50**

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## Section 2:

### Bracing for a Hug

**#1** The train hissed as it halted to a stop, brakes screeching like it wanted to hold onto something it couldn't. Crowds spilled onto the platform, ~~faces blurred by years~~ [their familiar features softened by the years that had passed]. He stood near the yellow line, palms damp, his chest tight as if the years of silence had been stuffed into his ribcage.

And then he saw her.

**#2** She was taller than the last time, of course she was, but her walk carried that same uneven rhythm he remembered, one foot always a half-beat behind the other. She scanned the crowd, uncertain, clutching the strap of her backpack so tightly her knuckles had gone pale.

"Lena," he called.

Her head turned sharply towards him, and for a moment she didn't move. Just stared, the air between them heavy with the years he had missed. He opened his arms, foolishly wide, like the gesture alone could make up for everything. She took a step forward. Then another. Finally, she stood in front of him, eyes tearing.

"You look older," she said.

He gave a broken laugh. "That happens when you wait too long to see someone you love." ~~Her lip trembled. She looked away, biting down the quiver in her chin. "Why now?" The question was soft, but it sliced. "Because I finally found the courage," he whispered. "And because I never stopped wanting to."~~ [Her lip trembled as she looked away, biting down on the quiver in her chin. "Why now?" The question was soft, but it sliced through the air between them. "Because I finally found the courage," he whispered. "And because I never stopped wanting to."]

Silence hung. The noise of the station seemed far off, like another world. He braced himself for her to turn, to walk away, to leave him with the years he had already squandered. But instead, she dropped her backpack with a thud and pressed herself against him, arms clinging so tightly his breath caught.

"I hated you," she murmured. "So much. But I missed you more."

He closed his eyes, resting his chin on top of her hair, afraid if he spoke too quickly it would shatter. "I'll take whatever you'll give me. Anger. Forgiveness. Anything. Just... let me be here now."

She pulled back, eyes glowing red. "Then don't leave again."

"I won't," he said, steady this time, as though making a vow to the bones in his body.

~~#3 And in the middle of a crowded station, years of absence collapsed into a single, trembling embrace.~~ [And in the middle of a crowded station, the weight of their years apart dissolved into a single, trembling embrace.]