### \*\*5. Is the story credible?\*\*

\*\*5 – Totally agree\*\*

The internal narration, emotional nuance, and depiction of high-level corporate stress are entirely believable. The dynamic between the former friends and their diverging life paths is deeply relatable and psychologically astute.

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### \*\*6. Does the text require your participation or cooperation to complete its form and meaning?\*\*

\*\*4 – Agree\*\*

While the plot is clear on a surface level, the full emotional resonance relies on the reader’s empathy and interpretive engagement with subtext, metaphor, and the significance of silent observation. The elliptical reunion and the story’s title invite deeper reflection.

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### \*\*7. Does it propose a new perspective on reality?\*\*

\*\*4 – Agree\*\*

The story challenges conventional ideas of success, suggesting that professional achievement may come at the expense of youth, idealism, health, and emotional well-being. It offers a clear-eyed but compassionate alternative to success-worship narratives by humanizing the high achiever rather than glamorizing him.

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### \*\*8. Does it propose a new vision of the genre it uses?\*\*

\*\*3 – Neutral\*\*

The story sits comfortably within the tradition of reflective literary fiction exploring personal disillusionment and aging. While not structurally innovative, it distinguishes itself with empathetic voice and insightful introspection. Its use of setting (the pool) as a liminal space is artfully done.

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### \*\*9. Does it give an original way of using the language?\*\*

\*\*3 – Neutral\*\*

The prose is clear, mature, and occasionally lyrical (“His shoulders sagged under the immense weight of worry…”), though it follows a conventional literary style. The strength lies more in the emotional intelligence of the narrator than in formal or experimental language play.