Hi Kitana,

Thank you for sharing your story “Collision.” It’s a story about a young girl who witnesses her parents fighting as they drive, and she struggles to comprehend what they’re doing and why they’re fighting.

**What’s working**

Making this story take place from Coral’s perspective works incredibly well. Because children are so innocent and naïve, their understanding of the world around them comes to them as if you’re staring at abstract art upside down. I’ve read very few stories told from the perspective of children, but when I have come across them, they’re masterfully done and break my heart. I come from a household of divorce—it was terrible—and I often found myself as a child watching my parents fight and standing there confused and upset because I didn’t understand why they were fighting. I get that feeling from this story.

As I read this story, from the outset, I could tell that this was a miserable marriage. The small details, such as the quietness in specific parts and the way that the slightest thing triggers a disagreement, speak volumes about how the mother and father in the story are at odds with one another and divorce is imminent. For example, when the mother speaks, the father ignores her and turns up the volume on the radio. The passive-aggressiveness and the detestation were precisely what you’d expect from a marriage on the rocks.

**What needs work**

While the story taking place from Coral’s point-of-view is exactly how this story should be told, it’d be more powerful had it been told in first-person. The story's impact remains when it’s told in third-person, but the emotional gut-punch of a small girl watching her parents fight from first-person would make it immensely more painful for the reader, which I think is the feeling you’re going for. Doing this would also allow for more creative freedom and make it read more smoothly.

Changing perspective from third- to first-person would make the conflict in the story more apparent. I wasn’t entirely sure what the conflict was at the set-up, and it made reading the story a little tricky. It wasn’t until the second reading, right at the end, that I understood the conflict was that Coral wanted her parents to stop fighting, and that’s when the conflict was resolved.

This is a very small nitpick that’s inconsequential, but I feel it should be brought up. When Coral is kicking her feet, specifically when it says “an alternating, patterned clunk clunk clunk clunk,” you should format those clunks using hyphens to make a pattern, so the reader subvocalizes the clunking in their head.

I’m excited to read the revision!

All the best,

Payton Ison