

I Belong, Just like Penny

By: Aiden Van

Category: Writing

Once upon a time, in a sparkly school supply box, there lived a lonely little #1 Pencil named Penny. Penny wasn't like the others in the box. While all the other pencils were #2 Pencils, with sharp tips and soft, perfect leads, Penny was different. Her lead was harder and darker, she couldn't even erase like the others.

Penny was often left behind, rolled to the corner of the box when the teacher or students needed pencils. The #2 Pencils always seemed to have all the attention, with their smooth, creamy lead and fluffy erasers. Penny often wondered why she was like this and why she couldn't be like them.

Every time Penny tried to join in with the group, the others would roll their eyes and whisper behind her back.

"You're so different," said Paul, a sleek #2 Pencil who was always so confident and perfectly sharpened. "You're just... too dark. Stay away, you are not like us at all."

Penny's eraser was small and worn down, barely able to fix any mistakes. It seemed like she didn't belong in a world full of perfect, pointy pencils. She had no one to talk to, and often, when it came to choosing pencils for assignments, she was overlooked.

"I'm not good enough," Penny would sigh as she watched the other pencils being picked for math homework or art class, feeling smaller as they bragged about all the things they had written that day. She was only used for heavy-duty projects, such as writing in bold letters or drawing thick, dark lines on paper. Sometimes she'd be chosen to outline shapes or add permanent marks, but it wasn't often enough to make her feel useful.

But one afternoon, after the bell rang for class to start, the teacher made an exciting announcement.

"Class, today we're going to have a drawing contest!" she said. "You'll need to find two pencils for this assessment, and we're going to see who can make the best drawing. Each pencil has a unique twist, so choose wisely!"

Penny felt a spark of hope. "Maybe this is my chance! Maybe this time, I'll be noticed for what I can do!" But as the pencils got plucked and picked, she was once again, left out. Rolling to the corner of the cup, she was just put in, waiting for a partner. But no one came for her.

"I guess I'm just not what they need," Penny thought sadly. "I'm too different, dark, and too hard. I don't fit in."

Just when Penny thought her chances were crushed, the teacher stated with a glimmer of excitement in her voice, "wait! I almost forgot there are two pencils left to be chosen, and one student!"

And just then, came out a pencil which was a #3 Pencil. Penny had never seen one before. It was a little different from the rest. Its lead was a bit softer than Penny's, but not as fluffy as the #2 Pencils. It was somewhere in between. It was sharp, but not as sharp as the others. Its eraser, like Penny's, was a little worn down, but it still had a certain and special charm.

The teacher smiled, "There you are, Alex, these are your pencils to use for this contest!"

Penny's heart raced. She wasn't alone anymore! A new pencil, one that was also different, just like her, was going to be her partner! Together, she believed they could make something special. Maybe now, she'd finally found a place where she belonged.

After school, in Alex's big, dark room, Penny and the new #3 Pencil introduced themselves to each other. "Hi, I'm Sam. What's your name?" "I'm Penny," she said nervously. As Penny and Sam settled into the place, they exchanged glances. Penny felt a spark of excitement. Sam seemed just as curious as she was.

"So, what are you best at?" asked Sam, his voice soft but confident.

Penny smiled. "Well, I usually work on outlining shapes with my bold lines. It's what I'm best at. I can make things stand out."

"Sounds like we're going to make a great team!" Sam said with a grin. "I'm good at adding details, the shading, and the soft edges. I'll fill in the small stuff while you do the heavy lifting." "Let's just hope Alex is a good drawer, haha," Penny smirked.

Together, they began sketching. Penny used her dark, bold lead to outline the shapes, creating thick, strong lines that stood out on the page. Sam, with his softer lead, filled in the details, adding shading to the pictures and smoothing out the edges where needed. Their partnership was perfect, Penny's strong lines complemented Sam's gentle but delicate work.

As they worked, she realized something important. Sam was just as unique as she was, and together, they could create something neither of them could do alone. And they built a close bond. They created contrast and harmony in every stroke.

Eventually, the contest day arrived, and the class gathered around to view the completed drawings. The teacher walked up to Penny's and Sam's artwork and smiled brightly.

The teacher soon gathered the students and praised their efforts. She said, "See? Not all pencils need to be the same. Some pencils are softer, some are harder, but each of you has distinctive qualities that make you special. Penny and Sam proved that being different is a good thing. You don't have to fit into one mold to make something beautiful."

The other pencils, who had once whispered behind Penny's back, now looked at her with admiration. Paul, the sleek #2 Pencil, rolled over to her with a sorrowful expression.

"I always thought you were just... different," Paul said. But today, you showed me that being different is actually a good cause. You and Sam really made a remarkable drawing, and I mean it."

Penny smiled and looked over at Sam, who beamed back at her. "we did it," she whispered. "we really did it."

From that day on, Penny no longer felt alone. She found someone who appreciated her for who she was. And Sam, the new #3 Pencil, had found a place where he could shine. After their accomplishment, together they became the most popular pencils in the box.

This story proves that "You don't have to be the same as everyone else to belong." You just have to find the right partner and the right place, where you're needed and cared for. This is more than enough.