

The Sound of the Pencil

Before I knew I loved drawing, I loved the sound of it. The scratch of a pencil on paper, the soft drag of shading, the quiet rhythm that made the rest of the world feel smaller. I was the kind of child who colored outside the lines, not to rebel, but because I forgot the lines were there.

No one told me drawing was a talent. It was not framed or praised or hung up on the fridge. It was just something I did, to pass the time, to calm my mind, to make sense of things I could not put into words.

In second grade, I started drawing faces. Not cartoon faces, but real ones. I watched people when they talked, noticing how one eyebrow lifted when they were unsure, or how someone smiled more with one side than the other. I would go home and try to draw it exactly as I remembered. Not perfect, just honest.

Now, I carry a sketchbook everywhere. It is full of strangers on buses, classmates during lectures, and my brother reading at the kitchen table. I never show most of it to anyone. I do not draw to be seen. I draw to pay attention.

That is what I have realized over time: my talent is not just in the drawing itself, but in how it trains me to see things clearly. To slow down. To notice.

It has also shaped the way I learn. When I study, I visualize everything. I connect ideas like shapes on a page. Even in subjects that seem far from art, math, science, history, I map out concepts the way I would sketch a face. One detail at a time.

I used to think talent had to look big, loud, visible, obviously impressive. Mine does not. It is quiet. It lives in the margins of my notebooks and in the way I watch the world. But it is there. And it means something to me.

Drawing has taught me more than technique. It has taught me how to be still. How to pay attention. How to take something ordinary and find meaning in the lines. I may never call myself an artist. But I know this is where my voice begins. With a pencil. With a page. And with the simple decision to look a little closer.