

# The Lost Pencil

Maya held her frayed, sparkly pink pencil, a gift from her nana, close as she entered her crowded classroom. It was more than just any pencil; it was her good luck charm, her secret keeper through endless pictures and tales. Its subtle glitter glimmered under the light of the classroom, reminding her constantly of love and support.

The morning flew by in a haze of numbers and words. At lunchtime, Maya opened her pencil case with glee, poised to doodle in her sketchbook. But her hand came up against nothing. Her heart pounded. The sparkly pink pencil was nowhere to be found.

Her heart dropped. She emptied her bag, then her desk, then her chair. Nothing. Tears welled in her eyes as she pictured it gone forever. Her friends, noticing that she was upset, joined the search, lifting books, checking corners, but to no use. Maya had a cold knot of despair form in her stomach. It was not just a pencil; it was a part of her heart. The afternoon crawled by, each minute making her feel the loss more.

once the last bell rang, as kids hastened out, Maya tarried, taking one last glance at the floor. "Finding something?" a soft voice inquired. Maya's gaze met Rohan, a kid from the back row who never really said much, by her side. He held a recognizable sparkly pink pencil in his hand.

Maya breathed in a gasp, her eyes wide with wonder and relief. "My pencil!" she breathed softly, her voice shaking.

Rohan presented it to her. "I picked it up by the art materials early in the morning," he mentioned softly. "It seemed special, so I kept it. I noticed you were gloomy throughout the day, but I did not want to disturb your classes."

As he turned it over to her, Maya saw something else. The tip, which had been blunt, was now tipped in a precise point. The tiny smudge of blue paint from the previous art class was erased. Rohan hadn't simply discovered it; he had taken care of it.

A warmth seeped through Maya's chest, dispelling

the initial coldness of sorrow. "Thank you, Rohan," she said, her throat constricted with emotion.

"Thank you so much."

Rohan offered a small, shy smile. "You're welcome." He then left quietly.

Holding her precious pencil, Maya understood it wasn't merely about retrieving her lucky charm. It was about the undeserved kindness of someone barely known to her, kindness that reflected care and compassion. It was a tiny act, but at the time, it was huge, reminding her that even in the most hectic school days, hearts are receptive and willing to assist. The shine of her pencil was brighter than ever, not only because it reflected light, but because it also seemed to reflect the soft, lovely presence of human decency.