

The pen loved to write.

Every day he would create lines and circles and squiggles and Zzzs. And even though he was a small pen, curiously he almost never ran out of ink.

He would often play with his other pen friends of different shapes and sizes. Some even had different coloring and could produce really neat lines next to his. It made his pen strokes stand out so much better. Cool!

One day, while the pen was doodling with his pen friends, an interesting new creature began drawing by him on the same piece of paper. It was nothing like he'd seen before. Big, bold strokes full of bright colors. It was so striking, and because he'd never seen one before, he thought he'd met a peacock.

His pen friends laughed at him, and told him it was a highlighter, not a peacock, silly. With such a beautiful turquoise color, he knew he wanted to spend some time creating lines with her.

In the coming months, whenever they happened to be on the same page, he would draw all sorts of new lines he'd never written before. His squiggles had daring spikes in them, his lines were curved, and he created new shapes that had never before existed. And the highlighter would come by and highlight his best lines, making them even more beautiful.

The pen even helped the highlighter with her highlighting. He showed her how if she got the angle just right, and drew in new ways, she could produce amazing new lines too.

They became the best of friends and even went they weren't writing and drawing on the same page every day, they still managed to laugh about their day's line work. A sense of understanding and deep love developed between the pen and the highlighter that he thought he had found the perfect partner.

Both their lines were made better by the other. The pen's normally drab lines sprung to life in her presence. The highlighter's radiance became much more approachable.

Until one day when the highlighter said she had to go away. But this time she wasn't coming back. She said it used up all her ink to travel so far to his page. And that she used more up than he did, even though it was the same distance.

He hadn't realized then that his pen had a sharp, spear-like tip that connected two points in straight lines, while hers was more like a razor-sharp blade that covered a vast area with a blanket.

Sadly, after that day, the pen and the highlighter never drew together again. He never laid down a path, she never blanketed it with her ink.

On that day, they both lost something. The pen lost the ability to store as much ink or for his lines to point to far off pages. The highlighter lost the ability to see beyond the small area she was coloring on.

And while the highlighter moved on to color the lines of other pens, the pen couldn't bring himself to draw squiggly lines with spikes further than the page he called home.

And as his ink drained in the months that followed, it never quite filled back up and overflowed as it once had. But the pen knew that one day he would come across another creature that would highlight his lines even better.

And he knew that if he found the right highlighter, together their lines would produce something better than both of them, that was created from the best of both of them.

A marker.