

Prose Honorable Mention
“When the Ink Flows” by Amaya Budd
Homeschool, 10th Grade

There’s nothing quite like a quality pen. There’s no shortage of run-of-the-mill pens, but finding a great pen is a challenge.

A high-quality pen is one from which the ink flows fluidly. It is a bold pen that doesn’t bleed through and is quick-to-dry. A high-quality pen is also well-balanced and comfortable to hold.

One pen that has met and exceeded the aforementioned criteria, is the Sharpie S-Gel Pen. While unique in many aspects, it is no different from any other pen in the fact that it was manufactured, sent to a distributor, and eventually shipped to a store. In which specific store my father found this pen is unknown and unimportant. The only necessary detail is that my father purchased this pen and brought it home. He used it for a time; I’m certain he greatly adored the pen. Perhaps unbeknownst to my father, my mother had taken a similar liking to the pen.

One day, my mother decided she must have this pen. Instead of buying one for herself, she stole my father’s. Having once held such a treasure, I can only assume he searched for his once-loved pen, perhaps he learned only later that she’d swiped it.

Regardless of the method of acquisition, my mother had obtained the pen of her dreams. I am sure she spent at least a small amount of time reveling in the quality of the pen, appreciating the way the ink flowed so smoothly from the tip.

She used her stolen treasure for a time. However, she eventually lost it, or perhaps the joy the pen brought her had faded into obscurity, ultimately leaving her mind altogether. This tragedy led to the moment I stumbled upon the magnificent pen tucked away in the back of a drawer.

I was ignorant of the magnitude of my discovery for only a short time before the full glory of the pen was brought to light. I decided I must have this splendid pen, so I stole from my mother the pen she had taken from my father.

With this pen, I wrote many papers, some for personal pleasure, most for school. This pen became an extension of my hand, one with which I could not bear to part. I have yet to find a pen that equaled its magnificence. Anything that needed to be handwritten was penned with the Sharpie S-Gel.

I had taken a Creative Writing class and used this pen weekly for any in-class assignments. In one such class, a friend of mine needed something to write with, so I lent him my beloved pen. I thought nothing of it at the time.

It was only once I had arrived home that I realized I was unable to locate my recently acquired treasure. I desperately rifled through my school bag over and over, but to no avail. I had to deal with the realization that my pen, the one with which I had written so many stories, was gone. I underwent a brief mourning period upon this realization.

One may wonder why I grieve for a pen if it is a mere writing utensil. It is for the simple reason that with my pen, I had slaved countless hours over papers, and jotted down many of my thoughts. I brought worlds into being with that pen and carefully constructed storylines and plots.

Certainly, there were other pens, but they weren't the same.

I spent that week sadly using pen after pen, trying to find one that could have some resemblance to my old one. In the depths of my mind, I held out a minute hope that maybe, just maybe, this friend had my pen.

I anxiously awaited the coming Monday, hoping to be reunited with my pen. Imagine my joy when I found that he indeed had my beloved pen! I'm sure he didn't mean to take it; it was merely a moment of distracted thought. I was thrilled to be able to use my favorite writing utensil again. Nevertheless, I had learned my lesson and never loaned it out again.

The week that followed was spent handwriting everything I conceivably could. I reveled in the feeling of my pen in hand once again. It made school notes less of a chore, my pen sailing effortlessly over the paper.

While I was elated that my pen had been returned, I was pained when I realized it was nearing the end of its eventful life. I was jotting down notes for school when it wrote its last word. My pen had lived a pleasant life; my only regret was not finding it sooner.

I've managed to locate more pens of the same make as my old one. I look forward to the journeys these pens will take me on.

My first Sharpie S-Gel pen will always hold a special place in my heart, and I look back fondly upon the pages written with it.

I hope that everyone will find a pen that inspires them to write something special, whether it's a story, a memoir, or just a fun little note. May each person find a pen that impacts them in the same way that mine affected me.