**Title : Who Am I at School?**

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Who am I? Sometimes, even I struggle to answer that question.

Especially during my teenage years, when I had to transfer schools twice because of my dad’s job, that question only grew louder in my mind. I had always found it hard to open up to people, but being thrown into unfamiliar places made me close off even more.

My first year at the new school, ninth grade, felt like a constant battle with loneliness. I sat alone in class, surrounded by unfamiliar voices and laughter that didn’t belong to me. Every lunch break became the hardest part of my day. While everyone else gathered in groups, sharing jokes and stories, I was completely alone.

Still, my mom packed me lunch every single day, carefully preparing my favorite foods. But I couldn’t bring myself to open it. I was terrified of how I would look sitting there, eating alone. So instead, I spent my lunch break sitting at my desk, drawing.

Drawing became my only comfort. For those brief moments, I could forget I was alone. That time with my pencil and paper became a small shield, a safe place where no one could hurt me.

But then, something I couldn’t ignore happened. One day, my mom came into my room and asked, “Why does it smell so bad in here?” We opened windows, cleaned the room, but the smell only got worse. Eventually, she discovered the source: the untouched lunches I had hidden under my bed. Day after day, they sat there, rotting, until the smell filled the whole room.

My mom didn’t say much. She just stared at the lunchboxes for a long time. I will never forget the look on her face. Realizing I had made her so sad broke something inside me.

That night, long after she left my room, I sat staring at the empty space where the lunchboxes used to be. I realized that the smell wasn’t just from the rotting food—it was the smell of my fear, my loneliness, and the parts of me I had tried so hard to hide.

For the first time, I allowed myself to cry—not just because I was sad, but because I finally understood that I didn’t want to live like this anymore.

My mom sat beside me in silence for a long time. And then, in the softest voice, she told me she had always worried about me but didn’t know how to help. That was the first time I truly realized how deeply connected we were—how my pain had become hers, even when I thought I was hiding it so well.

If I stayed this way, I would graduate as nothing more than a shadow. A person no one really knew. That night, I made a promise to myself: I had to change. Even if it was just a little, even if it scared me.

I started by looking around during lunch, searching for someone else who might be sitting alone. And then, one day, I found the courage to say hello. It was awkward and small, but that simple word opened a door.

That’s how I found my first real friends at this new school. Little by little, I began to step out of the world I had locked myself in.

Joining the school orchestra and art club became my next steps. Through them, I got to know teachers and classmates, and slowly, I became part of something.

At first, joining the orchestra felt overwhelming. I doubted myself, wondering if I was good enough to belong there. But little by little, the music started filling the empty spaces inside me. I found comfort in every note, every rehearsal, and every moment spent with others who shared the same passion. I was no longer just existing—I was truly living.

The girl who used to sit in the back, hidden away during performances, is now the one leading the first violin section. During major concerts, I’m even trusted with the microphone to introduce the orchestra and speak between performances.

Each time I stood up to speak, my hands trembled. But somewhere in the crowd, I could always find my mom smiling, her eyes full of pride. Music became more than just sound; it became my voice when words felt too heavy. Through every performance, I felt myself growing—braver, stronger, and more connected to the people around me.

School was once the place that made me feel the loneliest. But somehow, it also became the place where I started to change. Every small piece of courage, every step forward, began here—in this space called school.

School became more than just a place I had to go. It became a space where I learned what it meant to be seen, to be heard, and to be understood. For the first time, I realized that school wasn’t just where I learned math or history—it was where I slowly learned how to believe in myself.

Now, I wonder who I will become by the time I graduate. Will I look back and see someone I’m proud of? I think I will—because every step I take, no matter how small, is leading me toward that version of myself.

To some, I might still look like an ordinary student. But I know now that I’m someone who is growing—slowly but surely—into the person I want to become. And here, in this school, I am no longer invisible. I am someone I am choosing to be.

I am still a work in progress. But one thing is clear: At school, I want to be remembered as someone full of potential, someone still growing.

And I’m learning this every day: I am not done becoming myself. Every small act of courage is building me into someone I can be proud of. And so, here at school, I keep nurturing the possibility that lives within me.