

A few days before their own rough drafts were due, I showed my students how my rough draft had turned out. We used feedback cards to rank some of the writing skills I'd done mini lessons on. I was sure to point out how different my draft sounded here than it had in my writer's notebook entry; that *should* happen to writing as it develops, I told them.

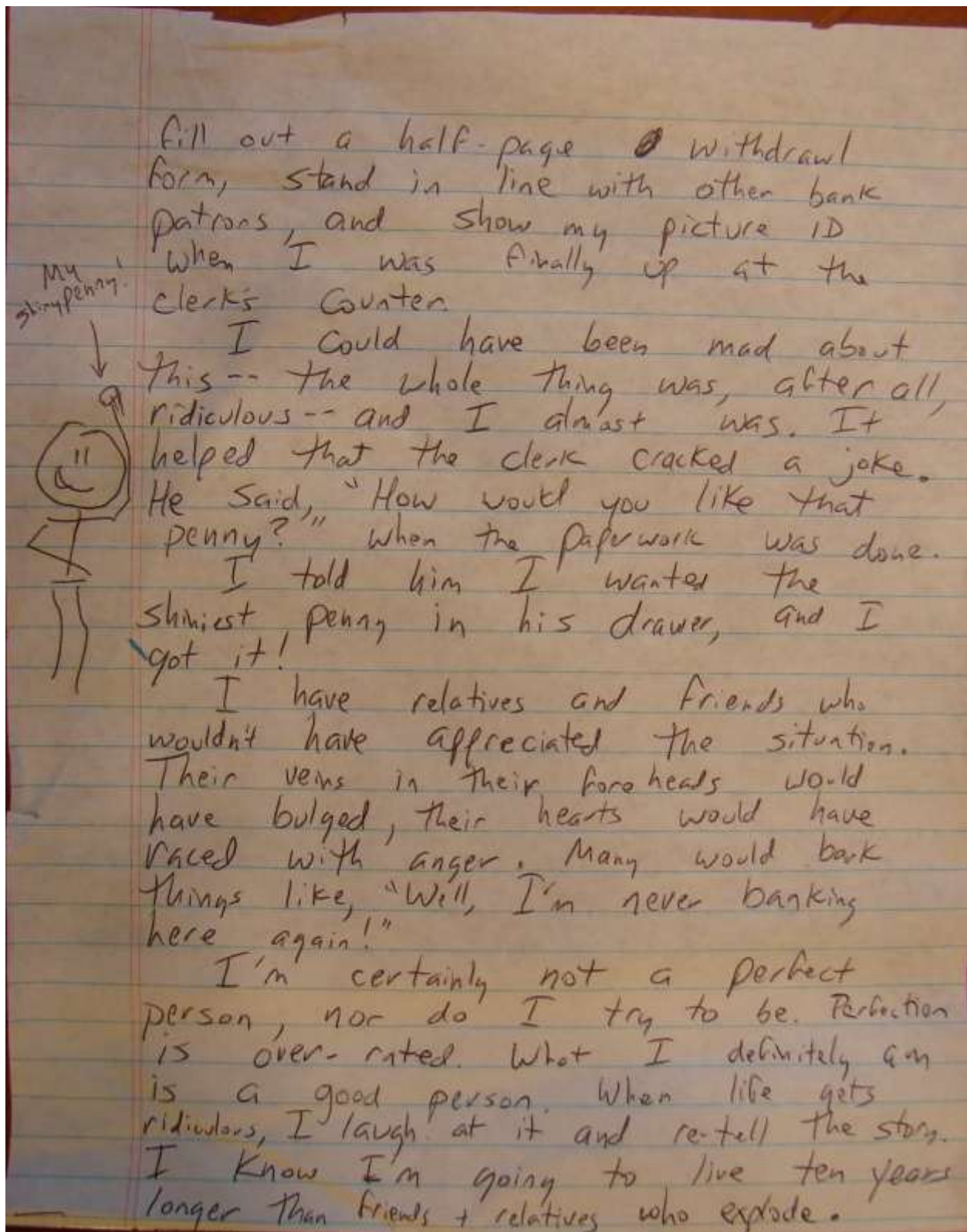
The Lesson of the Penny by Mr. Harrison

A coppery coin with no hint of tarnish was in my pocket. I learned a valuable lesson about patience from that shiny penny.

Recently I closed a bank account in order to transfer to a new, better account. On a Sunday, using my Internet skills, I emptied the old account of all money electronically. The following Tuesday, I entered the bank in order to officially sign that I wanted the old account deleted. The bank lady looked at me from across her desk and said, "This account isn't empty, sir. There's a balance of one cent."

Somehow the account I had emptied had earned one cent of interest over three days. When I told them I was fine -- that they could keep their penny -- I was told it couldn't work that way. In order to close the account, I would have to officially withdraw the penny.

It took twenty minutes. I'd much rather have been at home with my wife, but instead I had to



The best feedback I got from my kids was that the story sounded like a narrative, and I had told them I was trying to share a persuasive message. "Maybe you should move that part about 'people exploding to the beginning'" is what they told me.

I thanked them for the good idea. My second draft took this suggestion to heart.