

Sam was a snake who lived in a large cage at the zoo. The cage had both inside and outside areas. Sam's best friend was a lizard named Lilly who lived in the same cage.

Every day Sam and Lilly would lounge in the sun on a wide rock. People were always pointing at Sam and Lilly.

Lilly was very pretty. She had black and orange scales and yellow eyes. Sam was very dull. He had brown scales and even browner eyes.

Sometimes the kids who came to the zoo didn't even see Sam stretched out on the rock beside Lilly. Sam and the rock were the same shade of brown, so the kids didn't always notice Sam. The boys and girls only noticed Lilly.

Sometimes Sam was jealous. He wanted to be noticed too. He couldn't help being so very brown.

"What a beautiful lizard," the boys and girls would whisper to each other when they spotted Lilly. "Look at her black and orange scales. Look at her yellow eyes."

"She's not so lovely," Sam would whisper under his breath. Then he would feel awful because, after all, Lilly was his friend.

Lilly slept through the praise coming from the people on the other side of the fence. She only cared about the sun on her back, the warm rock beneath her, and her friend Sam.

Sometimes Lilly would reach out to catch a fly with one long whip of her tongue. The school children clapped when she caught one. But Lilly just ignored them and laid her head back down on the rock and fell back to sleep.

"How can you sleep with them watching you?" Sam hissed one day.

"Oh, I don't care about them, Sam," Lilly yawned. "I'm just glad we get to spend our days together." Sam felt better knowing he was perfect in Lilly's eyes.