

Section 1:

#1 "It was a miracle before my eyes; the plant had grown, and the seed my father had given me had finally turned into a flower. Day after day, month after month, I had nurtured this tiny seed, and now it was a beautiful flower. My heart pounded in my chest as I could only remember the promise my dad had made to me:"

Strengths: Your opening effectively establishes the emotional significance of the plant. Your use of repetition in "day after day, month after month" conveys dedication and persistence.

Weakness: Limited sensory details → Your description of the flower lacks specific visual elements that would help readers visualise this crucial moment. Phrases like "beautiful flower" are too general when describing something so central to your narrative.

"It was a miracle before my eyes; the delicate purple petals of the lily had unfurled, transforming the seed my father had given me into the flower he promised. Day after day, month after month, I had nurtured this tiny seed, and now its sweet fragrance filled my room as my heart pounded with hope."

#2 "I was only seven and didn't understand war, but my heart still clung to hope. Every day, I would water it, protect it against dangers, and whisper to it when I missed dad the most. Seasons passed; autumn became winter, winter became spring, but the seed remained a bare patch of dirt."

Strengths: Your reference to age provides important context. Your sentence about whispering to the plant effectively conveys emotional attachment and loneliness.

Weakness: Underdeveloped emotional landscape → While you mention not understanding war and missing your father, your inner thoughts and feelings aren't fully explored. The phrase "my heart still clung to hope" tells rather than shows your emotional state.

"I was only seven and couldn't grasp why Dad had to fight in a war so far away, but each morning I would kneel beside his seed, my small fingers carefully pouring water around its edges, whispering secrets and stories about my day, hoping somehow my voice would reach him wherever he was."

#3 "I placed the pot on a windowsill, making sure it had the right amount of sunshine and nutrients. Gradually, the shoot turned into a stem, stem to a bulb, until one night while I was looking at the bulb, observing, it happened. The bulb cracked, and out came a magnificent flower—a miracle was happening. My dad was going to come back; I was sure of it. I had completed my part of the promise, and all I could do was wait for my dad to complete his part."

Strengths: Your description of the plant's growth stages shows attention to detail. The emotional payoff of seeing the flower bloom effectively ties back to the promise.

Weakness: Rushed conclusion → The flowering scene feels hurried when it should be the emotional climax. Phrases like "it happened" and "a miracle was happening" miss opportunities to create suspense and fully explore this pivotal moment.

"Each evening after school, I would rush to the windowsill where I'd placed Dad's pot, carefully adjusting it to catch the golden afternoon light. Over weeks, I watched in wonder as the shoot stretched upward, thickening into a sturdy stem, then swelling into a tight green bulb. That Friday night, as I sat cross-legged before it, the bulb trembled slightly, then split with a soft crackling sound, revealing crimson petals that unfurled like a flag of victory—Dad's promise was blooming before my eyes."

Your narrative presents a touching story about hope, persistence and the symbolic connection between a child and their absent father. The core emotional premise works well, particularly the use of the growing plant as a symbol of hope for the father's return. Your writing would benefit from more fully developed scenes that slow down at crucial moments. When the plant finally sprouts and later blooms, these are key emotional turning points that deserve expanded detail. Additionally, you could deepen the characterisation by including more specific dialogue with family members who doubt the plant will grow.

The transitions between time periods need smoother connections. The sudden move to the city feels somewhat abrupt. You might consider adding a brief scene showing the child's initial reaction to this news before jumping to the practical problem of moving the plant. You've established a powerful premise with the father's promise. To strengthen this, consider adding a brief flashback showing the moment he gave the seed, which would help readers connect more deeply with both characters. Also, the ending leaves questions about whether the father returns. This ambiguity might be intentional, but adding subtle hints about the likelihood of his return would add emotional depth.

■ You could develop the emotions of your main character by showing more of their thoughts and feelings throughout the narrative. For example, when your brother scoffs at the seed, how does this make you feel? Additionally, consider adding more sensory details to key moments, like the feeling of soil between your fingers or the smell of the flower when it finally blooms. The move to the city during wartime offers an opportunity to contrast the harsh realities outside with the hope represented by the growing plant.

Overall score: 43/50

Section 2:

It was a miracle before my eyes; the plant had grown, and the seed my father had given me had finally turned into a flower. Day after day, month after month, I had nurtured this tiny seed, and now it was a beautiful flower. My heart pounded in my chest as I could only remember the promise my dad had made to me:

#1 "Take care of this seed no matter what. Water it, protect it, and if it grows and blooms, remember that I will come back from the war. I promise."

I was only seven and didn't understand war, but my heart still clung to hope. Every day, I would water it, protect it against dangers, and whisper to it when I missed dad the most. Seasons passed; autumn became winter, winter became spring, but the seed remained a bare patch of dirt. My mother told me not to put all my hope on the seed, and my brother just scoffed, saying the seed was just a thing dad had given me to make me feel better. However, I didn't give up. I made sure it got everything it needed and tried to make it grow by trying everything I knew.

#2 Then one day, as I trudged home from school, the weight of the ongoing war pressing heavily on my mind, I paused to peer into the garden. This time, instead of the usual barren patch of dirt, a small shoot had emerged, its delicate green leaves glistening in the sunlight. My heart leaped with an overwhelming sense of joy and relief; it may have been the smallest plant, barely a few centimetres tall, but it meant the world to me. The war had been raging for months, far longer than any of us had anticipated, casting a shadow over our daily lives. At a particularly tense moment, when my mother gathered my brother and me in the living room, her voice tinged with urgency, she announced that we were moving away. The war was approaching us, and it was no longer safe to stay in our rural home. We were relocating to the city, a place of unfamiliarity and bustling activity, but also a sanctuary from the conflict. As we prepared for our departure, I realised that the sprout in the garden could not be easily transported with us. Its roots were still embedded in the soil, and it was too fragile to be moved without care. Yet, it mattered too much to me to leave behind. With a sense of determination, I carefully dug the plant up, ensuring that I did not disturb its delicate root system. I placed it in a small pot, its soil still damp and fragrant, and clutched it tightly as we moved to our new apartment.

#3 I placed the pot on a windowsill, making sure it had the right amount of sunshine and nutrients. Gradually, the shoot turned into a stem, stem to a bulb, until one night while I was looking at the bulb, ~~observing, it happened.~~ [observing, I witnessed something remarkable.] The bulb cracked, and out came a magnificent flower—a miracle was happening. My dad was going to come back; I was sure of it. I had completed my part of the promise, and all I could do was wait for my dad to complete his part.