

Stories of Kindness and Courage

Inspired by the Teachings
of Pope Francis

The Little Seed and the Mustard Tree



Mia was seven years old and curious about everything. She loved finding tiny treasures - shiny pebbles, feathers, bottle caps - that she kept in a small wooden box under her bed.



One bright spring morning, her grandmother visited and pressed something into Mia's hand. It was so small, Mia almost thought she had dropped it.



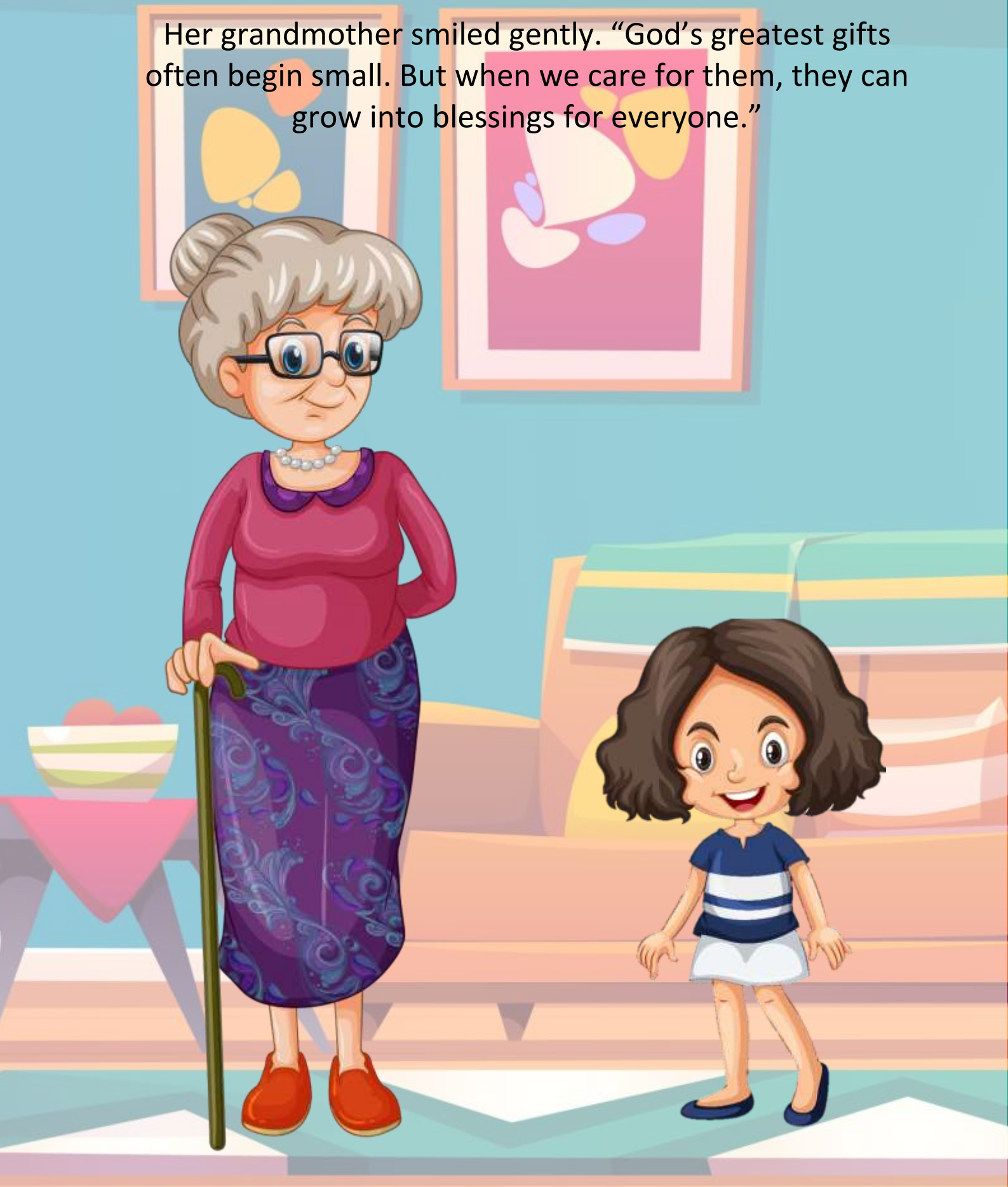
“A seed?” Mia asked, turning it over. “It’s smaller than an ant!”

Her grandmother nodded. “Yes, a mustard seed. It may look tiny, but inside is something very powerful. Plant it, water it, and see what happens.”



Mia stared at it. “But how can something so little do anything?”

Her grandmother smiled gently. “God’s greatest gifts often begin small. But when we care for them, they can grow into blessings for everyone.”



Mia carried the seed outside to the corner of the yard. She dug a hole with her fingers, tucked the seed in, and patted the soil.



The Waiting Game

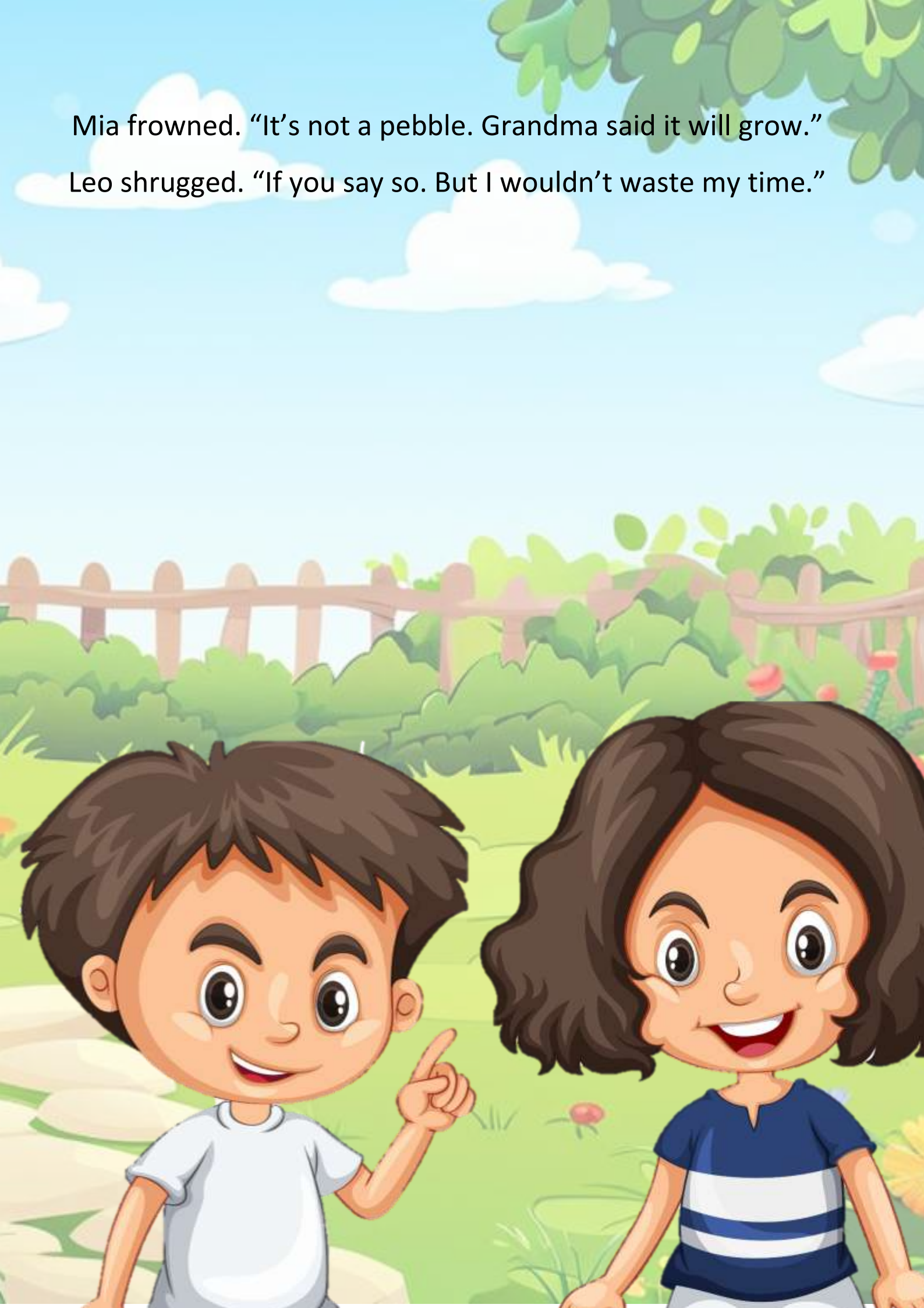
Every day, Mia watered the little patch of dirt. Every day, she checked. And every day... nothing.

After a week, her brother Leo leaned over the fence. "Still staring at dirt?" he teased. "Maybe you planted a pebble instead of a seed."



Mia frowned. "It's not a pebble. Grandma said it will grow."

Leo shrugged. "If you say so. But I wouldn't waste my time."



That night, Mia lay in bed, thinking. What if he's right?
What if it never grows?

But then she remembered her grandmother's voice: God's
greatest gifts often begin small. So she decided she
wouldn't give up.



The First Sprout

One morning, as Mia knelt by the soil, she gasped. A tiny green sprout poked its head above the dirt, like a little hand waving hello.

“It’s alive!” Mia shouted.



Leo ran over. “Whoa. You weren’t kidding!”

Each day, the sprout grew taller. Leaves unfolded like little umbrellas. A thin stem reached upward as though trying to touch the sky.

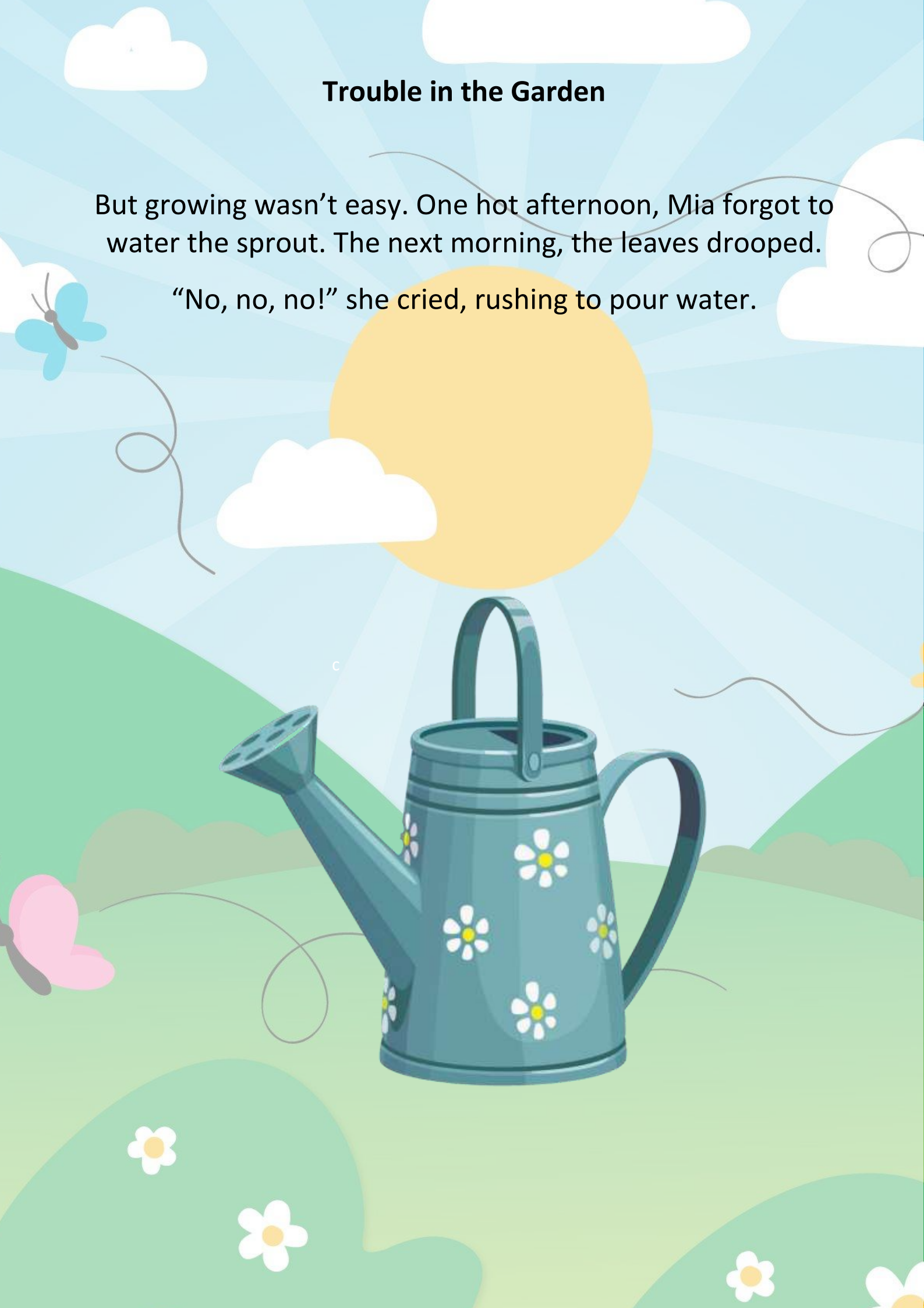
Mia felt proud. “See? Something so small really can grow.”



Trouble in the Garden

But growing wasn't easy. One hot afternoon, Mia forgot to water the sprout. The next morning, the leaves drooped.

"No, no, no!" she cried, rushing to pour water.



Another time, a gust of wind bent the fragile stem almost to the ground. Mia placed two sticks in the soil and tied the stem gently between them like a little guardrail.

And once, Leo's soccer ball rolled into the garden, almost crushing the plant. "Sorry!" Leo said sheepishly. "I'll be more careful."



Mia realized something important: the seed needed her love, her patience, her protection. It couldn't grow strong on its own.



A Tree for Everyone

By the end of summer, Mia's sprout was no longer small. It had become a tall tree with branches spreading wide.

Birds built nests among the leaves, singing cheerful songs every morning. The neighbours sat in its shade on hot afternoons. Mia and Leo tied a rope swing to one of the branches, and soon the yard was filled with laughter.



When Grandma came to visit, she placed her hand on the trunk. “Ah,” she said, her eyes twinkling. “Look at what love can do.”

Mia smiled. “It started so small, but now it helps everyone.”



Grandma nodded. "That's how kindness works too. A smile, a gentle word, a helping hand - each is like a tiny seed. Plant them, and they can grow into something big enough to shelter many hearts."



Mia's Realisation

That night, Mia opened her treasure box under the bed. She looked at the shiny pebble, the feather, the bottle cap... but then she thought of her tree outside, filled with birds and children's laughter.



She whispered a little prayer:

“God, thank You for the little things that grow into great things. Please help me plant seeds of kindness too.”



The next morning, she started. She helped her mom carry groceries. She shared her crayons with a friend. She even gave Leo the bigger cookie without complaining.

Leo blinked. “What’s gotten into you?”

Mia just smiled. “Just planting seeds.”





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