



Planting Seeds of Patience

A Comiri Family story



On Saturday morning, Dad carried a bag of potting soil into the garden, and Lila followed behind him with a packet of sunflower seeds.

‘I picked the biggest flower,’ she said, holding up the packet.

‘I can see that,’ Dad said. ‘You have ambitious plans.’

Together they filled a terracotta pot with soil. Lila chose one striped seed, made a little hole with her finger, and tucked it inside.

She patted the soil gently.

‘How long until it grows?’

Dad brushed the dirt from his hands and smiled.

‘Long enough for you to ask me that question more than once.’

Lila grinned.

‘I can do that.’



The next morning, Lila came into the kitchen while Dad was making coffee.

She was still wearing her pajamas.

‘I have to check something.’

Dad already knew where she was going.

Lila hurried over to the pot and leaned close enough that the end of her nose almost touched the soil.

‘It looks exactly the same.’

Dad carried his mug over and looked too.

‘Yep. That looks like a pot of dirt.’

After lunch, Lila checked again.

Before dinner, she checked one more time.

Each visit ended with the same careful inspection.

Finally, she looked at Dad.

‘Are you sure I planted it right?’

‘I am,’ he said. ‘The interesting part is happening under the soil.’

Lila looked back at the pot.

That made it much more interesting.



Dad crouched beside her.

'The seed starts by taking in water,' he explained. 'Then a little root begins growing down into the soil. After that, a shoot starts reaching up.'

Lila lowered her face toward the pot.

'Can you hear it?'

Dad leaned closer too.

They both listened.

The garden was full of sounds. A bird chirped from the fence. Leaves rustled above them. Somewhere nearby, a lawn mower started.

The sunflower seed remained very quiet.

Dad smiled.

'I think growing must be quiet work.'

Lila nodded thoughtfully.

'I think it is busy work too.'

'I think you are probably right.'



Every morning, Lila checked the soil with one finger.
When it felt dry, she gave it a little water.
One afternoon, she tipped the watering can a little too far.
Dad reached over and helped her straighten it.
'A little drink is plenty.'
Lila turned the pot so the other side faced the sunlight.
'Everybody gets a turn in the sun,' she said.
'Even sunflowers,' Dad agreed.

Some days Lila talked to the pot while she watered it.
She told it about school.
She told it about a ladybug she had found on the fence.
Once, she told it what they were having for dinner.
Dad heard that one from the kitchen.
'I hope the sunflower likes tacos.'
Lila laughed.
'I think everybody likes tacos.'



A few mornings later, Lila walked past the pot and stopped.
She backed up.
Then she leaned in.
A tiny green curve had pushed through the soil.
'Dad!'
He came outside carrying a dish towel.
'What happened?'
Lila pointed.
'Look!'
They bent over the pot together.
Two little green leaves were beginning to open.
Dad smiled.
'Well, hello there.'
Lila touched the edge of the pot with both hands.
'It was really growing the whole time.'
'It was.'
She looked at the tiny sprout again.
'I thought I was waiting.'
Dad nodded.
'You were. And you were taking care of it while you waited.'
Lila liked that idea.



After that, Lila began noticing slow things everywhere.
She watched a green tomato turn yellow, then orange, then finally red.
She checked a flower bud every morning until one day its petals opened wide
in the sun.

One afternoon, she and Dad made bread.
They covered the dough with a towel and left it on the counter.
When they came back, Lila lifted the towel.

‘It got huge!’

Dad laughed.

‘So did you.’

Lila looked down at herself.

‘I did?’

‘Absolutely. Your pajama pants are getting too short again.’

Lila pulled at one pant leg and considered this.

‘So I have been growing when I wasn’t looking too.’

Dad smiled.

‘That happens a lot.’



Weeks passed, and the sunflower climbed higher.
Lila watered it before breakfast whenever the soil felt dry.
Dad helped her move the pot when it needed more sun.
Soon the plant was taller than Lila.
Then it was taller than Dad.

One morning, Dad called from the garden.
'Lila, come see.'
She ran outside.
The sunflower had opened.
Its enormous golden face stretched toward the morning light.
Lila stood beside it for a long moment, smiling.
'That took forever,' she said.
Dad laughed.
'It did feel that way.'
Lila looked at the flower, then at the small watering can she had carried outside with her.
'I'm glad we kept taking care of it.'
Dad put an arm around her shoulders.
'So am I.'
Lila tipped the watering can toward the soil.
Tomorrow there would be something else to notice.