



Please Grow

Sumi wants her plants to grow, but they're not doing so well. A lucky run-in with a real farmer leaves Sumi with many tips and tricks, and even with seeds! Will she finally be able to grow her own food?



Please Grow
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Let's Read

 **The Asia Foundation**



What was wrong with my plants? The stem was skinny, and some

leaves were turning yellow. Were my plants infected? “Sumi, please deliver these clothes,” Mom said. My plants would have to wait.



Ouch, the sun was stinging my skin. I needed to hurry. There were three

addresses that I needed to deliver clothes to.



Hooray! There was only one destination left, Mbak Kinan. I'd never been

to her house. Usually, Dad or Mom delivered clothes there.*Mbak is a term of respect that means “Miss” or “elder sister.” It is used in Indonesia.



I sped up so I could quickly go back to my plants. Oh no, a wheel from

my basket fell off. As I was tightening the wheel, I noticed a kid biking from the corner of my eye. What was that kid doing?



“Next time be careful. Look, you ruined this plant,” I scolded

him. Luckily, there were some stems that survived. Wait, this wildflower was flowering without any care. Why couldn't my plants do the same?



I continued my walk to Mbak Kinan's house. Ah, there was Mbak Kinan. I

gave her a the bag full of clean clothes and turned to leave.



“Wait, Sumi. Please take these dirty clothes with you,” said Mbak

Kinan. As I waited I noticed a plant on the railing. Where did it come from? “There are more upstairs. Do you want to see?” asked Mbak Kinan.



I definitely wanted to. I was curious what kind of plants were up there.



“Whoa! Why do you have so many vegetables, Mbak?” “To sell them.”

I'm farming while also attending college," answered Mbak Kinan. Farming? How did it work?



Mbak Kinan told me about all the steps from planting the seeds to

harvesting them. Turns out Mbak Kinan didn't do it alone. Her friends helped her.



While walking around, I observed the leaves and the stems of the

plants. Ah, if only my plants were this healthy.



“Mbak, I’d also like to farm, but my plants are never this fertile. Please

teach me," I said to Mbak Kinan. "That's great, let's start with planting the seeds," said Mbak Kinan.



“Loosen the soil, add the compost, then mix well. Plant the seed in the

soil, water it daily. After the bud has grown, move it to a bigger pot,” Mbak Kinan instructed. As I followed along, I realized the soil that I had used at home wasn’t loose enough.



“Here are some spinach seeds and fertilizer. Try to plant them at

home,” said Mbak Kinan. Wow, it was my lucky day! I thanked Mbak Kinan and hurried home.



As soon as I got home, I jumped right in. Oh, I needed another pot. Aha!

These used detergent containers could work as pots.



I made sure every container was clean with no soap residue. After that,

I planted the seeds following Mbak Kinan's instructions.



Done! I would wait for the spinach seeds to grow. I hoped this would

work. Oh, no!



This was so troublesome. I had to start over again. I planted the

remaining seeds. But what if the cats bumped into the pot again?



Aha! This place looked safe. Hopefully the thorns from the roses would

protect my soon-to-be spinach.



Every day I checked on my seeds. I also remembered to water them

daily.



After a week, no buds appeared. When I touched the soil, it felt dry. The

sun was so hot it was drying out the soil. I knew a way to keep the soil damp! I learned it from a farming video. I waited again...



Whoa! My spinach seeds grew! Waiting for the seeds to grow had

required patience. As soon as the buds appeared, I felt so happy. I smiled all day.



Day by day, the tiny buds grew bigger and bigger. The fresh leaves

were ready to be harvested and enjoyed. When I grow up, I will be a farmer!



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profit organization that develops children's literacy through children's literature.

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Let's Read is an initiative of The Asia Foundation's Books for Asia program that fosters young readers in Asia and the Pacific.

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Published by The Asia Foundation - Let's Read,

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