

# *When a Flower Begins to Speak*

By: Nihira Begugam (Age 10)

I hadn't meant to pick a flower. My right hand opened, fingers wiggling around the bright green stem, my left hand by my side. Something felt off — different. The world seemed to pause just to watch. As I lifted it, the lilac's petals trembled — it wasn't the wind though. So what was it? Was something alive? Then I heard it. "Wait!" says someone. Or potentially, something. I guess...? I looked around — there were no animals or people, only a field of flowers lay beyond my eyes. So the flower spoke? Well, flowers can't talk, right? Had this one chosen me? Had I even picked it at all?

I stared at it, as my heart pounded rapidly. I was unsure whether to drop it or listen. Against my fingers, the petals were soft and almost warm. "You finally stopped," the lilac whispered gently. "I did? What do you mean by that?" I whispered back. "There were a thousand times when you just rushed past me," it says. Then I thought, I come here every morning for a walk, before school, on the weekend, mostly every day. Not once have I ever looked at the field like this before. "Wow! I can't believe I've never done this before," I say to the lilac.

"We can see and feel everything," the flower continued, its voice softer now. "The way you forget this world is alive, not just around you, but with you." I tightened my grip slightly, careful not to hurt it. The petals shifted, brushing against my skin like a quiet reminder. "There was a time when people noticed us. When they stopped, even for just a moment, to feel the sun, to breathe, to belong. Now you only look when something is already fading."

A breeze passed, but the lilac's voice stayed steady. "Do you know what it feels like to be stepped on? To grow in soil that no longer feeds you? How about to wait for bees that don't come as often anymore?" Its words were sad and honest. "No," I somehow muttered out.

“Luckily, we are still here. We bloom, even when it’s harder than before. Not for ourselves — but for you. To remind you that beauty still exists. That life still grows, even when you forget to see it.” The petals of the lilac stayed still, and for a moment, everything felt fragile, like the world was balanced on something too small to notice.

I slowly lowered the flower back toward the ground, my fingers loosened, out of respect. For the first time, I noticed every single thing around me. The way the light touched the grass, the quiet movement of the wind, the small living things around me, and now my school bus pulling up. This truly wasn’t an ordinary morning walk, but an incredible point of view on flowers. I gently placed the lilac into the soil, pressing it slowly. “We will keep coloring your world if you help us,” it says calmly, as I get in line to board the bus.