

The Secret of the Desert

My life has never been the same since then. The nostalgia that I felt the years before that day, running around the kitchen, playing hide and seek. And the days when he went away with my parents, and I was left in the hands of Auntie Susie and Uncle Felix, made me feel left out. **Their house was different to ours. The lemon-coloured walls, decorated with elegant pictures frames, in shades of orange and green felt unfamiliar compared to our lily-white rooms and bare walls.**

This creates the idea that their house is warmer and friendlier

It was his 4th journey, and this time, he was alone. **He waved at me as he walked away, the summer sun shining on his soot black hair, reminding me how much I wanted him to stay.** A week went by, and still no sign. Now, 7 years later, I'm still the one who wakes up in the night in a terrible state, as salty tears wash down my faces like an ocean wave coming towards the shore.

are you happy he is going? if not, think about how you can describe this sunlight to convey that

Today is the day I turn 15.

My parents are out all day, trading in the local market and won't be back until late this evening. **As they leave, the bright light floods from the room as they shut the heavy wooden door behind them.**

what is left behind?

As I would be left alone all day I decide that I'm capable now, to make the journey to the city of Minya, to get some supplies for us.

I plan to head out at 6 in the morning, so hopefully, I will get there and back before early this evening. I pack some food, **a compass that used to be my grandad's before he died**, to help me navigate my way, a **shiny aluminium** bottle for me to drink from, and floral-patterned scarf to protect my head from the heat.

After I finish packing, I change into a cool, cotton **white** blouse.

Now it is time to head out.

It is much cooler than I thought it would be, but I know that it won't last for long.

Walking through the dry, barren landscape, I feel minute compared to this vast expanse of desert and wondering what it holds for me. **The soft sand moulds into footprints as I take one step at a time, getting further away from our busy town and into the heart of the desert.** This feels like you are walking into something dangerous and sparse

I travel over mounds of sand carefully sculpted by the wind, and I check my compass to see if I'm heading in the right direction.

Taking a big thirsty drink from my dented, metal container I carry on my way wondering if this was how his journey began on that day. I try and push these thoughts away, replacing them with images of us all together, and our parents telling us about their happy travels.

I stop in my tracks as I recognise the place from their descriptions. I put my backpack and my compass down on a smooth boulder and cup my hands, scooping up some cool, fresh water from the bucket inside the well and bring it to my hot, parched lips.

Reaching into my weathered, leather sack I take my water container out to refill it. Turning around, I see people in the distance, not too far away. But my eyes must be deceiving me, because when I take a second glance it is in fact a sandstorm. **The swirling sand gradually starts to come towards me and,** knowing I will never outrun it, I wrap my scarf around my mouth and crouch behind the ancient well to protect myself from the force, with my heart beating frantically.

suggesting
confusion

Was this what happened on that day or was it all a misunderstanding and he is out there somewhere, now?

I glance back and notice my beautiful antique compass, **its brown and gold outer casing** glinting in the now rising sunlight. **is hope increasing?**

My grandfather gave this to me, 2 days before he died. The only precious object that he kept all throughout life and he had given it to me!

Many years later, I still can't picture my life without it. He always told me to hold onto the things most precious in my life, so I did.

If only I could have done the same with him.

This suggests confusion and dangerous blindness

I stagger towards it, my hair plastered to my face. When the sandstorm hits, I'm thrown to the floor on my knees. **My eyes sting as sand fills them.** I scramble about in hope to find my compass, and in doing so, churning up the sand. My body heaves with relief, as I feel my backpack and another object in my hands. When I blink away the sand from my eyes, I realise what I'm holding. **Someone's amulet. I rub my fingers over the sand covered engraving's and, it spells out the name 'Akhenaten'.**

It can't be I think, but I turn it over and notice my name on the other side. I reach up towards my neck and stroke my amulet.

How can you use setting to suggest this realisation?

Something touches my shoulder and as it does, everything turns black...

You have some nice, effective moments here.

Think about how you might develop a single shifting motif, such as light as you come back to descriptions of setting throughout. the changes to it should reflect the events in your story.