

JiNA JEONG

Project Earth



BY CAROL KIM

ILLUSTRATED BY AHYA KIM

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Chapter 1



READY TO SAVE THE PLANET

The bright sun made Jina squint as she looked out the car window. She could almost feel her skin sizzling like bulgogi on a grill.

“Dad, can you turn on the air conditioning?” asked Jina. “It’s so hot.”



“It’s going to be a hundred degrees today,” Dad said, reaching over and switching the cool air to full blast.

Jina groaned. “Why does it feel like it keeps getting hotter and hotter?”

“With global warming, Earth’s temperature is getting hotter,” said Dad.

“It’s why we have climate change.”

“Global warming? Climate change? I don’t understand,” Jina said.

“I’ll see if I can explain,” said Dad. “Earth has a layer of gases, called the atmosphere. It acts like a blanket for the earth. But driving cars and using electricity puts more gases into the atmosphere. It’s like adding more layers of blankets. As more gases are added, Earth’s temperature rises.”

“So we’re just going to keep getting hotter and hotter?” Jina asked.

“Well, a lot of people are working to help solve the problem,” Dad said.

That made Jina feel a little better. “I hope they figure it out soon,” she said.

Dad pulled the car up to the front of Jina’s school. Jina noticed a wavy-haired girl getting out of the car in front of them.

“Oh, there’s Sofia,” Jina said. “She just moved to town a few days ago.”

“It must be hard to start a new school late in the year,” Dad said.

Jina thought so too. She had thought about talking to Sofia yesterday and even offering to be her class buddy.

Her teacher, Ms. Hunter, had asked for a volunteer. But Natalie had waved her hand wildly back and forth. Jina decided to keep her hand down. Besides, sometimes Jina found it hard to talk to people she didn’t know. What would she have even said to Sofia?

* * *



“Good morning, everyone,” Ms. Hunter said. “We are starting a unit today about our planet. Your project is to make a poster. You get to decide on the topic for your poster. It just needs to relate to Earth in some way.”

“One idea is to focus on a part of Earth,” Ms. Hunter continued. “For example, the oceans or deserts, or the North or South Pole.”

Jina raised her hand. “What about Earth’s at-uh-mos...?”

“Atmosphere?” Ms. Hunter asked.

“Yes! And climate change,” Jina said.

“That’s a good topic,” said Ms. Hunter. “Maybe you could learn ways to help with climate change.”

Jina grinned. She loved the idea of helping to save the planet!

“Today our class is going to the library,” Ms. Hunter said. “You can start researching your project then.”

* * *

At the library, Jina and her friends Chloe and Bella went straight to the nonfiction area. “I want to do something about animals,” Bella said.

“Ms. Hunter said I could do a dinosaur project!” Chloe said.

Jina went to find Mr. Castro, the librarian. “Hi, Mr. Castro,” Jina said. “Can you show me the books on climate change?”

“Right over here,” he said.

Jina saw Sofia pulling books off another shelf. *Maybe I should ask her what she’s doing for her project*, she thought.

But just as Jina started to walk over to her, Natalie grabbed Sofia’s arm. “Come sit with me! We can look at our books together,” Natalie said.

Sofia saw Jina looking at her. As Natalie pulled her away, Sofia gave Jina a quick smile.

Jina smiled back and followed Mr. Castro.

“Five minutes, class!” Ms. Hunter said.

Jina quickly grabbed three books and got in line to check out. “I’m going to find out what to do about climate change,” she told Chloe.

“I’m ready to help!” Chloe said.

“I’ll be like a superhero,” Jina said.

She stood tall and put her hands on her hips. “Introducing . . . Earth Girl!”

She was ready to save the planet!