

JiNA JEONG

Project Nature



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Chapter 1



NATURE HIKE

Jina followed her cousin Shawn down the dirt path. A movement on the ground caught her eye. She stopped and stared at the bushes, being careful to move slowly.

Then she saw it. A small, green-brown lizard darted onto the path.

“Hey there, little guy,” Jina said quietly.

The lizard bobbed its head up and down and Jina giggled. Then, in a flash, it was gone.

Jina ran to catch up with Shawn.

Butterflies and dragonflies flew around the plants and flowers on either side of the path.

“I love the arboretum!” Jina exclaimed.

Shawn nodded, agreeing. “Let’s go check out that pond up ahead,” he said.

The two followed the path and made their way to a large pond. A wooden walkway took them out over the water.

“Look at that beautiful bird,” Jina said, pointing at a large, white bird.

Shawn looked through his binoculars at the bird. “I wonder what kind of bird it is,” he said.

He handed Jina the binoculars. “Want to take a look?”

Jina looked through the lenses. She was amazed at how much detail she could see. Then she laughed. “It has yellow legs!” she said.



“Hi Mom. Hi Dad,” Jina said as her parents walked up.

“See anything interesting?” Dad asked.

Jina pointed to the large, white bird.

“Oh, I love herons!” Mom said. “Or is it an egret? I can never remember which is which.”

“The nature center isn’t far from here. Maybe we can find out there,” Dad said.

A few minutes later, they walked into a building. There were displays about the plants and wildlife on tables and the walls.

“Hey, look at this,” Shawn said. He was looking at a wall with photographs of birds.

“All of these birds can be seen here at the arboretum,” Dad said.

“There’s a big, white bird,” Shawn said, pointing. “With yellow legs. It’s called a snowy egret.”

“That’s it!” Jina said.

Jina walked around the nature center. On one table were pamphlets titled *Children in Nature*. She started reading one.

“This says there are lots of children who hardly ever spend time in nature,” Jina said to Dad as he walked up.

Dad quickly scanned the pamphlet.

“It seems missing out on nature can actually be harmful to kids,” he said. “It affects their health and even how well they do in school.”

“Why aren’t they going out in nature more?” Jina asked.

“Some kids don’t live near a city park. Or they’ve never been hiking or camping,” Dad said.

“That’s so sad,” Jina said. “I wish there was a way to help those kids.”

Introduce kids to nature by starting a club, Jina read. Plan activities such as nature hikes, bird-watching, identifying plants and insects, and camping.

A nature club! That was something Jina could do to help.

On the drive home, Jina was bursting with ideas for a nature club. “As soon as we get home, I’m making a list of things to do to start a club,” she said.

Jina saw her mom take a deep breath.
“You might be getting a little ahead of yourself, Jina,” she said.

Jina frowned. “But don’t you think it’s a good idea to help the kids in our city who never get to explore nature?” she asked.

“Yes, of course we do,” Mom said. “It’s just that—” Mom paused. “Sometimes it’s best to be realistic about what is possible.”

Jina sighed. Her parents were always telling her things like that. She didn’t want to be realistic. She wanted to help kids who were missing out on trees and plants and animals.

I just need to come up with a good plan,
she thought.