

Kirsty Tate gazed happily at the rows of bushes, her bare arm resting on the open window as the car traveled along the bumpy country road. Pretty red, yellow, and pink flowers were tangled among the green leaves. She could smell the tangy aroma of cut grass and the earthiness of freshly turned soil.

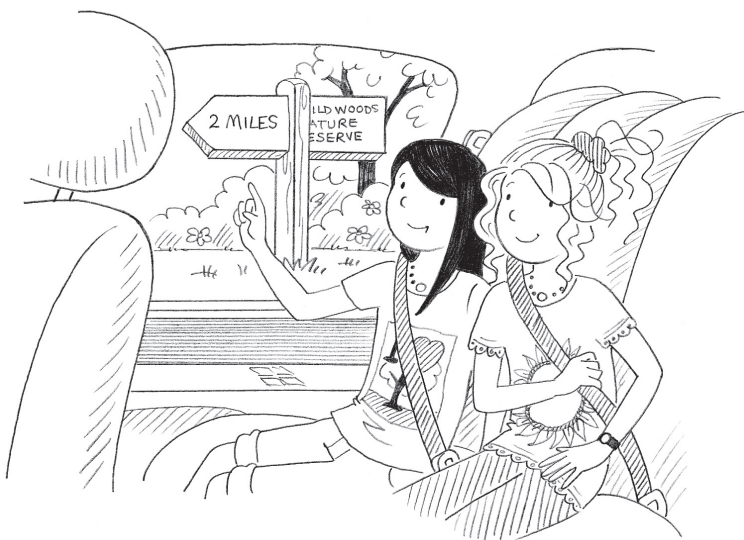


“We’re almost there, girls,” said Mrs. Tate from the driver’s seat. “Look!”

She slowed the car and pointed at a sign at the side of the winding road.

2 MILES—WILD WOODS NATURE RESERVE

Kirsty smiled at her best friend, Rachel Walker, who was sitting beside her.



“I’m so excited,” said Rachel. “The sun’s shining, we’ve got the whole





summer vacation stretched out ahead of us, and a whole week to spend here at the reserve with the animals.”

It was the start of summer vacation, and Kirsty and Rachel were on their way to Wild Woods, their local nature reserve. Rachel was staying with Kirsty, and their parents had arranged for them to spend every day that week at the reserve as volunteers. As the car turned up a rough, narrow road, their hearts raced with anticipation.

“I can’t wait to help out as a junior ranger,” said Kirsty.

“It will be so cool to see the animals!”

At the end of the road was an archway, printed with green words:

WELCOME TO WILD WOODS
NATURE RESERVE

