

Name: Shravanya Shrinivas

Age: 9

Grade: 3

Magical Nature

I was out in the woods hiking and exploring. "I just know that I am not going to enjoy this trip!" I said to myself. We were out as a family on this nature walk. It was just nature. What was it going to do? It was not going to be any fun! But we were going as a family and it was decided - it was done. So was in the middle of nowhere and my mom kept saying to keep *an open mind*. She always sang this song: "Keep an open mind and you will see hundreds of things to do and find!" It went to the tune of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." I tried to follow my mom's advice and started observing my surroundings. I noticed we were going into a big building. Cool! At first, I thought it was the Hershey's factory so I got happy. But then I knew what it was. It was a...butterfly conservatory.

My little sister was all excited to head into the conservatory. I wasn't. However, this was a great chance to escape from this nature walk. I sneaked away and just as people were about look my way, I jumped as high and far as I could and landed in a bed of flower bushes. Suddenly I got curious. How do these plants help the world? Is there any use for them? I didn't know why scientists like those "botanists" liked plants. As I turned back, I heard a buzzing sound. There I saw a bee grabbing nectar and honey out of the bud. The little guy went to a beehive next to me and fed the sweet food to the cute baby bees and the Mama bee. That made me realize that flowers may be helpful to bees, but there are still so many other things that are in nature. "What is all the other stuff for?" I murmured to myself.

As I was walking around, I passed some fields full of wheat. I then remembered what my mom said earlier. "Don't waste your food. When we go on the nature walk on Saturday you will see how hard farmers work to get all that grain. Nature's bugs then eat the bugs that try to eat the delicious wheat. Nature helps us humans survive." The fields of wheat looked beautiful. I understood that wheat is helpful for us and because of bugs. They clean out the plants and make it easier for us to eat and make it easier for the farmer to sell the wheat. The more I walked, the more I got interested. It was like I was doing my own nature walk, discovering things I never have seen and understood before. Suddenly I noticed something.

There was a faint voice coming from somewhere, or maybe everywhere. It kept repeating, *“Needs are important. But where do you get them?”* Well I didn't understand the meaning of this until later. I didn't get one word. So I moved on but the whole way I was thinking about that voice. What was it talking about? I was so concerned about what I heard that I didn't notice a hole in front of me covered in grass. I stepped forward and accidentally fell right into it. It was a deep, deep hole!

"Ahh! This trip had been so hard on me.. First, I was bored. Then, my head started hurting because of the plant learning I had done. Afterwards, the unknown voice came, and now a deep hole? I could not handle this situation at all." I thought to myself. But then I noticed a path in the darkness of the hole with fresh, sparkling, pure, clear drinking water. I guess I was thirsty because when I saw it, I ran and drank almost every drop. I started walking *again when that voice returned. “Needs are important. But where do you get them?”* I wondered what it wanted. Why was it following me? I had no answer. I lost my patience. I stomped my way across the way I came. But something was odd. The hole that I came through in was closed. Completely closed!

I screamed. But then I stopped. I knew what was going on. I froze. All along, nature has been playing with me. First, when I jumped, I landed right near a beehive to learn and explore how flowers help others. Then, I went past a field of wheat and it reminded me of how much farmers work to make that grain as well as how bugs help us humans. Later, a voice came trailing and.... Wait a minute! I understand now! That voice was Nature! It was reminding me in my own inner voice that nature isn't just all about the prettiness. We should admire it on how unique it is and how it helps us humans in many ways. But that's not all that was related to nature on my individual journey. When I fell in the hole I found water which is also part of nature!

Suddenly, like magic, the hole opened. I climbed out and caught up with my family just in time before they got in the car to go home. While I was getting in the car, I realized that my dad, mom, and my sister were all talking at the same time of what their favorite thing was in the conservatory. When it came to me, I said I didn't know, but the truth was I did - I most definitely did!