

WILD SURVIVAL

CROCODILE RESCUE!

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SCHOLASTIC INC.

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ISBN 978-1-338-63505-8

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

21 22 23 24 25

Printed in the U.S.A. 40

First printing 2021

Book design by Yaffa Jaskoll

CHAPTER ONE

Adrianna! Feye! Come meet us in the lobby,” Mom shouted over the intercom.

I was busy reapplying a bandage to Rowan’s paw. The injured lion cub was the newest member at the zoo. Rowan was usually fidgety, but after we played a game of tug-of-war, he quieted down enough to let me fix the bandages he had muddied during his run around the zoo’s outdoor enclosure. The squeak of a door alerted Rowan to company, and the cub quickly scurried away from my lap and tried to hide in a corner. After having been kidnapped by poachers in the wild, he was still afraid of most humans.

With a frown, I turned to the door. My older brother leaned against the frame. “Mom texted me, too,” Feye said. “That new producer is on his way over to tell us more about where we’re going.”

I stood up, about to respond, when an automated message interrupted my thoughts. “Thank you for visiting Sacred Sanctuary and Zoological Park. The zoo will be closing in ten minutes. Please start making your way to the exit now.” With a final pat of Rowan’s fuzzy head, I left the enclosure and headed down the hall to the Wildlife Hospital.

“I’m really excited about this new show, but I’m going to miss Alessi,” I said, looking down at my phone to see if my best friend had messaged me back. Her mom was one of the big cat caretakers and sometimes she came into work with her. We waved goodbye to some employees as we went to meet our parents in the visitors’ center lobby. I looked up at my big brother, waiting for him to respond. He

had recently dyed his black, wiry hair to a shocking blond that stood out against his dark skin and brown eyes.

My parents adopted Feye when I was just a baby. I've only ever known him as my big brother, even if we don't look alike. Our parents liked to joke that we were as thick as thieves, and called our adventures "Feye and Adrianna missions," because my mom was convinced we were on a mission to give her gray hairs. When we traveled along the Orinoco River in Venezuela, we brought piranhas into our tents to study how they ate, only to end up with bite marks and fishy-smelling blankets. During our last trip to Malaysia, we gave a group of orangutans all our bananas from our fruit stash. They made a terrible mess!

"I know you'll miss Alessi, but the *Wild Survival!* show has really taken off. We're going from a YouTube show to actual TV! Think of all the new

animals we'll get to help here at the zoo. It's a good thing," Feye said, stretching his arms above his head and then ruffling my black hair. As I squirmed from his grip and ran through the visitors' center doors, I saw our dad motioning for us to hurry up.

Around here, Mom and Dad are famous. Well, as famous as wildlife conservationists can be. They had a popular YouTube channel called *Wild Survival!* where for years they showcased our family's travels around the world. We rescue animals from all over and then nurse them back to health at the zoo. The YouTube channel was originally just a way for them to share their passion for animals with a bigger audience, but lately we had gotten super popular. So popular that a television producer named Mr. Savage had recently reached out to my parents, asking if they wanted to do a television network show. My parents had jumped at the chance because a network show meant more money to fund animal

rescues, and an opportunity to take our love of animals to a whole new audience.

I'd been begging our parents to let me help them with animal rescues on the YouTube channel, but they had a strict rule: "No on-screen until you turn thirteen." Something about keeping us safe and wanting to make sure we were mature enough to be in front of the camera. *Blah blah blah*. Feye got to be on camera and he made fart jokes at dinnertime—how mature is *that?*!

I had just recently turned twelve (*¡un año más!*) and my parents had given me the best news: that The Rule was about to go away because Mr. Savage said the television network wanted to involve the whole family in front of the cameras! There were still rules (of course! Sigh).

1. Safety first! If Mom and Dad thought a situation wasn't safe, Feye and I had to stop

what we were doing immediately and get out of harm's way.

2. I didn't do anything alone—ever. I always had to have an adult with me in the field.
3. The first two weeks would be a trial run. If I got into trouble, *poof!* I'd be back behind the scenes faster than you can say "Wild Survival!"

I couldn't wait to star in *Wild Survival!* with Feye and our parents. I knew they trusted me to be responsible because they let me do a lot of behind-the-scenes stuff, like give them ideas for segments to do on their show. I was proud that some of the video segments I had suggested were the ones with the highest views on our YouTube channel.

As Feye and I jogged up to our parents, Dad held out an iPad with pictures of a crocodile on it. "Mr. Savage sent over some info about an injured