

# Chapter 1

'I'm exhausted,' Nick said as he lay back on the soft sand. The gentle crashing of waves on the beach was very soothing. 'If we don't have to go straight away, I think I'll take a nap.'

'I could sleep for a week,' said Meg, sitting down next to her brother. 'No, a month.'

'I'm going to sleep for a year,' said Jack. Meg and Nick's cousin staggered towards them across the sand and collapsed in a heap. 'Urgh! Why did you say this would be fun?'



'It *was* fun,' said Meg. She looked out at the beautiful, golden beach, which the three of them had spent the afternoon cleaning. It had been hard work, and every muscle in Meg's body ached.

'Well, maybe fun isn't quite what I mean. But keeping Hong Kong's beaches clean is important.'

'I know,' said Jack. 'But why are we the only ones doing it?'

Meg looked out across the sand. Jack's question was a good one. When she and Nick had first started cleaning beaches, lots of other volunteers had joined them. But each week, fewer people came to help. Now, it was a chilly winter day, and nobody had come but them.

Meg looked over at her brother, hoping he would have an answer to the difficult question. But Nick's eyes were closed, and he was gently snoring. Meg lay down next to him and shut her eyes as well. Even though she was tired, she didn't drift off to sleep. She lay there and thought hard about the importance of cleaning the beaches. She needed to get more people to help, but she didn't know how.

