Episode 1: Phis wants to be a physicist

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Phis is 14 years old. Like most kids of her age, she’s a bit anxious about finding the person inside her...

She tried singing. Hmm...

Dancing is definitely challenging...

“You are very talented, Phis!” Her best friend Lizzy told her.

Sports are also not her cup of tea...

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“I wish I could be as confident as Lizzy!” Phis told her little sister Chemi. “Then I would know what I can do.”

She’s smart. She’s pretty. And she is taller than me! No wonder she’s so confident!

But why does height matter?!

I’m short, but I’m very confident!

“Who says size doesn’t matter?” Phis is not convinced. “Just read the newspaper…”

“I’m short, but I’m very confident!”

Even her name sounds sharp — it is the same as the Lizzy in Pride and Prejudice!

Chemi, don’t you think our names are a bit strange?

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Phis's self-search reached a conclusion after a monthly *Science Day* event in school hosted by Ms. Allen.

Imagine, we live in the quantum world. We have to comply to its rules, and behave very differently from our normal life.

Is light a particle or a wave?

Is the cat alive or dead?

Let's first take a glimpse of this strange but intriguing world, and travel back to the early days of the quantum age.
I mean the cat thing…
Didn’t Shakespeare think about this question as early as 16xx…

Hmm, Hamlet did say something like that…

To be, or not to be: that is the question
— Hamlet

I’m not sure that is what Shakespeare meant…

So this is the snake that poisoned Hamlet’s father?

You’re sure that is Hamlet? Why does he remind me of the little prince?

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I know one! Shakespeare!

Shakespeare?
Phis, this is not a literature class…

Interesting! But why?

You’re sure that is Hamlet? Why does he remind me of the little prince?

It took the deep observation and bold imagination of many greatest minds to lay the foundation of this field. Can any of you name one?
After the lecture...

Mom, Prof. Lee said I have a very creative way to connect to physics.

Great! Your dad and I always knew that you would be talented in physics!

When dad and mom were in high school:

I hope my children won’t find science so hard...

How was your physics exam?

To make their lives easier, maybe I should name them after Physics and Chemistry!

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Chemi, Ms. Allen suggested that I can take a few physics courses and do a summer internship in Prof. Lee’s lab after that.

What do you think? I may be really good at this stuff.

Go ahead. You never know until you try it out. BTW, I think how they came up with our names is totally cool. But I want to be a fashion designer!
Phis gave this idea a serious thought, “Why not? It’s really cool. And it makes me feel very special.”
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To read more about the stories of Phis, please visit us at www.physics.unl.edu/~xhong/hong/Phis/PhisHome.html.

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