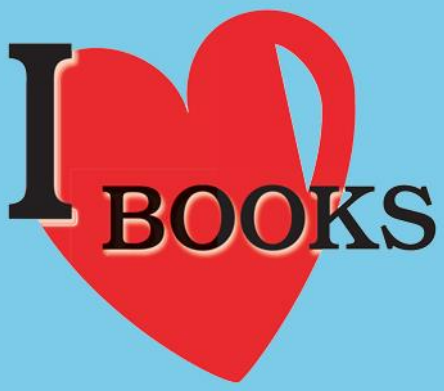

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Opening extract from

Tyrannosaurus Drip

Written by

Julia Donaldson

Illustrated by

David Roberts

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A Note from the Author

The idea of a dinosaur egg hatching out in the wrong nest had been in my mind for years before I actually wrote *Tyrannosaurus Drip*. At first I planned for two eggs to be swapped, and that the two baby dinosaurs would become friends even though their families hated each other – a bit like Romeo and Juliet! But then I thought that might be a bit corny, so I decided there would be just one egg.

Next I had to think of a trick for Drip to play, and I came up with the idea that he could trick the tyrannosaurus family with their own reflections in a river. But that meant that the duckbill dinosaurs and the tyrannosauruses would have to live on different sides of the river. How would the duckbill egg start on one side and travel to a nest across the river? That kept me awake for a while until I dreamed up the compsognathus: she could steal the egg and swim with it. That solved the problem and I was ready to go.

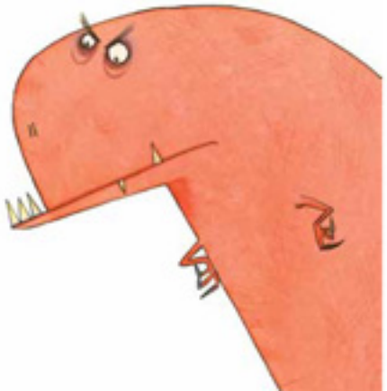
Once I started writing I realised I wanted a kind of chorus, so I introduced the dinosaur chants. When I act out the story on the stage I get the audience to recite the duckbill chants – and I give someone the special job of hatching out the dinosaur egg!

My son Alastair is very good at acting poor little Drip, but the trouble is that his daughter Poppy sometimes cries when she sees the tyrannosauruses being mean to him, so I can't cast Alastair too often.

If you'd like some hints on acting out the story at home or in a classroom, you could take a look at www.picturebookplays.co.uk, which is a website I created when I was the Children's Laureate and which has lots of ideas for dramatising picture books. You can even see a video of a class performing Tyrannosaurus Drip.

Of course the story wouldn't be the same without David Roberts's wonderful pictures. I love how David uses cool greens for the duckbills and orange and reds for the T Rexes, and the way he has given the T Rex mum an overlapping top jaw while the dad's bottom jaw sticks out. He's a very thoughtful and clever illustrator.

So I'd like to thank David, and also to wish Tyrannosaurus Drip a happy tenth birthday.



Julia Donaldson

JULIA DONALDSON DAVID ROBERTS

TYRANNOSAURUS DRIP

MACMILLAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

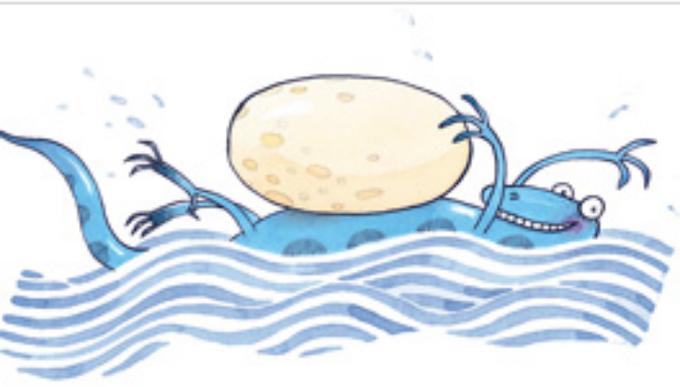
In a swamp beside a river, where the land was thick with veg,
Lived a herd of duckbill dinosaurs who roamed the water's edge.

And they hooted, "**Up with rivers!**" and they hooted, "**Up with reeds!**"
And they hooted, "**Up with bellyfuls of juicy water weeds!**"

Now across the rushy river, on a hill the other side,
Lived a mean Tyrannosaurus with his grim and grisly bride.
And they shouted, "**Up with hunting!**" and they shouted, "**Up with war!**"
And they shouted, "**Up with bellyfuls of duckbill dinosaur!**"

But the two Tyrannosauruses, so grisly, mean and grim,
Couldn't catch the duckbill dinosaurs because they couldn't swim.
And they muttered, "**Down with water!**" and they muttered, "**Down with wet!**"
And they muttered, "**What a shame that bridges aren't invented yet.**"

Now a little Compsognathus (but for short we'll call her Comp)
Found a duckbill egg and stole it from a nest beside the swamp.



And she swam with it,

and ran with it,

And murmured, "Clever me!"
And, "Won't the baby Comps be thrilled
with duckbill egg for . . .

"...T!"

She dropped the egg in terror
and went running for her life
From the mean Tyrannosaurus
and his grim and grisly wife.

And the duckbill egg went rolling, and at last it came to rest
In – of all unlikely places – the Tyrannosaurus nest.

Now the mother T had great big jaws
and great enormous legs,
But her brain was rather little
and she couldn't count her eggs.
And she sang, "Hatch out, my terrors,
with your scaly little tails
And your spiky little toothies
and your scary little nails."