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opening extract from

Dinosaur Cove: Assault of the Friendly Fiends

written by

Rex Stone

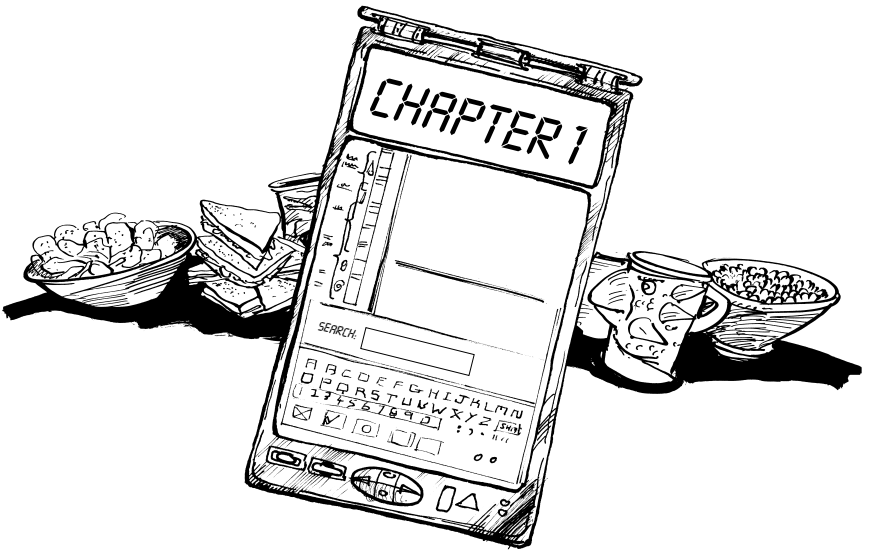
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The dinosaur museum was alive with dinosaurs—tiny T-Rex, a small pack of diplodocuses, grounded miniature pterodactyls, and a velociraptor arguing with a stegosaurus over who had the better costume. Jamie Morgan and his best friend Tom Clay were herding them all into the activity room.

'I've never seen so many people here,' said Jamie.

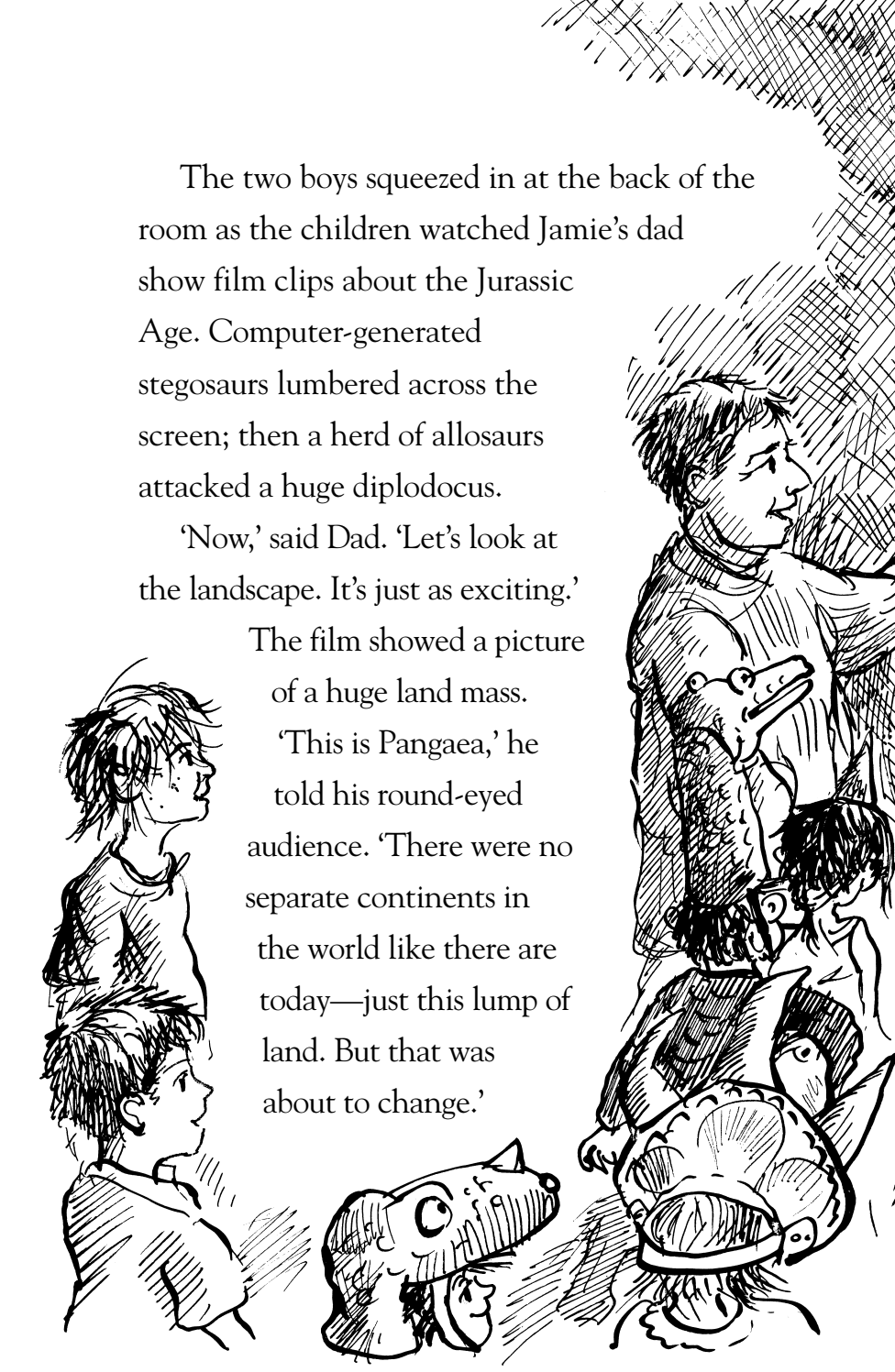
Tom laughed as a little triceratops with lopsided horns raced by. 'Dress as a Dino Day was a great idea of your dad's.'

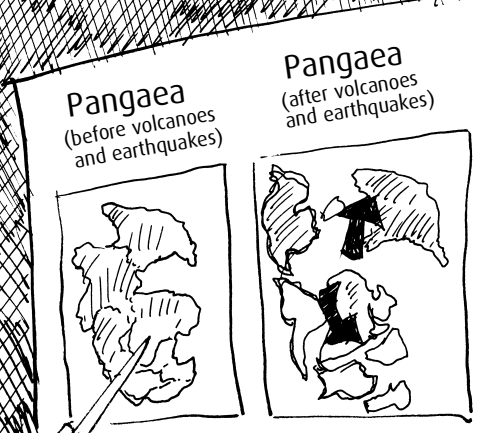
The two boys squeezed in at the back of the room as the children watched Jamie's dad show film clips about the Jurassic Age. Computer-generated stegosaurs lumbered across the screen; then a herd of allosaurs attacked a huge diplodocus.

'Now,' said Dad. 'Let's look at the landscape. It's just as exciting.'

The film showed a picture of a huge land mass.

'This is Pangaea,' he told his round-eyed audience. 'There were no separate continents in the world like there are today—just this lump of land. But that was about to change.'



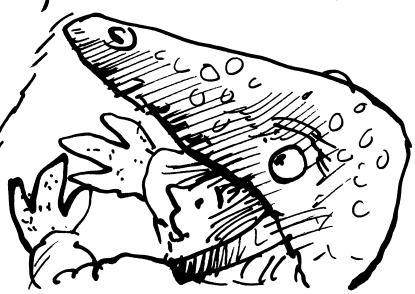


BOOM!

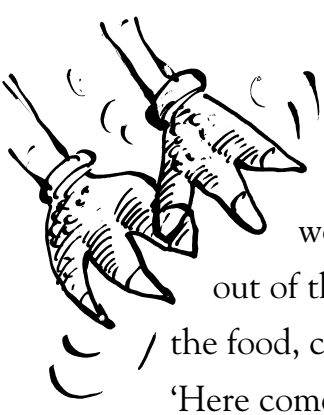
An erupting volcano appeared on the screen. Shrieks of delight filled the room.

'The volcanoes and earthquakes broke up Pangaea like a jigsaw puzzle,' said Jamie's dad. 'That was the start of the continents we know now.'

'And now it's time for lunch!' Jamie's dad announced. 'There are sandwiches and crisps at the back, so if you get in line . . . '









But the young dinosaurs weren't listening. They jumped out of their seats and surged towards the food, chattering excitedly.

'Here comes trouble!' muttered Tom.

The boys leapt into action. It was their job to make sure every child had a napkin, a plate, and a sandwich. But a sea of hands was trying to snatch the food all at once.

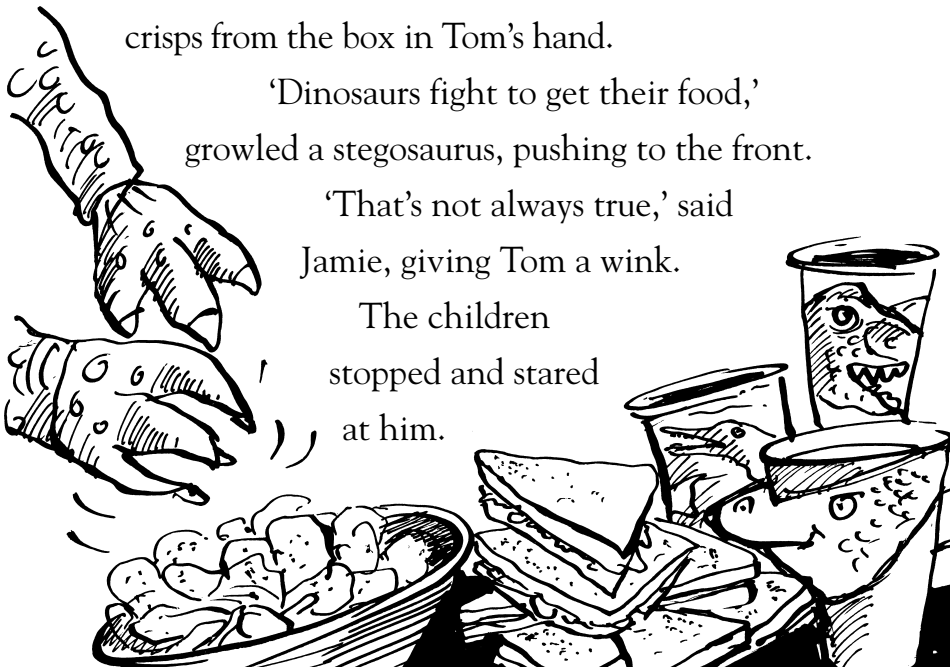
'Slow down,' Jamie shouted above the din.

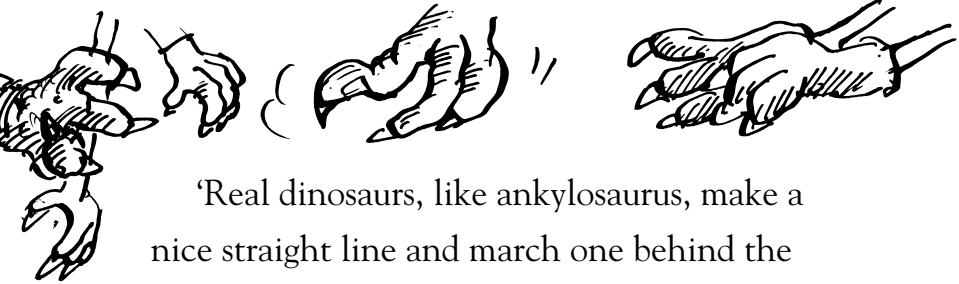
'ROARRR,' answered an ankylosaurus who was leaping in the air to grab an extra packet of crisps from the box in Tom's hand.

'Dinosaurs fight to get their food,' growled a stegosaurus, pushing to the front.

'That's not always true,' said Jamie, giving Tom a wink.

The children stopped and stared at him.



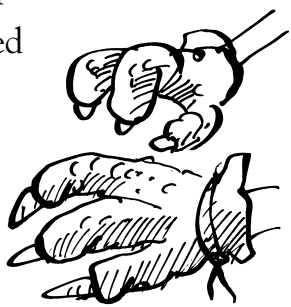


'Real dinosaurs, like ankylosaurus, make a nice straight line and march one behind the other,' Jamie told them solemnly. 'I should know. I live in the dinosaur museum.'

The dinosaurs immediately shuffled into a line, arms—and wings—by their sides.

'That was brilliant!' Tom whispered to Jamie as he poured juice into dinosaur cups. 'I thought we were going to be trampled.'

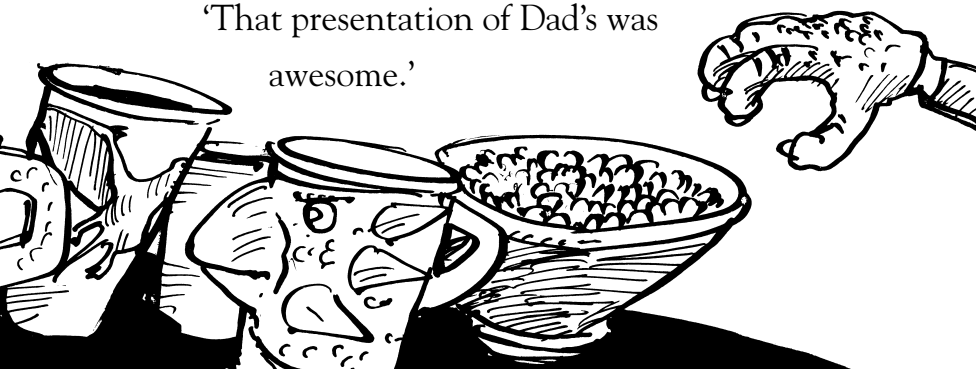
Soon all the children had marched off, with some very realistic roaring, to eat their lunch.



Jamie stared at the image that was still on the screen—the huge mountain ranges of the Jurassic era.

'No wonder the kids got excited,' he said, taking a handful of crisps.

'That presentation of Dad's was awesome.'



'Should we check out some real Jurassic mountains?' Tom whispered.

'Good idea,' Jamie agreed. 'We haven't explored the mountains in Dino World yet.'

The boys had a secret. Deep in the cliffs of Dinosaur Cove, they had found the entrance to a magical world of living dinosaurs. They went there whenever they could.

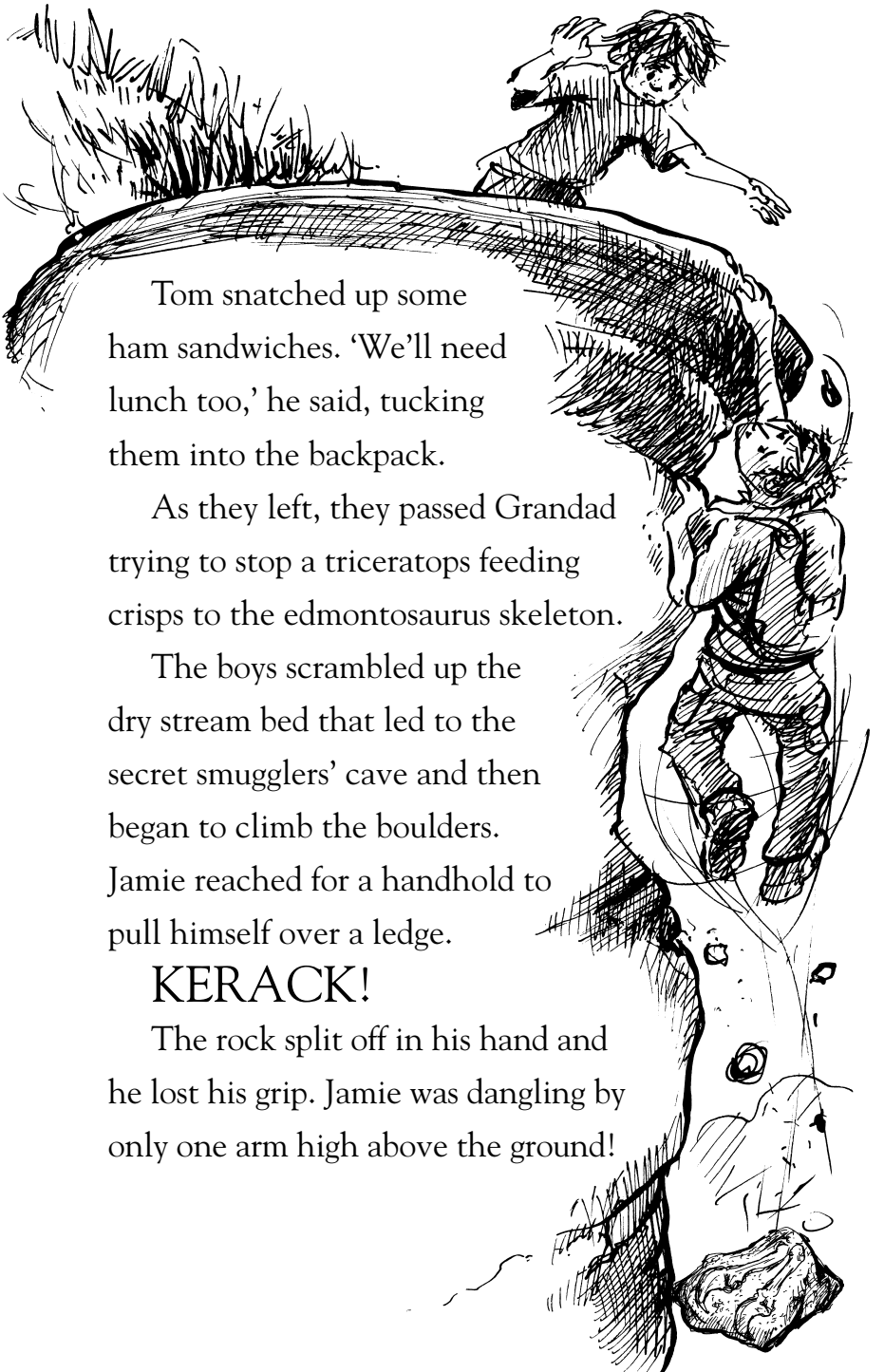
Jamie grinned. 'We've helped with lunch like we promised . . . '

At that moment Jamie's dad rushed past. 'Forgot to tell them to wash their hands before they hit the museum!'

'We're just going out for a bit,' Jamie told him.

'OK, see you later!' Dad was gone.

Jamie checked in his backpack. Everything was there: the Fossil Finder, notebook, and Jurassic ammonite to take them into the right dino time. He swung it onto his back.



Tom snatched up some ham sandwiches. 'We'll need lunch too,' he said, tucking them into the backpack.

As they left, they passed Grandad trying to stop a triceratops feeding crisps to the edmontosaurus skeleton.

The boys scrambled up the dry stream bed that led to the secret smugglers' cave and then began to climb the boulders. Jamie reached for a handhold to pull himself over a ledge.

KERACK!

The rock split off in his hand and he lost his grip. Jamie was dangling by only one arm high above the ground!