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Opening extract from

Dinosaur Cove: Stampede of the Giant Reptiles

Written by

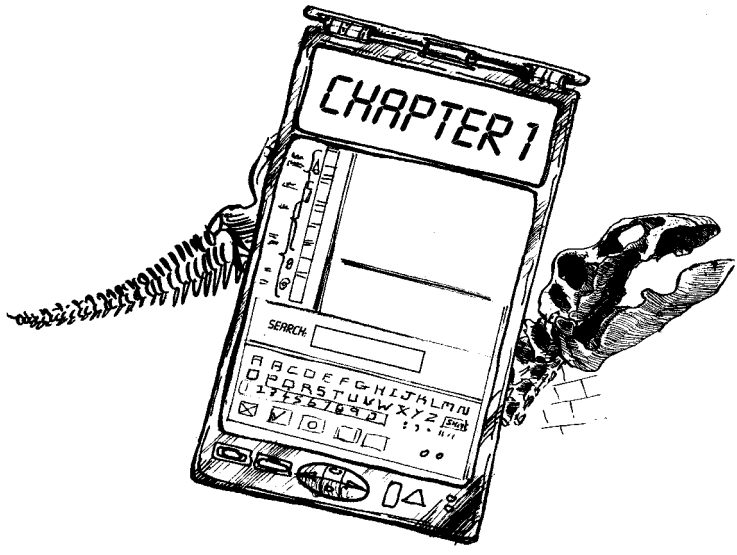
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Jamie Morgan stared at the huge dinosaur towering over him.

'That is awesome!' he exclaimed to his best friend Tom. 'A life-sized model of an edmontosaurus skeleton.'

The gigantic skeleton only just fitted in the museum on the ground floor of Jamie's lighthouse home. Its huge tail curled round the whitewashed walls and it reared up so that its duck-billed nose was high over the boys' heads. The museum was finally ready.



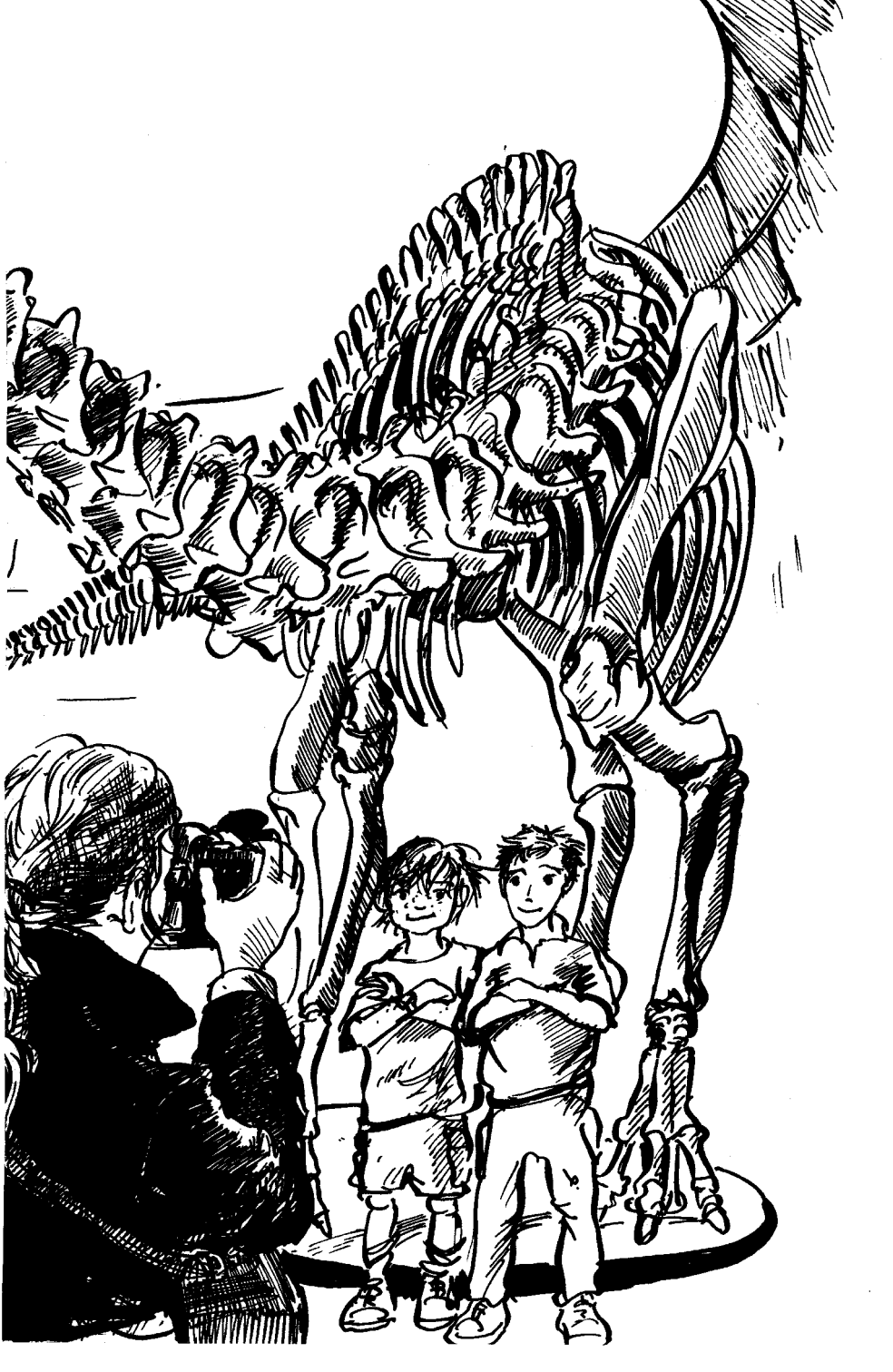
A big banner hung outside the lighthouse: **Dinosaur Cove Museum Grand Opening Today, One O'Clock**. This was the day everyone had been waiting for.

FLASH! FLASH! FLASH!

Jamie and Tom blinked in surprise. The photographer from the county paper was aiming her camera at the edmontosaurus. They jumped aside.

'It's OK, boys,' she called, waving an arm. 'Let's have you in the shot. It'll show readers just how big this beast really was.'





She took picture after picture, then grabbed Jamie's dad and made him pose over by the Cretaceous landscape model.

Tom rubbed his eyes. 'I'm seeing stars after all that!'

'But imagine how many photos she'd take if she saw a real live edmontosaurus,' said Jamie.

'We've never seen a real one close up,' said Tom.

'Maybe we will one day,' Jamie whispered.

Jamie and Tom shared an amazing secret. They had discovered Dino World, a land of living dinosaurs, and they visited it whenever they could.

'I wonder why we haven't already seen one,' said Tom.

'This will tell us where to look,' declared Jamie. He turned on his Fossil Finder and typed in: edmontosaurus.

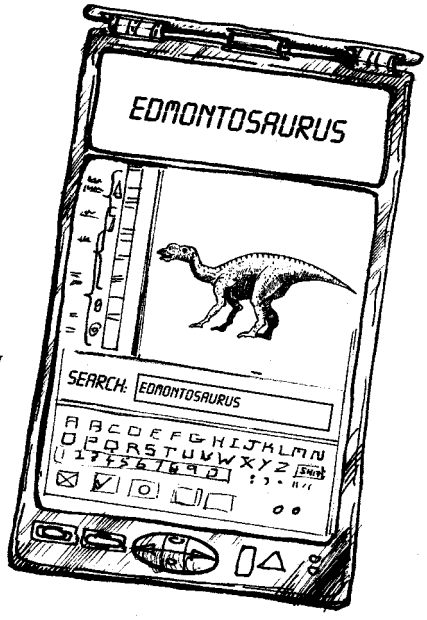




'HERBIVORE,' he read from the screen. 'ATE LEAVES AND BRANCHES. SLOW MOVING. WALKED ON ITS BACK LEGS— just like our model.'

'But where did it live?' asked Tom.

'It says here it kept to the trees to hide from predators. That was its only defence.'



'That explains why we've never seen one,' said Tom, 'if they were always hiding. That should be our next dinosaur mission—hunt the eddie!'

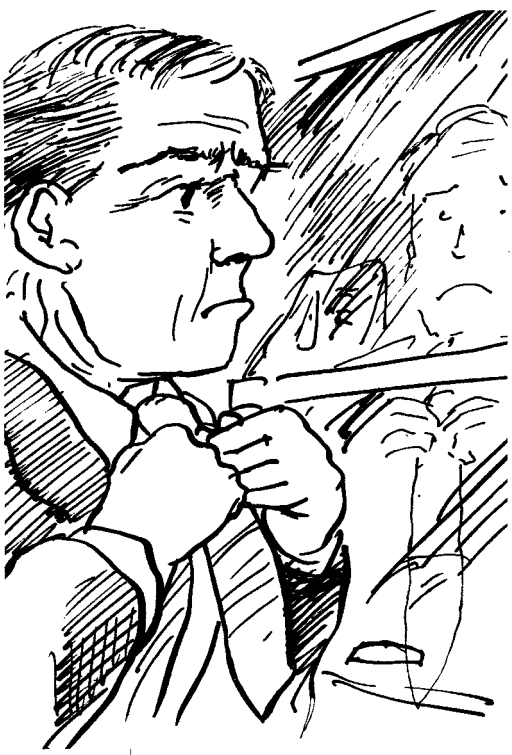
Jamie put the Fossil Finder away in his backpack. He had a gleam in his eye. 'Maybe I could ask if we can have a break?'

Tom grinned. 'Are you thinking what I'm thinking?'

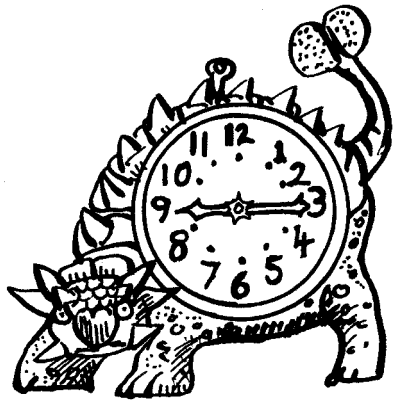
'Time for a trip to Dino World!'

Dad was being photographed next to the triceratops skull so Jamie and Tom ran up to Grandad. He was frowning at his reflection in a display case.

'Look at me,' he said, before Jamie had a chance to speak. 'Why can't I wear my old jumper and trousers like I do every other day of the year? I feel silly all done up like a dog's dinner.'



'But you look so smart in that suit, Grandad,' said Jamie. 'No one will look at the exhibits. They'll all be admiring you.'



'Get away!' Grandad laughed as he straightened his tie. 'They'll just think I'm another fossil. Now what are you two scamps after? Out with it.'

'It's nothing really,' said Jamie casually. 'It's just that, well, the museum's ready now so we were wondering if we could go outside for a while.'

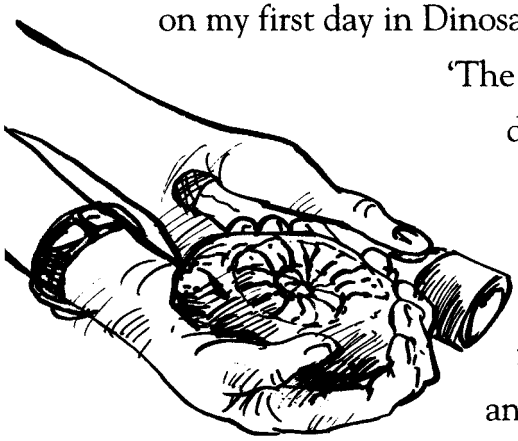
Grandad looked at the ankylosaurus-shaped clock on the wall, showing nine fifteen. 'Don't see why not,' he said. 'As long as you're back sharp at one for the ceremony—clean and tidy.'

'Thanks, Grandad.' Jamie swung his backpack onto his back and hurried out of the lighthouse, Tom right behind him.

They scrambled across the beach and up to the cave entrance high in the cliffs.

Making sure no one was in sight, they slipped inside. Jamie dug in his backpack for his torch, but his hand closed around something lumpy and hard.

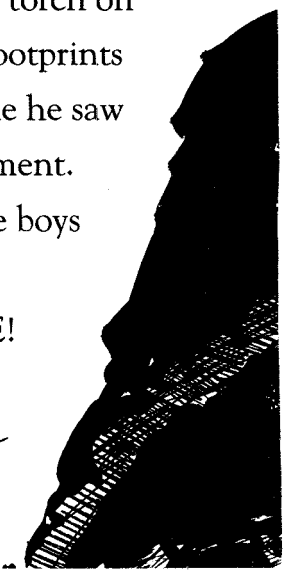
'Hey, look,' Jamie said, pulling it out along with the torch. 'This is the ammonite I found on my first day in Dinosaur Cove.'



'The first day we discovered Dino World,' Tom remembered.

Jamie tossed the fossil in his backpack and shone the torch on the five fossilized footprints in the stone floor. Every time he saw them he felt the same rush of excitement.

'Let's get back there,' he said. The boys trod in each of the dinosaur prints. One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . FIVE!



The dark cave disappeared and they stepped into the scorching heat and dazzling light of Dino World.

'It's great to be back!' exclaimed Tom, looking at the huge trees and dense jungle undergrowth around them.

Instead of the usual hum of insects and distant calls of dinosaurs there was an eerie silence.

'Listen!' Jamie said.

Tom listened hard. 'I can't hear a thing.'

'Exactly,' said Jamie. 'Something's not right.'

