

To Mum, Dad, Ellie and Laura – C.M.
To Simon, for all your help over the years – R.M.

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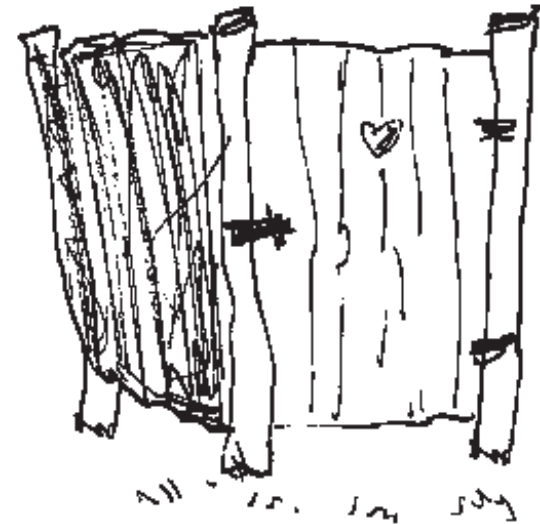
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DINOPOO



BY CIARAN MURTAGH
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CHAPTER 1



The teeth of the T. Rex glistened in the early morning light. They were smeared with blood and bits of fur. The T. Rex kicked away a pile of bones that were all that remained of his breakfast, and growled. From his home, high up on the mountain, it looked as if he could crush the tiny town of Sabreton with one stamp of his enormous foot. He sharpened his claws against the walls of his cave, let out an ear-splitting cry, and stomped down the mountain. It was time to find Charlie Flint.

It was another lovely morning in Sabreton. The stone buildings shone gold in the bright summer sunshine

and the dusty high street was bustling with dinosaurs and people. The Hungry Bone Café was packed with customers ordering breakfast. Charlie Flint smiled as he watched Peter Tray, the waiter, totter between tables, placing plates of scrambled pterodactyl eggs and mammoth-meat sausages in front of eager, hungry faces.

‘Morning, Charlie!’ called Peter with a wave. ‘What dinopants are you making today?’



Since the invention of dinopants, everyone in Sabreton knew Charlie Flint. He had come up with the idea of dinopants to stop dinosaurs poeing in the street. He realised that if dinosaurs had a reason to think before they poeed then they might be more

considerate about where they did it. The dinosaurs loved to wear their pants and now they always poeed in Dinopoo Field. Charlie had solved Sabreton’s dinopoo problem. But it wasn’t just the dinosaurs of Sabreton that wore dinopants any more. Charlie’s reputation had spread far and wide and dinosaurs came from all over the land to buy pairs for themselves.

Charlie even had his own dinopants shop at the end of the high street. On most days there was a long queue of dinosaurs waiting patiently outside, eager to be fitted for a pair.



Charlie looked up at the sun. He was late. He wanted to do a bit of extra work

in the shop before heading to school that morning, so he began to run.

When he got to the shop, Billy ‘The Boulder’ Blackfoot had already started getting out their bone and stone tools.

‘Sorry I’m late,’ said Charlie as he rushed inside.

Billy rolled his eyes and nudged Charlie playfully on the back before getting up from his workbench. Billy, who was one of Charlie's best friends, helped out at the dinopants shop every day. He was very tall for his age and had massive muscles on his arms and legs. His strength made him a natural when it came to cutting up animal skins, but despite his tough-guy looks, Billy was one of the nicest people in Sabreton.

When the dinosaurs came to the shop, Charlie would

measure them up and

design a pair of dinopants

for them. Then the

dinosaurs picked

out the colours

they wanted and

Billy chopped up

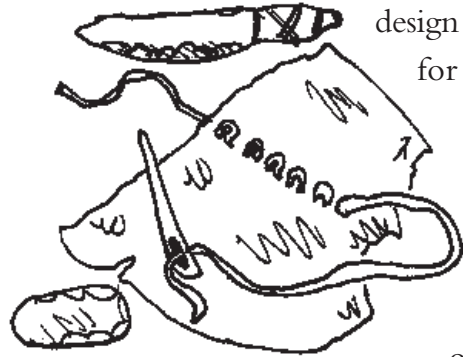
the right amount

of animal skin.

Charlie's other best

friend, James Tusk, carefully stitched everything together with a bone needle and thread. The shop doubled as the boys' workshop and tools littered the three wooden workbenches at the back of the room.

Billy picked a bright blue fur skin from the shelf and took it over to his workbench. 'I'd better start chopping this up. That brontosaurus wants to collect his



knickerbockers today.' He grabbed a flint knife and sliced smoothly through the fur. 'James can stitch them together when he gets here! *If* he gets here!'

'Did someone mention my name?' called James from the doorway.

Billy nearly dropped the knife on his foot. 'What *have* you got on?' he gasped.

James was wearing a bright orange and black spotted tunic, and a big purple belt.

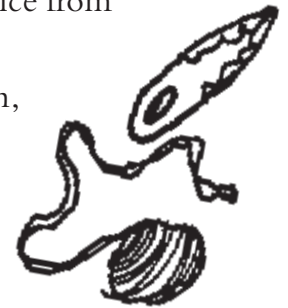
'This is my brand new leopard-skin tunic,' said James stretching out his arms and doing a little twirl.

'It looks like someone's been sick on your fur skin!' snorted Billy.

'It's the latest fashion,' said James indignantly. 'No more scratchy mammoth hide for me! Thanks to the dinopants shop, I'm rich. I can spend my precious stones on whatever I want! What do you spend yours on?'

James and Charlie laughed as Billy produced a king-sized bag of liquorice from underneath his workbench.

James headed to his bench, picked up a needle and carefully tried to thread it with some bright yellow yarn. As he did so, a terrifying roar filled the air. James slipped and pricked himself with the



needle, yelping in pain.

Charlie put down his tail-hair paintbrush and stood very still. 'What was that?' he asked.

'That was me!' spluttered James. 'I think I might bleed to death!' He held up a tiny scratch for the others to see.

Billy shook his head. 'Not you,' he said, 'the roar. It sounded like —'

Before Billy could finish his sentence the ground began to shake with the sound of pounding footsteps. A second heart-stopping screech filled the air and Charlie's blood ran cold. He looked from James to Billy.

Billy bit his lip nervously. There was only one dinosaur that roared like that.

'T. Rex,' whispered Charlie.



'What's he doing in town?' asked James with a shudder. 'He usually stays out on the mountain.'

They all watched from the door as the people of Sabreton scurried for cover – everyone had heard the T. Rex and they weren't hanging around to find out what he wanted.

A long time ago, the dinosaurs and humans had been at war. Eventually a truce had been agreed between them, and they had lived peacefully side-by-side ever since. But the T. Rex had never been happy with the truce and everyone believed it was only a matter of time before he decided to wage war on the humans again. Charlie had already made the T. Rex very angry with his invention of dinopants, but the T. Rex had eventually been won round and now sported a pair of black leather pants himself. However, Charlie, like everyone else in Sabreton, realised that the T. Rex was still a huge threat. When he ventured down from his mountain everyone panicked.

The boys inched outside. Charlie suddenly felt dinosaur breath on the back of his neck. He turned round slowly and breathed a sigh of relief. It was Steggy, his pet dinosaur! They looked after each other no matter what, and Steggy had rushed to find Charlie as soon as he'd heard the T. Rex's roar.

'The T. Rex wouldn't hurt us, would he?' asked

Charlie, looking at Steggy uncertainly. ‘We saved his life once.’

Another ferocious roar filled the air. There, at the end of the dusty high street, stood the mighty figure of the T. Rex. The massive dinosaur towered high above the trees and Charlie watched as he took an angry swipe at a pterodactyl that dared to swoop too close to his head.



Charlie gulped. The T. Rex seemed to recognise him. Suddenly he growled, flared his nostrils and ran straight for the little caveboy. ‘On second thoughts, perhaps he *would* hurt us! Hide!’

Everyone ran inside the shop. Charlie slammed the door shut behind him and leaped over the counter and Steggy squeezed in close behind.

Louder and louder, crashing like a thousand drums, the T. Rex’s pounding footsteps came towards them. Charlie felt the ground beneath him wobble like an earthquake . . . And then . . . and then . . . everything stopped.

Charlie held his breath. Nothing. He breathed a sigh of relief and popped his head over the top of the counter to take a peek. Just then, the door flew open with a crash, and the T. Rex’s huge head filled the entrance. He took one look at Charlie, and roared. Charlie felt his hair quiver as the shop filled with the stench of rotting flesh.

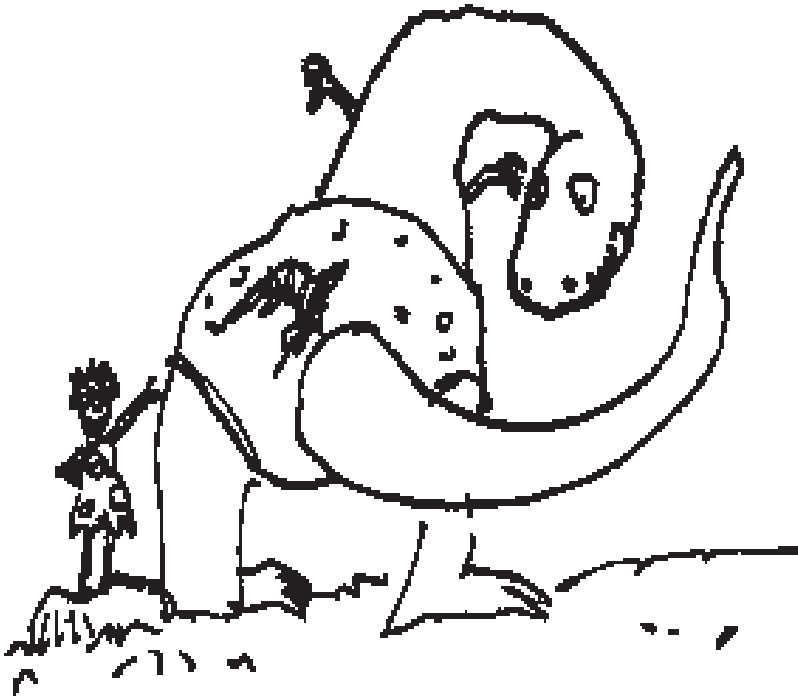
The T. Rex stared at them intently, as if studying a piece of meat on a butcher’s slab, and then reached inside the shop, hooked his tail through Charlie’s fur skin and dragged him outside. He lifted him high into the air towards his powerful jaws and glistening teeth, and snarled. Charlie closed his eyes, bracing himself for the worst . . .

But then, much to his surprise, he felt himself being lowered down on to the dusty ground. What was going on?

‘W-W-What do you want?’ stuttered Charlie, his voice trembling with fear and his heart beating hard and fast.

The T. Rex turned and showed Charlie.

‘Is that all?’ said Charlie with a laugh. ‘You terrified me!’



Billy and James, who had been cowering behind the workbenches, gathered in the doorway.

‘What does he want, Charlie?’ asked Billy.

‘He wants us to mend his dinopants!’ said Charlie pointing. The T. Rex’s dinopants had a large rip in them and he wasn’t happy about it at all.