



Creative Writing
Fiction
Group 3

A Century Breakthrough

Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School, Chow, Ho Ching – 13

In August 2026, young Lee dashed to the mountains as soon as he woke up. He did not even brush his teeth, as he was hyped to play in the river valley. A gloomy storm had been covering Liaoning for days and he missed the river dearly. He sprinted across the slope and jumped over rocks like a gymnast. Most people would find the route difficult, but Lee knew the mountain like the back of his hand. It did not take much time before he arrived at the river.

Lee rested on the side of the river. He tossed his shoes away and dipped his feet into the freezing water. A small giggle escaped his lips as the water tickled him. He gazed at the sun, slowly crawling up to the sky like a koala. Lee enjoyed the morning scenery all by himself, the peaceful silence calming down his energetic spirit. Although moments later, Lee started to splash around in the river. He skipped on the slippery pebbles, careful not to slip. However, he soon found it boring and craved new entertainment. An idea crossed his mind, and he dived into the water without a second thought.

When he opened his eyes again, everything was in a blurry filter. He swam around blindly, occasionally scaring the fish with his presence. He crouched down in the river, observing the riverine creatures. Tiny crabs hid in the cracks between stones, algae clung onto pebbles, but few got detached from time to time. Lee opened his mouth and caught some raw algae, the savory taste almost making him choke. As he submerged his body in water, he caught a glimpse of something special.

Lee noticed a particularly huge stone. It was not a boulder, in fact it had a rugged surface. Lee had never seen anything like it before. *Perhaps it came from the landslide from a week ago.* Lee considered. He glided through the river to take a better look. *Are those Drawings?* He wondered. A pattern of a lengthy creature had been engraved on the stone. Suddenly, a memory flashed in Lee's mind. He had read a book a few days ago in the library, it was about dinosaurs in the Cretaceous. This pattern... **could it be a fossil?!** Lee's eyes lit up. He had never seen a dinosaur before! It looked super cool! The fierce current made it hard for Lee to see crystal clear, but he was certain it was a fossil. Lee could not contain his excitement, he plunged toward the stone and tried lifting it up. Despite his efforts, the fossil was far too heavy for 8-year-old Lee. He knew he had to find help.

Lee slammed open the front door of his house, panting from the intense running. He immediately scanned around for his father, eager to tell the exciting news.

"Father! Father! Guess what I found!" Lee squealed, sparkles shimmering in his eyes. Lee's father was chopping wood. He grunted in annoyance, displeased that Lee ruined his peaceful silence.

"What is it again...?" he muttered, glaring at Lee.

Lee's enthusiasm dimmed when he saw the negative reaction from his father, but he still tried to keep a positive attitude.

"I found a fossil of a dinosaur—"

"Don't be stupid. Even if there was a fossil, why would you find it? You probably just saw a regular stone." His father interrupted mockingly.

"But I really saw it!" Lee exclaimed, trying to convince his father.

However, his father only laughed and went back to work. Lee was frustrated. He stormed off, hoping to find someone that could understand him.

Lee popped in every corner of the village, persuading each person he encountered. He was hopeful at first, but since he was a child, no one took him seriously. He began to lose hope. He walked sluggishly, sighing. He lowered his head, a moody aura spread in the air. *Why does no one believe me?*

Bam! Lee crashed into someone.

"I—I am sorry..." A lump formed in Lee's throat, making him unable to speak normally. He blinked back tears, not wanting to look impolite.

"It's okay little boy, but what's wrong? Why are you crying?" A soothing voice came from above.

Lee raised his head and discovered a kind-looking foreigner. The man had a warm smile and knelt to check on Lee.

"What's wrong?" he asked again with a concerned voice.

Lee could not hold it back anymore. He vented everything to the stranger. The stranger was surprised by the sudden outburst. However, as he listened to Lee's words, his eyes widened, and he was grinning from ear-to-ear.

"Is this true?! My name is Shane Louis. I am a paleontologist, and I would love to see this fossil!" he exclaimed.

Lee did not understand what "paleontologist" was, but he beamed at the last sentence. *He believed me!* Lee hopped in joy like a squirrel finding a nut.

"Come with me then!" Lee pulled the man's wrist and urged him enthusiastically.

Lee flashed through the village like a lightning bolt, Dr. Shane yelped as he was dragged behind him. The two soon entered the mountains. Dr. Shane was already breathless and struggled to climb rocks. Lee was an impatient child, but he waited and often lent a helping hand.

Soon enough, they arrived at the river that Lee played in the morning. Dr. Shane gulped, he was not expecting a large river valley. He carefully stepped in the water, while Lee jumped inside. Lee scanned around like a robot. Finally, his gaze landed on a rock.

"Here! There it is! That's the fossil I was talking about!" Lee pointed and rushed over.

The fossil had sunk deep into water, but the patterns were evident. Dr. Shane walked over and examined the fossil. The fossil was heavy even for a 30-year-old man. The water also made it hard to look with human eyes as well. He knew he needed help. He called his team immediately and they came straight away.

Moments later, after the archaeological team fished out the fossil, Dr. Shane quickly started studying. The fossil reminded Dr. Shane of the *Sinosauropteryx*, but some of the characteristics were unlike. The dinosaur was small, only a meter long. However, this dinosaur had a horn and had a short tail. Dr. Shane guessed that both came from the same breed. This was an extraordinary discovery, though, something baffled Dr. Shane. How did the fossil end up in the river?

"Found it here...playing in the morning...*a terrible storm for days...*" Dr. Shane overheard Lee chatting with Julia, one of the younger members of his team.

A storm? Something clicked in his mind. Liaoning had many cliffs, and just by observing, Dr. Shane saw that many were crumbling. The intense weathering in the past few days left the ground vulnerable. As the fossil was rather small and complete, Dr. Shane reckoned that the fossil must have tumbled down the cliff and fell into the river. Then,

the strong water flow washed away the dirt and dust covering the fossil, eventually leading Lee to find it. *If that was the case, then everything would make sense!* To prove his hypothesis, he ordered his team to look around the cliffs for traces.

Lee wanted to help too. Years of playing in the mountains gave him advantages. He travelled through the mountain like a little monkey. His eyes darted from cliff to cliff, inspecting each one of them. Soon enough, he noticed one peculiar small cliff. The cliff was cracked on top and had a missing corner. It was the cliff where the fossil had fallen off.

Dr. Shane investigated the cliff furthermore and at last confirmed that the fossil was from that exact cliff. The dinosaur had frozen to death in the Early Cretaceous and was buried in the ground. Dr. Shane called the local natural history museum and reported about the discovery. Lee had made the largest breakthrough of the century.

Days have passed, news spread like fire that a new breed of dinosaurs had been found in Liaoning by a little boy. Lee and Dr. Shane were interviewed by reporters from all around the world. The enthusiasm of the world overwhelmed Lee, but he was ecstatic to face them all. He recounted the entire story, occasionally adding a few dramatic points. Dr. Shane chuckled as he saw the young boy's eyes twinkling. He knew a new dinosaur lover was born.

After the exhausting interviews, Dr. Shane decided to write a book. For a paleontologist, writing stories was not something he was used to. However, as soon as he lifted his pen, words flooded the pages like a tsunami. Time flew, he finished his book. In the end of the book, it wrote,

“—And that was the discovery of the Thanazagresaurus.”

Chronicles of the Chinese Reptilian Wing

Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School, Yum, Yat Nok –

It was 150 MA. The Late Jurassic period. In a massive patch of forest in Asia, among some thick bushes and twigs, a well-hidden egg rattled and shook. Its spots were darkened and amidst the dotted pattern, cracks formed. They crawled open, like a spider web. Among these cracks, one managed to complete the circumference around the egg. Suddenly, the top of the egg burst open. Two legs crawled out from the tiny egg, followed by another pair. It jumped out of what had been its home for the last years and months. A lizard was born.

However, there was no time to catch a breath. It knew that one moment of hesitation, and all those months spent in the tiny shell would be wasted. It leaped out of the bushes and hid behind a rock, for if it was seen then only death was certain. Only after it confirmed that there was nothing watching did it crawl up the bark of a tree and into a small hole. It then felt the tree shake. It peeked outside and saw something massive. The dinosaur must have been searching for food! Though it did not know what species it was, what was certain was that it posed great danger to the lizard's life. It quickly coward back inside. The trees were shaking. The leaves were rustling. Around it, the screeching of what must have been other animals was heard. Rustle, rustle, rustle. The shaking was gone. The lizard took a peek outside. There was nothing there. It decided to go get some insects for food. As it jumped down from the bark, it saw an ant right in front of it. Perfect. It leaped onto the ant, biting down onto its body. It exploded grossly, and the lizard munched on its first meal. While it was chewing, though, the bushes around it started to rustle.

"Just bugs," it thought to itself. The rustling kept growing noisier. Suddenly, a twig snapped right behind the lizard. It turned to see three striped lizard-like creatures. One difference was that their tails towered over itself. The lizard looked at them for a second and got a closer look. It was standing on two legs, which were much more muscular than its. Instead of frontal arms, they had two small fingers. They were not lizards.

All that was heard throughout the jungle was a faint screech.

"That is how the dinosaurs lived," Dr. Brown explained. Though they were not exploring the topics of ancient dinosaurs, one must have felt compelled to talk about the past before relaying the future, for the big star of the lecture would be the future of fossil hunting. Quite coincidentally, a new dinosaur specimen had just been discovered in Yunnan, signaling the growth of another branch in the bark that was the family of reptiles that once ruled the world.

Dr. Brown told his students to prepare for the next lesson which saw the class delve deeper into future fossil hunting methods. As the bell screamed, students left the hall one by one. Suddenly, one of the students stopped Dr. Brown from leaving. It was the Chinese student, who had crossed the Pacific and stayed in a foreign country for years. Although Dr. Brown had no favorite students (he liked each of them equally), he was quite fond of the boy. Quiet and pleasant, he had managed to ace his essays. He asked Dr. Brown,

"Asia has never been good at fossil hunting. Are you sure that the new technology can help?"

Dr. Brown responded with a smirk, "Trust me, it will greatly affect the process."

Though he had not planned to give a speech for one question, he really could not resist.

First, Dr. Brown listed all the pre-existing tech. Of course, there was the caveman-like way of shoveling and chiseling until one hit bone, but that would damage the specimen if the tools hit the bones. There was also the excavator method, but that would also risk damaging fossils.

Then came the exciting part. First, Dr. Brown told the Chinese student about drones. Drones were used to analyze geographical positions and aerial surveys. They would then transmit the data of which experts would analyze possible fossil sites. Also, drones could get into places where a man couldn't. Take, for example, a patch of land so deep in the

Amazon that no man could get to. Drones would be set up and flown to the area to do a first check. If there were actually fossils there, the team would bring in the big guns and reach the site, whether it be airdropping in or helicopters.

He continued to talk about drones for five minutes, after which he moved on to artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence could be programmed to identify fossil sites. Say, there were one hundred photographs of places with fossils and places without fossils, with a ratio of fifty-fifty. After showing enough photos, the AI could practically tell apart the fossil sites. After which teams would be sent to further examine the area, saving time and money for the initial survey.

Dr. Brown could not tell if the student was at all interested in his rant. So, he used examples from China. He mentioned how China had deep soil, of which it would be hard to determine if there were fossils just by drones and AI. From that, there would be a groundbreaking geophysical technique called Radar Ground Penetrating.

A paleontologist set up a small probe-shaped machine. He signaled a thumbs up from his colleagues, who pressed a button on their small tablet. Within the span of milliseconds, a radar ping reverberated beneath the soil, completing a scan of the land beneath the paleontologists. As the machine slowly constructed the map, a few peculiar bulges were shown on the tablet. They were indicated in a three-dimensional manner, standing out from the very flat surroundings. That was the indicator of a fossil.

Dr. Brown shared his experience of using the radar himself a few months ago. It was quite easy to use and was helpful in finding fossils.

By then he had been speaking for about half an hour, and he felt the need to conclude his point.

“For billions of years, dinosaurs ruled the world before man. They were creatures who possessed an incomprehensible amount of age, and they certainly left their marks. Ever since that one fateful day though, these apex predators had now frozen solid, and all that was left were their bones. To unravel this mystery, humans had spent centuries upon centuries trying to complete this never-ending puzzle. Our ancestors had completed such a big part of the puzzle that the remaining pieces were difficult to fit. Hence, we had to advance to find the remaining pieces of this mystery, for what lay beneath the soil was something that had seen everything before the dawn of man. Although the dinosaurs could not speak, I’m sure that as their predecessors who now roamed and ruled the world like they once did, they would have very much enjoyed being studied and dug up from their slumbering state.”

Cost of Fossil

CCC Fong Yun Wah Secondary School, Tso, Sze Yu – 13

It is the year 2039, humanity and scientific research is trying to advancing day by day as we speak, the economy is in decline as only the wealthy seem to stay up float.

Mark Cadaver, a middle aged man in his thirties sat content with his old ragged couch. On his phone doomscrolling. It wasn't a surprise anymore as he checked his emails.

"Sincere apologies, Mark Cadaver. Your job application was denied."

Shucks.

Guess I'll have to try again later, I still have some money the government has provided me every month.

He checked the news on his phone, he wasn't expecting anything new in all honesty.

"Paleontologists are putting a bounty on for 250,000 dollars for any more bones of the Dinocephalosaurus as they plan to reborn and re-flesh the "Terrible-headed reptile".

Anyone who dares to attempt and try to retrieve, find and hunt those fossils in deep waters will be supplied with diving gear."

Tsk... Reviving dinosaurs? What for? The companies still running zoos these days? Pathetic. Though, 250,000 dollars for even a piece of small piece?

Why shouldn't he give it a shot? He has nothing to lose. The diving gear is supplied as well.

Mark quickly rang up his close friend, Joseph who answered.

"Why are you calling me now? I'm betting on red, hurry up."

"Joseph. We have to give it a shot now. 250,000 dollars is on the line and we should be the first to get those damned bones! Think about the fame, the time we can have with this opportunity. It'll sustain us for at least a few years!"

"Woah- Woah-! Hold on there, slow down for a second what the hell are you even talking about, Marky? 250,000 dollars? Bones? Geez take a breather we have time."

Joseph hung up.

Grumbling, Mark got up from his couch, grabbing his wallet and a jacket before getting his shoes on and taking transportation to the harbour.

Rinnng! RIIIIINNNG—

“GOD! WHAT IS IT MARK? Just lost 600 whole dollars and if it’s about those wacky 250,000 dollar bones then you better elaborate further.”

“Come to the harbour. I’m waiting in line for both of us to attempt to collect some filthy dinosaur bones. 250,000 dollars for every piece that you can find. Hurry up and bring your id.”

Joseph scoffed, rolling his eyes, there isn’t no way there’s going to be “250,000 dollars for a piece of bone tissue” though. Might as well try since Mark’s getting tickets for both of them.

As Joseph arrived at the harbour, Mark ran up and shoved a contract paper to him.

“DINOCEPHALOSAURUS FOSSIL—COLLECTING EXPEDITION CONTRACT”

“Any injuries and death will not be responsible after the signature.”

“Please write your signature on the line.”

“Mark did you even read the thing?”

“Just sign the damn contract, you want 250,000 dollars with me or not?”

Mark crossed his arms, glaring at the other as he awaited for Joseph to write his signature on the paper.

Pen up and ready, ink flew down as he signed the contract.

“Joseph Tally”

Diving gear up, ready to go down.

The two first swam deep, slowly but surely feeling the pressure against their bodies, it was taking a bit of a toll on Joseph, though Mark was pushing through.

“Hey— Mark? Something’s above us. I think it’s a ship. We should probably dive back maybe?”

“Geez shut up, just continue diving. It’s a ship, not like it’s going to suddenly sink and crush us.”

Mark Cadaver swam forward, his body just below the ship as he started to swim towards a oddly shaped yet intriguing “rock.”

“Hey Josey! These damn fossils are much easier then they make it say! Hah! Found a piece in a time record of 37 and 21 seconds! See if you can beat it.”

Mark said through the diver’s communication gear as he started to swim back.

PING.

Mark ‘looked’ at Joseph for a single second behind his diving gear before his body seemed to have stiffened, losing control as he dropped the fossil.

Joseph, perplexed and concerned as his own ears were ringing, he felt like he could pass out or his eardrums were gonna explode at any moment. Getting himself together and staring at the fossil for an couple of seconds before looking back up at Mark.

The water was tainting with red. Mark’s body slowly sinking to the water’s floor.

“Marky...?”

Joseph asked through his gear, his eyes wide and vacant, thoughts disorienting and empty.

Joseph looked up.

It was a Naval Ship.

He swam back up to the harbour. Eyes barely blinking, movements stiff and hard to manoeuvre as he climbed the ladder out of the waters.

“Here is the fossil.”

“Ah yes, this is the frontal bone of the reptile’s skull! A pretty decent find.”

“Though, where’s your diving partner?”

“...”

“I don’t know.”

The examiner the expedition seemed confused but didn’t question it. Not like she cared about their well-beings. At least they secured another piece of these fossils.

“Do you want the cash to be placed in your bank account or just be in your card?”

“Placed in bank please.”

“Right, and do you want your name to be on the ‘Fossil’s found and contributed board?’”

“No thanks.”

“LEAKED NEWS OF THE ‘TERRIBLE-HEADED REPTILE FOSSIL EXPEDITION.’”

“MARK CADAVER, 37 YEARS OLD FOUND DEAD IN WATERS FROM SONAR PING FROM AN UNIDENTIFIED NAVAL SHIP ON NOVEMBER 16TH, 2039.”

Joseph looked at the news on his new TV and apartment. Eyes half lidded, dark circles can be clearly seen under them.

His trash can uncleared, simply having bottle caps and thrown-out alcohol glasses.

Looking at his card, 217,000 remaining. Blew 11,000 last week.

I’m surprised they took so long to discover his corpse.

Is this the cost of a fossil?

New Tales of China's Dinosaurs

Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College, Chu, Hing To – 15

'Kaboom kaboom' The activity of Chinese New Year bloomed after the sound of firecrackers. People gathered around with their families to celebrate remarkable festival together. However, I had not been able to celebrate Chinese New Year since my parents passed away last year.

'The gnocchi are left on the table. You may eat it as the dinner.' My uncle had been taking care of me since the death of my parents. Nevertheless, he was busy with his works. Therefore, he could only handle my fundamental daily needs. The cultural significance of gnocchi in Chinese is the unity of family. Sadly, I could only eat it lonely. How ironic is it!

Suddenly, some strange sound, which was similar to bark, came from the kitchen. I decided to take it a look. Surprisingly, I saw a dragon! It was a typical image of China Dinosaur. It was trying to find some food from the cupboard. When we saw each other, both of us felt extremely shocked. Before I wanted to express my confusion as well as fear, the dinosaur had said, 'Do not be worried! I will not eat or hurt you. I just want to eat something. I will explain everything later!'

After I had given it some meat, it started to introduce itself, 'I was originally living in a traditional Chinese imaginary world. There are Jade Emperor, Daode Tianzun, Queen Mother of the West, and other gods you can see in some Chinese religious books. However, due to some unknown incidents, I was accidentally transported to this world and at your home.' Then, I asked some questions that I had been curious about, for instance, how is the life of that imaginary world look like, how is the appearance of those gods.

Later, the dinosaur asked, 'Do you have any wish? I can accomplish one of your wishes as you gave me food.' The idea of letting my parents rebirth appeared in my mind. Then, I whispered, 'I want to let my parents be alive again!' The dinosaur responded, 'It is a little bit challenging for me to let people rebirth, but I will try my best!'

It read out some words like curse. A cloud of smoke suddenly appeared, and the dinosaur disappeared afterward. Unfortunately, my parents still did not appear. I felt disappointed indeed. Instantly, another cloud of smoke stretched, and my parents appeared! They were truly alive! I at once gave them a hug, and my tears ran as flooding.

A New Tale of Chinese Dinosaurs

G.T. (Ellen Yeung) College, Lam, Max – 12

In a nice and warm summer in China, when a curious group of farmers were finding new land to plant their seedlings, they saw something fabulous. It was a fossil of a sinosauropteryx, but the people in the ancient didn't know that, and immediately flew the scene as they thought it is a monster.

The next day, the palaeontologists came to investigate that it was gone, leaving a long trail of shinny feathers. Most people fought it was a prank made with chicken feathers and left. Meanwhile a curious boy named Jack decided to follow it. He bought a loaf of bread and went for the sinosauropteryx.

A few hours later, he felt tired and sat on a rock next to the entrance of a cave. As he munched on the piece of bread, a low growl came from deep inside of the cave. However, Jack wasn't afraid. He went down all the way slowly and cautiously. The growl grew louder, but it seemed more like a cry. Jack. Lighted a match from his pocket, for a second he was stunned. There at the very bottom, a large chicken sat there crying, and the floor was flooded with water. It looked like a chicken but it has slightly different features like a long tail. Jack was still small and knew nothing about danger. He walked forward and said 'hi how are you?' He got information that the sinosauropteryx is named Frank and was lost with his friends. The poor creature could only go back to the past if he found them.

Jack felt a pang of sympathy for Frank. He promised to help the strange chicken-like creature find its friends. They set off together, following the faint trail of the feathers that Jack had seen earlier.

As they walked, Jack noticed that Frank seemed to be getting weaker. The water on the cave floor was rising, and it was becoming harder for Frank to move. Jack knew they had to find a way out of the cave and to the other dinosaurs quickly.

Suddenly, a series of strange calls pierced through the air, echoing off the cave walls. Frank's eyes widened with recognition and he let out an excited screech, wings flapping weakly in anticipation. Without hesitation, he took off in the direction of the sound. His steps wobbled but determined. Jack sprinted after him, his heart pounding in his chest. As they neared the source of the calls, the ground beneath their feet became muddy and uneven, making it difficult to maintain their pace. The cries grew louder and more frantic, mingling with the sounds of rustling leaves and snapping branches.

Breaking through a thicket of bushes, they emerged into a small clearing. There, in the center, stood a group of dinosaurs that bore a striking resemblance to Frank. Some were larger, with more pronounced crests on their heads, while others were smaller and had a more mottled pattern on their feathers. They were all huddled together, happy of finally being able to reunite. However, their eyes filled with a mixture of fear and relief at the sight of Frank. Their calls seemed to be a combination of greetings and warnings, as if they were trying to convey some urgent message.

Frank rushed towards them, his body trembling with emotion. The other dinosaurs surrounded him, nuzzling him affectionately and chirping in what sounded like a language Jack couldn't understand. But their reunion was cut short by a deafening rumble that shook the ground violently. Jack looked around in alarm and saw that the earth was splitting open, a gaping fissure snaking its way towards them at an alarming speed.

As the sky darkened, the dinosaurs panicked, scattering in all directions. Jack, realizing the danger, searched for a safe place. He saw a large boulder nearby and gestured for the dinosaurs to follow. With some difficulty, he managed to herd them behind the boulder as the ground continued to shake.

As the rumbling subsided, Jack knew he had to find a way to get the dinosaurs to safety. He remembered seeing a path that led out of the area earlier. Leading the group, he carefully navigated through the debris and overgrown foliage. The dinosaurs followed closely, trusting Jack to guide them.

Finally, they reached a wide-open plain. The dinosaurs seemed to recognize the place and let out joyous calls. Jack watched as they began to move freely, exploring their new surroundings. Before Jack could react, they vanished in a bright flash, as if they dissolved into the bright stars of the night.

Jack felt a sense of accomplishment, knowing he had helped Frank and his friends. As he turned to leave, he looked back to where they disappeared, he gave a smile and went back of leaving a trail of kindness.

A week later, when he went to the museum, he saw a display of dinosaurs that had been open to public just yesterday. There was a detailed model of the sinosauopteyx. Jack smiled to himself, knowing that he had been a part of something truly extraordinary. From that day on, Jack's love for paleontology grew even stronger. The little boy spent his free time reading books about dinosaurs and ancient creatures, dreaming of one day becoming a paleontologist himself. And whenever he looked up at the night sky, he would think of Frank and his friends, and the amazing adventure they had shared.

Through the Eyes of a Jiangxititan—The Untold Story

G.T. (Ellen Yeung) College, Lee, Sum Suet Charlotte – 12

“... Near the end of June, a group of palaeontologists discovered an unidentified dinosaur’s skeleton during a worksite in Jiangxi, China. It was later revealed that this set of fossils belonged to *Jiangxititan ganzhouensis*, a new species of titanosaurian sauropod. According to studies, these fossils are thought to be dated back about 90 million years ago...” Zhao sat on the side of the couch, leaning on the armrest. He turned down the volume of the TV, scoffing sarcastically as he kept his eyes and ears on the news report.

“ Can you believe it? They removed most of the important information about our discovery! First off, *Jiangxititan ganzhouensis* is not simply a new species of titanosaurus sauropod. Jiangxi is a singular genus of somphospondylan, and *J. ganzhouensis* is its sole species of this genus, therefore this species isn’t a titanosaur, and instead non-titanosaurian somphospondylan. Which suggests the existence of an entirely new undiscovered group of titanosaurs in Asia! I mean seriously, how could you mess that up?—”

“—Give them a break. After all, they only report as much information as their sources gave them.” Dr. Chang cut him off, standing near the entrance of the resting area. She had her white laboratory coat on, paired with plain gloves usually used for inspecting specimens. Chang walked to the front of Zhao, standing with her arms crossed.

“Now, if you’re done with your little afternoon tea party. We have to get back to work.” Dr. Chang commented lightly before walking hastily around the couch and back outside, leaving Dr. Zhao to quickly follow after her.

It’s unusually quiet today, aside from Zhao’s obnoxious chirping and Chang’s sarcastic responses. Usually there’s a few more people in the laboratory. Dr. Ming Lee would be at his station busy as always, mostly trying to finish the team’s piles and piles of paperwork, such as filling out forms or research. Aimee— the new intern— normally only goes to on-site work and verification as such, but sometimes she would stop around the laboratory to help out with analysing and or just basic tasks like removing dust and rocks from fossils. After doing all of their respective work, both of them decided to take a break today, hence why neither of them came in.

Nevertheless, the show must go on. As the wise Dr. Ming Lee once said, “ The history of the very earth does not wait for us!”

“So, shall we get started?” Dr. Zhao grinned cheekily.

“Get started we shall!”

She gently and carefully glided her hand against the fossil displayed for inspection, feeling every bump and dent. Dr. Chang moved onto the other side, picking up a brush with her remaining hand. She delicately dusted the specimen with the brush, taking in every scratch visible on the surface, trying to feel for some kind of...connection.

You see, to the plain eye, Dr. Chang may just be a talented and remarkable paleontologist who cares a whole lot about dinosaurs and such. But every paleontologist was once a huge geek that used to hold up their notebook to their teachers while blabbering on and on about dinosaurs and how cool they are. Of course, Dr. Chang is no exception, however she possesses a tragically extraordinary ability which no one else has.

Zhao peeked over her shoulders sheepishly.

“Uh.. so what? Do you feel anything yet?” He asked, his interest piqued.

She shook her head. What a shame, most of the time her ability worked on almost anything. But it seemed her ability malfunctioned. This might happen from time to time, so it’s not that big of a deal anyways—

Then, it happened.

It felt like someone shot a bullet through her head, except the pain was replaced with a sudden wave of nostalgia. A bright, white light flashes before her eyes, her ears were ringing. Her head was reeling with nausea. She didn't feel anything, yet felt a thousand emotions at once, but they did not belong to her. Images flashed between frames in milliseconds. The next second, everything went dead silent, peace. Dr. Chang squinted open her eyes. She found herself positioned in the middle of a wide wasteland.

She was in the past.

Well, not actually in the past, but simply... reliving the memories of the fossil she just touched, you could imagine it as some sort of dream. That was her tragically extraordinary power.

Tragic, because she has to watch the entire life of these animals, just to see them die in the end. Extraordinary because it was power no other had.

Her train of thoughts were cut off by the sound of... squeaking? No, it was a tiny, high-pitched roar. She looks to the left of her feet, and finds a little dinosaur, freshly hatched out of an egg. Chang recognized it to be a Jiangxititan.

Its little squeaks were met with a gentle roar. The mother stomped towards her baby, lightly nudging it with her head.

Then, the scene fades out, and shifts into another landscape. The pair of Jiangxititan was strolling along in the grassland, lined with tall pine-cone shaped trees which were much taller than our modern trees now. The sun was beating, big and bright. The pair stopped under the shade of a tree, the mother lifted up her head and extended her neck upwards, patiently biting off a large piece of leaf for her child. The little one was running around, making noises almost similar to a laugh, as would a human toddler. At the moment, Dr. Chang felt only contempt and warmth in her heart. She only saw what was not simply dinosaurs, but instead a mother and son.

The scene switched. The once little dinosaur had grown a bit bigger, perhaps it was in its teens. This time, It was not happiness Dr. Chang felt, but rather anger. The Jiangxititan roared at its mother, stomping its feet and shaking its heads around, which it admittedly looked quite odd considering it had such long necks. The mother was displeased, roaring louder back as a response. The teen turned away in a fit of rage, and they both parted ways.

She blinked, and to her surprise, she felt love this time around. Romantic, wife-and-husband kind of love. The Jiangxititan stood beside another one of its kind. They nudged at each other necks, moaning gently and almost purring. They picked foods for each other, they chased each other around. But they were both happy, hopelessly in love. Dr.Chang almost wished them to have a carefree life together.

The scene shifts.

And suddenly, Dr. Chang's heart sank. The worst part of the experience every single time, and every single time she would forget. She would forget that they died. She would get captured in the moment, she would forget that all these innocent animals with real emotions and lives and lovers and families, end in a devastating and undeserved fate. Dr. Chang couldn't bear to watch this part.

Roars of panic. Waves of horror and hopelessness. The dinosaurs were running for their lives, tripping over themselves. In the midst of the chaos, Dr. Chang spotted the Jiangxititan, laying down on its side, taking its final breathe before falling into an eternal slumber, thinking no one would carry on his memories, happiness or sadness, anger or fear. The most heart-breaking part most people seemed to forget was they were just as humane as we are. Some prioritize their own children, sacrificing themselves; Some run over others, desperate to survive; Some give up, because they know no matter what they do, there's no escape. And in the end, it would not matter. They would die together, strangers meeting strangers in their final moments. They didn't understand what was happening, but if there's one thing in common, they all shared an understanding that they would not survive. It's almost poetic, all species of dinosaurs —no

matter Jiangxititan or not, once separated and divided– were brought together by the tragically beautiful melody of death. A meteor collided with the ground and–

She's back. No longer feeling herself. She silently wipes her tears away with her sleeve.

“Hey now, it's okay, I'm here.” Zhao reassuringly puts his hand on her shoulder.

Dr. Chang had her back turned to him. Even though he's annoying, there's one thing you can always count on him. She was thankful for that.

“ I'm alright, thanks. The least we can do now is continue our research and keep digging up more fossils, for them, to tell their untold story when no one else can. It's our job, yeah?” She looked back at him, smiling bitterly.

So, every time she felt tired or exhausted with no motivation, she reminded herself, she's doing this for the animals that couldn't live to see another day. It's what she does, that's her motto.

A Dinosaur's Legacy and the Call for Conservation

G.T. (Ellen Yeung) College, Liu, Molly – 13

In the 1990s, a farmer discovered the world's first feathered dinosaur. Scientists named it *Microraptor*, meaning "China's dragon bird." Since then, more than 40 species of dinosaurs have been found in Liaoning Province, including over 24 species of pterosaurs.

Recently, a new species of Titanosaur was discovered in Jiangxi. What was unearthed was a well-preserved dinosaur skeleton fossil, preliminarily identified as an undocumented new species. With today's technology, a complete dinosaur skeleton fossil can be used in conjunction with artificial intelligence to create a detailed virtual image.

Within just a few weeks, the virtual image was completed. It depicted a small feathered dinosaur, with every feather clearly visible, almost as if it truly existed in the world. When wearing 3D glasses, the effect was even more stunning. The 3D image utilized the latest technology—"Virtual Biological Reconstruction Technology"—to restore the dinosaur's appearance. This technology combined 3D scanning, DNA sequence inference, and AI modeling to "revive" prehistoric creatures in virtual space. The lifelike dinosaur appeared before everyone; it was the size of a dog, covered in orange and black striped feathers, with spots adorning its long tail. It resembled a living bird but exuded an ancient wildness.

This experiment exceeded everyone's expectations, and one of the researchers announced new information. During searches in the same area, many fossils were discovered underground. This news shocked everyone. Just as they thought they could use the recently developed "Virtual Biological Reconstruction Technology" to restore the appearance of the dinosaurs, the researchers stated that the newly found fossils exhibited varying degrees of damage, requiring further study. However, with current technology, they could not be restored. This announcement cast a heavy atmosphere over the laboratory. Was it impossible to gain a deeper understanding of this new species?

After several weeks of analysis, they found that the fossils had been eroded by acid rain and pollutants for hundreds of years while underground. Due to nearby industrial activities, the soil and water sources had already been contaminated, severely degrading the preservation environment of the fossils. The team also discovered that many potential fossil sites had already been destroyed by mining and development activities. Coupled with recent typhoons and logging, the impact on the fossils was enormous.

"We were fortunate to have excavated a complete dinosaur skeleton fossil; it is already a miracle," sighed an assistant. "More dinosaur sites may forever disappear due to the destruction of modern society."

The laboratory personnel felt deep sorrow, as fossils of great research value became incomplete due to human destruction. This was bad news for both the laboratory staff and the general public. The traces of history were slowly being erased by modern humanity. Despite possessing advanced technology capable of restoring the appearances of prehistoric creatures, humanity could not prevent the disappearance of fossils due to environmental degradation. Human destruction of the environment was erasing these ancient memories of the Earth.

To make people aware of how their actions impact the environment, the government organized an exhibition under the laboratory's name. It used 3D projections to simulate dinosaurs living in modern settings, setting up different challenges for everyone to try to find a safe place to live from a dinosaur's perspective. The exhibition garnered widespread attention, and many began to realize the close relationship between environmental protection and human historical research, starting to practice environmental protection plans.

At the closing ceremony, one of the researchers stood on stage and said, “Dinosaurs are extinct, but their fossils are precious memories left to us by nature. If we do not protect the environment, even these memories will be destroyed. The story of the newly discovered dinosaur is not just about the past; it is also a warning for the future.”

Years later, the team found more *Microraptor* fossils in another unpolluted area, even discovering its nest fossil and eggshells. This time, they not only restored the appearance of *Microraptor*, but also pieced together its living environment: a social living form similar to that of birds.

The story of this dinosaur skeleton became a starting point for reconciling humanity with nature. It reminds people that every piece of land and every rock on Earth is a carrier of history. Protecting the environment is not only for the life of the present but also for those lives that have already vanished and the stories they left behind.

Mystery of Dinosaurs in Poyang Hu – Revealed

G.T. :(Ellen Yeung) College, Tsang, Jacob – 13

It was a cold, stormy day. I was trudging across vast badlands in China with my team, filled with sorrow and despair. As palaeontologists, we had a disappointing month—not a fossil was found! It is maddening to hear other teams discovering fossils in other sites. While walking back to our base, we stumbled down a valley that we had never noticed before. However, I felt that the atmosphere was enchanted and dreamy. What could possibly go wrong?

After entering the enchanted land, we settled down to have some food and voted to explore the valley afterwards. While we were eating, eerie erhus was suddenly heard playing out of nowhere! One by one, my team drooped down to a deep sleep. I was frightened and tried to yell for help, but meanwhile, I fell asleep too and had a dream. In my dream, beautiful and holy Guanyin suddenly appeared in front of me and said, “Palaeontologist Tsang, you have been working so hard to uncover the fossils hidden in the badlands of Jiangxi. I do appreciate it. As a token of appreciation, I would like to grant you a wish for your diligence.” It appeared so real and I replied, “Oh! Almighty Guanyin, thank you so much for your blessing. My wish is to uncover tales of China’s dinosaurs and let everyone in my team have an opportunity to see them” Guanyin replied, “Your wish is my command”.

Suddenly, my team and I found ourselves standing near Poyang Hu, a famous lake in Jiangxi. Dozens of dinosaurs were seen near the shoreline, with blurs and humps further out. One species of the dinosaur was exceedingly familiar. It has black scales, four clumsy little legs, a fierce-looking head with horns and a long robust body with a tail. It seemed to resemble the Chinese dragon! Unsurprisingly, unlike myths, they could not fly nor spit fire. The ‘dragons’ were swimming happily in the Poyang Hu, speedily catching little dinosaurs with a mighty bite. Many of them were either resting near the shore or swimming in the lake. They lived in groups, and the leader was the brawniest one. To communicate, they made deep rumbling sounds, like most predators. It was a fascinating sight and we spent many hours observing the dragons’ behaviour from a safe distance. We also collected some ‘dragon’ dung for examination before we got back to the present.

Out of the blue, the Poyang Hu in front of us faded and we found ourselves back in the enchanted land. We all first thought this was all a dream, but the palaeontologist who had collected the dragon dung still had the package, which had become a fossil. Then, we knew the trip was not a dream, and we knew where to dig for certain. We went back to the base and filed a request to fly to Poyang Hu to try to discover fossils. Luckily, the request was granted and we immediately flew to Poyang Hu. We chose a spot and began our fossil hunting.

After the incredible journey to the past, we knew fossils were hidden inside the rocky terrain of Poyang Hu. We worked tirelessly, in the heat of the day and the chills of the night. One day, after two weeks of digging, my shovel hit something hard. I called my team over and carefully evacuated the soil and rocks around it. Slowly, the hidden bones became clear – it was the rib of a large beast! We got rid of the dust and sent the rib to the lab. After further evaluation, it was estimated to be a carnivore that fed on fish in the Poyang Hu. This species is the first dinosaur found near Poyang Hu, marking history! This is a new tale of China’s dinosaurs, and it is very valuable to palaeontologists and scientists. This compensated for our loss a month before!

The unbelievable and wonderful chain of events led us to discover two new tales of China's dinosaurs – The Chinese dragon came from an ancient dinosaur and a new species of dinosaurs was found living near Poyang Hu. This discovery is a milestone in the history of palaeontology in China. Apart from contributing to the palaeontology in China, I also learnt that hard work always pays off. Never give up on doing something. Miracles always happen and solve all of your problems. This is an unforgettable memory and will be for all future times inerasable from my brain.

The Story of the Dinosaur Sinosauropteryx

G.T. :(Ellen Yeung) College, Yuen, Gaily – 13

I woke up at four o'clock in the morning, starting my daily routine on the farm. As usual, I plowed the soil with a small machine. After covering the whole piece of farmland, a white shiny spot in the soil appeared. What was it? I was curious about it and bent down for a closer look. Gently, I removed the soil on top of it and realised it was just an egg. But why would an egg be in the farmland? And why would the egg be so cold? The egg was a bit larger than chicken eggs too! Though I had a lot of doubts and questions, I needed to continue my work, So I placed it in one of the chicken nests. I forgot about it after a while.

After a month, while I was feeding the horses, I suddenly heard chickens clucking from the henhouse. Concerned, I immediately rushed over and found they were circling around the small pink creature which just hatched from the egg I recently picked from the farmland. I was shocked by what I saw! It had two short arms in the front and two feet in the back. Its neck and tail was long. It was just like a dinosaur but was extremely small! I couldn't believe it! What kind of creatures it actually is?

The small creature seemed to be fascinated by everything around it. It moved his head from the left to the right. I shooed away all the hens and approached it. It opened its eyes and stared at me. It tried to make some noise: "Cheep, cheep! Cheep, cheep!" Realizing it was hungry, I brought some milk for it and it seemed to be quite content.

Day by day, I fed it, taught it how to walk, and played with it. Sometimes, it also followed the chicks and had fun with them. It began to grow larger and bigger and soon, it was tall enough to reach my waist. Its fur became thick and its body turned into orange color.

However, as it was growing older, it caused more and more trouble to the farm. It broke the fences, stomped across the fields of crops, and tried smashing the door. I was afraid that it would cause larger damages to the farm. But at the same time, I wonder what made it go towards the entrance of the farm every time. Was it because he didn't want to live here anymore? Because it felt uncomfortable here? But there was a feeling telling me that he wanted to head to a place...

Ever since the last time I warned him never caused a disaster, it behaved well. However, something felt strange. It barely came out. It didn't play as much as usual. Sometimes, it shivered a lot while it was sleeping. I started to worry about it...

One day, I went to check on it as usual at 9:00 pm. However, it disappeared! My heart beat fast. My palms were sweating. I felt like there were butterflies in my stomach. Not only because I was afraid it would cause trouble, but also because I care about it! I watched it grow from baby to child. I took care of it with my greatest love. I cared about it like it was my child! I rushed out of the farm and ran on the road towards the forest. I had a feeling that it was this way.

I ran without slowing down a bit. I ran with my full speed. Suddenly, I saw a dark shadow. Was it the small creature? Was it? It had two arms and two feet, a long neck and a long tail! Yes! As I was about to call it, the creature turned around. Under the moonlight, I saw that its fur wasn't orange; it was red.

Were they the same species? Did that mean more dinosaurs live here? Weren't dinosaurs extinct? Curiosity piqued, I decided to follow the red dinosaur. It went into the woods, crossed a river and arrived at a cave. It went inside. I hesitated for a moment. Should I peek inside? Or should I just leave? Fine. I would just have a tiny peek to make sure that the small creature was safe.

I slowly turned around to the cave. I couldn't keep my mouth shut. There were so many dinosaurs in different sizes! There were some eating grass, some playing with each other, and some sleeping on the stone. It seemed to be a wonderland here, seeing so many dinosaurs which were thought to be extinct. But what I focused on the most was the dinosaurs I looked after since it was born. The particular pattern of its orange fur was very easy for me to recognize. Watching it jumping joyfully with others, I thought, It was more suitable for it to live here. Saying goodbye to this wonderland and the little creature, I sighed. I slowly picked up a rock from the cave as a memory and left.

I woke up the next morning and everything seemed to be a dream. I discovered a cave full of extinct animals. I said goodbye to the small creature that was always by my side. But when I looked at the rock, I knew that all of it was real. I observed the rock closely, and I found something strange. There was a dinosaur bone inside it! It was a fossil! I decided to sell it to the museum but I would keep the secret of the story of the cave. I hoped the dinosaur would live happily ever after. I was the farmer in Liaoning province of China, who discovered the fossil of the dinosaur *Sinosauropteryx*.

Dino Jump

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Cui, Max – 11

A long times ago, when the dinos rules the world, there was a Dino, who has a dream, to be a hero.

But the Dino is not strong, and lives him alone, just because he's a T-rex, so no one want's to be friends, with an terrified Dino.

At a sunny day, Dino gets awake, but he is not very lucky, because he saw a pterosaur who's hungry. He was scared of that, and runs to be alive. And he runs, and he sprint. And he runs as fast as light, and he got up, and he flies, and he travels to the cyber world and can't come back.

He can saw many game characters. And he understand, that he is dropped, in the world of games, and computers. He feels it is so warm, but this place is drought. Here is a desert, Dino knows. And there is not a big T-rex who wants to eat him for dessert.

But the bad thing also comes, the world behind him start disappearing it self. So he starts to run, again this time, but the thing is, his body be comes uncontrolled. He jumps high but he don't want. He saw some thing creepy, and it is a cactus moves toward. He was scared but then he jumps, and he falls, straight to the ground. But he does not died, or moves around, because he is been controlled, by a power unfound. Yet he heard a sound saying: "Hey, don't play your Dino jump games! It's time for lunch"

And Dino knows he was controlled by the guy at his front, and he runs and he jumps, but once he was thinking, he need a way to escape, around. So he thinks hardly, and wondered dreamily, but he have not saw the cactus, moving toward him.

So he runs very fast, but he don't know why he has came in this world. But when he runs, he thought about a thing, when he comes here, he is running, and he flies, it must be a power, which pulls him up by. So he runs very fust, and he runs, very hard, but suddenly the problems come! A evil pterosaur comes and pouch to Dino's face. Dino walks toward, wants to ask why? But the pterosaur just said:" because you don't belongs here!"

So Dino asked:" does you belongs here?"

"Yes I do, and I am the only guardian and Dino who knows the way out"

"So may you tell me the way back?"

"Yes I can, but you must help me do one thing."

"What?"

"I don't now that I will be the guardian in this world, the boy who controlled you at the real world is called Jason, he said if I go in to his computer, there will be a fancy land. But he treated me, he locked me in to this computer and le t me be the guardian to scared away any other creatures who got into this cyber world."

"So do you wants to let me help you to fight with Jason?"

"Yes, and don't forget to keep this thing with you."

The pterosaur throw Dino a watch.

This watch is not very big(to Dino)but it is very beautiful. There was a Dinosaur's sign. The 12 clock on the watch has a small lines of word: 'cyber world', and there writes 'real world' at 6 clock.

"It is not a normal watch, but a watch that can takes you to the humans world."

"Wow!"

"Cool, hah. I made this all by myself. It is born for this day! But you must keep it with you the whole time. Or you can never be back!"

"And, hey what's your name?"

"Emm..."

"Are you ok?"

"Yes, am fine."

"Sorry for asking that question."

"No, am fine, and go fight with Jason!"

"So how can I use this watch?"

"Oh, yes, you can press the top button of the watch to set the clock to cyber world and the real world."

"Thank you!"

“Good luck.”

Dino press the button and set it to the real world. And he fall asleep...

When he woke up he saw he got into a house, and he also saw Jason! but Jason is not a boy, but a evil, demon scientist! Dino stomp his foot, and roar as powerful as he could. He feels his body became big again!

Jason saw Dino and said: “Yes! It is the Dino that drops into Petreo’s cyber world!”

Dino thought: “What? Isn’t the pterosaur good guy?”

At the same moment, Jason take out a box, it is not a normal box, but a box that can make Dino feels very tired!

“Hello, I’m Doctor. Jason, the most powerful scientist in the world! This box will let your power be despaired from your body, and make a diamond that have enough power to open a black hole!”

But Dino is not weaken now! He used his foot and his teeth to kill this scientist, but the scientist have guns, at the moment, the pterosaur moves toward the scientist in one second! Dino finally wins.

“Thanks.”

“The pterosaur does not answered.”

But the things is not going to the right way, Dino’s clock has set to the cyber world by it self, so he fall asleep again, and when he woke up, he saw that pterosaur is looking at him, but not friendly! He said: “You finally back, but not back to the Dinosaur’s world! Ever, never!”

“But, why?”

“It seems you have forgot all of the things, but it’s ok, I remember!”

“What?”

“I can kill you now, no one will, knows, but it’s better to tell you all of the truth, 100 years ago, when it’s the end of Jurassic time, the prophet said there will be a disaster at the end of cretaceous period, and there must be a warrior who can use the power of the black hole to save the whole world. And the warrior was me, I’m the most powerful Dinos that can control the power of black hole, and I can move between times and space by flying faster than the light.”

“So what did I do that makes you so angry?”

“Because you have take my everything !”

“Why?”

“Because you try to kills me and take my power! But you have not wings, you think I’m died that night but you don’t know because you can’t control the power of black hole, so you lost all of your memories and sent me to the human’s world!”

“Uh! My head!”

“You comes to think of it, and I found a scientist who is good at technology and Dinosaur. He tells me that if I can bring him an alive Dinosaur, he will help me make a cyber world that’s under my control!”

“I think I have all remember, and sorry.”

“It is not only a ‘sorry’, but my whole life!”

“I will give you a last chance, you need to got 99999 score in my google Dino jump game! Oh, and remember my name: Ptereo!”

“Ok.”

The games starts and Dino starts to run, faster he run, faster the cactus come toward Dino, there was also many pterosaur appearing, and when the score finally got to 99998 it is almost as fast as the light! Dino jumps harder, and finally, the score comes to 99999, there was a black hole at the front of Dino. He wants to jump in the hole, but the world around him is collapsing, and the black hole is closing!

“Hey! You said you’ll let me go!”

Dino roared to Petreo

“I don’t know what’s going on! It seems like some one is controlling this outside this world !”

“Who?”

“It’s me! Your favorite scientist!”

“Doctor. Jason!?”

Dino and Petreo said at the same time.

“Well, well, well, let’s see who is here, my Dino and my old friend Petreo!”

“Why are you here!”

“Well, when you sent Dino to the real world, I’m thinking a question, why don’t I take two of you and make my diamond even more powerful!”

“Aren’t you killed by Petreo?”

“No, I faked my death but you two will be really dead in this cyberworld!”

“I won’t let you do that” said Dino, and he use his whole body to open the biggest black hole he have ever make!

“Jump in to that!”

“What?”

“I will use my power to send you to dino world, and destroy this world!”

“No! You must go back with me! I, I need to get my power from you!”

“I will send you your power just go!”

“No, come with me Dino!”

Dino push Petreo in to the black hole and said: “Bye”

“Don’t leave me!”

“Ahh!!!”

Dino send him back to the dinosaur world and use his last power to close the black hole and destroyed this world.

And finally so, Dino becomes hero, who uses the power, for the right place.

New Tales of Chinese Dinosaurs

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Jin, Caroline – 13

In 2050, an unprecedented archeological finding shocked the world. Chinese archaeologists have unearthed a series of ancient turtle shell dating back more than 3000 years. After taking them back to the laboratory and summoning experts to translate the inscriptions, an untold story between a soldier and a dinosaur from Shang dynasty was revealed...

3000 years ago, there was a man named Tang who lived a simple yet fulfilling life with his pregnant wife. Worried about the safety of his wife during childbirth, he embarked on a perilous journey to the snow mountain in search of the snow lotus, which was said helpful to ensure a smooth delivery.

The mountain was a treacherous landscape. Blinding snowstorms whipped through the air, and the steep slopes were covered in ice and slippery rocks. Tang carefully navigated his way, his determination was unwavering. As he reached a remote glacier, a glimmer of something unusual caught his eyes. There, half-buried in the melting ice, was a gigantic egg with strange markings that seemed to tell a story of an ancient era. Intrigued and sensing that this could be a occasional discovery, Tang used all his strength to carefully extract the egg from the ice and wrapped it in furs to protect it from the cold.

He carried the precious egg back home and intended to look after it with great care. He built a warm nest for it using the softest hay and made sure it was always at the right temperature. Day and night, he watched over the egg, with his anticipation growing. To his amazement, the egg hatched several months after his daughter's birth, revealing a small, yet fierce-looking dinosaur. The creature had bright, intelligent eyes and a powerful tail that swished with energy. It quickly formed a bond with Tang's family, especially with his young daughter. The little girl would giggle with delight as the dinosaur played with her, and it became an important member of their family. However, tragedy struck when their daughter was only four years old, Tang's wife passed away. Before they could fully grieve, the kingdom was filled with chaos and war. The call to arms was issued, and Tang, forced by the social situation, joined the military troop accompanied by his loyal dinosaur, and left his daughter.

When the ranks saw the four-legged creature with a wrinkled body, they were all amazed by how mighty it was. By its strong combat capability, the general desinated him to be the stormtrooper of the army. The Battle of Muye was a fierce and bloody encounter. Tang, astride his dinosaur, devoted to the war with unmatched courage. The dinosaur's powerful jaws and sharp claws tore through the enemy ranks, while Tang precisely thrust at the enemies. Their combined force was unstoppable and they quickly became a target of the enemy's attention.

As the battle raged on, the enemy general noticed their extraordinary performance and ordered a concentrated assault. Soon, Tang and his dinosaur were surrounded by a sea of enemies. Trapped and outnumbered, with no way out, they faced certain death. In that moment of desperation, the dinosaur let out a deafening roar that echoed across the battlefield. It turned to face the oncoming enemies and without hesitation, rushed towards them. Tang's eyes were filled with disbelief, he reached out his hand to grab it, but was powerless. The dinosaur's sacrifice was immediate and heroic. It fought with all its might, dodging spears and arrows, and using its body as a shield. Its scales were pierced, and blood flowed, but it did not wince. 'No!' yelled Tang, 'come back!' but it continued to firmly launch at the enemy without retreat, buying precious time for Tang to break free from the encirclement.

With tears in his eyes and a heavy heart, Tang made his escape. He took the last glance at the dinosuar, which its figure was teetering yet still firm. He found a hidden path and ran as fast as his legs could carry him, with the screaming of the dinosaur and the resonant bugle call of the enemies coming with a fierce momentum.

After the war finally ended, he returned home to his daughter. As she caught a glimpse of his figure, she staggered towards her father and embraced him tightly. They both shed blissful tears. From that day forward, Tang would often tell his daughter the story of the dinosaur: how it came into their lives, its loyalty and bravery, and its ultimate sacrifice. In memory of the great dinosaur, Tang carved the touching story onto a turtle shell. The tale became a family legend, passed down through the generations, a testament to the extraordinary bond between a man, his family, and a creature from a bygone era. And in the quiet nights, when the wind blew through the village, it seemed as if the spirit of the dinosaur still lingered, watching over them.

Transtime

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Li, Dylan – 12

“It look’s like we need to start without Jason,” Grimaud said.

With that, the two scientists pulled open a door on the cylinder, stepping inside. The crazy shakes of the cylinder machine took their attention, it shook so hard as if it is having an avalanche: the shaking begin faster and faster, and suddenly it stopped, throwing Kevin and Grimaud to the other side of the cylinder.

The door automatically opens, showing a giant forest before them: a Microraptor stared at them with a lizard hanging in it mouth, stared at them with curiosity, then run away. They step out of the time machine, lighten their torches and discover forwards: strange noises come from all around them, and they could see a lizard or a huge insect from time to time. Just as the two of them are discovering the world around them like an just born baby, Kevin step into a hole and fell unprepared to his knees. “whoa!” Kevin shouted. They look down at what make Kevin falls, and retreat in terror: it is a huge footprint big enough for Kevin to sit inside.

The ground shook, and a dinosaur stepped out of a high bush, it high spines that shapes like a mask waves: it two little beady eyes staring at their burning torches. Judging by it crocodile–alike body, Kevin shout out in name immediately:

“ a Spinosaurus! The biggest hunter on land and in shallow water. Run!” with that, the two scientist simultaneously turn and run toward the direction of their time machine. The Spinosaurus only thinking for one second with it tiny brains, decided chased after the two scientist wading between plants.

“Why is this giant interested in us? We're two small for the biggest hunter on land!”

“Oh please, for a junior like that one, we’re just the right snack. By the way, I see our time capsule is just sitting there waiting for us.”

They jump into their machine, but only finding a Microraptor already in there, putting a careful eye on the true master of the time machine.

“Why are you in here?” Kevin shout at the scared Microraptor.

“We’ll deal with that later! We should think about the bigger ones. Close the door!” with a shaky but fast hand, Kevin shut them in the machine by closing the door. Suddenly, a nearly critical attack put the cylinder machine of it balance, falling to one side. Subsequently, deep group of scratches made of three sharp claws embodied the door, one even coming through: the black claws then drag it way out of the wall. Kevin hit the button beside him which supposedly will take them back time. Before they know it, they are back in the lab: choking smoke filled the machine, and Kevin opened the door dragging himself out. Grimaud then fell unconsciously beside him. The Microraptor jump out, then stared at Kevin.

“Ahh... go away. I don’t know what you want. Now I need to help my friend.”

Kevin fell beside Grimaud, shaking his shoulder: but still, he lay unconscious. Kevin lay one finger on his neck: no pulse. “No! How did he just fell dead?”

Kevin sat down, his brain working on how does Grimaud just turn dead right before him?... then in the corner of his eye, he saw the Microraptor standing before him waving it front paw at him as him calling him to follow him. Kevin stood up, then follow the tiny dinosaur for he has nothing to do now. The Microraptor walks slowly, dragging its long feathered wings. It come before the sand patch, where Kevin, Jason and Grimaud once testified their machine to see if it works in different environments. The Microraptor jump into the middle, use its claws and its talons on its wings to make marks on the sand: sometime it even waves its wings to remove extra sands and make the sand back smooth. Then with a final squeak, the little dinosaur jump aside and let Kevin look at its art: there in the middle, clearly spelled in English, reads:

I AM GRIMAUD.

Kevin slump back into a nearby chair, and review what has happened today. "What a crazy day! First we launch the first time capsule in human history, then be chased by a Spinosaurus: then when we go back time, Grimaud just fell dead right beside me: then this Microraptor we bring from millions of years ago just say its name is Grimaud! What a crazy day!"

Seeing that Kevin still don't believe it, the Microraptor then run slowly toward the cabins where the scientist lives. "Hey! Stop right there! The other scientist will gone mad if they see you running outside." As if it didn't hear it, the Microraptor still kept racing toward the cabins of the scientists. "oh...how stupid I am. As if that dinosaur really knows what I am saying."

The dinosaur hearing that, then stopped and look at Kevin, trying to scowl: but without the help of eyelids, it only makes it look much more funny. After that, the Microraptor raced on with a quicker pace, and now Kevin need to run to chase the dinosaur. The dinosaur now reach the cabins, and run directly to the third one of the second row, and making it there, raises its little head and look at Kevin. "Wait...what...how did you know which house is mine? Wait a second...just to test if you really are Grimaud... which house is Grimaud's? The Microraptor raced past a few houses, and stop before another houses. By this time, Kevin has no chance but to believe it is Grimaud. "Ahh...sorry Grimaud. I'll use the Time Machine again and try to find a solution for you." With that, Kevin raced back with Grimaud the dinosaur following him. Kevin send a text to Jason about the situation, then Kevin programmed the time machine to one hundred years later, and went into the machine immediately. Wires sizzled, fire spark sprang all around: a few second later, the machine disappeared right in its place. The computer beeped, and jumping on a seat, Grimaud saw what he least wanted now: there on the screen, it reads: capsule malfunctioned. Time displaced. Time displaced. A second later, the capsule reappeared and it opened the door, revealing a familiar jungle : the jungle where Kevin and Grimaud just explored and come back, and Grimaud himself turn to a dinosaur. A swarm of heat swarmed toward Grimaud, burning his skins: the torches which he and Kevin used to explore fell, and lighten the whole forest: now he could see whole packs of dinosaur racing toward them with the wild fire behind trying to engulf them. One after another, the dinosaurs run into the capsule and knock Grimaud aside: trying to count the number of the dinosaurs, Grimaud thought there are at least one hundred that just went through the time capsule. The dinosaurs went totally wild in the lab, and only causing fire right in the lab by biting and bumping into electronic devices. Thanks fully they didn't destroyed the computer used to program the Time Machine.

Some strong ones must have marked the door opened, for at once the lab is cleared. With such racket going on, Grimaud is so sure that they'll be on the news tomorrow that he didn't even think of poor Kevin, which is caught in time and couldn't move to the next minute. He could hear the fire alarm going off: the fires must have caught on other things. Oh, how he wish there is a miracle to save them now! And just like a miracle, Jason's tired but relieved face pop out from the door. "Oh, how did you get in that, my dear Grimaud? Kevin text me there is a problem going on so I comes. Where is Kevin?"

Grimaud typed on the computer to show "so Kevin is caught in the river of time? How interesting. Let aside. I'll reprogram it." A second later, the programming stopped, and the time capsule reappeared in the middle of the lab.

Kevin walk out, and his beard become much longer like it hasn't been shaved for a month: Jason direct him aside, and put both Grimaud's dead body and Grimaud the dinosaur into the capsule. "You turn to a dinosaur because the capsule is overstressed. Now, without Kevin, you'll return to your body." The capsule disappeared and reappeared again, but now there's only the human Grimaud. Grimaud walked out. "Kevin! I thought you recognized me. Why don't you text Jason earlier?"

"But there is still other questions. You two used my capsule without me, and you two also destroyed my life's work..." Jason point to the time capsule, now burned and all the wires burned to the ground.

"but anyway...that is quite old, so maybe we should just makes a new one." Jason concluded. With that, the three friend went building a whole new time capsule.

DinoMan

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Li, Sue – 11

This Chinese town was next to a forest. The town was beautiful, chirping birds, colorful flowers, and houses standing neatly beside the street. It was midnight, and little Marta was sleeping peacefully in her bed. Suddenly, a chirp waked her up. She looked out the window, thinking about how she and her older sister argued today.

That afternoon, she saw a toy in Wella's bag. She grabbed the toy. "I want that toy!" she yelled, "Can you give it to me?" Wella shook her head. This toy was a kitten, and also Wella's favorite. But Marta sobbed, and her parents can bear it no longer. "Wella! Stop being so mean!" Mom snapped. Dad grabbed the toy from Wella's hands and tugged it into Marta's. "Don't cry, my honey."

Wella sighed sadly. This isn't the first time they argued, and her parents never cared about who was right and wrong, they only cared about their age. "Nobody cares for me," Wella thought, "I don't even have friends at school. They all thought I bullied my sister, because my mom said so at the meeting."

Now Marta was in her bed, looking at the window. She looked at the kitten toy in her hands, satisfied. She looked at Wella's bed. It was empty! Marta searched the house, but Marta wasn't there! Although Marta tried to tell herself that she doesn't like her sister, but her love for Wella which was hidden glowed inside her. She needed to find her sister. She thought of the forest that her sister played in everyday. "She must be there." Marta thought. She walked to the forest, in her clothes she wore at home. Cold wind blew, the moon shined in cold white, and the autumn leaves on the ground screeched every step she took. Marta never noticed that the night of this beautiful town could be so spooky.

Marta found footsteps, and decided to follow them. It led her to a wall built by iron nets, and a huge board hung on it. It read: "Zoo of Dinosaurs". She can see some giant creatures just behind the net wall.

The giant creatures behind the net moved in slow motion, and every stomp they took shook the Earth. They casted huge, black shadows on the dirty, rocky ground. Marta shivered.

The moon lit dimly up Marta's head, and the zoo was creepy. But Marta stilled walked in. She saw giant dinosaurs, all types and colors, every one was kept inside a giant cage of iron nets. The zoo was so big, and Marta thought that their were about eighty dinosaurs. But all the dinosaurs moaned and hummed in a sad, low sound, like a sad person. Marta was scared, but the dinosaurs didn't attack her, they just looked at her like looking at a toy. Suddenly, she found a dinosaur that attracted her eyeballs.

The dinosaur was a giant leaf-eater, with green and tough skin. Although it was a dinosaur, it reminded Marta of her sister. Her eyes had the same sad look like Wella's, and her face looked like Wella, too. It even had the same scar Wella had on her neck. Marta suddenly felt sorry for how she hurt her sister. But it was too late, and Marta ran back home.

The next morning, Marta woke up early. Last night's memories flashed in Marta's head. The iron net walls, the zoo, the dinosaurs. Were they true, or just a dream?

But seeing Wella sitting next to her, Marta thought that was all a dream, and kept it as a secret.

The day went on normally.

That afternoon, Marta told her parents she wanted to go to the forest to play. She went to were she remembered the zoo was. She didn't expect to find the zoo, and just like she thought, the zoo wasn't there.

The night was so dark, and the clock struck to twelve. Marta kept thinking about the things happening last night, but they seemed more and more real. "What if the zoo could only be seen at night?" Marta suddenly thought.

She ran to the zoo. It was there.

She found the dinosaur that she thought looks like Wella. That moment, she suddenly felt a feeling that it really was Wella. She felt so sorry for how she hurt her sister. Marta felt like she wanted to cry. Marta spoke softly to the dinosaur. "I am sorry, Wella. I am a bad sister." Tear drops fell slowly, and one fell on the dinosaur. Suddenly, a magical scene happened.

The dinosaur's tough skin melted, and it became human skin. The legs and arms became more white and thin. The shape of its head changed, and its human nose, eyes, and mouth started to show. It turned into Wella.

All the other dinosaurs looked at them, like looking at something they longed for. Wella told Marta the backstory of this zoo.

"Here is the zoo of the sad and unloved. The happy people do not come here. A sad and unloved person comes here, and he or she will turn into a dinosaur. The more sad and unloved a person is, it looks more like a dinosaur, and less like its human form. My dinosaur is one of the happiest dinosaurs here, and the second youngest. This one, in the iron-net room next to me, is a poor man whose house has been robbed and his mom and dad won't help him. He is a street urchin before he turned into a dinosaur. A dinosaur can only be turned back, if someone comes and cheers it up."

So the sisters cheered the other dinosaurs up, by telling happy stories and helping them. They did it for hours, but the dinosaurs who turned into humans joined, and after hard work and patience, all the dinosaurs have vanished, but tons of humans replaced them. It was four AM in the morning, and the sun was about to rise. Suddenly, a strike of white light shines, all the people they saved disappeared, and the sisters appeared on their bed.

"Where are they?" Marta asked.

"I think they went home, just like us." Wella replied.

The next day, they got a letter from a person called Rick. "That's the name of the street urchin dinosaur!" Wella exclaimed. The letter read:

Thank you sisters, for turning me back into human. I will remember your kindness for the rest of my life. I will thank you for the other people you saved too.

Now I won't be a street urchin anymore. I will get a job and live a better life. You gave us the hope for a better life.

Thank you.

Freddy: the dinosaur that was lost in time

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Li, Summer – 11

On a peaceful afternoon in May, Tina was doing her math homework quietly in her own room, while her father, who is a famous scientist and biologist was doing an experiment in his lab. He has a large lab in his own home in the basement. There is a small cloth hanger in the lab that has 5 lab coats on it. Next to it is a long, white table used to do experiments on. There were a lot of microscopes on the table. The biologist was sitting near the table in his hand, there is an engine. I am not sure what that engine is, but one thing that I am very sure is that this engine is probably not a car engine. It is about ten centimeters long and is made of metal. It is the shape of a diamond, a huge diamond that has an orange light on the top of it. He sat there spinning the engine in his old, rough hand. Finally he stood up and walked to the shelf next to the table, he firstly wanted to take maybe a tool or something else but then he found out that it was not in the lab so he stood up to get it in a tool room that is also in the basement.

Just in the same time, his daughter Tina went down to find his dad to ask him a question on her homework. But then she realized that her dad is not in the lab, so under curiosity she opened the door and walked straightly to the lab. She saw a lot of colorful creature's cell that is neatly arranged in cabinets. They are all kept in small glass bottles. She took the most beautiful one on the cabinet and opened the tiny plastic bag and one minute cell presented in front of Tina's eyes.

She looked around and found a small fossil of a baby pterodactyl, so she poured it on the fossil. Then, a magical thing happens, a baby pterodactyl sat on the fossil, the fossil that Tina poured the DNA on. Tina's eyes went wide open. She slowly got closer to the baby pterodactyl, she realized that she got something wrong, so that she decided to hide the baby pterodactyl into the closet and secretly bring the baby dinosaur to her own room. Meanwhile the biologist finally found the tool that he needed and walked fastly to the lab but Tina didn't have enough time to hide it, so when he arrives at the lab, the scent that occurred in the lab made him take a gasp.

"My goodness, what did you do with that creature, who did you do that, Tina are you crazy?"

Tina's eyes looked straightly to her father's eyes, her blue eyes with sweet appearance made her dad wanted to ignore this thing happening....

Days after days, Tina and the pterodactyl quickly became friends with each other. Tina even named the dinosaur as Freddy which the pterodactyl seem to love this name. Together they had a very happy time, for example when Tina is doing her math homework, Freddy would sit on the floor of the lab and watch Tina writing her math homework. Freddy's favorite food is meat and fish, so Tina would use her own pocket money to buy fish and meat for Freddy. Of course, Freddy would also help Tina to take the book that she wants before going to bed. He would fly above the most top floor of book shelf and use his beak to pick the book and flew over to give it to Tina.

They had a very good time together, I must say that twist and I promise that. But all good things come to the end, not to two months, both Tina and her dad realized that Freddy could not just live in their home, and here are some reasons:

Firstly, while Freddy is growing bigger and bigger they need a bigger space to fit him, and their house is filled of furniture, which is not very good.

Secondly, while Freddy growing up, he needs more food to eat, and they do not have so much money to purchase so much food for the poor pterodactyl to eat,

Finally, Freddy needed to practice how to hunt and fly, which is impossible to be done in a family.

Under the three huge problems that Tina's dad told to Tina, although that she didn't wanted to, but she also wanted to let Freddy have a good life, so she agreed. The biologist led Tina to his lab, this is the first time that he agree his daughter to his lab. (In the past, he often thinks that the lab is so dangerous for Tina.) He walked near to the table and took the engine that has been put on the table, then he walked to the wall, there is a black lock in the middle of the wall, the biologist walked to the wall and reached out his finger and use his thumb to put on the lock.

In the next second, the wall start moving and a invisible door opened. His daughter was shocked, but the biologist just sweetly looked at her daughter and smiled, slowly. They walked in the little room, then, they saw a big time machine putting in the little room, nothing else.

The biologist make a sign to let his daughter to step back and then he walked into the small room, taking the engine with him on his hand with him on his hand. He opened the cap on the machine and put the diamond-shaped engine inside. Then he opened the window made with glass. There is two sits inside the machine, the biologist sits on one of it and Tina sits on the other one. The biologist said slowly:

"I am not sure if this could work in the time bridge in between of now and the past, so it might be very dangerous, are you ready?"

"yes!" Answered Tina, excitingly holding Freddy tightly in her arms.

"Hold tight !" called Jackson, closing the window. In one second, they disappeared, no one knows how they transpired to the dinosaur world. I for the one that was telling this story to you is very sure that they succeed in transporting to the time before.....

The two people walked into the place and they saw a mother pterodactyl sitting on the tree feeding meat to the other pterodactyl babies. When, the mother flew away again, they slowly walked to the nest of the dinosaur while the mother dinosaur was going out to take some food, but then they feel something enormous behind them. Jackson turned around and saw a huge t-rex staring at them. He screamed out loud which made Tina also saw the dinosaur that could cause them to death. They straightly ran toward the forest, and the t-rex chase them at the back without any resting. The dinosaur nearly caught them and Tina signed to make everyone hide into the grass, the t-rex stopped and them turn into the opposite direction Fastly. They slowly get out of the grass and trees,

"that was close!" The biologist say slowly. Tina nodded and walked carefully forwards to the place that the dinosaur nest is at. They walked slowly and carefully to close the nest and put Freddy inside the warm, an comfortable nest. Tina They succeed in putting Freddy back to his family. Then, the two of them walked to the place that the machine has landed. In their walked back there, they saw quite a lot of fascinating pictures of the dinosaur world. At last, they sit in the machine and disappeared in the deep secret forest that is filled of special ancient animals.

Back in Jackson's lab, he is tidying up all the mess that his daughter, Tina has made. He accidently found out the fossil that Tina used to born out Freddy and in a shook, he knew that this fossil has diseases on it, and this baby pterodactyl is probably dead because of this scary diseases. He remembered that when the other biologists found this whole fossil, they knew that there is some diseases on it that people could avoid, but not dinosaurs could not, so this means that the disease is probably spreading inside the dinosaur's world! After thinking of this, the biologist was frightened and decided to go back to the dinosaur's world and help them. But then, he found out a huge problem,

the time machine that he invented can only be used once, he tried to fix the engine, so that it is brand-new, but that didn't work at all. He that he has no idea to return to the dinosaur world.....

And, I guess that is probably the reason why dinosaurs were extinct!

Jurassic Scavenger

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Li, Ryan – 13

Dark settled in the town of Jurassic, as the moon creeps up upon the inkish skyline. Beside the deep forest, stood a lone wood cabin, surrounded by wire mesh and metal cans torn into shreds. Windows of the cabin shattered into pieces, faint lights seeped through the room, forming the contour of a person. Suddenly, a rush ring of the telephone broke the dead silence. A young man wearing a yellow sweater slowly stood up.

"Hello? Anyone there? Hello?" No one answered.

He gently put down the telephone, and grasped his electric prod firmly, aiming it at the door. His breathing stopped, not daring to make a tiny sound. Outside the door, Hurriedly footsteps came close, violently bombarding drops of dusts in the air. His heart raced. Suddenly, the footsteps stopped. He slowly moved to the side, bending his waist low.

"DING DONG!"

"Hank, I need to talk to you, right now! " The deep voice of another young man came in from outside.

"Come inside," Hank exhaled as he laid his electric prod against the deteriorating wall. "The door is not locked."

The young man rushed inside, breathing heavily as he sat on the sofa.

"Relax Eddie," Hank confronted, "What's wrong?"

"We are running out of time! They are coming after us!"

"Dude, it's already midnight, nothing's going to hurt you. Tell me what happened." Hank patted him on the shoulders.

"We need to leave" Eddie cut him off, "Right now! before they find us!"

"Who...?"

"Do you think Sadie's death was an accident?" Eddie interrupted. "Don't you think it's weird? Why did these victims all die from the same Velociraptor? Sadie, Carter, Kenji. Don't you think someone's behind all these deaths?"

"Listen Eddie, your interpretation might be correct, but we

're definitely safe to stay here."

Outside the room, wind pierced through the shattered window, banging metal cans creating a cacophonous sound. The dull afterglow of the moon lingered on the withered stem of a red rose. Through the rustling leaves, the vague outline of a huge creature emerged, it's huge round eyes gleaming.

"Shh!" Eddie lowered his body cautiously, slowly backing away.

Hank snatched the electric prod, shivering as he turned off the lights.

"Maybe it will pass." Eddie said hopefully.

Suddenly, huge pieces of glass along with fragments of wood flew in, exploding towards the two of them.

"Duck!" Eddie jumped to the side, and hid behind a blue sofa.

The furry back of a dinosaur appeared in the room, and it's length reaching two meters. It's huge greenish tail whipped towards the wall, vigorously clashing plates and vases.

"It's..." Eddie murmured apprehensively, "It's a deinonychus!"

“No, it’s a verociloptor.” Hank corrected.

“Look at the huge scar on his back,” Eddie pointed to the dinosaur, “It’s the same one from Russia.”

Hank’s expression hardened from the frightent face. “But how is it possible to be in China?”

Behind the sofa, Eddie mouthed: No idea. He gestured Hank a count down to run. Then suddenly, the verociloptor spotted Eddie laying behind the sofa, it roared aggressively, pouncing towards him.

“Run!” Eddie ducked aside, and the verociloptor sank it’s claws into the wooden floor one inch beside him, leaving a huge deep mark.

“Over here!” Hank yelled from the floor, his hands swaying in the air. Eddie caught the signal, and sprinted towards the exit. Behind him, the huge verociloptor struggled up from the ground, and immediately shot forward, swinging it’s claws insanely.

“Go! Go! Go!” Hank lit up his electric prod, sparkling drops of fire as he swung open the door.

Eddie is reaching closer to the door, but the dinosaur was even closer to him. It tried to snap him in the legs, but Hank’s flying prod backed the dinosaur away.

“To my car!” Eddie ordered as he pulled down the heavy metal rolling door, just in time to lock the dinosaur inside.

They ran to the dark, and spotted a brown van parked beside the woods.

“That’s my car!” Eddie reached for his keys, and the engine roared to life.

“Quick!” Hank peered back to his hut, noticing the cans were already torn into pieces. Then, between the woods, he saw that verociloptor sprinting towards their direction.

“Eddie! Start driving!” Hank yelled as he hit close the doors.

Eddie’s hand flew over the handle, “On it.”

The van coughed enthusiastically in respond to Eddie’s moves. He managed to get the van running on the road, and the picture of the verociloptor slowly faded away.

“Whoa, that was close, we’re almost eaten!” Eddie let out a sigh.

“But that also meant we’re in danger, plus...” Hank took a small sip of water, “My bells didn’t ring when the dinosaur came, which means someone broke it, on purpose.”

“Yes indeed,” Eddie pointed back, “I’ve been doing some research about dino murders.”

“Interesting, have you made any progress?” Hank took off his sweater, leaning back casually.

“No, not yet.” Eddie adjusted the rearview mirror .

“And... you need to rest.”

“Sounds like a great idea.” Hank yawned and lied down, the he started to snore.

Eddie tapped on the radio, and then it started to broadcast.

“Breaking news, Since Dr. Carl’s dino cloning plan started to institute in parts of China, many issues has been reported from local residents. Authorities claimed that corruption occured during this adoption, resulting in dinosaurs escaping from the labortory, threatening the safety of citizens. Details related to this case ‘re still investigating.

“I can’t believe that!” Eddie murmured, “It’s gone so far in a month, they even use dinosaurs for crimes!”

Outside the window, the distant horizon started to light up, revealing a trace of sun that hiding behind purple clouds.

Hours passed, the winding old road turned into a highway, and the dimly-lit surroundings turned bright. "I hope Dr. Ray's correct," Eddie muttered, "Hank! Wake up!"

"Mmmmm....I would love to make emojies while eating crackers. Hank blurted out while chewing on his thumb. "Come on dude, a T-rex is nearby!" Eddie stomped his feet, trying to mimic it's footsteps.

"Where! Tell me!" Hank sat up so quickly that he almost head butted Eddie in the noes.

"Jeez, you got good ears!"

"So," Hank scratched his ears, " Where are we?"

"Look outside." Eddie lowered the window.

A gush of wind blew in, along with the flavor of fresh herb. A huge skyscraper stood in the middle of the department buildings, surrounded by huge metal fences. The logo of a dinosaur was printed on the side wall, labeled "P D E".

"Welcome to Haikou! "

Hank nodded, "Yeah right, so...I guess we'll find some clues, hopefully."

"No," Eddie stared at his phone, "We need to move to a safer place."

"And...why would we do that?" Hank raised an eyebrow.

"For safety." Eddie replied.

Together, they entered the skyscraper. Inside the building, windows the shape of rhombuses glued themselves into masterpieces. A huge skeleton dinosaur stood in the middle of the hall, guarding this area.

"This place is amazing!" Hank stared at the huge dinosaur in awe.

"Yes indeed." a man wearing a white gown walked towards them, on his chest, a name tag printed Ray Tang particularly conspicuous.

"Dr. Ray!" Eddie moved forward, "It's so nice to see you again! This is Hank." He gestured.

"Nice to see you too Eddie," Dr. Ray exhaled a breath, "But time is ticking, we need to get you two as far away from China as possible."

"But why can't we stay here?" Hank took out his green water bottle, and started to drink.

"No, definitely not," Dr. Ray glanced around apprehensively, and lowered his voice, "Dr. Carl and his crews sold the keys to control dinosaurs, and I'm afraid that some of my employees are involved in the murder case."

"And we're all in danger now." Eddie concluded.

"Exactly," Dr. Ray agreed, and started to run, "Let's move."

Soon, the picture of a barge ported in the harbor zoomed in.

"We're almost there!" Eddie breathed heavily. Suddenly, the alarm ran, blinding their vision red. Behind them, people scattered around, running for their lives. Eddie's heart sank. He saw a huge dinosaur sprinting towards them, and beside it, smaller ones following the lead.

"Run!" Dr. Ray grabbed their arms, and started to sprint.

They rushed through the glass door, and flew towards the barge 10 meters away. The dinosaur behind ignored the intimidated crowd, and leaped across towards Dr. Ray.

"Help!" Dr. Ray screamed as the verociloptor snapped him in the leg, and swallowed him in a blink.

“Run!” Hank scurried forward as Eddie jumped onto the boat, noticing a driver waiting for them.

“Go! ” Hank commanded as he banged a small dinosaur in the head with a shovel.

The barge speeded away from the shore, leaving the dinosaurs roaring with anger.

“We need to find the truth ourselves.” Eddie’s expression’s deadly serious.

Together, they sailed into the open sea.

Suddenly, a tense scratch of claws clanged on the back floor, shaking the room vigoursly.

Dinosaur Invasion

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Liu, Jason – 11

The whole event starts at year 2011.

Most people would never want to live at Dawn village, for it's ugly environment and filthy road . The Dawn village is between Germany and Poland and you need extra vision to discover this highly protected and hidden village . In most people's eyes, they will just see a plain grassland with old trees .

Now, you must been wandering: Hey, why it's been hidden, and why it's been hid so good?

Well, this should be a secret, but never mind. This place is a town, of course. But under it is a huge underground station with people streaming to work.

This is the top secret of Germany. Germany wanted to invade and control Poland years ago but didn't succeeded, because of the united allies. And now Germany wanted to start the world war III to rise the Nazi.

Below the Dawn village, there's an agent called Kevin, who's the most popular agent. He had messy hairs, brown eyes, always wore a black smith hat and he never change his clean, silky black gown. The group always sent him to complete missions and he had never fail, at least from now before.

On 2055 the December, the group sent him out to complete a mission to get information of Poland and steal the recipe from the train station at 225 road.

Kevin was a self-confidence man, but this time, he was nervous. He knew the whole German army was looking for this recipe, and this recipe was also the only way to beat Poland.

Kevin wasted no time and he was on his ways to 225 road 10 minutes later.

On the hills beside the road, someone spoke:

"He's on his way, sir."

"Good," said the voice "Make sure to track him inside the VELLATRED367, and leaves no survivors behind.

Kevin soon arrived and began to find the door with H on it . It's the door on his map that told him to go inside.

He carefully slid the door into a crack, and slithered inside through the crowd of people.

Inside was a sign read "No entry"

Kevin scanned the room and soon spotted the recipe.

But something caught his eyes and he observation began to set on a closet, and the inside was gleaming bright, and that's the only light in the room.

Out of curiosity, Kevin opened the closet and a strong wind burst out and blew him inside.

Inside was huge, Kevin suddenly found himself in a forest, the closet and the room had disappeared.

Suddenly, a dinosaur roared.

No, an animal roared, not a dinosaur! Dinosaur didn't exist.

But on the next second, a huge Brontosaurus came stomping down towards him .

Ok, maybe it's a time machine, that will does it.

But just as he took a step back, he felt of stepping on something. And the next thing he knew was that he was flying high and landing with a thump on something.

He looked down and nearly faint.

Kevin the agent was sitting on a Tyrannosaurus-Rex's back.

"Ahyahyah !" Kevin screamed out loud .

The dinosaur must had heard it, because it opened it tiny eyes and saw Kevin, with a roar of rage the dinosaur began to shake it's gigantic body and Kevin fell down with no alarm.

The Tyrannosaurus—rex charged at him. And Kevin suddenly remembered that he brought a light gun that can shoots light and pass signal

He took it out and aim it at the speeding dinosaur. A beam of light shot out and hits

The T—rex.

The dinosaur yelled in confusion for the strong beam of light and it backed up a bit, seizing his chance, Kevin began scrambling through the bushes and began to run towards the place where the time machine was.

It's just a second before the Tyrannosaurus—rex realized that his dinner was running away so it yelled and charged behind Kevin.

Just as Kevin began to get exhausted, a strange noise ranged up the whole forest, and the next thing he knew, strange types of pterosaur began scooping down to peck the T—rex's neck.

The T—rex roared again and thanks to the pterosaurs, Kevin was able to escape.

"Phew ! That's close ." Kevin said to himself, "I need to be more careful in this danger—"

He felt he had stepped on something square and hard.

He bent down towards the long grasses and somehow, he picked up a stuff like medallion. And it also had a letter H on the top of the box.

He examined it carefully, and it tells him one certain fact: somebody had been here before!

Kevin somehow shuddered to think about that, and he had completely forgot his missions.

Suddenly, another strange sound appeared from the hills. And the next thing he knew, an Hadrosaurus was marching down the hills and began to open and shut his mouth. Kevin looked left, and he saw piles of buried sand and he knew instantly that it's piles of eggs.

He hurried off incase the dinosaur began to charge at him .

I must find my way to the time machine before dark. He thought.

It's a long way to the time machine, or even Kevin himself wasn't sure that he was going the right way.

Speaking of it, he just thought he was so lucky to be thrown so far by the trap—wait.

He thought, why's there a trap? Trap hadn't been invented yet, and also it surely couldn't throw him that far—

He stopped, nearly ran into a big something, and it took him one second to realized that he had found the time machine .

The closet door was still opened, and just when he's about to walk inside the closet door, he was knocked aside by one strong man

"WHOA! SAM ! INTRUDERS!" He yelled after he bumped into Kevin .

"Close the portrait VELLATRED367! Get out, quick!"

Kevin wanted to scrambled in the portrait VE whatever, but he got punched by some one and got down, unconscious .

A shadowy figure marched forward, and Kevin saw his long hat that read H.Y.D.R.A on top .

"You !" Kevin gasped.

The shadow faded, as Adolf Hitler himself walked out from the closet .

"Yes, I'm wandering when I'll see you, Agent. I appreciate your abilities, but you have a heart of justice, so I am very sorry to let you inside and then send the dinosaur back—"

"You WHAT?" Kevin demanded.

Hitler however, didn't seemed listening .

"—and I will took the world using it . You know, VELLATRED367 is my baby, spent me tons of years to built . It's beautiful ! But one second here equals a day or so ."

He walked back to the closet.

"NO!" Kevin screamed but too late, the closet had already been closed .

Now Kevin began to feel hopeless, what will he do?

After an hour on present days, people were screaming and there's lazar any where !

And dinosaurs were roaming freely in Poland.

It's 2056 now and people had thought Kevin had died in the mission.

Kevin finally opened his pocket and found a medallion in it.

He opened the cube and found a watch and a scribble of note.

The note read : "The fossil controls VELLATRED, Nazi, EDI fossil .

The watch had a recipe: "Time watch, one time only.

Kevin knew that EDI fossil wasn't a fabulous fossil, but that's the only way to stop Hitler and his dinosaurs, so there's not so much to do except to use the watch .

He studied the recipe and turned the watch three times and said: "bring me to 1900 !"

In an instant, he had travelled to the past. He knew there's no time to waste but destroying the fossil.

As the piece had been destroyed by Kevin, the future changed, the dawn village didn't exist and there's no dinosaur attacking people anymore .

Kevin stayed at the 1900s and got married and lived happily ever after. And apart from you, who else would know that an agent which had disappeared in 2011 had saved the world?

THE END

(I 'm running out of paper anyway)

A New Home

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Lu, Hannah – 11

It was a peaceful fall in a bustling city, Shanghai .When someone walks in the city ,they will smell the moisty leaves that had fallen on to the ground and feel the cold breeze dancing by their cheeks. You can see skyscrapers all around , driverless cars were the most common cars on the road. The communities in the city have many green spaces and they are all very neat. The people in the city all have smart housekeepers to do things for them.

Meanwhile, on a small island that no one knew ,dinosaurs still exists. People do not know about this because they think they know everything and were lazy to explore more.

The dinosaurs have a children (a human) that they adopted one summer. Her name is called Mia .Mia was washed to the shore of the dinosaurs' island lying on a surfing board ,she was surfing on the sea when she and her family were on holiday , suddenly, a huge wave came and before she knew it , she was stroked away ,then she fainted. Maybe its because she was lucky ,when she woke up ,she spotted an island not far away and she used all her might to make it to the island. When she arrived at the island, she was exhausted . The dinosaurs found her when they went drinking by the seashore. They were very kind so they decided to adopt Mia . When Mia lived with the dinosaurs for the first week she merely knew what they were saying . However , there was a patient Sinosauropteryx that helped her and they became friends .So , after practicing everyday , Mia could speak dino language deftly .

Although they have a land all to themselves, the dinosaurs were facing a lot of challenges .They were nearly out of food and many dinosaurs died because of hunger. The dinosaurs decided that they would have to move to another place . When everyone were worrying about what they would have to do next , Mia thought of a great idea . Mia said to the dinosaurs , “Maybe we can go to my home , the land where I lived before . ” The dinosaurs had heard about the humans' world from Mia many times and they had a great desire to go there .

The sinosauropteryx said, “I agree , maybe we can go tomorrow , I will be the captain and Mia can be the sailor .”

“Some big ones like me can just swim and you will just need to build a boat for the smaller ones like Mia ,”Said a big dinosaur.

“Ok, we agree ,”Said all the dinosaurs.

Then , the dinosaurs and Mia started working. Some of them got a bit of wood for the boat, some prepared the last bits of their food and packed them in a small bag so they would not get out , some built the boat and tested it by the beach . This took them so long that it was midnight when they finished . “Do you know the way Mia ?”asked a dinosaur.

“Well, I probably know which way to go ,but I am not sure,” replied Mia.

“I am so sleepy , lets sleep,” Mia yawned and dozed off.

Following that , there was only the sound of little birds chirping in the distance ,the leaves danced beside each other making a rustling sound , the moon was full and bright . They did not know that this very moment , families are supposed to be celebrating the mid-autumn festival and eating mooncakes , but Mia's mom and dad could just look at the moon and celebrate without Mia .

Time flies when you are sleeping , the sun has just risen when something disturbed the silence. “Wake up sleepyheads , lets start our journey ,”said Mia. So they all woke up and started the day . The dinosaurs and Mia ate a simple breakfast and went on their boat get ready to sail . Finally , they took off.

Being on the water everyday was not easy for the dinosaurs .For the first two days, they finished the tiny bit of food that they have . On the third day, they were totally out of food.

“What can we do, if we do not think of something quick , we will all die on the sea,” said the Sinosauropteryx.

“Maybe we can eat fish , we can just catch some and cook them ,”said Mia .

“How can we catch fish if we do not have fishing tools ?”asked a dinosaur.

“Look , I invented this fishing net when we were at our island ,”replied Mia .

“You are so attentive, ”said a dinosaur .

Then , they fished and got two fishes that they can split after cooking . Mia burned a fire and cooked the fish in boiling water . “This is the most delicious fish I have ever smelled in my life, ”said a dinosaur.

After about ten minutes , Mia said, “Dinner is ready, come and get your share of this delicious fish.”

They finished the fish so fast that it seems like they had just started dinner . Everyone was sleepy after all this dinner making.

So, they all went to sleep.

The few months of traveling were something like this, eating fish everyday and fishing.

They sailed for several months when they saw a glimpse of an enormous boarder that had a beach that looked familiar to Mia . The dinosaurs got excited and one of them asked, “Is this the humans’ world ?”

“Well , I hope so.” answered Mia.

After ten minutes they arrived. Dinosaurs started to step out of the boat and all the people on the beach were frightened and they ran in horror shouting for help.

“There are a bunch of creatures roaming the city , help!” shouted a woman .

The dinosaurs were so hungry that they dashed into the city and ate everything they could except for people. The carnivores ate all the meat they can find in the grocery store . The herbivores ate grass , tree leaves and stems. This made the well organized city chaos.

People called the police and because they can not deal with this, they told this to the government to let them decide whether to keep the dinosaurs or not.

The governments were planning on evicting the dinosaurs out of their world .However, Mia can not let this kind of thing happen to her friends , so she decided to help them by translating what they said to the government.

Mia was ready to make her speech in front of all the citizens and she was not nervous at all.

“Good morning , ladies and gentlemen, my name is Mia and today I am here to announce something that is about life or death. So, I want the ones in here all take it seriously. First, I want to apologize about the dinosaurs roaming in without any warning. Secondly, I want to say that they were really hungry and were starving so I would ask if you

can kindly make them a part of your life. I will also respect everyone's opinions about whether keep them or not. Finally, I want to thank all of you who had come here to listen to my speech .”

The governments was very pleased about her speech and they let the citizens vote whether to keep them or not. Most people thought her speech was great and decided to give her a chance. Every family can get a dinosaur if they want, the left ones will be kept in the Beijing Zoo. Mia also went back to her family with a dinosaur.

This story tells us , do not judge an animal by how it looks , their heart can be kind . Also , be kind to animals or they might extinct .

Original

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Mu, Leo – 13

In the beginning, when God created the universe, the earth was formless and desolate. Then God commanded, “Let there be light” —and light appeared. Four days later, God commanded, “Let the earth produce all kinds of animal life.” Then the world was now filled with life. The world was now a peaceful and harmonious place. God viewed his work and marveled at its beauty. However, he wanted to create a species that could rule the world, the strongest species in the world. “They will stand tall on the ground, like the pillars that withstand the weight of the world; I will let the wind breeze aside them. They should be formidable as the heart of truth, show their virginity, and hold their heads high, because they are mine, my most remarkable work.”

Therefore, God illuminated the eyes of the creatures and strengthened their strength. “The dawn is coming, and I have created for them; this age shall be called the Triassic Period.” The first dinosaur was created, towering between the world like the giant in Greek myths. It was effulgent, showering the blessings of God, living in peace and a place above itself. God then said, “I will offer the creature the ability to reproduce; their children shall be revered, and they are doomed to be the kings.” The second dinosaur was created. They were aloof from conflicts, away from disputes, living a halcyon life. “How can I subvert the world’s order if every creature is living happily? The desire for revenge is glittering in my heart; I want to disturb the settled water in the world, I will put the world in chaos and disorder.” The devil went straight to the dinosaurs, along with the cloud and darkness.

“Aren’t you the most powerful creature in the world? Aren’t you the strongest creature in the world? Attain more, rule over the lives, be the creator of the world, override the nonentities!”

“We are already the happiest creatures in the world; we do not want anymore. Please go away, trickster.”

SHADOW

“I have already used my blandishments, but no words can demoralize their heart. The rage has intensified, the malice is killing me; if I cannot contort their destiny, I cannot change the fate, then I shall destroy them, ruin them with death, the influx of fear. I will create the most fearful creature, and at that time, even God cannot stop my devastation. This creature will be strong, even stronger than the herbivores, and fierce, as fierce as my talons and fangs. Their teeth will be as sharp as the blaze quenching in the fire, their skins as hard as the chain on Mammon. They will nip the hope that already exists, drink the blood that is flowing, bite the neck, and rip the meat.”

Therefore, the second type of creature was created. “This fantastic creature, I will call it the Tyrannosaurus. “Killing and murder are engraved in their mind, the words they heard and the songs they sang were the whisper of inferno. They invaded the residence of the herbivores, slaughtering them with violence, followed with the devil.

“What has the devil done to the world! I gave them the strength to appreciate, but not to kill. These creatures are also educable; I believe from their heart they are tangled and oppressed. I shall tell them to stop the massacre, because they are all brothers.” God put his hands on the head of the Tyrannosaurus, allowing them to touch the light. When a crack was opened in their mind, when luminosity dispel the cloud of darkness, they surveyed their bodies that were covered with blood, they gazed into remorse. They stopped their invasion.

WHEN HATE IS UNAVOIDABLE

“Do you think you have made the world peaceful again? I will not let you. I see the sorrow and grief beside the corpses of the herbivores' brothers, the hunger of the carnivores, desire is combusting, and it will result in the victory of me.” He turned into a Brontosaurus, walked through the storm, and absorbed the groan of the darkness. “Now the atrocious species has stopped its pace forward; they show their weakness and deficiency, that is our unity. We shall strike them with our bodies, revenge for the sacrifices!”

“But we shall rest in peace,” said the leader of the herbivores. “Coward! If we do not have any means to fight for our rights, we do not have any liberty to live; then what is the meaning of creation? Anyone standing here can tell me what we are. We are the most powerful creature in the world; we shall stand and disdain the trifles; we shall go with the glory! Now, shall we wait for the death that is doomed, or shall we finish the mission and duty of us as the king of the world? Shall we live in the fear of the Tyrannosaurus or resist using our strength and rule the world? Go with me and fight, fight the chains on me, fight the enveloping of dawn, fight the violence and atrocity, stand with me!”

“We shall fight! We shall fight!”

“I will give you sharp weapons, give you the ability to penetrate the skin of the carnivores, the ability to seek freedom.”

EXTINCTION

“What shall we do now? Shall we obey the gospel of God or stand in opposition to our brothers that do not eat meat? Shall we turn our left cheek to our enemy or stand with the herbivores?”

The devil, disguised as a Tyrannosaur, spoke to the desperate souls, “I have foreseen the future; there is a great philosopher who says, 'To be or not to be, this is the question.' Now, our race is standing at the crossroads woven by fate. Cowards will sink into the marsh; this is an eternal truth. Only the creatures with courage can survive. When the enemies swarm towards us, we shall dare, we shall bite all that hinders our way forward, we shall say yes when war is coming. Now, you will decide: one day more, and that is our destiny.”

When the sun broke the gloomy and hazy night, when the horizon was painted gold, God kneeled down to his work and added his one last orientation to them, a glimpse of red. This is the color of blood, also the color of termination. The boosting volcano roared with the dance of splattering, the art of ruin. “They will endure and suffer more if they exist, so please rest in peace.”

In the land of Eden, a man named Adam was created.

The Cloned Dinosaurs of 2070

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Nie, Coco – 13

Someone was knocking on Serena's shell. A glaring light fell on her. "Stop it!" She growled.

"Hey! Here comes another one breaking the shell!" There was a voice whispering outside. Nonsense. Why would I leave such a cozy home! It's perfect here, she thought.

"Come on, you'll be coming out anyways. It's amazing out here!" Serena stood up. Crack! Her shell broke with a loud snap. The blinding light made her eyes hurt, she could barely see the creature that stood in front of her. She looked around and saw lots of dinosaurs peeking out their eggs, crying and screaming toward the two-legged creatures. They were in a room filled with glass shelves and tables, with a sign on the door frame: Dinosaur Cloning Laboratory. One of the two-legged creatures picked Serena up and walked out of the room.

In the corridor, people walked past her, carrying strange machines and other creatures that she had never seen before. Serena had a bad feeling about this, an uneasy atmosphere of metal and chemicals pervaded the air, and she knew that she didn't belong here. Eventually, Serena was placed on a grassy field.

"Hello," a bigger dinosaur greeted her. "I am your brother, Dylan," he said.

"Where is this?" Serena asked in confusion.

He sighed, "we are trapped in this glass room by the humans, those two-legged creatures" he glanced at the exclaiming two-legged creatures standing outside the glass. "Probably forever," his words fell on Serena like stones. Is it my fate to be imprisoned in this glass box, and be watched over by crazy humans? Serena felt helpless. Dylan seemed to see what Serena was thinking about, he shook his head and said, "It is too hard to escape, we can't fight with humans."

The sound of laughter came from a distance. Other dinosaurs were playing with each other joyfully in the bushes. No one appeared to notice about the tragic destiny that was creeping up onto them. Perhaps I'm just overthinking about it, Serena comforted herself.

"These are Brachiosaurus from the Late Jurassic period. Chinese scientists have just developed the technology to clone dinosaurs, and we are lucky enough to see the first ones that just broke their shells today– May 10th, 2070. Today is undeniably a significant day for China archeology," a curator was explaining to the humans. In 2070, Chinese scientists discovered dinosaur genes in Sichuan province. This discovery shocked the archeological field and scientists were anticipated to clone them. Surprisingly, they succussed, and the first dinosaurs of 2070 were hatched.

Serena felt miserable, I was cloned? She sat down aggrieved. Just then, Dylan and his friends walked towards her. The three of them stood in front of Serena with solemn faces.

"We've decided to escape," Kayla said. She was a green brachiosaur with big eyes. Serena was surprised because her brother had just said that it is impossible to escape.

"We can't be imprisoned like this forever," another added.

"I will gather all the brachiosaurs and make a plan together," Dylan announced. He walked to the center of the room and cleared his throat, "dinosaurs, I don't think staying in this glass room for the rest of our lives is a good idea." Dinosaurs looked at him in shock. Obviously, none of them had thought about escaping.

"Escape!" Eric, Dylan's other friend suggested. Some dinosaurs started to discuss about Dylan's statement, others were whispering in surprise.

"I agree," someone shouted.

"Me too," noise began to increase, more dinosaurs started to realize their real fate. After a while of discussion, the dinosaurs decided to carry out their plan three days later.

Soon, the day came. It was a cloudy night when everyone was asleep. "Dinosaurs, this is the day that we've been waiting for. Remember our plan and fight for our freedom!" Dylan was the leader of this 'rebel'. Everyone cheered. Kayla picked the lock with a twig and signaled everyone to leave.

The moonlight streaming through the curtains fell on the marble floor, Serena gazed out the window and saw the bustling city of Zigong lit up with lights. They passed through different laboratories and finally reached the gate. "There are guards!" Panting, Serena alertly warned.

"They're sleeping soundly!" Someone jokingly remarked. The group of creatures tried to bend low and sneaked out of the gate carefully.

The city was bright even during nighttime, a few people walked on the streets watching their chip screens. The dinosaurs had to walk through the bushes to hide away from the city and people.

"What's that!" a person on the street screamed in horror. His voice caught peoples' attention.

"Run!" Dylan growled as the dinosaurs speeded up. After hours of walking and running, Serena and the group finally arrived the mountains. It was getting bright, a hidden stone road guided the dinosaurs into the deep mountain, where forests and streams stretched for thousands of miles. The news of the Brachiosaurus escaping from the lab should have spread all over the city by now.

At dawn, sunlight sprinkled on the mountains of Sichuan, where a group of dinosaurs cheered and celebrated for their freedom...

Sauroposeidon

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Yang, Michael – 13

50 years ago, in Chengdu, China, a group of archeologists discovered a dinosaur site with fossils and stones. They found many important clues about dinosaurs. Among the discoveries was a large egg, as big as a balloon, with black spots and colorful stripes. It sat quietly in the dirt, as if waiting for someone to find it. Many scientists saw it, but everyone was too busy to dig it out. Then, one day, a pair of gloved hands picked up the egg and took it to an old, mysterious house. The hands belonged to a historical professor who loved studying dinosaurs. He was amazed by the egg's size and spent days inside his dirty home, examining it. People found it strange, but no one dared to stay and watch, not even his students. One morning, the professor woke up and found the egg empty. The creature inside was gone! He heard a strange, sharp noise coming from the kitchen, like metal rubbing together. With curiosity, he tiptoed to the kitchen and gasped at what he saw. It was a tiny, grass-eating dinosaur! He couldn't believe his eyes. He caught the dinosaur and looked at it from every angle. The creature just made sharp noises, showing it was hungry. The professor quickly searched online. This cute plant-eating animal had gone extinct millions of years ago. It was named Sauroposeidon.

Comparing the real dinosaur to an AI model it seemed that the long neck, green body, and very long tail—all matched what the model showed. He was sure this was a real, living dinosaur from the past.

Excited and scared, the professor named the dinosaur "Chengdu" after the city where it was found. He started to document everything about Chengdu, from its eating habits to its movements. The professor realized that he had a huge responsibility. He needed to keep Chengdu safe and learn as much as he could from this miracle

creature. News of Chengdu spread quickly. People from all over the world wanted to see the living dinosaur. The professor's house became a center of scientific research. Teams of scientists worked day and night, studying Chengdu and trying to understand how it had come back to life. Chengdu grew quickly, and the professor's house wasn't big enough anymore. They moved the dinosaur to a special place where it could have more space. The place had a large, indoor area that imitates the dinosaur's habitat, with plants and a place for Chengdu to take a walk. The professor made sure that Chengdu was well cared for, and he continued to study the dinosaur's behavior.

As time went on, the professor and his team learned a lot about dinosaurs from Chengdu. They discovered new facts about their biology and how they lived. The world was amazed by the things this one dinosaur provided. Schools taught about Chengdu, and children everywhere dreamed of becoming dinosaur experts. The professor knew that finding Chengdu was more than a scientific discovery. It was a chance to reconnect with the past and understand the history of our planet. He hoped that by studying Chengdu, humans could learn to protect the animals and

plants that lived on the Earth. Chengdu's story became a symbol of the importance of protecting our natural world.

The professor and his team worked hard to make sure that the knowledge they gained from Chengdu would help protect species that were in danger of extinction. They believed that it was humans to make sure those stories of the world could continue. In the end, the professor's discovery in Chengdu changed the world.

It showed that the past exists surprises and that sometimes, the most unexpected things could teach us the most important lessons. The professor, once a quiet historian in his old house, became a person who reminded the world that surprising things could be found when we explore and protect our natural environment.

The Rescue

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Wang, Ava – 12

Ming's Note

--- What I'm Facing

In Room 1202, there lived a family on the verge of collapse. My name is Ming, and my father, Hao, is a man with outdated beliefs, like a grandfather. I possess a jade necklace, which has prisoned me for the past 12 years. We are the inheritors of the Fu Ma language, a nearly extinct dinosaur language. In search of a better education, my dad and I relocated to Beijing, where Mandarin is the predominant language. I feel completely lost. I desperately wanted to learn Mandarin to communicate with my classmates, but my dad refuses to allow it. This argument began on the 19th of November.

"Dad, I want to learn standard Chinese. There's no way I can speak the Fu Ma language with my classmates. Even our teacher, Mrs. Wang, was miserable," I said, growing increasingly frustrated.

My dad turned around and suspiciously stared at me. "Why? Don't you think it's impressive to know a niche language?"

I retorted, "No, what's more embarrassing than not being able to communicate with your classmates and teachers?"

My dad suddenly growled, "No! You have enough Mandarin at school. At home, you should speak the Fu Ma language with me. The extinction of our language is because of people like you!"

I shivered and became completely fed up with my dad's stubbornness. "If you want me to become a professor of the Fu Ma language, then what was the purpose of moving to Beijing? Just let me stay in Hainan!"

My dad tapped his head and said, "Whatever, but you still need to learn the Fu Ma language with me on weekends."

I sighed. My heart was pounding so fast. This was the first time I had argued with my father. I missed Hainan as much as I missed the taste of vanilla ice cream (I had only eaten it once). Why did we move to Beijing? Well, the school was nice, the roads were clean, but I missed my home. I walked slowly to my room, which was filled with cardboard boxes. My eyes were wet. What could I do? Lying on my bed, I tucked myself into the blanket, wishing that tomorrow would be better.

Mrs. Wang's Note

--- One of My Students

I have always had a passion for working with children, which is why I pursued a career in teaching. However, this year, I am faced with a unique situation. Ming Li, a student who recently moved from Hainan to Beijing, is facing difficulties in communicating with us. It is important to note that he is not a foreigner or mute; rather, he can only speak Fu Ma language, which is a nearly extinct dinosaur language. Ming is a well-behaved boy, and as his mentor and Chinese teacher, I can see that he is making a genuine effort to fit in. However, the complexities of the Chinese language in Grade 6 are proving to be a challenge for him, to the point where he struggles with basic spelling.

The root of the problem lies with his father, Mr. Hao. He firmly believes that there is no need for Ming to learn Mandarin. During my first parent meeting with Mr. Li, I was taken aback by his perspective. Our conversation unfolded as follows:

"Mr. Li, let's skip the formalities and address the issue at hand. Ming's Mandarin proficiency is at a Grade 3 level, and the Chinese curriculum in Grade 6 is proving to be too demanding for him. However, we have noticed that Ming is

putting effort to lean in class. After consulting with the school administration, we have collectively agreed to develop a customized curriculum for Ming to help him catch up with his studies."

Mr. Li seemed engrossed in Ming's test paper, seemingly disregarding my words. Feeling disappointed by his reaction, I called out to him. Mr. Li snapped out of his daze and responded, "Apologies, I wasn't paying attention. But, I didn't enroll Ming in this school to learn Mandarin."

I looked at him with a perplexed expression. "I see. Well, what I have to discuss today is of utmost importance. Ming is struggling to make friends, and he is feeling isolated."

Mr. Li widened his eyes and calmly replied, "I understand."

Attempting to convey my shock, I continued, "Do you truly believe that this is acceptable? Ming is unable to communicate with his classmates, making it impossible for anyone to understand his needs or desires. His desk mate noticed this and brought it to our attention. Are you genuinely unaware of this situation?"

Mr. Li nodded and smiled. "When did this start happening?"

Taking a deep breath, I responded, "It began around two months ago, if not earlier. We are unable to help him if he does not reach out to us. Even if he does seek help, we are unable to comprehend his needs. Mr. Li, this is why our school has established a special class for Ming. This is a rescue mission."

Hua's Note
—Desk Mate

At times, I am extremely selfish. My new desk mate, Ming, is a boy who is incapable of speaking Mandarin. I was filled with dread upon being paired with him. When Zhen (my dearest friend) caught sight of my slip with our seating arrangement, she gazed at me as if I were a pig about to be put on the roasting spit. Sharing a desk with Ming is exasperating. I have to help him with his Chinese homework and comprehend what he need as a "new student", which is frequently nonsensical.

The day that everything changed was a Friday. I hastily packed up to return home. As I closed my locker, I noticed something peculiar — scars on Ming's arms. He tiptoed nimbly and made his way to the bathroom. I sensed that something was wrong, so I followed him. The corridor was silence, with all the students already gone. It was so silent that I could even hear my own heartbeats. I stood outside the bathroom, covering my mouth, and listened intently. A few moments later, a groaning sound emerged from the bathroom. I peeked into the room and witnessed blood flowing on the newly tiled floor. I covered my mouth and knelt on the ground. I crawled nearer to the door and saw Ming sitting on the floor, holding an art knife and cutting his own arm. Then, he pulled his Jade bracelet off his neck, it shattered on the floor. I struggled to stand up, my legs trembled, and then I gasped, blacked out, and collapsed.

Nothing.

Hao's note
—Why I did this

I have had enough of what I've done. Our family was the heir of the Fu Ma language. This implies that if our family does not speak this dinosaur language, it will become extinct. I cannot deny that I am not an enthusiast of this language. I had no intention of learning the Fu Ma language initially. However, our family has a terrifying curse that no one can resist — the Jade necklace that we are forced to wear upon birth. When we reach 30, we need to tear the necklace with our own hands. The moment the necklace leaves your neck, you can learn another language. This implies that you need to have a child before the age of 25 and teach them the Fu Ma language to prevent it from

becoming extinct. However, everyone endures it. The reason why I took Ming to Beijing was to accelerate his thought of destroying the Jade bracelet, so that he could escape this curse and the curse would disappear from the world. The reason for being so strict is to push him harder. What surprised me was that Ming was harming himself to break away from this curse. I was nervous. I knew that if he didn't do this, he would be tormented for the rest of his life. But as his father, you couldn't heartlessly watch your son cutting his arms. Two weeks after my son's desk mate, Hua, found him cutting his arms and pulling off his Jade necklace, Mrs. Wang informed me that Ming's standard Chinese had improved significantly. This indicated that the Fu Ma language had become extinct. Things returned to the way they were before. Ming went to school, I went to work. Nothing changed and no one remembered the dinosaur family ever again.

Think that the story ended? No. It was all my imagination. When we found Ming, he was dead, sitting in the bathroom. His face was as white as a sheet of paper, pail and rigid. Behind him, there was his necklace and a letter. On the paper, it wrote:

"I can't endure it anymore. Sorry, dad. I Love you."

"I suddenly understand that the curse is there to protect us. This is a failed rescue. Something I'll never forgive myself." This is what I wrote before I tied the rope on the roof.

On the 6th Day

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Yang, Kevin – 11

To begin with, Adam was a man who just had graduated from university, at this time it was the best time to say about his own thoughts on the world and to do important things, but now it is hard to find jobs and make a living. Adam had been very strong and powerful, he had worked on a building team and carried huge and, also heavy objects up ten or more flights of stairs he was also very smart too, he was a straight A student and passed all of his courses at university.

Adam has strong arms and, also a strong body, he works out sometimes at the gym next to his house, despite this he was also very childish, he plays children games and go to children theme parks, he only watches movies that children could watch. Adam also has a pointy face, a large mouth and also a pointy nose, his face reminds you of a person who has experience the pressure and cruelty of life, his face also has scars which are left there when a terrible disease struck him at childhood, his life was very unfortunate indeed. Adam was always cheerful on things even though there might be things that didn't suit his tastes or made him do things that he didn't like, he can remain cheerful even though a really bad thing just had happened.

One day, which I think is his 56th day trying to get a job, but this day he saw an advert in the newspaper looking for an assistant to a fossil hunter, there is also a phone number under the ad so Adam called the number on his Apple 4s phone, the phone number was: 136 4128 1829, and after a while the call was answered.

"Hello, this is the fossil hunter center, what do you need?", said the phone.

"Emm, hello, this morning I saw an ad which said that you needed an assistant for a fossil hunter.", said Adam.

"Yes indeed, are you applying for this job?", asked the phone.

"Yes I am.", replied Adam boldly.

"so you can come to the cross section at seventh avenue and Queen's road, you will see the center there."

"Okay thank you.", said Adam.

Adam went to the place that the center had told him, and went inside, that place is the most beautiful place that Adam had ever seen, there were fossils everywhere, different kinds of them, fossils of birds and dinosaurs, also there are fossils that Adam had never seen before, fossils of giant elephants and prehistoric human skeletons, then he saw a person wearing a large cowboy hat and was also wearing a Hawaiian T-shirt and pants, this person who was called Jack has a hard face, a round chin, he also has a pointy nose, green eyes and jet black and brownish hair, his personality is also very different from Adam. Jack was longing for a chance to go out and have some adventure, he also wants to prove to his parents that he can live by himself and not dependent on them.

"So, you are the person that is applying for the fossil hunter assistant job.", he said in a loud voice and looking Adam up and down, "you better come with me and learn something about fossil hunting."

Adam, knowing this is once in a lifetime moment, followed Jack to the back of the center, there were a pit where people can learn how to dig fossils and how to find fossils, so Jack put Adam in a chair and showed a presentation to him about different types of fossils and how to dig up and once it was up how to preserve the different types of fossils, after Jack had told Adam how to do all those things, they had to practice the skills that Adam had just learnt, Jack and Adam jumped down into the pit and started to dig the fossils which are buried there.

Finally, Jack and Adam climbed back up.

“It seems that you have a potential for digging fossils,” Jack said to Adam, “I will hire you as my assistant.”

Adam laughed out loud, he was so happy that he just had gotten his first job, Jack stood nearby looking puzzled.

Adam said, “Sorry, I am just too happy that I have got my first job.”

Jack understood he happiness, it was the same for him when he had gotten his first job.

Following that, Jack and Adam, this team went all across America to find fossils and they had a lot of interesting adventures, one time in the wild, they found a fossil of a T-Rex but suddenly they were attacked by a boar(a wild pig) and they have to run for their lives, because of this when they escaped the boar they can't find the T-Rex fossil spot ever again.

Afterwards, they got a mission from the up and up to go to China and find fossils in the Gobi Desert, they also got an envelope with two plane tickets inside, on the plane tickets there is the time that they are going to fly, it was 2:30. Jack looked at his watch there are only one hour left. They packed the most important equipment and some clothes, and they rushed to the airport.

At five in the next morning, they had arrived in the Gobi Desert, it was hot and dry, with cactuses every few feet, it was sandy and dusty, even the air was filled with sand, it's almost that you can fry an egg on the ground.

Jack and Adam weren't lucky in this place, they searched and searched and searched for days, but they couldn't find anything. One time Adam fell down on the sand thirsty and crying for water, the heat, the plants, the animals and also the weather is against them finding fossils, other times they faced the danger of hunger and poisonous, dangerous bugs, they also faced the danger of buried by a sandstorm all these things were trying and succeeding to stop them find fossils in the Gobi Desert.

One day they got lucky and found a cave that has fossils in it. To be safe, they first put a camera into the cave and looked around, checking around for hidden dangers, after they were sure that the cave was safe, they slowly lowered Adam into the cave. With a Puff of dusty air, Adam landed on the floor of the cave, he looked around him, saw all the different fossils lying all in the cave, then suddenly with a large boom, the cave of the wall collapsed on and around him, Adam was hit by a rock and fell unconscious.

After a few minutes, Adam woke up again, he found that he is in a world that is filled with green plants and trees, and, also dinosaurs. He didn't felt nervous, he only felt excited at the chance that he can explore a new world, with different surroundings, and soon he realized that he is going to compete with dinosaurs for food, water and shelter, Adam immediately started to gather material to build himself a place to live in the cave. Adam used branches and leaves to hide the entrance of the cave, then he used soft fur to build himself a comfortable bed, then he thought the next important thing is to get food, Adam gathered wild berries and made some bowls from leaves, Adam also made tools from rock and wood, he built a fire inside the cave and used his tools and weapons to hunt down small dinosaurs for their meat.

By doing all this he managed to thrive in this new and dangerous world, and in the end, he became the ancestor for our species—human.

The Seventh Spirit

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Zhang, Coco – 12

Look, being an animorph was really cool but difficult. Because we have to deal with things accurately in the mortals and immortals.

If your reading this for a narrative for advancing your knowledge or for fun, fantastic. But if you feel something grumbling in your guts, you may be a one like me.

Some of us are born animorphs, so we don't realize we are being a normal kid having a normal life will be awesome. Only when they find out that they have a special power either from others. For example, an animorph cheetah, they will run faster than anyone .

Alright, my name is Taffeta. Di. Roses, my friends in mortal call me Taffy. My name is Jelly Beans while I'm in animal form (a wolf) in the immortal world.

I'm 12 years old, so I finished primary school in mortal world and started lower secondary back in Adagiora, my home.

Well, I have more friends back in my home, such as Summer. Lemonade, the lioness. Jaycee. Pineapple, the owl. Coco. Mango, the spider. Finally, Yannis. Mango, the alligator. They're all animorphs, but we don't stay in the same school while in primary. The reason is, we're all born in Adagiora so we have to train for years to be an animorph and pass a test. Or else, we'll just stay in animal form. My sister is in this situation, although she trained for years and years but she did not pass the test. So sad, I passed the test!

Alright, I know it is un respectful.

A description for my home: Adogiora, A kingdom with 7 different areas: 1. Gingerbread Town, a place where houses are made of cookies and all kinds of bread. Gingerbread man lives there, he's the mayor of this town, he decided to make a Marsh Mellow Hill and a lake. The pastries who live in this town drinks chocolate syrups instead of water, so the mayor worked out a chocolate syrup lake. The Marsh Mellow Hill are just huge fluffy marsh mellow, citizens could have a picnic on the hill.

2. Candy Cane Forest, candy canes and lollipops instead of trees, the air filling with fruit flavored gummies. All kinds of candy lives there, they build their own house using the kind of candies they like.

3. Popsicle Peaks, where mountains are soda flavored ice-cream, and some rocks are different flavor of popsicles. Animals live in another mountain which is the neighbor of this one, that mountain is normal, polar bears and a bunch of other animals that live in cold places.

4. Bubbly Jungles, normal jungle where normal animals live. Always raining

5. Dessert Desert, super-hot, most of it is normal, but beware: some cacti are dessert, some are real! Try not to spike your mouth!

6. Pearl Lake, a lake that has a part of it is sea, and a part of plain water. So, all kinds of water animals could live there.

7. City Center, very normal except it's for animals to work.

You know, we have a star named Dr. Holmes, a panda. He created all kinds of buildings and machines that made our lives better.

Commented [NH1]: no a

Commented [C(2R1)]: ok

Commented [NH3]: not "we"?

Commented [C(4R3)]: ohhhhhh, yes!

Commented [C(5R3)]: Done

Commented [NH6]: ; being

Commented [C(7R6)]: like i need to change the punctuation to ;

Commented [C(8R6)]: done

But what we don't know is, our slightest biggest problem was him, he'd like to have the world he like. The dreamland of Dr. Holmes was kind of chaos, such as-----

"Shut it, Jelly!"

"Alright, alright. Um... Jaycee, would you mind if you pass me some more jellybeans? I'm out of them right now."

"Okay, as much as you want." the owl sighed.

My friend, as I mentioned before, was a barn owl. She has white and golden feathers, twinkling in the night. Sharp claws could easily snap Coco out of life, and with eyes dark as night. As she said, I can't inform you guys that much, so I'll start with a math class in my immortal school.

Sitting with my best friends in the classroom, waiting for our professor to come and teach. He's a super professor, that's why math's my favorite subject. He agrees to let us eat snacks while learning in class if we understood what he taught us today.

We waited and waited, but he never came to us. Some students started to act like Summer, crazy. They jumped up and down, eating all kinds of . While this time, Summer acted weird. The fur on her back straightened, she whimpered and muttered something such as, ' It's coming, the scent, '

About 2-3 minutes, a different teacher stepped in the classroom. Students stopped eating and chatting, they turned while the other professor had a short speech in the auditorium.

"I'm here instead of Professor. Thomas, he had a serious accident and I'm teaching you guys for him."

Students groaned, the class was really boring just as listening to a sloth talking. Finally, the bell rang, my friends and I ran to our closet and slung our backpacks on our shoulders. No, it should be: Back(for Summer, Yannis, Coco, and me), and Grabbing using their claws(Jaycee). Animals aren't easy.

We headed straight to the Mango's house, Yannis and Coco's cousin was their too, so maybe he'll join us.

It's pretty amazing that their house was huge. I thought that Yannis was crazy by getting up an idea to have a party at their house and for a family of spiders, the house won't even fill Jaycee, but it actually did. My friends and I always come up a question that beset us for a long time: Why does a spider family got an alligator for a child?

The New Tale of China Dinosaurs

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Zhang, Dorothy – 14

“Yoo—hoo, check it out, guess who just got in Universal Studio!” A teenager shouted at his phone screen with excitement. “Shut up Scott, stop pretending you are a influencer with million followers, nobody cares about your dumb livestream”. Katrina commented with a bright smile. Scott Puckered up in dismay. “You are supposed to take good care of your baby cousin... What's his name again?” “Dino.” A five-year-old boy answered her question while licking an ice-cream. “Dino.” Katrina finished her sentence. “Let's see, the roller coaster takes the most time in line, so let's go to the Jurassic Park theme-land first.” Katrina took a deep breath and start marching towards front, the rest of the crew follows.

“Wow... dragon bones!”

“...Dinosaur skeleton. Dinosaur fossils refer to the soft tissues in the body of dinosaurs after death due to decay and disappearance, bones and other hard tissues deposited in the sand, in the...”

“Nerd.” Scott said within a fake sneeze.

Katrina turned back, pursed her lips, slightly shocked her head, “No Scott, I'm not nerd. You can't just call anyone who is smarter than you a nerd.”

“Wow... A golden egg.” Dino has a new discovery. A golden egg shimmered inside the dinosaur's jaw.

“You are right, but how come a golden egg appears in the skeleton's mouth? Weird.”

“Maybe it's some special festival celebration activity, hmm... what is nearest festival?” Scott took it down and hand it to Dino.

At the exact same moment, Dino put it in his mouth and bitten it hard.

“Why are you biting it?” Before the words were finished, Katrina felt a whirl, The heaven revolves, and the earth turns. As a huge halo of dazzling light passed over them, the surroundings environment began to change as well. Colorful Neverland transformed in to mounds of dry thatch and dirt roads. Laughters of youth vanished, replaced by the roar of the merciless wind. The strong wind forced everyone to close their eyes, when they opened them again, they found their selves on a savanna. The winds came from the north, across the plain, whooshing over their cheeks.

“Wha...Where are we? What happened? Why we are here?” Katrina's brain completely blacked out for about one minute.

Scott felt dizzy and still did not forget to joke, “Are you writing an essay in Chinese class? The six elements of a good essay? Hmm, interesting, let me guess what's next.”

“Ugh can't you just shut up for a second? Look at our situation here! ” Katrina said with a furrowed brow. “Okay, since we unbelievably started all of this because of the golden egg,” she speak towards Dino with all hear and soul, “Please don't tell me that you swallowed it.” Dino didn't cry or make any noise, just stared at the empty space ahead. “Ahhhhhh——” Scott shook Daddy's shoulders.

“Here.” Dino took it out from his pocket and slowly replied.

Katrina and Scott both breathed a sigh of relief.

“Can you keep it safe in your pocket, Dino?”

He nodded.

Then a distant roar of a primordial beast echoing woke them up from the dizziness.

“Dinosaurs.” Katrina and Scott whispered at the same time, trying to keep composure. They’ve realized how vicious these prehistoric giants were, and how human lives were nothing more than ants in front of them.

Scott took out a telescope from his Jan-sport backpack, leaning forward to ‘Spy on the enemy’. “Well, I knew that we are going to use it somewhere, at first I was planning on use it for the musical.”

“What are these long necked, leave eating dinosaurs called again?”

“Brachiosaurus, safe, they are fed on leaves and twigs, gregarious.”

“The egg is glowing.” Dino said with a glowing pocket.

A golden ghost which looks like Bowser of Mario float out of the egg. “Hi, I’m your time travel guide, Guano. So, back on track, your mission is to give this egg back to the mother dinosaur. I’ll guide you, here is a map and some weapons that you might need, good luck.” Then Guano disappeared again.

They followed the map into a deserted canyon, dust and sand suddenly kicked up all around. They had wandered into the Velociraptor’s quarters. Fortunately, the big pack seems to be out looking for food, and there’s only one left on guard, or the crew would be dead. There is no other way but fight, there is no way to outrun a velociraptor, much less they were in a narrow valley. Scott grasped the spear, Katrina clutched her dagger, and Dino covered behind. The velociraptor hissed menacingly. Scott made a bold thrust; it nimbly evaded and countered. Katrina darted in, slashing. Scott then directed Dino to shelter. He struck the raptor’s leg, but it kept attacking. With a final heave, Scott hurled the spear, striking true. Katrina seized the moment to deliver a fatal stab. As the beast fell, the group gasped for breath. They realized the perilous journey had only begun. Yet, this small victory filled them with determination as they pressed on, following the enigmatic map into the uncharted.

The trio followed the map and head down a winding river. They met an old man wearing a bamboo hat, writing some thing on bamboo slips.

Katrina looked at Scot and encouraged him sincerely, Scott, go say hello, he doesn’t look very hostile.

“On it.” Scott had set off without a word, he ran toward the guy with courageous chivalry at first but suddenly slowed down in the last two hundred meters and began to inch closer to the mysterious bamboo hat man. At his last few steps, he spoke in Mandarin with a subtle hint of awkwardness and timidity, “What a beautiful day to write on bamboo slips! Hi sir, I’m Scott, nice to meet you.”

The man rise his head from his onerous, burdensome task. He glanced at the boy who dressed strangely, but he was not surprised nor shocked due to all the other marvelous creatures in all shape and color he has seen. And replied with a weird accent that Scott have never heard of, “I’m the descendant of the Yellow Emperor, Bo Yi, I was ordered by the emperor Da Yu to travel the mountains and seas to record these creatures.”

“A book of mythical creatures...Shan Hai Jing?! You are writing the Classic of Mountains and Rivers?! They are dinosaurs?!” Scott was so shocked, that his jaw almost gott up close and personal with the ground.

Bo Yi’s face exuded radiance with praise and recognition, “The is a very good book title indeed, I’ve never thought of it before. Thank you young man, what can I help you with?”

Scott didn’t expect things to go so well, he hurried back and brought the golden egg to Bo Yi, “Can you help us find the mother of this egg, see I know it seems like a impossible task but...”

“You are in luck, I happened to be a expert on this, I’m like the neighborhood committee of dinosaurs. Let me look.” Bo Yi took over the egg. “A golden one, it is very rare for dinosaur eggs. But I also happen to know a dinosaur that may be the mother of this egg, which is probably the only one in the world.” He blew a horn shaped like a nautilus. The sound waves are so strong that the weeds swing and the willows sway. A golden tyrannosaurus galloped on the prairie; her rapid thumps were so heavy as if the earth would shatter. “Bo Yi stroked the head of the

golden T-Rex beside him and said: "She appreciates what you did. About how to repay your kindness. Why don't you tag along her, dinosaurs understand human nature very well, she will know what you want."

At some point Katrina and Dino came; after saying goodbye to Bo Yi, they followed the dinosaur to the river. At that time, the Yellow River was still crystal clear, had not been stained yellow by worldly dust. She roared at the river, like she was hinting the crew to jump down.

"You want us to dive in?" Katrina affirmed.

The T-Rex bowed twice.

Katrina and Scott looked at each other and chuckled, "You know what? Everything has been so magical and unrealistic today, Let's jump."

"Will do—" He gestured with two pistols and swung them up and down in laugh.

"I'm———ready!" Dino seemed excited to go back to the modern world where they belong. The three tightly held each other's hands and jumped down together.

With a splash of water, they have found out them selves in the drifting river in Universal Studios, there is an upside-down inflatable raft nearby floating on the surface.

"Tell me we didn't capsize and hit the bank and get concussions." Scott said, covering his head.

Dino and Prejudice

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Zhang, Nono – 13

One early autumn morning in Asgardia, all of the new seventh graders returned to school. The sun was shining high, a breeze was blowing in the western hills, and leaves were turning to red and brown. Only the day before, the students had been running down the hills, laughing and playing with their friends.

Our math teacher introduced a new student; the teacher was called Ms. Machel, and she was a nice teacher, but not to students who were in any way different or unconventional. All of the students were curious about who would be our new friend, but as soon we saw their appearance, we all screamed.

"Ahhh! What the hell is this creature? Why will he come to this school!!!"

"Well, he's Ethan, and he's the new student, as all of you noticed! Be nice to him. " The teacher said.

Our shock was because Ethan was a dinosaur; as we later learned from Google, a diplodocus, a kind of a dinosaur with a long tail and long neck. He had green skin but with a brownish underside...

"So, please introduce yourself, Ethan."

"Hello, I'm Ethan and um.....well I'm from the dinosaur world, but....."

The new student stepped forward towards us but then seemed too shy to continue, and Ms. Machel spoke in his place. "Ethan is from Eldoria, where as you all know, all middle school dinosaurs must pass a survival test to enter seventh grade; but, because of a childhood condition, Ethan is not the hardiest, so they sent him here, to a human school. Please be nice to him, because he's here for no fault of his own."

"Well, Ms. Machel, why can't he join other classes, why this one? It's not fair! We don't want a stupid dinosaur in our class!", one of the students yelled.

Ethan looked down, like he knew that he didn't belong to this world. He had probably been told that he might be treated like this, and done some mental preparation, but he still looked highly uncomfortable.

"I don't know either", confessed Ms. Machel. "I guess the school just randomly picked one class. I certainly don't want any misfit ruining our awesome group. Please be nice to him, so we won't have any fuss. And we can always just pretend that he's not here."

The teacher pointed to a seat in the corner, and said with clear dislike, so we all saw her true feelings, "Go sit there! And don't make trouble!"

Ethan sat down quietly and started to go through the textbooks that he was going to use. He enjoyed reading, smiling to himself, but squishing his hands until they turned to red. He concentrated so hard at times that he seemed not to hear what everyone was talking about. But perhaps that was the way Ethan avoided hearing how other people talked about him.

At break, no one wanted to play with Ethan. He must have been very lonely, but he couldn't find any help. Everyone, including even the principal and his teachers, actually disliked him. The only reason that they accepted him was because they didn't want any incident which might ruin their reputation as the best school in the city.

Time passed very quickly, Ethan went to school every day, apparently using money that he found on the street to survive. He was actually very talented at school work, but no matter how hard he works, still no teacher appreciated him. He was best of all at math; no matter how hard the problem was, he could always solve it. The thing is, no teachers or classmates acknowledged his powers.

Every time that he solved a problem, the teacher would hint that he cheated, and whenever he was the first to raise his hand with an answer, the teacher would always say that it was wrong, even it turned out to be right. He couldn't have liked that and must have realised that the teacher was just picking on him because he was a dinosaur.

Another reason why the teachers didn't like him was because he could only eat cooked food, and it was a lot of trouble for the school to prepare dinosaur food just for him.

Ethan still planned to prove himself in the mid-term exams, and so he studied very hard. He stayed awake studying until as late as 4 am, and during the day seemed to live in the library seeking knowledge. Finally, it was time to apply what he had prepared.

The exam was clearly easy for Ethan, as he was done quickly, and then raised his little arm as a sign to the teacher. The teacher did not respond, pretending that she did not see him, but as he kept his hand raised, she eventually walked towards him with an impatient expression.

"What is it?"

"I've finished", replied Ethan.

"Ok, fine. You are disturbing your other classmates! Don't be so arrogant! If you can't get a perfect score, then just sit here, and be quiet." The teacher said with open disrespect, "and if you dare disturb your classmates again, I promise I will give you a zero." She considered for a moment. 'In fact, you know what, because you have already talked during your class, I will give you a zero anyway. Do you understand?"

Ethan nodded, with pained confusion.

He sat there, quietly, trying to not make a single sound, in case he actually ended up with a negative score. He must have been wondering why no one ever treated him like a normal person. He wanted to have friends, he wanted to be treated with consideration, and the truth is, what happened to him that day was not right.

The end of the test came too quickly for most of the other students, and Ethan sorrowfully handed in his paper.

But no matter how unfair life seems, things can always change. A few weeks later, Ms Machel had another announcement. "Ok, everyone, please give me your attention! We have another new student. She's called Judy, and as you can see she is the same as Ethan, so let's try to be nice to her."

Judy stepped in, looking kind of shy and nervous, but as soon as she saw Ethan, she smiled.

"Ah, can I sit here?" Judy asked, pointing to the spare seat beside Ethan. Ethan was surprised and also excited, because she was the first dinosaur that he had met in the human world.

"Well, that's perfect", said Ms .Machel. 'Ethan and you both belong to the same species, with the same virtues, so just as long as you don't disturb the class, you can stay with Ethan."

Over the next few months, Ethan and Judy became best friends; they played together, ate together and even did homework together.

Ethan's fight went from being a solitary struggle to a shared battle, and he was no longer lonely. And as Judy was also very talented at math, they had many opportunities to prove themselves, much to Ms Machel's displeasure..

Dessert Rush

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Zhao, Jaycee – 11

"I won't brag , but we are trending!" exclaimed Butter Ginger Bread.

"Have you ever wondered what would happen if we didn't actually defeat Nooooooooooooo?" asked Lemonia Di Marmalade from the internet game, Dessert Rush, "We might have just wandered in the Google building forever, wouldn't we?"

"Probably" replied Mellowdy Fluffies, another avatar , "But we did defeat her so that's not a worry. Not at all."

It was the monthly reunion of the Dessert Rush racers. Dessert Rush is a popular internet game about racing. The coded world is a star-shaped land, separated into five areas: City Crunch, Icy Peaks, Tart Tunnel(that tunnel is extremely long), Candy land and Water Villages.

City Crunch was a city with lots of crunchy stuff. The C –Starting Line is also in here.

Icy Peaks is a freezing land of popsicles. Mount Cream, the highest mountain is here.

Tart Tunnel is just a dark space with boiling jam lava underneath. A path made of tarts and small cakes is lined above the lava. The tart tunnel is also the most challenging part in the whole race. All the lava goes out of Jam Springs, a hot lava spring(NOT a volcano).

Candyland is a forest and a mountain. It is Candy cane Forest and 8 layer chocolate pastel nicknamed "Swirly" because they have to run in circles swirling up then go in a tube which blasts you out to the last area----- Water Villages.

This creek is filled with all kinds of drinks, and jam. Spewers spill juice out into the creek, filling it up.

All the racer avatars are from one of these areas. The good friends, Lemonia Di Marmalade, Mellowdy Fluffies, Cocoa Puffs, Butter Gingerbread and Rancis Schweets, are each from a different area. They are also the racers most commonly used.

These racers held the monthly reunions----- to celebrate the day they defeated Nooooooooooooo. Every time, they told the exciting tale of Celebration...

An old arcade is opened at the corner of a park. Their game Dessert Rush was still one of the games in there. That period of time, they were still very popular, even in an arcade. Speaking of which, the game was simply popular because of the racers' powers. Lemonia could glitch through players or obstacles, Mellowdy could puff marshmallows. Rancis' power was to speed up, Butter's to activate gingerbread man walls(to block stuff) and Cocoa could blow chocolate .

Everything seemed good, and even the racers thought so. But time ruined it all. After four decades or so, all the kids turned into adults, and arcade games were no longer popular. Older ones like Pac-man were already unplugged. All companies were making much more complicated phone games, and nobody even bothered this place anymore. I mean, that's not the main problem, the racers could still race by themselves, and they would still live peacefully in the program, but conflict came when the demolition company came. In their meetings, the racers all panicked.

"As you all know, the company is taking apart our game tomorrow morning." announced Lemonia, " We need a solution to save ourselves. "

"What?"

"I don't want to be homeless!"

"I have an idea!" shouted Cocoa, " not all companies are making phone games----- They also invent internet games! We can take the code globe, all the players except us would protect the codes from inside the globe's core. "

After some whispering, all the racers agreed, and they headed for the vault. Carefully taking the globe out of its socket ,Lemonia pressed the "Combine" button, and all the codes folded. The other players hopped into the globe and stuffed the codes into the core.

Taking a deep breath, Lemonia signaled Rancis. In response, she activated the globe float. The racers put the core on a new socket, and Lemonia took the wheel while Rancis took the glassy seat besides her. The other two climbed on the longer sofa seats of blue pixels in the back, behind the globe. Cocoa sat on the seat facing backwards, on a small platform behind the float, with a catapult which could fire player's powers. She settled in the glass doors and nodded to Lemonia.

They steered the float into their game, which is now empty. Lemonia wanted to stay, but she knew that they had to go. She zoomed out of their game and into the arcade's main socket. There, Electro guarded the exit to the wires .

" Our game is fading! We drove the float out so we could escape!" Cocoa tried to act scared and anxious, and it worked!

" I will take a look." replied Electro in a robotic voice.

After he left, Lemonia saw the opportunity and shot straight into the wires.

The days in there weren't good. The players had to stop and give the float energy, and also avoid other internet users. How much time they have been in there, nobody counted or cared. But their friendship and tactic understanding improved during the days. Finally, they went down.

" I think we're here!" yelled Rancis, " Look! I have all this equipment now and we are zooming down!" The internet was nothing like they've ever seen. Glass roads and tracks carried avatars and floats, and website buildings loomed across the area. They searched a map and studied their surroundings. " Where could we possibly plug in our game?" muttered Rancis, " Aha! We go to this searching website called um, searchy.cn."

"Alright. Directions please" replied Lemonia.

A few seconds later, they arrive at Searchy. It was a book-shaped building with some words on it. Billions of books were stacked in the bookshelves, which were the walls.

"Here we are! Searchy's website, all is solved!" cheered Cocoa.

In the middle of the website sat a small tree sprout, and on his front chest a nametag read 'Searchy'.

"Hello, Mr.Searchy we..." started Butter

" Wikipedia? WeChat? We Com? Wee-wee funny videos? Weak? Weaken? Weakened? Weakest? Weakfish? " Said Searchy rapidly.

" Where would we plug in a new game so people would see it on the internet? SEARCH!" Yelled Mellowdy.

Searchy trembled, then replied, " I found two results for your query, isn't that interesting?", he continued, " You could send an email to the internet cleaning department; they don't clean anything, trust me. Or you could plug it in at Game Centre, just across Twitter, besides Facebook."

" Thank you !" Said Rancis, who already set up a map, " let's get going!"

Behind that very website, a female voice whispered to herself, " Plugging an old useless game to use up gamers' time huh? Just you wait and see, jokers."

This particular voice's owner was Nooooooooooooo, an evil internet janitor who was the avatar of Clean The Internet. Org. Her job was to clean all useless or already forgotten games or websites or pop-ups or anything forgotten already. She was the color of roses, a robot and held a scanner in her right hand and a vacuum in her left hand. She raced after the racer's float, with them not knowing.

Following that, Nooooooooooooo caught up to their float as Cocoa realizes that she was after them.

"Uh, guys? I think a janitor robot is after us, and she doesn't look happy, or forgiving, or nice." she said, " and she's closing in!"

Without time to get permission, she fired puff balls at Nooooooooooooo, who wasn't even able to get out of the way when the puffs struck.

Lemonia looked at the mirrors and saw what has happened. She yelled to and Butter, " Tell everybody to use their powers through the plug! Cocoa would choose and fire!"
Cocoa aimed and fired a hot boiling pie ball, melting Nooooooooooooo's system, but she quickly recovered.

"How is that even possible!" yelled Rancis, "She's regenerating on her own programs!"

Lemonia furrowed her brows, " Everyone hang on! Cocoa , stop for a second!" then she glitched through the Twitter building, leaving Nooooooooooooo clueless.

With a quick scan, Nooooooooooooo noticed their location, " Not on my watch, dinosaurs!"
Nooooooooooooo picked up speed, and crashed into their float.

BOOM!

The racers were all quick, jumping down as they plucked out the globe.

In the globe, the other racers did a two layer leap and hopped into Butter's hands.

Butter headed towards a float's station's narrow roads and blocked the road with a gingerbread man. She passed it to Rancis as she took up speed and headed back to game center. Smart as she was, Nooooooooooooo didn't just wait. She saw the globe and was after it. She started her vacuum, but simultaneously Lemonia took the ball, glitched and successfully plugged in the globe!

"NO!" yelled Nooooooooooooo, she couldn't unplug a thing(because of her code) after some furious screaming, she went of to other victims.

And this is the story of Celebration. Turns out young people love this game. Even though the gamers call them "Retro" but everybody agreed it means old but cool.

"I won't brag , but we are trending! "

The End of the Dinosaurs (Part II)

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Zhong, Zoe – 13

Quick, light steps, accompanied by a rustling of feathers.

The agora was lit with the light of a thousand fires flickering in the twilight, their orange hue contrasting with the dull sky. Stars twinkled far away, barely visible beneath the matted clouds. Gusts of wind brushed the customers' scales and feathers alike, extinguishing five fires and causing at least two dinosaurs to roar in exasperation. Yet, despite the misery and fatigue that accompanied a long day of work and labor, dinosaurs chatted and gossiped and cursed the Nuggetnese in the humble market square, happy to purchase some herbs before returning to their respective dens. Beneath the lighthearted and mellow gossip loomed the impending possibility of war with the Nuggetnese. Unspoken fear and uncertainty hung heavy in the air, casting a shadow over the market's vibrant façade.

Ovina glanced at the shoppers, making sure that she was not seen.

Exhaling, Ovina checked her surroundings a final time to confirm that there was no one there. In a flash, she raced to the nearest market stall, stuffing some mollusks in her mouth.

Finally. Food for the children. She left the stall, bouncing on one foot to avoid detection. Quickly, lightly, she heard the incessant chatter of the marketplace become quieter, quieter, until she could hear it no more.

Unfortunately, it was clear the dinosaurs in the market could hear *her* very well.

Snap. Her left foot crushed a brittle little branch, while her right foot hung suspended in the air awkwardly. In an instant, four pairs of eyes stared right at her frail body, while five pairs perked up in suspicion.

“*Ovina!*” she reprimanded herself, but it was all too late. She could already hear the cacophony of insults and slurs that were always hurled at her and her only.

“Egg-stealer. What are you doing here?” growled a Diplodocus, who was strangely aggressive for a herbivore and ostentatiously arrogant for a species resurrected only seventy years ago.

“N-nothing. J-just observing,” whispered Ovina, pretending to ignore the stinging comment about being an egg-stealer. Her kind was always stereotyped that way – selfish, heartless, loathsome for something that was not true. And yet, Ovina's neighbors treated her and her children like criminals, hurling insults at them and refusing to let them into private events.

“Right. Go back to where you came from, egg-stealer!” snickered another dinosaur, throwing a rock at Ovina, leaving a bloody indent. Holding back tears, the oviraptor dashed away on powerful legs, the wind biting at her fresh wound.

“And don't think about coming back, thief!

Carefully removing the thick layer of ferns that concealed her den, Ovina entered her crude sanctuary, opening her mouth to reveal the stolen mollusks from the market. “Hey, kids. Look, food!” she announced, her jewels’ eyes gleaming at the promise of a meal.

“Food! Food!” her children cried, stomachs nearly drowning out their cheers.

“Finally, I’ve been starving for *days!*” remarked Ovox, her youngest son. Forgetting to turn off the rickety television – an extraordinary discovery made by a certain Stegosaurus – Ovox pushed his brothers and sisters to get the first bite of those fresh, scrumptious mollusks and be the first whose stomach was filled. Ovina smiled, handing him a single mollusk.

“More! More!” complained Ovox, but Ovina told him kindly yet firmly that he could only have one. She then dismissed her child, splitting the remaining mollusks between her other children.

As Ovina placed the final mollusk in her oldest child – Ovet’s– trembling hands, her own stomach growled to remind her of its emptiness, chastising her for not taking just one more mollusk from the market stall. *Too late to go back and snatch another one.*

Ovina stared at the television as it broadcasted a live meeting between two heads of state and representatives of influential institutions.

“For long, the threat of a volcanic eruption has controlled us, manipulated us, stopped us from reaching our full potential,” the Troodon said, looking directly at the camera. Ovina gulped, remembering the scientist’s fascination with destruction and creation. “Yet, today, I proclaim that we have learned how to control volcanic energy. We have learned to harness nature, and for this, I call for a toast.”

The characteristic voice of the Head Scientist of the Research Institute rang clearly through the television static, every word crisp and audible.

Though her children paid virtually no attention to the broadcast and were instead play-fighting on the ground, Ovina listened intently to the Head of the Scientific Institute for Dinosaurs, who was giving a speech about a discovery, his eyes gleaming like a maniac’s.

There was a smattering of polite applause from the audience, followed by dead silence.

A bated breath, followed by giggles of pure delight from her children.

“Us dinosaurs would have conquered nature sooner or later. We have reached the *peak* of evolution. We are perfect creatures. We have resurrected our ancestors from the Jurassic Period.” He nodded to a Diplodocus in the audience. “We have invented the television and learned to harness electricity. And now, it is time for us to harness Mother Nature’s deadliest weapon against us, the catalyst of our so-called destruction.”

The crowd was truly and genuinely at unease now, whispers rustling through the crowd like fallen leaves. What exactly were the scientist’s motives, and what would this groundbreaking discovery cost?

In a flash, the leader of Nuggetland, the leader of an enemy nation, grabbed the microphone from the Head Scientist, his eyes livid. He was an imposing Tyrannosaurus Rex who had seen many battles in his lifetime; he treated his battle scars as trophies. Ovina flinched as the camera zoomed in on his angular face, since it would force her to look straight into his beady black eyes. “And we will not hesitate to harness volcanic energy to destroy certain groups who refuse to give up their territory. The magnitude is large enough to eradicate at least an entire continent, for your information.”

With that, the T-rex stormed off the stage, his assistants scurrying after him, their scattered praises barely caught by their microphones. Certain nations would be destroyed. Certain innocent lives would be lost.

Translation for those who could not yet understand her distress: Certain dinosaurs and her family needed to run.

A decision made in a split second is usually scorned and dismissed as reckless. Perhaps Ovina should have considered the facts for one second and found a better way to address the problem. Yet, in the midst of imminent death, there was no time to think. Ovina hoped the cold, biting wind would carry her somewhere far away, where she was not an outcast in a group of outcasts and she could be free from the shackles of war.

She clenched her three-fingered claws, a message barely escaping from her mouth. “We leave at midnight, children. Get ready.”

Yes, they would leave at midnight to escape the war.

Shrouded in darkness, Ovina crept through a nearby forest clearing, the outlines of the abandoned market barely visible in the midnight mist. Although she was nervous about leaving with no promise of returning, she felt a strange sense of tranquility as she stared at the market. At least the past was behind her now. At least no one would bully her for a lie anymore. Taking a deep breath, Ovina looked up to the sky, spreading her enormous wings. Her children and she would vanish without a trace, away from the world. No matter the cost, she would protect her family.

The next day, when her neighbors would converge in the market square to discuss how they would seek refuge in a nearby land, they would find their so-called “Egg-Stealer” had vanished without a trace. They would cheer and celebrate, but not for long. The market would be abandoned, with the vendors desperately rationing food and vegetables. Ovina smiled at the thought of that.

For the next couple of days, Ovina alternated between forests and wastelands, trying to find a tranquil place to set up camp. Her initial burst of energy slowly faded into resignation, and that resignation slowly faded into helplessness. The boom of a volcanic eruption seemed to follow her wherever she went, its creator taunting her. “Oh, you thought you could escape! Ha!” Or perhaps it was just a hallucination, a “reward” for endless days of fatigue and hunger.

The creators of the weapon were intent on eliminating every dinosaur who lived, friend or foe. Every single day, Ovina pleaded with the scientists and leaders behind this wretched project to spare her and her innocent children.

No, they would not listen. Not to a single voice in a cacophony of thousands.

Sooner or later, the volcanic bombs would swallow her and her children. Their lives would be swept away in the crossfire, and there was nothing they could do about it. The war had already begun, and the consequences were

clear.. As the distant rumble of certain death grew louder and clearer, Ovina glanced one last time at the only joys of her life, her gems. Their innocent lives would be cut short by a war, their life taken away by a weapon made by dinosaurs to destroy dinosaurs.

Taking a deep breath, she lifted her head to the sky.

“Us dinosaurs have reached the peak of evolution, the peak of technology. And yet, here I am, consumed by a weapon that dinosaurs made to kill their own kin. Let this be a lesson. We are perfect creatures, yet discrimination and war have eventually engulfed us, turning us against one another. Let this be a lesson, future generations. We never reached our full potential because we failed to set aside our differences and work together.”

The sky turned black, and fire engulfed her.

New Tales of China's Dinosaurs

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Zhou, Bella – 14

The story begins on a rainy night, with a damp smell permeating the air. Alexander hurriedly ran onto the last bus with his soaked backpack on his back. He is a second-year archaeology student, and working until midnight every day has become his daily routine. Alexander's life was not easy, and since he was eight years old, there has been almost no easy time in his life. His parents work out of town, and their monthly contact is just an envelope containing money. He has to take care of his sister every day except go to school.

Despite growing up in such a harsh environment, Alexander never gave up on his studies and finally received his college offer at the age of 18. And when he was about to choose his major, he had a big argument with his family. The desire to quickly earn money to support his family had always been Alexander's motivation for learning, but jobs with broad employment prospects and good money were not what Alexander liked. He seriously thought about his life for the first time and finally chose archaeology as his major. The reason is because of passion. But truth quickly slapped him. Facing thousands of newly enrolled college students, Alexander is like an empty paper in the archaeology department. He dares not think about the path he is pursuing. But now he has no other choice.

The next morning, Alexander came to the classroom exhausted. There are a round stone on the table. It's a dinosaur egg fossil. Alexander was surprised that new student like them rarely had the opportunity to see fossils. He scrutinized the stone that was billions of years old. He touch the fossil by one's feelings. At the moment he touched it, white light flickered in front of him. When he wakes up again. He is already lying on the damp ground

Where is it? Tall trees, surrounded by volcanoes. This is a place he is all too familiar with. Jurassic period. Alexander stood still, thinking that this was a joke played on him by someone. At this moment, the Triceratops slowly emerged from behind the grass. Alexander screamed in fear. Triceratops suddenly poke in English, 'What are you?' Alexander didn't realize who was speaking for a moment. But now there's nothing in front of him except this Triceratops. "I am human, and I came here without knowing what happened." "Alexander replied. Human? "" I haven't heard of it. "" But your body doesn't look like a dinosaur living here. "Alexander recounted what he had experienced and how he could now understand Triceratops. He begged the Triceratops to take him to a safe place. He knows staying here will only become dinner for carnivorous dinosaurs.

The Triceratops sighed in disappointment and followed suit. Took him to a small cave. I need to return to my tribe, and I can't bring something like you of an unknown species. Just stay here and wish you good luck. Alexander sat in the cave pondering, often fantasizing about traveling back to the Jurassic period. But now his task is go back. At this moment, a loud roar suddenly came. The heavy footsteps pushed in bit by bit. Alexander quickly hid behind a large stone and saw a large Tyrannosaurus rex through the gap. Fortunately, the Tyrannosaurus rex quickly left and seemed uninterested in this cave. After thinking about it, Alexander came to the conclusion that in order to go back, he needed to touch the dinosaur egg again. So what chance is there for him to come into contact with dinosaur eggs. Fortunately, the Tyrannosaurus rex quickly left and seemed uninterested in this cave. After thinking about it, Alexander came to the conclusion that in order to go back, he needed to touch the dinosaur egg again. So what chance is there for him to come into contact with dinosaur eggs. The eggs of gentle dinosaurs are easier to touch, and coupled with his ability to communicate with dinosaurs, he found Triceratops again and asked if they could use some of their eggs. Triceratops The showed mercy towards this young man and finally agreed to let him touch his dinosaur egg. He took one last glance at the Jurassic behind him, and although it was rare to come here, he had to go back. But now he touched the egg, nothing happened. He was very confused. If he couldn't go back, what else could he

do? Suddenly, he realized that the egg he had touched at the beginning seemed to be a Tyrannosaurus rex egg. It's over, Alexander only has this word left in his mind. How can he touch the eggs of the Tyrannosaurus rex. Probably died before getting close. Triceratops came over to comfort him, 'Actually, Tyrannosaurus rex's eggs are not that difficult. Their eggs will be buried under sand to absorb heat and hatch.'

Alexander, who reignited hope, crouched in the place where Tyrannosaurus rex might appear. I waited for a long, long time just for a Tyrannosaurus rex laying eggs on the beach. I don't know how many days have passed. Alexander saw a Tyrannosaurus rex on the beach. Alexander, who reignited hope, crouched in the place where Tyrannosaurus rex might appear. I waited for a long, long time just for a Tyrannosaurus rex laying eggs on the beach. I don't know how many days have passed. Alexander saw a Tyrannosaurus rex on the beach. After burying the eggs, the dinosaur mother left. Alexander realized that this was his chance. He worked hard to push aside the sand, hoping to find the buried egg. But at this moment, the mother Tyrannosaurus rex seemed to realize something was wrong and turned around to walk back. At the last moment, Alexander grabbed the egg with his hand and shouted to Triceratops, 'Goodbye brother.'

Another burst of white light flashed, and Alexander suddenly woke up from the bus.

Dinosaurs with a Difference

HD Beijing School (JinZhan Campus) , Zhu, Julianna – 13

I am a dinosaur, and I always will be one. In school, I stand out like a sore thumb, the only dinosaur among a sea of human children. My lack of good grades, my pariah status with the teachers, and my uncool way of looking and behaving only further isolate me. Dinosaurs, it seem, are the butt of jokes, and I am a punching bag famous for my softness. My parents, oblivious to my social struggles, reassure me that loneliness is a small price to pay for being myself. But I want attention and connection, not the solitude of a *Tyrannosaurus rex*!

Bullying is a daily ritual; a game to them but a torment to me. It is only when an outside teacher sheds light on the issue during an assembly that I realize the gravity of my situation. I had thought the bugs in my lunch, the thrown objects aimed at me, and the one-sided games of tag with about ten people trying to catch me at once were just a part of school life. However, I realise that these experiences are not just surface-level issues; but indicate a more profound problem of self-esteem. It feels as if I am rejecting my own life and everything about it. I struggle with feelings of hopelessness and sadness that go beyond the momentary challenges. This inner unrest makes it difficult for me to find joy or meaning as if I was battling an underlying emptiness that affects my sense of self and place in the world.

One day, the pressure becomes too much to bear. In a moment of desperation, I charge into the classroom, ignoring the usual barrage of objects. I seek attention – any attention – even if it is fear. I corner the ringleader, my sharp claws meeting his flesh, leaving a mark that shocks the school into silence. I am only semi-conscious at that time. The police is called by someone in the class, which all screeches and sprints outside to watch me being led away, a dinosaur removed from humans to keep him from harming them.

At the police station, my parents' anger is palpable. They accuse me of ruining their lives, of squandering their investments in my clothes, food, and education. My mother, once a promising pianist, lamented the life she could have had, blaming me for her perceived downfall. Their words cut deeper than any physical blow, and I retreat into silence.

The weight of their disappointment is a burden too heavy to bear. Each breath is a struggle, every muscle cries out in pain, and my mind plays tricks on me as I am lost in a sea of despair. In the dim light of my room, I let chaos erupt around me, transforming my surroundings into a vivid representation of the inner tornado I am experiencing. The walls, once a calm shade of blue, now seem to pulse with the energy of my emotions, while clothes lay strewn across the floor, symbols of my disarray. Papers flutter in disorganisation, each crumpled page echoing my restless thoughts. Shadows danced in the corners, mirroring the confusion and unease that churns within me. This physical chaos becomes a canvas, illustrating the depth of my struggles and the turmoil that feels both suffocating and liberating. Each object in the room bears witness to my distress, creating a vivid landscape of my mind's discontent.

But surrounded by the darkness, there is a glimmer of light. My mother, despite her own pain and disappointment, shows a side of her that I have rarely seen. She comes to my room when my noise has diminished a bit, and sits down on my bed, just beside me. We talk for a long time, beginning with just small and unimportant things. Her patience and kindness are a lifeline, a beacon in the storm. She helps me navigate the treacherous waters of self-doubt and isolation, teaching me that my worth is not defined by the scales that cover my body or the claws that extend from my fingers. I feel much better after that chat.

I go back to school after the few days I spent at home. I walk into the classroom and apologize to my classmates sincerely. I feel as if my rough and hard skin of a dinosaur is fading away, replaced by the smooth but speckled surface of my true skin; as if my claws are shrinking back into my human fingers, and red hair growing out of my little head; as if, all of a sudden, I am becoming more human.

With her support, I begin to find my voice, to stand tall not as a dinosaur but as a boy, a boy who is different but not lesser than anyone not once a dinosaur. I learn to embrace my uniqueness, to see the beauty in my differences, and to understand that I am no monster, no freak of nature, but a boy with dreams and aspirations, just like any other.

In the end, I discover a truth that resonates deep within my soul: 'I'm no Dinosaur. I am a normal boy all the way. No different than the others.' It is a revelation which changes my life, a realization that allows me to step out of the shadow of my dinosaur identity and into the light of my humanity.

The Chronicles of the Time Traveling Trio

HKCCCU Logos Academy, Chan, Lok Hei – 12

“Grandpa! Grandpa!” Sammy yelled, her voice quivering, “Y—your Time Machine! It started running all of a sudden! It’s sucking everything near it through the portal!”

Tam, putting on his rusty pair of glasses, squinting to faintly see the bright swirl of white, purple and orange. The nearer he and Sammy got to try and stop it, the more they were slowly dragged towards the portal. Before Tam could reach the “stop” button, their feet lifted from the wooden floorboards of the attic, and before they knew it, they were traveling to the unknown.

“Aghh!” They screamed in unison, falling onto the ground, careful of their surroundings as they get up. “Where... are we?” Sammy asked, her head throbbing.

Tam groaned, reaching for his glasses as he looked around, “I think we are in the past! Maybe the 20’s? There aren’t any holograms or flying cars around, only self-serve ATMs and ancient Teslas.

“Yo—you mean we are 70 years in the past? We are in 2020?!” Sammy shrieked in fear, ignoring the nearby people staring at her in confusion.

“It appears so,” Tam said, with a sigh.

As they tried to find ways to get back to their time, with futuristic technology and things we can’t even fathom would be possible, Tam and Sammy stumbled upon an old friend.

“Excuse me, my name is Tam. Tam Lee. I am trying to go to Kwun Tong. May I ask where the nearest hover-ship station is?” Tam asked a nearby stranger. He looked in his mid-30s, with jet black hair and fair skin.

“Uhh, hover-ships? There are only MTRs and bus stops here. I’m Ben, by the way. Ben Chan,” he said with a smile.

“Ben?” Tam thought. “Oh my god, Ben!” he screamed, giving Ben an extremely concerned look.

“Yes ... that’s my name. Am I supposed to know you?”

Indeed, Ben and Tam were colleagues and best friends who worked together as dinosaur fossil scientists. However, Tam unfortunately lost Ben while on the hunt for more fossils to investigate. This incident happened over 30 years ago, and after this incident, Tam was devastated, so depressed that he quit his job and retired early. Seeing him, even though Ben did not recognize him, made him burst into tears.

“Sorry, it’s a long story,” Tam said, wiping the tears off his cheek.

He told him all about the time traveling, and the fact that they used to be best friends. Ben found it hard to believe at first, but slowly with the genuineness of his voice, he believed Tam and agreed to help. Ben also shared that he and his team recently found an 8-million-year-old Titanosaurus fossil. And with Tam’s futuristic technology, they might be able to bring the Titanosaurus to life.

Tam was skeptical, but agreed to return the favor, bringing Sammy along. They were walking to the lab, and then introduced Tam and Sammy to the whole team. They twisted the story, a little bit though: they mentioned that he was a smart engineer who found a way to invent a machine that turned things to life. As they introduced them to the fragile, precious fossil, he carefully aimed his life gun, and blasted a strong light of dark and light green, and behold: the mighty Titanosaurus was brought back to life.

Its roar was louder than anything ever recorded in history, deafening every single person in the same room. They had to give it medication, to calm the dinosaur down before it could accidentally kill any scientist’s couple. The scientist went out to get things to tame the dinosaur, while others kept lookout. When Ben and Tam came back from the shopping trip, they were horrified. The Titanosaurus escaped its chamber, and was now roaming the streets of Kwun

Tong. Everybody on the street was grabbing their phones to take a video, while frantically running away from a Titanosaurus' deadly footsteps. Ben and Tam had to find a way to control and tame this mighty beast, while keeping Sammy safe.

They tried everything: feeding it lots of meat, trying to befriend it, and even chaining him down to the ground, but nothing worked. They were hopeless, but then Sammy had an idea. "It loves chasing people, right? Well, what if we get police officers, and get them to lure the Titanosaurus into a strong cell in a zoo or something, and then we'll figure the rest out!"

"Not a bad idea, but we find a bunch of policemen?" Ben and Tam said. A lot of people were calling the police at this point, so it actually wasn't that hard to find a few to help with the plan. The police ultimately agreed to help, getting ready to shoot it down when necessary, but trying not to do so, since this was an extraordinary phenomenon. Sammy's plan worked! The policeman successfully got a Titanosaurus into a strong cage in the local zoo, and Sammy, Ben, Tam, and their scientist team were greatly rewarded for this amazing historical find.

They were known as "the mighty history trio" and they kept finding more and more dinosaur fossils, but they wouldn't dare to use the life gun ever again.

If you are wondering what happened to the Titanosaurus, it was currently being taken care of by expert zoologist and biologist, getting fed properly, even getting cleaned. However, they could not find ways to breed the specific dinosaur, because their offspring was also gigantic inside, and might be extremely hazardous and deadly if it got out of hand. Eventually, they would figure out a way to bring dinosaurs back in a safe manner, but for now, it was time for Sammy and Tammy to go back to their time. They spent months building a new time machine, set the settings to 2100, said goodbye to Ben once again, and reluctantly jumping into the purple and orange portal.

The Legend of the Heroic Eagle

HKCCCU Logos Academy, Lui, Chi Hang – 12

One day in Liaoning, a Chinese farmer happened to stumble on a pile of bones. Regretfully digging up his crops which were wilted, he didn't know that his misfortune would turn into one of the most interesting discoveries of all time. The farmer, in his anger that more crops had to be thrown out, dug until he hit bones. "What are these things?" the bewildered farmer asked himself. He had no idea what those peculiar objects were, so he took them to the scientists in the 1900s. But even they couldn't identify them.

After 103 years, the scientists of 2003 had identified the bones as an eagle. But it was not a normal eagle. It was a male eagle that apparently knew martial arts, following the footsteps of a kung fu master, and later accompanying a young man with only one arm. In fact, he roamed China with the young man when the Han and the Mongols were waging war against each other, and joined the young man, who was named Yang, to be one of the most powerful kung fu masters ever. But before becoming a legendary warrior in China, he had been known throughout cultures.

Earlier, he had been known as two gods. The Mayans deemed him Kukulkan, while the Aztecs called him Quetzalcoatl. As the eagle was feathered and had a known habit of exterminating serpents, the Mayans and Aztecs knew him as the Feathered Serpent.

The scientists discovered that the eagle's favourite beverage was hot chocolate. The Mayans made him god of life, while the Aztecs made him god of learning. The eagle introduced chocolate to the Mayans and Aztecs and soon cacao beans were used as currency. But Hernan Cortes conquered the Mayans and Aztecs, so the eagle fled to Egypt.

He saw people wearing striped loincloths pulling carts with blocks on them. A man with a blue and gold headpiece was observing the construction of the pyramids. Suddenly, he saw the eagle. He hollered, "Capture that bird for me!" and pointed at him. The guards, wielding their spears, stepped forward ready to take the eagle.

The eagle flew, brandishing his claws and blinding one guard. But eight guards reacted almost immediately, breaking his wings. "Take him to the palace," said the pharaoh. When the eagle was able to see without hurting a lot, he noticed that he was in a chamber with a man leering over him. He took out a wand and a staff and started chanting in Egyptian. Then, he took out a dagger and prepared to sacrifice the eagle. Suddenly, Horus was standing in the centre of the room. The god said, "This eagle is my symbol, how dare you insult me by sacrificing him to me?" Horus took the injured eagle to the palace of the gods, where he cared for him. The eagle accompanied the war god for several millennia and battled demons, but the time came for him to go.

"Lord Horus, the Macedonians are invading!" a god said. Horus was getting weaker by every second, as Egypt was falling. More and more people were slain, and the Egyptian gods were getting weaker. Even though Horus had told him to flee, the proud bird thought "These are just mortals, I bet I can eliminate them all." So, he swooped down from heaven and attacked the nearest Macedonian. Unfortunately, his familiars immediately struck with their weapons. The eagle barely got out alive. As the soldiers had wounded him eons before, he wouldn't be able to fly again. So, he hijacked a divine ship and flew away.

The ship took flight and all was peaceful until the flags of the ship burst into flames. He saw the hieroglyphics on the boat which read "Ra". He was panicked when he saw snakes with wings spitting fire beside the boat. The snakes believed that it was Ra on the boat, and rejoined their master. Demons attacked the ship, but the fire snakes of Ra kept them at bay. The boat went on until it landed on a piece of grassy land. A group of surprised Chinese soldiers immediately surrounded the wooden boat with weapons in hand, so the flying snakes of Ra spit fire onto a few soldiers, and they retaliated by hurling their weapons and armour. Even though the snakes were skilled fighters, the Chinese soon took the upper hand, and soon they were up again, pointing their remaining weapons at the eagle.

Wounded by Egyptian soldiers long ago, the eagle was no longer able to use his wings as a weapon. He shut his eyes, awaiting death. But it never came. He saw a muscular man wielding a sword that was as black as night, massacring soldiers left and right. The mystery man swished and slashed his sword until there were only three. One was decapitated before he even knew what was happening. The second ran in front of the swordsman, clashing his sword with him. The poor man was cut in half. The third ran to the eagle, hoisted his spear and prepared to stab the eagle for revenge. Luckily, the swordsman saved him just in time.

The weakened eagle was brought to a cave and he woke up feeling refreshed. He stood up to see no one at all. He went out the cave and saw the swordsman slashing dummies with his sword. "I see you've awoken," said the man. The eagle stayed with the swordsman for eighty years. From that, he knew that the man was called Dugu. The eagle didn't understand Chinese, but Dugu had learned English so he taught the eagle.

Dugu was talented in both fist and sword fighting. He knew that the eagle was defenceless, so he taught the eagle a new kind of martial art to attack and defend with a beak. He fed the eagle snake eggs, which would boost the eagle's kung fu. The eagle learned the swordplay of Dugu. One time, Dugu went to Huanghe, and stood on slippery rocks. He leaped from rock to rock, and swiped, slashed and stabbed the air with his sword. The eagle was terrified that his friend would slip into the current and be swept away. But Dugu was too good for that.

Many years passed. Dugu, on his deathbed, passed the eagle his sword, and passed away. The eagle stayed in the cave, but he kept on practicing his kung fu, braving the slippery rocks near the deadly current of Huanghe. He kept on practicing until he was very skilled. But he was alone.

Until one day, a young man named Yang came to the cave. He was skilled with a longsword, and knew exceptional kung fu. The eagle was elated to have a new companion, and gifted Yang the black sword that Dugu had used, and taught him the sword moves Dugu used. Unfortunately, Yang had to leave, having to go back to the city. And the eagle was alone again.

The eagle had come back from a risky workout teetering on the rocks when Yang walked in angrily. That's when the eagle noticed that he had lost an arm. But Yang refused to talk. As Yang seemed to be staying permanently this time, the eagle took more snake eggs for Yang to eat. He stayed for six months until he heard that the Mongols were invading China. The eagle still held a grudge for the soldiers who "welcomed" him to China. But he thought of Dugu, who would have died for his country. So the eagle packed snake eggs, and set off for the last city of China with Yang.

With their kung fu, it took them two days to reach the city. Trooping in the city, Yang unsheathed his sword from behind his back and he leaped into the battle fray, sweeping his blade at Mongolian troops. The Chinese hurled their spears at the Mongols, but more kept coming. Soon, the Mongolian troops had taken the upper hand again. The eagle sliced into the nearest Mongol, but there were too many of them. The Mongolians suddenly raised their bows and arrows, shooting as one. The eagle was shot. The pain and agony were hard to bear. It was like someone was twisting daggers in his gut. Blood dripped from his feathers. Out of his eye, he saw Yang fall. It was the last thing he saw before everything went black.

The monitor the scientists was watching on went black. During the broadcast of the eagle's life, a few scientists had screamed. Several had cried. And more had been mortified, not believing that this was true. They felt sadness for the patriotic death of the eagle trying to defend China, and also respect for this hero and his companion, Yang. A monument was made for the eagle in China. The scientists grieved for him, and wrote a document of his story, which I have now put in this story to let the world know, and pay respect to him, may he rest in peace.

Travel the Past Dinosaurs

HKSYCIA Wong Tai Shan Memorial College, Ng, Ching Tung – 12

Hello! You might wonder why I'm here. I am Kellika Reddison, one of the students in college. I was not a fan of History because of all the timelines and historical names I needed to memorize. I didn't know some famous people in History so nobody wanted to have group discussions with me about that subject, especially that jerk name Damien. Damien is the class bully, acting like he is the king of the classroom all the time. He loves receiving large amounts of attention and admiration, especially from the girls. However, the only female victim he bullied was me, calling me a "good target" for his "population rates". I hate him so much, not worse than Luka at least, who is a History nerd who always yaps about things, like people nobody knows about. She also talks with me like I am her best friend forever, but it only made me remember how badly I failed everything based on History. Miss Leung, being a nice teacher she is, tried her best to teach me the basic ways to study History, even adding extra lessons after school to help me improve, but I wasn't interested, to the point of almost falling asleep on the desk every lesson. I thought all of them would never understand the difficulties of learning history, thinking I would still fail this subject in the future... until all those thoughts, all those words have no meaning to me once I touched the mysterious crystal ball.

It was History-learning day. All of the Form one students arrived at the Hong Kong Science Museum with their History teachers to learn more about the dinosaurs around the world, mainly from China. The guides led each of the classes to different areas, calling them an adventure. To me, it was more like torturing my small brain than a fun adventure. The guide who was leading my class introduced the Mamenchisaurus Sinocanadorum, the dinosaur with the longest neck being fifty feet long. "No wonder it had the longest name..." I thought with a frown as I inspected the dinosaur. They weren't on Earth anymore, so why did we still need to learn about them? I thought it wouldn't get worse until Miss Leung suddenly said with a smile, "Oh, snap! I almost forgot! There will be a quiz two days later about dinosaurs!" That wasn't something I was expecting. A quiz?! Oh no, I didn't want it at all. Miss Leung told us that we would write as many dinosaurs' names and facts as we could, which I was bad at. I was sweating after she said that, not sure if I could survive through that. However, the guides were smiling. They were enjoying the moment of shock and fear a bit too much. Guess who was squealing out of excitement about that quiz? Luka, that History nerd. She was the only one who wanted to show off her knowledge about dinosaurs through that quiz. I shot her a glare which silenced her. I didn't understand her love and interest for History, especially dinosaurs. Miss Leung laughed at our expressions and reminded us that it counted as a bonus mark too. My eyes lit up at that good news. Now that was a good deal! Damien smirked at that and mocked me, "Well, would you look at that! The noob wants to get those bonus marks! Oh wait! I forgot that she can't even remember simple dates!" I wanted to debate back at him and make him change his mind, but he was telling facts which I couldn't deny. All I could do was give him an eye roll, feeling my heart shattering at the impossibility of getting them.

When I arrived home, my parents weren't there, waiting for me. They were always busy with businesses, of course they would leave me here. I dropped my bag on the floor before going to my gloomy room. I felt like being in my own bubble, all alone and safe. Out of nowhere, I saw something glowing brightly through the darkness. Curious, I went to the direction and shoved everything aside to reveal the object. It was a dusty crystal ball covered in spider webs. Inside, there were models of dinosaurs and meteors on the ground. It was given by my dear old grandpa on my third birthday before he passed away from old age. Since then, I had never touched or shook it until now. I shook it gently, thinking that I would see meteors rising and falling as I shook. All of a sudden, I heard a voice calling for me, asking why I did this. I felt my fingers slowly getting sucked inside it along with my body. I dropped it to stop the effect, but it didn't work and sucked me back into somewhere unfamiliar.

I opened my eyes slowly, looking up at the bright sky. "Where am I?" I muttered as I sat up and rubbed my head. My eyes wandered around, wanting to get a clue about the location I was now. There was a sign standing alone, revealing the place's name: "Dzungaria area of China". I stared at the sign, blinking a few times to check if I was hallucinating. I wasn't, I really got here. When I stood up on my feet, I heard footsteps approaching towards my direction, making me jump in fright and try to get to the nearest tree to hide like a prey running away from predators. I felt something on my foot which made me tumble over and land onto the hard ground. Once the footsteps stopped, I knew I was doomed. I stayed in the same position, flat on the ground embarrassingly. What should I do now that I was stuck between fighting back or accepting my fate until I heard a familiar voice. "Are you okay, kid?" It was Xu Xing, one of the famous paleontologists, along with his crew. I stared at him in awkward silence before asking what year it was. "It was the year 2006, silly!" He even introduced himself and his crew kindly while checking and bandaging the wounds with some bandages. Wait, 2006?! There was no way I could time travel back nineteen years from the past. I thought it was just a myth! "Unnn... Hello? You seem stunned there?" Xi Xing asked, waking me up from my Wonderland. "I want to join your research!" I blurt out, sounding more like a demand than a question. I thought it would be a perfect opportunity to learn something before the History quiz. Fortunately, he and his crew mates ignored my sudden rudeness and agreed! We went highs and lows, searching for dinosaur fossils. Finally, we found a fossil of the Guanlong named by Xu Xing himself. Based on its size and bone features, it was a medium sized early tyrannosaur, around four meters long, with a large, distinctive but fragile head crest which could be for attracting mates or for recognition. We had a discussion about its possible uses, but once I was about to reveal some of my thoughts, something dragged me and threw me to another place which I didn't recognise again...

I tossed and turned on the cold, rough ground and the pain on my knees. I couldn't stand up without staggering, but the marks on them reminded me about the first journey. I sat up carefully to prevent touching the healing wounds. "Gosh... When will I find an exit? I'm tired already..." I ask myself out of frustration. I felt the wind hitting my face as I thought about this so negatively. I should continue going before I complain more. My eyes went towards the sign which was in front of me, standing tall and proud. I was somewhere in the Shishugou Formation. Did I have the knowledge to end this time traveling thing? Not sure, but it wouldn't be possible without any understanding about time traveling. The footsteps were heard again, but this time I was too lazy and weak to hide with those bandaged knees. However, they didn't approach me or give me a glance. Instead, they were so focused on digging something from one area to another. I saw one of them using an old, crumbled paper to note down the details. I put on my glasses to get a clearer view of the notes, investigating it secretly from the spot. I read the date which made my jaw drop... It was the year 1987, far from the year 2025! Before I could adjust myself to the shocking information, I was transported to another timeline again...

It was a different place this time, unlike any journeys which I always landed on the natural ground, I arrived at a building filled with different collections of cones and papers flying around like butterflies. They were all current investigations about a dinosaur named the Sinraptor in 1994. There stood two people, Philip J. Currie and Zhao Xijin, who were concentrating on their own conversation, mainly about the dinosaur. They even spent all their time describing and creating drawings of it according to their minds. Wait a second... I could just draw the actual picture of it. It would make History easier to study and memorize! I was such a genius! I sneaked up behind them to steal a sheet of paper and a pencil. I was very good at stealing things like a professional thief that I got the items without getting caught! I sat on the floor and moved "my" pencil onto the paper, even writing the meaning of its name and its size. "It came from the Latin prefix 'Sino', meaning Chinese, and 'raptor' meaning robber. Standing nearly 3 meters (9.8 feet) tall and measuring roughly 7.6 meters (25 feet) in length..." was all I wrote about. I was about to give the finished work to the paleontologists when I felt someone hitting my head hard enough to knock me out. The last thing I heard before I closed my eyes was "You foolish girl... You shouldn't change History like that... It is illegal here..."

When I gained some consciousness, I wasn't surprised about the location I was in. It was the Junggar Basin of Xinjiang I learned from the internet. However, I didn't know how this place was related to the other journeys I went through? I stretched my painful back and my healed legs. Those unexpected arrivals of places gave me great pain in my head. I saw a person looking into the bones which he explained that they belonged to the *Tugulusaurus*. The person I was talking about was Dong Zhiming, a Chinese paleontologist who had long been engaged in vertebrate paleontology research at the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology and Chinese Academy of Sciences. Seeing him again gave me a hint of hope, since he was the one who gave me the confidence in learning History through his determination, to the point of everyone calling him "the King of Chinese Dinosaurs". Through those admirations, I didn't forget to ask him the year I was in. He simply answered that it was 1973 while trying his best not to miss any information about the *Tugulusaurus*. He muttered out the information to himself, but it was loud enough for me to hear. I learned that the generic name referred to the Tugulu Group. The specific name was derived from Latin *facilis*, with the meaning of "easily moving", referring to the agility of the animal as indicated by its "delicate bones". He even collected the other details through a holotype, IVPP V4025, which were in layers of the Lianmuqin Formation dating from the Barremian–Albian. It consisted of a partial skeleton including four partial tail vertebrae, much of the left leg and part of the right, the first fingers of both hands, and a rib. The femur had a length of about 215 millimetres, 8.5 inches. The left first metacarpal was very short, showing that it was only 26 millimetres, 1 inch. The skeleton represented the only remains of the species that had ever been discovered. I was so fixated on his words, not wanting his words to end. That wish was broken when I felt someone shaking my shoulder...

"Wake up, sweetheart!" My mother yelled, shaking my unconscious body repeatedly. "What? What just happened?" I mumbled and groaned, putting my hand on top of my head. "Oh, thank goodness you are still alive, sweetheart! I was worried sick for you!" She started scolding me for not taking care of myself while she was working, but I wasn't focused on her words. Instead, I was focused on the crystal ball which was broken into millions of pieces, letting the dinosaur models out. I guess it was all a dream... those paleontologists were just my imaginations until my mother pointed at the bandages on my knees and asked, "Hey... where did you get those injuries from?" That was the question I couldn't explain because I was far away from the glass shards. At the same time, the bandages looked like they had been there for years, looking a bit dull. Therefore, I lied to her by saying that it was just an accident on my way home. You guys know that it wasn't the truth.

Two days after that incident, it was the day of the History quiz. I didn't study for them, just like usual. However, I couldn't leave the test paper blank without any words at all! "You know what, forget those thoughts..." I muttered once the timer started counting the numbers into my ears. I used all the things I learned from my dream, including dinosaur names such as the Guanlong, the Sinraptor and the *Tugulusaurus*. When the quiz ended, I prayed in my mind, hoping I could get at least three bonus marks as encouragement. What I didn't know was that I would get a surprise the next day...

The next day, Miss Leung gave out the bonus test results to us. When it was my turn, she only smiled at me with a hint of approval in her eyes. "Congratulations" she said to me, the volume was almost a whisper. I didn't know why she was reacting like that until I uncovered the amount of bonus marks I got. That was when my eyes widened to the point of them being the similar size as bouncy balls. "FIFTEEN MARKS?!" I screamed, hardly believing my accomplishments. I didn't know my dreams were all facts. Damien, my bully who liked to mock me, looked at the red numbers written in bold words on my paper, then at his. He only got six because of his unclear introductions "This isn't fair! She was supposed to be a noob at this! How does she get higher bonus marks than me?!" he yelled at Miss Leung, suspecting that I was cheating to receive the highest score. Miss Leung sighed at Damien's attitude before proving that I didn't cheat by saying that she didn't notice any devices or papers in her drawer. That was when Damien started to throw a tantrum, falling onto the floor and rolling around it like a child who didn't get what he wanted. I watched him acting like this which made him look hideous and embarrassing. I couldn't lie, he got his own taste of his

medicine for judging me horribly. Then it was Luka, who ignored me because of my lack of understanding about her love for History, was as shocked as Damien. Instead of throwing a tantrum about it, she started squealing and asking questions about the dinosaurs endlessly. This was the first time I felt popular and wanted by someone in History that I almost cried in joy. That was when I heard familiar voices in my head, encouraging me to become just like them and don't give up. Those voices were the History paleontologists, Xu Xing, Philip J. Currie, Zhao Xijin and Dong Zhiming. I couldn't help but thank them in my mind.

Now that I knew there were fun and interesting ways to learn History, there was still a question stuck in my head after that day... Were those just dreams? Did I really travel back in time?

The Maj

HKSYCIA Wong Tai Shan Memorial College, Poon, Shun Wong – 12

A Majungasaurus, the most dangerous predator in Madagascar. It was a cold blood dinosaur.

They even eat their similars! but it is not just cold-blooded .

Once upon a time, there is a majungasaurus and also a dangerous predator in the forest. The water and food is enough food for all the dinosaurs in the forest. The majungasaurus family lived here happily . But a volcano explosion killed the male majungasaurus and the other dinosaurs in the forest . Just the

Female majungasaurus alive and her son survived .

They needed to escape from the forest they lived in before they ran and ran , came to the desert and found food for their dinner , there were just a few bones for them , of course not enough ! So they kept looking for food and slept in the desert , finally , they succeeded ! They found a big corpse and ate them . Suddenly , a trumping sound outgoing , it was another majungasaurus coming . The female majungasaurus was very angry with him , so they fought with each other , but they all have a powerful biting power . The majungasaurus (female) finally won for the food and the corpse of the other majungasaurus can eat for a few days..

A few days later , they found that there were a lot of velociraptors there and stole their food. The female majungasaurus roared but they still did not run away .

They decided to run out of the desert , they ran for a long time. Under the sunshine , they may have had a heat stroke and will die . When they thought they would die , their mother saw a flower was standing in the sand. They quickly ran and saw a big forest near the desert .

They went inside and thought they were saved , but there came a roar , then a Giganotosaurus came out because of the battle before and the size. Giganotosaurus bit her neck and finally she died, the Majungasaurus wanted to protect her children from danger and sacrifice herself.

The little Majungasaurus were sad and hopeless . When he was sitting near the river a velociraptor spotted him. It thought the little majungasaurus was poor so it adopted it . A few years later , the majungasaurus had already grown up to be an adult . One day when he was looking for the prey , the Giganotosaurus was drinking water , then the majungasaurus rushed to the Giganotosaurus and bit the Giganotosaurus neck . Finally , he killed the Giganotosaurus and help his mother for revenge. Finally , he became the king of the forest.

New Tales of China's dinosaurs

HKSYCIA Wong Tai Shan Memorial College, Serpunja, Susang Nina – 12

As beams of sunlight filled the apartment with a warm glow, the chirping of birds could be heard outside. The golden hues of the morning light, paired with a cozy blanket, created the perfect start to the day, until the beeping of an alarm clock ruined it all. Insufficient sleep, coupled with the annoying noise, was the worst way to begin the morning. Or was it?

A lanky man with sunken eyes and slightly messy hair commuted to work via bus. "Hey! Why did you push me?" an older man shouted angrily. "Get out of my way!" an elderly woman yelled back. A heated argument broke out on the bus, with passengers watching eagerly to see how it would unfold. Annoyed, the bus driver intervened, scolding everyone.

Bored, the lanky man turned to gaze out the window. Suddenly, panic set in. "I've missed my stop," he thought, dread filled his head. "I can't be late or else my boss will fire me!" Negative thoughts raced through his mind as he scurried to get off at the next stop. He rushed over to his workplace, barely making it on time.

"Ryan," a stern voice called. He turned to see his boss, arms crossed, and disappointment smeared on his face. "This is the third time you've arrived at the last minute. Any more of this, and you will receive a pay cut." The boss's words gave him a sense of dread, and Ryan nodded, retreating to his desk.

"I wish our company was as successful as the others," Ryan thought to himself, mindlessly scrolling through his computer. "First, they fired Jonas, then Vivian, then Amanda. Am I next?" Just as he was spiraling into despair, his phone rang.

"Hello! Is this Ryan?" an excited voice asked.

"Yes, it is," Ryan replied, still feeling groggy.

"Well, it might sound crazy, but I think I found dinosaur fossils!" the man exclaimed.

A stunned silence followed. "Are you still there?" the man asked. Ryan Paused. "Just last week, someone else found dinosaur fossils, and now you've found some too?"

"Yep! I can send you a sample if you'd like."

An idea struck him. If his company could utilize these dinosaur fossils, the media would swarm, and they could even earn extra cash. Intrigued by the idea, he agreed. "Okay, I'll message you my address later. I need to get back to work now." The call ended.

A week later, a parcel arrived at Ryan's apartment. Butterflies fluttered in his stomach as he opened it. There it was in all of its glory, a dinosaur fossil! He carefully closed the parcel, excited to bring it to work the next day.

As he walked to his desk, excitement bubbled within him. These were the first dinosaur fossils found in Jiangxi. With the help of a few coworkers, he convinced his boss to approve laboratory testing for the newly discovered fossils.

Three weeks later, shocking news arrived. “This species of dinosaur has never been discovered before. We have decided to name it *Sinosauropteryx*. Our tests also revealed that the *Sinosauropteryx* had feathers,” the scientist announced.

The revelation sent waves of excitement through the office, and soon, word spread to the public. The news made headlines, and palaeontologists scurried to investigate and inspect the fossils. This revolutionary discovery went on to change China forever. Going from a normal Asian country to an international sensation for paleontologists and scientists.

As the news spreads, some people think it is propaganda and start making their own theories while others are in disbelief of what happened, whatever the response was— at the end of the day, the discovery will still impact the course of history of China forever.

The Last Dinosaurs

Hong Kong Taoist Association Tang Hin Memorial Secondary School, Li, Sum Yuk – 14

"Mike, look at the murals! How extraordinary are they!" A paleontologist named Sam pointed at the murals on the wall of the cave, he didn't know why they were there, but he was surprised.

"The animal on them looks like a dinosaur!" Another paleontologist said.

"It's amazing!", said Sam.

"I remember a story about dinosaur which is told by my grandpa, the story's details are similar to these murals," said Mike suddenly.

"Really? Tell me!"

"That all began with human's selfishness."

"Many years ago, when people were still living in caves and thatched houses, there was a kind of special animal. They were strong and tall, but kind and gentle. These animals had a unique technique—they can summon weather as they wished. They summoned sun to provide light when wanted to hunt. They conjured rain for crops to grow. However, such powerful strength could not be used without the expense of their own energy. Therefore, they seldom used it."

"It was a harsh time when people suffered from extreme weather like drought and heat. They begged these animals for dew from the sky so that they could farm. They even offered fruits and food they liked to show their gratitude. As the animals offered help to people, and people gave them what they wanted, their relationship became closer. People later named them as dinosaurs."

"After that, people and dinosaurs would always help each other. In summer, people gave different kinds of fruits and taught dinosaurs how to use rocks to make traps, dinosaurs helped people collect things at very high places. In winter, dinosaurs caught beasts for their furs, then gave them to people because they would use them to make clothes. Their friendship lasted for decades until one day when a catastrophic flood hit the land."

"People could not survive as the water filled everywhere. They cried. They yelled, and escaped but the chilly water broke their hope. All the crops were damaged. Nothing more than a barren land was left after the flood. A large number of people died, the people left were threatened by fear and hunger. In contrast to the people in sadness, the dinosaurs were more comfortable. Because of their huge body and thick skin, they were not seriously harmed. People asked them for help. They wanted the dinosaurs to summon sunny weather for them for two months so that they could build new thatched houses and find new caves."

"However, they refused. As the dinosaurs thought this action would make plants die and it was unfair for the other animals because too much sunlight would harm them instead. They did not answer to such request, no matter how the humans begged."

"Since then, the friendship between the two species no longer existed. People taught their children that dinosaurs were vicious dragons who were selfish and evil."

"Humans were worried that the rainy weather would make the woods wet, so they cut down trees in two days and put them in several high-relief caves. They killed all the animals which nested on the trees, ate them, and skinned them."

“The dinosaurs witnessed all these. They felt angry and tried to stop humans. However, they were ignored every time. Their friendship was broken.”

“A volcano erupted at where the dinosaurs lived. The sky was covered by ash, scalding magma could flow to anywhere. Most of the dinosaurs were covered by magma and ash. They died in pain and helplessness.”

“Although this was a desperate hazard, there was a lucky one—a dinosaur egg.”

“A month passed, a little dinosaur hatched. He reached for fruits and clear water in a forest nearby. With enough food and water supply from the forest, the little dinosaur lived happily but lonely.”

“Once, when the little dinosaur was finding food, he accidentally fell into the water. He was afraid, and the sky had become dark very soon, he tried to climb up but failed.”

“‘Anyone here? Help me please!’ He cried for help. The sound attracted a girl. She found him, and comforted him gently. Then, she lent him a branch, and pulled him out. When she saw his appearance, she was shocked. ‘You are a dinosaur!’ Yelled the girl.”

“‘Thank you, but why are you so scared?’ asked the little dragon. ‘My parents told me dinosaurs are the most dangerous animal in the world.’ The girl thought this little dinosaur was not as evil as her parents said. The little dinosaur gave some fruit to the girl, though he was confused about what she said.”

“They met very often in the following days because the girl wanted to pick some flowers for making birthday gift for her mum. The little dinosaur always helped her. At first, she was still afraid, but after some days, she thought he was a kind dinosaur, she changed her mind. They became good friends soon.”

“However, it was noticed by the girl’s father. He scolded her, but she didn’t break their friendship, and let the little dinosaur go back to the forest because it was dangerous that he was caught by humans.”

“The little dinosaur went back to the forest, he finally knew the reason why dinosaurs were hated by humans. At that time, he felt unfair, he did nothing bad to humans, but they disliked him. Luckily, he had a friend who could understand him. He could not forget the time they had together, so he always peeped at her, and put fruits in front of her house secretly.”

“The girl felt upset, and missed the little dinosaur a lot too. She could always find the fruits she liked near her house. She knew who had put them there, but she was ordered to stay at home, otherwise she would go out to find him. As they always played with each other before, she knew that he was a kind dragon. She decided to meet him again.”

“Unfortunately, they could not.”

“A drought came, the rivers and lakes dried. The people could not survive. The sunlight was too bright, high temperature made crops died and the people tired. The girl’s family was also facing this problem. Her grandpa was ill. His health was getting more worse because he was dehydrated. Suddenly, the girl’s father remembered the little dinosaur, he asked the girl to find him, but she didn’t. She told her father how important he was to her. She knew what her father wanted to do.”

“Nevertheless, the drought harmed the humans too much, they anxiously needed rainfall. The little dinosaur saw what happened, he noticed that the girl would die very soon without enough water.”

“Therefore, he went to find her, told her that he had decided to summon rain. But she refused, ‘You cannot do this. It consumes a large amount of your energy. In the past, the dinosaurs did this in a group, so they could do this safely.’

However, you are the only dinosaur in the world now. It will drain your energy.' 'Don't worry, I know what I should do.' He didn't change his decision."

"The next day, he went to find the leader of the humans. At first, the people were vigilant of his coming as he was a dragon. But when he told them he would like to help them summon the rain, they kept silent. Yes, they needed water, a lot of water to survive. Therefore, they were extremely delighted."

"Meanwhile, the girl saw all the people wear a big smile on their faces. She felt a growing sense of unease. She asked one of them, then, she got this terrible news. She ran to the place the person said as fast as she could. At that moment, she saw the sky was turning dark, rain started to fall, and her friend's body on the ground."

"She waded through the puddles to her friend, he lied on the ground. She tried to wake him up, but it was futile. The humans were celebrating the rainfall. The crops would be saved!"

"She went home with daze and sorrow. She could not stop recalling the time with her friend. When she was depressed, she went to the cave where the little dragon had lived, and carved their story on the wall."

"So, that's the beautiful mural here." said Mike.

Fossils Here, Fossils There

Kowloon True Light School, Agustin, Ezra, Jeezelle – 13

“Breaking News: A new species of titanosaurs has been found in Jiangxi!”

Wyatt stared at the television screen, wide-eyed. Ever since he was a toddler, he’s been obsessed with dinosaurs, digging up books in the library. Likewise, his twin sister, Lexi took a keen interest in fossils. They set foot in every history museum in China their parents could bring them to.

“Lexi, come over here!” Wyatt called out to his sister loudly, his eyes glued to the screen. Lexi perked up curiously, setting her bowl of cereal down and turned her sight to follow her brother’s.

“They found a new species of titanosaurs? How?” Lexi asked, astonished.

“Some paleontologists were digging when they found the fossils,” Wyatt explained, smiling widely. “They’re going to be put up for display in the Jiangxi Provincial Museum in a few weeks. We went there before, remember?”

Lexi just nodded, too stunned to speak. New fossils to research and write about in her journal? She was over the moon!

Wyatt rolled his eyes fondly at his sister’s silent excitement. He chuckled. “Let’s ask Mum and Dad if they can bring us during the Lunar New Year holiday!”

“Sure thing!”

The twins rushed to their parents in the kitchen, and after minutes of begging, they agreed to bring Wyatt and Lexi during the holiday.

For two kids always buzzing with energy, the wait felt like a lifetime. But the day finally came.

Arriving at the parking lot, Wyatt and Lexi could already see the top of the museum building peeking out from the trees. They squealed in unison.

“Forgetting something?” Their dad asked as Wyatt and Lexi began to walk away without even saying goodbye.

“Bye, Mum and Dad! See you later!”

“See you too, kids.”

In the distance, their parents drove off. Wyatt and Lexi walked to the museum.

“I can’t believe we’re actually going to see the fossils! Hopefully it isn’t too crowded,” Lexi said. “Speaking of which, there’s barely anyone around.”

“Perhaps they’re all inside the museum. We’re only on the way to it right now, not actually in it,” Wyatt suggested. Lexi pursed her lips in thought.

When they arrived at the entrance, there was a huge crowd! They had to push through, only to see police tape surrounding the area and police officers guarding the entrance.

“Stay behind the barricade tape!” A police officer yelled. The kids stumbled back.

“What’s going on?” “Let us through!” “We didn’t come all this way for nothing.”

Wyatt looked around. Nothing seemed to be wrong. “Miss, what’s happening?” he asked a woman, wearing her police uniform, and the badge on her cap proved she was an actual police officer.

The woman looked a bit surprised when she heard Wyatt, but her expression immediately softened when she saw the little boy.

“A group of people stole the fossils from the display case just a few hours ago. We saw them through the surveillance cameras and where they drove off. I’m heading with my team to look for the suspects,” she explained professionally.

The twins frowned. They were excited to see the fossils, but there was no way to see them now! Who knew if the police would be able to retrieve them?

“Miss, what’s your name?”

“You can call me Officer Chen.”

“Officer Chen, can we come along with you and your team to find the fossils?” Lexi asked hopefully. “Me and my brother waited for a very long time to see these fossils and...and our parents aren’t picking us up until 5pm!” She pleaded.

Bringing these kids would be dangerous, as they could get severely hurt. But at the same time, they were so little, and they didn’t have any guardians at the moment.

“I’m sorry, kids, it’s extremely risky, and—“

She stopped once she saw the kids’ puppy dog eyes. She sighed, running a hand through her hair. “You two really aren’t going to give up, huh?”

They shook their heads. “Can we come?” they asked.

Officer Chen reluctantly nodded. “Alright. But only because you kids are alone. You stay close, okay?”

Wyatt and Lexi cheered excitedly. They entered the police car with Officer Chen and another cop.

“Where are we heading to?”

“To Dazhou Road. That’s where the culprits are.”

Lexi giggled. She was feeling so excited already!

When they parked at Dazhou Road, the police officers were huddled up in a group with the kids right beside them. They walked through an alleyway.

“They’re here, aren’t they? Alleyways are notorious for crimes,” Wyatt said quietly to the officers. One of the officers nodded.

“They’re going to profit off the fossils and make tons of money.”

They followed the police officers closely. Eventually, they had to split ways. Wyatt and Lexi went with Officer Chen. They snuck into a building secretly.

“From here on, you kids stay quiet, and stay by my side. I’ll protect you,” Officer Chen said worriedly. For some reason, she was feeling nervous, despite her years of being a police officer. Something about this place was making her feel uneasy.

Wyatt and Lexi were already hugging each other as they walked, slightly scared yet excited. They could hear people talking as they walked through the halls.

Officer Chen opened the door to the storage room and immediately found the fossils inside two plastic bags. Whoever stole them didn’t hide them in a very good place. She took the bags.

“We have to leave immediately,” She said to the kids. Wyatt and Lexi peered at the bags. They could see the fossils through the clear plastic.

Just then, an alarm started blaring throughout the whole building. The lights turned red, and people started leaving the rooms. Wyatt and Lexi gasped. Officer Chen immediately picked them up, making a run for it.

Her heart thumped as she heard the footsteps of people chasing them.

“Get back here!” Someone yelled angrily and loudly. Wyatt looked and saw an angry group of men. His breath hitched. Lexi just held onto Officer Chen.

Officer Chen saw the exit, but several people started surrounding it. Her eyes widened.

Stopping, she set the kids down, and put the bags in their hands.

“Go,” she told them.

“But you—”

“Go, now!”

Wyatt and Lexi’s heart dropped, but there was no time to ask question. They ran, even when their legs started to cramp and they felt like they couldn’t breath anymore.

They only stopped when they saw the family group of police officers in the alleyways, and they started crying.

“Officer Chen is still in the building!” Lexi hiccupped, tears streaming down her cheeks. They entered the police car with some police officers while others went into the building to find her. When they came back to the museum, they saw the staff carefully putting the fossils back inside the display cases and the crowd cheering.

Wyatt and Lexi felt numb, and after inspecting the fossils for a while, they stayed with the police officers.

“Kids,” Officer Chen walked up to Wyatt and Lexi, smiling. Their eyes were red and puffy.

“It’s me.”

The twins looked up, shocked to see the officer who had saved their lives! They noticed a few wounds and bruises on her body. They grinned widely and hugged her.

“Did you catch the bad guys?” Lexi asked innocently.

“Yes, I caught them. You two were so brave, you know that?” Officer Chen comforted the two kids, kneeling and hugging them back. They all breathed a sigh of relief. Everything was okay.

She accompanied them to the museum to see the fossils together. Their eyes gleamed looking at the fossils.

“That’s the new species of titanosaur, right in front of us!” Wyatt exclaimed. Officer Chen chuckled. “You kids really like fossils.”

Near 5pm, Wyatt and Lexi were already waiting in the parking lot for their parents, Officer Chen still with them.

“Thank you for making our day a whole lot more interesting, Officer Chen,” Lexi looked up gratefully.

Their parents’ car pulled up. Before entering, the twins hugged Officer Chen again.

“You’re very welcome. Maybe you two could become paleontologists one day, with how dedicated you are to these fossils!” She teased them. The kids snickered and nodded. Officer Chen watched them enter the car and

waved goodbye. For the rest of the drive back home, Wyatt and Lexi rambled on and on about their day, leaving out the part where they almost got killed.

Though, there was one thing, other than the fossils, that they were definitely not going to forget; Officer Chen.

"She said we could be palaeontologists," Lexi told Wyatt. He nodded too, remembering what Officer Chen said.

"I think we should," Wyatt replied, grinning. Lexi smiled back. "It's official, then."

The two continued to talk, about fossils, about their day, about Officer Chen, about their dreams—anything. They knew their life was set on an unmistakable path and their destiny was changed forever.

Mind Your Dinosaurs

Kowloon True Light School, Cheng, Yat Nam Adelyn – 14

There were no dinosaurs.

From when I was young, I've always had a fascination with dinosaurs.

Growing up, I was surrounded by lush green trees towering above the world, sprawling up into the skies, hiding just away from the cement towers behind them. The grass beneath my feet was a constant companion no matter where I roamed. The creek was just some fields away, and the never-ending gurgle of flowing water was to become a defining characteristic of my early childhood.

The constant juggles in life and the growing pains of growing up would eventually banish dinosaurs to the back of mind, until they become seemingly a figment of my imagination, or were they fiction altogether?

Then there were the dinosaurs.

Before they would vanish into the thin air of adulthood, I would see them, albeit occasionally, going about their peaceful, prehistoric, cretaceous lives. A Sauropod would raise its long, long neck, nibbling at the crown of the trees, shaking its head as it tugged off leaves. Some would raise their heads, bellowing at the sky.

The sky! Many flying dinosaurs, which I soon learned the name was Pterosaurs, would streak across the sky gloriously in a grand formation. I often dreamt that I would be among them, with the world beneath me, high up in the sky!

That was the childhood wonder I grew up with, an evergreen oasis in a corner of my mind I thought would last a lifetime. Everyone said I gazed at everything as if I was witnessing the birth of planets and stars, as if I was seeing beautiful things, telling me that they too, wish they could one day see whatever spectacle I reflected in my eyes. Then I would get called back to the farm to help. If the farm was isolated from the rest of the world and the cities, then I was akin to a single pebble among a vast ocean of nothingness, just me and my pure imagination.

But it was magic. It was magical in the way that everything sparkled, emerald-green enveloped me, and beautiful streaks of sunlight created jewels in the sky. I loved everything, from the little squirrels to the deers to the gigantic, fictitious dinosaurs I would always see.

When my family moved into the city, I didn't leave them behind. I learned everything about dinosaurs, scavenged every inch of the early internet for information, the libraries were never not a priority. Mary Anning? My role model. I studied hard, aiming to get into a good university so I could keep learning and studying and *thinking* about dinosaurs. I had simple goals. I achieved all of them.

Around a few years before I graduated with a shiny degree, the old family farm was finally taken back by the government to use as residential land development. It was discouraging for my relatives still there, but my family was able to help them swiftly find footing in the city. And honestly? We all saw it coming. Nobody was surprised. As much as I had connections to that place, the childhood memories were as distant as I physically was from home. I now lived and studied in different parts of China, only going home to visit my parents.

Then, right after I actually graduated, the news came out.

Dinosaur fossils. Back home, in Jiangxi.

A new species of titanosaurs, quickly named with the generic name (as opposed to a lengthy scientific name) of Jiangxititan, very self-explanatory. Discovered in Ganzhou, a city in Jiangxi, the Jiangxititan was part of the Sauropoda. Objective facts.

Personally? I was absolutely thrilled. Ganzhou. *I lived there. Sauropods? Bells are ringing.*

More reports started trickling in. Paleontologists are suggesting it's actually non-titanosaurian now, they're trying to group it in based on the fossils. As much as I was itching to join in on the action and chase a long-cherished albeit faraway childhood dream, there wasn't much I could do as a fresh graduate.

So, I waited and waited. Until the right opportunity presented itself. An offer I could not refuse.

An old professor who helped me on my graduation thesis reached out to me, in hopes of convincing me to join an excavation team just south of Beijing. It was early September, and a lead researcher of his had to rush home for some sort of family emergency. The weather had just turned perfect, with the heavy rains from the previous summer season washing up new material, exposing plenty of fossils. At such a critical moment, losing one single researcher could really take a tow on the pace. I didn't need any convincing, after the influx of Covid, getting restarted on digging is difficult for anyone, let alone a newbie like me. If it wasn't now, it's never.

I met up with several old school friends in Beijing. It was a short trip by car to reach a certain area set aside just for the discovery of new dinosaur fossils. It's rumored to have an extremely diverse ecosystem of dinosaurs back in the early Cretaceous. There are many sayings going around about how they're so well preserved. Volcanic eruptions, collapse of land, earthquakes— all likely and could be backed up by evidence. Sounds like a challenge to me.

Such well-preserved fossils from over 90,000 years ago, maybe even more. On the rocky car ride, despite the views flying by, I poured all my attention onto the pictures of the first two fossils unearthed at the exact site we were headed towards. Almost the entire body of the dinosaur was impeccably preserved, the most uncanny thing? It felt so peaceful. They looked like frames of a dinosaur laying down for rest, to sleep, that got frozen in place and time, only remembered as a brief flash of history. There was no struggle in their final moments of life. So, how did it end?

Dinosaurs of China, what new tales would you reveal to me?

There was no rain, there was no wind. The air was eerily still. Our pickaxes and shovels hastened the pace.

I walked around the perimeter, indecisive about where to start. The air might be still, but it was bone-chilling nonetheless, the grey skies stretched above. Was there a storm incoming? The cold weather had blanketed everything in greyness. Everything felt tight and pressing.

I spotted a patch of dirt right in front of the curtain of trees, bending down, I got to work quickly. Hours stretched on forever, I occupied myself with my thoughts, my hands working incessantly, maybe I was even muttering to myself at one point, how could I not? Feeling the rapid approach of another presence, I set down my tools temporarily and looked up defiantly.

Chirp, chirp chirp?

My eyes widened, my heartbeat accelerated, and I forced myself to breathe.

Flee, you fool, was the voice ringing in my head. But how could I? When the one thing that has been my calling since childhood, is the one thing that shaped me *and* my life. My soul felt frozen in place, *just like the dinosaurs.*

Dinosaurs.

Chirp.

“Hello there, boy.” Words escaped my mouth breathlessly, and my eyes sparkled. I felt a sort of hunger entering me. Not the cravings for food, but the sort of hunger for finding something new.

Chirp. It cocked its head to the right, three more appeared right behind it. All of them, including the first one, were babies.

“Hey, beautiful, how are you?” My throat tightened as I outstretched my hand, my voice higher than usual.

I came looking for ancient fossils.

The first one, the closest one took a little step towards me stepping on the dirt, making a mark. Its glossy eyes stared into mine with such childlike wonder that was all too familiar.

“Oh, no, don’t do that. People are gonna see you,” my words barely a whisper now. I tore my sight away from it painstakingly and looked into the dense forest beyond, is there more in there?

I looked back into the dinosaur chick’s eyes. I saw stars, I saw galaxies far away, I saw myself. The me that chased my dreams so relentlessly I forgot what it was like to truly be amazed. I’ll have to let it go, don’t I? This young dinosaur—

Baffling, I thought.

Extinct for millennia. Now, very much alive right in front of my eyes. I don’t want to dwell on the specifics, I don’t want to think. I just marveled.

I left quietly.

I never told anyone.

I never told anyone I saw a real dinosaur; I went back to the car empty-handed. I would call it the day my life changed, or the day all my hopes and dreams came true. Or the day nothing happened, because technically, nothing was supposed to happen. Yet, I secretly hoped the dinosaurs, no matter of present or past, would continue to forge new tales. I would too, never give up doing what I truly love.

In the end, I didn’t say a word.

There were no dinosaurs.

Tales of the Dinosaurs Mysteries

Kowloon True Light School, Chung, Ni Fu Gwyneth – 12

In a small classroom in China, Mr. Chan stood at the front and told them about fossils. "China has become a big place for finding fossils. During the 1990s, the first feathered dinosaur had been found by a farmer." His voice was monotonous and flat with no emotion. Mei, the Form 3 student slumped onto her desk, bored and restless.

While her classmates leaned forward, excited to hear about ancient dinosaurs, Mei frequently looked at the clock, willing it to move faster. "Just five more minutes," she thought, laying her head on her arm. She longed for a quick moment of peace before the class ended.

In an instant, the classroom fell silent. No rustling of papers nor soft whispers. Mei sat bolt upright in bed, racing heart pounding inside her chest. Something was seriously off. The classroom lay in disarray, desks overturned, and papers scattered over the floor while the windows stood wide open, allowing a cold, biting wind to seep in.

"Hello?" Mei called out, shaking, as she rose, the chair scraping across the floor. There was silence. The room was suddenly washing in a wave of panic as her gaze scoured the room. Where was everybody? The air was heavy, almost like it weighed on her. Then, a low, growling sound echoed down the hall—a sound so strange and eerie, it ran chills down her spine.

What's going on? she thought, clutching her desk for support. Some kind of joke? Deep down inside, she knew it wasn't. An instinctive, heavy fear was welling up in her chest. The shadows cast in the room were like dark living things twisting and churning, seeming to watch her. Her trembling hands grasped for the door handle as she prepared herself for whatever might be on the other side. Little did she know, the far-off past she had slept through in class was awakening, and it was as real as life.

"Oh, if only I hadn't ignored the lesson!" Mei muttered to herself as she swung the door open. It was quite a different hallway altogether: dark and spooky, with flickering lights casting odd, distorted shadows on the walls. Lockers stood open, their contents spilled haphazardly onto the floor. The growl came again, louder this time, echoing through the empty hallway.

"Is anybody there? Mei called out, her voice cracking with fear. The silence that followed was deafening. Taking a deep breath, she forced herself to move forward, her footsteps echoing ominously. Just as she passed the science lab, a loud crash startled her. Heart pounding, she hesitated before peering inside. The lab was a disaster—broken glass sparkled on the floor, tables were overturned, and the air smelled faintly of chemicals.

But it wasn't until she saw the deep claw marks in the floor and walls, as if something had torn its way through the room, that really caught her attention.

What's going on?" she whispered, stepping backward. Then, she heard the slightest whimpering. Her better judgment notwithstanding, she stepped inside and followed the faint sound to the corner of the room. She caught her breath. There, in the shadow, trembling, was a small creature unlike anything she had ever seen. The scales glistened weakly in the flickering light, and his huge, round eyes were filled with fear.

"Are you... a dinosaur?" Mei asked, her voice barely above a whisper.

The tiny creature hesitated before nodding, its eyes wide and pleading. "My name is Tiko," it said in a raspy, trembling voice. "I've been hiding. The darkness... it's awakening."

"The darkness?" Mei echoed, her mind spinning. "What darkness? What's happening?"

Tiko looked around the room, as if he was waiting for something, or someone, to burst through the door at any second. "Fang," he whispered. "He's gathering his hunters. They found a way to break through the barriers. They want to take this world for themselves.

Mei's heart raced. Fang? That name sounded familiar. Suddenly, her mind flashed back to her doodled history book. Mr. Chan's lecture echoed in her ears: "China has quietly become the global epicenter of fossil-hunting. Sinosauropteryx, meaning 'China dragon bird,' was the first clearly feathered dinosaur discovered..."

Tiko's voice snapped her back to reality. "Fang was once a leader, but his greed consumed him. He'll stop at nothing to take control. We need to warn the others—before it's too late."

Mei's head spun. Dinosaurs were real. And somehow, they were in danger. Despite her fear, she felt a strange sense of responsibility. "How can I help?" she asked, her voice steady despite the chaos around her.

A gleam of hope flashed in Tiko's eyes. "We need to find the others. If we unite, we might stand a chance."

"Then let's go," Mei said, with determination burning inside her chest.

Together, Mei and Tiko navigated the darkened school, moving cautiously through the wreckage. The hallways were littered with overturned lockers and claw marks, and the faint growls in the distance kept Mei on edge. When they finally reached the courtyard, Mei gasped. A group of dinosaurs—real, living dinosaurs—was huddled together, their expressions a mix of fear and confusion.

"Tiko!" a large Triceratops called, relief washing over its face. "You're safe!"

Stepping forward, her voice was firm. "We do not have much time. Fang is building an army, and we need to stop him."

The dinosaurs exchanged uneasy glances. A Pterosaur flapped its wings to try to calm the group. "We've been in hiding for so long," it said. "But maybe... maybe it's time we fight back."

Tiko nodded. "Together we can stop him. We cannot let Fang take our home.

The group murmured in agreement, their fear giving way to resolve. Mei felt a surge of adrenaline. "Let's create a plan. We'll find the others and prepare for Fang's arrival."

As dusk fell, the courtyard filled with dinosaurs of all shapes and sizes—raptors, Pterosaurs, Triceratops, and more. Mei stood at the center, her heart pounding. "We must be brave," she said, her voice steady. "We're stronger together."

But before she could say more, a shadow loomed at the edge of the courtyard. Fang came up, his dark hulking figure looming over them. His pointed teeth glinted as he sneered. "So, you think you can stop me?" he said in a low, growling voice full of malice.

Mei stepped forward, the fear in her heart replaced by a firm determination. "We shall not let you take over. This world does not belong to you."

Fang burst out laughing, the cold sound lingering within the courtyard. "You're only a child; what are you capable of doing?"

In an instant, the battle began. Dinosaurs ran toward Fang as his roars reverberated across the night. Mei weaved through it all, organizing groups and lending her aid where needed. "Distract him!" Tiko shouted, leading a sub-group of raptors to attack Fang from behind. Pterosaurs dived from above, pecking at him to grab his attention.

The battle continued, and soon Mei was standing in front of Fang. "You don't have to do that!" she yelled. "You don't have to be alone."

Fang had hesitated; confusion flickered across his eyes. "Why should I trust you?" he growled.

"Because we're stronger together," Mei said, straightforward. "Together, we can build a better future."

Chaos died away for one silent moment. Fang looked at the dinosaurs now, faces upturned to his, hopeful rather than hostile. His hostility ebbed, slowly. "Perhaps," he whispered, the word husky with repentance. "Perhaps it is time for a change."

And so, the shadows of the past began to lift as understanding and unity began to shine through. In unison, Mei, Tiko, and the dinosaurs forged a new path where all creatures could thrive in harmony.

With the help of Fang, they created a sanctuary. Together, they built some makeshift houses, searched for food, and looked after each other from further threats. It gave Mei much satisfaction as the community became much stronger day by day.

As weeks passed, time went on, and the dinosaurs became accustomed to Fang; he joined their ranks. They shared stories, laughter, and moments of joy that Mei never imagined could exist between such different creatures.

She would often think about that drab lecture from Mr. Chan's class when suddenly the past had leapt to life as it never did for her before. Dinosaurs weren't just those beings of history but part of her current life, friends, and allies.

She stood in the courtyard one afternoon under the sun, surrounded by her new friends. Mei felt grateful; she had learned that sometimes the most unlikely occurrences can lead to the greatest adventures. Together, they were not just surviving; they were thriving. In the middle of their close-knit community was where Mei found her purpose. Whatever challenges lay ahead, she was prepared to face them head-on, knowing they would do so together.

New Tale Of China's Dinosaurs

Kowloon True Light School, Lau, Po Hei Clara – 13

90 days, 5 hours and 32 minutes. It has been 3 months since Theo left home, shipped off to Fujian Province alongside his friend, Flint. There, he had but one goal in mind, "Dig it till you find it" With a chisel in one hand, and a shovel in the other, Theo was determined to discover any fossils of the dinosaurs that once lived.

Walking by the locals of Zhenghe County, endless plains, large bodies of water and farmlands surrounded Theo and Flint. They were tired, they wanted to get this over with quick and easy, so they could go back to their families. Theo was never one to like walking for long hours and examining small fossil fragments. He preferred to be inside, looking at a microscope to reveal the fossil. Flint liked scavenging, but it's been 3 months, and they're tired. With a loud sigh, Flint turned to look at Theo, "You think they'll let us go back if we still haven't found anything after this week?"

Theo shook his head,

"They'll just send more people in to help us." He put his hands in his pocket, "It's either that there aren't any fossils here, or we're just horrible at looking for them." Flint chuckled at that. Looking up, he pointed at a mountain, instructing Theo to follow him up.

Up the mountain they went, huffs and puffs of air were heard, beads of sweat rolling down their temples until they reached the top. They could hear the sounds of a small stream, attracting them to go see. Around the stream of water were dark, crumbly rocks. Sedimentary rocks surrounded the river, the sight was beautiful, yet they had no time to waste to admire it. Hastily grabbing out a geological map, Flint hummed, telling Theo that there were possible rocks here from the Jurassic period. Their mere focus was on the ground now, Flint was occupied looking at the sedimentary rocks, each of them had a rugged texture, as if something was poking out. The sound of the cold steel of the chisel was heard, slowly exposing the surface of what's inside.

"Found anything?" Theo walked over, observing Flint's gentle yet precise movements chiseling the rock, removing each layer of the rock. A gasp came out of Flint's mouth, his eyes staring widely at the rock on the ground.

"FINALLY!"

He yelled, his eyes gleaming with joy.

What was originally a rock, was now a revealed fossil. Blowing the dust and sandy remains of the rock, he placed the rock in a field jacket, covering the entirety of the fossil with plaster. Theo picked up the fossil, putting it in his bag gently.

"Seems like today might be our lucky day." He smiled, his spirits lifted now. They looked further into the distance, seeing that this small stream led to a cave, dark and deep it looked, it was like it was luring them in. They knew this place was a spot with many Jurassic fossils hidden, so the only way to find them was to explore deeper.

Theo and Flint's eyes had been glued to the ground, meticulously scanning the rocky ground for any possible fossils. And they had found quite a few. The more they picked up, the more it seemed like they were placed there on purpose, as they noticed it was leading them to the cave. Perhaps it was a coincidence, they thought, a child that was bored moved the rocks to lead to the cave. Their footsteps echoed once entering the cave, the sounds of their clothes rustling more prominently than ever before, Theo took a flashlight out of his pocket, turning it on to venture into the cave. Layers of limestone were on the cave's walls, the harsh and lumpy texture of the walls invited them in as they walked deeper into the cave.

After walking in the never-ending cave for a bit, Theo spoke exhaustedly,

“It seems like there’s no point to continue further.”

“Yeah, but we still have to. Who knows what we’ll find here?” Flint optimistically said, his desire and spirit to explore still alive.

Theo exhaled deeply, before taking another step forward.

“THUD!”

Theo’s hand moved rapidly, using his flashlight to see where the loud noise came from, he slowly moved back. Flint kneeled down, hands coming in contact with the ground. Trusting his intuition, he reached forward, and felt a rock, two rocks, then three rocks! The grainy and rough feeling of the rocks seemed to be limestones. Flint picked them up and continued walking, until he stepped on another rock, a corrugated rock underneath his shoe, he picked it up and gave it to Theo. And he threw it, it landed with a big thud, and then a clatter of rocks were heard.

The ground suddenly felt shaky and unstable, Theo’s flashlight fell out of his hand, causing him to fall forward, hands on the ground. Flint’s rocks fell out of his hands, falling onto the ground. Theo picked up his flashlight, feeling the rapid shaking of the ground, the low rumbling sounds, Theo grabbed Flint’s arm, dragging Flint with him as he ran despite the difficulty to stand. They ran deeper into the cave, where a number of kerosene lamps were hanging on the walls of the cave, and the shaking ground stopped. Both of their hearts were pounding out of their chests, there was a runnel of sweat trickling down their foreheads as they examined the area. There were two pathways, Flint took the lead and walked to the left without a word and Theo followed him. A faint crackling sound was then heard, intriguing them even more.

After walking for what seemed like an eternity, they saw a rusty, metallic ladder leading down, Theo’s flashlight shined down, trying to see what was down there, but he couldn’t, so they climbed down.

Once they were down, the first thing they saw were blue and grey feathers scattered on the ground, they were large, long and fluffy feathers. When they looked up, both of them let out a piercing scream. Numerous dinosaurs were inside of what seemed to be melted tree sap, preserving them entirely. Seeing the dinosaurs in such close proximity and detail made their blood run cold, as they looked nothing like they assumed that they looked like. And the third thing they saw was a waddling Fujianvenator, its wings spread wide yet it couldn’t fly, it ran towards them, every step making the ground shake again. Theo’s hand reached deep into his bag, scrambling for his camera, his hand shaking as he took it out. The quick shutter sound of his camera and a bright flash, flashed the bird-like dinosaur back, causing its grasping fingers to reach for them, but instead grabbing the ladder behind them. Theo and Flint ran for their lives, their heart was beating so fast they could hear it, Theo shakingly held up his camera, taking photos of the preserved dinosaurs. They felt the large bird yell, calling for them, the sound was deafening. Its talon gripping onto Theo’s bag, and then pulling it. Theo fell back, his legs couldn’t move as fast as his brain before the bird had pulled his shirt, tearing it apart. He could feel its sharp talon almost cutting his skin. He sprung back up, running towards where Flint was at, already back up where they came from, he screamed at Theo, distress and fear for his friend, he knew he was no match for that bird, yet with just a little bit of faith left, he grabbed some rocks on the floor and threw them at the bird, hopefully weakening it. His hands moved faster than his brain before he saw that the bird’s eye was bleeding, his lips quivering looking at the sight. Theo was up the ladder by the time the Fujianvenator was hurt. He was panting but there was no time to calm down, he held tightly onto Flint’s hand before dashing off, finding his way back to get out of the cave.

Flint was still in disbelief when they were out of the cave. Staring at the sight of Theo gasping for air, the only words that came out of Flint’s mouth were random blabbers of “thank you” and “what just happened”, his head was trying to form a coherent thought yet he couldn’t, his head was blank. Tears watered up in his eyes, he sniffed before smashing his head into the crook of Theo’s neck, hugging him.

"I...can't..believe we survived that." His arms holding onto Theo's shoulders.

Theo gulped before speaking, "I don't think I can ever go on another trip after this." The two corners of Flint's mouth lifted up, letting out a broken laugh as he cried. Theo patted his back, leaning into the hug.

Theo looked down at his camera, his hands still shaking and his heart still pounding out of his chest, he inhaled deeply,

"Let's go back now."

New Tales of China's Dinosaurs

Kowloon True Light School, Tin, Lok Lam – 14

"Please don't leave!", she said, tears streaming down her face.

"I'll be back soon. I promise.", Von said to his daughter as he held her tight.

Von was a paleontologist, one who was about leaving for a trip to Jiangxi to find fossils. He was told about how China was less well-explored by people in the same field. He thought that maybe, just maybe he will be able to find the next species of ancient fossil. It was nearing Christmas. Although it would be a shame to miss this chance to spend time with his family, Von thought it would be much more of a shame if he missed out on finding the next species of dinosaur buried within the ground.

As Von arrived at a site where not many fossil hunters go, he went straight to work. He kept on digging and digging...After two days of almost non-stop work, Von saw something buried in the rock, something he had never thought he would find.

What he saw looked absolutely huge. The bone seemed to be from the neck of an astonishingly huge dinosaur. Von excitedly and carefully dug out the rest of the bones. He was correct. The bone was indeed gigantic. As he placed the dinosaur bones onto the table under the shade, hiding them from the sun, Von got a good look at what he just discovered. He dug more than 7 bones, surely that could tell him a lot about this species of dinosaur, Von thought.

However, he wouldn't have much time to uncover what this dinosaur really is.

As Von touched the cleaned fossil for the first time, he suddenly lost consciousness.

Von woke up to the sounds of loud roaring. Roaring that he had never heard before. It was dark, he looked up and didn't see the night sky, but instead, the stomach of a dinosaur. The area around him was so green, contrary to the grey buildings Von is used to seeing.

Von looked back down, and what he saw made him question every single decision that led up to that point. A Sinosauropteryx.

The Sinosauropteryx hit its beak on Von's leg. "Help, I lost my family..", Von heard from the creature.

He didn't just hear a dinosaur speak right?

"Are you...actually speaking?"

"Well, yeah. Could you help me please? I have to obtain food for my family, so I never spend time with them. However, now my whole family dislikes me and they left me!"

Von was still in shock. Well, he should have been shocked the moment he saw he was under a dinosaur's stomach. Von still had to find a way back to his timeline too.

"You know what? Fine, I will help you with your problems."

Von and the Sinosauropteryx agreed to travel until their bodies couldn't anymore. They travelled far and wide, and never once gave up. Von saw how the world looked like. There weren't buildings, just trees and rivers. A world where humans hadn't used the world's resources yet.

After travelling for as long as the sun rose three times, the Sinosauropteryx said, "that's them! That's my family!"

Von let out a sigh of relief. The duo landed on the ground, where the Sinosauropteryx's family was and the Sinosauropteryx immediately began speaking.

"Why did you leave me?"

"You never spend time with us! You're always out finding food, we almost never see you! I bet you don't even want to see us. That's why we left", one of the family members said.

The Sinosauropteryx stayed quiet for a while, his family member's words echoing in his brain.

"So...you want me to stay with you guys more and go out for food less?"

"Exactly."

Von thought, "I get it now. So quality time is important for family."

As that thought disappeared, Von woke up at the site of where he found the bones of the huge dinosaur.

"I guess some things just never change..."

I should go home.", Von thought.

Man or Beast? A New Tale of Dinosaurs

Kowloon True Light School, Wong, Hei Nam Kayce – 14

I am a creature. One with feathers glued upon every inch of skin, one that fed upon the remains of meat, one that hunted and tore flesh apart as smoothly as a leaf was flowing in ebbing waters.

As my progenitor finally wandered back in the nest, it nuzzled its head against mine. Soft yet prickly feathers started tickling my senses, I tilted my head against its, trilling as a nonsensical warmth filled me, as if my appetite for smaller animals had dwelled and quenched. I had been warmed. I had been filled.

In a world full of mayhem, there had been this unspeakable, indescribable connection between me and this particular creature, one of my own kind, a tinge of familiarity, as if my own instincts wanted to recognise this one as someone whom I could let my guards down with. A shelter, someone I can hide away with, someone that I can trust to protect me, it isn't an exaggeration when I say I *trust* this one. It provided food for me when I was a feeble child, it provided me warmth when I needed it, it let me finally let out a sigh I never knew I held — in a world where you either hunt or be hunted, I knew I could have the mindset of 'the hunted' in this scenario.

A safe haven.

When my progenitor stopped rubbing its head against mine, it went outside for a while and dragged a body of a more or less, dead, animal. It nodded its head towards the body whilst staring into my eyes, as if itching for me to feast on it. I let out a soft, annoyed growl — I've always preferred hunting on my own, it wasn't so much that it gave me a thrill but more of an instinctive urge, whenever my progenitor did this, it felt as if it thought I was still a hapless infant instead of a grown creature. I needed no help.

Brushing it aside but still reluctantly eating my fill, I stepped out of the cave without a word, it turned its head and took a small step forward as if in an attempt to stop me, but ultimately decided against it. As the blaring wind hit my feathers, flowing through them. I flapped my wings and outstretched them, finally soaring through the skies — it felt good to be able to stretch my wings, to feel the wind hit my face. The bustling environment icked me. I saw some taller creatures with long necks slowly munching on trees, I never understood them but I only briefly glanced at them whilst trying to zero in on a vulnerable target, I knew I couldn't overpower them, after all. No creature of my kind was going to take the risk of taking on a creature that big and tall — it was threatening, in a way, how they towered over us, how we seemingly seemed so, so small in comparison, how even with wings, it seemed as if we didn't have weapons of our own.

I let out a gasp in surprise when the taller creature suddenly whipped its head back, almost like an attempt to attack me, just narrowly missing my neck. I let out a loud trill, and it looked back, pupils wide.

It looked.

It was the first time in my life that I realised how silent eyes are.

My fight or flight instincts suddenly activated, in a desperate attempt to flee or be *hunted*. I flapped my wings like my progenitor taught me, big, make yourself as big as possible, fast, be as quick as flowing rivers.

Suddenly, a dam was constructed, as if concrete was falling on top of each other. The flowing water halted. Flowing waters bring life, stagnant rivers create a swamp.

Soon after, my silent eyes appeared lifeless. I sank into the soils of this land.

I am a human being, one with skin covering each inch of my body, one with immeasurable intelligence and wisdom.

At least, that's what my mother would say. She always exaggerates her words but, I knew that in her eyes, I was still a little girl. Someone vulnerable and weak to the horrors of this world, someone to be protected, cared for in every respect. It's overbearing, but somehow I understood why. The affection towards being cared for, the fulfillment of being the victim of their pride, it's all so implausibly *warm*. As if my belly had been full from my mother's iconic lotus root and pork soup — hearty and somewhat burns.

I knew that in a world full of chaos, I could trust my mother at the very least. Perhaps, even if I was in a world that had the ideal of 'a dog-eat-dog world', I would still choose to trust my mother. It's an unwarranted and naive choice, but something in me tugs at the thought of not doing so.

Following my mundane life, after coming back from school, I sat down at my desk and started pulling out my homework. Sitting face-to-face with Chinese History homework was something that immediately got my attitude down. My heart sighed a little at the thought of having to do hours of essays. Whilst contemplating whether I should procrastinate or not, my mother came back home from hours of harsh labour and patted my back, the imprints of her hands still on my jacket. It's a silent exchange of words, but I've never minded the silence of our home. It was not unwanted, in fact, it was quite comforting.

My mother finally uttered her first sentence of the day, "Why are you just sitting there?"

Annoyance immediately started growing in my chest, flinching as if nails were scratching on a blackboard, as if damp shoes were screeching against wooden floors. I stood up with my hands clenching at the textbook and went to my room.

It was weird, our emotions, I mean. I hold so much love for her but she irritates me more than anything else. It was as if, because of the intense emotions I feel for her, everything was magnified, whether that be a positive emotion or the other end of the spectrum. I sighed as I sank into my bed sheets, I *knew* that I should do my homework, I knew my mother meant the best for me and that no malice was laced in her words — but in the end, I couldn't bring myself to even look at it.

I found myself looking forward to the next day, even though I forgot that we would be visiting a museum.

The next day came in a flash. It was like fate, the one thing I dreaded the most yesterday was right in front of my eyes, Chinese History — well, not *exactly*. It was a museum on Chinese dinosaurs and we *were* learning a lot about the history of Chinese traditions and dinosaurs in general. As I mindlessly and quite frankly, disinterestedly looked at the fossils of the dinosaurs. I felt myself somewhat pulled at a certain one, it was one with feathers and a long beak, with a tail that somewhat resembled a raccoon's. It was called a Sinosauropteryx.

My breath hitched when I saw the fossil, I felt pained for some reason and couldn't bear the look of it any longer than a second. I left that exhibit as soon as possible.

After our short museum visit, I found my interest for dinosaurs growing. I didn't know what possessed me to do so, but the moment I arrived home, I opened my tablet up to research *dinosaurs* of all things. The more I read, the more I realised something. For some reason, with every article I read on the stories of dinosaurs, the angrier I grew.

Why is it that dinosaurs were depicted as something so violent, even *monstrous*?

In Chinese tradition, dragons were hailed as a higher being, but they were truly derived from dinosaurs. They were used to describe *emperors*. Something powerful, something that reigned over the world with an iron fist. Things that roamed the earth as if it was their divine right to rule.

A monster, they said. A killer, they said. Rulers of the earth, they said.

We are not dinosaurs. Dinosaurs are not human. But can we truly say that? When dinosaurs ruled the earth in the same exact way that humans are currently. While dinosaurs hunted for their survival, some humans hunted for pleasure. Can we truly say that dinosaurs are more monstrous than humans?

A ruler, they said. A dog-eat-dog world, they said.

How can we have the audacity to call another creature a monster?

My silent eyes scanned through the text.

I realised humans can never understand the wrath of being classified as a *monster*.

A New Tale of China's Dinosaurs

Kowloon True Light School, Wong, Yuen Lam – 14

"Dave, it's time for bed," she yelled out.

Once she entered his bedroom, he was already in bed, reading *The Only One Left* (dino ver.), as she was about to tuck him in. He asked, "Mom, where will we go when we die?"

"Oh sweetie, why would you ask such a thing?"

"Well, in the book both of the parents died, but it didn't say where they went after that. Mom, do you know where they will go?"

"Oh, well.... they will go to a place named, deaven."

"Where's deaven?"

"It's a place up above the brown sky, a place between this universe and another."

"Ohhhhh, well how d-- "

"Honey, it's late, you should really be asleep right now, I promise I'll tell you more tomorrow. Now, go to sleep."

With a gentle flick, she turned off the light, and the room was enveloped in soft darkness. A new adventure was about to unfold. Dave squeezed his eyes shut, letting sleep take him.

Suddenly, he found himself stepping through a mysterious red door that appeared out of nowhere. The moment he crossed the threshold, he was transported to a shadowy realm, standing in a vast emptiness, surrounded by nothing but a small, old-fashioned desk that materialized before him. Upon the desk laid a piece of paper brimming with math questions, each one more daunting than the last. And next to it was a walkie-talkie. Multiplication – Dave's worst enemy. The mere thought of it made his stomach turn, memories of countless hours spent calculating math equations flood through his mind. Yet, the undeniable curiosity of this place intrigued him. What would happen if he managed to solve these problems? What adventures awaited him on the other side of this challenge? With a deep breath, he leaned closer to the desk, ready to face what laid ahead.

"Okay, I got this. Just remember what Ms So taught us. 3 times 8 equals 24. 9 times 8 equals 72" The questions proved increasingly difficult. Eventually he got stuck on the final question. "Ugh! What's 11 times 12? I don't know how to solve this." A voice comes from the walkie talkie. "Stuck on a question?" "Yes. How do I solve this? Please help." "If you want to solve the question, you need to think creatively," the voice replied, encouraging him. "Remember, sometimes the answers lie beyond the numbers themselves."

Dave frowned, confusion swirling in his mind. "What do you mean?"

"Math is like a puzzle. You have to look at the bigger picture. Try breaking it down. What is 10 times 12?"

"Uh, that's 120. But..."

"Exactly! Now add 12 more. What do you get?"

Dave's eyes widened as he grasped the hint. "Oh! That's 132!"

Finally finishing the last question, the desk began to glow, illuminating the dark void around him. The desk turned into a magic carpet and the walkie talkie turned into a scarf.

Dave gets on the magic carpet. And it starts levitating and flies away. Flying higher and higher up to the sky until they hit the barrier going to another universe. As that happens, Dave's body slowly turns transparent, revealing his bones. And eventually he ended up squeezing between the soil.

After what felt like an eternity of concentration, Dave finally completed the last math question. As he wrote down the final answer, the desk erupted in a radiant glow. The once-ordinary desk transformed before his eyes, its legs curling as it morphed into a magnificent magic carpet.

Beside it, the walkie-talkie dissolved into a vibrant scarf, swirling with vibrant colors. Dave felt an inexplicable connection, as if it were a trusted companion guiding him on this journey.

With a mix of excitement and curiosity, he climbed onto the magic carpet, it began to levitate, gently lifting him off the ground. It soared upward, gliding effortlessly through the air, flying higher and higher up to the sky.

As they flew past the upper barrier, a strange transformation began; his body started to gradually become translucent until only his bones were visible, like a ghostly figure, slipping into another realm.

Then he starts to panic, "where am I? It's too tight here. Help! Is anyone on the other side?" After a while, Dave starts hearing a loud banging noise coming from above. Slowly the noise grows louder and louder. "Woah! Look what I found! Is this a fossil?" "Oh my! We have to take this to the lab."

As the voices above grew clearer, Dave felt a rush of panic. "No, wait! I'm not a fossil!" he shouted, but his voice was muffled, lost in the soil. The tightness around him was suffocating, and he struggled to breathe.

Just as despair began to sink in, he remembered the magical scarf that had transformed from the walkie-talkie. "Wait!" he thought, pulling it close. "Maybe it can help me!" He focused on the scarf, imagining it granting him the strength to break free. As he clutched it tightly, a sense of warmth radiated through him.

Suddenly, the ground above him trembled, and with one mighty push, he felt the earth give way. Light burst through the soil as he was propelled upwards. In an explosion of dirt and grass, Dave emerged into the bright daylight, gasping for air.

As he stood up, brushing the soil off of his transparent skin, he realized he was surrounded by a group of human adults frozen in shock. Their expressions full of fear, as they backed away cautiously, they took in the sight of him, a real dinosaur.

Completely in shock, one finally calmly spoke up. "What are you?", stepping forward, curiosity overtaking fear.

"I'm... I'm Dave," he stammered, his heart racing. "I just came from another universe I guess. I'm a dinosaur. I am assuming you all are?"

"We are humans." The humans replied. "This is impossible. Dinosaurs are extinct. They don't exist. We've been trying to find fossils and learn more about them. This is crazy, how are you alive?" The human asked. "Well there is a whole other universe full of dinosaurs, considering I came up from the ground, I think maybe an underground dinosaur universe." Dave replied.

The human's face lit up with a bright smile as he extended his hand, saying, "Would you like to learn more about our world? We can share stories about our universes!" Just as Dave was about to reach out and reply yes, another voice suddenly pierced the air.

"Dave, wake up! You're going to be late for school! Come on, get up!" The familiar call jolted him back to reality.

New Tales of China's Dinosaurs

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Chan, Evelyn – 14

I'd always feared I'd have to meet Baba again like this, after four years torn apart from my motherland.

Why, why, why?

The rhythm of blood throbbed in my temples, and my eyes stung from the sandalwood incense as I halfheartedly listened to my mother's eulogy for Baba's memorial. Suddenly, the awful bitterness when she mentioned my father's name disappeared when she spoke of her late, divorced husband. They were replaced with pain and regret and an unspeakable sense of sorrow I couldn't quite put my finger on. Grief spilled out of her like ink from a broken cartridge, as the enunciation of every word she spoke sagged with emotion.

The aftermath of the ceremony was held together by a pregnant pause. People gathered in the comfort of the church hall. I stayed outside, letting the autumn rain drench me in its melancholy. The pitter-patter of the rain reverberated in my ear. Northern China was unforgiving with its transition from summer verdure to ashen winter, its brittle wind bringing an unflinching chill to her heart. The spirit of once vibrant leaves met the ground holding souls and broken bones.

I fidgeted with the tendrils of ebony hair that fell across my face. Even that reminded me of my father, the obsidian colour of his eyes and hair which were quite the opposite of the blue of my mother's eyes and her wispy, golden hair. Unusually cold droplets trickled down my face. You'd never have guessed that I wasn't crying if it weren't for that. But the truth was, I couldn't remember the last time I succumbed to so much emotion. I've spent the last few weeks so thawed and vulnerable and exposed with my heart conditioned to the ache only felt once in a lifetime.

Only 56, a fire so wild, too early to be extinguished...and a dinosaur breakthrough, they say?

And with this I turned down my head, closing my red-rimmed eyes, hiding from the piercing glares as if I were a criminal victim to the gallows. When I flickered them again, I was alone, sitting in the doorway of a memorial service, black dress drenched in rainwater and salty tears.

The air hung heavy, permeated with the scent of aged paper and leather, a thousand whispered stories clinging to the shelves that lined the walls from floor to ceiling. I'd begin seeking solace in my father's study after his death, slowly piecing the fragments of his legacy. His legacy remained stubbornly elusive to me, for my mother whisked me away from his care to America the day I turned 15. But memories came washing over me as I threaded my hands over his palaeontology books. Suddenly I was a petulant young child, Baba trailing his fingers over every word as he tried to tell me how dinosaurs had roamed the earth long before humans were crafted from the hands of Nuwa.

I scaled the shelves, fingers running over the threaded spines, stopping when my gaze fell upon a familiar title. Baba's journal. With unprecedented excitement, I drew the volume out meticulously, plumes of dust waltzing across its pages, the colour swept away by the sands of time. It was bound to leather so dark it seemed to absorb the meagre light. Each entry was a window to his work throughout the years, painstakingly written, ink flowing across like a stream tumbling rapidly over the river bed.

Unbeknownst to me, gleaming days bled into darkness as I fell captive to memory, the dim light of his study engulfing me into his embrace. I remembered.

When I was five, engulfed in his embrace. Filled with childlike wonderment as he unfolded his discoveries about the newly unearthed Fujiaventor, gifted with wings but cursed to live their days on the ground. "Why couldn't it fly?" My question hung in the air, my chin resting on my hands. Baba laughed. But he never told me why.

When I was ten, hearing my parents battle with words as sharp as scythes, enough to cut through their hearts, and mine. Screaming and fighting replaced the laughter that used to fill our house with infectious joy. I was foolish enough to live for the hope of it all, drunk on blind optimism as my family fell apart. Was it my fault, I wondered. But they never told me why.

When I was thirteen, swept away to a country worlds apart from the chiselled walls I called home, the succinct syllables of my mother tongue, forced to fit into a mould of American society. I sacrificed my identity for another, wondering why I couldn't be happy. No one told me why.

When I was eighteen, desperately waiting for my college admissions letter, hope brimming inside me as I told of my dreams of following in my father's footsteps. My mother's eyes darkened, her curved lips drew taut. She never told me why.

Those questions plagued me like darkness as my fingers flicked through the archaic book, like linen sized with starch to touch. My eyes widened in surprise as a slip of paper fell from its crevice between two pages. Chinese characters written in delicate strokes of obsidian black, tapering off at the end of each slash.

when the dinosaur spread its wings and soared
did it fear the ground, the earth, the floor?
did they think: flight or fear?
did they see Death, coming for a life to reap?
or did they drink on the highest bliss?
not a fire yet to be extinguished?

There was something so evasive about the way Baba had described his love for dinosaurs, as though he were channelling the spirit of creatures lost in obscurity. It was as if his voice were reverberating next to my heart, tinged with warmth as he read those words aloud under the slant of pale light from the study lamp.

I clutched the paper to my chest, its weight like a talisman against the storm brewing within me. Waves will continue to erode the shore, sands of time will wash away all that is left – but I couldn't allow myself to shun Baba's legacy to the abyss of oblivion. I turned the paper around, hoping for something more, to feel his presence upon me once again – met with hasty strokes, unusual for a perfectionist like him.

"The Fujiavenator – did it embrace the thrill or fear its fate? Every fossil tells a story, a whisper from the past itself. The fujiaventor's skeletal frame restricted it to spread its wings and soar, but it didn't encumber its will to live. And I want my child to know this: the spirit of dinosaurs thrum vivaciously within you, an unquenchable thirst for freedom. For the world is yours."

I could almost hear the gentle ebb and flow of his voice, the bubble of his laugh. From him, I could touch a world filled to the brim with aspiration, dreams and hope. That was how I could mend the hollow ache perforated by grief, replaced with passion and purpose. A seeker of truths, just like Baba had been, to take the paths he once walked. To unearth the stories washed away to the streams of time. To breathe life into his legacy frozen by fate. I would not fear the fall and passionately pursue the flight.

The answer finally dawned upon me. Now I know why.

I emerged from the dark chambers of my past, the crumpled paper crinkled in my grasp. My mother's silhouette stretched across the room, her hand reaching for the mahogany door. Darkness plagues her bleary eyes flickering with exhaustion, and a haunting vacancy is all that stared back at me. I search for the curve of her smile, the crinkle at the corner of her eyes that embraced me as a child, finding none.

She seemed to want to speak, but instead she let her gaze linger over me, and I found my heart bleeding flesh all over again. I take her cold hands into mine, my voice steady despite the hurricane brewing in me. "I want to stay," I told her.

She winced, brows furrowed tight with pain. Tears started again without sound or movement as worry lines framed her mouth. A question lingered on her lips, but silence swallowed it – she chose to cup her hands in my face. "He...would have been proud," she spoke in a hoarse whisper.

"Your father – Baba's," she chastised herself slightly for letting her words slip, "his dedication created a chasm between us. We ended in a quiet tragedy because we were all but a flame bound to be extinguished one day. He left to board his ship into a horizon promising a different dawn, and I couldn't hold him back."

Her mouth turned up a fraction of an inch. "But you can be the wind sailing his dreams. Do what I couldn't do. I believe in you."

My compass, my anchor, lay in the foundation of my own family. I promised the heavens to embrace the flight, to soar and let his spirit guide his dreams home.

New tales of China's Dinosaurs

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Cheng, Emma – 11

A shadow casted over the deserted rocky ground. Perched high on a mountain stood a massive feathered creature. Its sharp amber eyes staring down at the world. Opening its mouth, it screeched. Instantly, a flock of smaller and featherless bird-like animals, the Pterosaurs gathered above the feathered creature. Aligned neatly in rows in the infinite sky.

Looking proudly at its army, it gave a small growl. Baring his teeth, it roared, echoing across the desert. Like a signal, the flocks of Pterosaurs flew off into the distance. The feathered dinosaur stared at them in admiration and pride. As it ran off to follow his tribe, the wind behind them whispered. *There will be a time, where the world needs you most. Just follow the sun and let the unexpected lead your tribe to victory.*

“DRRIIINGGGG!!!” The alarm had once again marked the start of school. A young Chinese girl rubbed her eyes and dragged herself off her bed. The sound of the phone rang disturbingly. Grudgingly, she took the ringing phone and answered, “Hello?” She mumbled. “Excuse me miss, but is Mr. Li currently free?” A man said from the other side of the line. The girl blinked and told the man to hold. “Papa! A man is looking for you!” she called. A man appeared with an excited look plastered on his face. “Finally! I’ve been expecting him.” He took the phone from his daughter and mumbled something. “Of course! I’ll bring my daughter Maya. Thank you so much sir!” Hanging up, he cheered, “I’ve done it Maya!” He continued, “The fossils of the Sinosauroptryx will be displayed in the museum!”

Maya was happy for her father, “That’s great! Are you going to take me to the museum after school?” Her father smiled at her, “Of course!” Then he looked at the clock and joked, “That is, if you’ll make it to school at all.”

Their car skidded to a stop, as Maya hopped off. When she saw the Sinosauroptryx. Maya was shocked. The Sinosauroptryx was like nothing Maya has seen. It was about the size of a velociraptor, but instead of tough skin. It had feathers. Nudging her, her dad smirked, “A pretty decent discovery made by your papa, isn’t it?” Maya nodded, still gazing at the particular dinosaur. Suddenly a man in a business suit approached them. Murmured something to her father and gestured to him to follow him. Patting Maya’s back, he urged, “Go explore, I’ll be back in a bit.”

A ray of bright sunlight shone through the small gap of the window. Curious, Maya followed the streak of light. Looking through the window she saw the ray of light continue to stretch endlessly. Feeling a sudden jolt inside her. She had no choice but to follow it.

Past the parking lot. Crossing the garden of the museum. It led her into the small huddle of trees beyond the garden. The ray of light then came to a halt. Confused, Maya asked herself, “What was the point of that?” About to turn away to return to the museum. A small rustle was detected. Flinching, she turned back. Maya, unable to hide her fear “Hello?” she whispered, trying to hide the quiver in her voice.

Atlas, a feathered creature came from behind the bushes, acknowledging the girl’s expression as it softened its eyes. “I come at peace, Maya.” the Sinosauroptryx said. “I’m so sorry, but I’m Faeyi. The descendant of my mother’s tribe.” Faeyi explained. Maya widened her eyes, “I’m dreaming.” The Sinosauroptryx circled around her, then gave Maya a firm prod with her foot. “Oww!” Maya grunted. Faeyi grinned, “See? I’m real” Then her expression turned dead serious, “Only you can see and interact with me. No one else. It took years of searching, but when your ancestors call. You have to answer.”

“Ancestors?” Maya asked. Faeyi explained, “The tribe is a group of exotic ancient dinosaurs led by a leader. My mother, Glamir has past the leadership to me.” Faeyi continued, “A few centuries ago, a prophecy was

sent to me. It passed on the message saying the world depended on an unexpected person to make the tribe's destiny." Maya was surprised, " But that still doesn't add up. What happened to the meteorite that I thought wiped your kind from the world?"

Faeyi gritted her teeth, " It was supposed to. Until I realise what the prophecy meant." She said, " Something has minus the damage from the meteorite. Something that messed up the timeline. Without all the dinosaurs gone. This can affect humans and their coming future."

Maya's heartbeat quickened, " How much time do we have left to settle things?" Faeyi answered, " Not much. It took me enough time trying to reach for your help. I suppose fifteen minutes left. This is why I need a human's help. Listen, there is a scroll in the museum, find it, tear it and everything would stay the same. The time would run normally, but you only have fifteen minutes." Maya froze, then rushed towards the entrance of the museum.

Pushing past people, time slowed. She looked everywhere. Climbing behind counters, checking the bathrooms. She ignored the shouts from the staff. She had no time! Looking at the clock. It ticked. Five minutes passed and no luck. She reached the ancient Greek section. Pillars, no. Displays, no. Scroll? "Nothing." She panted. Finally she reached the dinosaur exhibit. She saw her father. Looking at Maya in confusion, seeing her sweating and panting. But before he could stop her. Maya saw a piece of paper sticking out of a dinosaur egg for display. The time ticked. 5 seconds... She ran. 4... Reaching her hand out. 3... Lunging at the eggs. 2...Snatching it. 1... with a firm rip. The scroll was separated into half. A tugging sensation swirled around her. Then it ebbed away. The faint outline of Faeyi's body appeared in front of her. Mouthing the words " Thank you" Before disappearing into thin air.

Carved Secrets

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Chow, Samantha – 11

The humid March air clung to my skin, a damp shroud of suffocating heat. I slouched in my armchair, fingers racing between two keyboards, the faint hiss of an energy drink punctuating the quiet hum of electronics around me.

Suddenly, the shrill chime of the doorbell shattered the stillness. I muttered under my breath — it was 2 AM. *Who would come knocking at such an ungodly hour?* With a reluctant creak, I opened the door to find a middle-aged woman in a flowing white velvet dress, clutching a bouquet of white roses. Her bloodshot eyes glistened under the soft glow of the hallway light, and tear-streaked cheeks shimmered like a haunted reflection.

“I need your help,” she whispered, her voice barely more than a fragile thread.

I stepped aside, welcoming her into the faintly illuminated room. Abruptly, she blurted out, “Have you heard about MH370? My husband, Paul, was on that plane...”

“This was his last voicemail,” she said, her voice breaking. She clutched the phone like it was the only thing tethering her to him. “I’ve listened to it a thousand times, and I still don’t understand... but I know it means something.”

A man’s voice crackled through the static of the recording: “Ashley, I will show the world the mystery of the feathered dinosaur. If something happens to me, don’t worry, we will meet again.”

My heart quickened, my eyebrows arched. A man was out there—or had uncovered something extraordinary. I guided Ashley out of my sanctum, urging her to meet me at the site where Paul was last seen before vanishing.

By the next evening, we found ourselves standing in the Shandong Tianyu Museum of Nature, a labyrinth of glass cases and softly illuminated displays. The air was thick with the faint musk of aged leather and decay, and the shadows of ancient skeletons loomed like silent sentinels over the exhibits. This place feels alive with secrets, each artifact waiting to tell its story.

We headed toward the Dinosaur Zone, hoping some clues might linger among the shadows. As we walked past the guards, snippets of conversation floated through the air. “The ghost prowls this museum every night...” I caught one guard’s words. *Ghost? What kind of tales are they spinning?*

“Excuse me, has anything unusual happened recently?” I asked one of the guards, my curiosity piqued. The guard’s gaze flickered, his jaw tightening. “No,” he muttered, but the word hung in the air like a poorly told lie. *His shifting stance betrayed his fear—or stubbornness.*

“Tell me,” I demanded, holding out a wad of cash.

The guard snatched it quickly before responding. “About a month ago, we noticed something bizarre. One man acted strangely, almost like a ghost. He came in every day at 6 AM and stood transfixed over there.” He pointed to a shadowy corner. “He just stared at the artifact, skipping lunch and dinner, until one day he stopped. That was on March 7th.”

A cold chill crawled through my bones. “Do you have a picture?”

He handed me a blurred image from the CCTV. *My heart raced.*

Ashley's eyes bulged, “That’s... Paul!” She sputtered, her voice cracking. *This is more than a coincidence; it’s a thread weaving through time.*

The guard led us to the spot, where a rough fossil lay under a glass case. As I laid my hand on it, the smell of decay filled my nostrils. I felt small protrusions on the surface—etched in, not natural.

Peering closer, I caught my breath. In tiny letters, it read: *Aboard the MH370 to know the truth. (Paul 1934)*

“Paul wrote this in 1934? That’s 79 years ago!” Ashley exclaimed, her eyes wide, the first flicker of hope illuminating her face. *Suddenly, a thought struck like lightning. What if MH370 had somehow sent Paul back in time, into 1934?*

That night, I scoured the internet for unusual occurrences in Shandong in 1934. My eyes widened at a particular case: “In early July, a dragon had fallen from the sky.” Intrigued, I read on. A photograph from the Shengjing Times showed a crowd of villagers clustered at the edge of a murky lake. In the shallows, the skeleton of a monstrous creature jutted from the water like the ruins of an ancient shipwreck, its jagged bones clawing toward the surface.

These were real dragon bones from 90 years ago! Spellbound, I printed the picture to show Ashley the next day.

When I revealed it, Ashley gasped, her eyes shimmering with disbelief. “This is Paul,” she said, pointing at a slim man in glasses and a business suit, distinctly different from the others. He held a large piece of paper covered in drawings.

At first glance, the drawing appeared to be a dragon with outstretched wings, exuding an aura of ancient mystery. But then, a thought began to form in my mind. *What if this creature was not a mythical dragon but a feathered dinosaur? The sharp beak and piercing eyes resembled those of a dinosaur rather than a dragon. The wings, too, could easily be imagined covered in feathers instead of leathery membranes.*

Could it be that the legendary flying dragon and the feathered dinosaur were, in fact, one and the same? Was this what Paul was trying to tell us?

"As Ashley held the photograph, her sobs quieted, replaced by a fragile smile. For the first time in years, she had a piece of Paul—a piece of the mystery he had dedicated his life to. I watched her, wondering if the answers we had found were enough—or if I would spend the rest of my life chasing the truth of what really happened to MH370...

New Tales of China's Dinosaurs

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Lan, Mischa – 13

The night air was filled with laughter and anticipation as the villagers settled on the soft grass, ready to listen to Li's grandmother, AnXia, and her tales.

"Gather around, everyone!" AnXia called, her voice warm and inviting. "Tonight, I will tell you about the legendary dinosaur Sinosauropteryx!"

The children leaned in closer, eyes wide with curiosity.

"What's so special about the Sinosauropteryx, Grandma?" Li asked, bubbling with excitement.

AnXia smiled knowingly. "Sinosauropteryx is one of the first feathered dinosaurs discovered! It lived during the Late Jurassic period and was known for its beautiful plumage. Picture a giant creature that resembled a giant bird!"

"Wow!" exclaimed a younger boy, mouth agape. "Did it fly?"

"No, it didn't fly," AnXia replied, shaking her head. "But it could run fast and had feathers that kept it warm. It was small but fierce and clever!"

Li's imagination soared as he pictured the vibrant feathers of Sinosauropteryx glistening under the sun.

"Did it have any enemies?" he asked eagerly.

"Of course! Like all creatures, it had to be cautious of larger predators. But it was smart; it could hide among the trees and use its speed to escape," AnXia continued, her voice becoming more animated.

"What else can you tell us?" another child piped up.

AnXia chuckled. "There are tales of brave explorers searching for fossils of this magnificent creature. Its fossils are rumored to lie in the fields of Jiangxi. Who knows, maybe one of you will find it!"

At those words, a thrill ran through Li.

"What if I found one?" he mused. "What if I discovered something amazing?"

AnXia smiled encouragingly. "If you work hard like your father, my dear, you might. Your father spends long hours in the fields, tending crops, finding something new every day—be it a rare flower or a hidden stone."

Li nodded, inspired. "You think I could find a fossil if I dig deep enough?"

"Absolutely!" AnXia affirmed, leaning closer. "The earth holds many secrets. With patience and determination, you can uncover them, just like your father does."

The children around the bonfire listened, their imaginations ignited by AnXia's tales.

"Maybe we can all help!" one girl suggested eagerly. "We can dig together!"

"Yeah!" another chimed in. "We'll be like real explorers!"

Li grinned at his friends, excitement surging at the thought of an adventure. “Let’s do it! We’ll search for fossils every day after school!”

AnXia laughed heartily, her eyes twinkling. “That’s the spirit! Remember, every great journey begins with a single step.”

I.

Years later, as Li worked on the farm, he reflected on AnXia’s tales of dinosaurs and fossils. He recalled how his father toiled tirelessly in the soil, always searching for something extraordinary hidden beneath the surface.

“If I work hard enough, maybe I’ll find something amazing too,” Li thought.

With each strike of his spade, he felt a sense of purpose. Then, he hit something hard beneath the surface.

“What’s this?” he murmured, curiosity piqued. Kneeling, he brushed away the dirt, revealing a delicate spiral shell fossil glimmering in the sunlight.

Li’s heart raced. He lifted it to eye level, and to his astonishment, a mystical glow began to emanate from the fossil, pulsing gently like a heartbeat.

“This could be massive! I need to find someone to help me investigate this,” he exclaimed, excitement surging through him.

“What if it’s a dinosaur fossil? This could change everything for me!”

Before Li could react, a rush of energy enveloped him, and the world around him blurred. The edges of reality softened as if he were peering through a mist. Staggering for balance, Li felt the earth erupt in a chaotic spray of dirt and debris.

Voices of the villagers echoed, distorted mutters spiraling around him.

“What’s happening to Li?” one voice cried, filled with concern.

“He’s losing his balance!” another shouted urgently.

Confusion and panic rippled through the crowd as they called out, their cries merging into a chorus of worry.

“Someone help him!” a woman pleaded, her voice breaking as she strained to see through the chaos.

“We need to get him back!”

Confusion washed over Li as the energy engulfed him. He felt himself drawn into a vortex of swirling colors and sounds. It was as if he were being pulled into another realm, a place where time and space lost their meaning.

When Li finally regained consciousness, he found himself lying on the ground, disoriented and bruised. His body was covered in abrasions and cuts. The cuts marred his skin, some deep enough to reveal angry red flesh beneath, while others were shallow but still oozing with dirt and grime. His arms bore scrapes that looked like jagged lines drawn by a careless hand, and bruises bloomed in various shades of purple and blue, each one a testament to the violence of his fall.

As he struggled to push himself off the ground, he felt the sharp sting of pain radiating from his wounds, a reminder of his vulnerability. He opened his mouth to speak, but no words came; what could he possibly say in such a broken state?

The sun, once a warm embrace, was abruptly eclipsed by a shadow that crept across the ground, ingurgitating the light around him. This shadow was not just any ordinary shade; it had a distinct shape, tapering off into a long, sinuous tail that flicked back and forth in a sluggish motion. As Li stood there, the realization struck him like a bolt of lightning. This creature, with its vibrant feathers and sharp teeth, was the very embodiment of the tales his grandmother had shared around the bonfire when he was a child. The Sinosauropteryx—he could almost hear AnXia's voice recounting its story, describing how it was one of the first feathered dinosaurs, a marvel of evolution that roamed the earth long before humans existed.

"This is it," he thought, his heart pounding in his chest.

"This is the dinosaur Grandma spoke of—the one that could run fast and hide among the trees." He remembered her words about how discovering such a fossil could connect him to ancient wisdom and honor his family.

But before he could fully process this connection, the Sinosauropteryx crouched low, its gaze fixed on Li as if sizing him up.

Just as the creature lunged forward, ready to pounce, a blinding light enveloped Li once more. He felt himself being pulled away from this prehistoric world, the vibrant colors and sounds fading into a whirlwind of brightness.

"Not again!" he gasped as everything around him swirled into chaos.

II.

As Li slowly regained consciousness, the first thing he noticed was the concerned faces of the villagers surrounding him. Their expressions were a mix of worry and relief, eyes wide with questions as they knelt close to him.

"Li! Are you okay?" AnXia's voice cut through the haze, filled with concern. She reached out to touch his shoulder gently, her hands trembling slightly.

"What happened? We saw you fall!" a neighbor exclaimed, pushing forward to get a better look.

"Did you hit your head?" another villager asked, glancing nervously at the scratches and bruises marring Li's skin.

"I... I'm fine," Li managed to say, still dazed. "I just... I had the strangest experience."

"Experience?" AnXia pressed, her brow furrowing.

Li took a deep breath, gathering his thoughts as he looked into the eyes of those who cared for him. "I found something in the field—a fossil," he began, excitement creeping back into his voice despite the lingering confusion. "It glowed, and then... I was transported to a world filled with dinosaurs."

The villagers exchanged incredulous glances, some whispering amongst themselves. "Dinosaurs?" one of them repeated skeptically.

"Yes! I saw one—it was incredible!" Li's voice rose as he recalled the vibrant feathers and fierce amber eyes of the Sinosauropteryx. "It was just like Grandma described in her stories!"

AnXia's eyes widened with recognition and pride. "The Sinosauropteryx? You really saw it?"

"I thought I would never come back," he said, his voice filled with wonder. "But then I woke up here, surrounded by all of you."

As he spoke, the children gathered around, their eyes wide with amazement as they absorbed every word.

"Can you tell us more?" one child asked eagerly, bouncing on their toes.

Li smiled at their enthusiasm, feeling a sense of responsibility to share what he had experienced. "Of course! Gather around," he said, motioning for them to sit closer.

"The dinosaurs were magnificent," he said passionately. "They moved with such grace and power. And there was something magical about being so close to them."

"And who knows," Li concluded with a twinkle in his eye, "maybe one day we can uncover more fossils together—just like Grandma told us!"

In that moment, surrounded by family and friends under the fading light of day, Li knew that he would continue to seek out mysteries hidden beneath the earth—just as his grandmother had always encouraged him to do.

New Tales of China's Dinosaurs

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Wu, Joycelyn – 12

I awoke to the sound of my brother dragging a tree. Food. I started chewing the bark off. It's been a while since we've seen each other. Since our parents divorced, we've had different surnames and lived apart.

"KunYu, HuiMing is here." The mamenchisaurus JinWu liked so much caught my eye. I forced myself to respond. "Hello, HuiMing. Nice to see you."

"Hey there, KunYu. I was hoping to find some interesting company today." A moment hung in the air, our gazes locking briefly. I noticed the slight tension in his smile and returned a polite nod, my expression neutral.

HuiMing chuckled lightly, but there was a hint of something sharper beneath. "Just trying to make the best of it, right?" I glanced away, pretending to be interested in something else, but not before catching another quick look from HuiMing—just a flicker, but enough to remind me.

"Let's see what we can do to pass the time," JinWu suggested, eager to ease the moment. "Sounds good," I replied, keeping my tone light, though I was still staring at him.

From the corner of my eye, I saw a Lufengosaurus walking by. "What's a Lufengosaurus doing here?"

HuiMing's head snapped up, eyes fixed on the creature. Before I could process it, he charged at the Lufengosaurus. "Hei Rongjian, what are you doing here?"

The Lufengosaurus remained silent. "Seriously, your clan's reputation isn't great," HuiMing said, frustration evident.

"Look who's talking. Your clan isn't exactly flawless," Hei Rongjian shot back. HuiMing smacked him. I tried to break up the fight, unsure of what to say or why they were clashing. Then I noticed JinWu stepping up beside HuiMing. In a rush, I grabbed both my brother and HuiMing by the neck.

"Zhu JinWu, what were you thinking? And HuiMing, knock it off. Drink some water and come back. JinWu, you go with him. No objections." I sent them off and attempted to talk to Hei Rongjian.

"You're Hei Rongjian, right?" He nodded, silent. "Just so you know, I think HuiMing is a jerk, but he's my brother's best friend." That earned a slight smile from him.

"You can talk, you know? Why were you two fighting?" He hesitated but finally spoke. "Our clans have feuded long before we were born, so we were raised to hate each other."

"Woah. That's rough, but why?"

"Who knows? We don't have a choice."

"I'm Cha Kun Yu, Zhu Jin Wu's sister." He nodded again, and we sat in awkward silence. Suddenly, I heard HuiMing yelp in shock. Rongjian reacted immediately. We sprinted toward the sound.

What I saw rendered me speechless. A plesiosaurus had emerged from the water, glaring arrogantly. A ring of water tightened around HuiMing's neck. If it weren't for the dire situation, I would've rolled my eyes. Rongjian looked panicked but stepped up bravely.

“Greetings, could you please let my acquaintance go so we can discuss this civilly?” Just as I thought HuiMing was about to be strangled, the plesiosaurus released him.

“I am MiaoQing, youngest daughter of the Chang clan, and your friend has invaded our territory.”

“Really, Hei Rongjian? That's the best you could do?”

“Well, a thank you would suffice,” he replied.

“Not the time!” For once, I was grateful for my brother. “We sincerely apologize for the intrusion, Lady Chang.”

I tried to sound sincere. She took a deep breath. “No matter. Address me as MiaoQing; we are of similar age. And you are?”

“I am Cha KunYu, here are my brother, Zhu JinWu, his friend Huang HuiMing, and Hei Rongjian.” I caught HuiMing shooting a brief thankful look at Rongjian. MiaoQing scoffed.

“Well, I was expecting something else, but you'll do. A huge asteroid is set to crash into Pangea today. My clan learned about it from the signs in the water. My family has retreated to a nearby underwater cave, but I came to warn you. You're the destined controllers of fire, earth, metal, and wood. I can already see who is who.”

“Oh, would you just tell us—” HuiMing interrupted.

“Obviously, as one of the only grounded members, KunYu is earth. You're the embodiment of fire. Rongjian is wood, and the boy over there is metal.” A loud rumble rang, followed by a bright light in the sky, radiant yet seemingly deadly.

“Oh gods. We don't have time. I'll evacuate the seas. HuiMing and Rongjian evacuate the forests. KunYu and JinWu evacuate the land.”

I focused on my father, recalling his voice, my brother's touch, and my mother's presence—they kept me grounded, as MiaoQing said. Next to me, Rongjian sprouted trees, HuiMing glowed with flames, and my brother manipulated metal. I was amazed. The earth shook beneath me, responding to my call, followed by another rumble from above. We moved quickly to save as many as we could. I saw flaming debris falling from the sky, and just as Rongjian was about to be hit, HuiMing pulled him away. I smiled; maybe they would finally get along. We gathered long-necked sauropods and small feathered dinosaurs that rushed into an underground hole I had created. I sealed it, knowing there was little hope left for anyone else. As debris crashed down, the last thing I saw were my friends, whom I had known for only half a day. I held onto my brother tightly.

We woke in a brilliant palace of gold, seemingly above the clouds. Across from us stood LongWang. “Rest, my children; we shall honor your sacrifices. From now on, the rivers running across Pangea will bear your names. The Yangtze River, Chang Jiang, after Chang MiaoQing. The Yellow River, Huang He, after Huang HuiMing. The Pearl River, Zhu Jiang, after Zhu JinWu. The Amur River, Heilongjiang, after Hei Rongjian. And the Red Lake, Chagan He, after Cha KunYu. Let Chagan He be forever red, the hue of sacrifice and blood spilled.”

Then my vision blacked out, and my eyes never opened again.

Secrets in the Journal

Pui Ching Middle School, Fok, Ho Yee Kalie – 12

Hidden secrets are simply right under your nose, my dear Aisha. We humans are just too busy to pay attention to them." Nana told her. Those words were the ones that engraved themselves into Aisha's mind when she was cleaning. But what she hated about cleaning Nana's room the most this time, wasn't because of how dusty the whole room was, but instead was the fact that they were cleaning up to find a spot to place her urn.

"Next to the vase?"

"No."

"How about on her desk?"

"And have people knock over it? No."

"The shelf next to her favorite books?"

Aisha pondered. That wasn't a bad spot... "Sure, Ma."

The moment her mother set the urn, a soft thud caught Aisha's attention, then something hit her foot. It didn't hurt, although the impact caused a bit of throbbing as she looked down to pick up an aged leather book.

"Oh, sorry, honey. I must've dropped something there. Could you help me pick it up?" Her mother was adjusting the urn, too fixated on whether the urn would look good under the lighting of the window to care what exactly dropped on the floor.

Aisha nodded, and curiosity piqued when she decided to flip through the journal. This was wrong, but...Nana can't exactly scold her, can she?

The contents inside fueled her interest even more. The words on the first page were delicate, with their loopy handwriting and how curved the 'L' and 'y' were in 'Lindsey'. This was Nana's journal.

"Aisha?" She jumped at her mother's words, distracted enough to not have heard her. "I'm trying to ask you whether or not this angle is right. I'm thinking of showing the little flower patterns on the bottom, but the reflection of this emerald right here is just too beautiful to just move to the side. And what was that that fell?"

"Oh...nothing." That was when Aisha decided: This was going to be the first secret she's kept from her mother.

The moment Aisha heard her bedroom door close back, she sat up from her bed. She could see the small moving shadows that shone through the door gap at the bottom, then the small quiet 'click' of the door next to her room. Her parents couldn't hear her now, and she pulled out Nana's journal from under her pillow, flipping through the first few pages.

Distinct drawings were on each yellowing page, with the loopy handwriting she recognized (and inherited) beside them describing different features of —

"Dinosaurs," Aisha murmured to herself. This fueled her interest, how each scale seemed to be visible to the naked eye, how the drawings captured the different aspects of each creature. The feathers...the scales...not the bones Aisha

had to study in school or were engrossed by in books, these drawings adapted the skin and flesh of said dinosaurs, their vibrant colors and lined sketches of foot prints of shapes and sizes.

One raptor-like dinosaur caught her eye: The one that had 'Guanlong' written on the top. That must be its name. She hadn't seen it in her books or even heard of it in her Dinosaur Club. It bore feathers on its arms and on its back. No scales, it seemed. A vibrant emerald green (Hey, just like the urn!) clashing with a yellow undertone, striped with magenta. It had a crown on its nose like the Dilophosaurus would, only it was singular instead of double. she'd remembered 'guan' meant 'crown' in Chinese from her tutor. Maybe that's how it got its name. But then how did —

"Aisha! You're going to be late! I thought you wanted to go to the field trip!" Aisha groaned when she heard her father call her, jolting up as she heard the words 'field trip'. She had completely forgotten her class was going to the International History Museum today. The journal was loosely clutched in her hand when she got up, she must've fell asleep halfway through it. Frantically, she grabbed her backpack and shoved the journal in her bag, dashing to school.

"Late again, Aisha," Mr. Johnson shook his head disapprovingly, and gestured to the bus where most people were already seated. "Just go and take any free seat."

Aisha heaved a sigh, and got in the bus to find an empty seat next to the window. Sitting down, her eyelids grew heavy, and with a few nods against the glass, her head leaned on the window to doze off and catch up on the sleep she missed out on when woken up at 6 a.m. in the morning.

Aisha woke up to chatters and people getting off the bus later on. They must've arrived.

"Good morning, children! I'm your tour guide, Ms. Didi, and I'll be showing you around the International History Museum. Remember, stay in line, and no using your phones to play video games — I see a phone over there — But photos are allowed. Now, shall we begin?"

Aisha ended up daydreaming about 70% of the tour, checking her watch whenever she was bored. What she was excited for was the dinosaurs, not how humans in the Stone Age managed to survive, or how Egyptians made mummies. The whole museum was a squared-donut shape, which she found quite amusing, as in the centre was a garden people would use to relax, and where her long-awaited dinosaur fossils were displayed. After a boring talk on the evolution process of humans, they were finally, finally, finally moving on to her beloved dinosaurs.

The class set foot on the luscious green grass, the sun shining over them with just the slightest of wind. This was a paleontologist's favorite weather condition (And she would know). Dinosaur fossils of the classics: T-rex, Triceratops, Pterodactyl and more were set on platforms with supporting beams to hold the bones up, a tablet next to each to learn more about these fascinating prehistoric animals. Ms. Didi led the class to each, explaining information Aisha had long ago knew, before once again, the Guanlong she had just read about yesterday caught. Only this time, it was the fossil of the ancient reptilian.

"Ah, I see one of your classmates here has found our latest donation," Ms. Didi led the class, telling them to gather around the Guanlong as she turned to Aisha, spotting her name tag.

"Wonderful finding, Aisha. This is the dinosaur I want to tell you all about next," Ms. Didi started. "Now, this right here, is the Guanlong. It's a Chinese dinosaur, and so very generous of our friends from Southeast Asia to even spare this treasure for us to exhibit. The Guanlong was first found in 2006, and its name is based on its crown right

there —" She pointed at the tip of the nose. "—'Guan' is Chinese for 'crown', and 'Long' is Chinese for dragon." So I wasn't wrong, Aisha thought to herself.

Ms. Didi continued. "And according to experts, it is likely that the Guanlong has scaled skin, like its cousins, the T-rex." That received a reaction, people 'ooh'ing and 'ah'ing with the information that led to Ms. Did show a proud smile.

"That's inaccurate." Aisha cut in, surprising herself.

The tour guide's smile faltered. "How so, Aisha?" The whole class was facing Aisha now.

"Well, the Guanlong is feathered." Aisha stated matter-of-factly, unsure where the confidence of correcting superiors came from.

"And where did you find this theory?"

Aisha fell silent. How could she explain the journal? Her tone came out sheepish. "I...I forgot." A couple of giggles could be heard amongst the class, even a faint "Nerd!".

"Alright, then," Ms. Didi tried to regain her composure and settle the class down again, flashing her bright smile again. "I believe, that this is a nice attempt on expressing your ideas, Aisha. But I also believe, that I would trust the words of experts more than just a memory. It's still admirable that you're willing to speak up about this, Aisha, but until another group of experts find that the Guanlong is likelier to be feathered, then we should assume it's scaled for now."

That motivated Aisha.

Aisha took in the cheers and applause, the flashing cameras and the reporters fighting against security guards. 20 years later, she had done it. She was the head of that 'another group of experts'. Nana's old journal was in her hand even when she stood on the stage and gave out her speech on this Chinese reptilian. And it was only then did she notice what the last page wrote: Hidden secrets are simply right under your nose. We humans are just too busy to pay attention to them. Reminded of the only person that has supported her dream of becoming a paleontologist, but failing to see her live it, she only had a few words to mutter to herself: I did it, Nana. I paid attention.

Because she knew, if she hadn't paid attention to explore the journal, maybe she wouldn't be where she was now...

Legend of Monk Lan and Dinosaur Hua

Pui Ching Middle School, Mo, Yui Tung – 13

Dinosaurs are fierce. They cruel and they kill. But if we see them in a different perspective as the Chinese see dragons, we may see something different. If we change our perspectives, the world may be different to our original knowledge. Just like legends, they may be unrealistic, but we can always see big morals from them...

In the ancient times, when dinosaurs roamed the earth, people lived nervously every day, afraid to be killed by the enormous creatures. Not only were there dinosaurs harming people every day, but humans were also powerless against natural disasters. There was once a village named Miu, where people were all hungry and sad as there were numerous disasters. One day, one of the worst came—hailing. It killed people every day and every time they want to go out to fetch for food. In the meantime, a lot of dinosaurs always came to “fetch food” too. People were desperate. However, one day, things changed.

A monk named Lan suggested, “We need a guardian to help our people. We need someone strong and wise.” Yet, everyone was weak and hungry. Who could be the guardian then? Who or what is the strongest? Then Lan brought out a crazy method—asking a dinosaur for help. No one agreed with Lan. They all thought he had gone crazy, saying “Dinosaurs are our biggest enemy! They are cruel and they kill! How can they help us?” However, Lan was not moved. He replied confidently, “Everything is born inherently good. There is just a fine line between kindness and cruelty. Do we not kill? Do we not eat flesh? Good negotiation can make good endings. Everyone is just about miserable. Then why can't we work together for a better future? Why should we cut one another's throats? I am a monk of peace. I can communicate with wise dinosaurs, and I shall make a hopeful future for both of our kind.”

So off Lan set. Wise dinosaurs are hard to find. Most of them retired from the world to avoid troubles. Other dinosaurs just kept killing like a beast until one day they wake up and gain wisdom. The only wise dinosaur Lan knew was Hua, who lived in a cave far from village Miu. Despite this, Lan is determined to change the fate of mankind and the secular attitude to dinosaurs.

Before arriving at the cave where Hua lived, Lan had to go through a forest. The forest was filled with an atmosphere of terror. The fog there gave Lan the creeps. Suddenly, with a quick “whoosh”, an arrow flew past Lan's ears. “That is a warning. Leave our forest at once!” A voice roared. Lan replied in a shivering voice, “May... May I ask the name of yours? I... I mean no harm to you...” Hardly had Lan's voice faded away, a group of people with strange symbols drawn on their faces and arms stepped out. Some carrying a sword, some carrying a bow and arrows, and some carrying a pike. One of them pointed his sword at Lan and demanded, “I can see that you are a monk. If you have come to persuade us to follow your religion, leave at once!” Lan replied, “No, no! I am just on my way to a cave. Neither will I do harm to you, nor interfere your religion!” Hearing this, the natives were much calmer. They put down their weapons and even offered Lan food.

While eating, Lan asked the natives many questions. In addition to the way to get to Hua's cave, Lan also asked about their religion. The natives shared their thoughts with Lan and although Lan had different beliefs, he still nodded and listened very carefully when they were talking. The natives felt strange, “You don't have such belief as we have, but how come you just let us be? Aren't you monks supposed to spread your religion to others?” Lan replied calmly, “Yes, we share our religions to people who don't know about it. But we don't force them to join us. I believe no matter how different our beliefs are, we can still live harmoniously together. We live in the same world. There's no need to turn the world into chaos.” “Hmm... You have a point. We should try to tolerate people that are different from us...” The natives nodded thoughtfully.

A day later, Lan said goodbye to the natives and continued to search for the cave. After a few days of tiring trip, Lan finally arrived. The cave wall was full of tiny fluorites. The aura was indeed suitable for a wise dinosaur for permanent residence. Suddenly, a deep calm roar filled the cave. Lan could understand what Hua was saying, "Who... Has come... To seek for wisdom?" Lan bowed and answered, "My name's Lan. I ask for your power and wisdom to help the people of the village Miu." "What power... Do I have that you seek?" "Hua, I deeply admire your power of peace and blessing, and your wisdom that can save lives. Please help! I beg you!" "Very well..." Hua replied. "I can see your determination and your love to the world... I, will help you and your village."

Hua allowed Lan to sit on his back, and he carried him back to Miu in a night. Hua used his tranquil roars to soothe the people's pain. His serene acts pacified the resentment of the people. His perception allowed him to foresee natural disasters, and his wisdom was there to teach the people ways to cope with them.

Slowly, the people developed their own culture and different ways to deal with natural disasters. They became more independent, and they don't need Hua anymore. So, Hua returned to his cave, and his good deeds were told as legends. The wise dinosaurs were eventually praised into dragons with mana and infinite peace, unlike the horrible impression they gave to the people at first, because people found out that if everyone is treated equally, you can always find goodness in people or creatures that looked unpleasant.

The Time Machine with the Dinosaur

Pui Ching Middle School (Macau), Lei, Ian Hei – 12

Once upon a time, there is a man in the forest, and he has seen a dinosaur bone. Near him, there is a time machine. The man looks at it, then he sees a letter. In the letter, it said, "This is a machine that is used to travel back to the past, and it is made to see the dinosaur." The man takes the dinosaur bone and sits on it. He turns it on, and the machine starts to work. He is excited about this trip to see the dinosaur.

He went to the past and saw many dinosaurs, and he saw a dinosaur that is like the bone that he picked. In the forest, he wants to use the book to check, but he forgot that he had left his backpack in the forest. He is very sad and he doesn't have anything to use or eat. He feels hungry and he has nothing to eat. He saw an egg, and he thinks that he can eat it. But after that, the owner of the egg, the T-rex, saw him eat its baby. It felt very angry and it wants to eat the man, so it tries to catch the man. The man runs away, but the dinosaur keeps chasing him, which makes him very scared. He sees a hole, so he jumps into it to hide. When the dinosaur goes away, he goes out of the hole and sees the beautiful world of the early Cretaceous period. He sees a lot of dinosaurs that he has never seen before.

He says, "Is this the early Cretaceous period?" He sees a beautiful view he has never seen before. He sees a baby dinosaur running in front of him, and he sees there is a dinosaur bigger than any dinosaur he has ever seen. He runs faster than the small dinosaur to find a place to hide, so he tries to find things to eat and use. He starts to look for things, but he finds nothing. He feels so sad about that. At that moment, he sees a dead baby dinosaur. He runs so fast to get there, takes it, and burns it to eat. He feels happy and he is not hungry anymore.

The next day, he goes to explore the place. He sees a very fast dinosaur run past him, and he is very excited about that. While the dinosaur is taking a rest, he finds his camera and takes a photo of the dinosaur. While he is taking the photo, a little dinosaur is behind him, and he sees that the big one is the mother of the small one. The baby shouts and wakes its mom up and wants to eat the man. It is very angry that he took a photo of itself, so it wants to chase him and feels very angry. When he is running away, he suddenly sees a dinosaur with a long tail.

Then, he sees that it looks like the dinosaur that he has seen in the bone. He thinks that this is the dinosaur that people are looking for. He uses his camera to take a photo of the dinosaur. He wants to catch it, but it runs so fast that he cannot catch it. So he wants to use the time machine to go back and catch it again when it is taking a rest. He goes back to the place where he came to the early Cretaceous period.

He uses the time machine to go back to the time that he saw the dinosaur. While he is using the time machine, he suddenly sees the dinosaur run in front of him, but the time machine is already running, so he can just see the dinosaur run away. He is thinking that if the dinosaur ran slower, he could catch it.

When he travels back to see the dinosaur, he runs very fast because he wants to not lose the dinosaur again, because he sees that the time machine is losing battery. So he runs very fast to catch the dinosaur. He has caught it, but he doesn't know anything about the dinosaur. But he realizes that he forgot to take the book with him, so he wants to go back to the time machine. But when he goes back to it, it has disappeared, and he is very confused about why it is gone. Suddenly, he sees a T-rex want to eat something. He sees that it is the thing that he is looking for—the T-rex is going to eat the time machine. Then he uses a rock to hit the T-rex and wants it to chase him. "Go away from my time machine!" the man says, and the T-rex is angry and wants to kill the man. He sees a big tree, so he hides behind it. He feels very scared, but it cannot find him. However, it smells the man, so he runs as fast as he can to see if he can

go to the time machine and bring a dinosaur back to the 21st century and show the people what the dinosaur looks like. So he wants to send the dinosaur to the time machine and bring it back to show the people who don't believe some dinosaurs lived in China. So he runs the machine and goes back to the 21st century and shows the people what the dinosaur looks like, what it eats, and where it lived in the early Cretaceous period.

Therefore, he uses the machine as fast as he can and runs it to go back to the 21st century to show the people, so he can make money with that. He is excited and thinking about the money that he can make. He think he will be very rich, so he will be able to build a dinosaur museum. When people visit the museum, they will believe the dinosaur is real. However, when he goes back, many people don't trust him because they think the dinosaur is fake. Whatever he says, no one thinks that he is telling the truth, so he thinks of something that can show people and let them. The time that he sees the dinosaur and he takes a photo with it, he takes the camera and prints the photo out and gives it to the people that don't trust him.

He showed the people the photo and some of them trusted him but some of them didn't, they think he found it on the internet, but took the camera with him and showed them the photo, last he showed them the Time Machine, and all of them believed it.

Dream Again

Pui Ching Middle School (Macau), Sam, Cheong Iao Cosette – 14

It was a quiet night in 2024. Sulie, a curious and imaginative twelve-year-old girl, drifted into sleep. Her room was filled with the soft glow of nightlights. The desk next to the bed is a book she recently read which was about Chinese dragon. As she succumbed to slumber, she found herself in a dream unlike any she had ever experienced.

In her dream, she stood in a vast land filled with grass and flowers. Suddenly, everything around her darkened, with a lot of mist gathered. A majestic figure emerged from the fog—a dragon. Its eyes were like deep pools of wisdom. This was Aaron, the legendary Chinese dragon. “Aid me, Sulie,” Aaron implored, his voice resonating in her mind. Soon, Aaron disappeared, at the same time, Sulie woke.

The next day, before Sulie drift off, she began to wonder if Aaron would meet her in her sleep because she was interested in it. Not surprisingly, Sulie met Aaron in her dream. This time, Aaron said “Everyone fear me, and I suffer at their hands.” Sulie awoke with a start, her heart racing. She dismissed the dream as a figment of her imagination, but the vividness of Aaron’s plea lingered in her thoughts.

Days passed, but Aaron keep continued to visit her in her dreams. Each night, he shared more about his world—a place set in 1890, where superstition ruled and dragons were seen as mere myths. With each encounter, Sulie felt a growing connection to Aaron and his plight, and started to be sure of Aaron’s words were truth. “Humans bully me,” he explained one night, his voice tinged with sadness. “They do not understand that I am a guardian of nature. They see me as a monster.” Sulie felt a pang of empathy for the dragon. She began to believe that perhaps there was a way to help him. “I will find a way to reach you, Aaron,” she vowed.

Determined to help her new friend, Sulie immersed herself in research about time travel and the concept of multiverses, a theory suggesting that multiple dimensions coexisted alongside her own. She spent hours reading books and searching the internet, her room cluttered with notes and sketches. Despite her efforts, every attempt to find a way to travel to 1890 seemed futile. It didn’t help anything no matter she tried to hypnotize herself or bang her head to some hard object. Frustrated yet resolute, she continued to dream of Aaron, each meeting fueling her desire to help him.

One evening, while Sulie exploring an antique shop with her parents, Sulie stumbled upon a peculiar amulet. It was adorned with intricate carvings of dragons and ancient symbols. The shopkeeper, an elderly man with a twinkle in his eye, noticed her fascination. “This amulet holds the power of the ancients,” he said mysteriously. “If you seek to traverse time, it may aid you.” Then, Sulie bought the amulet home secretly, her heart racing with excitement. That night, she wore it to bed, hoping it would unlock the door to Aaron’s world.

As Sulie drifted off to sleep, she clutched the amulet tightly. In her dream, she felt a surge of energy, and suddenly, she was standing in 1890, in the heart of China. The air was thick with the scent of incense and the sounds of bustling markets surrounded her. “Aaron!” she called out, and the dragon appeared before her in the turn of a hand. His eyes were bright with hope. “You finally came!” Together, they explored the vibrant world of the past, where Sulie witnessed the beauty of nature and the fear humans had of the mythical creatures. She learned of the feudal superstitions that plagued Aaron’s existence.

As they ventured through the village, they encountered a group of humans who harbored a deep-seated fear and hatred for dragons. They threw stones and shouted threats at Aaron, his majestic form shrinking under their hostility. "Why do they fear you?" Sulie asked, her heart aching for her friend. "They believe I bring misfortune," Aaron replied sadly. "But I am a protector, not a destroyer." Determined to help Aaron, Sulie devised a plan. She would confront the bullies and show them that dragons were not to be feared. "We need to change their minds," she declared. Using the amulet, she summoned courage, and together with Aaron, they approached the village square.

"Listen!" Sulie shouted, drawing the attention of the townsfolk. "Aaron is not your enemy!" As Sulie spoke, the crowd began to murmur. Some looked skeptical, while others seemed intrigued. But just as they began to listen, the bullies stepped forward, anger in their eyes. "Get away from that beast!" one of them shouted. In the scuffle that ensued, Sulie realized they were not just bullies; they were also misguided by fear. In a moment of desperation, she raised the amulet high and called upon its power. A blinding light enveloped the bullies, and when it faded, everyone became unusually quiet, and began to listen to Sulie quietly.

With the bullies subdued, the villagers slowly approached Aaron, curiosity replacing fear. Sulie explained the importance of understanding and respecting all creatures, emphasizing that fear stemmed from ignorance. Sulie asked "When have you ever seen it hurt anyone of you?" The villagers listened, and over time, they began to accept Aaron as a guardian rather than a threat. With the amulet's help, Sulie returned to her time, knowing she had made a difference.

Back in 2024, Sulie often thought of Aaron and the village. She realized that the bond they shared transcended time and space. After a long time, she went back to his normal life and started doing what she loved. Inspired by her experiences, she began to write stories about dragons and the importance of acceptance. As she wrote, the amulet rested on her desk, a reminder of her journey and the lessons learned. Every night, she still dreamed of Aaron, who now soared freely in a world where he was celebrated rather than feared. In her heart, Sulie knew that the spirit of the dragon lived on, not just in her dreams, but in the hearts of those who dared to believe in the magic of understanding and friendship.

The Deadly Dinosaur Island

Pui Ching Middle School (Macau), Yu, Chi Lam – 15

Dinosaurs once reigned as overlords until a meteorite hit Earth, ending their era. However, have you ever imagined that futuristic technology could bring dinosaurs back for research? Please don't ask me how I know; I have been to a real one.

A year later, my grandmother passed away, leaving behind a mysterious and ancient box. While packing my belongings, I stumbled upon the box. It was engraved with a strange symbol resembling a snake biting a mouse. The box, made of agarwood, was adorned with many Chinese elements. My grandmother, an adventurer who cherished Chinese culture, had traveled extensively throughout China collecting precious items she adored. Upon opening the box, I discovered a yellow paper with symbols and a map. I cross-referenced the locations highlighted on the map with Google Maps and found it an island in the Pacific Ocean. I realized that this place might be her last wish, so I decided to journey there and uncover its mysteries.

I flew to a neighboring country and rented a small boat to the island. The island was rich in tropical vegetation and I soon got lost in it. I fell asleep under a big tree. When I was sleeping soundly, I felt something pushing me. To my surprise, I saw a monster with a small body, a protruding mouth, and sharp teeth. I was startled and screamed. Looking closely, I suddenly realized that this little creature resembled the legendary dinosaur – Microraptor Restoration. He is so bird-like that I read in a biology book that "birds may even have evolved from him."

I found it a little unbelievable and suspected that I was traveling through time. The little guy barked twice, and when he felt that I posed no threat to him, he left. I secretly followed him to a grassland here there were more and different kinds of dinosaurs.

My heart beat fast as I got closer. I saw a crazy scene. Many dinosaurs are fighting. A giant Tyrannosaurus is fighting some Triceratops. Their shouts made the ground shake. There was so much dust that I couldn't see clearly, but I couldn't look away.

Suddenly, the Microraptor I was following suddenly cried out. I looked back and saw a Tyrannosaurus Rex looking at me. The tremendous feeling of oppression made my legs weak and my throat unable to make a sound. Just as the Tyrannosaurus Rex was about to open its mouth to swallow me, Microraptor Restoration pushed me away. When I came to my senses, I ran madly towards the jungle, trying to get back to the boat on the shore and escape.

A few minutes later, I was lost again. I ran deep into the jungle and saw a very large cave with the words "National Laboratory" written on it.

I walked in and there was no one inside. The scratches on the wall told me there had been a fierce fight. In a lab report, I learned that these were replicas of dinosaurs discovered in China. Staff members performed a dinosaur ecological show on the island. Observe the living conditions of dinosaurs.

Running out of the cave, I followed the footprints back to the shore. I finally figured out why my grandma left me the box: she wanted me to save the dinosaurs.

I knew I had to find a way to protect this ecosystem and the dinosaurs, but first, I had to find a way to get off the island and tell the world about my discovery.

An Unknown Dream

S.K.H Tang Shiu Kin Secondary School, Chui, Ching Yin – 13

Xiang Qi took another sip of coffee, trying to refocus herself in order to remember some dinosaur species in the palebiology test. She looked at the ticking clock. Second by second, time was slowly leaking out of her palm. “Dangit...” She complained. Even so, she kept on mumbling different species, trying to distinguish the species by remembering their fossils. But as the more pages she flipped through, the more of the effects that’s provided by the caffeine wore off. She eventually flipped to the pages which had Chinese dinosaurs and fossils mentioned. Before she could even celebrate, she dropped to the table. Her eyes were getting drowsy. She tried to snap herself out of it but failed miserably.

Everything went black. Then a strong beam of light appeared out of seemingly nowhere. Xiang Qi found herself in a traditional short-sleeved hanfu and a pair of long pants. “Where am I...?” She asked herself. She then noticed someone is using a shovel to find something in the volcano ash. “Probably not the best idea to interrupt him...” She rubbed her eyes as the strong light was extremely painful for her. “My eyes...” she grumbled.

It’s another hard day for the farmer and part-time fossil hunter Yumin in 1996. Under the bright sun during summer and the gruelling volcanic ash that’s heated by the warmth of the sun, drops of sweat slid down from Yumin’s face. He kept on digging into the ash, getting tired minute after minute... dragging his foot in order to continue. It’s just like running on a treadmill, even though the results were sometimes worth it all, but it’s consuming energy as violent as a massacre— or a slaughter house. It just depended on how Yumin looked at it.

As the seemingly endless ash extended into the edge of Yumin’s eyes, his shovel hit something hard— “Maybe a rock? Perhaps it’s a piece of metal, jewellery? No. There’s no way. A small fossil seemed more like it. It probably wouldn’t be worth that much though. Yumin took a fern look at the fossil. “Wait a second... it’s a bit larger than usual... is it perfectly persevered...? No way! Jackpot!” The part-time fossil hunter shouted from the inside out. He bowled down before he held the fossil in his hand, and took a closer look at it. Xiang Qi looked at the situation from a distance, starting to understand what type of dream she’s probably in, unlike those fever dreams she often had. “Hmmm... Maybe it’s something about Chinese dinosaurs, but I can’t put my finger on it though...”

Yumin celebrated as he realised the quality of the fossil. Since he had prospected around Liaoning Province to acquire fossils to sell to individuals and museums, Yumin recognized the unique quality of the specimen. “This quality is unbelievably well-preserved...” He separated the fossil into two slabs, and sold the slabs to two separate museums in China: the National Geographic Museum and the Nanjing Institute of Geography and Paleontology.

As Xiang Qi blinked her eyes, she was suddenly inside the National Geographic Museum. “Woah, that was fast.” The museum seemed normal until a foreign visitor entered the museum, he snapped a few photos before leaving in a hurry. Xiang thinks something... odd. She snapped her eyes, hoping to somehow teleport right to this mysterious foreigner, just like she had just teleported to the museum. She’s then in America. “Wait, America? I swear I was still in China just a while ago... is the foreigner an American...?” She wondered but a piece of newspaper hit her right in the face. “Ouch!” Xiang Qi pulled the newspaper away from her face, and held it with a firm grip before she read it. The newspaper was printed with the words ‘New York Times’. Xiang continued to read through it. “New dinosaur discovered in China!” Xiang Qi flipped open the newspaper, skimming through pages as fast as a machine. “Everything’s still normal for this fossil until Phil Currie realised the significance of the newly discovered Dinosaur in the museum, and named it ‘Sinosauropteryx’, also known as ‘first Chinese lizard wing’.” “Wait a minute... is this about the Chinese dinosaurs in the book...?” She whispered to herself, puzzling all the events together.

But as she was thinking about what’s going next in her dream, she blinked once again. This time, she’s in a construction worker’s uniform. She looked at a worker nearby. “Holy—” She thought to herself as she noticed a large billboard screen with an advertisement on it. “Hm... I’m probably in the modern era right now... just to confirm it...” Xiang walked up to a worker that’s near her. “Sorry, but what’s the year and the time right now? I just can’t remember it.” “Though you should know that, we’ve gone through over half of the year already... whatever, it’s June 2021. we’ve

been continuing to construct the building in the construction site, working all day and night, going on just like usual.” Suddenly, a worker nearby that’s operating in a crane shouted out loud “ Hey! I don’t think that fossil–looking thing isn’t suppose to be here!” They’re not experts, but they know for a fact– that was not supposed to be there.

Eventually, they contacted paleontologists to study the fossil. And after a few days with some fossil data matching along with DNA pairing, a new titanosaur was discovered. A television that’s in the construction site. “Paleontologists in China have discovered a new species of titanosaur, opening the suggestion of the existence from a previously unknown group of titanosaurs in eastern Asia. After all the research for the fossil of the new dinosaur, paleontologists decided to name the unknown titanosaur species as ‘Gandititan cavocaudatus’. In the end, Jiangxi Geological Museum officially announced that the Gandititan cavocaudatus’s remaining fossils were found at a construction site in Ganxian district in Ganzhou, East China’s Jiangxi province on Jan 30, adding a new species to the massive collection of dinosaurs species in mainland China.” The television announced.

Xiang Qi opened her eyes, finding herself laying on the table with her book. She yawned and stretched her body a bit. “That’s a weird dream…” she said before looking at the clock. “Dangit! I’m going to be late!” She quickly brushed her teeth, changed into her uniform, took her school bag and had a quick bite out of a piece of loaf bread before she left the house.

As Xiang Qi made it on time and took the test, she’s met with a long question in the test: Is it still possible to find more fossils in China ? She pondered the question for a bit, but eventually wrote her idea down. “Even though we’ve already discovered many dinosaur species already, since China is less well–explored by palaeontologists, also meaning that maybe there’s even more dinosaur species that we still don’t know. Perhaps… the odds might be large or slim by how we view it. But no matter how slim the odds are, there’s still a possibility. We might not know now, but as they say, ‘patience is the key to success.’ No matter how excited we are, or unsure about the future, only time can tell us about the amazing stories that these fossils will provide. We’ve officially entered a new era… The New Tales of China’s Dinosaurs.”

Dinosaurs in a Metropolis

S.K.H Tang Shiu Kin Secondary School, Wong, Lok Ching – 12

In the bustling city of Hong Kong, amidst the vibrant energy, there lies a dinosaur, waiting to be found.

“Arrgh! Me tired!” Sam whined, dragging his feet along the path. “Sam, we’ve come all the way here to have fun, not to complain,” his dad ordered, trying to keep the mood light.

They hiked up the mountain, the cityscape slowly disappearing behind them. The air was fresh, and the sounds of nature surrounded them. Just as they reached a clearing, something caught Sam's eye. At the corner of their vision, there it was—a dinosaur lying gracefully on the top of the mountain!

Sam's eyes widened in amazement. He ran ahead, his fatigue forgotten. He opened his arms wide, hugging the dinosaur as if he were greeting an old friend. “This is a Sinosauropteryx!” Sam exclaimed, his voice filled with wonder. “Mum, can we please keep it?” he begged, offering the dinosaur a bite of his lettuce.

His mum, slightly taken aback, knelt beside him. “Owning a pet is a huge responsibility, especially owning a dinosaur. Are you sure you can take care of it?” she asked, her tone serious but gentle.

“YES! I’ll feed it, groom it, and even train it! I’ll treat it like family!” Sam said, his excitement bubbling over.

His mum looked at his eager face and then at the dinosaur, which seemed surprisingly tame. “Okay, fine. You can keep it,” she agreed with a smile. Sam beamed with joy and named the dinosaur “Feathers.”

The next day at school, Sam was buzzing with excitement. “Alright class, tomorrow is our annual show and tell. Please bring your most meaningful item to you and introduce it to our class tomorrow,” his English teacher, Mr. Matthew, announced.

Sam knew exactly what he would bring. The following morning, he arrived at school with Feathers by his side. As they walked through the gates, his classmates and teachers stared in awe. Feathers' presence caused quite a stir.

The school was a sprawling complex of modern buildings, with large windows that let in plenty of natural light. The hallways were decorated with colourful student artwork and motivational posters. The smell of freshly baked bread from the cafeteria wafted through the air, mixing with the faint scent of cleaning supplies. The playground outside was filled with the sounds of children laughing and playing, their voices echoing off the walls.

“Dude, why is there a bird in our school? Only an idiot would bring a bird to show and tell!” Leo, the school bully, announced loudly, trying to embarrass Sam.

Suddenly, Feathers lunged towards Leo, roaring loudly. Startled, Leo yelped and instinctively stepped back, but Feathers was undeterred. The dinosaur charged toward him, and in a flash, the situation escalated. Leo, feeling threatened, growled and snapped his jaws in defence. Leo glanced at his arm, a red mark was left on his arm.

“What’s with the commotion here?” Principal Wilkins marched into the classroom, his stern voice cutting through the noise. The students fell silent, their eyes wide with anticipation.

“Principal Wilkins— Sam brought a dinosaur to school for show and tell— and it bit me!” Leo wept. The entire class watched as Leo cried like a baby. “A DINOSUAR??? Oh dear, I’m going to make a phone call.”

Moments later, Wildlife Management and Conservation, Emergency services, the Military were on the scene.

Officer Chan, stationed nearby, quickly coordinated with his team to evacuate the school, and set up a secure perimeter. The school grounds were soon cordoned off, with officers urgently directing students and staff to safety while a helicopter's searchlight swept the area.

Officer Lee's voice trembled as he pointed out the dinosaur near the playground—a small, feathered beast with razor-sharp claws, pacing with a menacing intensity. Suddenly, the dinosaur let out another small roar and charged at a tree, snapping it in half with terrifying force. Officer Chan, his voice steady despite the chaos, alerted animal control to prepare tranquilizers, but the dinosaur's aggression heightened the tension. The team moved cautiously, every step deliberate, as the dinosaur's roars echoed ominously through the schoolyard.

The first tranquilizer dart hit its mark, but instead of calming, the dinosaur became a whirlwind of fury, charging at the team with jaws snapping and tail swinging violently. The officers scrambled to retreat, narrowly avoiding its deadly strikes. Dr. Wong, her hands shaking, called for more tranquilizers, knowing they were running out of time. With backup on the way, the team regrouped, their breaths heavy with fear and determination. The second dart was fired, and after a few agonizing moments, the dinosaur's movements slowed, then it finally collapsed with a ground-shaking thud.

Officer Chan, his voice filled with relief, confirmed the target was down, and the team swiftly prepared for transport. The dinosaur was carefully loaded onto a transport vehicle, surrounded by a vigilant team of veterinarians and animal control officers. As the convoy drove away, the school grounds slowly returned to a semblance of normalcy, with Sam cautiously emerging to witness the aftermath. Tears fell down Sam's face as he watched the convoy drive further and further away from Sam.

"Sam— please! Wake up!" tears went down his parents' cheek," It's been a month— I'm begging you— wake up!!!" Sam rubbed his eyes, "It was all.....a dream?" "Sam! What are you talking about? You've been in a coma for an entire month!" His mother opened her arms, hugging Sam tightly. "NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! FEATHERS!!!!!" Sam cried loudly.

The Night of the Dinosaurs

Shanghai American School Pudong Campus, Cai, Ayden – 11

The small town of Willow Creek is nestled between rolling hills and dense forests, resembling a setting straight out of a storybook. Seriously, have you ever witnessed a night sky so resplendent with stars? It's as if someone has scattered glitter across the cosmos! As I lie in bed, gazing out my window, I can't shake the feeling that something extraordinary awaits just beyond my reach.

At twelve years old, I often feel like an outsider. My family relocated to Willow Creek just a few weeks ago, and I'm still grasping the pace of this unfamiliar environment. My days are consumed with drawing dinosaurs and immersing myself in books about them, but at night? Well, let's just say my imagination runs rampant. I find it nearly impossible to sleep as my mind races with thoughts of T-Rexes and Velociraptors. It's utterly exhausting!

One evening, I decide to explore the dusty attic of our old house. Who knows what treasures might be hidden up there? As I sift through neglected boxes, I suddenly spot something that quickens my pulse—a dinosaur toy! It's a Velociraptor, its colors faded yet still captivating. I lift it and hold it under the moonlight streaming through the attic window. "No way!" I whisper to myself as it begins to emit a faint glow. What kind of enchantment is this?

That night, after dreaming vividly about dinosaurs roaming freely beneath the stars, I awaken to a rustling sound outside my window. What could that be? My heart races with a mix of excitement and trepidation. Is it merely my imagination? Or could it be something more tangible? Compelled by curiosity, I tiptoe to the window and peer outside. "Whoa!" I exclaim as I behold dinosaurs wandering in my backyard! A colossal Brachiosaurus is munching on leaves from a tree while a nimble little Protoceratops darts around as if engaged in a game of tag. This can't be real! Am I dreaming again?

I step outside, feeling the cool night air envelop me like a comforting embrace. "This is surreal!" I murmur to myself in disbelief. Just then, two dinosaurs approach me: Raptor, the playful Velociraptor with bright eyes and an impish grin, and Spike, a gentle Ankylosaurus who exudes an aura of strength and kindness. "Hey there!" Raptor chirps, his voice light and teasing. "You look like you could use some excitement!" "Excitement? You mean like evading predators?" I respond with a nervous chuckle.

Spike chuckles softly. "Don't worry! We're not here to harm you. We're just as curious about you as you are about us." "Seriously? Dinosaurs want to be friends with me?" It's hard to fathom. As we converse, everything feels magical—until Rex makes his entrance. He's a T-rex with razor-sharp teeth and an even sharper demeanor. "What do we have here?" Rex growls menacingly. "A little human playing with his toys? How adorable."

"Uh-oh," I mutter under my breath as tension fills the air. Rex appears ready for confrontation. Spike nudges me gently with his armored back. "We need to find safety," he whispers urgently. "What do you mean?" "There's a legendary refuge known as the 'Valley of the Lost Dinosaurs.' It's rumored to be a sanctuary from predators like Rex." "Let's go!" My heart pounds as we embark on this unexpected adventure.

We navigate through towering ferns that brush against our skin and cross a rushing river teeming with curious Plesiosaurs peeking out from below. "This is exhilarating!" I exclaim as we splash through the water. As we approach the valley's entrance, Rex corners us beneath the ancient trees. "You think you can escape me?" he snarls.

"Wait! We can outsmart him!" The idea flashes into my mind like a light bulb turning on. "What do you mean?" Raptor asks, looking at me expectantly. "I've read extensively about dinosaurs! We can utilize your strengths against him!" With newfound determination, I devise a strategy: Raptor distracts Rex with his agility while Spike uses his powerful tail to create obstacles in Rex's path.

"Let's do this!" I shout as we spring into action. In this moment of crisis, everything falls into place; believing in ourselves ignites bravery within us all. Our fear transforms into resourcefulness as we collaborate to outmaneuver Rex.

As dawn breaks over the horizon and bathes everything in golden light, we celebrate our victory over Rex—until one by one, my dinosaur friends begin to fade back into the recesses of my imagination. "No! Don't go!" I cry out as they start to disappear. In this bittersweet moment, I realize how much they've taught me about friendship and the importance of believing in dreams.

Awakening back in my room as sunlight streams through my window, I find that the Velociraptor toy still glows softly on my bedside table—a tangible reminder of everything that transpired. Later that evening, gazing up at the night sky filled with stars once more, I feel a renewed sense of wonder and possibility coursing through me.

“What if it was all real?” I ponder aloud, excitement bubbling within me. With one last flicker of moonlight over my toy Velociraptor, I smile because deep down inside, I know that sometimes dreams can come true if you believe hard enough. And who knows? Perhaps tonight will bring another adventure!

Crushed Under Silence

Shanghai American School Pudong Campus, Shi, Kevin – 11

As I crash through the woods, gripping my blade, I only then realize, it's tipped with blood. Not theirs, but mine. Now I finally understand. Their words... *"you'll end here, no matter where you came from."* Now, as I smell my own flesh, I realize where I am headed. The distant memory of the fear in my past came. *I am going to realm 2.*

The sirens wail behind me as my entire world starts to fade away. I try to keep them open, but my eyelids feel heavy, and soon enough, all light has been drowned away.

"Guys! The kid's awake!" a voice shouts from below me, deep and gravelly. As more heavy footsteps emerge, I get chills down my back as I realize that I've finally made it. I've escaped earth, so where am I now? As I wake up, I realize that I'm floating above metal dinosaurs! My heart pounds as I look around. Hills all around form urban living areas, and for some reason, I'm floating in the center of a huge circular landing.

"So... where am I?" I inquire, surprising myself with a deep voice, just like them around me. As they look up, many sigh in disappointment, and as they look at each other, one by one, only then does someone reply.

"You don't need to know." An old-looking entity with ionized copper skin replied mysteriously.

"Why? Just tell me, there can't be such harm done." I ask childishly. As I looked down, I realized that everyone was grumbling with displeasure. Without a word, my platform slowly begins to sink, seamlessly melting into the ground. All this silence, especially from a huge crowd, was so eerie, and the thought of living in this obscure realm without knowing the truth seemed truly unbearable.

Two other dinosaurs come up, walking in identical stances, with their velociraptor tails swinging so wildly that it seemed aggressive. Then, they pulled me by the shoulders, eventually bringing me to the biggest hill around. "Here'll be it. Step in, relax, and enjoy." The tall one greets in a tone too friendly for our surroundings.

Another oldish dinosaur escorts me to a room, and the drills and equipment there remind me of the horrible childhood memories of going to the doctors. An intimidating triceratops therapist comes and harshly declares, "I just need one thing from you. If something happens to you, and you leave this realm, would you tell anyone about it?"

What's his motive? "Why would you ask something like that?"

He takes a deep breath in, as if he had expected this. "Go ask the boss. He's the one who's got all the answers."

Hearing this, I realize that the answers to my questions can only be revealed by 'the boss', given the reluctance to answer me by the other dinosaurs. "Where?" I asked, believing the therapist was telling the truth.

"You'll know it when you see it," the therapist replied mysteriously, "now answer my first question."

"Okay, that's obvious. I would tell someone where I came from if I somehow landed myself in another realm, right?" I asserted.

"No. You will *not* tell anyone about the things you've encountered, and the experiences you've been through here. Now, may I ask again, if something happens to you, and you somehow leave this realm, would you tell anyone about it?" The therapist slyly responds, with a grin on his face.

Suddenly, I feel a jerk of movement, as I stand up, angry about how much they were hiding. "Yes. I will not conform to what you say, because it is simply inhumane. I will oppose any attempt to erase my memories of this ugly, drab realm." I sucked in another breath, preparing to continue my rant, but was cut off.

"Wrong, I'll be nice one more time. What is your answer to my question?"

"Yes, I will talk about realm 2."

He groans in frustration, and then the pain comes.

It's a buzz in my brain, a feeling nobody else would be able to describe. Something you can't control, that's just in there, existing. If I could, I would dig my hand into my scalp to take that thing out. This will drive me insane. Insanity—that's it. There, I decided that I can't take it anymore. I open my dinosaur mouth, wanting to let out the

scream of the century. Instead, fire spits out. The therapist gasps, and I get the feeling I wasn't supposed to know how to do that. As I let out more anger, the next few minutes pass like a blur. In between my rage and fire, I hear screams. Some call help. Some despair. And some admiration.

I watch in satisfaction as this hill burns down, finally catching my breath. All around me, there is destruction, chaos, and madness. *Are you sorry, my little angel asks. The ghoul replies, my chains have been broken, my barriers destroyed. The monster in my soul has been kept away too long. It is today that I let go.* Saying this to myself, I wonder what has gotten to me. Insanity. Just like before, with the buzz in my brain, I have no control of anything whatsoever.

"Where's the therapist," I screamed, "where is everybody?" Once again, almost uncontrolled, there is a pain deep inside me, ready to well up into another ball of fire. I try to look around but suddenly, a deep boom sounds from behind me, along with a crowd of hatred.

"I said... what is the answer to my question?" A familiar voice speaks from within.

Scared, I express, "n-n-no s-sir. I-I will n-not tell."

"That's right," the therapist announces. As I regain composure, screams of protest emerge from the crowd, rambling on about the 'new kid' destroying their home, once beautiful and purposeful, but now just a mere pile of rubble.

Unfortunately, I know that this rambling wasn't just annoyance, but true hatred. Something so deep that there is no pulling them out. Something so powerful that there is no greater motivation. Something so rare that I did not know how to fight back.

And so, I ran. A moment later, I heard another bolt of lightning strike behind me, confirming I'd made the right decision. Oh, the fear. The fear of the unknown. I wanted to turn around and see what all the racket was about but then promised myself that not knowing was better than knowing.

So then, I kept running as fast as I could. For a while, things were fine; I was in good shape. But a few minutes later, tiredness swept over me, and just as I thought that things couldn't get any worse, a bolt of lightning hit my tail, lighting it on fire. Now, there is pure panic within me, and telling from their expressions, my attackers know it.

I keep on running, the fire on my tail threatening to swallow me whole. Looking at what has happened so far, I find that I have only a few minutes until it travels onto my body. *I need to find water fast!* Lost in my thoughts, I almost miss a water fountain I had run past earlier.

Phew, I think, making a U-turn and sprinting inside the entrance to the hill with the water fountain. I put my tail in the water, and after turning around, I realized that nobody had followed me in. I looked outside, and saw many scared faces, hidden behind their masks of anger.

Something weird is going on, I think, and as I turn around, I realize just what. A Dino about double my size walks down the grand staircase, but only then do I realize who this is, from the scared attackers, the swagger in his step, and his cocky attitude: **The boss.** *Perfect,* I think, *I can finally get some answers!*

So, I carefully approach him, looking up at his towering build, only then do I realize that there are wrinkles in his face. Those wrinkles, however, are not from age, but from anger. Before I can react, he takes a swipe at my face, landing a blow right beneath my eye. My blood drips like tears, and as I run for the exit, I realize it's blocked by my previous attackers, smiling at me.

He raises a claw, and just before it was lights-out, a noise in my brain interrupts me, "*go left, then get behind him.*" I immediately recognize the triceratops therapist's voice, and I execute the command, buying myself more time. "*You'll know it when you see it.*" The triceratops's voice booms again, then a buzz of static sounds. The boss starts turning, and at the same time, words appear on his back: "*Password?*" Puzzled, I don't know what to do. His claw swipes again, and my blood drips too. "*DNA extracted. Travelling to realm 3.*" Words appear again, and this time, I'm not given a single moment to think.

I've woken up in paradise.

Dinosaurs, Game On

Shanghai American School Pudong Campus, Wu, Yuk Pak – 13

Opening my eye while my head was still on the desk, I soon realized it was break time and I've been sleeping the whole English class. Meg was just beside me staring at the blue sky outside the window.

"Wanna go out and breathe some fresh air?" I suddenly suggested, "And help me about my Chinese history work." After some seconds/ or minutes, Meg slowly departed from his seat unwillingly while yawning at the same time. We went out to the corridors and started walking with no destinations.

"Where are we Going?" Meg slowly squeezed out the words.

"Just walking around." I replied back.

We somehow end up at our Chinese History classroom when we stopped. The lights were off, and the air was full of dust. "It seems like last class was about a few years ago!" Meg suddenly brightened his mood and spoke. It is true though; the last class I took was about when I'm in 5th grade, "I don't know why but the school just stopped Chinese history class, and nobody ever talked about it since then." I added while swiping the dust off my chair. Break times over, we figured out that there is a new Chinese History classroom, which wasn't the one that we're in, we ran there in less than a minute blaming each other at the same time for not knowing where the classroom was.

"We're talking about the history of the Chinese Dragons today," the teacher started his 45-minute-long boring speech averagely, time crawled slowly through the dragons. I thought it was interesting, unfortunately, I finally picked up my book that was covered in dust and started to read. Meanwhile Meg was looking around the classroom unusually, "What is this smell? Plus, isn't now supposed to be daytime?" Meg whispered, I looked down at my watch then quickly turned my head facing the window, it was black, darkness covered the sky as well as my faint heart. I did realize the strangeness when I stepped in the classroom, the curtains were closed and weird rocks at the corners. The teacher came up to me, walking slowly, but with a sense of oppression, just when I was wondering, I appeared in a cave, Meg was still sitting beside me and the teacher was up front writing stuff on the rocks.

"What is happening?" I tapped Meg, "you didn't listen? There is a test coming up! The teacher is now explaining the rules." Just when I was about to ask where I was, a mysterious power pushed all of us outside, the sunshine and fresh air came into view, soon afterwards there was a loud roar from somewhere close.

"Ready set GO!" The teacher shouted, "the exam starts now!"

I was puzzled but everyone else started to run to the boxes at the sides, I followed them and soon realized that there are names on each one. The boxes were lined up in a circle, so I found mine within seconds and opened it. Inside was a card with the word "mission" on it, a watch, as well as a wood-and-rock spear. I picked up the card and started reading carefully, "your mission: steal the dragon eggs, Chinese dragon eggs worth 5 points, normal dragon eggs worth 3 point. Pass for 3 points, A for 5 points. You can team up with others. Field: the forest in front of you. Notice: Everyone has their own mission. Tips: THERE IS ONE EXAMINEE THAT IS STOPPING YOU TO COMPLETE YOUR MISSION. Time to complete 30 minutes. After you take the egg, come back here. Good luck Chester." I stuffed my card in my pocket and took my spear, the first thing that popped into my mind was to find Meg. When I saw his box, nothing was there nor as he, so I walked into the forest.

After piling through the leaves, I found an egg lying peacefully in its nest, it's a dragon's egg! Strangely, I didn't see any sign of a dragon nearby. Without thinking, I picked it up and ran. "BOOM!" I fell on the ground fiercely with pain in my ankles, I looked back, a rope was tightly tied to my feet. Standing in front of me was...Meg. I realized he's the one that is stopping me. "Meg! It's you! Why are we here? What is this test?" I asked him while breathing rapidly, "it's awkward to see you here, but this is a place for worriers, just like the dragons, with braveness

as well as mighty powers. Sorry my friend, but there is my last chance to prove myself. Sorry.” After saying this, he grabbed his bat and swung it on my face when I was still trying to understand what he was saying.

“Hahahahaha!” I woke up seeing the teacher standing in front of me holding a book and Meg giggling beside me. It’s obvious that the bat was the book that went on my face, I can still feel the pain and could imagine the mark. “Chester!” The teacher screamed “what have you learned today I’m your dream huh!” Well, I actually did, I felt that dragons were not that scary, it’s human nature that would hurt, friends were useless compared to desires.

Unearthing Dreams: A Farm Boy's Journey to Paleontology

Shanghai Community International School, Simon, Wybie – 13

The discovery of a young boy's journey to the realm of the ancient fossils was discovered in the diary of ichén (奕辰). The diary spans from 2011 – 2025, although not all pages were recovered

October 29, 2011

Today is a cloudy day. Father bought me this new journal because I ran out of pages in the old one. In school we learned some new vocabulary words. I didn't know any of them, who knew grade 9 would be so hard? Today we'll have to help father with the new cabbage field.

October 31, 2011

Today is a stormy day. I am astounded by the strange object that we found. When father and I dug in the field we found some bones. I think they are animal bones, but father believes they are human. He doesn't want to talk about although I'm not sure why. He's always been like this. It's frustrating but I think he's just worried.

November 1, 2011

Today is a rainy day. Together finally called the police about the bone. A policeman will arrive in a couple days to examine the bone. The officer on the phone instructed us to put on gloves and put the bone into a plastic bag. I am nervous but strangely excited about the possibility of this situation being something bigger. Father is stoic, but I can tell he's nervous.

November 5, 2011

Today is a windy day. The policeman examined the bone and said it may be human. He told us it looked like a hip bone, but he wasn't quite sure. The policeman said he would take it to examine it so we should expect an answer in 1–2 months.

He packed up the plastic bag and went off in his yellow striped police car. Me and little sister Fei-Fei feared him. Fei-Fei started crying big crocodile tears. He was so tall and thin with tiny, piercing eyes.

November 10, 2011

Today is a windy day. We got a letter from the police station much sooner than expected. They said it wasn't a human bone, but it didn't match any animal bone in the area either. So, a specialist from Shanghai will test it for any other matches and take a closer look. The bone will take 3 days to be shipped. Me and Fei-Fei are excited.

Father took mom into the kitchen to discuss it. He's anxious that something is wrong and there is a crime scene, meanwhile mom doesn't care as long as we were safe.

November 11, 2011

Today is a mild day. Father told us to clean the pig sty and remove the weeds. The entire time while working I could only think if we'll get answers soon.

Perhaps it's the old neighbor, I haven't seen her for a while anyway. Or perhaps it's a deer. Or it's a totally new animal.

November 13, 2011

Today is a bright sunny day. So much has been going on I completely forgot to write in here. They tested the bones, and nothing matched.

That's why they sent the scientists to inspect the place where we found them. I can't believe they are coming to our farm. I have been so excited ever since we got the news.

November 15, 2011

It's a rainy day, and the experts are delayed for a week. Fei-Fei and I are miserable. Father says not to worry, but I can't shake the thought: What if they don't come at all? It haunts me, though at least it's better than the ocean of work ahead.

November 23, 2011

Today is a sunny day. The scientists came. They looked tired at first, then came in and discussed something with father in the kitchen.

When they all went outside me, and Fei-Fei wanted to follow but mother told us to stay inside to do homework. Apparently, there are a lot of bones that aren't known to science in the cabbage field. Father is mad that he won't be able to harvest this year but I'm secretly glad. It is tedious, hard work which only he enjoys.

November 24, 2011

Today is a windy day. The scientists started digging and found even more bones. Father and the experts then went into the kitchen to discuss the situation. I am too curious about the secrets they are keeping to even sleep at night. I just wish they'd stop treating me as a child.

Dec 4, 2011

Today is a windy day. 3 more scientists came to dig up the bones. Apparently, they are dinosaur bones. It is so unreal that I keep thinking I'm dreaming. Today me and Fei-Fei snuck around the house right after school to watch them.

It is so fascinating to experience that it makes my head spin with joy! They found a couple more bones which was surprising to hear. From the corner a large boulder like one caught my eye, this could be hip bones. Who knew there was a whole avalanche of bones right under our feet? They handled them so delicately and with such care as if they were glass.

Dec 6, 2011

I snuck into the tent where they stored the bones. The earthy smell hit me as I entered. They were in glass cases which made them look like the richest treasures in the world. Which maybe they were. I looked closer, and I could see something. I saw a bone that looked a little bit like a human spine. But coming out if that were thinner bones. Could it be? Could those be really wings?

Dec 7, 2011

Today is a windy day. I am so happy I could sing. Today me and Fei Fei were peeking at their work one of them noticed us and waved us over. I thought we were in trouble, but he was super friendly. He invited us to watch him work.

We kneeled and watched him carefully. The bone was small and brittle. It had a beige-brown color with a couple of cracks. And marks. He told us that these bones are surround 16.5 million years old. I can't even imagine the number, that's how big it is, I asked him what dinosaur these bones belong to.

He responded, "We don't know, our team thinks it's an undiscovered species. We want to name it Sinosauropteryx." I frowned at the name: "China dragon bird?"

He chuckled "Yes, since it has feathers! This opens the doors to hundreds of new theories of what's been undiscovered. What else is still out there? We have discovered something tremendous of the ancient world".

I asked him how long it takes to become a bone digger. He chuckled and told me it is called a paleontologist and that it takes 4-6 years. I was about to ask another question when mother called me inside. Rats. She got mad and said that we shouldn't bother them while they're working. Fei-Fei started crying again but I wasn't bothered. I couldn't even listen; I was just too distracted by all the information that whirled in my mind.

Dec 9, 2011

Today is a rainy day. Mother forbade us from going out to see them and sadly they don't have any books about paleontologist. But in school they do have one book about dinosaurs although it is sadly taken, I guess I must wait. Although I am yearning to just go out and see the site, but I know not to disobey mother.

Dec 10, 2011

Today is a hazy day. I finally got the book, but I already have it finished. Maybe father will drive me to the city to get one. It is so interesting, all the facts and information. But there is so much information out there. I wish I could become a paleontologist so I can help discover the world of dinosaurs.

Dec 11, 2011

Today, Father took me to the city to buy books. The rustling and bustling overwhelms me. I got three books and learned that last year, the Asilisaurus was discovered. A large dinosaur with a long tail, legs and neck was found. The picture looks like a stretched out dog. Although finding 200 bones, no teeth were found, and that mystery only deepens my desire to learn more

May 3, 2025

Today is the sunniest of all days. I am now 27 and I am starting first ever day on site in Jiangxi. Since my childhood, more than 40 dinosaur species have been found in the province of Liaoning. Including more than 24 pterosaurs – winged reptiles. All my life has been dedicated to this art, to this craft.

Even since my childhood. Although I thought I had lost this diary where I found my passion, but I found it in an old box. How odd? I wish I could tell little me how great he would do. How many dreams we would achieve. I am a happy man.

Discovery

Tai Kwong Hilary College, Chan, Ching Hang Lucas – 12

As I woke up, I immediately headed to the river for a refreshing morning bath. Looking down on the clear crystalized reflection on the water, my small figure which was covered in orange fur, and a long, majestic furry tail came into clear sight. I leap into the icy water and relax myself. After five relaxing minutes, I climbed back on the riverside and grabbed a leaf to dry myself, while doing so, my other family members got within my eyesight, my mom, dad, and brother. We are sinosauropteryx, the very last of our kind, as the others have all gone extinct a few million years ago, whereas my ancestors survived by escaping to this island before our species went extinct. This was an isolated small island, habited only by our family and some animals. Apparently, near this island, there is another large continent. Nevertheless, the world outside the island was full of mysteries, as other sinosauropteryx had never left the island to explore in fear of death. I, however, fear not death, but fear living in a pitiful life of being trapped inside a small island like this, thus it is my dream to one day leave this island to set on a grand adventure outside the island.

During dinner, I proposed my idea to my family, hoping for their approval, however, they refused to let me leave, reasoning that they were concerned for my safety. I completely disregarded them, and in a flash of anger, I decided to depart that night. I walked slowly to the coast of the island. The strong wind blew the leaves around as I dragged the heavy tree that fell just a few days ago, which I had customized to be a sturdy raft I believed would make its way to the nearby continent. With a leap of faith, I hopped on the raft with much uncertainty, and at the same time with much confidence. As the strong wind blew the raft further and further away from the island, I heard three voices coming from the coast. "Come back home safely!". Their voices were still heard even in the strong and fierce wind.

As I navigated deeper into the crystal like ocean, my journey forward brought forth many challenges, ranging from fierce windstorms to torrential rain. Though there were many hardships and much more to come, my will and determination did not dwindle in the slightest. After probably three days, I finally saw it: solid land. Presumably, I had just entered the nearby continent. The coast of the land was covered with grains of golden sand, with the water as clear as a polished mirror. Up to the point that I could see the depths of the deep ocean. This land was more magnificent than any land I had ever seen. Though a part of me refused to leave this beautiful coastline, I still decided to stick to my original reason for even being there, *to explore*. And to visit this magnificent beach once again, I set out further down this mysterious land.

As I walked further down the beach, I noticed a large vibrant emerald forest towering over me, with the trees casting shadows on me. With every single step I took, the scent of Mother Nature filled my lungs, reminding me of my home island. As I continued to navigate my way through the lush forest, I noticed a hidden wonder, a waterfall spilling into a crystal clear lake. After wandering deeper towards the very core of the jungle, I noticed a brilliant discovery: a small burrow containing many tasty treats, and a horde of lizards. As I caught them individually, I lifted them from the friable soil to my beak-like mouth. As I finished my long awaited feast, I lay comfortably on the large tree trunk behind me, with the position where I was facing the bright, luminous moon hanging up on the sky lazily. The world outside my small trapped island was great. I pat my tiny palms on my clean white belly and slowly fall into the world of dreams.

Just before I was about to sleep, an agonizing pain pierced through my arm, and before I had time to run away, a large net swiftly swallowed me, removing any chances of escaping. Not long after, overwhelming fatigue filled my body with astonishing speed. My legs felt like they were disconnected from other parts of my body, and my arms

soon followed. Not long after, so did my head and brain itself, my head felt ever heavier as if it could fall asleep anytime. The next thing I knew, I woke up in an unknown place. It had gray walls, and it was moving. Aside from this, conversations were happening from behind the wall facing forwards. As my eyes went fully wide open, a large, tall creature approached me, standing on two legs. It had long arms, long legs, and pitch black hair on the top of its head. And it pulled out an object sharper than the stinger of a bee, with liquid dripping off of it, and inserted it in my arm.

The second time I woke up, I was in a lush green forest, as if everything was merely just a horrible dream. I walked along the wind flattened grass, which led me toward three shadowy figures. Upon closer inspection, they were my family. They didn't begin to move until I moved closer to them. What has happened though? The thought hung in my mind. How were they here? Could it be that the past two days of my adventure were just a dream? No, it felt too real for it to be a dream. Unable to conclude, I simply accepted the reality placed in front of me and walked forward.

The next two days, I slowly accepted the miraculous reality of my family just being on this island. The days were fun, just like how they were when we were back on our island. Me and my brother would play catch and hunt lizards together. Though the days were fun, I couldn't help but notice that the movements of my family felt stiff and weird, everytime they moved for no longer than five minutes, they'd stop moving and stand silently until another ten seconds when they became active again. That night, my family and I were walking down the stoney mountain steps, when suddenly, my brother tripped, and the skin on his stomach was torn apart. His wound didn't contain flesh, but rather, his wound revealed a hard cold silver colored surface. He didn't bleed blood, but black fluid. I didn't know how, but they were just replicas of my family.

Immediately, I started to run westwards, where my home island was located. I could not linger here anymore, this place, though containing beautiful terrain, was far too dangerous. Suddenly, a group of two legged creatures approached me. Four of them carried a black long object aimed at me, and another four who wore white coats. I did not know what they were, but my guts told me that they weren't something friendly. I ran for it, at the moment that I moved my limbs. Three hard objects pierced my right leg, left arm, and my back. Despite the agonizing pain running through my body, I carried on westwards. With every step I took, blood splurled. The tall figures walked away saying "Got him, Dr Enrico."

Heavy snow fell as I dragged my disheveled and hole filled body across the blanket of snow covering the landscape. The blood leaking out from my body creates a contrasting color of rose blood and pure snow. Pain and fatigue filled the entirety of my body, then I was wrapped with the sickening feeling of my legs no longer supporting me, and I fell head first onto the stone cold rock. I pondered on the question I've been having since I came to the island. If I listened to my family and didn't go to the island, would I wind up happier by staying on the island, and live a wistful life without knowing how life outside of the island is, or be happier exploring the unknown in pursuit of my thirst of knowing what's outside the island? "Come back home safely!" The phrase echoed in my brain, but the fact is, I couldn't, I couldn't come back home. My blood poured more and more, I could feel the sensation of my life leaving me slowly. The warmth of my life was being enveloped in the daunting and icy cold arms of death. The moonlight shines brightly, casting a bright yellow light upon me, with the blanket of stars that seemed to just stretch towards infinity. The cool night sky demeanor seemingly eased my pain, and I closed my eyes, with my mouth stretching to form a beatific smile. I'd rather explore the ends of the world than be trapped on an island. I had no regrets.

T-Rex

Tai Kwong Hilary College, So, Jat Tung – 13

Something was wrong. Very wrong. But it was Alex's idea to hike in the first place, which wasn't that surprising.

Jordan never wanted to come. But Alex insisted, she always did, saying they should do something meaningful. "Jordan, we're fifteen, get a life!" Alex would say. And yet, Jordan always went along with it. But there was something off today, not just today, but there seemed to always have a nagging feeling that Jordan felt everytime she looked into Alex's eyes. As if her sweet smile would always twist into a dark sinful sneer.

It had been a total of thirty minutes of trying. While hiking on the bumpy trails, Jordan tried talking about school gossip, plans for high schoolanything you can think of—but Alex didn't seem to care at all, and something was off about it.

Alex did not answer, her gaze cold as ever, unfazed, walking in front of her while Jordan was a few steps behind. A colossal rock chamber stood in front of them. Jordan stopped at her tracks, there was a feeling, a feeling that seemed to lash out of the great cave, a scream, pulling her into the unknown, the unwanted.

Stepping on some stone steps, Jordan could only manage to blurt out, "Alex?" But before Jordan could say anything else, a sudden shove made her slip and fall. Her eyes widened, the world seemed to be flipped upside down. For a brief moment she saw Alex staring at her own hands in shock.

THUD, a piercing pain hit her body.

Light flashed before her eyes. As she found herself running in a place she's never been before. She could feel rough sand between her toes. Her chest pumping and beating. Legs swollen from top to bottom, blood dripping everywhere, each drop dissolving in the sand. The place was filled with smoke, clouding her vision. She tried gasping for air; how much, she tried to scream, but the only thing that came out was a gasp.... Her body leaned against a cold stone wall. Only leaving a memory of the faint drops of rain, shattering down to the floor. It rained, LOUDER, roaring, hammering in her ears.

Another flash came before her eyes. There was a puddle in front of Jordan, reflecting her face and the ceiling of a stone cave. She was some kind of a strange creature, with beady eyes, tiny hands, and there were bite marks on her neck, swollen and red. She assumed it might have been the "her" that she is seeing last breaths. Another face of a creature stood in front of her, killing her.

Then, once more, another flash hit her face. Making Jordan sprang up gasping, gripping tight on a piece of soft fabric, which now, she realised, was a blanket. In the damp room, she looked around, it was a hospital. Coming back to her senses, she tried remembering what had come to her. First, she was hiking with her friendAlex. She pushed her. There was danger in Alex, but she couldn't remember quite why. Or maybe she didn't want to. No. Jordan needed to do something, they were both stuck in this endless cycle. Jordan decided she was doing this not just for her

own survival, but the people that were killed in countless lives. And she would not fail to keep fighting. She swung her legs to the side of the bed. Her toes touching the cool floor. Moving her right leg first, then she tried moving the other. Reaching to the door knob, she ran outside the door. She could hear nurses calling after her but they were too late, their voices were muffled by the wind. Breathless, Jordan looked around, she could feel glances from people, but she couldn't care any less.

Walking alone on the streets, she tried recalling where the cave was. Red lanterns hung above her, giving off a warm glow, as she found herself having occasional feelings of déjà vu washing over her, making everything strangely familiar. Going through the noisy bridges and streets, she arrived by stepping on the same stone steps that led her to the cave.

As Jordan went into the dimly lit cave, she could hear water dripping, one of her feet stepping on a puddle. Next to her she peered in closely as she read the words on a stone wall, her hands followed the carved patterns, with dried blood stains splattered on it. She wasn't quite sure what it was, but it was a writing, about a prophecy of life. Then, she read the words out loud, "When the timer ends with zero, the betrayer's fate is sealed." Below her was a timer that flickered blue..... five minutes and ten seconds.

Suddenly, she heard footsteps, a figure came out of nowhere.

"You knew didn't you? That you had to kill me. " Jordan's eyes filled with hatred. Her heart clenched with disappointment looking at the person who was once her best friend. Suddenly, she remembered the other face of the creature when she was in the hospital. Jordan's eyes narrowed, " It's.... you? Don't do this—"

"Do you even think we have a choice, Jordan? It's a prophecy. And guess what?" sighed Alex, her eyes turning dark, leaving nothing but darkness, " You died in every. Single. Life. One of us lives, one of us dies, the clock's ticking."

Alex's eyes glanced at the timer on the stone wall. It was a reminder of their fate that Jordan had to face. Alex came here first, and she knew what had to be done.

Pulling out a pocket knife, Alex slid the knife across Jordan's arm. Jordan winced in pain, blood poured out and the cut was deep under her skin. Reacting quickly, she pulled Alex's hair, slamming her to the wall with her other hand. Alex shrieked.

Three minutes.

"You're crazy.." Jordan said, panting between words, her feet stepping back, trying to digest what was happening in front of her. Before Jordan could react, a sudden jab hit her stomach, the knife stabbing right through her body.

"You can't win Jordan, no matter how much you try, "Alex breathed, pulling out the knife and walking to the cave mouth. Jordan, with a sudden gasp, her body hit the floor with a thud. Zero.

In her lifeless form, she curled up on the floor, her fingers trying to reach for her phone that was inches away, her eyelids turning heavy. She wanted to say something, to call for help, but blood pooled out of her mouth leaving her choking as blood splattered on the floor.

So this was the prophecy, being killed in every single life of hers, Jordan thought. In that moment, life flashed before Jordan's eyes, seeing each and every time line in front of her, each life of hers being killed again and again. In one of her visions, she trusted Alex, allowing her into her herd. But as food was scarce, Alex turned her back on Jordan, eliminating her for competition for her very own good. Jordan wanted to stop the cycle, she wanted to stop Alex, she wanted to do so much more, she couldn't die here, she just couldn't.

Suddenly, Jordan felt her body was burning with heat, as if someone had set herself on fire, burning her to the flesh every second, each limb stretching, melting apart. Scales started to form on her body, her feet gripping onto the stone floor screaming in pain. Then with a sudden stop, she opened her eyes again, looking at a puddle in front of her to see who it was...she was no longer human.

This was her fight, and she is willing to do anything to win.

A Moment Frozen in Stone

The British International School Shanghai, Low, Xin Yu Avelyn – 13

Clink, clink, clink.

The sweltering sun blazed above with an unforgiving intensity, as heat clung to me like a second skin. Gleaming beads of perspiration lined my forehead, trembling pearls that swelled until gravity claimed it. My calloused hands, roughened by years of labor, moved the hammer and pick in a steady rhythm, each strike with precision and focus.

Clink, clink, cli—

The tip of my pick chipped away at a large, hardened piece of the compacted earth. Beneath the jagged fragment of rock I had dislodged, something unmistakable caught the light—a lustrous, curved surface, etched with faint, intricate patterns. This was the moment I had been waiting for—not the lectures, the hours poring over books, the years of refining my techniques. The thrill of revelation flowed through me, replacing my fatigue with a new sense of adrenaline. Brushing away the loosened earth with trembling hands, the shape became clearer: the unmistakable ridge of a fossilised bone, perfectly intact, without a trace of dirt on it. *That’s odd*, I thought. Fossils were supposed to be caked with layers of dust, a testament to its age and the millennia they had spent entombed in the earth’s embrace. Instead, this one glistened in the light of the sun, illuminating its surroundings and stood out amid its lustreless scenery.

Captivated, I reached out to trace its ridges and curves with my hands. The instant my fingers made contact, the ground beneath me shifted as though it was no longer solid. The familiar desert landscape blurred and warped with the background, and as the earth gave away beneath me, I was swept under a wave of darkness.

Fragments of reality gradually pieced itself back together, distorted shapes swirling in my vision. Dancing colours flitted everywhere; a piercing beam of brilliance broke through my stupor, bringing me to my senses. My eyelids fluttered sluggishly, and the world around me swam into focus. The ground beneath me wasn’t the familiar, rough texture of the sunbaked earth—it was damp and springy. I glanced up. At first, everything was a blur—a swirl of muted greens and golds, shimmering and shifting like a mirage. I blinked hard, and as the haze began to dissolve, I was met with a breathtaking sight. An immense canopy thrived across the sky, soft, ethereal light filtering through them, dotting the canopy with flecks of illumination. The leaves themselves painted the scene in hues of emerald and amber, morning dew glistening atop every leaf. It dawned on me—I wasn’t at the excavation site anymore. *Where am I?*

Swish.

I jerked my head towards the sound. An impossibly large figure emerged from the shadows. My breath hitched as I took in its towering form, every inch of it radiating a raw, primal power. Its scales shimmered faintly, catching light in all assortments of tints. Its head swung towards me, its eyes resembling round, glassy orbs filled with molten lava. A ridge of bone-like spines jutted along its back; their edges tipped with what seemed like bioluminescent crystals. Unconsciously, I reached out my fingers and grazed the surface of its scales, crescent-shaped plates arranged in a vertical pattern. This specimen—it was unlike anything I read in ancient Chinese tales. Suddenly, a deep, resonant rumble started to tremble the ground—A bold declaration: I was standing in *its* space, not mines. Then, with a powerful movement, it charged.

I squeezed my eyes, arms reflexively raised to brace for impact. The hulking mass hurled itself towards me, each pounding footstep echoing in my ear. *Is this it?* I shut my eyes, bracing myself for oblivion...

Nothing happened. Stunned, my eyes cracked open, adjusting to the light; I was not dead. The ground beneath me was torn apart, deep gashes in the earth marking the path where the beast had barrelled through. It had charged right through me, as if I were a mere wisp of air.

My eyes trailed after the footsteps, and an infant, no larger than a baby kangaroo, laid sprawled on the forest floor squealing in delight. It was the splitting image of the earlier dinosaur. The infant scrambled to its feet, letting out a shriek of joy as it pressed its tiny form against its protector's towering leg. The great beast lowered its head to the infant, its rough, scarred snout caressing the tiny ridges of the smaller one's body. It nudged its young forward, their massive forms vanishing into the tangled depths of the jungle. I stared, awestruck by this show of love. It struck me—I wasn't part of this world. This was before ancient china, before their settlement, before humans existed.

Yet, as I lingered in the warmth of the moment, an unsettling silence settled in the air. Out of nowhere, the Forrest came to a standstill—there was no rustling of leaves, no gentle whisper of the wind. The stillness pressed against me, thick and suffocating.

Thud. Thud. Thud.

My heartbeat resonated loudly in my oppressive surroundings, each beat thrumming with anguish and an overwhelming sense of foreboding.

Thud. Thud. Thud.

A shift in the air caught my attention. In the distance, hazy shapes began to take form. The air grew thick with tension, an almost tangible weight pressing down on me. As the shapes drew closer, their outlines sharpened, resembling jagged rocks. Behind each shape trailed a tail of fire that lit up the sky, leaving molten scars across the light blue canvas. Meteorites—blazing with intense heat, plummeting towards the earth.

Boom.

The first meteorite struck from afar, sending a shockwave that knocked me off my feet. I scrambled to my hands and knees, eyes wide with terror. The darkening sky, once a soft tapestry of cotton clouds amidst a pale blue background, was ablaze with fiery trails. More meteorites rained down, their blazing arcs inching closer and closer. The once vibrant landscape was now a chaotic inferno. I could hear the distant roars of creatures, their calls filled with panic and terror, desperate attempts to flee from the impending destruction. This was it—the end of their world.

And then, through the chaos, a familiar cry pierced the air. Dread curled in my chest, and my body moved of its own accord, rushing towards the scream.

As I approached, I knew it was too late. Through the haze and chaos, a towering figure roared with desperation and anguish, with its offspring huddling beside it. A meteor, hurtling at unimaginable speed towards the earth, was aimed right at them. The dinosaur gathered its youngling close, enveloping it in a protective embrace. Their forms huddled together; a poignant image of parental devotion etched into history. The dinosaur lowered its head and pressed close to its youngling in a final act of love, sharing a fleeting moment of solace. A blinding flash erupted as a meteorite struck with catastrophic force, obliterating everything in its path. The ground quaked violently as a shockwave of fire and force surged outward, sweeping me off my feet. Lost in the cataclysm, my consciousness slipped away, dissolving like granules of sand in an hourglass.

Whoosh.

A warm, tranquil breeze blew over me, engulfing me in its serenity. For a moment, I wanted it to swallow me, forever holding me in its clutches, in eternal peace. But a searing light pierced through my eyelids, urging me to awaken.

"Hey! Guys, look what I found!"

A voice shattered my tranquility, surfacing me up to meet the glaring radiance. It was late in the afternoon when the sun was blaring down at full force. Gasping for air, I clutched at a solid object in my hands, my heart still racing from the vivid memory. My surroundings came rushing back—the parched, baked excavation site, the sweltering heat, the accustomed noise of hammers and picks striking away. I blinked, and realised my eyes were wet with tears. Their

final embrace was etched into my mind, so real it was impossible to dismiss. I looked down at the object in my hand—sure enough, it was a dinosaur fossil, shimmering faintly in the heat.

I stood up and walked over to where my colleague was kneeling.

“Look at this! —An infant dinosaur bone. It’s odd, though, there’s no dust anywhere”

I smiled wistfully.

“I found something too,” I said. Holding out my hand, I uncovered the luminous fossil and placed it down beside the other.

There, they laid, gleaming proudly underneath the sunlight. These tiny fragments were their story, their moment frozen in time, tangible remnants of parental love dating beyond humans. Even after eons, they had been reunited again.

Hey, dinosaur, can you see?

The Price of Knowledge

Wellington College International Shanghai, Allāyate Goni, Nora – 13

It had been three years. Three years since I moved to a different city. Three years since I had to leave everything behind. Three years since my parents' death.

I was eleven at that time. My brain could barely comprehend what had happened. I was already nicely tucked in bed, just waiting for my parents' warm words of good night as they always did. They were successful paleontologists, always excavating underground, striving to find something more breath-taking in every excavation, making each one more worthwhile than the last. Yet I waited. And waited. I waited for a very long time. Until I started to worry, because they never forgot the 'good nights'. Ever.

Suddenly, my ears picked up an unusual sound; the slow creaking of a door. We rarely had visitors, it was usually some old boss entering their late fifties, discussing some great fossil my parents' had uncovered. But this was different. I could hear my parents' voices now, and my heart almost lifted – except, they were having an argument with the 'visitor.' Now I wanted to bolt down the stairs and tell them to come up, to say good night, to tell me everything was going to be fine.

But I could not. Because their voices had risen, risen to a point that they were almost *shouting*. But the stranger must have said something unsettling, disturbing even, because my parents fell completely silent.

Nothing could have prepared me for what happened next.

The gunshot sound struck me like a slap, overwhelming my hearing as the echo rang throughout the house ominously. Then another. I wanted to scream and cry. To let out all my shock and anger. But I knew better.

Maybe I still stood a chance. I crawled under the bed covers, weeping for as long as I could remember, trying to stay silent. He must have left, because now the house was eerily quiet. I still had the urge to run downstairs, but I could not be completely sure that he had left. So, I forced myself to sleep, along with ghostly nightmares and horrific gunshots haunting me in my sleep.

Three years later ...

"Amy, honey, time to wake up!" my 'mom' chided.

I hated it when she called me that, because that is something you said to your daughter, and I was not her daughter, well – not really. She was my adoptive mother, married to another Chinese man. They were my adoptive family, ever since my parents had – left me.

I did not remember anything about my real parents; their nationality, their age – not even their names. I looked at the fragile photograph I had in my hand; it was the only thing I had from them. One half showed my parents' smiling faces, the other had been torn away. I had spent my whole life wondering what or – where the other half could be. The missing puzzle piece.

With immense effort, my brain forced my body to get up and be productive. I walked to the bathroom mirror and regarded the dark eyebags looming over my lightly freckled face.

"Another sleepless night" I thought to myself. But I knew perfectly well why I had trouble sleeping these days. Today, I was going on a school field trip to the Dinosaur Museum in our largely populated province; Shandong.

I moved here ever since I was adopted, three years ago. I had felt so lost, so scared, with no one I knew, no one to trust, just a new life ahead of me with no one to guide me. But it was not the lack of trust I had that was bugging me, it was the fact that my parents had been well-accomplished archeologists in their past lives. All the memories had vanished from my pool of thoughts, but the fossils were not part of it. They practically lived off it, and I remember I loved seeing them excavate and find a more peculiar fossil each time, pouring their hearts out into their work, striving to give me a better life.

I knew that visiting a museum full of dinosaur fossils would fill me up full of nostalgia and make me break down and start to cry. I shook off the feeling of dread and grief ripping my insides and hurtled my bag that constantly weighed me down onto my

shoulders. I walked to the bus stop, and when the bus finally arrived, I took my seat and immediately dozed off into nostalgic memories, a treat to agonizing torture.

At school, we took another bus to the museum. My head felt heavy and dizzy; I had been taking buses since the beginning of the day. The bus halted, and my eyes met the name that had been harassing my mind for so long: *SHANDONG DINOSAUR MUSEUM*.

The excited group of children streamed in through the museum doors like a flowing river. The teachers yelled at the children to come back in a wasted effort, but they had already dispersed widely throughout the exotic palace of fossils.

I observed the interesting and strange dinosaur fossils all around me, which differed from vegetable-eating triceratops to flesh-eating tyrannosaurus rexes, the whole time trying hard not to think of the subject perturbing me persistently. I closely observed a glass box containing the fossils of the Rex. Below was a plaque that read:

TYRANNOSAURUS REX – THE DEADLIEST KNOWN DINOSAUR TO HUMANKIND. The contents of this box show a fossil from this deadly creature from over 70 million years ago.

Then in big red letters an advertisement read:

VERY FRAGILE. DO NOT TOUCH

A shiver ran down my spine at the mere thought of this deadly creature. I scribbled some messy notes on the paper I was given and proceeded to the other fragile fossils laid out around the museum. As I was observing, the shiny, polished black marble walls caught my attention.

My fingers ran past the smooth surface when they caught on a slight bump. I traced back to the misshaped bulk, squinting so I could see it properly. There was a small hatch attached to a big rectangle, I pulled it, revealing a giant door to a completely different place.

I looked behind me, expecting shocked gasps and rapid footsteps from my classmates, but there was no one. Silence. I knew this was a crazy idea from the very beginning, but I really had no idea how this would affect me later, and my parents' fate, if you could believe it.

I took a cautious step into the room, my whole body shaking like a leaf. I barely had time to register my surroundings when I felt a cold hand on my shoulder. I instantly turned around, but did not have any time to figure the identity of my so-called 'kidnapper' because they took me by the waist and hauled me to what looked like a big caravan. They thrust me in, and I felt the engine roar into life, racing past the uneven floors while leaving a dense cloud of dust in its wake.

I registered all the details of the inside of the caravan when my eyes caught a torn piece of photo pinned on the caravan wall, a big red X marked on to it, as if it were a target.

My fingers trembled as I reached out to unpin it from the peeling walls; it was a picture of me as a toddler, my face bright and smiling, without a care in the world. I slipped out the photo I always kept with me from my pocket. My hands shaking, I joined the two pictures together, a perfect line forming in between the two; I had finally found it; the missing puzzle piece.

Shortly after, a million questions buzzed in my head, specifically: *Why was I the target?* My doubts were interrupted by the deep, harsh voice of the caravan driver:

"Mission accomplished, now onto Phase Two."

I knew this was it. The end of my life. It had been quite bizarre; losing my parents, getting kidnapped, being the target of a mission ... But as I was about to assume my death, the caravan driver opened the door and thrust me out of the caravan into some kind of prison cell within the span of a few seconds at most.

I was sitting in a cell (for all I knew) in pitch darkness with an aching and bruised body and a picture of me and my parents' smiling faces which did not really fit the occasion. I looked around to make out my surroundings in vain. Then I heard a voice familiar to me only three years ago.

It was my mother's.

"Amaia? Is that you?" Her voice was warm, just as I remembered it, but also hurt and full of pain. I immediately thought of all the possible things she could have been through these years.

I was in momentary shock. I could not move. My body felt hard and rigid, my mouth suddenly dry, unable to move, unable to make sound. Then the moment passed, and I flung my arms around the dark figure sitting beside me— except it was not my mom's— it was my dad's.

"Dad?" I called out in shock, relief, and amazement altogether. I let go, momentarily startled because I was not expecting that, but immediately regretted it.

I was about to go in and hug him again, but they beat me to it. They both wrapped their arms around my quivering body and squeezed it tight. After I had recovered from my daze, I squeezed their arms tight in response.

My dad turned to me in the dark: "Amaia." His voice sounded pained like my mother's, which made me want to cry all over again.

"Listen very carefully. Your mother and I encrypted a formula that gives the location of one of the most powerful Tyrannosaurus Rex's fossils. If they get it, they will use its DNA to recreate the entire race of Tyrannosaurus Rexes, eventually destroying all huma—"

He stopped reluctantly, and I instantly knew why.

I felt the cold tip of a gun pressed against my head, and it was the same harsh voice from the caravan: "The formula or the kid dies."

My dad hesitated for a second, which cost me my entire life.

I heard him pull the trigger, and then it all went black.

A Whisper of Shadows

Wellington College International Shanghai, Alfayete Goni, Arancha – 13

I have a secret that I've never shared with anyone. It lurks in the shadows, always ready to crawl out and confront me. It's a heavy weight on my shoulders, pressing down on my soul. It takes away my appetite, my energy, my desire to speak. It's not just a thought; it's a memory—a nightmare. Fourteen years have passed since I was born in Zhangjiajie, and fourteen years since my parents were taken from me.

I can't help but replay that fateful scene in my mind, as if somehow, it could bring them back. The day was November 10, 2021. My mother, in her gentle voice, asked me to get the door. Our house was so small that I reached it in one step. My heart raced as the knocking grew louder, a tension filling my chest. I unlocked the door, and with a slow turn of the handle, the metallic crunch echoed eerily around me.

When the door swung open, a hooded figure stood before me, an x3 machine gun resting on his muscular arm, adorned with a tattoo of a bull and a cobra. "The Bulls Eye Cobraz," I whispered, my lips dry. Panic surged through me, and I scrambled behind the door, my heart pounding.

Then came the bang. I heard the gunfire before I saw the horror unfold. I stood frozen, tears streaming down my cheek, as I realized my parents were gone, leaving only pools of blood behind. The hooded men shouted that my parents didn't have what they were looking for before they left, taking the only family I had ever known. That was the last time I saw them.

Now, every time I think of the Bulls Eye Cobraz, a chill runs through me. The memory is a nail dug deep into my skin, a scar that will never heal. I remind myself of the truth: they are dead, and there's nothing I can do to change that. But what did they want? What was it that my parents didn't have?

I try to think positively, turning my gaze to TaoWei. He's the only stable thing in my life, with his messy brown hair and intense black eyes that cut through my defenses. When he winks at me, my cheeks flush, and my heart skips a beat. At least I have him, I think.

Zhangjiajie, my magical hometown, is breathtaking. With subtropical forests, crystal-clear streams, and serene lakes, it's a haven. But it's more than just that. Dinosaurs roam these lands—Shantungosaurus, Ambopteryx, Anchiornis, and Archaeopteryx—guardians of our village, they embody the magic that sustains us. The five pillars of our village, each with a gem, are powered by this magic. Yet, the central pillar has never had a gem, and I've never seen one.

The Bulls Eye Cobraz knows this magic exists, and I can't shake the fear that they'll return to take it. Without my parents, I feel the weight of that fear more than ever.

As days pass, I wear a mask of smiles, hiding my terror. I'm scared, but no one can know. Fear is a weakness, something to be ashamed of. It visits me daily, draining my happiness and replacing it with nightmares. I must stay strong for Grandpa Po, who has tried to fill the void left by my parents. But now that he's ill, the responsibility falls on me.

One evening, as I sit quietly, the world shifts violently. I hear the screams of villagers, the chaos of gunfire, and the desperate cries of mothers clutching their children. My heart races as I hide beneath a blood-stained sofa, not daring to move. The Bulls Eye Cobraz have returned, and this time, they are here to destroy everything.

I peek out and see the horrors unfolding—hooded men attacking, bullets flying, and my heart stops when I spot TaoWei. He's wearing the Bulls Eye Cobraz cloak. I gasped. How could he betray me like this? My breath catches in my throat, anger and confusion boiling inside me as I realize he's one of them.

As the battle rages on, a deafening silence envelops me, and I shake with fear. I can't just stand by and watch my village perish like my parents did. "I'm fighting back, even if it's the last thing I do," I whisper to myself, focusing my anger on TaoWei.

Suddenly, an Anchiornis lands beside me, its fearful eyes pleading for help. "They might have killed everyone, but they won't lay a finger on you," I whisper, placing a reassuring hand on its trembling head. Determined, I climbed onto its back, ready to fight.

We soar through the sky, landing in the Tianmen cave, one of the five pillars. The magic is palpable here, and as I step outside, I gasp in horror—dinosaurs are dying. I can't stand by and watch. I rush toward the battlefield, fueled by a desire for revenge rather than fear.

In the chaos, I hear someone shout, "YUNYUN, BE CAREFUL!" I look up just in time to see a massive Shantungosaurus barreling toward me, a hooded man chasing it. I could run. I could step aside and let the Shantungosaurus continue running away. But instead, I freeze, as if my feet were rooted to the ground, feeling my life flash before my eyes.

Just as the dinosaur is about to trample me, a hand grasps my arm and pulls me aside. I stumble and turn to see who saved me—TaoWei. My heart races, torn between gratitude and betrayal. "I don't understand," I mutter, backing away.

"YunYun, please listen. I was forced to join the Bulls Eye Cobraz. I would never hurt you," he pleads, and my heart flutters despite myself. He extends his arm, and I place my hand over his, drawn in by his gaze. We mount the Anchiornis together, and as it takes off, I can't help but hope he's telling the truth.

We land on the central pillar, the highest one, which has never held a gem. TaoWei explains that each pillar is imbued with magic, but this one—the couples rock—holds a deeper secret. "Remember the legend? One of your ancestors carried the fifth gem in their soul," he says. I nod slowly, recalling the tales I dismissed as mere stories.

Suddenly, a hooded figure approaches, exuding an ominous presence. "Your parents didn't have the fifth gem, or at least we didn't find it," he says, and everything clicks into place. The Bulls Eye Cobraz killed my parents to uncover the truth about the legend. My anger boils over; I had been searching for answers all this time, but they were right in front of me.

"Wait, does that mean you're part of the Bulls Eye Cobraz?" I demand, my heart racing.

"Correct, except—" The man behind him steps forward, removing his hood. My heart sinks as I recognize the tattoo on his arm. It's the same as the man who killed my parents.

Grandpa Po.

I stagger back, disbelief washing over me. I had been living with my parents' murderer for years, and I hadn't even realized it. "You killed my parents!" I spit, rage flooding my veins.

"Indeed, the only reason you never saw the gem on the central pillar is that your soul took it when you were born. You were filled with love and happiness, which defeated the magic," he explains, a twisted grin on his face.

“Now you are the guardian of the fifth gem,” TaoWei adds, his enthusiasm chilling me.

“Guess we’ll have to see if what you say is true,” Grandpa Po says, stepping closer. My heart races as I realize the gravity of the situation. I have been betrayed by the two people I trusted most.

“Should I do the honors?” TaoWei asks, excitement evident in his voice.

“I will,” Grandpa Po replies, gripping my shoulder tightly. Pain tears through my heart. “Au Revoir,” he says, and pushes me off the edge.

As I fall, my mother’s voice calls to me, and everything fades to black. My heart stops, and I know I’m finally free—free to join my parents.

My World

Wellington College International Shanghai, Bi, Lyndsey – 11

It was an early morning, when I sat on the wooden bench staring at the grey sky as rain cascaded down, dark mist patrolling the air. I got up, setting off down a little path for a walk on my own. Passing by a loving father holding the child's hand, passing by a husband and wife holding each other's arms. Everyone laughed so happily and I was the only anomaly. I hurtled down the road, to my place, the secret garage on the corner of the town. I crashed into the gigantic room, collapsing onto the floor, filling my lungs with the familiar dusty smell. A few meters away, some birds were gliding in the sky, how empty and caged I was! My father said I am good at nothing and my mother's supports had long gone. At school everyone seemed to be isolating me, asking me "there is a party tonight, who's taking you to it?" but I was sure I have told them I had nobody for 10 times already! So, I just shut up and they walked away, judging me together. I slowly backed off to a corner and allowed the darkness to swallow me.

Chapter Two

The Mamenchisaurus

Perhaps it was all just too overwhelming, that the next day's morning, I woke up swinging open the door, and I saw the most dazzling view in my lifetime.

How beautiful the sky was as if it was playing with a palette! A clear, light-blue with strips of clouds decorating bits of it into candy floss! I suddenly recognize some unusual jade green in the grass. I bent down and an amazing forest unfolded before my eyes. There were trees that looked like palm trees with leaves of pine trees. Wait, isn't that a Cycad that's supposed to appear in the late Jurassic? Just as I was investigating, a head poked in and tapped me gently on the shoulder. I have been expecting this for a while. I looked back and stroked the silky little head, attempting to climb up. Inching my way up on the slippery surface, I began to notice how beautiful the view up here was, as if I were the only one who was up high and saw things the way they truly are. It was true. I have never thought about it before, but now, I see! I was different from all others with my grown-up thoughts and my tragic stories, but is that a disadvantage? A smile on my face, I slid down onto its back and let my thoughts wander away.

I sat happily and stroked its long neck satisfied. Wait a minute... how come the sky seemed further than before? In fact, I felt that even my little dinosaur went down a bit... Wait, my dinosaur went down? We are sinking! It was a deadly brown mud puddle right below our feet, oozing like a monster wanting to devour its lunch bit by bit. From far away birds hooted as if watching the most hilarious episode ever and flapped away, evaporating. Shaking my head, I focused back to my problem. Suddenly seeing something, I jumped lightly down my dinosaur and I opened myself up flat, jerking my body around. Fortunately, I landed on an enormous pile of soft grass, unharmed. But what about the innocent dinosaur?

Leverage principle! I heaved some pieces of wood as the little guy also gave the slightest tilt of its body. To my absolute surprise, it hauled itself up on to the wood. However, the wood began to have little cracks on it, and about to break! What should I do? How can I be so useless, not even being able to save the little creature that have just brought happiness into my dark, gloomy world. Now tears were forming in my eyes, I was watching it struggle as I pulled my knees up close to myself and sobbed. That was when I heard a tiny whimper from my dinosaur, as if calling me for help, thinking I was its last hope. Without a doubt I plummeted into the puddle and pulled the piece of wood that was still hanging-on underneath the dinosaur's body. Then I lied down and slowly floated back to land. Immediately I threw the stones onto the wood, putting as much weight on it as possible. There was a terrifying crack. The dinosaur seemed to rise up by an inch as it instantly tried to scamper up the wood again. I let it do it. I

trusted it. By now my hands were getting sweeter than ever. Then, abruptly, I saw the little baby head appear on land just as the wood shattered into a tiny—pieces. Whoohoo! Success!

Chapter 3

Boom!

Just as we were celebrating our victory, a rumbling sounded in the nearby land and I felt the ground began to shake. What was happening? Just as we were wondering, the ground beneath us splitted open and we were separated. “No!” I shrieked. I ran towards the crack, using speed to soar further, and I sprawled into the air just as I fell, a familiar slimy long neck came into my view, and, without hesitation, I clung on to it, and I was being held up high in the sky, and onto a silky back. With a rush of joy, I wondered: Does anybody feel the alarming rise of heat? BOOM! The eruption. The anger of the gods started to show in the faraway land, ash clouds had already started to form and the lava leak was increasing. Any time now the bulge would burst and death would finally come. Without a doubt I steered my dinosaur, it broke off into a vicious run and galloped away to land as far away from the volcano as we can be. We sprang over tall grasses and crushed hard stones. In the nearby land we could already hear deafening noises of the lava flow approaching. The sky was a gleaming blood—red color with only strips of amber lights and grey ash decorating it. The whole land near the volcano has now turned into a deadly grey, covered with ash by the pyroclastic flows. Caught by a sudden strong wind I covered my mouth as I desperately mumbled “water, I need water”. As if remembering something, my Mamenchisaurus took off into a rapid run. Then, we both saw it: A shallow pool of water. I dived into the pool, filling my lungs with the clean water. Doing a somersault with joy, I splashed around without a care just like a 7-year-old should. We have succeeded once again. Or had we? Something told me that things were just not quite right, I felt a shiver down my spine, and just as I turned around to look, I just caught a scent of dust in the air, and I knew it was all too late. An ash plume has buried us.

Chapter 4

Home “sweet” home

The dusty smell was just so familiar. My eyelids fluttered open and I brushed back my hair, realizing that I was still standing upright. I slowly bent down to examine the hard—wooden floor. This is where my things are, this was my place and it always had been. My garage! I wandered into the back yard, and saw a particularly green bush of grass. Instantly everything flashed back in my head, the clear sky, the tall cycads, the muddy pool and the raging volcano. And of course, I can never forget my Mamenchisaurus, the “little guy” who accompanied me with all those peculiar adventures but suddenly, I was standing in my back yard, with nobody to play with and nobody to greet.

Chapter 5

5 years later

It has been years since I have experienced my weird journey. I can still remember it clear as crystal in my mind. Right now, I am staring at the sky that was a dreamy silvery grey color with little drops of rain dancing their way down. And you know what? I just went to watch a movie yesterday on my own! I was laughing and crying whenever I wanted! And on my birthday last month, I bought myself a tiny piece of cake shaped in a heart. Lighting up a match, my hands clasped together and I made a wish for me and my dinosaur. Being all by myself with nobody taking care of. Am I lonely? Pitiful? Tortured? Was it so bad at all? After all, I wasn't alone, my baby dinosaur has always been living in my head.

Defining Gravity

Wellington College International Shanghai, Blatti, Amaia – 12

BANG! NOOO! AHWWWW!

I jolt awake.

The sounds of gunshots and desperate cries awoke me. I rushed out of bed with trembling legs. Fear crept inside me as I pictured the worst-case scenarios. It was like a movie but put on fast forward. I crept down the stairs, my head buzzing full of questions about what awaited me. Dreading my worst fear, my instincts pushed me further down the stairs hearing murmurings of voices saying “Take it and go...Hurry, Go faster...” The voices started to fade away. They all wore black hoddies covering most of their faces. They were easy to perceive with the bright background. Bright flames filled the kitchen that was burning down fast. It was like I was in a microwave and the heat was going to cremate me into ashes. The dark figures were murmuring even more but I wasn’t interested in what they had to say. Hidden behind the dark oak wood stairs, I could see everything. But lying on the ground was what I had feared most. Blood was trickling down her chest. She had deep wounds, and jagged cuts covered her face as well as a lacerated arm. My heart dropped. For a second, I couldn’t breathe. My heart sunk deep below my feet, deep below what I would have called home, deep below my gut and worst of all my hidden fear. I mustn’t let it out now, I thought. I had hidden it for a long time. But this time I couldn’t control it. All this fear had taken me over the limit, beyond the limit and making me stim. Whenever I was scared, my arms started to flap by my side. Fear started to climb up my throat and slowly like needles piercing my tongue.

CRASH! OWWWWW!

I sit up. I wipe my fringe off my forehead and the sweat off my face. I didn’t even think for a millisecond what or where the disturbing noise had come from. I knew it was Auntie Yue being classic clumsy self. I think about the dream I just had. It had been the fourth time this week I had that stupid dream about someone dying and that’s a little concerning considering it is Friday today. My jet-black hair was as fluffy as a pompom. My eyes darted across the room and finding a shattered glass mirror. I look at my reflection. My pale white skin makes me look like a ghost, with dirty brown marks on my face and my thin legs and arms make me look weak and poor. I grab the wiggling brush on my desk under my mirror and force it to comb out all the knots, but it doesn’t seem like it wants to cooperate today. The comb also manages to slip itself out of my struggling hands... I always knew that comb was weird. Anyway, that didn’t really bother me. I shuffled my lazy feet towards my closet to get changed. Downstairs, I found Auntie Yue with one foot on the marble table that we found on the street with ice in her hand. She smiled at me. “Hey sweetie, can you find me the bandages please?” her warm voice made me feel like I was wrapped around in a blanket. I rubbed my gunky eyes that started to be aware of my surroundings. I rushed down to the cupboard to fetch the bandages, grabbed one and slid it across the table. Auntie shoved a bowl of dry oats in front of me. My tummy grumbled and it felt like there was an empty balloon deflating inside of me. But I couldn’t be late. I pick up my dark green backpack and head out the door forgetting to close it behind me. It was a beautiful day. There were birds singing, lush green grass and the sparkling river. I ran down the mountain slope I live on and halted at the river. My eyes darted around finding a bright red canoe. I ran over and plonked my backpack inside then I slowly but steadily placed one foot after another. Once I was safely sitting in the canoe, I unwrapped the rope that was keeping me steady. I paddled a bit further away from the house, I pulled the motor, and it started to run. I sighed, relieved that the old rusty thing didn’t bail on me and leave me stranded in the middle of the river. Five minutes later, I got out of the canoe, tied it up and rushed to school.

RINGGGGGGGGG!

Class was about to start!

I ran up the staircase which led to my classroom. I hear voices, saying “Kids, quiet down, we have a ...” I rush in the room looking like a walking disaster. Mr. Wang looks at his fancy golden hand watch. Then looks at me. I could see fury trying to escape from his eyes. “Five minutes late! MIA, DETENTION!” He banged his hand on my desk as he shouted the last word. My legs shook. I was petrified from him. “Now class, as I was saying, we have a visitor that should be here any moment.” The class looked around the room with eager eyes. I looked at the large man with the briefcase walked in. “Hello, I am Dr. Ying, and I am happy to say that when you did the writing competition last month, there was a winner in this class.” His low voice sounded like a trombone. “Your papers have been sent to us judges, and we have agreed that this paper was well and truly worthy.” I peeked at Sofie, smirking to the whole class. She was an absolute teacher’s pet and had the biggest house in our village. Oh, how I hated her. “Please let me welcome the winner to go hiking in the mountain...” it was pin drop silent. I could hear my heartbeat thump in my chest. I was certain it wasn’t me when ... “Mia Li” I gasped. I could hear muffled voices in the back row. Mr. Wang was whispering something to Dr. Ying. He shook his head and said “There, there, children I know that this is hard for you but I assure you, this is well earned.” “He looked at me. “Come on now, a hike awaits you.” I looked at his like he was out of his mind. I was not just going to let this random guy take me off to the ‘misty mountains’ that was stupid. What idiot would listen to him?

Apparently, me. I lied in bed that night thinking of the tough hike. I tried to tell him that I couldn’t go because I HAD to look after Auntie Yue, but that was obviously a mistake because she just smacked me with a icepack. I was staying in a private hut in the middle of nowhere with another hut beside me with the tour guide in it.

The next morning, I woke up bright and early to the sound of birds chirping and snakes hissing. I got dressed. I was so full of the buffe last night I couldn’t eat a mouthful so I headed outside. I walked outside and stretched my legs. I rubbed my two hands together and puffed out fog. It was cold morning. Owwww!!! I looked around, an ant must have bitten my leg. The cite was dazzling. The Sunrise was beyond comparable. I felt something pull at my jumper – making it slip off my shoulders.

I saw a weird tentacle black thing grab the tip of my jumper and pull it to the side of the cliff past the metal barrier. I ran to the barrier. And looked down. What was rising was incredible. The wings were stunning, and the shining scales were dazzling in the sunlight. It had a tiny slim body the size of me. The wings looked like webbed feet and the face was incredible. I didn’t even know myself what I was looking at, but I knew it was beautiful. It had incredible wings. I closed my eyes.

I pictured it was all a dream. The boiling sun beaming against my face, freshly cut grass and warm ...SLOBBER! I jolted upwards finding a slobbery face awaking me. My eyes were blurry so I could only see a black figure moving towards me. Instinctively, I moved away but when I did the floor felt soft and there was a tornado approaching. Then it all stopped and I was defining gravity. The site finally came into view and I was motionless in the air flying.

“Mia, are you okay?” awoken by the sounds of familiar worried voices. “ What happened? We found you on the road hike outside.” My eyeballs stretched wide awake.

“Huhhh... but there was flying and dropping and...” Auntie Yue looked at me and chuckled “Ahh silly girl, is your head okay?” I was too weak to speak, but I knew that that thing would find me again. That made me smile inside.

The Dinosaur Egg

Wellington College International Shanghai, Chen, Amanda – 13

“Auntie Meibao, if I had 10 yuan for every time you gave me noodles free of charge, I’d be drowning in money,” Li Haoran said, his voice muffled as he shovelled steaming noodles into his mouth.

The shop was small and worn, tucked between two towering apartment blocks. Auntie Meibao slapped a damp cloth over the counter and shook her head.

“Haoran, maybe if you actually paid me, I’d be the one drowning in money,” she retorted, though her smile softened the words.

Across the table, Mingxia sat quietly. Her red jacket was two sizes too big, and her cheeks were sunken. She poked her noodles with chopsticks, the steam curling around her face like a fragile veil.

“Eat, Mingxia,” Haoran said gently, his tone carrying a weight of worry he didn’t voice.

She picked up the chopsticks, her movements slow and uncertain. Auntie Meibao, watching from the counter, frowned.

“That girl...” she murmured under her breath.

Haoran finished the last of the broth, leaving the bowl spotless. He stood, stretching his broad shoulders, and thanked Meibao before taking Mingxia’s hand in his calloused one.

They stepped into the chill of the November afternoon, the wind tugging at their worn clothes.

It was hours later, in the crowded streets of the city, that Haoran saw the newspaper.

“RARE DINOSAUR EGG STOLEN – HUGE CASH REWARD OFFERED!”

The words caught his eye, and his breath hitched. The photo of the egg, a rare, fossilized relic from the ancient creatures that once roamed China, was accompanied by the promise of 300,000 yuan.

He stood frozen, the chaos of the street swirling around him. The sum wasn’t just a number. It was food. Medicine. Hope.

He ripped the paper from its stand and marched toward the edge of the city, where the streets narrowed into an old neighbourhood of leaning buildings and dusty courtyards.

“Zhangwei!”

The door creaked open, revealing his childhood friend. Zhangwei’s face was worn, his eyes sharp and calculating. He looked Haoran up and down before stepping aside to let him in.

The inside of Zhangwei’s home was cramped, dimly lit by a single bulb. His wife lingered in the corner, their young son in her arms. The boy peeked out shyly, his round face a stark contrast to his father’s gaunt one.

“What is it?” Zhangwei asked, his voice low.

Haoran slapped the newspaper onto the table. “This. We’re going to find it.”

Zhangwei’s brow furrowed as he scanned the page. “You’re serious?”

“I need the money,” Haoran said simply.

Zhangwei glanced at his wife and son before looking back at Haoran. His lips pressed into a thin line. “Fine. But don’t think this will be easy.”

The search was gruelling. Together, they combed through Liaoning’s underbelly, tracking whispers of the stolen egg. The trail led them through smoky gambling dens, abandoned warehouses, and markets where everything had a price.

At last, their efforts paid off. Beneath the flickering lights of a cold warehouse, they found it—the egg, nestled in a straw-lined crate. Its shell was smooth and speckled, ancient yet oddly alive.

But as Haoran reached for it, Zhangwei stepped in front of him.

“I can’t let you take it,” he said, his voice tight.

Haoran froze. “What are you talking about?”

“I need this money, Haoran. My family—”

“So does mine,” Haoran interrupted, his voice a low growl.

Zhangwei’s jaw clenched. “I’m sorry.”

The fight erupted in a blur of fists and desperation. Zhangwei was quick, but Haoran’s strength was relentless. They grappled, their friendship splintering with every strike. Finally, Haoran overpowered Zhangwei, his hands shaking as he landed the final blow.

Zhangwei crumpled to the ground, his chest still. Blood pooled on the concrete floor.

For a long moment, Haoran didn’t move. His breath came in shallow gasps as he stared at the lifeless body of his oldest friend. The egg sat between them, unscathed.

By the time Haoran returned to his village, night had fallen. The wind howled through the narrow alleys, and the windows of his small home were dark.

He hurried to his neighbour’s house, where he had left Mingxia. The man who answered the door avoided his gaze.

“She was crying too much,” he muttered. “It’s not our responsibility.”

Haoran pushed past him, his heart pounding, and ran to his house.

The door creaked open, and cold silence greeted him.

Mingxia lay on her bed, her small body curled under a thin blanket. Her face was pale. He dropped the egg onto the floor with a dull thud as he stumbled toward her.

Her tiny hand was cold in his. Her chest no longer moved.

Haoran sank to his knees, his vision blurring as tears streamed down his face. The room felt impossibly small, the walls pressing in, suffocating him.

The egg sat in the corner, forgotten, its faint speckles catching the dim light.

There was no sound except for the wind outside.

The Final Sunset

Wellington College International Shanghai, Chen, Effie – 13

The sunset looked extra mesmerizing today, like how her grandmother used to describe them to her. Maybe the sunset looked extra beautiful because the world knew she was going to die. She wondered what the afterlife would be like, if she would finally be reunited with her parents. Or would it just be dark, nothing at all. Taking a deep breath, she finally met the eyes of the looming death in front of her. Inna Guiying Varya squared her shoulders and stood proudly in front of the Yangchuanosaurus, realizing that she was not afraid of her inevitable death. Slowly, so very slowly, she watched as the dinosaur reared its head back, then swung down at her.

All she could see was black.

Then, she heard a voice.

A familiar one.

Far away.

Calling her name.

“Inna.”

“Come back.”

“Come back home...”

But that small town Zabaikal’sk was not her home.

Her home was Manzhouli.

It was too late to tell the voice.

Too late.

February 17th, 1986

I’m finally visiting Manzhouli, where my mom was born! Living in Zabaikal’sk, I’ve always wanted to go to China. It was where my parents fell in love and had me. As me and my mom ride on the back of my dad’s old rusted pickup truck, with him driving, I concentrate on taking in every single small detail, every hill, every tree, every animal. I don’t mind the freezing February wind biting into my face, because why would I? I’m in China!

October 21st, 1989

It’s my eighth birthday today! And obviously I celebrated in Manzhouli. Today was the best day ever. I invited all my friends to come, and we had a picnic on the countryside. On the way back home, I stared at every twist and turn we took, just like every ride back.

June 9th, 1994

All good things eventually come to an end. That’s what my mom told me. My parents told me we weren’t allowed to go to China anymore because of some danger happening there. They said if we stay in our town, the border patrols will keep us safe. So that’s what we did.

February 15th, 1996, 5:32 am

I can't take it anymore. I'm running away. Today. To Manzhouli. I know the way better than I know the back of my hand, even after two long years. I can't believe it; I'm finally coming home.

February 15th, 1996, 4pm

I wander through the streets, hauling the heavy rucksack on my shoulder. It is getting fairly late now and by the time I find somewhere to stay, it'll be dark. If I even find somewhere to stay. Nobody wants to be caught outside at night in the winter here. Especially with whatever danger that is lurking around here, the danger that ended up with one of the villagers dead. Slowly, but steadily, I make my way across the town, searching for any apartments or motels. At seven pm, I found a shabby, but cozy inn near the half-frozen lake. Pushing open the door, I made my way towards the front desk.

"Hello, is there a room available tonight?" I speak fluent Chinese. I guess all those lessons with mom really paid off.

The old woman behind the desk looked up, a bored expression coating her face.

"Name?"

"Wang Guiying" I offer a polite smile.

"Are you by yourself?"

I offered a curt nod.

The woman sighed.

"This isn't somewhere you'd want to be during these few years, I advise you to quickly finish whatever business you are here for and go back to wherever you are from. Russia, I presume. How many nights?"

"A week"

"That'll be 105 RMB"

Luck must've been on my side for me to find a place to stay for only that cheap. I rummage through my bag and finally find the small pouch of money I took before I left. Perfect, I still have 520 RMB left after paying.

"Second floor, third door to your right", the woman says after handing me the keys.

"Thank you, have a nice day"

No response. I expected that.

After three tiresome long days of chatting up strangers, hoping to find out about the mysterious danger here, they all said two words, then ran off. *Kǒng lóng*, meaning dinosaur. What? All that work and it got me nothing. In addition to that, I'm running low on money.

October 21st, 1998

It has been two years. Two years of working odd jobs, two years of staying in that inn. I also started getting letters after the first month. Letters every two weeks. From my mom. Each said the same thing:

Inna, come back. Come back home. Please. We miss you. We're still living in Zabaikal'sk, come back at least once, to visit.

Over these past months, the old hotel manager has grown on me, though not the other way around. We've become kind of like friends. If not friends, then friendly acquaintances. Just the other day, I poured my heart out to her about my birthday coming up soon. Sooner than soon. Tomorrow. I miss my parents. The old woman merely said to just visit them. I can't just go visit them, can I? I'm still mulling over the conversation as I lie awake in bed. I want to go...It's just that I'm scared. Scared for their reaction, scared to see home again. No, not home. It hasn't been home since I first set foot in Manzhouli when I was five. I decide to sleep on it and decide what to do in the morning.

I don't know what I am doing as I sit in an old wooden carriage, currently giving directions to Zabaikal'sk, to the man at the front. This better be worth it, I think to myself, I paid a good amount of money for this ride. I hop off the carriage as we near the border, I'm on my own now. Passport in hand, I near the security booth. Strange, there's nobody there.

"Hello?" I call out.

"Anyone there?" I try again, in both Chinese and Russian.

Nothing.

I step foot inside the booth, perhaps they are in trouble. Inside, I look around for any traces of people. On one side of the room, I spot a huge panel of screens. Pretty advanced technology. I take a moment to appreciate it when I catch a remote. The screen at the very top must be a TV screen. I fumbled with the remote for a few minutes before I finally figured out how to turn it on. Looks like a news report and utterly useless. I almost turned it off before I heard what they were taking about.

Breaking News, Zabaikal'sk, a Russian town bordering China destroyed by Yangchuanosauruses, a type of dinosaur. There are no survivors.

At that moment, as if on cue, I hear a roar outside the booth. I freeze. No. It can't be. I step out of the booth. I probably shouldn't have done that.

I took in the dinosaur in front of me. It was like nothing I've ever seen before in my life. Around four meter tall, I'm guessing, and about eleven meters in length, the creature was basically a killing machine. Sharp teeth, lethal claws, long tail, this thing had it all.

My heart is beating so fast, I think I'm about to have a heart attack. I took rapid deep breaths in an attempt to calm myself. I whip my head around, looking for anything that would aid me and keep me safe.

On the horizon, I see the sunset.

So pretty. So...mesmerizing.

My last moments of peace, before,
death.

Secrets of the Past

Wellington College International Shanghai, Chen, Fika – 13

Silent tears streamed down Giselle's face, racking her body with sobs and making her vision blurred. She took a deep breath, trying to compose herself as the eulogist started the speech, going on about how much of a good palaeontologist he was, about all the achievements and projects he had carried out and acquired. She sucked in a sharp breath, feeling her heart break as she realized that he would never ever appear in her life again. Letting out an anguished cry, she started to remember how she used to run up and hug him when he came back from work, and she wondered how she would ever get on with life without his presence around her. Giselle paced the room, nibbling on her fingernails as she anxiously awaited for the reading of his will.

"And to my beloved daughter, I leave my estate in Shandong province, and 25,000 Yuan. I want you to go to the manor and find something. *In the house of memories where shadows play, Seek the floor that's loose in the light of day. Find the key to a world both old and new, Where wisdom lies with ancient knowledge.* This should help you find you what you need.

Determined to honor her father's memory and unravel the mystery he had left behind, Giselle traveled to the estate in Shandong. The property was vast, filled with ancient artifacts and relics of her father's illustrious career. The house was like a labyrinth of rooms and hallways, each one holding a piece of the past. She put her explorer's cap on as she wandered around the massive house, humming to herself quietly as she found herself in the enormous library. Giselle roamed around the bookshelves, when something glittery caught her eye. She backtracked, and found a tiny, barely-visible intricate design on a floorboard directly below the window. She pried it open carefully, and found a small, brass, ornate key hidden beneath. This must be the key to a world both old and new. It had the same intricate design printed onto the floorboard; swirling lines around what seemed to be a leaf, and it was quite heavy.

With the key in hand, Giselle explored the house further, trying to find the place where the wisdom, lies with ancient knowledge. She suddenly thought of her late father's study room. It was where he always wrote and presented case studies. She looked around the room for clues, any imperfections in the bookcases or the floorboards, eventually discovering an odd looking book that didn't seem to fit in with the other books in the shelves. She pulled it out cautiously, expecting a secret entrance to pop out or something. Giselle braced herself, but nothing happened. She rolled her eyes, as disappointment flooded her senses. She was about to put the book back and walk away, but something was calling to her. She peered into where the odd book had been, noticing a slight crack in the bookshelf. She peeled back the thin wood, revealing a small key hole camouflaged into the back of the bookshelf. Giselle dug the key out of the pocket, and inserted it into the keyhole. The key fit perfectly into the lock, and a hidden door popped open behind her, showing a dark staircase leading into the basement of the gargantuan mansion.

Inside, Giselle was met with an astonishing sight: rows and rows shelves lined with neat little jars containing perfectly preserved, pickled dinosaurs. She could hardly believe her eyes. She knew her father had always been fascinated by the prehistoric world, but she had never imagined he would make such an extraordinary discovery. Giselle carefully lifted one of the neatly labelled jars, holding it up to the light. It seemed to be filled with some kind of thick, droopy liquid. The tiny creature inside, a prehistoric lizard-like dinosaur, seemed to float in suspended animation. She marveled at the details, feeling a connection to a world millions of years old.

In the center of the room, on a large table, lay several dinosaur eggs, carefully arranged and labeled. Alongside them was an old, leather-bound book, presumably her father's diary, filled with detailed notes and reports on his

experiments with the eggs. She flipped through the pages, suspicion coursing in her veins as she realized that the pages had been ripped out. Giselle, sat down on the marble floor, took a deep breath, and started reading.

Day 1

The experiment's working! We finally figured out the formulae a few hours ago, and I can't wait to test it out. This one's different from the others, I can feel it. It's supposed to grow a dinosaur fetus in some superficial egg shells we made. We're really excited about this project because it means we get to analyze the egg the whole time.

Day 19

Progress is showing. The fetus is growing, and it looks like a pink pile of flesh molded briefly into shape. It should hatch by the end of November. We've modified the genes so it hatches as an oviraptor, the world's 3rd most rarest dinosaur. We're hoping to run some tests on it when it hatches so we can get to know more about this nearly unknown species.

The last entry of the diary looked messy, as if her father had rushed it, and it was torn into half; the bottom half missing.

Day 91

Dear Giselle, if you're reading this, I want you to know that I love you and always will. Please be careful, because at this point, you will have seen the jars and dinosaur eggs, and you'll be in grave danger. I need to tell you something. I'm actually n.....

Giselle put the diary down as she stared ahead of her in confusion. "I'm actually what Dad?" The lack of information she was getting was so irritating. Giselle threw the book down onto the floor, her anger evaporating a bit, as she felt a tiny twinge of satisfaction watching the tattered book clatter to the other side of the room. The hair on the back of her neck suddenly stood up, sending shivers down Giselle's spine. She was getting an uncanny feeling that she was being watched. She turned around swiftly, surprised when she caught a glimpse of a tall shadow escaping out of the secret passageway.

"Hey!"

Echoes of Extinction

Wellington College International Shanghai, Chen, Liang – 13

There wasn't a single ripple in the water, sunlight streaming through the branches, creating unique patterns on the floor, and the once luscious green leaves had transformed into a tapestry of warm colours; glowing reds, golden yellows, and deep oranges. The leaves crunched underfoot as Aunt Chen strolled home from a long day from working at the noodle shop. Aunt Chen gazed at the beautiful scenery of Liaoning, and it seemed to take all of her stress away. She followed the crisp, colourful blanket of leaves down the path to her small cottage.

As she pushed open the creaky door, she heard her daughter Xiaoli Chen laughing in the backyard mixed with their dog, Bones, barking. They had named him Bones because his favourite toy was a squeaky toy bone. Aunt Chen smiled as she took a seat in the backyard and watched as Xiaoli noticed her and ran over.

"Hey mom! Welcome home!" she exclaimed. Aunt Chen chuckled and pulled her into a hug as Xiaoli threw the toy bone to the right. She replied, "It was fine, although it was a very busy day at the noodle shop."

Just as Aunt Chen finished her sentence Bones ran over and dropped his bone on the floor next to her. She bent to pick it up but noticed something strange the bone was much heavier than usual, and it was dusty, covered in dirt and definitely not made of plastic. It was almost as if it was a real bone. Xiaoli also noticed something was off and came closer for a better look. They both turned to direction Xiaoli threw the toy bone, and found it still laying on the ground, next to it bones stood in front of a hole sniffing the ground, his paw covered in dirt.

"Is this a..." Xiaoli mumbled.

"A fossil?" Aunt Chen finished quietly.

The both of them stayed frozen gaping at the strange, mysterious object in Aunt Chen's hand. Until Xiaoli finally said, "It could just be a strangely shaped rock."

"You're not wrong," Aunt Chen said tentatively. But they both saw in each other's eyes that neither of them believed that statement.

What had seemed to be a calm normal day had turned to a confusing, perplexing event.

Xiaoli reached out to take the intriguing object from her mother, but when she took it, her hand slipped causing the fossil to fall onto the tiled steps of their backyard, breaking into two pieces. Xiaoli yelped and immediately bent down to inspect the fossil, and found something even more curious. The fossil was hollow and in it contained a rolled up piece of faded parchment. She immediately picked it up and glanced at her mom in confusion. Aunt Chen was speechless and simply just shrugged her shoulders, looking dumfounded. Xiaoli could no longer contain her curiosity and began unravelling the scroll.

Suddenly, the ground began to shake and the world started spinning, colours blurred together and Xiaoli and Aunt Chen screamed in unison eyes locking together one final time before everything went black.

When Xiaoli opened her eyes she found herself laying in a forest filled with towering trees draped in vibrant vines and mosses, while the air buzzed with the sounds of chirping insects and distant calls. Filled with confusion she stood up and brushed the dust and debris off her. "Where was her house?" "Where was the little road that led to her front yard?" "Where was she?" As she looked around at the trees, she heard a faint rustling coming from behind her. She spun around eyes wide as she began to imagine what that could be. Then she heard a familiar voice call out, "Hello?"

"Mom?" Xiaoli tentatively said, inching closer to the bush and sticking her head through the leaves and vines. On the other side she found her mom, Auntie Chen, sitting on the floor looking very puzzled. Her face lit up when she saw Xiaoli's face, and asked, "Where are we?"

"I don't know, I can't seem to recall much."

"Well... Last I remember, we were...."

Suddenly she gasped as she realized. "The fossil!" she cried. As Auntie Chen processed this information, her face turned to a look of realization but then it quickly turned back to confusion, "But that still doesn't explain where we..." Her sentence was cut short by a loud thunderous roar coming from somewhere to their right. The sound echoed through the forest, reverberating off trees sending vibrations through the ground. Their eyes widened in fear as they heard the roar get louder followed by muffled footsteps of something large coming their way. "Quick! Hide!" Auntie Chen hissed as she and Xiaoli dove to the ground beneath the bushes. Xiaoli peeked through one of the cracks in between the leaves. And made a small gasp of surprise from what she saw. It was a dinosaur! Suddenly Xiaoli tripped and stumbled into the clearing where the dinosaur stood. The dinosaur's head snapped towards her. She gasped in fear and turned to run but being the clumsy person she was she tumbled to the ground. She screamed as the dinosaur advanced. The last thing she saw was the Dinosaur's mouth filled with jagged teeth and dripping with saliva. Then... nothing.

The Seventh Fossil

Wellington College International Shanghai, Chen, Ryan – 12

It was a foggy day, like always, and the relentless drone of the digging machines filled the air. In the year 2091, the world had become a graveyard of its former self, suffocated by the atmosphere and scars of climate catastrophe. Towering corporate edifices loomed over the desolate landscape, their glass facades reflecting a society obsessed with wealth and status. In this bleak reality, fossils had become the ultimate currency, and an individual's worth was measured by their "fossil count" — the amount of fossil unearthed. Reaching a fossil count of 7 would elevate one to the status of a near-trillionaire.

Chen was a dedicated paleontologist boasting a prestigious count of 6. His life revolved around the bones buried deep beneath the earth, yet as he gazed out at the city from his high-rise apartment, the desire for recognition gnawed at him. He longed for the day he would unearth that elusive last fossil—the one that would elevate him to the revered fossil count of 7.

Suddenly, a knock echoed from the door. Chen, slightly intoxicated, stumbled toward the entrance and wearily opened it. There lay an unmarked envelope, covered in leaves and dirt. As he pulled out the contents, his breath caught in his throat; it was a pair of coordinates leading to a restricted site—a long-abandoned industrial complex rumored to hold untold treasures, including the skull of a giant theropod. Flabbergasted yet determined, he snapped out of his thoughts and quickly assembled a team: his former mentor, Dr. Li, who upheld ethical standards of paleontology, and, rival archaeologist, Mei, known for her cutthroat tactics. Together, they planned to explore the site the very next day.

"Tomorrow will be the day... Tomorrow will be the day," Chen repeated to himself, anticipation coursing through his veins. The silver moon crept higher in the sky, but he still could not rest. He imagined his future glory—fame, accolades, and the validation he craved, all hinging on a forbidden excavation. As dawn broke over the mountains, they set off in their old, rusted van. Out the window, was a destroyed landscape, ravaged by pollution. As they drove past the filthy tainted remnants of rivers and the befouled hills stained with rubble and trash, Chen's gaze fell on a dead crow on a road sign, surrounded by tiny eggs. In the crow's beak lay a cracked egg, the shell scattered on its face. The sight tugged at his heart, but he quickly dismissed it and drove on. Soon, they spotted an abandoned fenced-off patch of earth nestled against the craggy mountains. Consulting the map, Chen confirmed this was their destination. As they approached the complex, the air thickened with the stench of decay, and rusted machinery jutted from the ground like skeletal remains of a forgotten era. Chen's heart raced with anticipation, but tension simmered in the air. Mei's piercing gaze lingered on him, ambition radiating from her like heat from a flame. Dr. Li's cautious demeanor served as a stark reminder of the risks they faced. "Remember, we're here to uncover history, not to destroy it," Li cautioned, his voice steady. Chen nodded, but the weight of his ambition pushed him onward, drowning out the warnings echoing in his mind. As they ventured deeper into the complex, it became evident that the government had laid traps to deter intruders. Fortunately, Mei's keen instincts enabled them to evade detection, and they pressed on. Within the crumbling walls of an abandoned structure, Chen spotted something unusual—something curved and horn-like protruding from the ground. "Here! I think I found it!" he shouted, excitement flooding his voice. As they began excavating the area around the horn, days turned into a blur of dirt and discovery. Each they unearthed felt like a step closer to glory, yet the atmosphere grew increasingly tense. Mei began to sow seeds of discord towards Li, Chen's leadership came under scrutiny, and the cracks in their unity widened.

The moment of revelation arrived when they finally uncovered a breathtaking fossil—the well-preserved skull of the theropod, its glimmering like jewels under the dim light. "YES!!!" Chen cried out, jubilation surging through him.

But then Dr. Li pressed a finger to his lips. “Shhh! They might hear us!” At that moment, sound of approaching drones shattered their triumph. A bright red lights streaked across the sky. Then another. Then another, weaving the fog like predators scenting prey. Panic surged within the trio. “Run!” Dr. Li shouted, his voice drowned out by the mechanical whirring above them. In chaos, Mei seized her opportunity, darted towards the fossil with the gleam of desperation in her eyes. “Mei, don’t!” Chen yelled, but she was already bolting away, clutching the theropod skull. Fury ignited within him, and he sprinted after her, his fear eclipsed by his obsession. Chen, we need to escape!” Dr. Li urged, but Chen’s determination on reclaiming the fossil clouded his judgment. As they dashed through the ruins, the drones closed in, their red lights sweeping over the like bloodhounds on the hunt. Chen and Mei collided atop a dilapidated structure teetering on the edge of a crumbling rooftop. As the drones surrounded them, Mei pushed Chen aside, her eyes wild with. “Back off, or I’ll drop it!” she threatened, extending the theropod skull over the edge. Chen knew she was bluffing, yet the threat sent a chill down his spine, forcing him to take a step back. The drones hovered closer, their whirs growing louder. Suddenly, Mei slipped on the icy surface, and the fossil slipped from her grasp. Time seemed to freeze as Chen watched his dreams plummet into the below. In a moment of desperation, he lunged forward, attempting to save it. “Chen, no!” Dr. Li shouted, reaching out, but Chen miscalculated his leap and lost his balance, falling through the decaying floor beneath him, darkness swallowing him whole.

When he regained consciousness, pain radiated through his body, and the sounds of chaos faded into a distant murmur. He lay atop the shattered remains of the theropod skull, which was reduced to fragments. Above him, world continued its relentless pace, indifferent to his fate. “Did she—did she get away with the fossil?” Chen whispered, realization crashing over him like a cold wave. The ambition that had driven him had led to his downfall. Dr. Li knelt beside him eyes filled with regret. “You have to let it go, Chen. It isn’t worth your life.” But as Chen lay there, understood the true cost of his obsession. The fossil count, the recognition, the wealth—all fleeting. As the drones circled above, he felt his strength fading, tears welling in his eyes. In his final moments, regret and the bitter taste of karma consumed him.

He had gone too far, and now he would pay the ultimate price.

Whisk Me (And My Taxes) Away

Wellington College International Shanghai, Chen, Zhu Zhu – 12

Cold, exhausted and shaking in frustration, Layla staggered up the rotting hill of dust and debris after her coworkers, almost tripping over a fragment of bone poking out. She lets out a sigh. If only her sister hadn't signed her up for this stupid extra credit paleontological project... she should call her and demand a refund. Then, a shout interrupts her brooding. "Come on, Layla! The cafeteria is first come first serve, and I'm starving!"

#

The familiar scent of cooking instantly put Aaron's mind to rest. He stoops a bit through the hanging door, salt-and-pepper hair brushing the ceiling. His diner is quaint, but with a distinct rustic feeling from the hanging signs in Mandarin and a crackling flame burning in the hearth.

"Yo, Aaron! Two lanky teens leaned against the counter, grinning. "Casino tonight? It's a surefire win this time."

Aaron shook his head, chuckling. "Can't gamble away rent money, can I?"

And with that he donned the apron and chef's hat, easily blending into the bustling crowd.

Weaving through the sea of bodies and sizzling food, Aaron snatches two empty plates and tosses them towards the overcrowded sink. He's rewarded with an indignant "Hey!" from the cook, who bats at him softly with a frying pan before turning back with a sigh of "Stupid boys."

An afternoon of cutting, frying and washing plates later, the door gives an almighty lurch and a formidable-looking man struts in. Aaron was about to chastise him for leaving mud on the welcome mat, before his stomach sinks and he groans inwardly. John Michael, self-proclaimed "head of this industry." With a balding head, thick eyebrows and squinting eyes, John was the epitome of ugliness. But it didn't affect the fact that he held control over Aaron's property – something that he didn't let him forget.

"Mr Aaron," he hissed, emphasizing the former word, "I regret to inform you that your rent is due." A smirk played on his lips as his eyes sparkled maliciously.

Aaron strode forward confidently, a few hundred bills collected from months of endless work clutched in his hand. He stretched out his forearm to deliver the bills –he remained adamant that John Michael would always be kept at least an arm-length away– and the man in question took the pile, whistling softly.

"Woah... I mean, pitiful – How long did this take you to collect? I bet your whole worthless life isn't worth half of this." He started to count the bills, stumbling a few times and having to start again. Aaron watched, grinning confidently. His effort was finally paying off.

At long last, John looked up with a faux look of disappointment which emphasized his grotesque features. Aaron's arrogant smile was wiped of his face as he said, "This still isn't enough."

Aaron's confidence faltered.

No.

He couldn't believe it – he wouldn't believe it.

He scrambled over, stomach sinking. Desperation flooded his thoughts. Forty-six dollars. The rent was sixty. Only one option remained, illegal as it might be.

#

After an afternoon of stuffing their lipstick-smeared mouths with pasta, Layla's coworkers returned to their digging, pickaxes clanking against the ground. She trudged up the cobbled path to the laboratory.

The halls were eerily quiet, still echoing with white noise, some doors still swinging off their hinges. Heart in her throat, hands clammy with cold sweat, Layla proceeded through the empty corridors. The first thing that greeted her was the smell. It oozed through the walls, an odorous force that made Layla gag. She ventured deeper into the labyrinth of corridors her unease growing, completely oblivious of the situation that would ensue.

#

Layla was scared. She had checked all the rooms, but it seemed as if the scientists had all vanished into the sterile white lab coats. Just then, a high-pitched alarm went off, a flashing red glow projected against walls. Shadows flickered on the walls, their eeriness amplified by the tinted white lamps. Footsteps were approaching. The tension in the air was poignant as she turned a corner, almost slamming into a tall young man in a scruffily-made-up moustache and blonde wig. At first glance, he seemed to be roughly the same age as her, his "hair" knocked lopsided as he struggled to his feet. Layla rushed forward to lend a hand. "Oh, my word, are you alright? I'm sorry I wasn't watching where I was going... and that reminds me, do you know what's going on? Where is everyone? Oh yes, my name's Layla by the way." The words seemed to rush out of her. She had already spluttered out more sentences than she had done through the entire bus ride to this quaint laboratory, before realising that the man seemed to be holding something behind his back. His ears flushed red as he saw the source of her interest, and he clutched at the object with renewed vigour. "Ah, yes... about that..." He hesitated, before blurting out: "I'm Aaron."

#

Layla nodded assent, then frowned. "What's that behind your back?" "Nothing" Aaron said quickly, as he did a stupid kind of pirouette to conceal it. A loud crash sped shattered the silence. Both turned to the noise. Behind Aaron, a giant cracked egg lay on the ground, cracks spidering through its tawny shell. "What is that?" Layla whispered. Aaron snatched up the egg and ran, Layla hot on his heels.

Aaron's heart raced as he pounded through the sterile corridor, the egg stirring in his arms. The harsh light flickered, and Layla's frantic footsteps followed close behind him.

#

Someone really needed to fill Layla in on what was going on. She had been thrown into this wild goose chase, with no knowledge on what was going on besides the order that she was to aid the scientists in discovering fossils in this wreck of a place. She yearned to return to her apartment, to remain oblivious of the situation. Layla was so caught up in her thoughts that she stumbled, her breath hitching in her throat, and sprawled face-first on the tiled floor. She struggled to force herself to get back on her feet, to continue this chase to God-knows-where, but she found that

she didn't have the strength. As she against the wall, heaving in deep breaths of this foul-smelling hall, a familiar face popped up – salt-and-pepper hair glinting in the hostile light. Layla found strength in this unexpected appearance and stood up, taking in a deep breath before starting her tirade:

“You imbecile! How dare you do this to me! Do you even know who I am? My sister's car is probably worth your whole worthless life! I have half a mind to just dial nine-one-one right now, you thief. This is private property, and you are trespassing!”

Aaron sighed as she continued her rant, tuning the whole thing out after her quip about his 'worthless life.' It was the second time that he'd heard the phrase today. As he opened a mouth to provide a rebuke, or perhaps apologise for ruining her entire day, she snatched the egg from his arms. His breath hitched as her hand brushed against his sleeve, only half noticing as she peeked inside the egg and let out a gasp of excitement. Faint cooing noises were emanating from the broken shell, and Layla let out a giggle of excitement as she spun on the spot, the egg cradled in her arms, Aaron watching on with a look of bemusement. Then, a scissoring movement caught his eye as the shell started to crack, pieces falling away to reveal a distinctly bird-like thing, with scaled wings and taloned claws. None of them could believe it. Both leaned in closer to glimpse the creature, before Aaron said with glee, “Don't you see? This is a living, breathing dinosaur! It's the end of all our problems! We could get funds for it, start a centre to nurture this little fella, and money and fame will come pouring in!” At his words, Layla's heart was light with joy as she clutched the dinosaur to her chest, and Aaron's mind was a whirlpool of thoughts as the pressure of his rent was lifted from his shoulders.

A loud clattering broke their euphoria.

At first, it seemed like a stampede – then, it was no longer just one movement, but a series of them: travelling through the corridor in an unorganised line. It was a herd of baby dinosaurs; some still with their shells acting like hats, some joking around in a language that Aaron and Layla could not understand but which was still beautiful. Possibilities flooded through, ideas branching together of a future with these magnificent beasts.

#

The sun set on that fateful day, and Aaron and Layla gathered outside the facility to watch it. In their eyes, there had never been anything more beautiful, as both their lives were taking a turn for the better.

The Hidden Symphony of Time

Wellington College International Shanghai, Devis, NurIvy – 12

The air was still in the hills of Liaoning, save for the distant calls of cicadas. Mei Zhao crouched low by the dig site, brushing soil off what looked like tiny bones, her heart thrumming with excitement. At fifteen, Mei was used to being overlooked—not just by her parents, but by life itself. Living in a rural town, surrounded by her father’s endless fossil samples and her mother’s ecological reports, Mei often felt like a background character in someone else’s story. Her parents—renowned in their fields—seemed to have forgotten that she wasn’t a project to be managed, but a person with her own story waiting to unfold.

But here, at the dig site, Mei felt something stir inside her. She wasn’t just helping her father’s team; she was discovering. The excavation had unearthed a fossilized *Sinosauropteryx* nest—a rare find. The creatures were feathered, about the size of a chicken, and were known for their distinct striped tails. But what fascinated Mei more than the skeletons were the insects preserved alongside them. Some were frozen in amber, others fossilized within the rock strata—species thought to have gone extinct millions of years ago. Yet Mei’s keen eye noticed a troubling pattern: many of these “extinct” insects looked eerily similar to the ones she had seen skittering around her backyard.

That night, Mei sat by the open window in her room, sketching an ant she had collected earlier. Outside, the forest was quiet, except for the occasional rustling of branches in the wind. Mei’s hand paused mid-sketch as her gaze drifted to the jar on her desk. The ant inside moved erratically, scratching at the glass like it was trying to dig its way out. She thought back to what she’d observed earlier at the dig site. The insects they’d unearthed weren’t just ancient—there was something... alive about them, even after millions of years.

“Evolution doesn’t move backward,” her father would say. But what if these insects had never needed to evolve at all?

The next morning, the sun was already beating down on the dig site by the time Mei arrived with her parents. Tents and tables were scattered across the excavation zone, and scientists buzzed with excitement, taking measurements, jotting down notes, and photographing fossils. Her mother, Jing, stood by the workstation, examining one of the preserved beetles with a magnifying lens.

“This species hasn’t been seen for over a hundred million years,” Jing said, more to herself than to Mei. “Yet... here it is. And I swear I’ve seen the same beetles crawling near the river.”

Mei leaned over her mother’s shoulder. “Do you think they’re still alive? The same species, I mean?”

Jing gave a tight smile. “It’s not impossible. Species can go unnoticed, especially in isolated ecosystems. But it would mean... something’s been hiding right under our noses all this time.”

That thought sent a chill through Mei. She had always felt as though she was missing something—the bigger picture, some truth that lay just out of reach. The forest behind their house, usually a place of comfort, now felt like it was hiding secrets.

The unease deepened over the following days. Mei noticed strange behavior among the insects in the forest—ants clustering in dense masses along the roots of trees, beetles gathering in odd patterns, wasps moving in synchronized swarms. It was as if they were waiting for something. When Mei mentioned it to the scientists, they brushed it off as coincidence, more interested in their fossilized treasures than in modern insect behavior.

But Mei's mother grew more concerned. She spent long hours comparing the dig site fossils with the living insects she collected, her brows furrowed in thought. One night, Mei found her sitting at the kitchen table, surrounded by jars of insects and sketches.

"There's a pattern," Jing muttered, half to herself. "The insects we dug up—some of them are behaving just like the living ones. It's as if... they recognize something."

"Recognize what?" Mei asked, her heart quickening.

Jing looked up, her eyes shadowed with a mixture of fear and fascination. "Each other."

Mei felt the weight of the word sink into her chest. If these insects had survived unchanged for millions of years, then what else might have endured with them?

Days later, the tension snapped. While the team worked at the dig site, a swarm of insects rose from the forest floor like a dark, shifting cloud. They moved with terrifying coordination, stinging and biting anyone who got too close. Tents were overturned, equipment scattered, and scientists fled in panic. Mei watched in horror as ants and beetles poured out of the ground in endless waves, forcing the excavation to come to an abrupt halt.

"These aren't just insects," Jing whispered as they retreated to safety. "They're a colony. And we've disturbed them."

Back at home, Mei sat at her desk, turning the pieces over in her mind. This colony—whatever it was—had survived for millions of years, untouched by time or humanity. The fossilized *Sinosauropteryx* bones made more sense now: the dinosaurs had formed a symbiotic relationship with the insects, coexisting in ways no one had ever imagined. Perhaps the insects had even helped the dinosaurs survive longer than previously thought. But now that humans had disrupted the colony, it had turned hostile.

Mei's parents wanted to leave the area, fearing an ecological disaster. But Mei couldn't shake the feeling that this discovery mattered. It wasn't just a fossil dig anymore—it was a glimpse into a hidden ecosystem, one that had outlasted the dinosaurs and remained unseen for millennia. And it wasn't just science; it was a story waiting to be told.

The final piece of the puzzle fell into place when Mei ventured into the forest alone, determined to understand the insects' behavior. She followed the swarms to a network of underground caverns beneath the dig site. Inside, the air was thick with the hum of wings and the scuttling of legs. Mei crouched in the shadows, watching as beetles and ants moved in synchronized patterns, forming intricate structures from soil and plant matter.

The colony wasn't just reacting to the excavation—it was evolving, adapting to the threat of human interference. Mei realized with a jolt that these insects weren't mindless creatures—they were part of an ancient intelligence, a living network that communicated and adapted as one.

She had a choice: leave the colony alone and let it remain hidden, or convince the scientists to work with the local ecologists to protect it. Destroying the colony would mean losing an ancient piece of Earth's history—and possibly unleashing even greater danger.

In the end, Mei found her voice. She stood before the scientists and spoke with more conviction than she knew she had. "This isn't just a discovery. It's a warning. The past isn't something we can dig up and control. It's still here, living alongside us. If we don't learn how to coexist with it, we'll make the same mistakes the dinosaurs did."

Her parents exchanged glances, and for the first time, Mei saw something different in their eyes: recognition. They listened. And together, they worked with the local ecologists to cordon off the site and study the insects in ways that wouldn't disrupt the colony.

As summer drew to a close, Mei sat by the riverbank, watching dragonflies dance over the water. For the first time in her life, she felt like she belonged—not just to her family, but to the world around her. The colony, the fossils, the forest—they were all part of the same story. And now, Mei was too.

The swarm below would remain a mystery, hidden beneath the earth, but Mei had found her place. Not just as a scientist, but as a storyteller—someone who understood that knowledge was more than facts. It was about connection, the thread that wove people and nature together across time.

And in that quiet moment by the river, Mei knew: she would never be invisible again.

Shandong's Dinosaur

Wellington College International Shanghai, Gao, George – 11

A sheet of white blanketed the village and filled the streets of Linqu County in Shandong, the streetlights flickered and swayed. The wind and snow occupied the streets forcing people into their houses. Suddenly a small boy appeared in the corner, tears dripped down his cheeks into the white below. He was covered in layers of rags bespattered in mud and his black hair seeping out of his woolen hat was white with snow. The snow danced and attacked his flushed face. It filled his shoes and penetrated his thick coat he had only recently attained. He stumbled forward dragging his legs behind him. He felt dead as he was alive, struggling on through the vicious cold until finally, he slumped down on the doorstep of a tupi with orangish walls made of mudbrick and a straw roof. The world faded.

He slowly opened his eyes and looked around at the unfamiliar surroundings. An unfriendly odor was coming from a dimly lit oil lamp standing in the corner. Water dripped from the oak ceiling into a steel pail and ground was covered by a thin layer of rustic mire. He was lying on the wooden bed frame. He took a moment for everything to come back. Then a question came to him: was he dead? He tried to sit up and a searing pain surged from his toes to his fingertips, he opened his mouth and screamed, but no sound came out. Panicking he strained his muscles in a vain attempt to move yet his body screamed in agony.

Suddenly, the door slowly creaked open. An old man that was possibly in his fifties walked in at a leisurely pace. His clothes were ripped and ragged and his feet were encased by a thick layer of mud. He held an old wooden bowl, burnt at the bottom and containing a smidgeon of rice. The man turned to him, the tips of his mouth raised in a friendly smile.

“Oh good your awake!” the man said cheerfully in Chinese.

Glancing at the boys huge eyes and frozen face he chuckled and said “My name is Wang Yixing, what is yours boy?” as he set the wooden bowl on a stool beside him.

He opened his mouth to say “Where am I?” but no sound came out of his mouth which he noticed was unbearably numb, instead the lion in his body growled in response.

The man chuckled again “You must be hungry!”

The boy gave a tiny nod and winced, casting hungry looks at bowl of rice left of him. The old man pried open his jaws and supplied his mouth with a spoon of rice. It tasted like dirt. At least it was better than nothing. The boy chewed slowly, lost in thought, until the last bit of grub was scraped clean from the bottom of the bowl.

“I’m sorry this is all we have” said Mr. Wang apologetically, almost sadly.

Mr. Wang slowly stood up and walked to the door. Looking back for the last time he left the room.

“My name is Yuan Longxi” the boy called after him feebly.

Longxi was now 12 years old. He had lived with Mr. Wang for nearly five years now. He was a good boy, well learnt and strong. He helped Mr. Wang do his sales and did chores. He took any spare time to run to the local library. He loved books, most of all books about dinosaurs. Tyrannosaurus rex, Abelisaurus, Gargoyleosaurus, a vast number of species fascinated him. He had his freedom, and he could go anywhere he wanted all except one room

which Mr. Wang strictly forbid him to enter. He had tried the doorknob before and found it locked. That was when Mr. Wang came storming in, stony faced and dragged him off without a word.

One tempestuous night, Longxi woke up. Thunder boomed and roared outside, tendrils of light seeped through the cracks and crevices in the walls, and drops of water formed pools on the muddy ground. Longxi heaved himself up from his cold, hard bed and threw his blanket aside. He blinked his eyes a few times then licked his cracked and bleeding lips. The taste of blood permeated his senses. He flung his legs off his bed and stumbled to the kitchen. Supplying himself with a sumptuous amount of water he headed towards his room. Suddenly, something very peculiar caught his attention. The door of the room Mr. Wang strictly forbade him to enter, was ajar. Curious and scared Longxi stepped towards the door. He put one hand on the doorknob and slowly pulled it open. The room was so dark that he could perceive nothing inside. He hesitated for a moment then took a step into the darkness. Almost instantly, a blinding blue light illuminated the room. Longxi couldn't breathe. The atmosphere was changing very quickly, and his body was being flung around. The last thing he heard before he was knocked unconscious, was a roar.

Longxi, slowly opened his eyes The world rocking before him. Where was he? He looked at his surroundings. A forest, with pine trees stretching as far as eye could see. The wind mummering tales of melancholy, the pines swayed their branches slowly and wearily, the usual calm quietness was now a sad slumber. Longxi shivered, he could not be sure if it was because of the cold or of the fear. Then he realized, this was an ancient forest, the thick undergrowth of large ferns would never appear in the present era. He had time traveled. Longxi felt something warm trickling down the side of his head that distracted him from his thoughts. He lifted a trembling hand and placed it onto the liquid. When he took his hand off it was stained and soaked with blood. Longxi quickly ripped a piece of dirty cloth off the bottom of his shirt and tied it around his head covering the wound. Then he dragged himself to his feet and stumbled over to a nearby tree. It was not until he settled down when he noticed how parched he was. So, he went on searching for water.

Soon he came to the bank of a river, its waters thrashing and churning with fury. He plunged his hands in the river, ignoring how turbid the waters were, and took large gulps eager to conquer his thirst. Suddenly, a horrible and ominous roar, split through the thundering currents. Longxi slowly, turned his head around trembling. A shadow loomed over him and the odor of rotten meat was becoming unbearable. It was undoubtedly the terrible features of the Tyrannosaurus rex.

Longxi let out a terrifying scream and dashed toward the cover of the forest. The T-rex let out another earsplitting roar, and charged towards Longxi, flinging away any obstructions. Sweat cascaded down Longxi's face as the thundering footsteps behind him drew closer. Panting he collapsed against a stone. He could feel the dinosaur breathing down on him. The T-rex's huge yellow eyes glued its menacing stare on Longxi and uncovered its huge, jagged teeth with their malodorous stench. Longxi closed his eyes tightly and silently said goodbye to Mr. Wang and his friends. Tears burst though his eyelids and a wail left his mouth. It was only a matter of time before his soul left his body. Suddenly, the T-rex let out another roar. Longxi opened his eyes alarmingly to see the T-rex rammed aside and trampled on by a herd of large green dinosaurs. Shantungosauruses. His favorite dinosaurs. Longxi stood up, trembling and wide-eyed, shocked by what had just happened.

The T-rex was lying on the ground bleeding from a hideous wound on its shoulder and the Shantungosauruses were looking at Longxi in...was that worry?

"Th-Thanks" Longxi stuttered frightfully.

One of the Shantungosaurus dipped his head and touched Longxi's sweating chin. Longxi caressed the dino's crown. The world went quiet, as dinosaur embraced man, man embraced dinosaur. Longxi couldn't believe it he had touched a dinosaur, Shandong's dinosaur.

Mr. Wang came rushing out from the forest behind Longxi hurriedly. When he saw what was happening, he smiled.

"That's Bryan the leader of their herd!" Mr. Wang said, gently placing his hand next to Longxi's.

Longxi turned around in surprise and saw Mr. Wang beaming at him.

"It's time to go" Mr. Wang took Longxi's hand and returned to the time machine.

The Secret Civilization

Wellington College International Shanghai, Gaoqiao, Lin – 12

Prologue: World War I

In midst of the hustle and bustle of Yantan Village, a mother and son fleet away from the townscape and into the obscure darkness...

"Mother, the mist approaches." the son mutters, clinging onto his mother. A block-like patch of gray mist creeps towards the pair, threatening to envelope them in ever-ending darkness.

"No need to fear, my son. It is time for them to come. We have avoided for way too long; this was destined to be our fate." his mother replies, emotionless.

"It isn't, not yet. The world will suffer without their aid. We both know that." The boy whispers, defeated. He opened his arms wide and surrenders himself to what was to come.

~~~~~

They call me Ivy. The girl of sharp-edged wits. The people of Yantan village have a tradition of symbolic names. Yantan is a place filtrated with the past. The world may have evolved into a technology-centered world, but Yantan remains constant. A shadow of the past. Isolated.

Blair was an apprentice that my master's close friend had taken on not long ago. A hard-headed girl with a unique perspective on morality. Our masters' close relationship had bonded us together, and we had since become inseparable.

Our masters were craftsmen, so our working spaces tended to be placid and undisturbed. Nonetheless, our surplus teenage energy could not go unattended. Typically, Blair would suggest something with minimal risk, such as kite flying. However, today was a special occasion. Our masters had left town, so we had the entire day to ourselves. Blair insisted on exploring the rural areas, and although I was hesitant, I agreed. The past few weeks of the apprentice trials had been a backbreaking experience for Blair, and this may be the perfect opportunity for alleviation.

We set off immediately. After reaching the rural areas, I noticed that Blair was unlike her usual self. Our conversations reached an end at an instant, and suspicion lurked beneath the apparent facade of excitement.

Blair mumbled something unintelligible, staring directly at the ground. Abruptly, she looked up and raised a finger to the gloomy distance: "Heaven, what is that!?"

I followed her gaze but failed to identify anything abnormal. "What's what?", I shrugged, bewildered by Blair's sudden intensity.

"It's calling, the mist!" Blair declared, getting more and more agitated by the second. She stood up straight, sprinted in the direction she was pointing at, then turned around, exasperated.

"Aren't you coming, scaredy-cat?", she sneered.

Appalled at her villainous attitude, I squinted in the direction she pointed at. There was, to my surprise, a thick gray mist, and it was unlike anything I had ever seen. A gargantuan, block-like formation of translucent gray mist hovered in the air, its edges indistinct and ever-shifting, as if caught between a solid and vapor state. The mist advances at a steady pace, silently absorbing everything it touches. It reflects light in bizarre ways, casting ghostly shadows that

stretch unnaturally across the ground beneath it. There is a haunting stillness about it, as if this dense fog is silently watching, waiting to strike...

Just then, a tap on the shoulder jerked me back into reality. Blair was becoming extremely impatient. Something was wrong with Blair's attitude. Although she may be stubborn at times, she would never be intentionally ill-mannered. Yet, Blair would never stand a chance against the supernatural phenomenon alone. This was for Blair, someone I treated like family. I gathered and lashed my feelings in bonds, then darted towards Blair, away from known territory.

~~~~~

"Shall we take another break?" I wheezed, panting. After running for an hour nonstop, I was slumping in exhaustion and soaked with sweat. Yet, what really stunned me was how Blair remained energetic and hadn't even broken a single drop of sweat throughout the entire run. There was no explanation to her abrupt change in personality and her unnerving endurance. Blair had always been tenacious, but this time was different—unnatural.

"Ivy, we are almost there! Can you show some perseverance after all the times I've been stopping just for you to catch your breath?" Blair snapped, annoyed. I swung around to face her. I've had enough of her attitude. I stormed past her, kicking gravel in her eyes. Then, I turned back to face her, her outraged expression catching me off guard. I regained my temper and said levelly: "I am not someone you should mess with."

However arrogant she was, Blair was right—in a sense. The mist had swallowed the landscape around us, turning the hinterlands into a distorted gray blur. The air was thick with an unusual weight, as though every breath was heavier than the last. I dragged myself forward with each step, following Blair's relentless pace as we ventured deeper into the heart of the mist.

~~~~~

But the further we went, the more I realized—this wasn't just about exploring. Something was possessing Blair, and it was dragging me along with it.

~~~~~

As I trudged through the misty air, my eyes detected something exceptionally unusual. Shapes and bodies of human-like creatures began unravelling before my eyes. I squinted, wondering if I was hallucinating out of exhaustion.

Suddenly, one of the creatures turned around to face my direction. My heart stopped as the figure emerged fully from the haze. It was a hybrid, a fusion of human and dinosaur. The body had the broad, muscular form of a man, but its head was unmistakably that of a dinosaur. A narrow reptilian skull with sharp, jagged teeth. Its eyes, cold and filled with hunger, stared straight into my eyes, sending a jolt of fear through my veins. The creature's skin was rough and leathery, and its claws flexed, digging into the ground below. I stifled a scream. I was aware of Blair standing next to me, but I no longer trusted her.

Just then, the monstrosity let out a deafening roar, a sound that vibrated through the very air. The mist around us seemed to shudder in response, as if the creature's call had awakened a mighty spirit. The other hybrids began gathering around, as if summoned by their leader. Goosebumps revealed themselves all over me as I instinctively stepped back, but Blair didn't move. She stood there, eerily still, her eyes locked onto the creature with an unnatural state of calm.

Then, this time facing directly at Blair, it opened its mouth again. From there came a deep, snaky voice that just about resembled a human's—

— “Mistress, you have come to me at long last. We have waited for this moment since the dawn of our imprisonment. WE ARE FREED!”.

~~~~~

Epilogue: Year 3000

“The Dinoids were a secret human–dinosaur hybrid civilization. They were a result of a failed science experiment. The Dinoids exceeded expectations. They were invincible. The unbreakable skin and predatory skills of dinosaurs, merged with the emotional and intellectual intelligence of humans. They were perfect. Therefore, they should not exist. Such perfection would be the downfall of the human civilization, scientists observed. Thus, the Dinoids were sent to exile, forever cursed to be hidden from the human civilization. However, when humanity is in danger and in need of these unbeatable creatures, a spiritual help would be sent to those who believe. Then, these chosen ones would make it their responsibility to find the Dinoids and release them into the human civilization. If they failed to do so, however, the chosen ones would face the eternal wrath of the Dinoids.”

Blair sat by the fire, telling her children the story of the Dinoids. Since their heroic defeat of the mind–controlling AI (which at that time, the people of Yantan had no idea about), the legend of the Dinoids had spread. Her children had no idea that Blair was the chosen one who freed the Dinoids—but that truth was about to be revealed.

Her husband—their father—was the very Dinoid that Blair had first met years ago, the creature who had once been a mysterious stranger, and now stood beside her, waiting for their children to learn the truth.

## I Returned

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Huang, Xi Han Fiona – 12*

1.

Was I dead? I didn't know. But it felt like home.

2.

My grandfather died a year ago. He was an amiable old man, who used to smile and wave at me, as warm as the sun. But he died. Died on my birthday. My only light was gone, leaving me alone to confront the darkness. He abandoned me too, but I couldn't hate him. I remembered, like it just happened yesterday, my grandfather was smiling at me, just so lively and healthy. Tears were pouring down like a waterfall uncontrollably. "Twinkle, twinkle little star..." I sang to myself, just like what my grandfather did before.

This day was the day to visit my grandfather. I was there to say goodbye.

"Grandpa, I will be leaving after a few days, so I will not be able to visit you. But I promise, I will come to see you after my trip. You might be wondering where I am going to. Yes, my university gave me the opportunity to go to an archaeology site. I promise, after a couple of years, I could definitely be someone just like you."

These two promises were never granted.

The next few days, I went to school just like normal and packed my tools to prepare for the archaeology site. It had been a long time since I was so happy, showing the brightest grin on my face. Second step of becoming an archaeologist, check!

A few days later, I packed my bags and prepared. But I had a feeling. And it was not a good one. My heart was beating wildly, like a drum. The wind blew on me, cool and chilling, making my spine feel cold. And then, the lights went out. From the bottom of my heart, I felt a sense of familiarity. Was it him? It couldn't be.

I still left, gently saying goodbye, to my home and him. I still believed it was him, congratulating me. However now, I know his purpose wasn't as simple as that.

3.

"Last minute preparation! Check what you have brought! All students should listen!" A cheerful voice appeared. It was supposed to be a warning, but it felt gentle and tender. It was Mrs. Lee.

"Soon, we'll arrive at the archaeology site. It is and will be very dangerous and hazardous. This is the LAST WARNING! If one of you start moving away from the group, YOU MIGHT DIE! If fortunately, you don't, then keep it as a secret, or else you'll get expelled," Her voice was high-sounding; it was not as supportive as before. It was a serious warning, however, I wasn't really aware. There was a rescue team after all, and no one would actually risk their lives to do a random thing.

But I was wrong.

At first, I was with all the other people. But something attracted me; something made me go to another direction; something which felt important. It made me sink into my illusions; making me aimless; making me lose the direction of my companions. There were too many people in our group, so I was left neglected on my own. Alone.

4.

"I must have lost my mind! Where in the world am I?" I found myself in the mountainous areas when I finally had awakened from my craziness.

The mountain road was twisting and turning, and there were cliffs everywhere. The wind called my name, as if to count my incompetence and procrastination. How did I get here? Nobody knows. However, this was not a good thing. The mountain was deserted, and no one would hear my helpless cries and shouts. Even if I made it back alive, it would still be a disaster: I would get expelled, and my future would be ruined.

But someone came. It was Mrs. Lee.

"Thank goodness me! Xiaoran!" She called my name, "Come back with me!"

There was nothing else to care about more than my life. So, I thought about nothing else, and ran.

I ran. It was no good thing to do in a mountain.

A small rock had fallen, as if an omen had appeared. The panic deep in my heart was here again. I had a bad premonition. And that premonition was about death!

Another rock had fallen. But unlike the other, it was humongous. Humongous enough to kill a person. Mrs. Lee immediately pushed me out of the disaster, leaving herself alone to suffer what I had brought. She smiled. And she cried.

The deafening sound of the rock had ended Mrs. Lee's life.

"Tell my family...to be happy...You too, Xiaoran..." Her last words were used to soothe my feelings. Her last smile was used to soothe my feelings too. Such a waste of energy! I didn't deserve that!

The gray sky turned to be even more melancholic. She died, and everything was in disenfranchised grief for her. Thank you, Mrs. Lee.

5.

However then, I saw a glimmer. A glimmer that was different from all other light. It was a fossil. A fossil that was shaped like a Sinosauroptryx. It was a Sinosauroptryx! This was something the whole university was finding! This was something Mrs. Lee and my grandfather would be proud of!

I ran as fast as my legs could bring me, and gently went over the fossil. It was pale white and very smooth after all the centuries underground. But I felt something abnormal. It was like being petrified; I felt electricity going through my body. And suddenly, everything went black.

6.

I opened my eyes. I saw a scene of dinosaurs. The scene of dinosaurs was like a rich oil painting. In the dense forest, their sturdy bodies loom and blend in with their surroundings. And then, I heard a deafening roar. A roar of a T-rex. I was startled, confused and intimidated. Where was I? What was this place? I bent down to look at myself. A Sinosauroptryx. I was a Sinosauroptryx! And right in front of me, was a Tyrannosaurus.

I was racing with my life. I sprinted. I tried to, at least. But it was useless. It came to me and gave me a hard bite.

"Don't kill me!" I tried to beg, but the only thing I heard was my own melancholic cry.

Suddenly, another T-rex appeared. The two dinosaurs started to fight over their prey. I knew this was the moment, and ran away, watching them fight. The second one won; the first one died. This was the law of the jungle—weak die, strong live.

I understood what I needed to do, and figured out the situation I was in. Like science-fiction stories, I was back in the past. Back in the Jurassic period. And what I needed to do was to keep myself safe. I had to kill.

7.

Growling, I ran as fast as my legs could take me, my claws shimmered under the bright sunlight. I leaped and opened my mouth. One bite. Two bites. Three bites. The Spinosaurus attacked too. One bite. Two bites. Three bites. Velvet blood was streaming down onto the ground. That was my first kill. I gave the Spinosaurus an attack. I promise, it wasn't my fault, it was that Spinosaurus who tried to eat me at first. But I was not a prey to hunt. I was a carnivore.

Or was I?

I saw the streaming blood. It was like a pool of bright-red liquid; it was like a warning that was telling me to stop. I was no predator. I was a human-being, not something that slaughters!

I stopped immediately, looked at the Spinosaurus' corpse afraid. I wanted to go home. But I had no method to bring myself back.

8.

I thought. The portal that brought me here was a Sinosauropteryx. The only one in this area was me!

The one common thing between me and that fossil was that we were the same species. The difference was that I was alive, and that fossil was dead. Did I need to kill myself? No, I didn't want to obviously. However, what if that was the reason?

To live in a dinosaur society, I had to harm other creatures. That was not me. That was not Xiaoran. That was not what Mrs. Lee or what my grandfather wanted me to become. So, maybe I should die in order to return to my world. I would die anyway! What mattered?

And yes, I made a crazy decision. I committed suicide, because death wasn't scary unless you died in a completely unfamiliar world.

And yes, I went. I passed away.

And yes, I was back in my world.

And no, I was dead in reality.

I looked at the ceiling. It was the familiar mountain. It turned out that I was struck by the rock, buried underneath it with Mrs. Lee. At least, I was here, I thought thankfully.

Faintly, I saw my grandfather walking close to me, inviting me to his place...

## The Legacy of the Flying Dinosaur

Wellington College International Shanghai, Jin, Luning Alice – 12

*Chaos. Danger. Screams. We are the dark. We fear no-one. We will **rule**.*

“Stop following me!”

“I’m not!” Xiao Bao protested, stumbling over the rocky path as he tried to keep his distance from the girl ahead of him.

“Oh yes you are. And are you arguing with me?” Lihua narrowed her eyes at Xiao Bao.

Xiao Bao bit his lip and swallowed his retort. Lihua was the mayor’s daughter, not someone to trifle with. And him? Just a “poor orphan boy” like Lihua said.

Xiao Bao was tired of getting teased. The mayor had found him and his dying mom on the outskirts of town, and the villagers had decided to take pity on him, but it came with a price: being the subject of Lihua’s endless taunts.

“I’m not following you!” he snapped, throwing his arms up in frustration. “I’m just walking this way.”

Lihua smirked and said nothing.

Xiao Bao sighed quietly, his breath misting in the crisp morning air. The endless plains of Inner Mongolia stretched before them; the golden grass rustled softly as a gentle breeze picked up. He had no time for this, he was supposed to be looking for herbs for Old Zhang, the healer, who’d sent him out early today to collect a rare healing plant that only grew near the ancient temple’s ruins on the far side of the valley.

But as always, Lihua had appeared from nowhere. And now, *she* was following *him*.

“I’m not arguing with you, Lihua. I just need to—,” he muttered, but was cut off by Lihua

She folded her arms. “I’ll tell you what I’m doing here. I’m looking for something... more *interesting*.”

Xiao Bao paused, a nervous feeling crawling up his spine. “More interesting?” He sucked in a breath.

Her lips curled into a secretive smile. “A dinosaur egg.”

“Ha! A *dinosaur* egg? You mean a rock or some old thing you found that looks like an egg, right?” Xiao Bao snickered but it came out sounding hollow; he knew Lihua had a strange connection with rare creatures, and she always tested the boundaries of reality and myths.

Lihua raised an eyebrow, her eyes glinting in the sunlight. “I think you’ll be surprised.”

Before Xiao Bao could say anything else, Lihua darted ahead, her feet a blur on the grass. He rolled his eyes, but his curiosity got the better of him. He had to know what she meant.

When they finally reached the ancient temple’s ruins, she stopped abruptly. Xiao Bao stood behind her, unsure if he should say something. The rocks jutted out of the earth like the jagged teeth of some great beast, and the wind howled.

Then Lihua pointed. “There. Do you see it?”

Xiao Bao followed her gaze, and he froze. Nestled in a shallow crevice between two rocks, half-buried in dirt and dust, a giant egg, and it was unlike any egg he’d ever seen: scaly but iridescent.

“*No way...*” Xiao Bao breathed.

Lihua grinned. “Told you.”

She took the egg and wiped dirt and dust with her sleeve “It’s not just any dragon egg,” she said softly. “It’s a *linheraptor*.”

Xiao Bao’s heart stopped. “A linheraptor?”

“My family has been guarding this egg generations before I was even born, to hatch in my generation, which makes it my egg.” Lihua shrugged.

Xiao Bao was confused. He’d always thought Lihua was a spoiled, arrogant brat, but now... Now she seemed like something more—something powerful and mysterious.

Suddenly, the shell began to split into jagged lines, and *CRACKKK*.

A small bird-like creature sat in Xiao Bao’s palm, blinking its eyes innocently at Lihua and Xiao Bao.

Lihua smiled as the baby linheraptor started to stretch its tiny wings and said soothingly. “Welcome to the world, little Linh.”

Xiao Bao’s mind whirled as the dragon let out a soft, melodic cry; he had thought that dinosaurs— let alone *flying* dinosaurs were just a myth— now seeing one in front of his own eyes... it was unbelievable.

“Looks like I’ll be following you after all,” Xiao Bao said, his voice low and uncertain.

Lihua gave him a knowing smile, her eyes never leaving Linh as she nestled into her arms. “I knew you would,” she said, her voice full of promise.

Xiao Bao watched cautiously as Linh started to nibble on Lihua’s hand. Linh was no bigger than a bat housecat, but the regal way she held herself gave a sense of authority and power.

“Lihua... this...” Xiao Bao murmured. “How is this possible?”

Lihua smiled at Linh and said calmly, almost serene, as though she had expected this moment all along. “Not impossible. Just rare.”

Lihua’s eyes softened for a moment, and she stepped closer to him, the dragon cradled in her arms. “You’re more than that, Xiao Bao. You’ve always been more than that. Linh seems to *know* you.”

Xiao Bao swallowed hard, feeling a stir in his chest. He didn’t want to believe it. Lihua had always seen him as nothing but a poor orphan, a boy who’d never have the fortune or the power to stand alongside her, let alone to bond with something as an intelligent yet adorable linheraptor. But the way little Linh was looking at him—the way she tilted her head, curiously as though she recognized him...

“I can’t,” he said, taking a hesitant step back. “I’m nothing like you. I don’t know anything about——”

“You don’t have to,” Lihua interrupted “That’s why I’m here. To help you understand. To guide you.”

Before Xiao Bao could respond, Linh had hopped off Lihua’s hands, and a few steps closer to him, her claws clicking against the stone ground. Lihua watched silently; her eyes fixed on Xiao Bao. Then, to his surprise, Linh nudged his foot with her tiny snout, with playful eyes.

Xiao Bao’s breath caught. He looked from Linh’s gaze to Lihua, who gave him an encouraging nod.

“Go ahead,” she said. “Linh won’t bite.”

Tentatively, Xiao Bao knelt down, his fingers trembling as they hovered just above Linh’s back. He had never been close to anything so... wild, so untainted by the hands of humans. But Linh seemed to sense his hesitation and let out a gentle purr, almost feline, as if reassuring him. Slowly, Xiao Bao lowered his hand and stroked her colourful wings. Warmth radiated through his fingers, and an unexpected feeling of peace settled over him.

Suddenly, Linh flapped her wings again, but this time, there was more force behind it, and the ground seemed to tremble; Linh was growing, stretching out her wings in a way that filled the air with power, power that resonated deep inside oh her, like a long-forgotten memory stirring. Linh’s form started to shift, her body stretching: wings growing larger, ruffled her vivid feathers.

Lihua stood behind him, her gaze filled with something like triumph. “She’s not just any linheraptor” she said softly. “She’s the last of their kind, the one that was prophesied to return when the land needed it most. The land is in danger, Xiao Bao. The spirit has chosen us to restore balance.”

“Balance? What do you mean?”

“The world is changing,” Lihua explained. “Ancient spirits have begun to stir, and things long buried are rising to the surface. The emperor’s men have been hunting linheraptors; and without them, the world will lose its way.” Her voice grew dark. “There are forces in the world who want Linh dead. They want to control her power. But we are meant to protect her.”

Xiao Bao’s mind was spinning. His life had just shifted from a quiet existence in the village, a life full of simple tasks and quiet days, into something he couldn’t understand. The weight of what Lihua was saying felt too heavy to bear.

But before he could ask more questions, Linh stretched her full-sized wings and let out a loud, commanding roar that echoed across the valley. The ground shook beneath their feet, and Xiao Bao felt the hairs on the back of his neck stand up. There was no doubt in his mind now that Linh was no ordinary creature.

Lihua’s voice broke through his thoughts. “Come, Xiao Bao. There’s no going back now.” She placed a hand on his shoulder, guiding him towards Linh. “You can’t run from destiny. Not anymore.”

With that, she turned towards Linh, and bowed, as if acknowledging her command, Xiao Bao followed, his heart pounding in his chest. And in that moment, Xiao Bao realized that he wasn’t just a boy from the village anymore. He was part of something much larger. Something ancient. Something powerful.

And with that realization, the bond between him and Linh was sealed.

Lihua smiled as she reached for his hand, and together, the three of them stood beneath the vast sky of Inner Mongolia, ready to face *The dark*.

*The battle has begun.*

*Destruction.*

*Fear.*

*Us.*

## My Life for a Fossils

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Lee, Veronica – 12*

I had no choice. Please, just trust me—I had to do this. The wind whipped the sand up into my face, and I couldn't help but cough. My shoes felt like they were made of lead, stuffed with sand and weighing me down at every turn.

“Hurry up! We haven't got all day!” the man barked at me. I didn't even know his name; honestly, I didn't know anyone's name here. All I understood was that I was trapped under their control, with no way out.

But before I dive into that, let me take you back two days—when everything changed. My family was struggling. With my father gone, my older brother vanished, and my mother sick, it felt like the weight of the world was on my shoulders. My younger brother couldn't go to school, and I did my best to teach him what I could about literature. We were dirt poor, barely hanging on by selling second-hand goods from our home. That day was like any other until a hard knock distracted me.

“How may I help you?” I asked, hurrying to the counter and facing a hooded man.

“Can't tell ya,” he replied, his voice mysteriously familiar. Stepping closer, he loomed over me, making him look intimidating with a cold look in his eyes. “But I can tell you this—you need money, and we can give you that.”

“What—”

“But we ain't doing nothing for no one for nothing.” He shoved a slip of paper into my hands and turned to leave. I unfolded the small strip, revealing hastily scrawled letters:

‘Today, 10 pm, ‘Dumpling Place’ hidden kitchen.’

At 9:45, I found myself stumbling towards the restaurant's basement, knowing it was a meeting place for a secret gang, I had no clue what they did, or why they wanted me.

“You're here.” It was the man from before, surrounded by others cloaked in black, all wearing matching masks that made it impossible to recognize anyone.

“Is that her? She's so skinny, ugly,” one man sneered. At that time, being a bit overweight was considered fashionable, but there I stood, too thin and lacking nutrition, and they could laugh about it.

“Name?”

“Mei.”

“Age?”

“Sixteen.” I paused, then added, “I'm only here because you said you can give me money, not to answer your questions.”

“We can give you money.” The man from the store replied. “But you have to do what we say.” I snorted, trying to mask my fear with make-shift bravado and sarcasm.

“*Wonderful*. Then tell me what you want me to do.”

“We want to steal *The Dinosaur Fossil*.”

“Okay, that's—” My heart raced, and I looked up, eyes wide. “Wait! That's illegal! It's cursed! Are you—”

“Do you want the money or not?” I froze, words escaping me, making me feel uncomfortably hollow. *The Dinosaur Fossil*—the one buried deep in the deserts, the only fossil illegal to dig up. But for the money... I had no choice.

At the break of dawn, I left a note for my mother that read: “Gone out, back soon.” With a heavy sigh, I made my way toward the waiting gang, knowing my promise to my father lay shattered. My thoughts drifted until a booming voice snapped me back to reality.

“You’re here. Wrap it up!” The man, clearly the leader, commanded as the others hurried to gather their bags and equipment.

“We’re leaving now?” I stammered, panic rising in my chest. “I’m not ready! I didn’t bring anything! What—”

“You won’t need anything. We leave—now.”

I squeezed into the back of a delivery van with about ten others, the cramped space quickly becoming uncomfortable. The ride felt endless, bouncing over potholes until fatigue finally swept me away into sleep.

“We’re here!” The leader barked, that same intense energy in his voice.

As we slipped out of the van and stepped onto the coarse sand, a sense of disappointment washed over me—there was no turning back.

Time blurred as we trudged across the desert, each step dragging with uncertainty. I tried to drown out my fear with a lullaby my mother used to sing whenever I cried as a child. I missed her and my younger brother, Hong, now more than ever.

“We’ve arrived!” one of the gang shouted.

“Arms at the ready!” another echoed.

“I don’t have a weapon! Am I going to die?” I panicked, my voice rising.

“Keep your voice down, you don’t need one—just keep up,” the leader shot back.

“By the way, you asked for my name. What’s yours?” I pressed, narrowing my eyes at him.

“Can’t tell ya—just call me Boss.”

“Boss. Right,” I muttered. My older brother also made me call him boss before he disappeared.

We approached a towering building encased in high gates. The gang immediately fell into a defensive formation, but no one emerged from within.

“The guards must be on a break,” trying to sound casual.

“You shouldn’t be worried about them. It’s the birds you have to look out for.”

Just as he spoke, a dark cloud erupted from the tower’s peak. Panic surged through my veins as the gang unleashed a flurry of arrows into the sky, some birds tumbled to the ground, but many continued to rush toward us. These guys seemed experienced; they must have done this before. Without warning, we dashed toward the building, adrenaline drowning out every ounce of my fear.

I found out that the building was an abandoned dig site, but a guarded one. After going through series of security like spears and crumbling pillars, we reached the heart of the building. That was where the fossil, in all its glory, lay. The

creature's talons were at least half a meter, it's spine crooked, but intimidating and . Then there were the wings, I never believed it until I saw for myself. The wings were opened like in flight, making the creature seem majestic. It had no eyes, but it seemed to be looking, for us.

"Come here," said the man, "I have something to tell you."

I walked over and he pointed to the fossil, "Now, my men stationed in their places, you now need to unlock the fossil."

"Unlock the fossil?"

"Correct," he rubbed his hand together and whistled, one of his gang men rushed over and gave him a knife. The handle was leather, and the blade was gleaming under the only ray of sunlight coming from a crack in the walls.

"This is what you're using, good luck," he had a sad tint in his eyes, but he kept a firm smirk on his face. "Well go on! Get closer to it!"

I walked over to it, having no idea what I had to do whatsoever, I looked back only to see everyone still staring at my every move. I gulped, breathing shallower. When I got to the fossil, I tried to grip the knife tight, but my hand disobeyed. I didn't know what to do! What was this about? Maybe it was the aura of the fossil, I was becoming more scared by the second.

"A vulnerable one. This one is perfect," said a voice, coming from the heart of the fossil.

Suddenly, all the men around me kneeled, each saying the same thing.

*"Congratulations Master. You are soon to be free."*

The man said something else, "Master, I have found her. Let me do it. I'll know how."

"Very well Ming, don't fail me this time," said the dark voice.

*Ming?* The man took off his mask, revealing a dark scar that ran across cheek. I gasped, I know that scar! My brother got one when he fell— It's him! But he kept coming closer. I tensed, sensing something was wrong.

"What are you doing? Get away from me!", I said, raising the blade, but he knocked it out of my hand easily. He pointed it at me, I backed off and fell, *hard*.

"How could you? Do you know when you ran away how devastated mother was? You were the only person who could earn money for the family! I hate you!"

"Enough! I *don't* regret my decision. The power of the fossil...it's glorious. I need that, and I won't be needing you."

He quickly ran a line across his palm and let his blood drip onto the fossil behind me. No doubt he'll do the same to me. Still on the floor, I shrunk back as he made huge, deep slit across my right palm and let the blood run onto the fossil. I screamed.

So much blood...so much pain... My body was as cold as ice, frozen from horror and helplessness. I felt the world start to lose pigment; a painful headache attacked me. I knew was going to die, soon.

"Ming," my voice, rasped and weak, a thin ray of light escaped from the fossil, "I missed you..."

That's when I blacked out.

## The Legend of the Crystalsaurus Wish

Wellington College International Shanghai, Liong Kee, Elaine – 11

My eyes gleamed with excitement as I saw the bus coming towards me. It felt like a dream come true. I've been waiting my entire life to get into the Young Fossil Company (YFC), and now I'm finally here. I looked at my bestie with a smile. A man with blonde hair, blue eyes with glasses, wearing a white T-shirt and brown shorts, came down the bus and shouted, "Hello fellow students! Welcome to Beijing! My name is Peter Ling, but just call me Pete. I'm one of your council's in YFC. You're all chosen as a member of YFC, but before you can officially become one, you will need to pass the next round. We'll talk about all that later, anyways, congratulations! Now follow me, and I will take you to the campsite where we'll start having some fossil fun!" Everyone cheered and started hopping on the bus for our journey ahead.

After two hours on the bus, we finally got off, Pete grabbed everyone's attention and registered for our camp cabins.

Finally, Pete called out the two besties' names.

"Aisha Li. Ella Shan. Helen Lan. Jane Wang. You're all in Crystalsaurus cabin."

I was super excited, but confused when they said crystalsaurus, *Is there such thing as a Crystalsaurus?* I turned to Aisha and told her what I thought. "*Maybe it's just a dinosaur that we never heard of.*" Aisha answered. But I know all the dinosaurs that were ever found, how can I not know what dinosaur that is? A gentle tap on my shoulder stopped my mind from wondering, Aisha was pulling me over to where our cabin was. Everyone here is all talented in fossils like me.

Everyone walked to the main campfire for dinner, I was starving. Finally, food came. While we ate, I wonder what I should write about first in the letter I will send to my adopted parents. I never saw my actual parents; I wish I could. We then headed back to our cabins, and dozed off to dreamland.

The first day of being a YFC—in training seemed fun, Aisha and I went to get our schedules for the day from the councils. After eating breakfast, we started our first activity, "Learning about different dinosaur's habitats". To be honest, that session was boring. I nearly slept during the lesson, dreaming about what the crystalsaurus looks like. *Oh, I should ask about the crystalsaurus!* After, I asked my teacher, Ms. Yue, about what a crystalsaurus was. She stood up excitedly, and grabbed an old book, in what seemed to be from a long time ago. The book's cover has the title: ***The legend of wishes***. Below it, it wrote: The crystalsaurus *written by Matthew Shan*. I couldn't believe it; *did it say "Shan"*? Ella then asked, "Who wrote this book?", Ms. Yue then answered, "Matthew Shan wrote it, he was one of our greatest members in the company, but he suddenly disappeared with his wife on finding the crystalsaurus. People tried searching for them but never found a clue. They had a beautiful daughter called Ella; I feel very sorry for her."

"I'm the Ella Shan!" I said, shocked and confused.

We had a quiet moment for a while. I've always thought they died in a car crash, that's what my adopted parents said. Then Ms. Yue broke the silence, "I would be happy to help you figure out what a crystalsaurus was, since you're the daughter of this author, I would like to give this book to you, this book was his diary as well, so you can find out all his adventures with your mother."

"I would love to keep this book, thank you!"

I was so surprised how she just changed the topic like that, but what matters now is that I got something that I can discover on.

As I got to bed, I told Aisha everything, and her mouth dropped. I and Aisha went to read through the book secretly, while everyone was asleep. There was this one page that caught my eye. A page filled with my dad's handwriting and the other page with a map with torn borders:

*I finally found where the crystalsaurus lies! Their footsteps are shiny, not like others. They only live among crystals of their kind, if I am right, it seems like we need to go through a portal. I think the portal could be somewhere on the map.*

The map showed the whole Great Wall of China. Looking at the map, it says that the portal would be somewhere to the eastern side of the Great Wall, covered with the maze of green trees. On the next page it said:

*A crystalsaurus is a magical, legendary creature that grants wishes. Whoever finds a crystalsaurus may be granted the wish they always ever wanted. But some say that the wishes they grant might not always be good; some say that people disappeared from their wishes.*

Wait... Maybe my parents disappeared like what it said in the description!

Below the definition lies a picture of a predicted crystalsaurus. It's got shining, gradient colored, scaled dragon skin, with huge bat-like wings and a pointy long tail. It's got crystal horns like a deer and has eyes as bright as the stars.

I must find them. I can't believe that they could be still alive. If I can convince the department to get a field trip to the Great Wall, then I'll be able to find the portal. I whispered to Aisha, "Aisha! I need to find my parents! We just need to try convincing the department to let us have a trip to the Great Wall!"

"I'm with you, but how are we going to make this plan work?"

"We just tell them that in our activities, we discovered that the Great Wall had many fossils related history to learn. Then while others tour around, we secretly slid away and find the portal."

"Okay, we'll ask the start of tomorrow."

After planning, we went to bed before anyone noticed. I couldn't sleep at all; my parents could be alive! Finally, I started closing my eyes dreaming about tomorrow.

The next day, we went to the lobby. I quickly dragged Aisha to Pete with the register clip board. I then asked Peter with a soft voice, "Excuse me, Peter,"

"Yes,"

"Well, I with Aisha thought, since we learnt that the Great Wall of China had many historical facts about dinosaur fossils, maybe we can have a small visit there with the camp?"

"What a great idea you two have, I'll go tell the councils right away! Thank you, girls! We'll go at around 9:00am, okay?"

"Okay, thank you Pete!"

"You're welcome!"

*Oh my gosh, I can't believe it!* I thought surprisingly, I did not expect that to work out that well! So, on we head off to our activities, today we have 'fossil finding & fossil polishing' session. This session seems to be fun, and it's outdoors! Aisha dragged me to the class, as I looked at the schedule.

Everyone sat on the ground, as our teacher, Mr. Albert, settled everything we needed for the lesson. Mr. Albert taught us the right ways to find a fossil, knowing your rock type like limestone, sandstone, shale, or looking for the signs of a fossil's presence and other facts. After that, we went to find hidden fossils that were buried in the ground before the class started. When we found the fossils, we started polishing them with the nice professional tools. Mr. Albert was very impressed with the class.

The next morning, I and Aisha got ready to head off the Great Wall. Aisha handed me my dad's book, and I stuffed it in my bag. Let's go find that crystalsaurus.

As we got off the bus, we all went to Pete, and he called out who's in what group and what time we meet on the bus; 3:30pm. When everyone was in their groups, we started walking in front of the gate where people bought tickets. We went hiking all the way up. Few minutes later, we had a water break and that is when Aisha and I started to slide away. Because of the various people here, we easily slid away and started our new route. I took out the book and navigated carefully with Aisha. We arrived at a greenish looking maze just like on the map.

Luckily, we got passed the maze and found our destination. But where was the portal? I then noticed some footprints on the ground with shinny crystals, which were pointing to a dark forest pathway... I and Aisha slowly walked towards it, squeezing each other's sweaty hands hardly. Suddenly, a huge blue and green portal appeared right in front of us! *Yes, we found it!* Suddenly, there was a shake underground! We then got sucked into the portal!

"AAAAHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!"

***TO BE CONTINUED..... PART 2!***

## The Fossil Heist

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Lo, Gareth – 13*

Sand and dust wafted through the air on the fossil site. The land appeared desolate, but James knew the site was just a shadow of what could be underneath it. Son of an immigrant mother and an American father, James grew up as a mix of both cultures. His parents often struggled to pay the bills and often dreamt of a better life, a life where they didn't have to catapult out of bed every day at the break of dawn to go bust their backs for 12 hours. A life where they worked stable jobs not having to struggle to make ends meet. And though they didn't succeed, their son sure did. James J. Hammet was a world-renowned palaeontologist, travelling the world studying and looking for fossils. James stood, pensive in thought, thinking about how his life now was like night and day compared to his harsh childhood. Although things were better now, James also could not help but think about how life didn't quite meet his requirements. He felt as though he wanted more. Needed more.

As he sat there muzzily daydreaming, he felt a hard pat on his back. "Ouch!" yelled James, seemingly surprised. "The team have just dug up a fossil, we need your help" his boss muttered sternly. His boss, Ricky. Had always treated James like an outlier, despite all the grit and grind James put into his job, his needs were never tended too. The only times he would hear from his boss was when he needed James's help. James reluctantly rushed over to the fossil site and peered over the crowd, Hong Kong wasn't home to many fossils. So, anything, bird, fish or plant fossil from the dinosaur era was considered breakthrough, however this time things were different. Usually, the team was calm and collected, efficiently extracting whatever was to be found. Although today there were at least fifty people frantically running around, he really wondered what all the fuss was about, especially with the journalist around with all their camera gear. He rushed up, trying to understand the intensity written on everyone's face, but then he saw it.

The fossil lay there like a needle in a haystack, James couldn't believe his eyes. This was history, and he was a part of it. The dinosaur species was yet to be confirmed, but James knew that it could fetch a tad bit of cash on the black market. People might wonder why James felt like this, and trust me, he pondered about it quite a bit as well. But the truth was, James was never brought up well. His family was always known as the immigrants that didn't hold up well. And for good reason, his parents struggled to provide James with basic necessities and were barely home, even when he wasn't old enough to fend for himself. But even when they were home, James was treated like nothing. Some nights there wasn't even enough food on the table. His parents were borderline alcoholics and often berated him. Since he was young, every night he would say to himself "One day. I'll earn some cash, enough for the rest of my life and move away somewhere. If I worked hard enough, I'm sure I could." But to his despondency, nothing happened. Sure, he was living the dreams of many other people, but he wished, especially that day. That he could let go of everything and run free.

That night, he listened to the owls hoot, thinking of everything that could go wrong. After all, if he failed. Everything would be gone, his job, his life, his everything. He would spend his life rotting in jail like a soulless body. But hadn't he spent his entire life like that? He concluded that there was nothing to lose. After all, his everything in hindsight, was nothing. He grew up in an abusive household, worked for an exploitive boss. Soon, exhausted from his own thoughts, he slumped into bed.

Suddenly, he seemingly woke up in a vault. The fossil lay in front of him. Sweat rained down his forehead and though he might have felt calm and collected earlier, he knew his future stood in front of him. He leaned forward, cautiously reaching for the fossil, his future. The fossil felt, weird. Almost a bit like his bedroom wall. Then he heard

a thud, the next moment. He was sitting on his bed, a puddle of sweat around him. His head hurt after the hit; it really did. The next few months he continued to have these dreams, every time he thought of the heist, he told himself that he would do it soon. But inside he knew that all his life, all he heard was “soon”, “later and “next time” and that it was getting to him. One day, he couldn’t take it anymore, he really couldn’t.

As he crept into the vault, he was petrified. He was afraid of being caught, but based on his dreams, the only thing between him and that fossil was the passcode. His colleague told him the passcode so he could check on the fossil occasionally, so he knew that even if he was caught, he could play it off. But that was a worry for another day, as he carefully input the passcode, his temperature skyrocketed. He felt as if, he had unlocked his true self. He stepped in the vault, carefully observing his surroundings. Just as he did in his dreams, he leaned forward reaching for the fossil. Soon the fossil was carefully extracted from its holding case. James vigilantly crept out, as he left the vault. He dashed for his life, for his everything. Taking the fossil with him. He drove to who knows where. But what we knew now was that the future held many things for James.

# Dino Hunter

Wellington College International Shanghai, Petersson, Mia – 11

## Chapter 1 – Meet the Heroes

Thud. Thud. His heart was racing. Thud. Thud. The controller was smeared with oil. Thud. Held by the hands of Li Jan.

Li Jan is an eighteen-year-old, spoiled, home-schooled teenager whose father was a bodyguard that worked for Houston Whitney. Li spends half of his time playing dinosaur video games and half of his other time reading about nature, camping, and dinosaurs. He is a skinny teen with silver strands in his messy black hair; we could tell from the slightest glance at his puffy eyes that he has experienced a sleepless night. Li is not tall for his age, and thanks to his time spent reading, he is pretty smart. His father is half Canadian and half Guizhou, and his mom was an orphan abandoned at the Guizhou Xiuwen People's Hospital. Li's grandfather was a successful dino palaeontologist who grew incredibly wealthy after discovering a *Sycptosaurus* fossil in the high mountains after an unexpected landslide.

Li's mother's name was Patty; it relates to her face reminding everyone of a raw beef steak. Patty is a plump woman who was about five and a half feet tall. She had long, thick black hair that ran all the way to her hip. Li's father is a slim, tall man about eight foot five. He always wears a fashionable wig on his bald head.

Li has always taken an interest in dinosaurs. His favourite so far is the T-Rex; he usually changes his favourite every week. Every day he plays this video game called *DINO HUNTER 3D* and has posters of the main hunter named Collin Keeper and his trusty sidekick Sean Ludwick by his side. He wishes to be a dino hunter one day.

"Great job, Dr. CK, you've made it to level 3! Remember to always follow your heart! Believe! You'll do great!" said The Main Guide in *DINO HUNTER 3D*.

That night Li had the craziest dream yet... Dr. Li and his assistant Sean Ludwick were running from a pack of Velociraptors. His boots sunk into the mud, mosquitoes clinging onto his skin, and hanging vines whipped onto his face like a bat hitting a birthday piñata. Sean had managed to hand over a sniper rifle to Dr. Li as he tried to untangle his boots from tendrils. Dr. Li closed his eyes and shot. The vibration of when he pulled the trigger ran through his blood. Finally, the hideous creatures ran away.

Li sat up from his bed, eyes wide open. Five seconds later he was packing canned food, clothes, a world map, grabbing the poster of Dr. CK, and climbing out of the window. Once Li had gotten on his motorbike, ready to pounce, he remembered that he needed a sidekick.

The family phone rang in the house of the Chens. "Hello?" a teenager responded.

"Hi Thomas, I was hoping you'd answer," said Li.

"Li? Do you know what time it is? It's the middle of the night!" said Thomas.

"You want to know what I think? I think that it's time we started our own dino-hunting team – me the team leader, and you my trustworthy sidekick. I'm going to make a run for it today! It's finally time to take my life seriously!" said Li.

"You'd better be serious about this," said Thomas as he hung up the phone and went to prepare.

## Chapter 2 – Sean Ludwick

Thomas is a skinny, average twenty-four-year-old looking old man with silky brown hair. The Chens are not rich, but they had enough money to make a living. Thomas is half Austrian and half Guizhou. His parents own the

supermarket down the street where they sell the best mangos.

Li and Thomas decided to meet at the Shilongpo historical landmark.

“Where are we going to go?” asked Thomas.

“Let’s find a place to camp first,” said Li.

Li and his sidekick Thomas settled in a cave near the riverbed of West–South of Guizhou and reread Li’s camping book about how to start a campfire. Soon they gathered twigs from the nearby trees and started to rub them together.

“This isn’t working,” said Thomas. “Let’s go back and get a lighter.”

“No, we can’t! Remember we are dino hunters now. We can’t return home or give up – we already made it this far!” replied Li. “But on second thought, it would be nice to grab a few things.”

Thomas’s face brightened. “Ok, I’ll go to my house, get the lighter, and come back,” he said.

It was morning. They decided to leave the camp at noon and go off to another city.

“Are you sure you have everything?” asked Li.

“For the third time, yes, I have everything,” replied Thomas.

Thomas climbed aboard Li’s motorbike, and they headed off to the countryside near the border of Chongqing.

“Are you ready?” asked Li.

“Yes, of course I’m ready,” snapped Thomas. Li and Thomas were both really nervous as they crossed the white painted line.

### **Chapter 3 – Dinosaur Hunt**

Li and Thomas went house–hunting downtown a neighbouring city called Guiyang and managed to find a suitable small, cheap flat to stay in for now.

Li and Thomas went into the house and looked around. A box sized room around the size of a jail–cell containing a fridge, a microwave, two wall–mounted bunks, a toilet, and a sink.

“So, what do you want for dinner?” said Li, looking at all their canned food options in his bag as they settled themselves on their beds.

“You know what? I think I want to try the chicken curry today,” replied Thomas.

“Chicken curry it is!” said Li walking to the microwave.

“Li, did you ever think that dinosaurs are extinct?” said Thomas. “Cause maybe we cannot find what we came here for.”

“I just want to believe,” Li said, fighting to hold back the tears coming out of his eyes.

“Hey, hey, hey, don’t worry. If we can’t find any dinosaurs, then we will look for dinosaur bones, eh?” Thomas said while handing Li some toilet paper.

“Ok,” said Li while wiping away his tears.

“Good. We’ll start the hunt tomorrow,” said Thomas.

Li and Thomas packed all the equipment they needed for the trip and climbed onto Li’s motorbike. They travelled around Chongqing looking for a place to start their search and stopped when they came to the mountains. Li wanted to start the search where Chongqing’s last landslide was. Li has, and always will, look up to his grandfather. They prepared the materials needed and started to dig.

“Hey, Li!” Thomas shouted. “Look what I found!”

Li walked up, stood next to Thomas, and noticed a black hole where they couldn’t see the end.

“Did you dig this just to trick me?” asked Li.

“No, I just dug, and then this popped up. Why would I want to trick you?” said Thomas.

“Huh, that’s weird,” said Li while looking at the hole. “Let’s go and explore!”

Thomas dug more on the side as the hole got wider and wider.

#### **Chapter 4 – Into the Abyss**

“Oh—my—lord,” said Thomas. “Ok, you hold the rope as I climb down.”

“Hey Thomas?” said Li. “Do you think that there are dinosaurs in there?”

“What? No! Dinosaurs are extinct!”

“Ok, I am going down.” Thomas slid down the rope and landed. Splash.

“EWWW,” shouted Thomas while landing in what appeared to be water.

“What?” asked Li.

“I landed in some gluey, slimy stuff. But otherwise, you should come down and check this. I think we could get some samples of this,” said Thomas. Li carefully tied a tight knot on the spike as he slowly lowered himself down.

Splash.

“EWWW,” said Li while handing Thomas the samples bag.

“What do you think this is?” asked Thomas.

“I honestly don’t\_”

“AAARRRGHH,” screamed Thomas.

“What?”

“Shush! Not so loud!” shushed Thomas as he turned his head to the left. Slowly, Li followed his eyes to where Thomas was looking and spotted two large round eyes staring at them in the dark. Slowly, it opened its mouth, showing off its sharp, vicious teeth.

“AARRGGHH,” shouted both Li and Thomas as they ran for the rope. The dinosaur’s eyes had gotten larger, as had the heavy thumping noise of its feet. Li and Thomas pushed each other, clinging to the rope for dear life. Li, who was in front of Thomas, noticed that the hole they had dug was slowly closing by itself. Moments later, Thomas saw it too.

“COME ON, LI!” screamed Thomas as the dinosaur neared. “CLIMB FASTER!”

“I’M TRYING,” Li shouted back, his hands blistered and burning. The dinosaur reached the bottom of the rope and leapt, its jaws clamping onto Thomas’s foot just as Li reached the top.

#### **Chapter 5 – CLIMB!**

Just when Li reached the top, he held the hole open with one foot and a hand. With the other, he reached for Thomas.

“HERE! TAKE MY HAND!” Li shouted.

Thomas hesitated.

“COME ON! TAKE MY HAND!” shouted Li.

Thomas figured out that if he took Li’s hand, he would drag him down. It all happened so quickly that Li barely saw it.

Thomas took the camera off his head, took pictures of the dinosaur, then threw the camera to the ground above. He looked at Li one last time and let go.

Li was shocked, so shocked that he let the hole close as he heard the dinosaur devour its meal.

# The Time Machine

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Shen, Liz – 11*

A woman's head dropped to the floor with astonished expressions as the man threw the dagger away, he held the rock in his hands and spoke the spell devoutly. His body appeared in a large machinery, he pressed the only button inside, the one which said go.

## One month ago, in Yunnan province

"We need volunteers to test if the time machine is working," said an old man, he is the director of a time machine experiment, "the people who go are going to get extra points for the exam. Everyone who wants to go, please sign up here, put your names on this piece of paper. There is a maximum of 8 people. Even though you might die in it, but if you bring back the fossil, then there will be rewards more than you could expect"

The only people who signed up were Tao Xiao and Li Qingchuan. Others were afraid of death. The lesson ended, and the old man flashed an expression of dissatisfaction and muttered under his breath: "It's a shame that only two people dared to join. But at least one of those two ought to die. Zhong Ren, my best student, is still trapped, and he'll never come back! My lord must be proud of me!"

The day finally came after one month, and the two people were ready to travel to their destination, the Shang dynasty, to get fossils and artifacts. They are going to be there for one month, until the machine has enough battery for the trip. They held the rock together and spoke a spell to activate it. They flashed inside a large machinery with everything prepared. They pressed the button in the middle and sat in two seats.

## The emperor's study room

"Lord, there are two people from 2000 years later that just arrived. Do I leave them to what they're doing, or do I order the assassins to kill them before they could cause any harm?"

"Leave them for now. I would like to see what they are planning to do. But if they show any interest in that fossil, take them to me, for they will do harm to us otherwise. Now go!"

As the general left, the emperor looked at the samples taken of the mysterious object seen in the morning and started to mutter: "Did they, even Dr. Zhao, forget me? I am already left here because of the stupid mistakes they made, and they still dare to use the same prototype?! How idiotic. But at least they sent 2 people, if one of them finds the true meaning of the spell and does it accordingly, then that person could go back to the present. But I was the only one on that trip of my time! So even if I knew it, the meaning, I would still need to stay here for the rest of my life, how is this fair to me! The professors in our school always translates unknown messages, so how are they ignoring the fact that people would die in this!"

## Shang dynasty, under the reign of Zhong Ren

"We're finally here, after all of that trembling of the machine. I checked and we have everything needed for survival."

"We'd put this rock and scroll in our house, but we don't want it stolen by some random bandit since it is shiny and looks valuable, and we can't go back without this."

"However, it's way too big for us to carry around every day. Don't forget, our main mission is to get that fossil from the pit before it gets taken by the emperor. If we leave the stone in our bags, there would be no space for the fossil"

"But we're only in two plebeian bodies, how can we get in the fossil pit without any background?"

"Don't tell anyone; the emperor Zhong Ren is said to have been from our school 2 years before us. But in one summer holiday, he suddenly disappeared from school. He might also be in this time machine project."

"Just try to do something big that could alert the emperor. And it has to seem modern, so that we could catch his attention."

"Let's just get the fossil now, I remember from our textbook that he would excavate it one month later but already started planning around one week ago."

No one noticed, but a leaf was flashing red lights in the corner of a window; teleporting an audio of what they said to another leaf with a signal receptor.

### **Fossil bone bed**

A few days later. Tao set foot on the dry, yellow ground beneath her. She scanned around and quickly saw her target: the largest fossil in this bone bed, the Lufengosaurus, the fossil they were aiming for; more correctly, the body of the crystal. She carefully used a brush to clear the dust above the skeleton and the original size was revealed. Its length was around seven meters, and its height was around three meters. The skull was revealed, and inside of it was a shining crystal. She caught a slight change of noise in the background so told Li to stop making noises, nobody replied. She noticed a scene of mockery in the ambience, so turned to see. What was waiting for her was Li's body fainting on the floor and a team of warriors wearing the army's bronze armory standing dragging his body. She was then held like a prisoner and was yanked all the way to the emperor.

"Just think these people are free labor for the emperor. They helped him find that crystal he was talking about, and we'll all get paid for taking them." said one of the soldiers as they left the bone bed.

### **The emperor's study room**

Li and Yao opened their eyes due to a splash of water. The emperor was sitting in front of them. They learnt this dynasties etiquette so quickly bowed accordingly. All the other people left.

"I thought that you heard rumors about me being from the present. That is true." Zhong said, walking around the room. "I am Mr. Zhao's past student. The one who disappeared in the summer holidays."

Not regarding their astonished expressions, he continued: "I am left here because of the mistakes made by my mentors and that I was the only one on that trip. Only one of you can return, try to translate the scroll into English, and remember to follow what it says."

Zhong left them speechless and knelt on the floor, not willing to stand up. He did what he had been doing before, as if they weren't there. A scroll was thrown onto the ground in front of them, revealing the words inscribed on it.

"It is the exact same copy of what we have!"

"Exactly what I thought. I thought that they would be smarter than this. I have already stayed here because of that, for now I cannot leave this time anymore. If you don't leave in two days, then you will stay here, for all your life. Leave now, otherwise..."

### **Li and Tao's house in the Shang dynasty**

Li thought about Zhong's advice about translating the scroll into English. He translated it, but his face turned pale. If the scroll is correct, then it means that for someone to return, all other people must die. He does not want to, but he must kill Tao to get back. He may be desperate, but he is still sane in the last parts of his consciousness. But then, the thoughts of the whole trip in the Shang dynasty came to him, the appalling sanitation, disgusting food and worst of all, the stinging clothing with fleas on. The petrifying memories crushed the last parts of his sanity. Controlled by his subconsciousness, he picked up the dagger from the bag, packed to help them survive other people, and walked to Tao's room being completely stoic. Ignoring her horrified and astonished expressions, he drew a perfect line with the dagger. Tao's head dropped.

Almost without hesitation, Li picked up the stone and spoke the spell. He appeared in the time machine, pressed the "go" button and fainted in his seat. He only realized what he did when he woke in the hospital.

**Zhong's study room**

In his room, Zhong finally heard that the Li left to leave them with peace and Yao died. Without any doubt, he knew that it was Li who killed her. "I knew that nobody would resist the temptation of going back to the present. At least one of them went back this time." His face turned into the face of another person, the face of the director of the experiment, Mr. Zhao.

## The Survivors

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Tan, Jessie – 12*

I took off my hoverboard and stepped onto the platform the floating platform that connects with the teleporter. I entered the code and the entrance to the teleporter opened. Then, I thrusts my bags into a luggage teleporters before climbing into the main tunnel. Immediately, the entrance behind me closed and I was teleported to my home. To my surprise, someone was waiting for me at home.

“AHHH!” I screamed, terrified, just as my bags came shooting out of the luggage teleporters and landing on Caleb Wu’s face.

“Do you have a knack of hitting your brother’s face?”

“No need to shout!”

“I came here to tell you guys that we all got chosen for the annual Family Fossil Hunt! You can’t go because the age limit is above 15.”

“That’s so typical of you. Of course you would do that,” I stated coldly. Unable to withstand disappointment, I stomped to my room and burst into tears.

“Hey, don’t be mad! I’ll send you videos every day, okay?” my brother called from outside the door. “See you at dinner!”

“Every time, empty promises!” I muttered and opened my secret laptop. Inside, was files and files of every dinosaur species in the world. I ignored that and I opened a file named Caleb. Inside though was everything about him. Sure, I hacked all his devices, but he’s my brother so it wouldn’t matter right?

I didn’t notice time passed until my room alert system sounded and I quickly put away the laptop and opened my tablet.

“Don’t be sulky, time to eat dinner! When the rest of us goes to Liaoning, you’ll get this home all to yourself,” she remarked, cheering me up.

That night, I heard a crash downstairs and grabbed my dagger beneath my pillow. It was intricately designed with patterns beautifully carved on the metal. Slowly, I opened the door and found the lights were off and a man was standing in the living room. Just as I drew my dagger to attack, he turned around and it was Caleb.

“When did you have a dagger?” he asked casually.

“Where’s mom and dad?” I replied, ignoring his question.

“Probably still sleeping like logs.”

“I’ll check their bedroom. Can you check mom and dad’s lab?”

“Sure.”

I ran to my parent’s room. The door was locked. Mad with worry, I smashed the door open with a chair. Their beds were empty, but the window was wide open, and the cold wind blew at the curtains wildly. Yet the blankets are a mess and suddenly, the seemingly cozy room started to feel sinister. I screamed for Caleb, and he came running in.

“What—What happened here?” he asked, stuttering.

I noticed a note on the floor, and I grabbed it and read slowly, “*Today on this moonlit night. Your parents gone from your sight. If you ever want to see them again. Do not call the policemen.*”

My hands shook as reality hit me and unable to hold anything the letter dropped to the floor. Tears flowed silently down my cheeks as I fell on my knees collapsing under the pressure. Caleb snatched the letter, and everything grew silent. My cat bot, Luna, hopped in and assessed the situation.

“The kidnapper left no thumb prints,” Luna said.

“Give it the letter for it to assess, Caleb,” I whispered, voice hoarse.

“N-No, it’s the only thing we have,” Caleb stuttered

“Master Wu, I’ll be careful.”

“Yeah, Caleb.”

“I’m not taking chances.”

“Be reasonable.”

“No and that’s final. Caitlyn you’ll go up to your room and lock your door, windows.”

He trudged back into my parent’s lab and locked the doors. I looked at his back while he left, and I felt something was off. I looked around the room, everything was a mess, and he went straight into the lab without helping to clean up. It was almost as if he doesn’t care! So, I asked Luna to do some analysis...

When Caleb came out, and I slipped through the door and tiptoed into the lab. With my flashlight I found some documents piled on the table, and it all added up. Caleb’s weird personality, his strange actions and his suspicious language. He betrayed mother and father... I heard a click behind me and saw Caleb, holding a gun to my head.

“It was you all along,” I interjected softly yet menacingly.

“Yes, spare me your furious screaming,” he smiled wickedly.

“Why?”

“Why? If you truly know me, you will know why.”

“But—”

“Don’t ‘but’ me! Nobody understands me!”

“You’re unbelievable! I’m leaving!”

“Oh no, you aren’t! I want you to see what I’m going to do with our parents’ invention.”

He locked the doors with a snap of his fingers. I watched in horror as he set the location of the time portal at Lonely Hill and turned on the time machine my parents created. With a beep, the process began, and a horrific scene unfolded before my eyes. A dinosaur head of an Alectrosaurus poked through the portal. I stared in terror, as the portal gurgled and clamped shut when the last of the Alectrosauruses materialized.

“What’s your plan?” I shouted.

“All I want is to be the hero of the day!” he replied carelessly.

“You mean the villain of the day.”

“Same thing, from different perspectives.”

I was fuming as he unlocked the lab door, and strolled out, leaving me inside the lab. Without hesitation, I gathered all my contacts for a phone call on the lab tablet.

“What’s wrong?” voices asked in unison.

“Dinosaurs are coming to town and I’m not kidding,” I shouted. “Gather as many humans as you can and go into hiding.”

With that, I ended the call. The devices in the lab showed the locations of the dinosaurs as the alerts rang. Using my precious time, I hacked into the security and accessed all the security cameras in the city. Just before I start working, I asked one of my genius friends to create a government broadcast to warn people of dinosaurs. With strings of hair hanging down my face, I started working and hoped that my efforts didn’t go to waste. I placed different portals at the places where dinosaurs were, hoping that no one will go inside the portals. Beads of sweat poured down my forehead and my fingers typed so fast that they were blurred. However, the loading seemed to be against humanity.

My frustration was getting worse and worse. While waiting, I sent the recorded conversations I saved in my recorder online. Everything seemed to be hopeless now, nearly no one’s on the streets anymore, either eaten or gone into hiding. There was blood everywhere and the streets were lined with broken parts of buildings. The

Alectrosauruses were stomping up and down the streets, destroying everything in its path. Tears rolled down my cheeks as I thought of humanity pathetic, defeated, hopeless.

A blindly flash of light shone from the screens, and I fell, unconscious. When I opened my eyes again, I found the lab door open with Luna looking down at me.

“Mistress Wu, you’re awake!” Luna said robotically yet heartwarmingly.

“I want to check the traitor’s room,” I replied indifferently. His door was locked up to prevent anyone in looking in them and I allowed Luna to do the trick. Outside, it was dull. Inside, it was a different story. There were high-tech computers, screens, tablets everywhere and most of them were on a plan called “Operation Glory” which was the plan Caleb where summoned the Alectrosauruses. I saw many files that were about different operations that I dare not to open. Then, I saw Caleb’s diary. Inside, many parts shocked me like “Alexander isn’t my best friend anymore. People always laughed at me and kept on praising Alexander. That’s when I started my first plan: Operation Revenge.” I never thought my ultra-smart brother was insecure and lonely. As I turned around, I saw a dart board covered with darts, as I plucked off each dart, I saw a boy’s face covered with holes. He must be Alexander and there’s nothing I could do about it.

“Let’s go check outside,” I declared expressionlessly, despite Luna’s protests.

The Alectrosauruses were gone and so were most of the citizens. The remaining ones was the ones that took heed to my warning. I gazed at the disastrous surroundings around me, filled with the past hours of terror and death. The morning sun smiled down at the rest of the citizens as if nothing ever happened here. We were the only ones that were left. The Survivors.

“Well, what will it feel like to rebuild a city?” I murmured.

“That wouldn’t be necessary. You’ve passed the Purification stage. Now it’s time for the Experimental stage,” announced a dark voice and I turned around to see Caleb and a bunch of suited guys. “After all, welcome to the real world. We are going to another planet.”

## The Girl who Befriended a Dinosaur

Wellington College International Shanghai, Tan, Kayla – 12

Have you ever seen a criminal running from the divine, hiding for 5 centuries? Surprisingly, a girl called Xing-Yi exactly fits the description.

Xing-Yi was walking through the Yunnan grassland, finding food after she arrived in earth from her never-ending escape. Though the walk may have sounded calming, this was stressful for her, as no food was to be seen! She had gotten so hungry that she considered biting off her arm, but luckily before she tried self-cannibalism, she spotted a tall, green animal ahead.

'Finally, some food!' she rejoiced. Like a secret agent, she quickly crawled next to the animal while holding a sharp stick. She was ready to start her ambush, and was already thinking about how to eat it— when only after closely looking at the 'animal', she realised it was not just any creature... it was a— 'A dinosaur?!

She was too stunned to speak. She dropped her stick, and simply fell on the ground, shaking her head in denial. *What mess did I get myself into?!* She thought.

Her anxiety levels rose, and her heart was beating faster than ever. She was getting dizzy, and all scenarios were forming in her head. She didn't know where this dinosaur came from, but she read about them in books— and she was terrified. She was so scared, that by the time she came back to reality she saw the dinosaur right in front of her. 'AAAAHHHHH!!!!'

Luckily, the dinosaur had no intention of eating her. Even better: it was a herbivore. The dinosaur sat next to her, and started chewing on leaves while Xing-Yi was sweating. *What is this dinosaur doing?!* She thought. This weird interaction already made her lose her appetite, so her only goal was to leave.

After finding an excuse to leave, she immediately ran. But while running away, she felt some guilt; is this how I treat animals? Could I have been any nicer to this dinosaur? And the questions kept coming. Amid her thoughts, she heard heavy footsteps behind her. Looking behind, she saw the dinosaur following her!

'Sorry, can you leave— '

She paused. *I can't keep treating it like this, Xing-Yi thought.* If she was the dinosaur, who had nowhere to go, how would they feel if they kept getting pushed away like this?

After making her decision, she looked up at the dinosaur; then she turned around, starting to walk.

'Let's go, Clover.'

6 months later...

It had become spring, and other than the flowers blooming, Xing-Yi and Clover's relationship miraculously bloomed into a thriving friendship! Additionally, it was also someone's birthday...

'Luckily the weather's good today, Clover. Or else my birthday would be even more miserable!' Said Xing-Yi.

'Who's birthday?'

Xing-Yi uncontrollably flinched.

'Why so afraid dear... it's only me, the forest fairy!' The fairy introduced.

Xing-Yi sat up and looked directly at the fairy, observing all her features. She had long, shiny black hair, a fair complexion like a porcelain doll, and the most special: her eyes were as shiny as marbles, which reflected the clear sky. *Were all fairies this beautiful?* Xing-Yi thought.

'Anyway, Is it your birthday then?' Asked the fairy.

'...Yes, but I don't really celebrate it — '

'Don't be silly birthday girl! So, how old are you?' interrupted the fairy.

'...518?'

The fairy gasped.

'Woah grandma... your older than me!' The fairy exclaimed.

'Yea...'

'Still... Happy birthday! As my gift, I shall grant you with... 3 wishes!'

'...really?'

'Yes! Say it now!'

In doubt, Xing-Yi began wishing. After all, what's the worst that could happen?

'My first wish, is to stay happy and healthy.'

The fairy nodded in approval.

'Secondly... I wish my companion, Clover, can understand and speak the same language as... me... if possible, of course!' Xing-Yi said hesitantly. She felt dumb for asking that.

'No, no, I could definitely do that. Go on!'

There was an awkward pause for awhile. *Is there not anything else I could wish for?* Xing-Yi thought.

'I—'

'Don't worry! If you can't think of one now, just call me whenever you think of it, okay?' Said the fairy.

Xing-Yi nodded.

'Oh, look at the time! I gotta go... Bye birthday girl! Oh, also happy birthday!!!' Shouted the fairy as she wandered off into the forest depths.

'That lady is quite strange,' said clover.

'Yea...' replied Xing-Yi, still staring into the forest depths.

Suddenly, she realised who she was talking to.

'CLOVER? YOU CAN TALK?!

Since that day, life had just been getting better! The cherry blossoms in spring had turned into Autumn gingko trees, and it was a beautiful autumn evening while Clover and Xing-Yi went for a stroll. Their bond was now inseparable, and there was no way they would be separated.

Right?

'The evening today is splendid!' Remarked Xing-Yi.

'I thought so too.' Replied Clover. The two looked out onto the horizon, and saw the sky filled with hues of red, yellow, and purple.

You know, I think I've been having so much fun, I've began to forget something important.'

'Really?'

'Yea, well... I don't think it's THAT important.'

Suddenly the sky blew a tremendously strong gust of wind upon the two. The sky shined a blinding light, while someone walked down invisible steps from a portal.

A terribly similar sense of fear came upon Xing-Yi. Now she remembered it. How could she be so stupid! The reason she came to earth, the thing she was forgetting—

'We meet again, sinner.'

That's what she was forgetting! Yes, her escape...! How could she forget?!

The air felt tense, and Xing-Yi tried her best to stay calm.

'Did you enjoy your hide-and-seek game?' Asked the entity as they slowly walked to her.

'How did you find me...?' She muttered. Her anxiety quickly spiked up.

'Do you think I'm blind? You are running from the gods, Cecelia.'

'Cecelia? W—who is Cecelia?!

'You don't remember the curse? **You shall live till you can't even remember your name!**

The horrifying memory ran through her head.

'Does that ring a bell?'

'I was young... I—I didn't know the consequences of stealing the divine potion!' She defended.

**'SILENCE!'** The entity bellowed. They pulled out a long, sharp dagger. 'You shall now serve your punishment and be a sacrifice to repay for your sins!'

'WAIT! Don't kill her... kill me instead.' Interrupted Clover.

By hearing those words, it felt like a sharp thorn stabbed Xing-Yi.

'Clover! What are you doing?!' She screamed.

'I want to save you, Xing-Yi.'

'No...! You can't leave me! What... what will I do without you?!'

'Xing-Yi, I'm just a dinosaur. Just... move on.'

The words Clover said pierced through Xing-Yi even harder. How would she live without her only companion?

'Clover... Please!' She helplessly pleaded.

'Goodbye, Xing-Yi.' Bid Clover.

...

'I guess I could take them instead... Well then, farewell Cecelia. I hope you enjoyed playing this long game of ours.'

Said the entity. With Xing-Yi watching in defeat, the god stabbed Clover, then leaving through the portal. After the portal closed, all that was left was Xing-Yi, who was left crying mindlessly on the grass.

She had lost everything. Again.

A month later...

Like Xing-Yi's condition now, the weather had turned gloomier and darker. The mentally scarred girl rotted in her bed, still denying the fact that any of that ever happened. During her depressing thoughts, she heard someone approach her from behind.

'Hey birthday girl, have you thought of your third wish yet?' Asked the fairy,

'I... I don't know.' Muttered Xing-Yi. She turned around to the fairy, revealing her current condition: horrible.

'What the—What happened to you! You look so different to how I saw you 7 months ago! You used to be so happy... pretty...'

Thinking about how happy she used to be— with Clover— she then burst into tears.

'... Oh my! Dear there's no need to cry! Why so sad?'

'They killed Clover... and— and they took them away!' Xing-Yi cried.

*Them?* The fairy thought.

'I want Clover back! I don't know what to do! \*sniff\*.' She admitted.

After realising what to do, the fairy smiled. She then closed her eyes, and after 5 seconds or so a luminous light shined through the whole room.

Wiping her tears, Xing-Yi stared at the light, curious but also hopeful. *Please, something good happen...* Xing-Yi thought. *Please!*

Suddenly, something floated down gently and rested next to Xing-Yi. Soon, she realised the thing wasn't just anything... it was... it was—

'CLOVER!'

The two shared a long, emotional hug, and Xing-Yi was crying even harder— tears of joy. While they reunited, not wanting to interrupt their moment, the fairy quietly stood up, and happily wandered off to her next errand, disappearing into the depths of the forest.

Looking into the fairy's direction, Xing-Yi felt nothing but gratitude to the fairy.

'I guess the fairy isn't that strange after all!' Clover remarked.

'Yea.' Replied Xing-Yi as she stared into the sky, wondering where her life will take her next— now hopeful for the future.

## The Echoes of the Unforgotten

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Teng, Mia – 12*

Hannah knelt on the cold, stone ground, her knees burning as the icy surface bit into her skin. The night air wrapped around her like a suffocating shroud, the wind howling through the gaps in the stone castle as if mourning her fate. She stared up at her father, her chest heaving with ragged breaths, her eyes brimming with anger, betrayal, and a desperation that threatened to consume her. How could he—her father, her protector, her life, become this monstrous figure towering over her?

Professor Lin's warning echoed through her mind, sharp and haunting:

Some choices cannot be undone.

And now, as her father raised the bronze dagger high above his head, the sharp edge gleaming like a scythe in the moonlight, she finally understood the weight of those words. His face, once a map of warmth and love, was now unrecognizable—a battlefield of furrowed brows and twisted rage, his darkened eyes were empty of the humanity she had once known. He wasn't her father anymore. He was Phantom's puppet.

"Please, Father, don't," Hannah whispered, her voice trembling, her plea a fragile thread against the storm of his anger. "This isn't you."

Her words pierced the night but not his heart. They fell like pebbles into an abyss, swallowed by the void Phantom had carved within him. Instead of softening, her plea seemed to fuel his anger. With a guttural cry, he swung the dagger in a savage arc, the blade slicing through the air with deadly intent. Hannah threw herself sideways, the blade narrowly missing her and striking the stone with a deafening clang that reverberated through the castle walls.

Her knees scraped against the ground as she scrambled to her feet, the pain sharp but insignificant compared to the fear gripping her chest. She ran—fled through the twisting stone corridors of the castle she once called home, her father's furious shouts chasing her like ghosts. The path ahead led to the wild forest beyond, a labyrinth of colossal trees and lurking silhouettes where the creatures of ancient China roamed.

As her feet pounded against the earth, a memory surged forth, unbidden and vivid, a fragment of her past that stopped her in her tracks. It was the night everything changed.

It had been a Wednesday. Storm clouds churned like restless beasts, rain battering the windows of Hannah's small room. She sat by the window, her forehead pressed to the cold glass, staring into the swirling chaos outside.

She was eleven then, a child dreaming of escape. Escape from her dull life. Escape from people who didn't understand her—who teased her for believing in the impossible. How bitterly ironic it was, then, that the impossible knocked on her door that very night.

Three soft knocks.

Hannah froze, her stomach twisting. This was wrong. Terribly wrong. The knock came again, more insistent. Against every instinct screaming at her to stay put, Hannah rose and heaved the door open. A cloaked figure stood before her, rain dripping from their hood, their presence otherworldly.

"Hello, Hannah Agatha Ling," the figure rasped, their voice like the creak of ancient wood. "You've been chosen."

She flinched at her full name, barely anyone called her that. Before she could speak, they thrust a small, smooth egg into her hands, its warmth startling against her cold skin.

"Take this," they commanded, their tone urgent. "Time is short. Hatch it before midnight. The Academy awaits."

The figure disappeared into the storm, leaving Hannah with the egg and a hastily scrawled letter. Her hands trembled as she unfolded it:

“Dear Hannah,

I await you at The Chinese. The egg must hatch. Good luck.”

The grammar was atrocious, but before she could laugh or cry, the egg in her hands began to tremble. Hairline cracks spread across its surface, and then, with a soft *pop*...it split open. A tiny, green dinosaur emerged, its scales shimmering like emeralds, its bright eyes locking onto hers with an intelligence that stole her breath.

“Cheng,” she whispered, the name spilling from her lips like a prayer.

In that moment, a bond forged between them—something ancient and unbreakable.

The journey to Hatchlings Academy was surreal, like stepping into a dream. The academy, nestled in the mist-shrouded mountains, loomed like a fortress of secrets. Lanterns cast a golden glow on the cobblestone paths, and the air buzzed with an energy that made Hannah’s skin tingle. She clutched Cheng tightly, the little dinosaur nuzzling against her chest as if to reassure her. Professor Lin, the academy’s enigmatic leader, greeted her with a knowing smile. “Welcome, Hannah. I see you’ve already formed a bond with your Ling long. That is no small feat.”

At Hatchlings Academy, life was a whirlwind of wonder, students trained with dinosaurs of every size and species. Cheng, though small, was quick as lightning and fiercely loyal. Together, they learned to communicate without words, their bond growing stronger with each passing day. But even amidst the beauty and camaraderie, a threat brewed. Whispers of Phantom spread through the academy like wildfire—a dark force bent on controlling the world’s dinosaurs.

“The Ghost Rider,” Conor said one night around the campfire, his voice low and fearful. “He’s Phantom’s servant. He steals dinosaurs for his master’s army.”

Hannah shivered. “What does he want with them?”

“To conquer the world,” Conor replied, his eyes dark. “And if he gets Cheng...”

The nightmare began one crisp morning. Hannah arrived at Cheng’s stable to find it empty. The sight of the open gate sent her heart plummeting into her stomach.

“Cheng!” she screamed, her voice breaking.

Every corner of the academy grounds was scoured, but Cheng was nowhere to be found. Desperation clawed at Hannah as she burst into Professor Lin’s office, tears streaming down her face.

“He’s gone,” she choked out. “Phantom took him.”

Professor Lin’s face darkened. “Then we must act quickly. Phantom’s darkness is like a poison—it will consume Cheng if we don’t intervene.”

Hannah clenched her fists, her jaw set with determination. “I’ll get him back. I swear.”

The journey to Phantom’s lair was harrowing, a test of courage and resilience. Hannah and her friends—Conor, Abby, and Lily all faced countless perils. They battled Dilong, serpent-like creatures with razor-sharp fangs, their victories hard-won and costly. By the time they reached the entrance to Phantom’s cave, their bodies bore the lacerations of their struggle, but their spirits remained unbroken. Inside, the air was thick with malice, the shadows alive with a sinister presence. Phantom’s voice echoed through the cavern, chilling and cruel.

“You think you can defeat me?” he sneered, the evilness of his power oozing from every word. “You are children. You are nothing.”

Hannah stepped forward, her heart hammering but her voice steady. “I don’t need to defeat you. But my beloved one needs to be saved.”

In the centre of the lair, Cheng stood motionless, his eyes empty, his spirit trapped by Phantom's dark magic. The sight shattered Hannah's heart.

"Cheng," she whispered, almost choking.

The bond between them was her lifeline, and she clung to it with everything she had. She reached out, her hands trembling. "Cheng, it's me. Remember the time we won first prize in the Dinolymics?"

For a moment, nothing happened. And then, a flicker of recognition sparked in his eyes.

"No!" Phantom roared, his power lashing out like a storm. "You cannot take him from me!"

But Hannah didn't falter. "You're not his," she said, her voice rising with unshakable conviction. "You're mine. And I will fight for you."

Cheng let out a deafening roar, the sound shaking the cavern. The magic binding him shattered, its fragments dissolving into the air along with Phantom's form, flickering and weak as ever.

The flashback ended, and Hannah found herself once more on the stone ground, surrounded by her father's army. At their centre stood her father, his eyes still clouded by Phantom's spell. But Hannah saw the man beneath the darkness—the man who had once cradled her in his arms and promised to protect her.

"Dad," she said, her voice trembling but resolute. "I know you're still in there."

He raised his dagger, his hand shaking.

Hannah stepped forward, tears streaming down her face. "Please, come back to me. I need you. Mum wouldn't want this. Remember who you are."

For a moment, the world held its breath. Then, like sunlight breaking through a storm, her father's expression softened.

"Hannah?" he whispered; his voice raw with guilt. The dagger slipped from his grasp, clattering to the ground.

Hannah ran to him, throwing her arms around his neck. "We're together now," she said, her voice thick with emotion. "We'll make it through this."

With Phantom defeated, they returned to Hatchlings Academy, hailed as heroes. But as the night crept forward, something stirred. A shadow moved in the distance, and a cold breath grazed Hannah's neck. The darkness had not been fully vanquished.

Danger was still lurking, and this was far from over.

## Jennifer's Adventure

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Wang, Ariana – 12*

“Mom, when are we going to arrive at China?” asked Jennifer her voice brimming with excitement.  
“Only two more hours. Stop asking me, you’ve already asked me almost twenty times. Can’t you stay quiet like your sister, Jaden?” replied Mom with a tired voice.

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When they finally arrived, they weren’t at a museum but at the sprawling mansion of their family friends, the Li family. “Welcome!” Mr. Li greeted them. “We can’t wait to show you, our collection!” Jennifer’s eyes widened as they stepped inside. The grand hall was filled with incredible dinosaur fossils displayed in elegant glass cases.

“Wow! This is incredible!” she gasped.

“Look at that T. rex skull!” Jaden exclaimed, snapping photos.

Mr. Li explained the stories behind each fossil, from the giant sauropods to delicate dinosaur eggs. Jennifer listened intently, imagining the dinosaurs roaming the Earth millions of years ago.

“Can we touch this one?” Jennifer and Jaden asked, pointing to a smaller fossil.

“Of course!” Mr. Li smiled, encouraging her curiosity. “Just be gentle.”

However, all of a sudden, they were outside, and they can’t see any buildings or humans, then they heard powerful roar it was a Alectrosaurus. “It was just like what I read in the book!” said Jennifer with a surprised face.

“Where are we?” shouted Jaden. “I want mom! I want to go!”

“We are in the dinosaur world isn’t it so cool,” said Jennifer with a happiness smile.

“NO! it is so dangerous here any creatures might kill us I don’t want to die I don’t want you to die I need to find a way that can bring us home now as fast as I can!” replied Jaden. She looked pale like she was dead. Her voice worried and definitely not relaxed.

As the Alectrosaurus let out a deep roar again, Jennifer and Jaden froze. The massive creature, with its sharp claws and piercing eyes, stood before them, both frightening and fascinating. Jaden, anxious, scanned their surroundings. “We need to find shelter,” she thought, and they dashed toward a cluster of lush ferns, hiding behind the thick foliage. The ground shook with each step of the dinosaur, but eventually, the sound faded away.

“We need to figure out how we got here,” Jennifer said, her mind racing. If they could retrace their steps, maybe they could find a way back home. Just then, a shimmering object caught her eye. Jennifer approached cautiously. It was a small, glowing stone nestled among the ferns. The warmth radiating from it filled her with a sense of wonder. She picked it up, and suddenly, the ground trembled again. A Alectrosaurus appeared, its head looks like it had a very strong jaw and its tail looked long and powerful but had small babylike little arms and claws that looked a little bit strange on its strong looking body.

The creature lowered its head, curious about the glowing stone. In that moment, Jennifer felt a connection to the dinosaur, as if it understood them. The Alectrosaurus nudged the stone, and a swirl of light enveloped them. They felt a strange sensation, as if being lifted from the ground. When the light faded, they found themselves back in the grand hall of the Li mansion, surrounded by the familiar dinosaur fossils. Jennifer looked at the glowing stone, heart racing with excitement. They had truly visited the dinosaur world.

As they shared their incredible experience with Mr. Li, he didn’t say anything, but a smile was all across the face.

Jennifer knew they would remember this story forever, and perhaps one day return for another journey into the past.

## The Beast is Real

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Wang, Haoyu Harry – 12*

It was dusk when they arrived at the Sichuan Basin.

'Land of Heaven's Abundance', it was called by the local people; as the Basin's soils were rich with fossil beds and known for the discoveries of several dinosaur species. Archaeologists and fossil diggers were attracted here like metals to a magnet, most here betting on chance with a hope of discovery.

Carrying their large, stuffed bags of equipment on their shoulders, the three men marched slowly towards the populated and lively village beside the Basin with sweat crawling and dripping down their backs. Behind them, the sun dipped below the horizon, dusk unfurled its velvet cloak across the sky, painting the world in soft shades of purple and gold.

"We're almost there, gents. Just one more route and we'll be at the village," the most muscular of the men, who wore a light red cap, explained heartily. "Can't wait for the moment we set down into the Basin, hit the jackpot and find a dino bone for ourselves. I mean, this place is crowded with fossils!"

"Ugh, could you please stop yammering on about 'hitting the jackpot' and all that, Xu? I'm tired of you repeating this all along the journey. Anyways, we've got more to worry about. What 'bout the hotel fees? I'd bet none of us have enough money to pay!" the man who walked at the back complained, lighting a cigarette.

"Why do you have to be so negative all the time, Liu? Let him dream away. He's still young," the shortest of the three remarked, placing his hand on Liu's back.

"Don't touch me, Chen!" Liu spat, shuffling away uncomfortably. "Wait? What's this?"

He had stumbled upon what reassembled a huge hole in the ground. It wasn't that deep, more like a footprint, with three prints sticking out of a hole in the middle.

"Come on and hurry up, Liu! What are you doing, stopping randomly all the time?" Xu called.

"Coming," Liu said.

As the men entered the village, they were immediately greeted by the friendly villagers, having their bags removed and placed at the local station and treated kindly. They were much more caring and generous than Liu had expected, giving the fellow travellers free rent for a few days. After all, the villages around the Basin were always crowded with people.

But just as the trio was about to enter their lodgings, another cluster of archaeologists and fossil diggers arrived.

They were behaving, somewhat peculiarly.

There was silence for a while, as most of the crowd was huddled together, staring at the ground.

Then one stumbled forward, eyes wide open, and screeched: "THE BEAST IS REAL!"

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The room was lit with a few lamps, warm but exposed to the howling wind outside. The men sat together chatting while they ate a few rations provided.

"What beast? I don't believe in this embarrassing gossip. Who came up with this beast myth anyways? Maybe they saw a tiger in the woods? Or perhaps one of the fossils of the dinosaurs? If so, we definitely should go and take a look!" Xu exclaimed.

“There are no tigers in China, stupid! But this beast though... the way they acted... we should still be cautious out there in the Basin.” Liu warned, occasionally shuddering.

“Pffft! Don’t be a coward!” Chen laughed. Suddenly, through the window came a monstrous croak, ringing into Chen’s ears.

“AAAHH!” he yelled, leaping away from the window. “WHO’S THERE?”

He wheeled towards the flower pot and the table and threw it towards the window. It shattered on impact as Chen gasped at what he had done.

“What the hell was that for?” Liu shouted.

In from the window, came again the same croak. Chen looked towards the sound with his eyes widened. It was a frog. He relaxed, his face now red.

“Sorry... I couldn’t control myself. I, uh, was terribly nervous... I thought it was something else.”

“The beast, right?” Liu laughed. “Now who’s the coward?”

Then there came a knocking on the door. It was the chief of the village, an old man with a snow white goatee which dropped down his chin.

“Ah, my visitors. I’m here to discuss the... thing outside.”

“You mean the beast?” Xu demanded, curious. “Because these two are literally killing each other because they’re afraid of that so-called... beast.”

“Er, yes. I’m just here to warn you to not go to the bamboo wood right at the edge of the Basin, behind the village.”

“Why?” Liu questioned.

“Let’s just say I told the same thing to your fellow visitors outside.”

“What, those insane men outside? You also believe in this beast?”

“No, no no! I beg your pardon, but this has been happening for the past four years now, ever since we recovered that... skull. And then we saw all the footprints around.”

“Footprints...” Liu muttered.

“What skull? Take me to it,” Xu interrupted, suddenly fascinated by the idea.

“Come with me.” The village chief said quietly.

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It was in the middle of the village hall, hanging on a wall, a strange but magnificent thing, a tiny skull reassembling a head with a remarkably long, skeletal neck stretching out from behind.

“Oh! I know this creature! It’s the skull of a Mamenchisaurus, a dinosaur species found a while ago, right here at the Sichuan Basin.” Xu exclaimed, surprised. “What is this supposed to do with... the beast?”

“After we retrieved this from the bamboo forest, we began seeing all those footsteps,” the village chief sighed. “Then everyone went mad.”

“Footprints...” Liu muttered again.

“I... I don’t understand. None of this makes sense. But if you’re so intent on your little ‘story’ being true, then fine. We’ll go. Let’s check if there’s actually a monster in this ‘mystical’ bamboo forest. Come on, Liu, Chen. Let’s get away from this madman.” Xu stormed off.

“That’s what they said…” the village chief murmured.

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Xu stepped through the dense grass and dirt of the bamboo forest, pushing through the many layers of bamboo slowly with his knife in hand. Chen and Liu followed silently behind, pale-faced and cautious in their actions, like frightened prey attempting to hide from the invisible predator.

“There’s no monster here! I told you! It was all lies, made-up stories to scare us away! Perhaps they’re hiding some sort of treasure here! Then we’ve definitely hit the jackpot!” Xu laughed jeeringly.

“I can’t be so sure about that,” Chen said. “What’s that?”

On the ground in front of them, the three men could see a track of footprints, footprints of something large.

Liu had seen them somewhere before, on the way to the Basin. “Xu! Isn’t this what the village chief said? Footprints of the beast!”

“Pfft! Come to your senses, Liu! There’s no such thing as a—”

That was when they saw it.

In the road before them, stuck in the middle of the dirt, half sticking out and half submerged in the ground, was a skull. In particular, a skull of a Mamenchisaurus.

“AAAAH!” Liu yelled, covering his face and jerking backwards in fear. “THE BEAST!” he cried as he readied his shovel, preparing to smash the skull into pieces.

“WAIT! What do you think you’re doing?” Xu exclaimed, leaping in between Liu and the skull, his arms outstretched as he defended the fossil.

Then, slowly and carefully, Xu began digging up the skull with his shovel, swinging it against the dirt gently time after time.

But Liu froze. In his eyes, the skull was shifting, changing, morphing into something else. It had sprung back to life, now again animated with monstrous movements as it laughed mockingly at him. To Liu’s tired imagination, skin and flesh began to return to the skull, and out from its head sprang two vulture eyes, both bloodshot red and staring right into his.

In his mind, the beast was skeletal, horrific and gruesome, towering over the slender and tall bamboo of the forest, rising over him as it let out a ghastly roar into the night sky. And Xu was freeing the monster from its grave, unleashing death to them all.

“DEATH IS WHAT’S COMING FOR US! THE BEAST IS REAL!” he cried, screeching and bleating like a frightened goat, his hands clenched on his head as he jerked his hairs up with a sense of insanity. Then he launched towards Xu, bashing his shovel against his head.

Xu fell to the floor, unconscious.

In fear, Chen stared at Liu, horrified by his actions. Liu was now also shifting into something different, something more savage and barbaric.

“WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!” Chen pointed frantically towards Liu. “You… YOU ARE THE BEAST!”

Then the men struggled, skirmished and fought, kicking and punching one another; once friends, now fighting for survival, overwhelmed by fear.

The last that was heard of them, coming out of the bamboo forest, was hysterical cries of: “THE BEAST IS REAL!”

## The Lost World

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Xia, Marcus – 11*

“What was that?” Mr. Li shouted as the leaves rustled in the bushes around them. “Something we don’t understand.” Mr. Wong said calmly. Mr. Li shouted before something jumped out of the shadows at them.

2 days before...

“Oh, don’t be so serious, it’s just a trip to Hunan for fossils,” Mr. Li said, though both knew it was more than that. Archaeologists had found a new dinosaur species and called Mr. Wong for help. He never traveled without his assistant, Mr. Li. Soon, they were bumping along a rough road in a taxi.

As the taxi screeched to a halt, the hum of chatter, carts, and the roar of planes flooded their ears. “Nice day for a discovery, don’t you think?” shouted Mr. Li over the sounds of planes and people. “There’s no time to chat,” murmured Mr. Wong. “We have work to do.” They rushed toward the downward slope that led to the plane, and the captain ushered them inside. Minutes later, the captain’s voice came over the radio, announcing that they would be taking off in one minute. Voices faded as the plane rolled onto the runway; the ground blurred as the plane sped up, and seconds later, the air screamed like the wind in a storm.

Shortly after takeoff, Mr. Wong noticed a strange cloud of tiny birds flying east. He initially thought they were migrating but dismissed the idea since it was July. As the plane landed and screeched to a halt, he checked his watch: 9:30 AM, right on time. “Come on, Li, we need to go,” he muttered.

They called a taxi at the airport and loaded their suitcases in the trunk. After an hour on bumpy roads, they reached the site where archeologists had set up tents among giant trees. Some were brushing dust off pearly white bones in the dirt. “We’re almost done excavating, so you’ll soon get a good look at them,” a man said excitedly to Mr. Wong.

“How soon can we see it?” Mr. Wong inquired.

“In about 36 to 48 hours,” came the reply.

“We can wait. Where will we be staying?”

“In the professor’s quarters.”

“Lead the way.”

The archeologist showed them to their quarters, and after dropping off their suitcases, they went outside to watch the progress. Mr. Wong noticed birds flying east and, upon checking his compass, was surprised when they disappeared. A man then announced it was time to relax for lunch. They enjoyed their lunch of beef, sausages, and broccoli, finishing at 12:00 AM. After lunch, Mr. Wong eagerly examined some dinosaur fossils, noting that it was a species he had never seen before, even with all his years of experience. That night, a storm kept everyone indoors.

The next day, they discovered the rain had washed away dirt from the fossils. Suddenly, their compasses began spinning, all pointing east. Mr. Wong, recalling the birds, insisted only his assistant, Mr. Li, accompany him to investigate. He solemnly explained the situation to Li, and they followed the birds to a hidden cave covered in vines. “Let’s go,” Mr. Wong said as they entered the tunnel.

“Could you turn on your flashlight? It’s too dark to see anything.” called out Mr. Li.

“I don’t have mine on me,” replied Mr. Wong. “Wait, I think I see light.”

“But how? Were underground!”

“Let’s find out.”

They scrambled through a narrow, damp tunnel, hearts racing with excitement and trepidation. After what felt like an eternity, they emerged into a cave filled with a vibrant ecosystem. Lush, emerald forests and sparkling rivers created a stunning landscape under an otherworldly light. Towering trees swayed gracefully, their leaves whispering to the refreshing breeze. Exotic flowers added bursts of color to the scenery, and the air was rich with the sweet scent of damp earth and blooming flora, making it feel like a hidden paradise underneath our feet.

Mr. Li's eyes widened in astonishment as he took in the breathtaking scene. “But how is there light?!” he exclaimed, his voice echoing in the cavernous space.

Mr. Wong gestured toward the shimmering crystals embedded in the rocky walls. “It’s bacteria growing on the crystals that radiate light,” he explained. Just then, something rustled among the dense canopy, sparking their curiosity and drawing their gaze toward the mysterious shadow flitting between the trees. “What is that? It has a long neck!”

“It looks like a...”

“Dinosaur!” Mr. Li trembled, “But how on earth did it survive?”

Mr. Wong explained that the cave was coated in a strange, unknown metal that seemed to have compressed and absorbed the heat and shock of the meteorite impact.

As they drew closer, the massive 10-meter-tall creature suddenly crumpled to the ground with a thunderous crash, sending a tremor through the earth. Dust and debris swirled around its colossal form. From the shadow cast by the fallen giant, a dark, menacing figure emerged, crouching next to the majestic creature and staring at it with predatory intent. Mr. Li's heart raced, and his voice trembled with fear as he shouted, “What in the world was that?!” His eyes widened, trying to comprehend the scene with terror.

“An undiscovered species; it’s killing the dinosaurs!” exclaimed Mr. Wong. They decided to use the strange metal to capture the creature. They walked around collecting the silvery strips of metal from the ground. Using their archeological tools, they made dents in each strip and fit them together. After hours of hard work, they built a cage and set it up in an area with many dinosaurs. Mr. Wong observed the creature’s size and weight and figured it couldn't escape inside the cage. They waited for the creature to return, and soon, it approached a dinosaur. Mr. Wong jumped out, slammed the cage over the creature, and closed the cage door firmly.

Mr. Wong leaped out secured the cage, and the creature struggled but eventually quieted. “What do we do now?” Mr. Li asked.

“We should bring it back to the surface for examination,” replied Mr. Wong. They transported the creature through the cave and drove back to their base, greeted by a man who exclaimed, “Where were you two? We were so worried!”

“We were checking out some suspicious tracks and found this creature hiding in a bush, we have never seen something quite like it,” Mr. Wong told them. “ah, Li, would you mind taking it out?”

Mr. Li took the cage out of the car and allowed the spectators to observe it. It had gray skin, gleaming white teeth, blood-red eyes, and long, sharp claws made of an unusual material. “You’ve discovered a new species! This is incredible!” they exclaimed.

3 days later...

"We have confirmed your extraordinary discovery of a new species; you will be credited for this remarkable find," declared the government official, a hint of authority in his voice. "Is there anything else you wish to add?"

"Oh yes, we—" Mr. Li began, his excitement evident as he leaned forward. However, he quickly fell silent as he caught the stern, warning gaze of Mr. Wong.

"My friend here was going to say that we have nothing further to discuss and that we wish you a good day," Mr. Wong interjected with a polite smile.

They both watched as the official turned away, sliding into his vehicle and driving off into the distance. As the car engine faded, Mr. Li leaned closer, his voice dropping to a whisper, "Why did you stop me from mentioning the dinosaurs?"

"Believe me, those creatures are better left undisturbed," Mr. Wong replied, the weight of his words hanging in the air.

"Why not? They're incredible!" Mr. Li exclaimed, his eyes alight with curiosity.

"Well, we certainly don't want to spark another mass extinction, do we?" Mr. Wong stated matter-of-factly.

"No, of course not," Mr. Li nodded, his enthusiasm dimming slightly as he absorbed the implication.

"So, there you have it: if no one knows about the dinosaurs, then there's no risk of a mass extinction," Mr. Wong concluded, his tone leaving no room for argument.

With that, they continued their journey, walking side by side as the sun dipped lower on the horizon, casting warm hues of orange and purple across the sky. Ahead lay the promise of new adventures in a wondrous world filled with mystery and beauty, the shadows of hidden truths trailing silently behind them.

## Cancerous Dinosaurs

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Xiao, Ya Dai Charlotte – 12*

1

I touched my bald scalp as I stared into the darkness. With the light of the city, my dream of becoming an archeologist was slowly being diminished as well. Time was passing like sand falling, and yet, I was still alive. My body was sucked of energy, as the risk of my disease increased. I was far away from a light named hope. Far, far away. I was fatigued; it starved me. I was malnourished, a gaunt shadow on a thin wooden bed dreaming, for something better, saving me from the pain. Death.

When I was little, I used to dream of flying, high in the sky like a pterodactyl. Or driving deep into the water like the mosasaurs. But now, I dream about dying, ending the pain, enclosing into the darkness. Big changes have been made. My heart has been withering. My desires have been fading into the darkness.

What could I do?

I don't know.

I checked the clock; I wanted to close it. The ticking irritated me. 00:01. It showed. I had stayed awake for 2 hours. I slept at eleven. I turned around. The blankets enveloped me like a cocoon, the heat made me suffocate. The smell of perspiration blocked my nostrils, and I took a tissue to wipe it. I tossed again. 00:02, the clock showed, (to my annoyance) and I closed my eyes. I tried to deflect my focus to something else, but this was heavy.

Heavier than I imagined...

I sighed. My breath was muffled, and my throat tingled. I coughed out a spurt of blood, and it crackled like firewood. I was too tired to grab a wipe, so I closed my eyes and forced myself to sleep. And the warmth of the blood led me to sleep into a dreamless night.

2

I woke up being entangled in the cold. The blood I had coughed up the night before was brown, fading into my blankets. The waking city was obscured with a thin layer of mist. The sky was grey, like ashes. The clock was still ticking. 05:00 it showed. I groaned, as I attempted to wrap myself into oblivion and darkness once again. I failed. So, I decided to get up. A warm pool of blood rested on my bedsheets. It was brownish red, with some patches dry and some still liquified. External bleeding. Typical.

I left it there.

Then I dressed.

I made my own breakfast.

A sunny side up egg, toast, oatmeal, and orange juice. After fiddling with my plastic spork (I refused to use the metal cutlery after poking myself using a metal fork on the head once), I finally stabbed my egg and unwillingly stuffed it into my mouth. I could do with some suffering anyway; I thought to myself. Then, I chewed, spit and drank for a few minutes, before finally giving up.

"Egg on my shirt," I groaned as I brushed it off. Then I rushed to the bathroom, washed my hands several times until it was bruised and finally rushed out to slip on the bathroom mat.

“Ughh, ow.” I moaned, as I swore under my breath. I held the thin door railing to support my weight as I slowly got up. My lungs started to contract, and mucus blocked my weak trachea. That is what the doctor had said. Then a flood of red metallic blood poured out. It stained the mosaic floor. And with the pain I fell to the floor again, this time, my knees edging on the marble.

“Owww... sheesh!”

I groaned, slowly got up and looked down on the floor before proceeding. When I finally passed the slippery slope of the floor, I had to get ready for school. I ate my meds, changed into school clothes (the most comfortable ones, plus I had lost my fashion sense), and lastly meditated. My therapist recommended this treatment, though it was personally self-harm and boredom. Then after passing all of these processes, I went to the bus stop.

As usual, I was early. The sun was tenderly poking out of the red horizon, with the spring wind blowing onto my pale cheeks. I sat down on the hard rock tarmac and sighed. I glanced around to divert my attention, and it finally rested on this bluejay. It had sapphire blue wings, with a ring of pearl. The light shining from an angle made it luminescent to a degree which gave it an ethereal radiance. As its wings gracefully flapped, a soft breeze whispered through the air, causing the leaves to rustle and dance around its elegant presence. But then, I snapped out of this trance.

3

The metal box gleamed under the sunlight, its surface reflecting like a mirror. A panel adorned its side, catching the eye with its intricate design. Ten enormous buttons illuminated the box, their soft glow casting a mesmerizing light. As I approached, I noticed the buttons had Arial font text labels, each one a portal to another world. Some labels read "Time travel" and "Duplicator," their words echoing in my mind. Yet, there were others, mysterious and unintelligible, resembling ancient hieroglyphics, their shapes and lines seemingly etched into the very fabric of the box. A towering antenna rose from the top of the metal machine, dominating the environment, and I could feel it, a tangible energy that sent shivers down my spine. The air around it seemed to vibrate, creating an eerie sensation that both fascinated and unnerved me. But my curiosity, at last, got the best out of me. I walked forward, slowly and steadily, and pressed the "Time travel" button. To the Mesozoic era. And I felt this sensation. I was pulled in, like gravity ruled different. My body was experiencing a new type of heat like being baked in a tesla-sized microwave. The smell of plastic permeated the air, and perspiration coated my bruised back. Once again, discomfort surrounded me, and I could not let go. I twitched and kicked my weak limbs, fighting hopelessly. I was a fish trapped in a net. A strong metallic net, with a harpoon sticking through my bare chest. A whirlwind of colors blinded me, and the colors made me dizzy. My head was rumbling, and it was giving me an agonizing migraine. The whirling motion came to a halt suddenly.

4

I cautiously emerged from the time machine, my heart pounding with anticipation. And there, right before my eyes, stood the embodiment of my past lifelong dream – dinosaurs. My breath caught in my throat. And in front of me, I saw tall thick palm trees, larger than I had ever imagined, stretched high into the sky. The air was dense and humid, filled with the cries of creatures I had only read imagined or read in the books. There, not far away, was a herd of dinosaurs. Their scales glimmered under the sunlight as they moved gracefully together.

One of them approached—a massive, but surprisingly gentle-looking dinosaur with deep green eyes. It seemed to study me curiously. My heart pounded with fear and awe. I stepped closer, and it lowered its head, almost as if it understood my pain. In that moment, I felt like I belonged.

As days passed, I lived among the dinosaurs. They were not the mindless beasts I thought they'd be. They had their own ways of communicating, of caring for one another. They taught me to find food, to build shelter, and to listen to the world around me. For the first time in a long time, I felt alive. They accepted me even though I was weak, even though I was dying. I stopped coughing blood as much. I smiled more.

But there was trouble. A huge predator was threatening the peaceful dinosaur village. The others were afraid. They whispered to me in low, mournful sounds. They knew I was sick, that my time was short. I realized what I had to do. I would fight to protect them, to give them a chance to escape.

With trembling hands, I picked up a sharp rock. I knew it wouldn't do much against the mighty beast. But I had to try. As the ground shook and the monstrous predator drew near, I ran forward, a thin shadow of courage and desperation. My heart thundered, my breath came in painful gasps, and my body burned.

I slashed at the predator, distracting it. I roared as loudly as I could, calling it away from the others. My dinosaur friends used the chance to flee. The beast struck me with a force that felt like mountains collapsing. Pain exploded everywhere. I collapsed, the world fading.

But as darkness claimed me, I saw the dinosaurs escaping. I had given them life. My final breath came with peace. I had found my purpose—my sacrifice meant something.

## Truth Behind the Science Lab

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Yang, Madelaine – 12*

It was a cool Autumn morning in Shanghai, in the year 2356. Zhao xin and her family were listening to the news on their robot.

“237 people died near a mysterious science lab. This is the fifth time this has happened this year. Scientists found that they were killed by dinosaurs. It is suspected that it was another accident.”

“It’s impossible that it’s still a coincidence after 5 times.” commented Zhao xin, frowning her eyebrows. Frustrated, she stormed back to her bedroom. She decided that she needed help from her brother.

“Hey Zhao yi, I need your help.”

“What is it?” he asked, curious.

“It’s about the news; I feel like there is someone behind all the killing.”

“It does seem dodgy.”

“I’m gonna investigate, but I need a dinosaur expert to help.”

Zhao yi chuckled, “You and your hallucinations again.”

“It’s for uncle,” Zhao xin’s voice quivered.

Zhao yi wiped off the smile on his face, “Fine then.”

Together, they set off on an adventure to find the truth of the science lab. They worked 24 hours, searching the web for any clue. However, they got no results. Eventually, exhaustion dawned on them.

“I think we should look for the science lab,” Zhao yi suggested.

“Let’s go before more people die.”

They travelled the whole of Shanghai, from one street to another. The cool breeze blew past their faces as they were running. Suddenly, Zhao xin heard a noise.

Creak.

She stopped. Silence. She walked another step.

Creak.

The noise was coming from the object below her. Carefully, she picked away the leaves. There it was. It was a hidden door in the ground.

“Brother, look!”

Zhao yi immediately sprinted towards her, gasping at the secret she had just found.

“This is amazing!” Zhao yi exclaimed. “Let’s go in.”

“But this is dangerous.”

“Don’t be a coward.”

Zhao yi dragged her sister into the trap door. They found themselves in a bright hallway, illuminated by the lights on the ceiling.

“Whaaaaaaaaat?” His voice echoed throughout the entire hallway.

“Shut up!” Zhao xin whispered. “Is this the science lab?”

“I think so,” he whispered back.

They scanned their surroundings. Zhao xin gaped. In front of them, was an uncountable number of narrow hallways. Thoughts were swimming in her head. She resisted the urge to run back home. No, she thought to herself. After calming down, they tried to explore the peculiar place, straining their ears to hear any sound. But the white walls just seemed to never end, leading them to nowhere. It was like a maze. Fatigue was draining all their energy.

“Let’s rest here,” Zhao yi suggested.

Unexpectedly, someone yelled, “Intruders!”

Zhao xin almost jumped up and hit her head on the ceiling. With no time to react, they dashed down multiple corridors. Zhao yi looked around as they ran. This particular corridor had doors with numbers on them. Behind them, the people were approaching very fast. What have they gotten themselves into?

A hand grabbed them by the shoulder. They struggled, but the grip was too tight. They were pulled into a room.

“I’m not supposed to help you guys,” the person told them.

The lady, who had silky black hair tied up in a ponytail, wore a lab coat and gloves.

“Who are you?” Zhao yi asked.

"I'm the scientist's assistant, Li ping. Why are you here?"

"We saw that many people died here, including our uncle," explained Zhao xin. "I found it suspicious, so I came to investigate. I'm Zhao xin and this is my brother Zhao yi."

Li ping stayed silent for a moment, looking as if she was in deep thought.

After a while, she finally replied, "As long as you guys keep this a secret, I can tell you everything."

"Fine."

"Professor Ming invented the cloning machine and collects samples of dinosaur fossils. He experiments on people to see how powerful each species is. His goal: to destroy humanity. I despise him. I'm forced to work for him," Li ping sighed.

As she was talking about Professor Ming, she grimaced and glowered. They could feel the pure hatred she had for him.

"Can you guys help me stop him? I can't do it myself."

"Yes," Zhao yi agreed without hesitation.

"Really? I am so grateful!"

"We need a map to navigate through this lab efficiently," Zhao yi pointed out.

"Oh! I have one in the drawer."

She fetched out a map. It looked extremely complicated, with hallways and rooms everywhere.

They used the map to walk through the narrow corridors, occasionally stopping to rest.

Boom.

The loud noise violently shook the ground and threw them off balance.

"What was that?"

"Dinosaur footsteps. Probably around 20 metres away," Zhao yi explained.

As soon as they turned the corner, they saw it.

It was a massive dinosaur.

Immediately, they crouched down and stayed silent. All of a sudden, they heard screaming and crying noises.

"Don't look," Li ping warned them. "It's not pleasant."

After a while, the noises had stopped.

"Thirty kills in two minutes, not bad," an uncanny voice remarked.

Professor Ming, who was watching the slaughter, laughed maniacally.

Zhao xin's eyes widened. The place they were watching the dinosaur before had already turned into a bloody scene with flesh everywhere. She wanted to vomit.

"Filthy intruders, I know you're here. Come out or I'll do it the hard way....."

Zhao xin stepped into his sight and the others followed.

"Oh, you've finally showed yourself. You like being a traitor, Li ping?"

"You've murdered innocent people and my dad. I've had enough, you monster!" Li ping shouted angrily.

"Monster? This is all to restore our Earth's beauty! It was once full of nature, then humans trampled all over it!"

Professor Ming looked beyond angry. He was fuming.

While they were arguing, Zhao xin and Zhao yi grabbed the closest weapon and began to sprint towards the cloning machine, which was at the end of the long corridor.

Professor Ming watched them as if they were putting on a show. Hidden compartments were revealed at the side of the walls. Ten guards stepped outside, blocking their path.

Three guards immediately jumped onto them, almost scarring Zhao xin's shoulder.

Li ping pulled out a remote control from an invisible pocket and pressed the button in the centre. All their weapons evaporated into thin air. They easily knocked them all unconscious and got through.

"I forgot that you had that Li ping," Professor Ming snorted.

There was nothing blocking their path now. It was only a few meters away from them. This reminded Zhao yi of a video game; a boss would spawn just before the end of the level. He felt that something was off.

"Guys, don't go!" He shouted as he dragged both of them backwards.

Just like he hypothesized, a dinosaur spawned right in front of the cloning machine.

"That's a *Dinocephalosaurus*, an aquatic dinosaur. Wait..... That's weird; it's walking on land!" Zhao yi exclaimed.

"Impressive, isn't it?" Professor Ming grinned.

"Hit its eyes. Distract it while I get my weapon," Li ping ordered.

When Li ping went to help them, they were already injured in several places. All three of them jumped onto it at the same time and managed to give the dinosaur some nasty gashes. It wasn't enough. The Dinocephalosaurus came to Zhao xin's direction. She clenched her weapon tightly. The creature moved surprisingly fast and hit her weapon onto the floor. Sweat dripped down her face. It was creeping up on her and she can't defend herself. Was this the end? Helplessly staring at the creature's jaws, she accepted her fate. In a smooth movement, Li ping jumped in front of her and took the hit. Blood streamed down her torso, and it didn't stop.

"Li ping!" Zhao xin cried as she ran towards her.

Zhao yi took the chance and leaped up behind the creature and finished the final hit.

"Why?"

"It was necessary. You are much more important than me."

"No!" Zhao xin cried.

She smiled as she closed her eyes. They never opened again.

Zhao xin, her breath quickening, sprinted to the cloning machine and pressed the button with all her strength. She could see the veins in her hands. In a blink of an eye, the cloning machine exploded and was engulfed in flames. Everything was over.

"My plan!" Professor Ming yelled as he collapsed onto his knees. "I was doing it for the greater good!"

"That doesn't justify what you did," Zhao yi stated.

After a while, the police arrived and arrested Professor Ming.

"Uncle, I've finally avenged you," Zhao xin thought as she smiled.

Zhao xin and Zhao yi slept soundly that night. She still thought about Li ping at times, thinking about how she sacrificed herself to save her. They were now famous and were known as the 'Saviors of the Human Race'.

As Professor Ming was being led to his cell, he smirked.

"Not bad, kids. You've beat me..... for now."

## The Time—traveling Camera

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Yu, Ruoxi Lucy – 12*

“Mum, you know, I was just walking home on the outskirts of the Gobi Desert, when something sharp dug into my shoe. I looked down and took my shoe out of the gritty sand. I used my hands to brush aside some of the sand that had gotten into my shoe, then leaned over the hole to see what had been so sharp.” explained Xiao Ming as he munched on his spring rolls.

“Oh, ok. Did you know that it was a dinosaur tooth as soon as you took it out of the hole?” asked Chen Ayi.

“No, but I took it to a local museum, and they identified it as a Euhelopus tooth.”

Chen Ayi stood up and cleaned the dinner table. She turned to the kitchen sink and started scrubbing the plates.

“I’m so amazed that you found a dinosaur tooth though.”

“Yes, but it’s just that I—”

“Gosh! Look at the time! You should probably go to sleep now, or you won’t be able to wake up in time tomorrow to welcome our visitor Mr. Cai in.”

Xiao Ming obediently went upstairs and as he slumped onto his bamboo bed, breathed in the fresh scent, and muttered to himself: “I just wish I hadn’t found the dinosaur tooth so I wouldn’t be so famous in Inner Mongolia right now. I just want to live a normal life with nature.”

He fell asleep.

The next morning, he woke up with a jerk, and rushed downstairs to help prepare the house for Mr. Cai to come. Xiao Ming was just about to sit on the sofa and relax when the doorbell rang. He got up and walked to the door. He unlocked the door and welcomed Mr. Cai in.

“Hello, Mr. Cai! Please sit down.”

“Oh, no need to be so formal! Anyone for a cup of coffee?”

Later that day, after Mr. Cai had left, Xiao Ming was about to sit down on the sofa when a glint of silver caught his eye. He stood up and went over to it. It looked like a camera. He hadn’t seen it the day before. He assumed that his mother had bought it to make the house look good for the visit of Mr. Cai, so he took the camera and thought, “I would like to have some photos of my dinosaur tooth, in case a museum wants to see pictures of it.” and he went and took multiple photos of his dinosaur tooth and left it on his table before going to sleep.

When he next opened his eyes, he went to his table to put the dinosaur tooth away. But to his surprise, it wasn’t there. His table was bare. He rushed downstairs to his mother and told her of the terrible thing. “What did you do with it last night?”

“Oh, I just took some photos of it with the camera you bought, nothing stupid.”

“But I’m pretty sure I didn’t buy any cameras recently.”

As soon as she had spoken, Xiao Ming clapped a hand to his mouth and blurted out, “Then Mr. Cai must have left it here yesterday!”

And with that, they rushed to his house with the camera.

At the place that the front door was supposed to be, there was a wall with red bricks. Xiao Ming frowned. "How do we knock? And where is the door?" As soon as he spoke, the bricks at the bottom of the wall vanished into the house. Within minutes, the disappearing space formed the shape of a door, and Mr. Cai appeared in it.

"Welcome!" He said. "This is my humble abode." He led them in, and asked: "Why have you come today? Don't tell me that you knew it was my cousin's birthday today! Ha ha!"

"Well, no, I'm afraid I didn't know that it was your cousin's birthday today. But what I do know is that you left your camera in our house yesterday." explained Chen Ayi, seeming a little embarrassed.

"Oh really! Did you take any photos with it? Because you know it may—"

"Yes! I did! Um, what does it do?" blurted out Xiao Ming. He wasn't used to blurting things out so suddenly as he was always being top of the class at school and listening in class, so he was even surprised at himself.

"Oh! Um, is everything all right? Mr. Cai, you look as if you've just accidentally made someone go to live with dinosaurs!"

"Well, the thing is, I have! Basically, any object or person that has their photo taken with that camera will be time-travelled to the time of the dinosaurs, when the Euhelopus' were still alive."

A look of concern appeared on Chen Ayi's face, "What do we do? That means that our dinosaur tooth is in the time of the dinosaurs!" she exclaimed.

"Well, if you really want your dinosaur tooth back that much, then I will have to take a photo of you to send you to the time of the dinosaurs. I will also have to give you a string to put around your neck. It has a button attached to it. When you are ready to come back, you just press the button. Also, adults will forget about what happened but I'm not sure about children."

With that, Chen Ayi and Xiao Ming hung the string around their necks and got ready to go. Mr. Cai took the camera and 'Snap!'

A whirlwind of dust swirled around them and then they found themselves standing behind a tree on the edge of a forest. Suddenly, Xiao Ming and Chen Ayi heard a low rumbling sound.

"Quick! Hide behind this bush." whispered Chen Ayi to Xiao Ming. The rumbling sound grew louder, and in the distance, a large shadow appeared. It seemed to be running away from something. Within seconds, a tyrannosaurus rex appeared into their sight, and it was chasing what looked like a Euhelopus!

"Wow! Look at that! That's so cool, mum!" Xiao Ming whispered loudly. Xiao Ming looked back to check if his mother was still there, she was. When he looked back at the dinosaurs, the T-rex was gone and the Euhelopus was limping back to its nest. And, in the nest, there seemed to be a dinosaur tooth, and Xiao Ming was quite sure it was a Euhelopus tooth, his Euhelopus tooth. Not long after that, Xiao Ming and Chen Ayi noticed that there were baby dinosaurs in the nest, and they seemed very hungry. As if the larger Euhelopus could hear their thoughts, he limped away into a thicket and started feeding on some of the plants. He soon beckoned his children over.

Xiao Ming grabbed the chance to get his dinosaur tooth back. He darted out, snatched the tooth and dashed back into the trees. The flash of movement must have caught the Euhelopus' eye because it turned its head towards their direction and started making its way towards them.

“Quick!” whispered Xiao Ming, “Press the button!” Chen Ayi did as he said and pressed the button on her string. She vanished. Xiao Ming was about to press his own button when his hand slipped, and the string fell off his neck. He grappled about on the ground for it when a loud roar filled the air.

He stumbled backwards and landed in a bush. He looked up and saw a huge face staring at him. He made to run, but there came another loud roar that shook the dust off the ground. Xiao Ming scabbled backwards and grabbed his string from under a leaf, and with his Euhelopus tooth clenched in his other hand, pressed the button just as the Euhelopus’ mouth opened wide to swallow him whole.

He appeared in Mr. Cai’s house a moment later, covered in dust and very tired. He said, “Wow! That was so cool!”

“What was so cool?” wondered Chen Ayi.

Xiao Ming thought to himself: Oh, I forgot that adults forget what happened. But I will never forget. Perhaps being famous isn’t too bad after all.

## The Fossil Adventure

*Wellington College International Shanghai, Zhong, Ianna – 12*

As the sun set a boy and girl walked out from the airport of Yunnan “Let’s get back on time to eat dinner! You don’t want to miss it do you John?” “Of course I would not Sarah, I will get there before you!” yelled John. “Hey!” yelled Sarah after him as she ran to catch up to him.

A mountain full of traditional houses came into view as Sarah and John jogged uphill “Look how much it has changed. I can’t believe that only 3 years have passed.” Sarah and John were born in China but they have lived in America since young age even though they don’t stay in Yunnan for a long time they still think of it their home. A house bigger than the rest was in the middle Sarah and John walked towards it as they saw their grandfather Peter, Peter was an old man, but he could walk and jump totally fine. They rushed over and gave him big hug “Look at you now a few years ago you were only at my chest, now you are taller than me.” commented Peter.

When Sarah and John ate finish their dumplings, they told Peter that they wanted to climb to the top of the hill and look what has changed in the 3 years. Peter responded with a yes but with a lot of words about their safety he kept on telling them about how to be safe until he closed his eyes and fell asleep. Sarah and John ran out to adventure as they saw lots of kinds of animals, after running for half an hour John and Sarah started slowing down into a walk. They were halfway through the hill when John decided they should sit down and rest, Sarah thought it was a good idea and they sat down on a broken tree. “I think the forest has changed so much. Look at the time we should get back by 9 o’clock. Right John?” asked Sarah as she sat down “Yeah, we should go soon. Ahhhhhhh!” “John where are you where did you go!” shouted Sarah as she used her phone to look at the spot John was sitting a second ago. She looked down and there was a hole she looked around desperately until she saw a vine “I guess I have no other choice,” she thought as she gripped onto the vine and slid down.

After a few minutes there was a loud sound. Sarah rubbed her butt as she stood up it was pitch black, so she took out her flashlight. She felt a sudden wind on top of her head. Sarah flashed her flashlight at it a pair of eyes stared at her. It was a bat. She started running. Sarah never knew she could run this fast in her life, she always got last in PE lessons yet now she was running faster then ever. After awaking that bat, she woke up all of them and they chased her she noticed they were following her light, so she turned it off the bats flew away. She slowly walked catching her breath until she tripped over something. “Ouch!” yelled the thing Sarah tripped over, Sarah thought she heard of this voice before and she asked, “John is that you?” “Of course, it’s me can you help me get up I think I have broken my leg from the fall.” responded John as he groaned in pain. “I also think I have discovered some kind of white rock or something it is right next to me.” Sarah used her flashlight and looked at it closely. It looked very familiar...

She started shaking with joy and excitement. She shrieked “John I think we might have discovered a fossil!” John jumped up into the air not caring about his leg as he shouted, “Oh yeah now that you say that it really does looks like a dinosaur fossil. “Wait what kind of dinosaur is it?” After racking her brain for a few minutes, she gave up and took a few photos to keep and looked at the time. It was 3 o’clock in the morning and a day has already passed, they have stayed in this cave for the night. They also didn’t have water and food supply. They decided it’s time to find a way out of this cave.

Slowly, looking for a light source they wandered around the cave for some time. Soon they followed the sunlight to the hole they dropped in from “Well now we are here but we don’t have any rope or something to get up there.” voiced John as he sat down no hope in his voice. “John if I remembered correctly, we were playing with fireworks with grandfather. Do you still have some?” stated Sarah as she racked her brain for ways to get out. “I should have some left wait. Let me check.” mumbled John. After a few minutes John took out three fireworks “I only have three

left.” whispered John as he looked up. “But it’s better than nothing. Let’s shoot them up one by one,” decided Sarah “Out of the three I think the people should be able to hear or see one.”

The first one went up it was red but there was no sound, but they did not give up hope. The next one went up it was white and had a large sound, Sarah got a little bit worried but continued. The last one went up. It was the largest and the most colourful one, after it was out of sight John sighed “If they did not hear or see that I think there is a chance we will be stuck in here forever.” “Don’t give up hope John.” she muttered “Don’t give up.” Sarah kept on repeating in her mind.

A shadow showed up Sarah looked up in hope to see her grandfather “Grandfather, me and John fell in here and are stuck can you help us get out?” “I may not be strong enough I will call some people to help wait. I will be soon back.” stated Peter as he wobbled away. Soon he came back with a long piece of rope “Hold onto this rope when you are ready tell us and we will pull you and John up.” Yelled Peter as he held on to the rope. Slowly they got pulled up after they got up Sarah immediately told her grandfather that she wanted to go to the dinosaur museum. Peter told her to rest for a while then they can go over.

After resting they ran to the museum and asked the professors what fossil was in the picture. They looked at the photo for days until they determined that the fossil is a species of dinosaur that they haven’t found before. They asked Sarah and John where they took this photo and told the team to immediately go there to dig out the fossil.

When they dugged it out and named the species but in the name Sarah’s name and John’s name were concluded. The news about a new kind of dinosaur species fossils in China made a lot of tourism.

17 years later a boy and a girl wearing lab coats stepped down from the plane “Are you ready to look for some more dinosaur fossils?” asked the girl “Of course I do after finding that fossil 17 years ago we did not find any new ones did we.” answered the boy. “Let’s go!” he shouted as he ran towards the sunset.

## Bones In My Yard

*Wycombe Abbey Nanjing, Chen, Adele – 14*

When my brother was digging a hole for a new tree in the backyard, he saw a bone leaking out of the dirt. He called me out and we dug slowly with a shovel until we found a big bucket of bones. I saw that these bones did not look like normal animals, so I took them back to my room and began to observe, I read various books, and finally, I spent two months to piece together a dinosaur skull! According to my observations, this skull belongs to a Tyrannosaurus rex. As I was about to take a closer look at the skull of a Tyrannosaurus Rex, the skull started talking. It said that it was buried into the ground by a team of top scientists and transported it to my time, because in the distant future, human science and technology have been highly developed, but also due to excessive resource development and environmental destruction, resulting in the destruction of the earth's ecology. In search of a way to save the planet, scientists are going to ask the man who dug up the skull to help them. This crystal ball can keep you safe, and you can also contact future scientists through this crystal ball, and they will tell you what you should do. After saying that, he spit out a crystal ball from his mouth, and I was immediately confused after listening to what he said, I have never encountered such a strange thing. I made up my mind and decided to do what it said. I first prepared some food and water, and I also prepared a lot of first aid supplies. I also brought flashlights, batteries, tents, blankets and so on. After cleaning up, I began to try to contact the future scientists with a crystal ball. I patted the crystal ball, and the crystal ball immediately appeared as the scientists. I started talking to scientists, and they said that if I succeeded, they would give me a lot of money. I started talking to scientists, and they said that if I succeeded, they would give me a lot of money. We had a quick chat about what I should do and how I should do it, and they said that all I had to do was take some dinosaur blood, and dinosaur blood could help nature regenerate in the future. The scientists sent me some things that I could use, lots of anesthetics, tranquilizers, a big, sharp needle, and a smart watch that would help me identify the weaknesses of those dinosaurs and the types of dinosaurs. The next day, there was a huge spaceship in my backyard, and I knew it was prepared for me by scientists, so I immediately sat in it, and after I went in, the spaceship flew up by itself, and in a blink of an eye, I was in the age of dinosaurs, I walked out of the spaceship, surrounded by dense plants, huge trees to cover the sun, the air is hot and humid. Before I could recover myself, the ground began to shake violently. I looked in horror and saw a group of Triceratops galloping forward, their huge bodies moving like hills, and the ground under their feet being stepped out of deep pits. I ducked behind a sturdy tree, my heart pounding. After the Triceratops, I discreetly poke my head out and decide to find a safe place first. I make some simple weapons and tools from branches and rattan and found a hidden cave for temporary shelter. I heard a strange noise while I was sleeping. I looked for the source of the sound, I saw an injured baby dinosaur, its leg was cut by a branch, blood flowing, I quickly took out a small glass tube from the backpack, the blood it is flowing to collect into the bottle, so that the bottle is full, I treated the wound, and the baby dinosaur ran away, in the next few days I collected 10 different dinosaur blood, the watch came to a sound, I raised my arm to look, I finally completed the task, I jumped up with joy, the scientists are also very happy to celebrate for me. But then, the sky suddenly became very dark, a huge meteorite dragging a long tail across the sky. I knew that this would be a disaster enough to destroy the world, I quickly hid in a cave, but finally did not escape this devastating disaster, I thought I would die here, but when I opened my eyes, I appeared in my home! I looked at the clock on the wall, and it had only been five minutes since I had traveled to the age of the dinosaurs! I checked my bag to make sure the blood was still in it, and I quickly used the crystal ball to contact the scientists, and they said just bury the blood and the dinosaur skull and the crystal ball where I had dug up the dinosaur skull, and they would receive it. I buried it after I heard it. Five minutes later, my bank card received a transfer, and I knew that the scientists had received my stuff. I was tired after such an exciting adventure and just wanted to have a good sleep. I lay down in bed and fell asleep. When I woke up again, my body was drenched in cold sweat. After a while, when my mind cleared, I realized that what I was

experiencing was a dream. After I lost my mind for a while, I heard a scream in the backyard, and my brother yelled that there was a skull leaking out of the dirt! I know, the adventure begins again...

## Reborn Dinosaur

*Wycombe Abbey Nanjing, Jiang, Vivi – 13*

I never believed such a something strange could happen to me before.

I walked in the forest of Triassic, as I looked around, there were giant footprints were embedded in the mud. Gently caress the layers of vines, they are huge and strong, like the green python, entwined together.

As I walked deeper into the lush jungle, a breathing sound suddenly appeared. "Help!" Something was crying! "Help me! I had been buried under ground so many years ago. You built houses and planted trees on top of me." Who is talking? I do not think I had made friend with a Triassic creature!

Just as I walked across some low bush. A huge body appeared in the dark green of jungle. That body moved closer and closer to me. "I slept under your backyard millions of years ago. Help me! Dig me out!" "Wait, who are you?" I shouted back. But the voice seems didn't want to answer my question. "Dig me out and get my body back together. Let me see your world." The voice grown farther and further.

I opened my eyes. "What a strange dream!" I sat up on my bed and throw the bedclothes back. The sky was still dark blue, some stars were twinkling. Thinking about that dream, an idea grown into my head.

I ran down the stairs and carefully opened the door of my backyard. The night of this town was quiet as usual, darkness covered the houses. Blue and purple shadows swallowed the trees and grass in my yard, trying to hide a secret.

I found a shovel and a brush in the tool house, using them might make my work easier. The rain this morning made the mud softer to dig in. As I am digging deeper in the mud and sand, the shovel hit something long but hard. I gently brush the mud of it, it shows a milky white color. It was a bone! Along with the surprise, I found more bones around this bone.

The sun started rising, I took the bones inside my house. It was hard to build back the bones at beginning, but as I spent a lot of time with more and more research, the bones were finally fixed together, a whole dinosaur stood in front of me.

I used springs and gears to connect the joint to make it move. And used rubber skin to cover the skeleton, make it look more like it's alive, the sin was colored by brown and green paints.

It's already! Just waiting for a special night. I control "reborn dinosaurs" walking down the street.

It looked like it had come back to life and was curious about everything around it, enjoying the wind hundreds of millions of years later.

This long night is all the time for its short return to life.

## A True Friend

*Wycombe Abbey Nanjing, Newson, Mary-Rose – 13*

As my friends waved goodbye I wondered when we would see each other again. Slowly, I turned around and started walking back to my house. My steps were heavy and tears threatened to fall. Shaking my head, I walked back to my room and started packing my bags.

Just a few months ago, I was a normal student with a normal life. I didn't have many friends but that didn't bother me. everything was going on as usual until she came. The most perfect and goodlooking student I have ever seen. Little did I know she was soon going to be my best friend who I cherished so much.

When Abby first arrived, everyone wanted to be her friend. To be honest, I did to but was too shy to ask. Instead, I walked away to my own disappointment. But Abby had followed me and asked me to help her with homework. After that, we spent more and more time together and even started having sleepovers. People started thinking she was weird for hanging out with someone like me, but Abby didn't care. She continued playing with me and that was the first time I ever felt so happy in my life. She stood up for me, went shopping with me, and even made presents for me. pretty soon, people started bullying me but Abby always was there for me. she was like an angel and I didn't know what I would do without her.

But a few days ago, she came to tell me the news. She was moving again because of her fathers job. I got extremely upset but I knew I couldn't change anything, so I came up with a plan. I asked Abby all about where she was going and even found out where her new school would be. Then I called my parents and they helped me find an apartment near it. I didn't tell Abby anything so that it would be a surprise. "Wait for me Abby" I said as I locked the doors to my old home.

## Dinosaur Bones in My Yard

*Wycombe Abbey Nanjing, Wang, Cherry – 13*

When my brother was digging a hole for a new tree in the backyard, he saw a bone leaking out of the dirt. He called me out and we dug slowly with a shovel until we found a big bucket of bones. I saw that these bones did not look like normal animals, so I took them back to my room and began to observe, I read various books, and finally, I spent two months to piece together a dinosaur skull! According to my observations, this skull belongs to a Tyrannosaurus rex. As I was about to take a closer look at the skull of a Tyrannosaurus Rex, the skull started talking. It said that it was buried into the ground by a team of top scientists and transported it to my time, because in the distant future, human science and technology have been highly developed, but also due to excessive resource development and environmental destruction, resulting in the destruction of the earth's ecology. In search of a way to save the planet, scientists are going to ask the man who dug up the skull to help them. This crystal ball can keep you safe, and you can also contact future scientists through this crystal ball, and they will tell you what you should do. After saying that, he spit out a crystal ball from his mouth, and I was immediately confused after listening to what he said, I have never encountered such a strange thing. I made up my mind and decided to do what it said. I first prepared some food and water, and I also prepared a lot of first aid supplies. I also brought flashlights, batteries, tents, blankets and so on. After cleaning up, I began to try to contact the future scientists with a crystal ball. I patted the crystal ball, and the crystal ball immediately appeared as the scientists. I started talking to scientists, and they said that if I succeeded, they would give me a lot of money. I started talking to scientists, and they said that if I succeeded, they would give me a lot of money. We had a quick chat about what I should do and how I should do it, and they said that all I had to do was take some dinosaur blood, and dinosaur blood could help nature regenerate in the future. The scientists sent me some things that I could use, lots of anesthetics, tranquilizers, a big, sharp needle, and a smart watch that would help me identify the weaknesses of those dinosaurs and the types of dinosaurs. The next day, there was a huge spaceship in my backyard, and I knew it was prepared for me by scientists, so I immediately sat in it, and after I went in, the spaceship flew up by itself, and in a blink of an eye, I was in the age of dinosaurs, I walked out of the spaceship, surrounded by dense plants, huge trees to cover the sun, the air is hot and humid. Before I could recover myself, the ground began to shake violently. I looked in horror and saw a group of Triceratops galloping forward, their huge bodies moving like hills, and the ground under their feet being stepped out of deep pits. I ducked behind a sturdy tree, my heart pounding. After the Triceratops, I discreetly poke my head out and decide to find a safe place first. I make some simple weapons and tools from branches and rattan and found a hidden cave for temporary shelter. I heard a strange noise while I was sleeping. I looked for the source of the sound, I saw an injured baby dinosaur, its leg was cut by a branch, blood flowing, I quickly took out a small glass tube from the backpack, the blood it is flowing to collect into the bottle, so that the bottle is full, I treated the wound, and the baby dinosaur ran away, in the next few days I collected 10 different dinosaur blood, the watch came to a sound, I raised my arm to look, I finally completed the task, I jumped up with joy, the scientists are also very happy to celebrate for me. But then, the sky suddenly became very dark, a huge meteorite dragging a long tail across the sky. I knew that this would be a disaster enough to destroy the world, I quickly hid in a cave, but finally did not escape this devastating disaster, I thought I would die here, but when I opened my eyes, I appeared in my home! I looked at the clock on the wall, and it had only been five minutes since I had traveled to the age of the dinosaurs! I checked my bag to make sure the blood was still in it, and I quickly used the crystal ball to contact the scientists, and they said just bury the blood and the dinosaur skull and the crystal ball where I had dug up the dinosaur skull, and they would receive it. I buried it after I heard it. Five minutes later, my bank card received a transfer, and I knew that the scientists had received my stuff. I was tired after such an exciting adventure and just wanted to have a good sleep. I lay down in bed and fell asleep. When I woke up again, my body was drenched in cold sweat. After a while, when my mind cleared, I realized that what I was

experiencing was a dream. After I lost my mind for a while, I heard a scream in the backyard, and my brother yelled that there was a skull leaking out of the dirt! I know, the adventure begins again...

## The Story About a Bone

*Wycombe Abbey Nanjing, Zhang, Michelle – 13*

It was an ordinary Sunday. The sun was pouring down on the patio loungers, and the breeze was full of fragrance. I have just come back from the flower market to buy some seeds. It is rare for a lazy person like me to try to plant a flower carefully. I picked up my cell phone and called Rossum, who lives across the street (she's my best friend) and asked her to join me for a chat and plant flowers. As we talked, we picked up the shovel, found a satisfactory piece of soil, and dug according to the instructions. As we dug, something felt wrong, and suddenly, my shovel hit a hard bulge. I looked down and saw a strangely shaped bone half buried in the earth. At first, I thought it was just an ordinary animal bone. But as I crouched down to take a closer look, I couldn't help but gasp and feel a strong sense of shock and surprise. The shape and texture of this bone was unlike any I had ever seen before, it was huge and heavy, with strange bumps and ridges on its surface, as if it told a story of the past. The thought flashed through my mind: Could this be a dinosaur bone? The thought made my heartbeat faster and my hand trembled slightly. I quickly brushed the dirt off the bones with my hand to get a better look, filled with awe and curiosity at this amazing discovery. With such a precious thing, how could I sit idly by? My friends and I put the bone on a transparent cabinet and searched the Internet for some information to make sure it would not be damaged. So, I would look at it every day. Until the day comes. I was stunned. The dinosaur bone was gone. The blood drained from his face and turned white. It's like a thunderbolt, buzzing in my ear. As I stood there, staring straight ahead, my mind kept picturing the image of my beloved bone. My hand trembled slightly, and my heart was filled with fear and panic, afraid of being discovered, afraid of losing the bone, and even more afraid of being punished for it. I wanted to find a place to hide the artefacts more quietly, but I was afraid that doing so would arouse more suspicion, and for a moment I flitted about the room like a headless chicken, completely at a loss. I was stunned. Who leaked the news? After a month of this incident, I thought that nothing would happen, but suddenly my doorbell rang, and I opened the door without thinking much. "Here is my ID," he showed the professional badge in his hand, which was originally from the museum. "Do you remember the dinosaur fossil? After our identification, he is from the Cretaceous period, is an ankylosaurus fossil, very rare, we want to recover him, would like to ask how much you are willing to pay?" I thought about it, and said, "I will email this tomorrow, but you said, I can leave you an email and then tell you that I need to think about it." He smiled, "OK, waiting for your news, goodbye, happy life!" When I decided to sell this valuable item, caution took over my heart. I know that once the pricing is wrong, I may bring great losses to myself. So, I did a lot of preparatory work before pricing, looking up various materials and consulting a lot of people in the industry, but the more information I got, the more hesitant I became. After discussion with our friends, we decided to sell it for 80 million. Because we found it together with our friends, we decided to take 40 million each. This money is enough for me to live a luxurious life. With the release of the message, my friends and I received 40 million yuan directly on the bank card account, which is fast. But the retribution also came faster, because we secretly traded dinosaur fossils, we were soon arrested by the police, at the police station, we accepted the police interrogation. The police asked us serious questions about the origin of the dinosaur fossils, the details of the transaction and the people involved. The museum staff that day was also at the scene, and we explained in detail that my friend and I were sentenced to less than five years in prison or criminal detention and fined. The man, who claimed to be a museum staff member, was sentenced to not less than five years but not more than 10 years in prison and fined. It didn't end well for either of us. Readers, if one day you also found ancient relics, please hand them over to the local authority at the first time, do not hide secrets or trade.