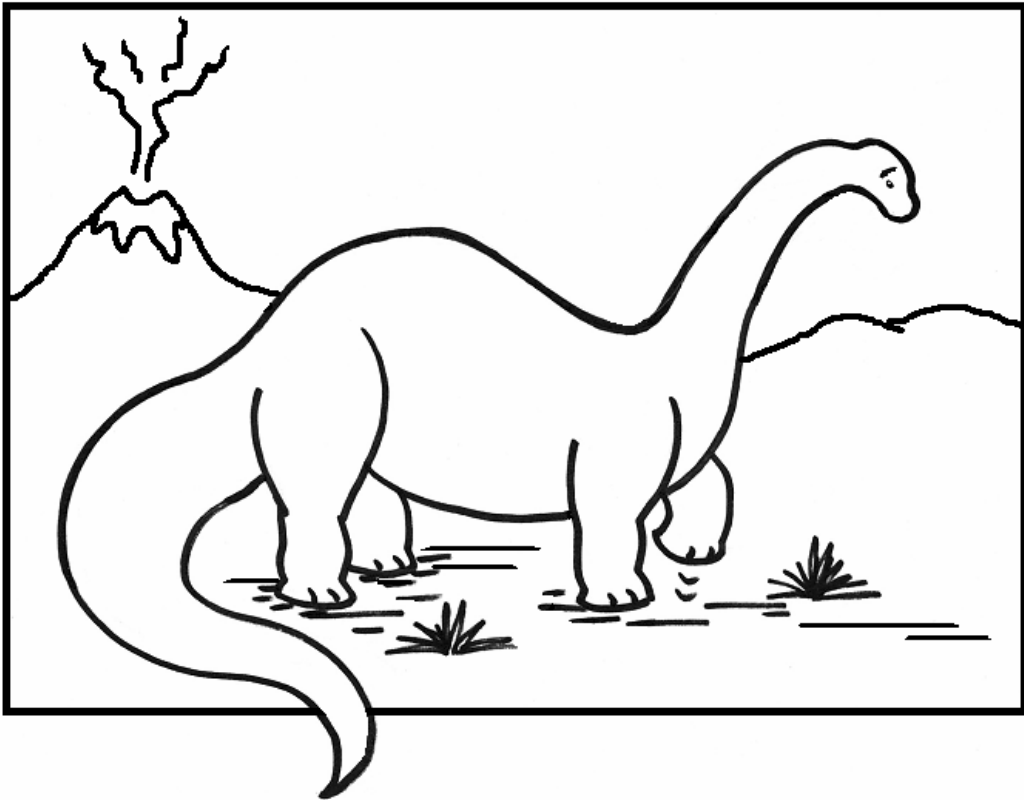


EARTHSHAKER



Emma Laybourn

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EARTHSHAKER

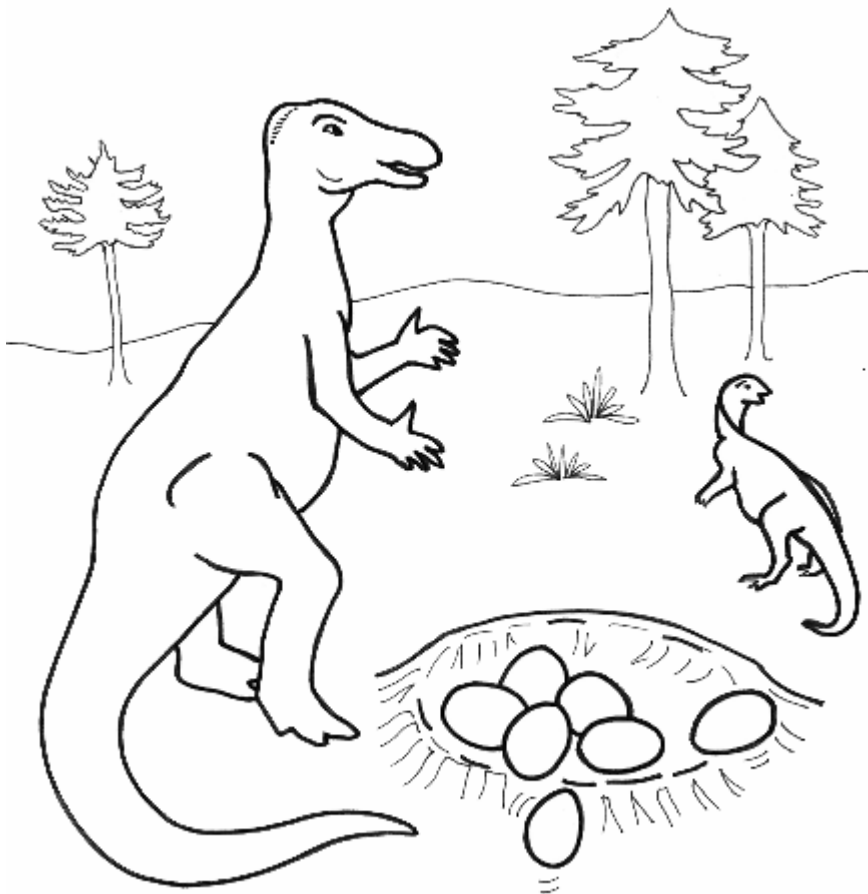
Chapter One

BOOM...BOOM...BOOM...

The earth shuddered.

Trees shook, dropping leaves on the tidy nest below.

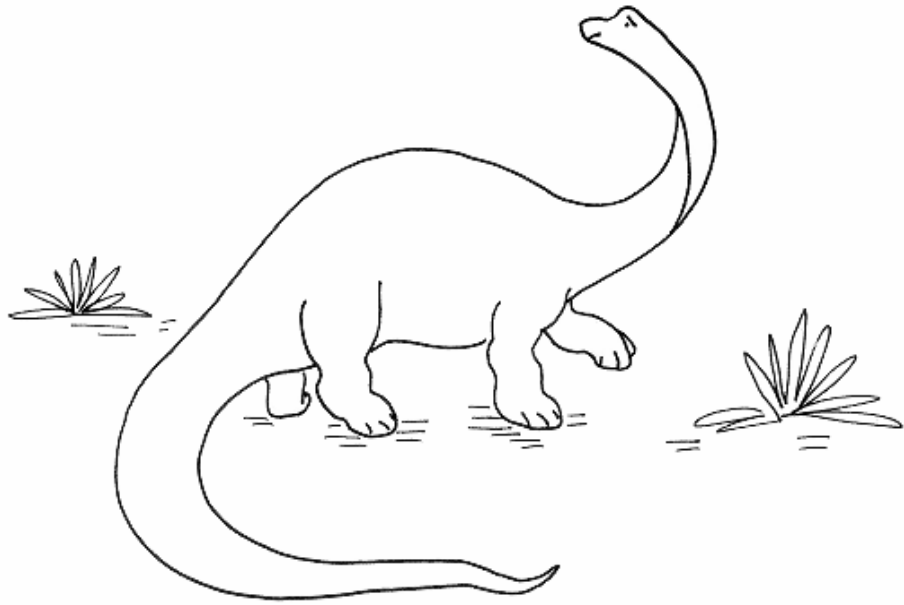
The nest belonged to an iguanodon. As the eggs rolled around, their mother Brenda steadied them with a claw.



“What on earth?” she wondered.

BOOM...BOOM...

Then, through the trees, appeared the biggest dinosaur she had ever seen. It was like a grey mountain on legs. It had a long, long, neck and a long, long tail.



“Who are you?” asked Brenda.

The long neck snaked towards her. Weak eyes in a little head gazed at her.

“I’m Seismosaurus,” said the enormous dinosaur, in a voice so tiny she could hardly hear it. “I’ve come to live here.”

“Sei – Seis –” tried Brenda.

“It means Earthshaker,” said the dinosaur. “Call me Sizo if it’s easier.”

“Well, Sizo, could you please tiptoe?”

“All right,” whispered the dinosaur. He took two more steps.

BOOM...BOOM...



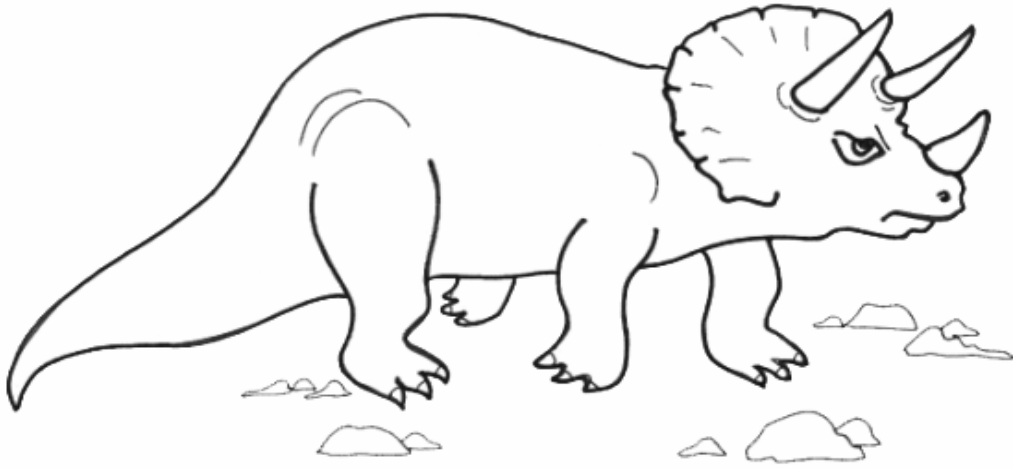
Pteranodons fell out of the trees. A group of hadrosaurs began trumpeting in alarm.

George, the old triceratops, came to see what was going on.

“I can’t sleep for the noise,” he grumbled.

“It’s Sizo here,” said Brenda. “He’s a little bit, um, heavy-footed.”

“Can’t you tiptoe?” demanded George.



“I *am* tiptoeing,” said Sizo in his tiny voice.

“Hmph!” snorted George. “What a racket! I hope he’s not staying.”

“Oh, please let me stay,” begged Sizo. “I’ve been alone for ages. I want to live with other dinosaurs.”

“Give him a chance, George,” said Brenda kindly. “You can see he’s a plant-eater. He’s not going to eat us, are you, Sizo?”

Sizo shook his head. “I’ll only eat the highest leaves,” he whispered, “the ones you can’t reach.”

“Hmph! All right,” grunted George. “But only if you remember to tiptoe!”



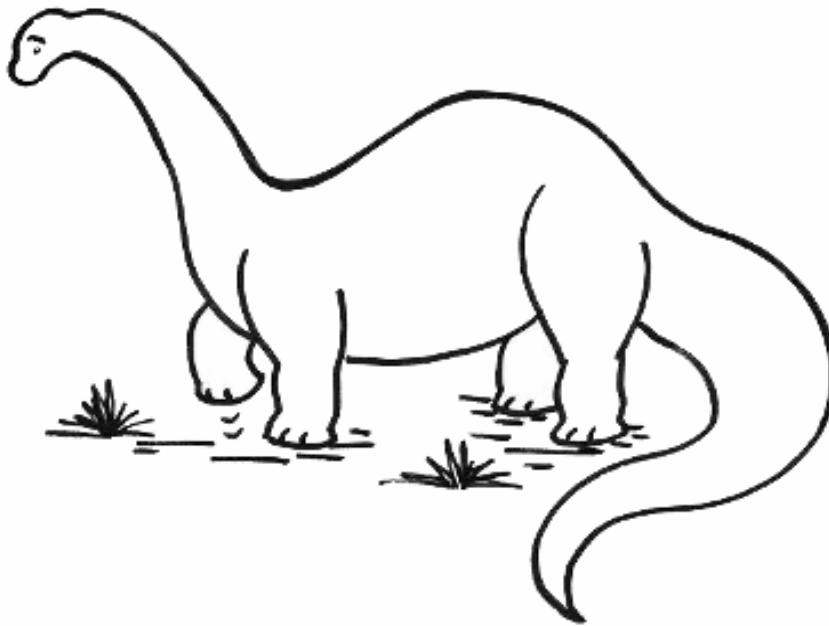
Chapter Two

So Sizo settled into his new home.

He liked the other dinosaurs. But he wasn't really happy.

He worried about making too much noise. Although he walked as quietly as he could, his footsteps made the earth tremble. The other dinosaurs blocked their ears and grumbled.

"Tiptoe!" George would bellow.



Sizo tiptoed, but that wasn't any quieter. In the end, it was easier not to walk at all. He just stood in one place for most of the day, eating whatever he could reach.

And life was peaceful, for a while.

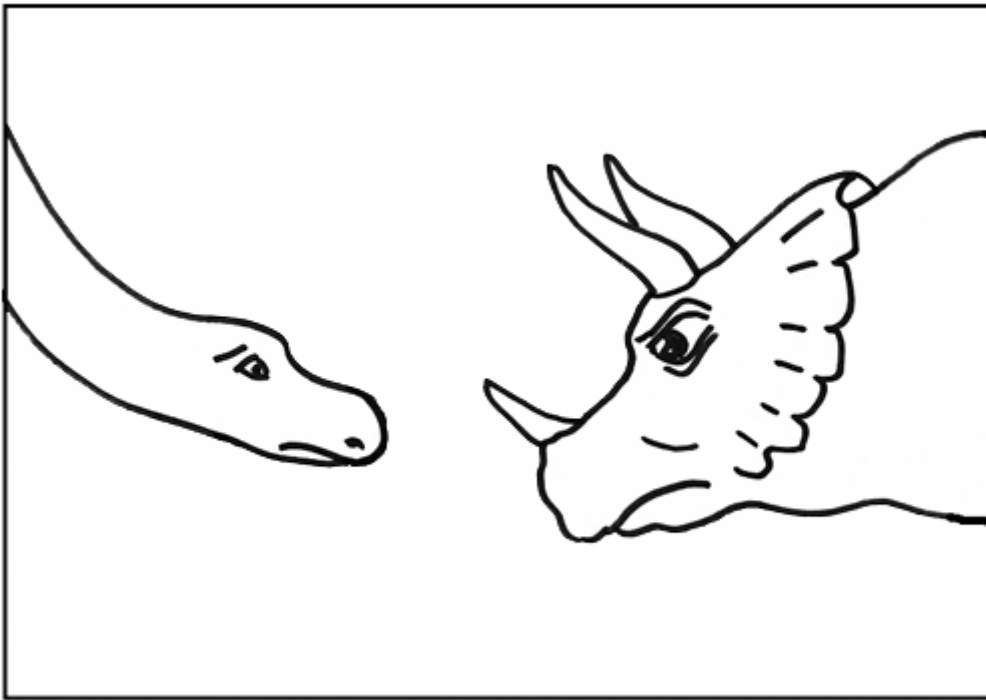
Until –

BOOM...BOOM...BOOM...

The ground shuddered. Brenda's baby iguanodons tumbled over and began to cry. The hadrosaurs wailed in protest.

George came storming out of the forest.

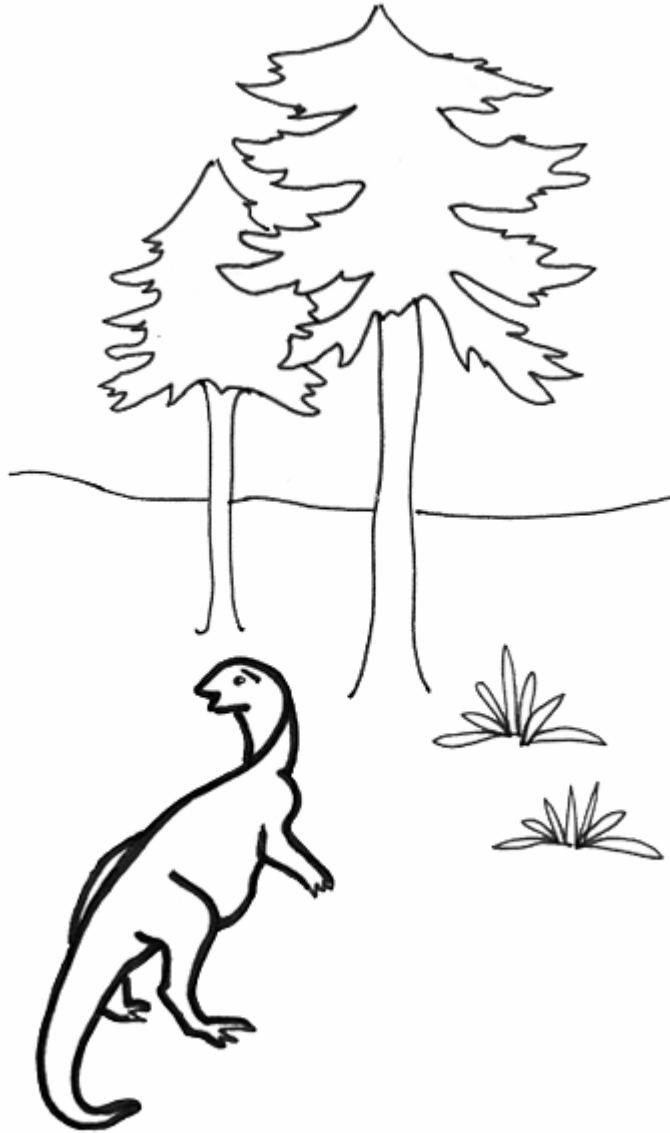
"Oy, Sizo!" he roared. "I told you to *tiptoe!*"



"But it's not me," protested Sizo.

"It's true," said Brenda. "Sizo isn't moving."

The dinosaurs stared at Sizo. He stood quite still; yet they could hear thuds and crashes.



“It must be another big dinosaur,” said George uneasily.

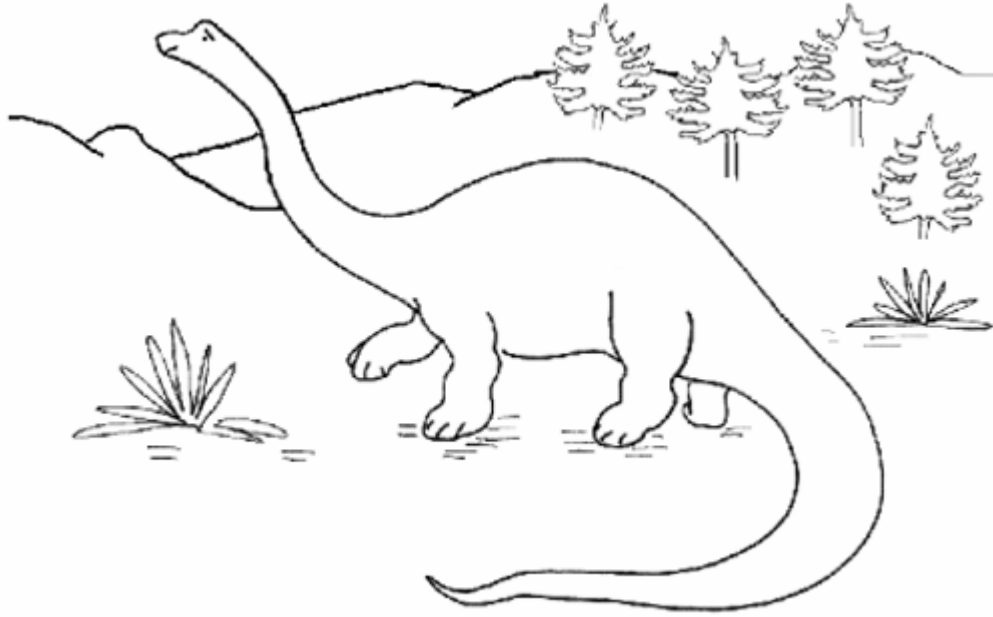
“Another Sizo.”

“Oh, no!” said Brenda. “Come with me, children. You don’t want to get trampled on!”

All the dinosaurs hurried away into the forest – all except Sizo.

“Another Seismosaurus!” he thought excitedly. “Another Earthshaker! I wonder if it will be my friend?”

So he set off joyfully towards the noises to find out.



As he walked, the earth shook harder. The crashes grew louder. He could smell a strange, fierce, burning smell.

“Funny dinosaur, this,” thought Sizo.

He came round a bend, and stopped. Ahead of him a hump rose out of the forest.

“That’s a *huge* dinosaur!” he thought.

The ground beneath him trembled.

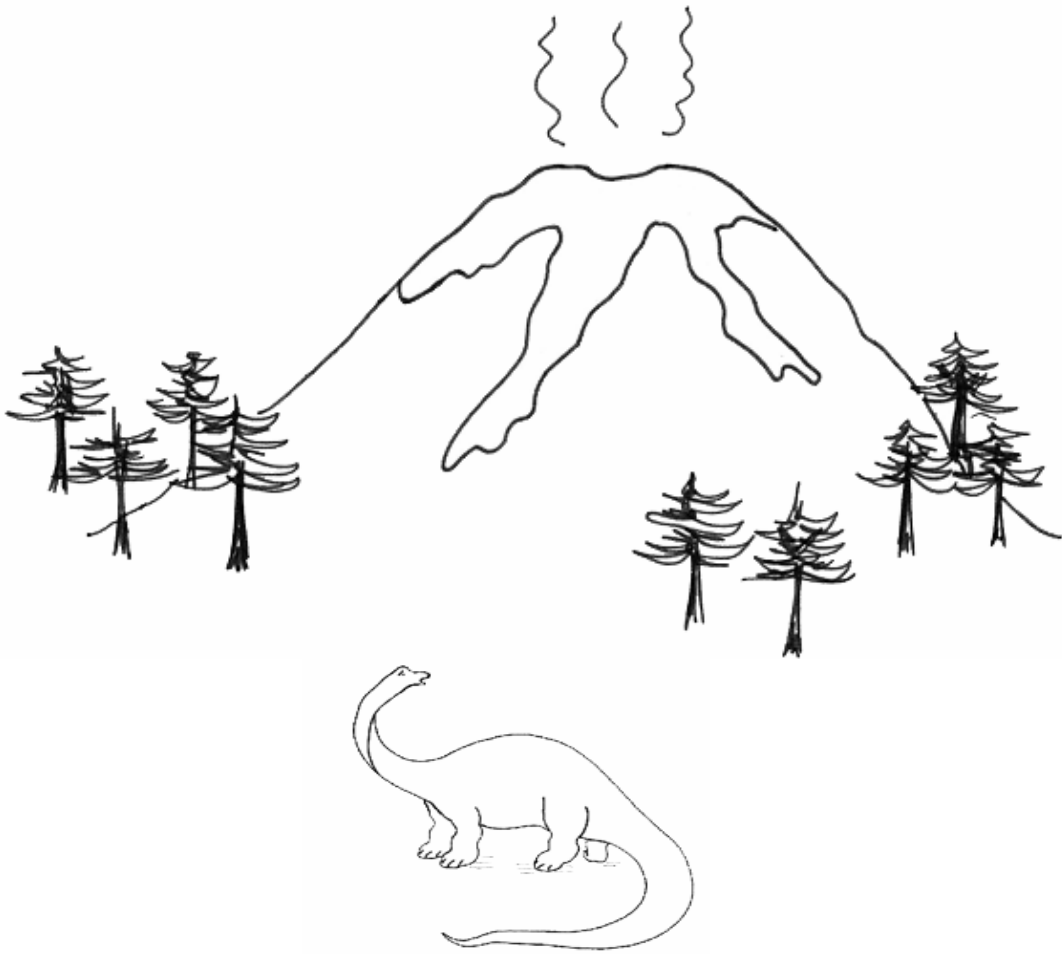
“It’s an Earthshaker all right,” said Sizo.

Then he saw that smoke was billowing from the hump. Down its side ran a glowing river of red.

“It’s bleeding!” he whispered.

The thick red river flowed past a tree. It ripped it up, and threw it down with a crash.

Sizo blinked at the river with his small, weak eyes. It wasn’t blood. It smelt of rock, and it was smoking.



“I don’t think that’s a dinosaur at all!” he said.

The smoking river hissed and sizzled. Two more trees thudded to the ground, and burst into flames.

The river did not stop. It kept on flowing through the forest.

“Oh, no! It’s heading for our home!” gasped Sizo. “I’d better warn the others!”

He plodded back as fast as he could. There was no-one around. Sizo cleared his throat, and shouted.

“Danger!”

It was a tiny shout. He tried again.

“DANGER!” Still nobody heard him.

“Help!” thought Sizo. “Whatever can I do?”

Chapter Three

Nobody could hear Sizo's voice.

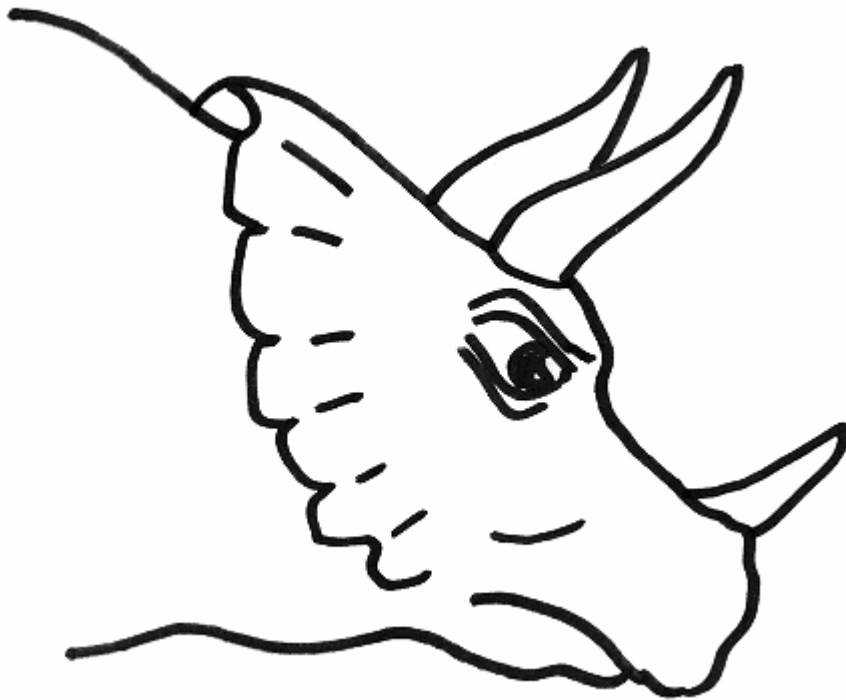
But he knew that everyone could hear his feet. So he began to dance.

He started with big, slow steps. Then he danced higher and higher, faster and faster.

Trees dropped their branches. The ground began to crack. And Sizo kept dancing.

All the other dinosaurs rushed up to stop him.

"I said *TIPTOE!*" yelled George.



"Sizo, what do you think you're doing?" cried the dinosaurs.

"I'm dancing," whispered Sizo.

"Dancing?" said George. "That's it! You're banned!"

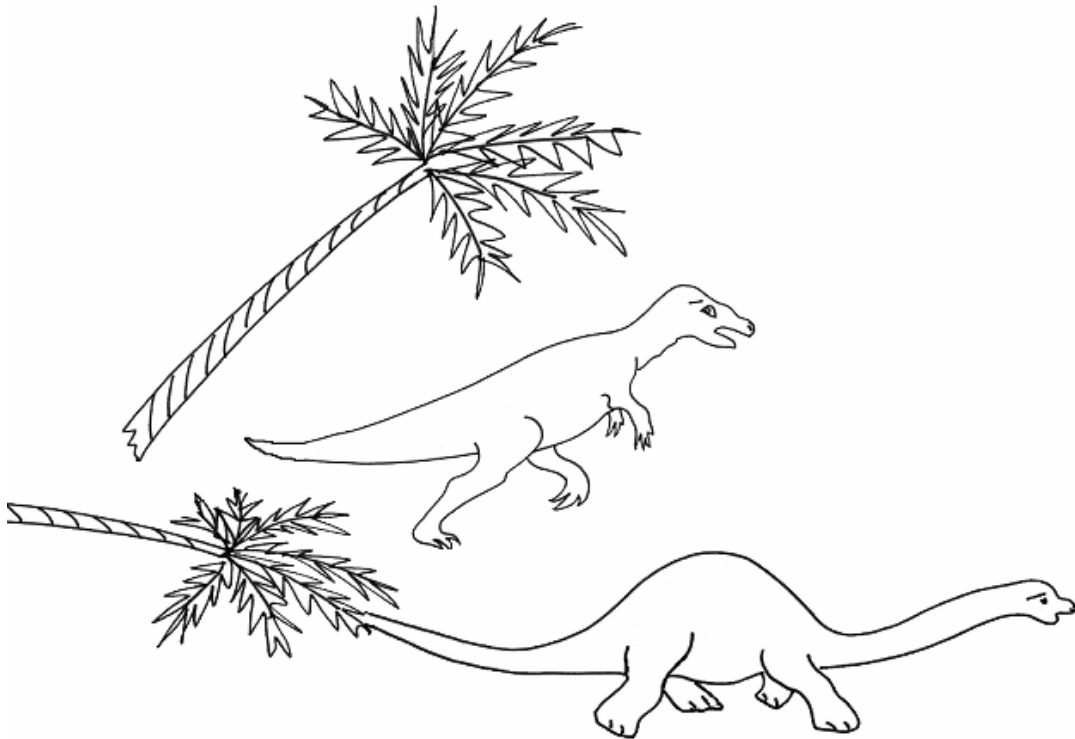
“But there’s danger coming!”

“Danger?” said Brenda. “Where?”

“There’s a river of fire coming towards us,” whispered Sizo.

“It’s flowing out of a hill and burning everything up!”

“What?” cried Brenda. “That’s a volcano! We must get out of the way.”



The dinosaurs didn’t wait to hear any more. Together, they thundered through the trees. A cloud of smoke followed them. Behind them, burning branches crackled and crashed to the ground.

“Where are we going?” wailed George.

“We need to get to higher ground,” said Brenda.

But her babies began to squeal. Hot ash was falling like rain.

“It’s burning us, Mum!” they cried.

“Quick!” said Sizo. “Come and shelter under me.”



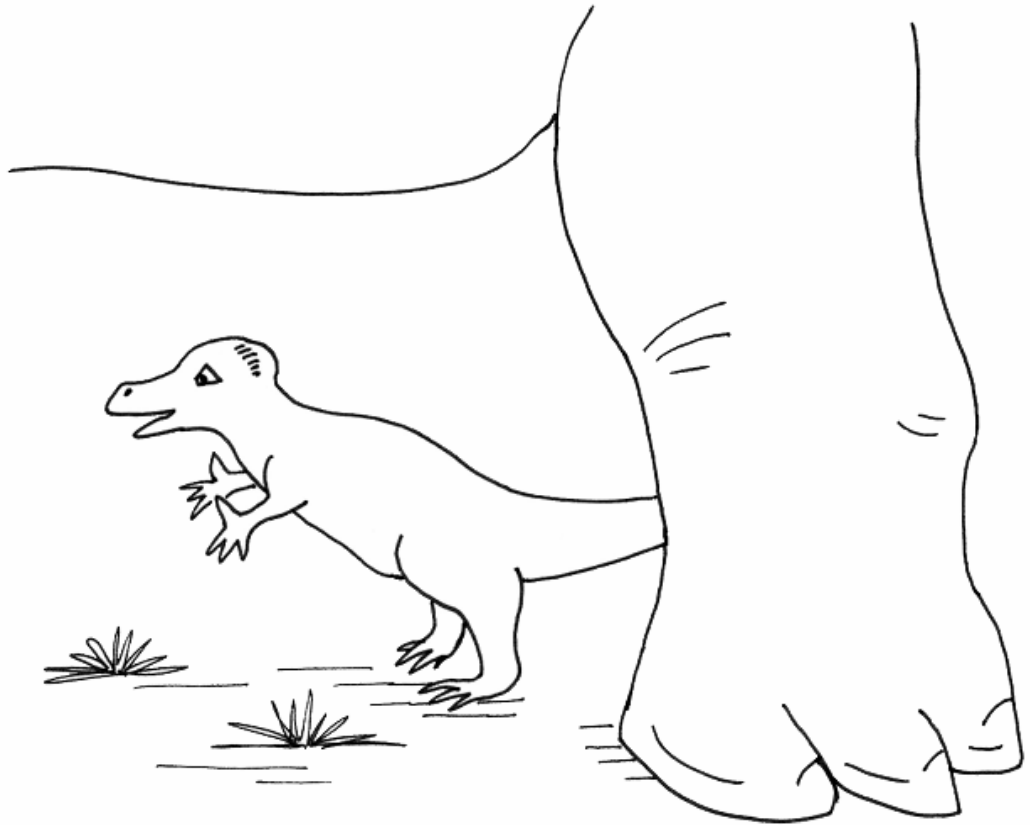
The baby iguanodons crept beneath Sizo. His huge bulk kept the hot ash off them while they walked.

“You’ll stand on them!” protested George.

“No, I won’t,” said Sizo. He had had so much practice at tiptoeing that he never once trod on a baby’s tail.

The dinosaurs climbed to the top of a hill and left the smoke and ash behind.

At last they stopped. Brenda’s babies peered out from under Sizo.



“Is it safe yet?” panted George. “I can’t see.”

“Let me look.” Sizo craned his long neck over the treetops.

“Yes, we’re safe here,” he said.

“Thanks to you!” said Brenda, gathering her children round her. “Sizo, you’re a real friend.”

“Am I?”

“The best. From now on, you can thump all you like. We won’t complain.”

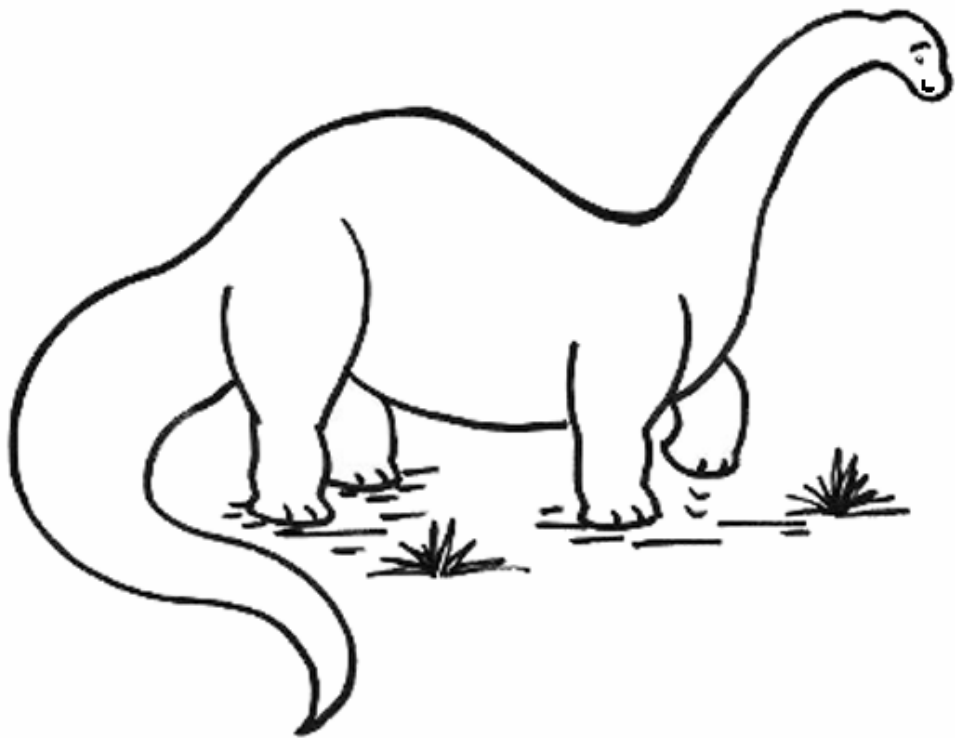
“Yes, we will!” said George.

The other dinosaurs glared at George. He coughed.

“Er, sorry. Thump away, Sizo. You can even dance if you want.”

“All right!” whispered Sizo happily. “But I promise that I’ll only dance *on tiptoe!*”

The End



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