

‘What’s the big secret?’ Tom Clay asked his best friend Jamie Morgan. ‘Why did your grandad tell us to come up here?’

The boys had just climbed the spiral steps to the lantern room balcony right at the top of the old lighthouse where Jamie lived with his dad and grandad.

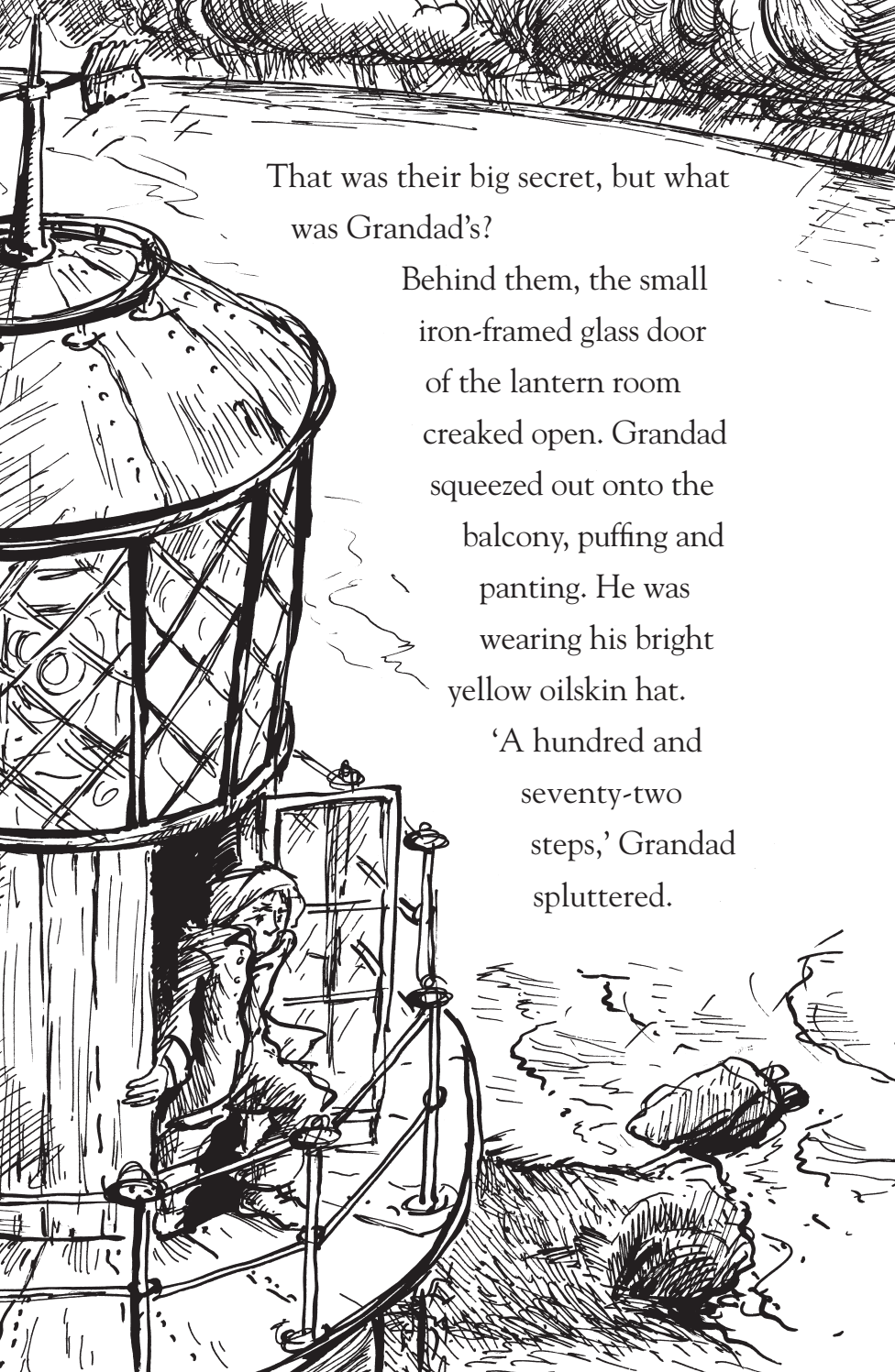
‘He wouldn’t say,’ Jamie replied. ‘Wish he’d hurry and catch us up, I’m getting soggy.’ He peered into the cold grey drizzle that surrounded them. ‘On a sunny day,



you can see all of Dinosaur Cove from here,' he said.

'Everything except our cave,' replied Tom. 'You couldn't see that, even with a telescope on a clear day.'

The two friends grinned at each other. Hidden away in Dinosaur Cove was a cave that no one else knew about. It led to an amazing world of stomping, chomping dinosaurs and other awesome prehistoric beasts.



That was their big secret, but what was Grandad's?

Behind them, the small iron-framed glass door of the lantern room creaked open. Grandad squeezed out onto the balcony, puffing and panting. He was wearing his bright yellow oilskin hat.

'A hundred and seventy-two steps,' Grandad spluttered.

'But it's worth it to see this. And I don't mean the view! Keep very quiet, me hearties. We don't want 'em to hear us . . .'

Grandad put his finger to his lips and tiptoed round the balcony. Jamie and Tom shrugged at each other and followed.

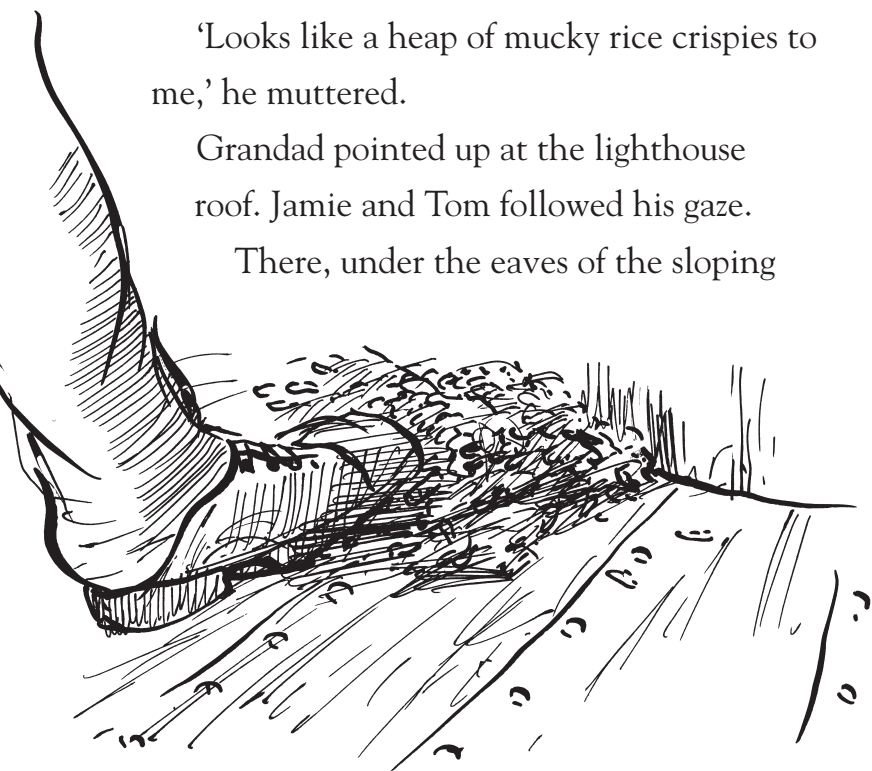
'See?' he hissed, prodding a pudding-sized pile of grey gritty stuff with his foot.

Jamie glanced at Tom. Tom raised his eyebrows.

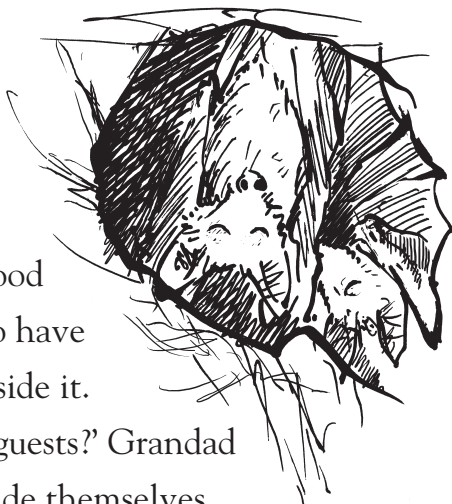
'Looks like a heap of mucky rice crispies to me,' he muttered.

Grandad pointed up at the lighthouse roof. Jamie and Tom followed his gaze.

There, under the eaves of the sloping



roof, directly above the pile of grey stuff, was a little hole where the wood had rotted. It seemed to have something curled up inside it.



‘See our new house guests?’ Grandad whispered. ‘They’ve made themselves very comfortable.’

Tom put his binoculars to his eyes and focused them on the hole.

‘Bats!’ he breathed. ‘Two of them hanging upside down, fast asleep.’

Jamie glanced down at the grey gritty stuff. ‘So that’s bat poo,’ he chuckled. ‘It looks crunchy!’

‘These little critters are pipistrelle bats,’ Grandad said in a low voice. ‘They eat insects, so their poo is insect wings and other bits they can’t digest.’ He looked at the boys. ‘Not scared of bats, are you?’



‘No!’ Jamie and Tom both made a muffled snorting noise. Grandad didn’t know it, but they’d met much scarier things than bats on their adventures.

‘Some people are terrified of bats.’

Grandad smiled.

‘That’s because they don’t know anything about them,’ Tom replied. He made his fist into an imaginary microphone. ‘Bats,’ he whispered, in his best secretly-watching-wildlife TV presenter voice, ‘have a sort of

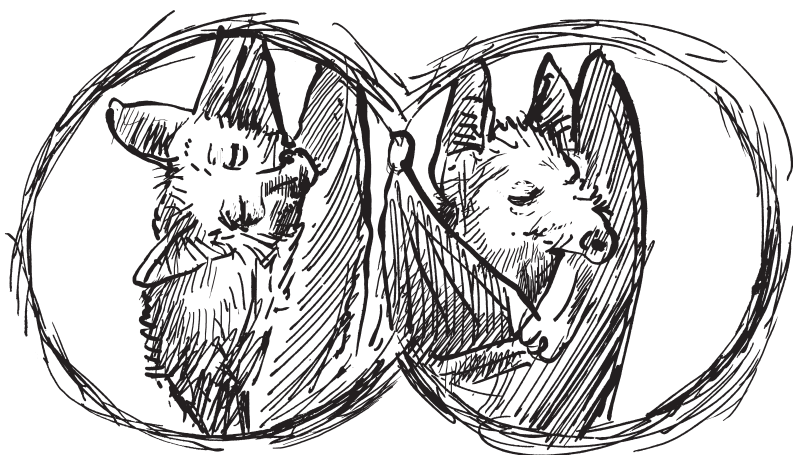
radar that stops them bumping into things in the dark. It’s called echo location . . .’

‘Let me have a look, bat brain!’

Jamie hissed. He took the binoculars from Tom and wiped the



water drops off the lenses. The bats were not much bigger than mice, with pointy ears and dark furry backs. Their leathery wings were stretched around their plump tummies



so thin that he could clearly see the long, bendy bones that supported them like the spokes of an umbrella. Tiny claws sprouted from the tips of the wings.

‘Just like tiny pterosaurs!’ Jamie murmured.

‘Bats are mammals, not reptiles like pterosaurs, you wombat,’ Tom whispered.

'I know that, fossil face,' Jamie replied.
'But they're the only mammals that can flap
their wings and fly.'

A gust of wind whirled round the
lighthouse, whipping icy drizzle into their faces.

'Time to go inside,' Grandad said,
hanging onto his hat. 'If I were you,
I'd do what the bats are doing and find
somewhere warm and dry to spend
the rest of the day.' He headed
towards the door to the

lantern room.

Jamie looked
at Tom.

'I know just the
place,' he said.

'Somewhere
much hotter
and drier than
Dinosaur Cove.'



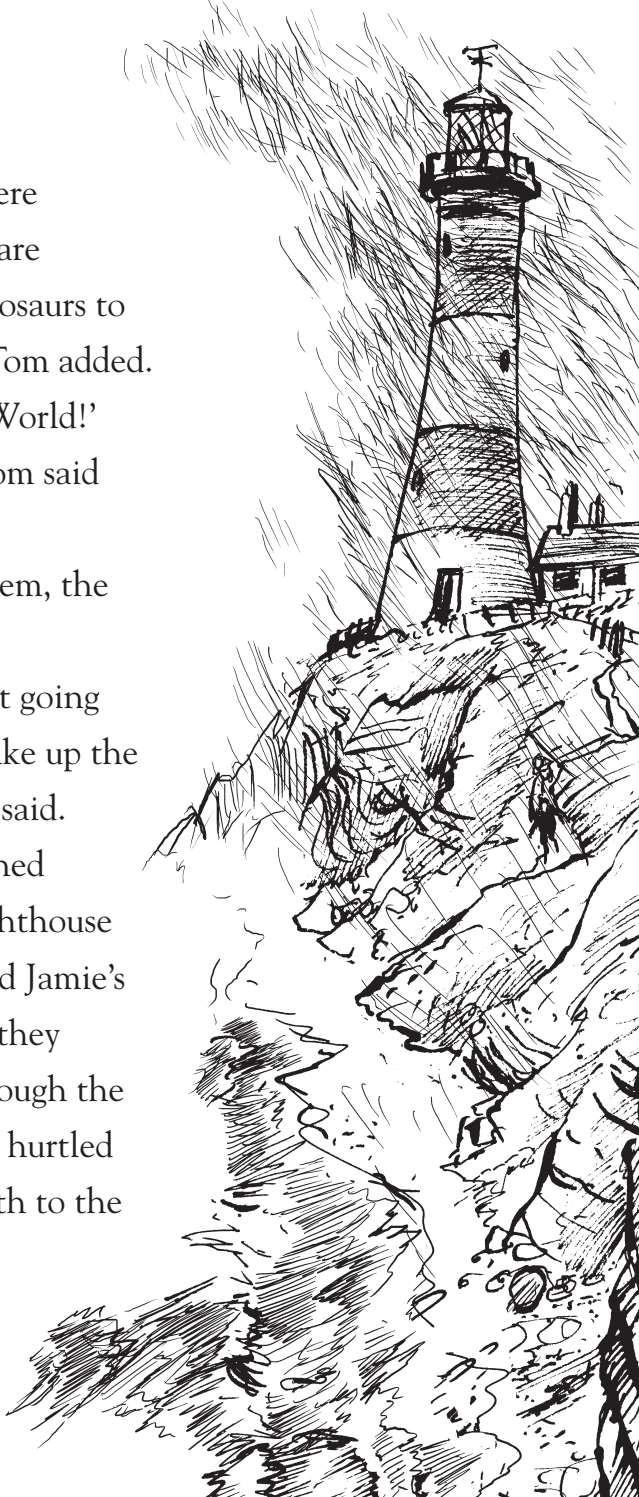
'Somewhere where there are real live pterosaurs to check out,' Tom added.

'Triassic World!' Jamie and Tom said together.

Above them, the bats stirred.

'Better get going before we wake up the guests,' Tom said.

They dashed down the lighthouse steps, grabbed Jamie's backpack as they barrelled through the kitchen, and hurtled down the path to the beach.





‘Got the Fossil Finder
and Triassic ammonite?’

Tom puffed as they sprinted
along the beach to the
Smuggler’s Cave.

‘Check and check!’ Jamie panted.

And in no time at all, they’d taken off
their coats and squeezed through the gap at
the back of the cave to the secret chamber.
They placed their feet into the fossilized
dinosaur footprints that ran across the floor.

‘Dino World here we come!’ Jamie yelled.
He shone his torch towards what looked
like a solid rock wall. Tom counted as they
stepped towards it . . .

‘One . . .

two . . .

three . . .

four . . .

five . . .’



In a blinding flash of light, the smell of dried pine needles filled their nostrils. They were in the ancient hollowed-out tree in the smouldering heat of Triassic Dino World!

