

DINO KNIGHTS INVASION



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For Clara & Henry

J.N.

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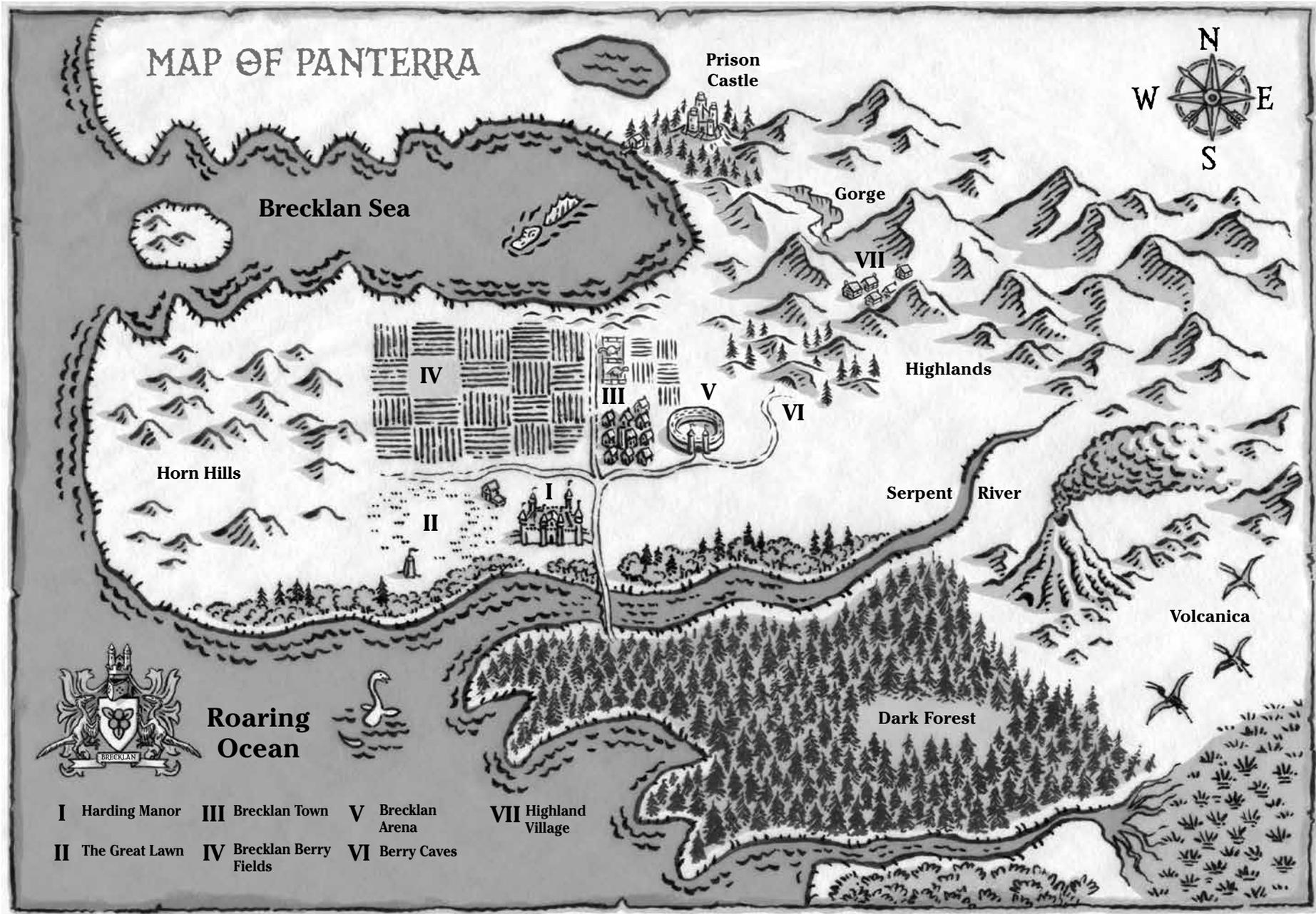
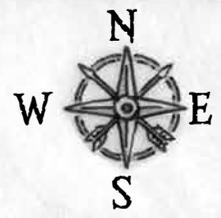
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MAP OF PANTERRA



Roaring Ocean

- I Harding Manor
- II The Great Lawn
- III Brecklan Town
- IV Brecklan Berry Fields
- V Brecklan Arena
- VI Berry Caves
- VII Highland Village



Galliard

You are about to meet...



Torin



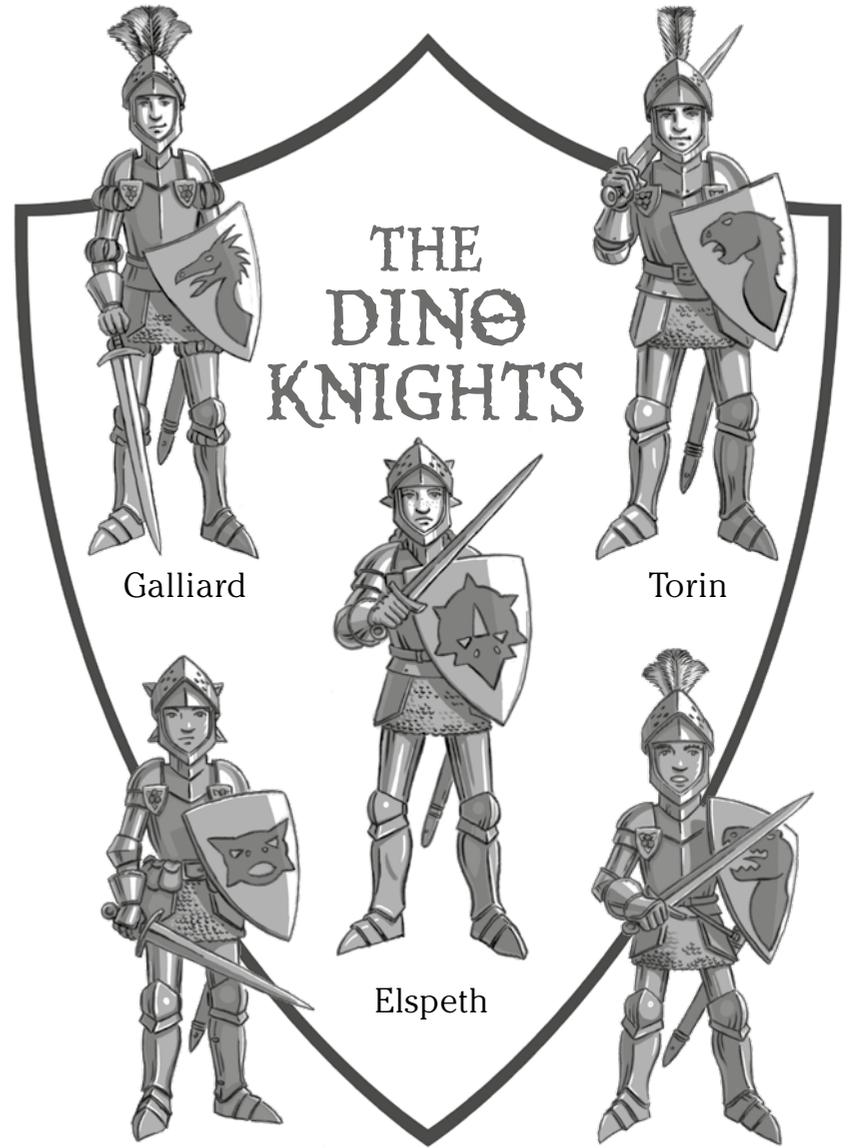
Elspeth



Iyla



Henry



THE DINO KNIGHTS



Galliard



Torin



Elspeth



Iyla



Henry

BRECKLAN



Lord Harding
Longtime ruler
of Brecklan,
and Henry's
guardian.



Lady Anwyn
Wise co-ruler
of Brecklan, and
champion
of peace.

HIGHLANDERS



William and Eileen
Caden and Clara's parents,
captured by Prince Pattick's forces.



Angus
Caden and Ellie's
uncle, a strong and
strapping man.



Caden
Ellie's brave
cousin who
yearns to
join the
Dino
Knights.



Clara
Caden's
younger sister,
bright and
spirited.

MOUNTAIN REALM



King Rannick

Wise and fair, but blind to his son Pattick's ruthless ambition.

Prince Pattick
Greedy and vain prince of the mountain realm.



Alice

Once enrolled in Pattick's Knight School, she fled when Pattick revealed his true colours.

Glenn

One of Pattick's guards.





Henry Fairchild rode his dinosaur through the fog.

The morning mist had yet to lift, shrouding Brecklan in low cloud that hugged the ground. Henry's loyal Tyrannosaurus Rex was eager to gallop, but Henry held him back with the reins. The mist made it hard to see, and Henry

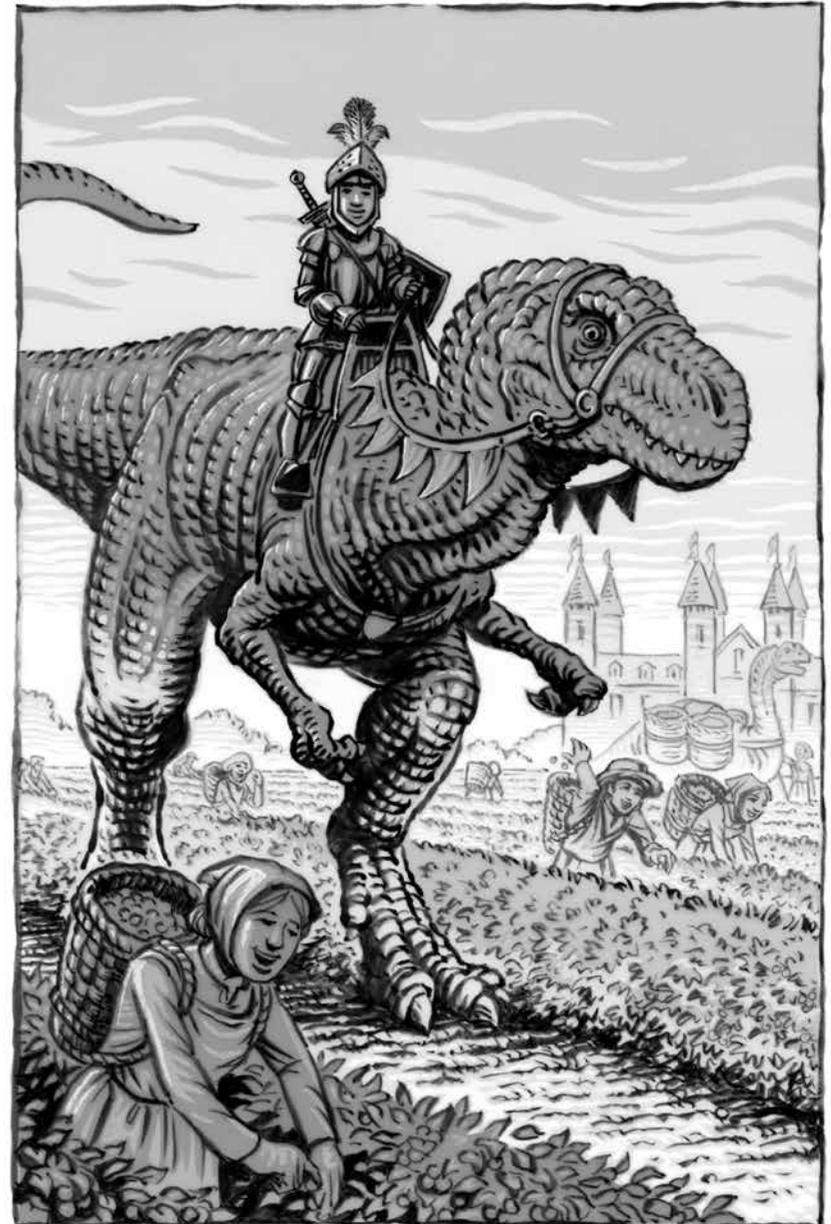
didn't want Rex to crash into anything or anyone.

He and Rex were on patrol, keeping watch over Brecklan's perimeter for any sign of trouble. So far, it had been a quiet morning; just a boy and his dinosaur out for a ride. But Henry was a Dino Knight, and he wore his sword on his back, ready for action.

They gently trotted towards the farming fields – as gently as a T-Rex could, that is. The rising sun was slowly burning off the fog and Henry caught sight of hundreds of hard-working Brecks bringing in the harvest.

“It looks like a bumper crop,” Henry said to Rex.

At this time every year, the people of Brecklan Town woke before sunrise to



harvest the Brecklan berries. This was their most precious crop, as it only grew in the fertile soil of Brecklan province, on the western coast of Panterra.

The Harvest Master would have sounded his horn early that morning, calling the townsfolk to the fields. Henry had grown up in Brecklan, and for as long as he could remember, he had picked Brecklan berries on harvest day. But the berries weren't for humans to eat, they were for the dinosaurs. The Brecklan berries were special, because they allowed the Brecks to tame and train dinosaurs; indeed, they were so valuable that on this important day, Henry and his fellow Dino Knights had to keep a close watch for any sign of theft. The annual crop was worth a Brontosaurus'

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weight in gold. With a full harvest of ripe Brecklan berries, the people and dinosaurs of Brecklan could live in peace together for another year, and the province would thrive by trading their prized crop with the rest of Panterra.

Henry knew there were only twenty-four hours to bring in the harvest; unlike most other berries, Brecklan berries all ripened at the same time, so it was vital to pick them when they were ready. And after harvesting, the berries had to be stored in the cooling caves beneath the foothills for a month before being ready to use. A freshly picked berry wouldn't just tame a dinosaur, it would put it straight to sleep.

This time last year, the harvest horn had woken Henry from his slumber in

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the stables, and he had run to the fields to gather as many plump, purple berries as he could find. It was amazing how much had changed for Henry in just one year. Now, he sat atop a T-Rex, keeping watch over the harvest – no longer a lowly stable boy but a proud Dino Knight. Satisfied that the crop was safe, Henry turned Rex around to head back to Harding Manor, where he lived and trained with his teammates. It was time to check in with them all.

With visibility much better now, Henry loosened the reins and encouraged Rex to lengthen his stride. The T-Rex let out a thankful roar and started to canter. Henry's body dipped and swayed as he rode towards his friends. The morning sun began to warm Henry's neck as the

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last of the mist disappeared, revealing Lord Harding and Lady Anwyn's imposing manor house, with the dinosaur stables beyond.

It was hard for Henry to believe that Harding Manor was now his home. He slept in his own grand chamber in the mansion, so much more plush and comfortable than his old stable lodgings. And it smelt better too. Henry felt proud and lucky to be a Dino Knight. For the first time in his young life, he felt like he belonged.

BOOM!

Suddenly, a huge explosion tore through the air.

"What the Halisaurus was that?"

Henry dug his heels hard into Rex's sides. The dino doubled his pace as

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Henry steered him towards a column of smoke rising up from behind the stables. Was someone attacking Harding's dinosaurs? Henry wouldn't stand for it! He wasn't a stable boy any more, but he still felt a deep sense of duty to protect the dinosaurs that he had looked after for so many years.

Rex burst through the main gates and sped across the grass, his claws sending up clods of earth. Henry drew his sword and pointed it straight ahead, his arm steady. Months of knight training had toned his muscles and made him strong.

They swerved around the side of the wooden stables, kicking up clouds of dust.

"Halt! Lay down your weapons!" Henry called. Lord Harding always said

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it was polite to give an enemy a warning before slicing off their head.

But as the air began to clear, Henry lowered his sword. Rex skidded to a halt, just in time to stop careering into a makeshift laboratory. There was a smouldering hole in the ground, beside what looked like a giant pile of dinosaur dung.

A girl with short black hair stood behind the crater. She was flanked by Conker, her Ankylosaurus.

"Iyla! What are you doing?" Henry gasped. Gasping was a mistake. The stench overwhelmed him immediately and he began coughing uncontrollably. "What's that smell?" he wheezed, wiping the tears that streamed from his eyes. Even Rex was shuddering beneath him, trying not to retch.

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Henry jumped down and patted his dino, giving Rex permission to take a few steps back. The Tyrannosaurus snorted his thanks.

“Henry!” Iyla pulled a leather mask off her face. The leather was punctured with breathing holes, and the inside was lined with downy feathers of some sort – perhaps gathered from an Ornithomimus.

Iyla laughed as she spotted Henry’s streaming eyes. “You need one of these!” she said, dangling her mask in his face. “Keeps the smell out.”

Fortunately, the last of the fumes were fading away. But not quickly enough for Henry.

“What are you doing?” he asked. “I thought the stables had been attacked!”

He examined the table. At the end

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nearest Conker was the steaming pile of dino dung. Conker looked quite proud of himself – Henry could guess where the fresh manure had come from. Along the desk was a suspended assortment of glass tubes and flasks, all heated by a row of dripping candles. A bubbling concoction of dung was passing along the tubes until it plopped into a giant vat. Beside the vat stood a half-empty barrel with the word *Danger* painted across the side.

Henry shook his head. “Are you playing with dino poop?” he asked.

“Hardly,” she replied. “I’m running important scientific experiments. With dino poop.”

Iyla was the science brain of the Dino Knights, but this was one experiment

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Henry had never seen before, and wished never to have to see, or smell, again.

Iyla grabbed a wooden ladle and swirled it around the vat of stinking liquid and dino dung, sending up bubbles that frothed and burst as they hit the surface. A fresh waft drifted up Henry's nostrils and he felt the blood drain from his face. He looked around for bushes to run to, if he needed to be sick.

"Oops!" Iyla said, quickly tying her mask back on. Her voice was muffled when she spoke. "Icks dino-mike."

"What?"

"Fino-right."

"WHAT?"

She gave a sigh and lifted her mask. "Dino-mite! Made from fermented dinosaur poop. When ignited, it can blast

the turrets off a castle. It's going to be the Dino Knights' secret weapon!" She pulled her mask back down and carried on stirring.

Henry shook his head again. "I don't think it needs to be a secret," he said. "I'm not sure anyone else would want to use it."

"You never know when you might want to blow something up," she replied, carefully measuring more of the noxious liquid from the steaming vat and pouring it into the barrel.

Henry backed away and mounted Rex.

"Good luck with your explosive poop," he said, pulling the reins and leading Rex away from the smelly test site.

They trotted past the stables towards another set of fields. More townspeople

were working in rows, moving between the Brecklan berry bushes. They were gathering plump berries and tossing them over their shoulders to land in the wicker baskets strapped to their backs.

At one end of the field, the Berry Keeper was weighing the baskets and writing in a big book. The feathered tip of his quill quivered as he scratched careful notes. No batch of berries could be harvested without a record being made in this important ledger.

Henry noticed a young Brecklan boy nearby, with bulging pockets in his breeches. Henry cleared his throat to get the lad's attention.

"Make sure you remember to deposit those extra berries," Henry warned him sternly.

"Oh, right," said the boy, realising he'd been caught purple-handed. Henry watched as the boy plucked the stolen berries from his pockets and added them to the Berry Keeper's pile to be weighed.

Henry spotted his friends circling the field on their dinosaurs, armour glinting in the sunshine. Henry was wearing hand-me-down armour, but he still felt proud to wear it on behalf of the Dino Knights.

Henry steered Rex over to an older boy with brightly coloured silks fluttering out from his silver armour. His golden hair glowed like a halo around his face in the morning sunshine, but Henry knew this was no angel. Gally was an experienced Dino Knight, and he seemed to have taken a dislike to Henry, a relative newcomer. Gally turned at the sound of

Rex's approach and immediately his lip curled in disapproval.

"Where have you been?" he demanded. "You're late, poop-scooper."

Gally never let Henry forget his humble origins, a mere commoner who was mucking out stables not so long ago.

"I was checking out that big explosion," Henry explained, ignoring Gally's insult. "I thought we were under attack, but it was just Iyla experimenting again."

"A real knight knows the difference between an attack and an experiment," scoffed Gally. "Maybe you would be better off back in those stables."

Henry wondered why Gally was always so hostile to him. After all, Henry had been recruited into the Dino Knights by Lord Harding himself. He'd earned his

place fair and square when Brecklan was attacked by Harding's enemy, Neville Avingdon. Wasn't that enough to secure his place on the team?

Gally turned his Ornithomimus away and continued his circuit of the field. Henry shook his head as he watched the snobby Dino Knight recede into the distance. A prickle of doubt made Henry shiver inside his armour. Was Gally trying to push Henry out of the Dino Knights?

One of the other knights drew up beside him, curly red hair spilling out from beneath her helmet. It was Ellie, who was always much kinder to Henry. "Don't let him get to you, laddie," she said in her thick Highland accent.

Henry shook himself. "Is it that obvious?"

"Aye," she replied. "Gally only does it

because it needles you.”

Henry sighed. “I can’t help feeling that he thinks I’ve got no right to be a Dino Knight.”

Ellie reached across Kayla, her Styracosaurus, and placed a hand on Henry’s arm. “Well, you are one of us. And what really matters is that you believe you should be here.”

“I guess so,” Henry said, still secretly doubting himself.

“Come on then, let’s check out the north-east perimeter. Maybe someone’s trying to break into Brecklan. We can fight them off.”

Sometimes Henry wondered if Ellie was a bit too keen on fighting.

The pair began to make their way towards the foothills, their dinosaurs moving with slow, steady strides. Henry

told Ellie about Iyla’s dino-mite. She threw her head back and laughed. “I love Iyla like a sister, but she does some crazy science sometimes.”

“Well, I guess you never know when you might want to blow something up,” he said with a smile, quoting Iyla.

“Aye,” said Ellie. “Fair point.”

Henry’s eyes scanned the line of trees beyond the field, looking for any tell-tale movements that might give away an intruder.

Suddenly, Rex tripped on a tree stump and lurched to the left.

“Steady on!” Henry called, gripping his dino’s scaly neck to stop himself from falling off. But as Rex righted himself, Henry caught a glimpse of something – or someone – in the treeline.

“Knights assemble!” he called out,

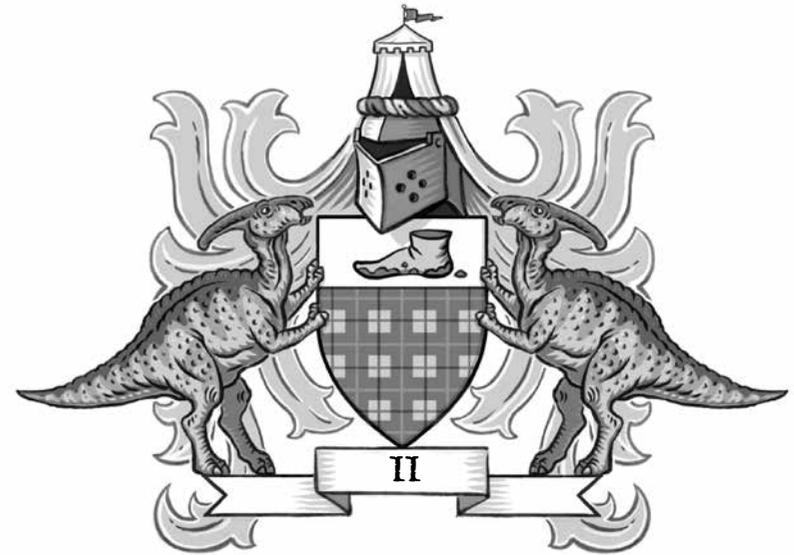
without hesitation. In that moment, his months of combat training kicked in.

Torin and Gally galloped over on their dinos. Torin was the leader of the Dino Knights and he rode high in the saddle of Haringey, his trusty Nothronychus.

“Who goes there?” Torin called. Haringey reared up on hind legs to give his master a better view. “Lower your weapons and show that you mean us no harm,” Torin asked calmly.

“Reveal yourselves!” barked Gally, standing up in his stirrups in an attempt to appear as important as Torin. “Only cowards scurry around the forest. Brave warriors fight out in the open!”

Something rustled in the trees and the Dino Knights braced themselves for battle. Henry drew his sword, ready to fight.



A head poked out from between the trees. Then another, and another.

Henry waited for the intruders to emerge. He watched as one small figure after another crept out from the trees. These weren't enemies of Brecklan – they were children!

They wore woollen skirts with a patchwork of lines woven through them,