

TRYGG THE DINOSAUR

by Paula Louise Salvador

EXCERPT

His hard work had tired him out, so he sat down in the nest. He was about to fall asleep when he felt the island tremble slightly. It was enough to cause one of the other eggs to slip toward him. He put his mouth around the egg's pointed end, making sure the sharp tips of his teeth didn't break through the shell. Then he gently settled it back in the damp ground at his feet. But why was his nest moving like that?

Using his tail for balance, he eased up and peeked over the top of the nest. A rush of cold air hit him in the face just as cawing broke out in the trees overhead. Flocks of birds darted from branch to branch, making loud warning calls. And the ground started to shake so much that he struggled to stay standing.

At the edge of the island, a group of animals leapt out of the shallows. At first, he thought that they were like the birds above him, except they looked too big to be able to fly. Besides, they moved by running with their heads stuck out in front of them. Instead of wings, they had long arms and hands with three fingers—and they had claws.

They were just like him.

The pack swarmed past. A reddish-brown one at the end skidded to a stop. He towered over the nest, and slobber dribbled from his small pointed teeth. “Hey, little Troödon!” he called out, but when he got no reaction, he shook his head in frustration. “I’m talkin’ to YOU!” he said with a growl. “You see any other Troödots alive in that ring of dirt?” The dinosaur glanced nervously over his shoulder. “You’re gonna have to move fast, kid,” he shouted, then he turned to flee.

“Mudslide comin’ through!”