



MAGINATION ISLAND

== RACE TO RUMBLE RUIN ==





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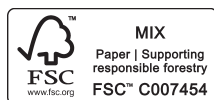
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*'You can't use up creativity.
The more you use, the more you have.'*
– Maya Angelou



IMAGINATION ISLAND

AREA 3

AREA 2

LAUGHTER LAGOON

SILLY STRING STREET

WHIZZWAVE WAY

MO'S MARINA

CAMOSEUM

CHAOS FALLS

AREA 4

PRACTICE PLAYGROUND

PROLOGUE

Many moons ago, an astronomer, a poet, a princess and a pirate stumbled into a magical land.

The astronomer observed the skies and stars.

The poet dreamed his visions to life in words.

The princess was an inventor with bold ideas and an eye for numbers.

And the pirate was an explorer of the deepest oceans and scavenger of the seas.

These four did more than just observe and dream and invent and explore. They *imagined* so deeply that real magic stirred within them. And they found themselves transported to a place where anything they thought of came to life.

They called it . . . Imagination Island. And they were its first four Protectors.

Others imagined their way to Imagination Island over the years. But time took its toll. All too soon, its Protectors grew old, and the magic was in danger of disappearing. And so a Race was devised, to ensure the island's survival. A Race to find four new Protectors.

The **THIRD** leg of that Race starts . . . NOW!

Chapter 1

THE UNWELCOME WELCOME

It took a moment for Luca's eyes to adjust to the bright orange glow of the Imagination Island sunset.

"EWWW!" a voice screeched behind him. "What happened to your *hair*?"

Before arriving, Luca had combed some gel through his hair and put on his new pyjamas. He'd been begging his mum to buy them all week, after unexpectedly appearing on Imagination Island last time wearing raggedy old dinosaur ones. For this third leg of the Race, he'd wanted to look the part – and not give Tiago or Team Talent any more reasons to taunt him.

So much for that plan.

Team Talent's Tara and Trude were leaning over him now with faces like sour lemons.

Trude the French racer grimaced. “*C’est révoltant*,” she said.

Luca nervously touched his head. What were they talking about? He’d spent ages combing the gel through so there weren’t any clumps.

“Wait a minute!” Tara squinted for a better look. “You *wanted* your hair to look like that?”

“*Mon Dieu!*” Trude howled, stroking her slicked-back ponytail like it was a pet. “If I looked like that, I’d wear a hat.”

“If I looked like that, I’d never show my face again!”

“If I looked like that, I’d –”

“What are you idiots doing?” a voice boomed.

Tara and Trude jumped. Luca peered up just in time to see the ringleader of Team Talent glaring at his teammates from beneath a thick black hood. Luca couldn’t face Tiago on his *best* days, let alone on the day he’d been ripped from his bed before he’d caught a wink of sleep.

Earlier, as he’d pulled his head through the neck of his soft new pyjama top, he had felt more prepared than usual. Sure, he’d been so nervous he couldn’t eat his dinner and he kept feeling like he needed a wee, but at least for this third round of the Race, he’d known what

to expect. The plan had been to get a full night’s sleep and a few hours without constant questions from his family, so he could arrive on the island feeling calm and composed. Maybe even confident?

But his head had only just touched the pillow when the familiar scent of strawberry, sherbet and vanilla had filled his bedroom. The air had started fizzing, like it had been charged with electricity, and the sound of his siblings – Otis snoring, Frankie and Felix arguing, and Ruby blowing another experiment up in her room – had faded away.

And now here he was.

Yay.

“Sorry, Tiago,” Tara squeaked now, her frizzy red hair standing to attention. “It’s just, have you seen his –”

“DOES IT LOOK LIKE I CARE?” Tiago barked. “I’m plotting our plan of attack with Tamal. Come here.”

Luca was so glad he wasn’t on Team Talent. Imagine having to make small talk with the meanest person you’ve ever met. Imagine having to smile at their jokes. Imagine having to invite them to your birthday party!

He waited until Tiago, Trude and Tara were far away before he took in the rest of his surroundings. The smell of washing-up liquid wafted up his nostrils, from the

giant bubble that arched overhead. Ahh. The Practice Playground. The place they visited at the start of each leg of the Race before the challenges, riddles and rules took over.

Luca tried not to think too much about the unknown magical creatures that lurked beyond the bubble. Instead, he imagined a grey tracksuit not too dissimilar from his pyjamas, plus plain white trainers and some mintymallows that exploded in his mouth and cleaned his teeth. His pyjamas disappeared obediently, and Luca stroked the soft grey fleece that replaced them. Chewing his mintymallows, he rose to his feet and looked around for his teammates. He could always rely on Ali, Om and Fliss to calm his nerves.

But . . . where were they?

Chapter 2

THE WELCOME PARADE

“FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT!”
 Ali’s Scottish accent ricocheted around the Practice Playground.

“BACK, FRONT, SAUSAGE ROLL, SLAP SOME SAUCE ON, POSE!”

Luca whirled around. What ON EARTH was Ali doing?

“KEEP IN TIME MY SPIKY FRIENDS!” Ali wore a pleated kilt with a matching hat over her curly brown hair, and waved a long baton over her head. “SIDE TOGETHER. CLAP AND CHEER. PICK YOUR NOSE. STEP UP A GEAR!”

Ali twirled towards Luca like a fairground waltzer without a stop button. Behind her, a parade of baby T-rex dinosaurs copied her every move. They were dressed in similar outfits, high-kicking and tossing each other in

the air like a band of professional cheerleaders.

Luca realised Ali must have imagined her terrifying back-up dancers as soon as she arrived on the island. Wasn't she the least bit scared of their razor-sharp teeth, their whippy tails or their suspiciously tiny hands?

"WE'RE BACK ON THE ISLAND TO WIN THE RACE!"

Ali whooped.

"ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR!" responded the dinos.

"LET'S GIVE A CHEER FOR OUR FAVOURITE PLACE!"

"ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR!"

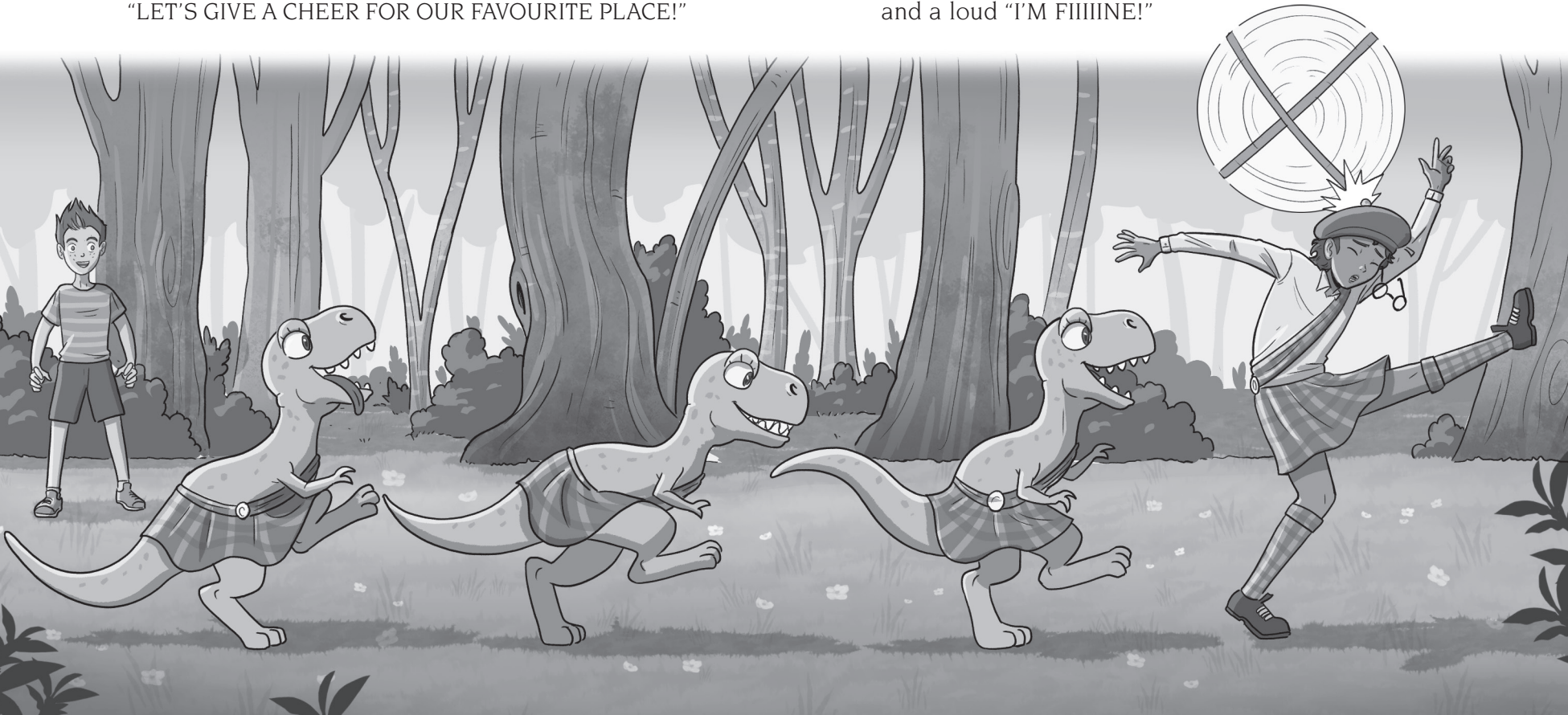
"TEAM DREG ARE GOING TO BEAT THE REST!"

"ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR ROAR!"

"THIS TOMATO KETCHUP I WANNA DIGEST!"

The dinosaurs looked confused. "Roar roar roar roar roar roar roar?"

Ali threw her baton in the air as the dinosaurs parted. It clonked her on the head, knocking her glasses off the end of her nose, but she styled it out with a dizzy spin and a loud "I'M FIIIIINE!"



As two dinosaurs started blowing trumpets as if announcing a king or queen, a small figure with short black hair and determined eyes flipped her way to the front of the pack. Fliss soared and spun and held her arms out with her usual poise. Luca grinned as he recognised his second teammate.

Another creature, much smaller than the dinosaurs, bounded after Fliss. It had rusty-red scales, a spiky tail and a beaming smile.

“Come on, Grubby!” Fliss yelled. “Let’s see your best flip!”

Team Dreg’s dragon mascot let out an excited “RAWR!” and tried to jump in the air. But rather than twirling gracefully like Fliss, Grubby’s small wings got caught beneath him and he tumbled towards the feet of the largest T-rex.

Luca’s heart jolted. Grubby was *inches* away from being trampled!

Taller and stealthier than Fliss and Ali, a third figure suddenly darted into view and caught the little dragon seconds before he got crushed by a baby dinosaur. Luca let out a deep breath. Good old Om. He was always there to save the day.

Om carried Grubby to the end of the line, where Fliss

was flipping on the spot and Ali was still swaying from her baton head-bump. The baby T-rexes gave a round of applause as they huddled together.

“This way for a group hug, Kind Ears!” Ali cried, waving Luca over. “Team Dreg are BACK!”