



The Case of the Missing Dinosaur

Impossible Days

By J. Ladis and Haley Dell

Little Story Magic



The parade had flags, drums and a very small mayor. It did not have Mabel, the enormous green dinosaur who was supposed to lead it. “We need detectives.”
“We have two.”



John put on his detective hat. Julia opened her notebook. In the mud beside Mabel's empty place, they found footprints bigger than dinner plates. "An enormous clue." Julia crouched lower. Inside one print were three tiny webbed marks.



The prints led to the bakery. The baker pointed toward the fountain. “She went that way! Her head sailed right past my upstairs window.” “A flying dinosaur?” “Or a very tall one.”



At the fountain, the drummer pointed the other way. “Mabel went toward the bridge. I saw her tail!” “Two directions. One dinosaur.” They walked around the fountain. The muddy prints curved all the way around it.



Beyond the fountain, the enormous prints continued toward the bridge. Beside them ran a trail of tiny ones. A downy yellow feather clung to a thorn. “Our dinosaur has company.”



Behind the bridge stood a green, leafy hill that had not been there yesterday. John raised his magnifying glass. The hill blinked. “Mabel!” “Shhh. I’m being an umbrella.”



Six ducklings huddled beneath Mabel's belly. She had followed them away from the parade. Now they wanted to go under the low stone arch. "I don't fit." She tried to tuck in her tail. The tail stuck out farther.



John and Julia could fit. They followed the little prints through the arch to the pond. On the far side, a mother duck hurried along the bank, calling. “We’ve found your missing six.”



They led the mother duck back through the arch. Six yellow heads popped out from under Mabel. Six little bodies hurried after her. “Umbrella closed.” She stretched up so high that John’s hat tipped backward.



Mabel led them back past the bridge, around the fountain and past the bakery. Both witnesses waved. The drums began. “Case closed!” Julia shut her notebook. A duckling stepped across the cover and left one tiny muddy print. “Almost.”

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