

# Contents

## 6 China, 160 million years ago

It is mid-morning, and already hot and humid. Dinosaurs of many different kinds are about.

## 8 A few weeks later ...

A group of *Mamenchisaurus* mothers keep a watchful eye on their eggs.

## 10 A few months later ...

The *Mamenchisaurus* young grow up quickly on a diet of ferns and other plants.

## 12 A few years later ...

Mamenchi and his family are feeding from trees at the edge of a forest.

## 14 A few minutes later ...

Suddenly a pack of *Yangchuanosaurus* hurl themselves at the *Mamenchisaurus* herd.

## 16 A few years later ...

As winter sets in, the herd sets out for richer forests and swamplands further south.

## 18 A few weeks later ...

As Mamenchi wades across the ravine, the shallow water suddenly becomes a deep, raging torrent.



## 20 Ten years later ...

All the soft parts of Mamenchi's body have rotted away, leaving only the hard parts, the teeth and bones.

## 22 Millions of years later ...

Mamenchi's remains have turned to stone.

## 24 Eighteen thousand years later ...

Two children notice what looks like an animal's skull in the ground ...

## 26 A few months later ...

A team of scientists carefully dig into the rock all around the skull the children found.

## 28 Today

Visitors come from far afield to see Mamenchi's skeleton mounted in a museum.

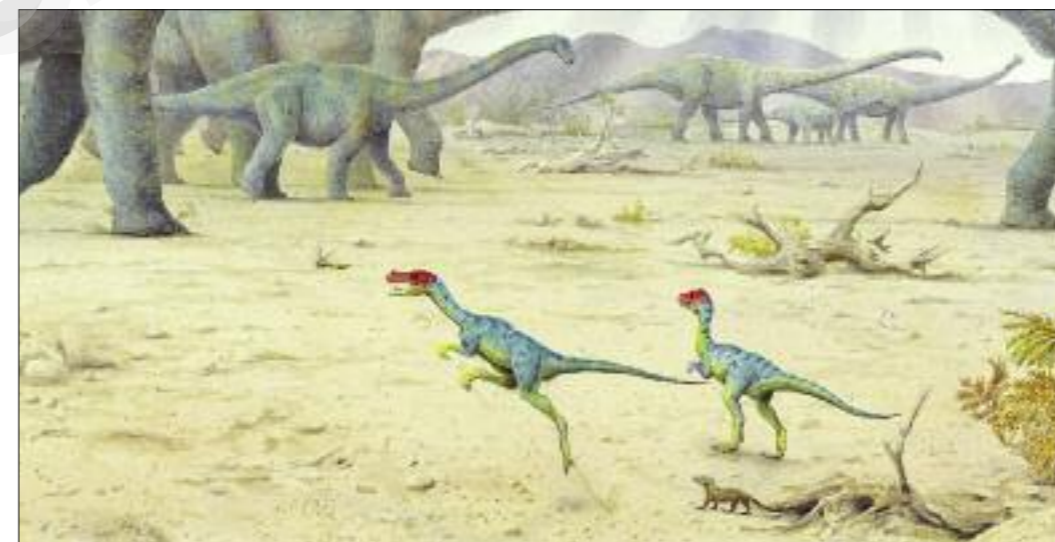
## 30 Glossary

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# Introduction

Imagine you are in China, many millions of years ago. All around you, there are hot, sticky forests and swamplands. The silence is shattered by shrieks and bellows as dinosaurs lumber across the landscape. Into this world is born a baby *Mamenchisaurus*. If he makes it to adulthood, he will grow into a 25-metre-long colossus. But dangers lurk everywhere, from the moment he hatches out. What will life hold in store for him?

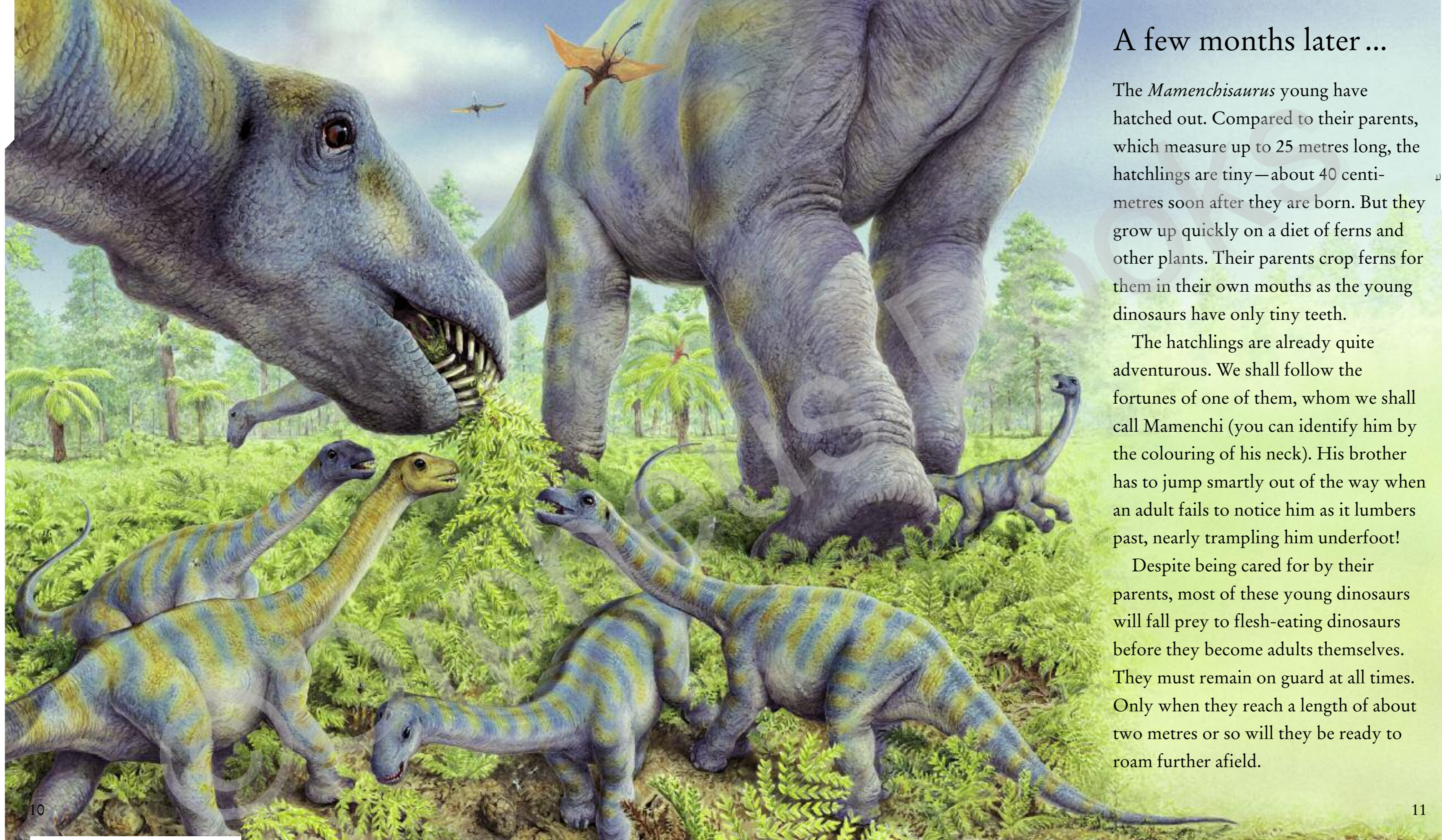
The story told in this book is like a journey. It is not a journey from one place to another, but one in which you travel through time. With each turn of the page, the date moves forward a few days, a few years or many millions of years. Each time—every stop on your journey—is a new chapter in the life of the dinosaur. The early days in his mother's nest, the encounter with a pack of flesh-eaters, the journey to warmer lands with his own young family, his death and burial at the bottom of a river, the fossilization and later discovery of his remains—all tell the story of a dinosaur.



Look out for a tiny mammal. It lived in China at the same time as the *Mamenchisaurus*. It appears—in some form—in all of the illustrations.

Use this thumb index to travel through time! Just find the page you want to see and flip it open. This way you can make a quick comparison between one scene and another, even though some show events that took place some years apart. A little black arrow on the page points to the time of the scene illustrated on that page.

Some dinosaurs were born with fully formed limbs and may have left the nest immediately. Others were helpless and were fed in the nest.



## A few months later ...

The *Mamenchisaurus* young have hatched out. Compared to their parents, which measure up to 25 metres long, the hatchlings are tiny—about 40 centimetres soon after they are born. But they grow up quickly on a diet of ferns and other plants. Their parents crop ferns for them in their own mouths as the young dinosaurs have only tiny teeth.

The hatchlings are already quite adventurous. We shall follow the fortunes of one of them, whom we shall call Mamenchi (you can identify him by the colouring of his neck). His brother has to jump smartly out of the way when an adult fails to notice him as it lumbers past, nearly trampling him underfoot!

Despite being cared for by their parents, most of these young dinosaurs will fall prey to flesh-eating dinosaurs before they become adults themselves. They must remain on guard at all times. Only when they reach a length of about two metres or so will they be ready to roam further afield.



160 million years ago



A few weeks later



A few months later