

THE CASE OF THE  
**MISSING**  
**DINOSAUR**  
**EGG**



## The First Kids Mysteries

*The Case of the Rock 'n' Roll Dog*

*The Case of the Diamond Dog Collar*

*The Case of the Ruby Slippers*

*The Case of the Piggy Bank Thief*

*The Case of the Missing Dinosaur Egg*





# THE CASE OF THE MISSING DINOSAUR EGG



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*For Professor Ann Marie Major,  
in gratitude for her friendship,  
her expertise and her students.*



## CHARACTERS

**Cameron Parks (Cammie)**, our narrator, is the ten-year-old daughter of U.S. president Marilee Parks and her husband, Rick. Since Cameron's mom was inaugurated in January, she has lived in the White House with her extended family.

**Tessa Parks**, Cameron's sister, is seven years old and a drama queen.

**Nathan Leone (Nate)** is Cameron and Tessa's cousin, the only child of their aunt Jen. Nate was born in Korea. Aunt Jen adopted him as an infant and brought him to live with her in San Diego. Now he and Aunt Jen live with Tessa and Cameron's family in the White House.

**Jennifer Maclareen Leone (Aunt Jen)** is Cameron and Tessa's aunt and Nate's mom. A widow, she lives with Nate in an apartment on the third floor of the

White House and acts as First Lady in President Parks's administration. President Parks is her younger sister.

**Jeremy, Charlotte and Malik** are Secret Service agents who help keep the First Family safe.

**Mr. Morgan and Mr. Webb** are security officers with the Smithsonian Institution. Previously, they helped Tessa, Cameron and Nate solve the Case of the Ruby Slippers.

**Barbara Maclaren (Granny, aka Judge Maclaren)** is Cameron, Tessa and Nate's grandmother. She used to be a judge in California, and before that a district attorney, and before that a police officer. When Cameron and Tessa's mom won the presidential election, Granny agreed to come to Washington to help take care of Cameron, Tessa and Nate.

**Willis Bryant** is Granny's special friend. He used to run the White House elevator but now works for Cameron's family, taking care of their too-energetic dog, Hooligan, on weekdays.

**Jan and Larry** (she's blond, he's not) are popular local newscasters in Greater Metropolitan Washington.

**Marilee Maclaren Parks (Mom)** is Cameron and Tessa's mom and, since January, the president of the United States. She's a lawyer, and she used to be a senator from California.

**Rick Parks (Dad)** is Cameron and Tessa's dad. He has a job building airplanes in California, so he is usually in Washington only on weekends. He used to be an air force pilot.

**Mr. Brackbill** is the librarian at Cameron, Tessa and Nate's school.

**Evgenia** is in Cameron and Nate's fifth-grade class. She is very smart and quiet.

**Hooligan** is Cameron and Tessa's dog. He looks like a Dr. Seuss version of an Afghan hound. "Hooligan" is a word that means rowdy, but Hooligan is not really bad. He just has too much energy.

**Ms. Ann Major** is a deputy assistant press secretary in the office of President Parks. Her beagle, Pickles, has playdates with First Dog Hooligan.

**Antonia Alfredo-Chin (Toni)** is a friend of Cameron, Tessa and Nate's who also happens to be the niece of the president of a certain nearby nation and the daughter of its ambassador to the United States. She lives in Washington, D.C. Her dog, Ozzabelle, was a gift from Tessa and Cameron.



## CHAPTER ONE



My little sister, Tessa, leaned over and whispered in my ear, “That is the biggest egg I ever saw.”

True, it was a really big egg. But we were in the audience at a talk at a museum, and we were supposed to be quiet. I shushed my sister, but she ignored me.

“It makes sense, though, doesn’t it, Cammie?” Tessa said. “Dinosaurs were big. So their babies were big. A big baby needs a big egg.”

Now my cousin Nate joined in. “They’re called hatchlings, not babies, Tessa.” Nate is ten like me. Tessa is seven.

Nate’s mom looked over at us, put her finger to her lips and nodded at the man who was talking. On the table in front of him was the gleaming, cream-colored egg.

I pointed at myself and shrugged, meaning *Me? I didn’t do anything!*, which made Nate’s mom—my aunt Jen—frown.

Oh, fine.

It was a Saturday afternoon in April, the week before Easter. Outside, it was a beautiful day. We live in Washington, D.C., and down by the Tidal Basin the cherry trees were blossoming. What I really wanted to do was go play outside with my dog, but instead I was cooped up with a bunch of ancient bones and grown-ups at the National Museum of Natural History.

Don't get me wrong. I like the museum, and I like dinosaurs. But when you're the kid of the president of the United States, like I am, you spend a little too much time being quiet and polite.

With no choice, I shook the wiggles out of my shoulders, resettled my posterior into the chair and tried to listen. The speaker's name was Professor Cordell Bohn, and he was a paleontologist—pronounced “pay-lee-un-TALL-uh-jist” —which is a person who studies long-ago plants and animals, like dinosaurs.

“Most people are surprised to learn that fossilized dinosaur eggs are reasonably common in many locations around the world,” Professor Bohn was saying. “What's unique in this case, uh...unique—”

Professor Bohn stopped, looked down at the egg and raised his eyebrows. Was he listening to something?

A few seconds passed, nothing happened and Professor Bohn tried again.

“As I was saying, this find may help us better understand the link between dinosaurs and modern-day birds. We are hoping to study the shell—”

He stopped again, and this time everybody heard it—*rata-tap-tap-tap* coming from the egg.

What the heck?

Somebody gasped; other people whispered and pointed. Professor Bohn himself took a step backward but at the same time said, “There is no cause for alarm.”

Meanwhile, my little sister leaned over. “Cammie? Is it going to hatch?”

Nate answered before I could. “Don’t be ridiculous. Dinosaurs have been extinct for sixty-five million years.”

Extinct or not, the *rata-tap* continued, and now the egg began to wobble!

To the left of me, a man wearing an untucked white shirt and black dress pants jumped up, ready to run. Next thing, the people beside him did the same; then...*rata-tata-tap*...*rata-tata-TAP*...*rata-tata-CRACK!* The eggshell broke and—right before our eyes—something damp, gray and funny-looking started to bust out!