

Thad's Tree House

A Short Story

Ten-year-old Jonathan Park huffed and puffed as he rode his bike up the final block to Thad's Tree house. On the front handlebars sat Jessica Brennan, Jonathan's new friend.

"Hurry Jonathan," Jessie urged. "We're going to be late."

"I know, I know. What a day to be late." Then Jonathan muttered something to himself. "I'm already going to be in trouble."

"What's that?" Jessie asked.

"Oh, nothing," Jonathan said.

"What did you say about being in trouble?" Jessie asked. She held tightly as Jonathan peddled frantically around the corner and into the driveway of Thad's house.

Jonathan was silent as he got off the bike, and held it firmly so Jessie could get off, too.

"Jonathan what do you mean – trouble?"

"Nothing...probably nothing."

"Jonathan, you did tell them I was coming along – didn't you?"

"Well," Jonathan chose his words carefully. "They haven't exactly had a lot of girls at the Eagle's Nest before."

"Yes," Jessie said very pointedly, "But they know I'm coming now don't they?"

Jonathan stammered a little as he laid his bike down next to the others that were already there. "Well not exactly..."

"Jonathan Park, you didn't even tell them – did you?"

“I started to, but then we started talking about something else and...” Jonathan’s voice trailed off as the two walked through the gate and into Thad’s backyard.

“Hey Jonathan!” Thad cried out from up in the tree house.

“Hey, what’s up with this?” cried Eddie. “Jessie what are you doing here?”

Jonathan couldn’t believe Eddie was already there. Eddie was notoriously late to every meeting, but this time Jonathan was even later. “Guys, it’s just Jessie.” He looked up at the faces that were staring blankly back. “Guys – it’s Jessie, you know Jessica Brennan!”

“Hi Jessie!” little Timmy yelled down from the tree house.

“Hi Timmy,” Jessie shouted back up.

Up in the tree house Mike whispered to the rest of the guys. “Hey, we’ve never had a girl in the tree house before. Are we just going to let her up here? What are the club rules?”

“I’m not sure,” said Thad, the Eagle’s Nest club leader. He was scanning the club’s chalkboard in which the notes from the last meeting were written. “I don’t know if we have an official rule...”

“But if we let Jessie up, next thing you know, this place will be swarming with girls.” Mike pointed out.

Jonathan stood at the bottom of the tree shouting up to the gang. “Guys, Jessie’s cool. Remember? She’s the one who helped me escape from that Simon Addleman guy in the cave. She’s got more guts than most guys,” Jonathan argued.

“Well one thing for sure,” said Eddie, “Every time I come here, you guys make me say that dumb password. I don’t think we should let her up here because she doesn’t know the secret code.”

“Well Eddie, you have a good point there,” Thad pointed out. “Without knowing...”

“Cockadoodle, Cockadoodle, Cockadoodle Doo, We’ll be watching over you,” Jessie’s voice rang out from below, as all the guys’ mouths dropped wide open. As she continued to recite the rhyme, she moved her hands in the club’s secret hand motions. “Quackity Quackity, Quackity Quack Quack

Quack. Bad guys better just turn back, we soar higher than all the rest, cause we're the crew from the Eagle's Nest!"

Mike, Eddie, Timmy, and Thad all looked at each other in total disbelief, and then shrugged their shoulders.

"Drop the ladder!" proclaimed Thad royally.

"How'd you know the password?" whispered Jonathan as the two climbed the ladder.

"I have spies in important places."

"My sister, Katie!" Jonathan said.

"She said you practiced it a hundred times," Jessie explained.

"This is one time I'm glad she butted in," said Jonathan.

"Jonathan did you tell her the password?" accused Eddie as the two stepped into the tree house.

"No, but we might want to change it. My sister knows it."

"Put that on the agenda for the next meeting," said Thad.

"So guys is she in?" said Jonathan.

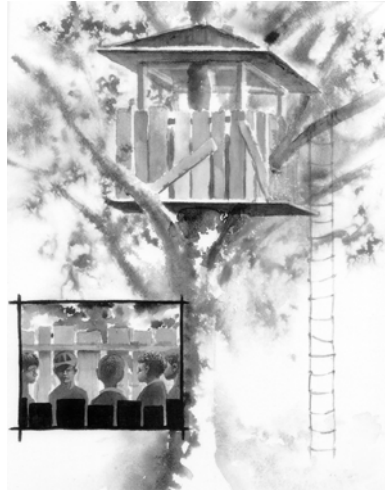
"I vote her in. I think someone clever enough to figure out our password should be automatically in. Except for big sisters," said Eddie.

"What about you, Mike?" said Thad.

"As long as she doesn't bring a lot of other girls with her," said Mike.

"Thad?" asked Jonathan.

"I vote her in. As long as she doesn't want to redecorate or anything."



“You could do with a few cute lace curtains and maybe a flower border around the wall here,” said Jessie.

Jonathan looked at her.

“It’s a joke. This place is awesome. Now, do you want to hear my version of what we found in Hidden Cave or not?” Jessie said.

“Yeah,” said Timmy.

“Well, it was this creepy looking skull,” said Jessie.

“Yeah, Jessie screamed when she saw it,” said Jonathan.



“Well, the skull was sitting on this stalactite and the way Jonathan’s flashlight was shining it made this huge shadow on the wall that looked like a dinosaur.”

“Really?” said Timmy getting into the story.

“Yeah, and my dog Shadow was barking and barking. But then, when I looked closer I could see it was just a fossil.

“You mean when I looked closer at it,” corrected Jonathan. “You didn’t want to go near it at first.”

“So what kind of skull was it?” asked Eddie.

“It was a coelophysis (see-low-fi-sis) skull,” said Jessie.

“I’ve never heard of those before,” said Mike.

“They’re the same ones they found at Ghost Ranch,” said Eddie. “Hey I knew something Mike didn’t.”

“Yeah, they were little dinosaurs about five to seven feet long and built to run,” said Jonathan.

“Well, they must not have been too fast because there’s a bunch of them buried at Ghost Ranch,” said Eddie. “I’ve seen them with my own eyes.”

“And they were buried by lots of water,” said Jonathan.

“Oh, yeah, well I heard some guy explain how all those dinosaurs were killed. He said they were probably eating a bunch of food, and they were so focused on their meal, that they didn’t notice that the creek was rising behind them. All of the sudden the creek rose and killed them all,” said Eddie.

“Hey it sounds like those dinosaurs eat kinda like you, Eddie,” Mike taunted.

“Well, I think that Noah’s Flood is a better explanation,” said Jonathan.

“Really?” said Mike.

“Yeah the Bible says that God sent a worldwide flood. Dinosaur graveyards like Ghost Ranch are great evidence that a huge amount of water killed a lot of dinosaurs.” Jonathan explained.

“You guys keep talking about dinosaurs and the Bible, but I always heard that dinosaurs went extinct 65 million years ago. That doesn’t seem to fit with the Bible at all, does it?” asked Mike.

“Yeah, it’s all a little confusing,” Timmy said as he leaned against one of the club walls. “I believe in the Bible, but I don’t know what to believe about dinosaurs.”

“It was kinda confusing to me, too,” Jessie agreed, “but ever since I met Jonathan and his dad, it’s starting to make more sense.”

“So Jonathan, where did the dinosaurs come from?” asked Timmy.

“Well, Timmy,” Jonathan started out, “The Bible tells us that God made everything in six days. In Genesis, it says that God made all of the land-dwelling animals on day six of the creation week.”

“Didn’t He also make man on the same day?” Thad asked.

“Right!” Mike said sarcastically, “Man and dinosaurs lived together.”

“Why not?” Jessie retorted.

Mike wasn’t quite sure what to say. “I don’t know, I’ve just heard that dinosaurs died out a long time before man was around.”

“That’s what evolutionists say,” said Jonathan. “But they haven’t proved it to be true. They mostly say that because that story fits with what they want to believe.”

“So is there any evidence that the dinosaurs did live with man?” Mike asked.

Thad snapped his fingers. “Hey, what about dragons?”

“Dragons?” Timmy mimicked.

“Yeah, Timmy, remember how Dad was telling us about all of the different dragon legends?” Thad said.

“Yeah...”

“That’s right, my dad talks about them, too,” said Jonathan. “He says there are stories about dragons from many countries that have been passed down through history. What if some of those stories were exaggerated tales about humans meeting dinosaurs?”

Mike was in deep thought. “I’ve never thought about it before, but dragons do look a little bit like dinosaurs.”

“Yeah, and the word dinosaur wasn’t even invented until a couple of hundred years ago. Maybe dragon is the old word for dinosaurs?” Thad pointed out.

“Well, the word dragon is even found in the Bible,” Jonathan added.

Jessie’s face lit up. “Speaking of dinosaurs in the Bible, my mom was telling me about the creatures in the book of Job.”

“Yeah, in chapters 40 and 41 of Job, God talks about Behemoth and Leviathan. They definitely sound like dinosaurs.” Jonathan said. “You want to know the weird thing?”

Timmy was completely fascinated by what Jonathan was saying. “What?”

“Job lived after Noah’s Flood, so that means that if those were dinosaurs, they had to have gone on the ark.”

“How would they put dinosaurs on the ark?” scoffed Mike.

“Yeah, how’d you like to be on the same boat with a T-rex?” said Eddie.

“Hey, they could have brought a baby T-rex,” said Thad.

“Aw, how cute,” said Eddie.

“Cute isn't the word I'd use,” commented Mike.

Jonathan continued, “Some creation scientists have figured out there would be enough room on the ark to fit all the animals. There would be more than enough room for all the animals that Noah had to take, including the dinosaurs, with more than half of the space still left over?”

“Wow,” said Mike. “I never heard that before.”

“So how'd the dinosaurs go extinct?” Timmy asked.

“Well,” Jonathan said, “The flood probably killed almost all of the dinosaurs. That would explain all of the fossils that we find. A few of each kind of dinosaurs might have gone on the ark, like the ones God told Job about. The flood was such a huge catastrophe, that it probably changed the world in a big way. It's possible that the world was just too different for the few dinosaurs that survived in the ark, and they eventually died out.”

Thad was amazed by Jonathan's answer. “How do you know so much?”

“My dad's a paleontologist,” Jonathan reminded him.

“Oh yeah.”

“The cool thing,” Jessie added, “is how the scientific evidence fits with the Bible.”

“Yeah,” Thad responded. “I guess when God tells us something in the Bible, we can trust it.”

“That's for sure!” Jonathan agreed.

There was a slight pause as everyone sat quietly thinking about things. Then Jessie broke the silence. “Hey, how'd you guys like to go exploring?”

“Yeah!” Everyone chimed in.

“I'll bet my dad will let us check out the cave,” Jessie suggested.

Mike leaned over and whispered into Thad's ear, "I think Jessie's going to fit into the Eagle's Nest just fine."

"Whoa, I don't know if I'm ready to go back to the cave – I've got some bad memories of that place ever since Simon was after us," Jonathan said.

"Come on Jonathan, it will be fun," Mike said convincingly.

"Let me call my dad, and see what he says," Jessie said.

Timmy was filled with excitement, "Let's go!"

Jonathan wasn't so sure. "Remember... the bats, the dangerous cliffs, how Simon scared us to death... guys?"

Thad was already picking up his gavel, "All those in favor of exploring the cave say `yes.'"

A loud `yes!' resounded from the tree house.

"This meeting is officially adjourned," said Thad, pounding the gavel. "Let's go!"

Look for more info about dinosaurs, dinosaur graveyards, & Ghost Ranch on our web site – [www. ICRAventures.org](http://www.ICRAventures.org).