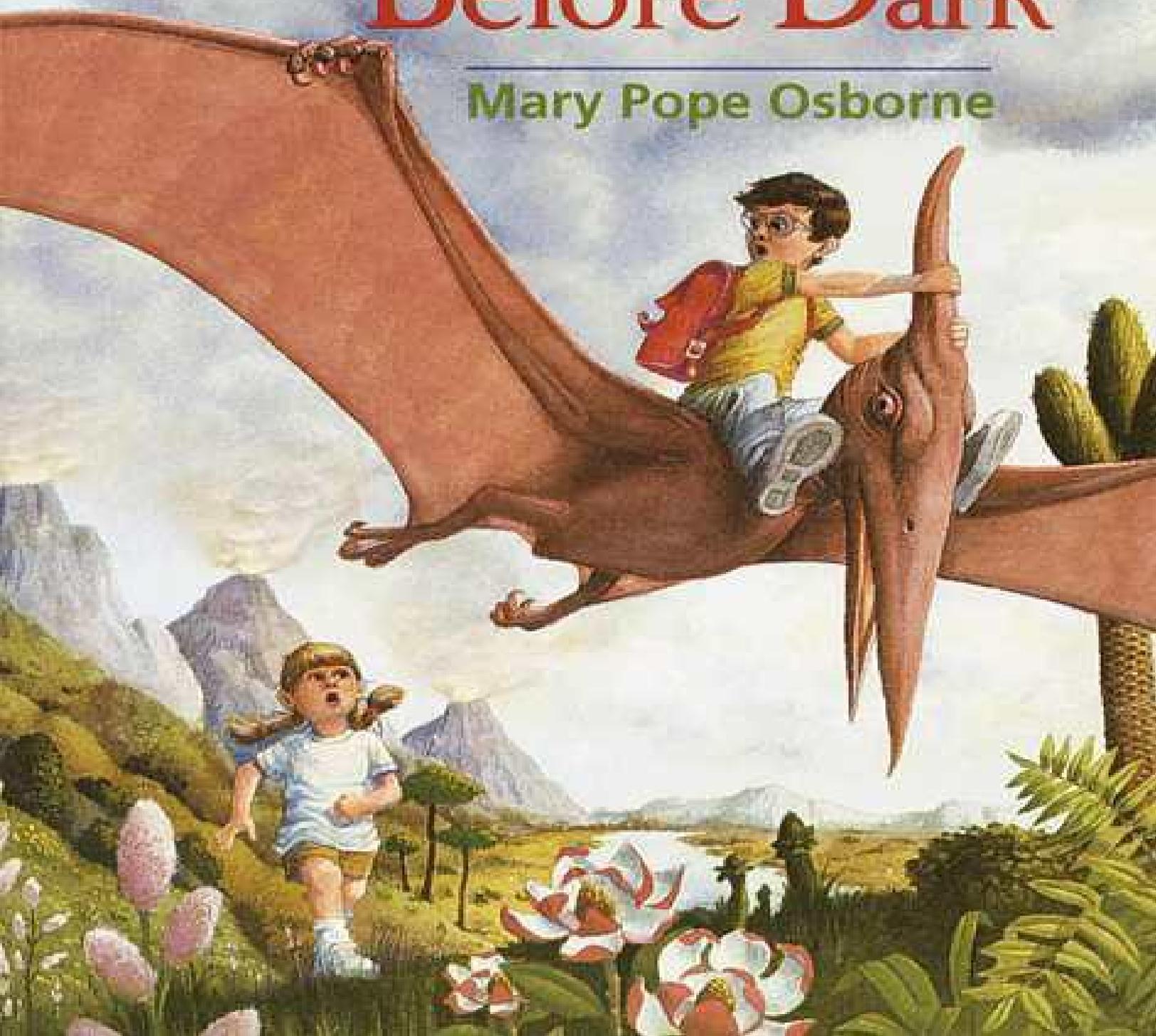


MAGIC  TREE HOUSE #1

# Dinosaurs Before Dark

Mary Pope Osborne



Here's what kids have to say to  
Mary Pope Osborne, author of  
the Magic Tree House series:

*WOW! You have an imagination like no other.—Adam W.*

*I love your books. If you stop writing books, it will be like losing a best friend.—Ben M.*

*I think you are the real Morgan le Fay. There is always magic in your books.—Erica Y.*

*One day I was really bored and I didn't want to read ... I looked in your book. I read a sentence, and it was interesting. So I read some more, until the book was done. It was so good I read more and more. Then I had read all of your books, and now I hope you write lots more.—Danai K.*

*I always read [your books] over and over ... 1 time, 2 times, 3 times, 4 times ... —Yuan C.*

*You are my best author in the world. I love your books. I read all the time. I read everywhere. My mom is like freaking out.—Ellen C.*

*I hope you make these books for all yours and mine's life.—Riki H.*

Teachers and librarians love  
Magic Tree House® books, too!

*Thank you for opening faraway places and times to my class through your books. They have given me the chance to bring in additional books, materials, and videos to share with the class.—J. Cameron*

*It excites me to see how involved [my fourth-grade reading class] is in your books ... I would do anything to get my students more involved, and this has done it.—C. Rutz*

*I discovered your books last year ... WOW! Our students have gone crazy over them. I can't order enough copies! ... Thanks for contributing so much to children's literature!—C. Kendziora*

*I first came across your Magic Tree House series when my son brought one home ... I have since introduced this great series to my class. They have absolutely fallen in love with these books! ... My students are now asking me for more independent reading time to read them. Your stories have inspired even my most struggling readers.—M. Payne*

*I love how I can go beyond the [Magic Tree House] books and use them as springboards for other learning.—R. Gale*

*We have enjoyed your books all year long. We check your Web site to find new information. We pull our map down to find the areas where the adventures take place. My class always chimes in at key parts of the story. It feels good to hear my students ask for a book and cheer when a new book comes out.—J. Korinek*

*Our students have “Magic Tree House fever.” I can’t keep your books on the library shelf.—J. Rafferty*

*Your books truly invite children into the pleasure of reading. Thanks for such terrific work.—S. Smith*

*The children in the fourth grade even hide the [Magic Tree House] books in the library so that they will be able to find them when they are ready to check them out.—K. Mortensen*

*My Magic Tree House books are never on the bookshelf because they are always being read by my students. Thank you for creating such a wonderful series.—K. Mahoney*

MAGIC TREE HOUSE® #1

# Dinosaurs Before Dark

by Mary Pope Osborne



illustrated by Sal Murdocca

A STEPPING STONE BOOK™

Random House  New York

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*For Linda and Mallory,  
who took the trip with me*

# Contents

[Cover](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Copyright](#)

[Dedication](#)

[1. Into the Woods](#)

[2. The Monster](#)

[3. Where Is Here?](#)

[4. Henry](#)

[5. Gold in the Grass](#)

[6. Dinosaur Valley](#)

[7. Ready, Set, Go!](#)

[8. A Giant Shadow](#)

[9. The Amazing Ride](#)

[10. Home Before Dark](#)

[Special Preview of \*\*Magic Tree House #2: \*The Knight at Dawn\*\*\*](#)



# 1

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## Into the Woods

“Help! A monster!” said Annie.

“Yeah, sure,” said Jack. “A real monster in Frog Creek, Pennsylvania.”

“Run, Jack!” said Annie. She ran up the road.

Oh, brother.

This is what he got for spending time with his seven-year-old sister.

Annie loved pretend stuff. But Jack was eight and a half. He liked *real* things.

“Watch out, Jack! The monster’s coming! Race you!”

“No, thanks,” said Jack.

Annie raced alone into the woods.

Jack looked at the sky. The sun was about to set.

“Come on, Annie! It’s time to go home!”

But Annie had disappeared.

Jack waited.

No Annie.

“Annie!” he shouted again.

“Jack! Jack! Come here!”

Jack groaned. “This better be good,” he said.

Jack left the road and headed into the woods. The trees were lit with a golden late-afternoon light.

“Come here!” called Annie.

There she was. Standing under a tall oak tree. “Look,” she said. She was pointing at a rope ladder.

The longest rope ladder Jack had ever seen.

“Wow,” he whispered.

The ladder went all the way up to the top of the tree.

There—at the top—was a tree house. It was tucked between two branches.

“That must be the highest tree house in the world,” said Annie.

“Who built it?” asked Jack. “I’ve never seen it before.”