Introductions:

Tiny the T-rex, in name and stature, just turned 19 a week ago. His birthday lands at the beginning of summer. This summer, his first summer after graduating high school, he spent his birthday at home with his parents, not doing much. His mom made his favorite dinner, and his dad picked up a cake from the local bakery. His older brother and sister, who had moved away years ago, called from out of state and sang him a happy birthday song. All Tiny's friends from school were out of town for the summer. That didn't matter so much because most of them were also going to school out of state, so graduation was pretty much the last time he would see them.

Tiny wanted to do something special to commemorate this new segment of life, leaving high school and transitioning to something new and a little scary. Everyone did the best they could to make his day as unique as possible, but it was nothing like what he envisioned.

After his birthday, Tiny felt uninspired. He spent most of his time replaying video games and taking lazy walks through the neighborhood. At the end of a lazy stroll, midsummer, Tinny saw the mailman driving off as he got home. He waved and then went to check the mail. There was a sales paper for the local grocery store and something else, a fancy-looking envelope shaped like a taco. The envelope, with its wax seal engraved with the letters T.K., was addressed to him. Who could have possibly sent him this awesome invitation?

Rouge, the raptor, grew up under the tutelage of a human. She was raised as a pet, kind of like a cat, and loved her life and her human. Her human, Mary, was 28 when she adopted Rouge. They spent 30 beautiful years together until the day Mary passed away in her sleep. Rouge was moved out of the home she grew up in and into a group home for abandoned dinosaurs. Rouge was despondent all the time her first couple of years in the group home. She would stay in her room and keep to herself for the most part. She didn't grow up around dinosaurs, only Mary, so she wasn't sure how to interact with the others. One day a new resident came to live in the home, a stegosaurus named Bruce. He was about Rouge's age and was determined to get to know everyone, including her. He made sure to stop by and speak to her every day; he even started dragging her to the social evenings they had once a month. After a while, Rouge came out of her shell and began making friends. Bruce left to live with an extended family member, but he wrote everyone letters every now and again. One day she was sitting in her room flipping thru a photo album. Mary had made it after some adventure they had. They used to have a lot of adventures together. Mary had just turned to the last page when she heard a knock at the door. She looked up to see Max, the orderly, and He told her that she had gotten some mail while handing her an envelope.

It was fancy, shaped like a taco with a wax seal engraved with the letters T.K. closing it. It all looked a little too elaborate for Bruce to have sent it. She wondered who did send it while sitting on her bed, admiring the envelope.

Penelope was a teenage Trex. She was 16 and living her best life. She went to an all-human school, but nobody treated her any different. Well, now nobody treated her differently. When she was in the first grade and first introduced to human children, she had some issues making friends. Mostly because she found humans to be delicious, and she kept trying to eat all her classmates. She learned the hard way that eating your classmates makes them feel bad the day that the goldfish attempted to eat her. She dropped her human cravings cold turkey from then on, and since she has become quite popular. Now, she has plenty of friends and is even a cheerleader and the top gymnast in her school. She has fashioned herself into somewhat of an "it" girl.

One afternoon while home sitting on the couch searching thru magazines for the perfect dress when the phone rang. She rushed to answer, because why wouldn't it be for her. When she answered, she heard her best friend Katie's voice. Katie had called to tell her about a party Tom Kanes was throwing. Tom was a sophomore. He came from a wealthy family and always threw rowdy parties because his parents were always gone. It was his way to rebel to get back at his parents for his loneliness. All the cool kids went to Tom's parties, so she was a little miffed at hearing he was having another one, and she had yet to be officially invited. Before she could get mad, Katie told her that Tom had sent out a bunch of invitations in the mail. The theme of the party was retro. Katie had heard that there would be cassette tape decks and aerobics videos playing at the party. As soon as Penelope got off the phone, she rushed outside to check the mailbox, as she knew that there was absolutely no way she didn't get an invite to this party. Inside she saw a fancy envelope shaped like a taco. It had a wax seal closing it with the letters T.K. engraved into the wax. Cute, she thought as she took the envelope back upstairs. She meant to call Katie back but got caught up looking at dresses in her magazines.

Hankree was a middle-aged Trex who had just finished celebrating his 40th birthday. He worked as a trash collector in his town and loved his job. He looked forward to going to work every day. Hankree came from a line of trash collectors. His dad, granddad, and even his grandma on his mom's side had collected trash in that very same town. As a hobby, Hankree enjoyed tinkering. His job allowed him to collect all sorts of material. Whenever he saw something interesting that someone had thrown out, he would take it home and make it better. He had been doing it since he was a child. His dad would bring him all sorts of stuff to tinker with, and he would make all kinds of things. In the past, he had made a soft-serve ice coffee machine that was a big hit. He had also created a pair of headphones that was supposed to play the song that you were thinking of but couldn't quite remember. Instead, it only played Livin La Viva Loca on repeat. That one was not such a big hit. Hankree was a happy and creative dino, and everyone loved him most of the time. The thing about Hankree was that he tended to get caught up in his work, so caught up that he would forget to do basic things.

Stuff like picking up his dry cleaning, brushing his teeth, even eating and sleeping. Most of those things were fine but forgetting to eat became a significant issue for Hankree. When he failed to eat, he became hangry. That means bad-tempered or irritable as a result of hunger. When hangry, Hankree tended to go on rampages, looking for food and destroying property. Sometimes someone would get him a sandwich before he got too far away from his house. But on occasion, Hankree would make it out of the neighborhood. When he did, he always made a beeline to a human community. Hankree thought humans were a delicious and rare delicacy, craving them the most notably when hangry. That is until he met a human boy named Hal. Hal refused to be eaten by Hankree and trapped him until he didn't desire to eat humans anymore. After, Hal and Hankree became good friends. The same day Hal trapped Hankree was also the same day Hals mom made Hankree dinner. Spaghetti with meatballs and garlic bread. After that, every time Hankree got hangry, he would run straight to Hal's house and wait for dinner. He even learned to cook to make dinner for Hal and his family from time to time. One day as Hankree was getting home from work, he saw Hal waiting for him on his porch.

Hal's mom had made way too much spaghetti, so Hal brought some for Hankree and all his coworkers. Everyone in Hankrees neighborhood loved Hal's mom's cooking. Hal told Hankree that while he was waiting for him to come home, the postman had dropped off a letter for him. Hal handed Hankree a fancy-looking envelope shaped like a taco. It had a wax seal engraved with the letters T.K. closing it. "It looks like you have been invited to a taco party," Hal said while handing it over. "Be sure to bring back some taco recipes that we can try out," Hal added as they walked inside. Hankree didn't know who T.K. was, but he did love trying new things.

The Taco Party:

It's the day of the taco party, and all the dinosaurs are getting ready. Tiny decided to wear his "cool guy hat." It's an old cowboy hat that his great great great grandad bought on sale at some store in town that has since become a Starbucks. Tiny's grandad cubed originally bought the hat so he would feel cool enough to ask Tiny's grandmom cubed out on their first date. Since then, as the hat has passed from generation to generation, it has generally become common knowledge that you only wear it when you need to be extra cool. Locally sourced chocolate brown leather that had become soft and smooth while taking on a rugged appearance from being worn in for over a decade would make anyone extra cool.

Rouge and her hall neighbor Anna made a trip to the mall so that Rouge could buy a new dress. Now getting to the mall from the group home was quite a feat. You had to take two buses, a cab, another bus and then the train. It would take them all day to go and come back, so they decided to make the most of it. They stopped to take pictures at scenic spots, window shopped every chance they got, they even had a mukbang in the mall food court with their table neighbors. Rouge took Mary's necklaces with her to the mall. She wanted to find a dress to match it. Mary used to wear that necklace every single day. It was a large stone consisting of a mixed myriad of blues inside a silver frame and hung on a silver chain. Rouge went to the mall, intending to find a blue dress to match. With Anna's help, she ended up with a burnt orange dress that complimented the necklace better than any blue dress ever could. They even found shoes to match, blue ones that helped the necklace "POP!" Rouge, not being great at social situations, was glad to have a piece of Mary to take with her to the party. She was also very grateful that she had a new friend in Anna and was glad to be visiting the mall with her. Once they got back to the group home, Rouge put her purchases away and started making a new scrapbook containing her latest adventures at the group home.

The day Penelope had to research, but she ended up with what she considered the perfect retro outfit. It had a real 80s vibe, big hair, leg warmers, even a thrifted dayglow fanny pack. She was planning on using the fanny pack even after the party, as it could fit her cell phone and a travel charger! Penelope was nervous about the party. She had been to a ton of Tom Kane's parties, so she was not anxious about that. Penelope was worried because this was not a Tom Kane party. A few days after the finishing touch for her outfit, an actual walkman with a cassette tape arrived. Penelope received Tom Kane's 80's baby party invite in the mail. At that moment, though, Penelope was unsure about who T.K. and his taco-shaped invite were. Still, she became determined to use this party as a test run for her outfit's style-ability and party functionality. If nothing else, Penelope was the queen of every party she attended and had every intention to keep her reign afloat. One problem, though, she had no idea who all was going to be at this party. How could Penelope smooze without background info! Penelope cold-called a party last when she first started human school. That didn't go over well, and she had no desire to revisit that experience. She decided she needed a backup plan, so she ordered a mini encyclopedia of regional persons, creatures, and otherwise sentient otherthings. It arrived the day before T.K.'s party and fit perfectly into her fanny pack. She was now ready to rule T.K.'s party like the party queen that she was.

The day before T.K.'s party Hankree spent his day prepping. He was excited about the party, but he had to remember he was on a mission. That mission being, acquire the local favorite taco recipe. If the said recipe was a secret, acquire any taco recipe. He wanted to be sure he remained prepared to document any taco cooking experience. Hence, he packed his camera, a tape recorder, two blank journals, three journals full of his cooking and test recipe notes, his reading glasses, throat lozenges for extended talk sessions, extra batteries for his tape recorder, and ducktape. He also remembered to pick up his dry cleaning to look presentable for the food, I mean party.

The only parties Hankree usually went to were block parties, so He was unsure how people would react to him at this T.K. Taco Party. Hankree knew that he usually came off as a party killer. He didn't like to dance, so instead, he would start conversations with party-goers. He talked about facts and statistics and mechanical engineering stuff more than fun party things, which usually did not interest his fellow party-goers. He once tried to research fun things to talk about at parties, but his results were inconclusive. So he reached out and asked everyone around him what "fun" things to talk about at parties were. His coworkers told him to talk about the finer details of trash collection, which always went well at parties they attended. His neighbors said he should bring up party planning details for neighborhood block parties, as that was what they talked about at their parties. Hal, on the other hand, told him not to do any of that. Then he gave Hankree a plastic cube full of tiny cards. Each card had a "conversation starter" written on it, but to Hankree, it just looked like a random thing to say. Hal assured him that if he would just pull a new card each time he talked to a party-goer, he would succeed at being a cool party-goer. Hankree trusted Hal the most, so he made sure to take a stack of cards from the cube and put them in his pocket. While also making room in his satchel for the cube containing the rest of the cards. He did have to remove all three notebooks containing his culinary research. Still, he figured being a big hit at the party could be exponentially better than sharing his culinary research in his mission to obtain that taco recipe.

All the dinosaurs arrived at the same time. Their respective Ubers, Lyfts, Yellow Cabs, and in Hankrees case, a garbage truck arrived in front of T.K.'s modest-sized home. It had a dirt yard and a giant boat full of taco remnants out front. They could see party lights strobing and hear the base of some party song playing inside. The dinosaurs had never met before that night, but each one was happy not to be the only dinosaur at the party. Standing outside T.K.'s home was a small group of dragons. As the dinosaurs got out of their vehicles, they saw the dragons munching on something before they walked inside. Tiny started the awkward introductions as the dinosaurs stood around the front porch steps looking at each other and shifting from foot to foot. "Hi, I'm Tiny, in name and stature. Yall ready for this party?"

Penelope was the first to speak up. "I was born ready! Penelope is the name, and parties are my game! Well, parties are not all I do, but it sounded nice, right." At this point, Rouge jumped into the conversation. "Penelope, that sounded great. You seem to be a very energetic young lady. I, on the other hand, am a very mild-mannered old lady." Rouge laughed at her joke. "I'm Rouge, by the way, your resident old lady raptor." Rouge laughed some more, as did the rest of the group. Hankree stepped closer to the center of the group at this point. "Hi, I'm Hankree, resident tinkerer, junk collector, and future taco recipe holder. I would also like to add Ms. Rouge that I consider you resident raptor extraordinaire because you don't look a day over 35." Hankree said that last part with a wink, causing Rouge to blush. Tiny decided to rally the troops at this point. "Now that we're all friends Let's Party!" With that, he motioned for everyone to make their way up the stairs and into the party.

As they walked inside, they were overwhelmed with loud dance music and strobing party lights. As their eyes adjusted to the light, they could see, milling about, all the party-goers. Some were dancing, and some were flying. Some were eating and drinking, while others were laughing and kidding around. To the dinosaurs, the thing that stood out the most was that all the party-goers were dragons. They were impressed and surprised at just how many full-sized dragons could fit in the modest home. The only thing more abundant than dragons at the party were tacos. So Many Tacos! The Dinosaurs were just amazed by just how many tacos fit into the house, along with all the dragons. While the group just stood and stared in aw Hankree suddenly started yelling to be heard over the music. "Isn't it amazing? There are so many dragons eating so many tacos at such an astounding rate. Yet, the supply of tacos does not seem to be affected by the rate at which they are consumed. Astounding!" Before any of the dinosaurs could reply, a young boy with a dog walked up to them.

"Hi!" The boy yelled so that the dinosaurs could hear him over the music. "Welcome to my party, I'm The Kid, but everyone calls me T.K. for short. I'm so glad that yall could make it out. I hope you didn't have any problems finding the place." Hankree was just about to expound the merits of GPS to The Kid when pandemonium broke out.

The Afterparty:

A dragon standing next to a front room window was chatting with his friends when suddenly he burped. On most occasions, no one would have even noticed. Everyone noticed this time, as a stream of fire came out of his mouth, catching the curtains on fire when he burped. The dragons in question seemed just as shocked to see the curtains burning as everyone else. Everyone on the first floor of the house stopped and stared at the curtains, bringing the party to a sudden halt even as the music kept blasting and the lights kept flashing. Tinny snapped out of the shock that had overtaken the room first. He grabbed the punchbowl and threw its red sugary contents at the burning curtains, successfully putting the fire out. Despite his heroic efforts, no one applauded. Instead, all of the dragon's faces transformed, all changing from shocked party faces into strongly disapproving looks. Tiny, thinking everyone was mad at him, squeaked out, "Sorr..." but before he could finish, The Kid yelled "RUNNN!" and sprinted towards the kitchen. In the background, you could hear a low grumble reverberated around the room. It was the sound of a houseful of dragon stomachs grumbling in unison along with a hint of the whooshing sound made by those dragons turning to look at each other in an uncomfortable panic. The Kid was franticly digging through the kitchen recycling bin. Suddenly he arose from the bin grasping an empty salsa container. He looked closely at the label and then turned towards the dinosaurs, mouth agape, then it happened. In unison, all the dragons started to burp fire catching the whole house up in flames. As streams of fire jetted around the room, the dinosaurs began to run. Thankfully they all just barely made it out in time. As they huddled together in T.K's front yard, not too far from the boat. All they could do was stand there and watched the house burn down.

The dragons, obviously impervious to flames, didn't rush to flee the house. Once it burnt down, they were all still inside, crying. The dinosaurs collectively started to tear up over all the destruction and sadness when The Kid walked up to them. "I'm so sorry about all of this," he said. "It was shaping up to be a great party." Hankree sounding very blue, asked in a sorrowful tone, "What happen?" The Kid begins to explain. You see, it seems that in DragonLand, yes, this realm is called DragonLand. It is a very established fact that dragons love tacos.

You could think of any kind of taco, tofu, beef, chicken, even banana tacos. As long as the food medium is served in a taco vehicle, dragons will love it. Dragons also love anything that accompanies tacos, the toppings, serving trays, and especially the parties. There is only one thing that all dragons HATE when it comes to tacos, Spicy Salsa. It has been well established over decades that Spicy Salsa should never be given to a dragon, that is, unless your goal is for it to start unwillingly spewing fire. Spicy Salsa always gives dragons literal heartburn. Their stomachs can't take the spice giving them acid reflux. Due to dragon anatomy and physiology, that reflux starts out as acid. It travels through their cells as an acid, pooling into the area surrounding their heart, as their hearts are below their stomachs, and the acid pools out downward. Once the acid is around the heart, it is exposed to air, as dragons' lungs are behind their heart. Once exposed to air, acid turns into flames, as that happens when dragon acid meets air. The fire causes mass discomfort to the dragon involved, who, in response, will begin to burp uncontrollably. This burping increases the amount of air available to the acid flames, stoking the fire and expelling it from the dragon's body. As this is an entirely different process than when dragons willingly spew fire, the flames in this scenario tend to be much hotter than regular dragon flames.

After hearing this, Hankree, a scientist at heart, asked, "So is that why the house burned down so quickly?" To which The Kid responded with surprise and a smirk, "that's exactly why great observation! Hey, since you are so good at observations, maybe you all can help me solve a mystery." Upon hearing the word mystery, Rouge perked up. "Mystery? I love mysteries! I would be happy to help!" "Me too!" Tiny added. "The helping part, not the loving mysteries part. I'm great at helping but bad at puzzles." At this point, everyone turned to look at Penelope as she had not replied to The Kid's request. She looked back and then thought for a second. "So, if we help you with this mystery, that means you are going to make us all VIP guests at an epic after "the house actually burned down" party, correct? I mean, we need to get something out of this deal." The Kid laughed, "of course! In fact, I will make you guys VIPs for life to all my parties if you solve this one."

Dinosaurs on the Case:

"So, Kid, or do you prefer The Kid? Either way, what's the caper? I'm so excited!" Rouge was practically vibrating with excitement. "Either is fine by me, The Kid replied. I'm glad you are so amped! Here is the deal." The Kid goes on to tell the dinosaurs how He is known to throw taco parties. He has thrown so many that he has developed quite the talent for taco party planning. The Kid has a seemingly never-ending waitlist full of party participants. The list is a new development for The Kid. He had to do something after a whistleblower leaked news of an underground dragon fight club to the local newspaper. It seems the dragons created the fight club years ago in an effort to decide who would get the chance to attend The Kid's next party. They managed to keep it a secret for years, but one dejected participant, tired of constantly losing fights and never being able to attend a party, spilled the beans.

"A fight club! that's hardcore!" Tiny interjects, to which Penelope replies, "Duh, dragons, of course, they would have a fight club." The Kid tries to finish explaining the nature of the caper, but then Hankree interrupts. "Penelope, dear, I have to say that statement you just made is very racist towards dragons. You are just facilitating a stereotype. I mean, how many dragons have you ever spent time around? This party was the first time I have ever interacted with a dragon, and from what I saw, they seem to be rather pleasant." Suddenly Rouge begins to shout, "Let him finish the story! I need this mystery!" All the dinosaurs, The Kid, and a few weeping dragons stop what they are doing to stare at her. "Sorry," she says quietly. "I'm just so excited." The Kid smiles and nods at Rouge, "Thanks, that was awkward."

As The Kid continues, the dinosaurs learn that since he lives in DragonLand, and throws many taco parties, The Kid is very aware of dragons' spicy salsa intolerance. So he has made it a habit to check his salsa jars multiple times to be extra sure that his salsas are always mild. Sometimes, when he wants to be fancy, The Kid will import unique salsas, like Super Extra Mild Salsa or Bland Times Ten Salsa. He even orders his Salsa from the same taco supply superstore, even though they recently built a new one closer to his house. The Kid becomes distraught, "I'm just so confused as to how this taco tragedy could have even happened." Luckily, The Kid rescued a lone empty salsa jar from his house before it burned down. He held it up for all to see, "Look! the label even says Totally Mild Salsa!" Everyone, including the few dragons who were weeping before they were distracted by Rouge's outburst and were now invested in this conversation, Gasped. "Look! It says Totaly Mild Salsa in Big, Bold, Letters!"

Penelope yelled, spinning around and pointing at the jar. Suddenly Hankree reached out for the jar "let me see that!" The Kid handed the jar over to Hankree so that he could examine it. Hankree looked at the jar closely. Then he franticly started rummaging through his bag. "Got it!" he said, pulling out a huge and antique-looking magnifying glass. "How old is that thing?" Tiny inquired. Hankree was too busy studying the label on the glass to answer. Tiny was responded to, in a sense, by Rouge and Penelope. They ended up starting a conversation debating the merits of actual antique items vs. remodeling items to have an antique look to them. Just as Rouge began talking about her favorites among various wood stains you can use to make chairs look older, Hankree shouted. "Eurika! Look at this under the substantial, bold, and colorful Totaly Mild Salsa text. Also, in colors, only about three fractions of a shade different from the original label color. While also being slightly covered by the border art of the label, you will see this." The dinosaurs, The Kid, and those few formerly weepy dragons gathered around Hankree and the magnifying glass. Hankree had the magnifying glass held out far enough from the jar so everyone could read the very concealed in plain sight words:

TOTALY MILD SALSA! NOW WITH SPICY JALAPENO PEPPERS!

"Spicy Jalapeno Peppers!" The Kid shouted with abandon, "those are nowhere near being Totally Mild! No wonder my house got burned down." The Kid paused to think, and then he said, "I'm surprised the fire didn't happen sooner. We were partying for at least an hour before you dinosaurs showed up." The Kid just shook his head slowly and looked down at the ground. "Who would do such a thing! DragonLand is the largest importer of Salsa. Every single Salsa Manufacture in the world knows that dragons hate spicy Salsa. The High-End Mild Salsa industry started because of us!" At this point, the Kid got visibly upset and had to excuse himself. Only, as his house had just burned down, he had no place to go. So he just stood behind the boat that was once filled with tacos and wept. "Guys, we have got to solve this mystery. Look at him. We can't leave him like this." "You are exactly right!" Rouge said with a fierce and determined look in her eyes. "I know just where to start." After that, Rouge spun dramatically, getting all up in one of the dragons who had recently become involved in the conversations faces. "Hey, do you all have city directories in DragonLand?" After Rouge and Hankree, being the oldest people at the party, thoroughly explained what city directories were, followed by all the younger people explaining what Google was to them, a search was performed. Using the rescued salsa jar and Hankree's magnifying glass, they found the company's name that made Totally Mild Salsa. On the label, in even smaller letters and a lighter font than the spicy jalapenos statement, they saw that TotalyMildSalsa inc made the Salsa. After their Google search, they saw that the manufacture and the main headquarters for TotalyMildSalsa inc were actually in DragonLand, at 466 NotSusAtAll Lane.

"Egads!" Tiny shouted, pointing his index finger straight up in the air. He was trying out his best Sherlock Holmes impression, but it didn't go over well. "Now, how do we get there. Dragons, what're your two cents?" Rouge, along with the rest of the dinosaurs, turned to stare at the dragons. The dragons, in turn, just shrugged and slowly backed away. The dinosaurs looked around to see who else might give them directions. They couldn't ask The Kid because he was still crying behind the empty taco boat, and all the other weeping dragons had scattered. "Now what?" Penelope asked. "We need a map." Hankree replied, "now, where we can obtain one is a different story." The dinosaurs looked around, hoping to glean some new information out of their situation. "What about that?" Tiny said, pointing off in the distance. There was an illuminated sign a little ways off. The dinosaurs could not read what the sign said from their current location, but they knew that those kinds of signs were usually found at restaurants and gas stations. So Hankree figured that the 50% chance they had of finding a gas station where they could buy a map was good enough for them to walk to see what was at that sign.

Taco Cave:

The Dinosaurs started their journey towards "the light," as they had started calling it. As there are no streetlights in DragonLand, the road was quite dark along the way. When they first started walking, Penelope used her phone to light the way and play some mood music. After about 45 minutes, her phone was at 10% battery life. "How much longer do we have to go! I need some juice!" Penelope wined as she turned off her flashlight and music and put her phone away. Hankree guessed it wasn't much longer, but as he had already supposed that same thought 20 minutes beforehand, no one believed him. After about 20 more minutes of walking, they finally saw it, the storefront attached to the glowing sign. They were all saddened to see it was, in fact, not a gas station or a store. It was The Taco Cave, a taco drive-thru restaurant. They were more saddened to learn that the restaurant had run out of tacos 45 minutes prior and that they were only still open because they had plenty of drinks and taco fixings. All the Taco Caves in DragonLand made most there money off selling taco fixings in bulk through the drive-thru window. As they very often sold out of all the available complete tacos quite quickly, but to be fair, it would be hard for anyone to be able to keep up with DragonLand taco demand. After "dining room" hours, the Dinosaurs had to chat with the late-night shift employees through the Drive-Thru window. The staff consisted of two teen dragons, Jackie and Paul: high school sophomores and juniors, respectively, and one older teen dragon, Bart, who had just graduated from high school. Paul was the one who told them about not having any tacos, and when they tried to get drinks, Jackie was the one that let them know that their money was wrong. Luckily Bart gave them all a drink on the house after they told them about the taco party. "Wow, man, I was supposed to go to that party. I just couldn't get my shift covered. Totally Mild Spicy Salsa, that's really messed up." Bart said as he handed them drinks through the window. "You guys wouldn't happen to know where TotallyMildSalsa Inc Headquarters and Manufacturer is, would you? Google said it was in town."

Tiny asks the trio as they sipped their tasty beverages. The three dragons just looked at each other quizzically. "The Google also said it was at 466 NotSusAtAll Lane. Do you know where that street is?" Rouge added. "NotSusAtAll Lane! I know where that is. We like to practice skate tricks out there." Paul shouted, "It just seemed like an old long road, though. We've never seen any buildings out there. My skate crew and I are the only ones in town who hang out there, and I bet we have walked further down that road than anyone else in town. If you are going to go exploring down there, you guys are definitely going to need some wheels." "Can you, as the kids say, hook us up, young man?" Hankree inquired. "Of course, you guys seem cool, and any friend of The Kid is a friend of mine. Plus, the perks of being part of a skate club, is that we have a lot of extra gear between all of us. Tell you what, give me two days, and I will have a map drawn up for you along with all the gear you will need."

"Deal!" Tinny shouted. "Oh, Paul, what am I going to do with you" Penelope added with a wink that made Paul blush. "You guys should go to the bank downtown and see if they will exchange your funny money for Taco Change," Jackie added. "Oh no," Rouge said, "if we don't have the money they take here, how will we find a place to rest for the night?" "I got that! My aunt runs the hotel right across the way there." Bert said, pointing across the street. I'll text her, and she will let you guys stay for the night, but you have to go to the bank first thing!"

The dinosaurs waved goodbye to the dragon trio as they walked over to the hotel. When they walked inside, a friendly lady dragon greeted them. "Hi, I'm Sherral, you guys looking for a room for the night? We have plenty, along with the softest sheets in town and a complimentary taco breakfast. Mind you, that breakfast has a strict two breakfast taco limit." Sherral then whispered, "It used to be a taco buffet, but that got out of control quickly." Hankree pushed through his dinosaur pals to get to the front desk. "Nice to meet you, Sherral," he said, with a slightly shaky tone. "You must be Bert's Aunt. I'm Hankree, its so nice to meet you finally." He leaned onto the counter and stared at Sherral with a very goofy look on his face as he said that. "Yeah, finally, after we just found out that you existed less than ten minutes ago across the street at the Taco Cave," Penelope added with a sigh. "Mam, Bert said that you could maybe rent us a room for the night on credit, and we can pay you back in the morning as soon as we get back from the bank. All we have is Dino Bucks, but it seems the only currency taken here is Taco Change." Sherral thought for a second and then looked at Hankree, still ogling her from the counter. "Is that right, Hankree?"

Sherral asked, tapping Hankree's forearm. Hankree only mumbled something indistinguishable and leaned into the counter further. " I guess I can set you guys up for the night, just be sure to go to the bank first thing and leave Re-Re here with me. You know as collateral," she smiled and winked at Hankree. "Is it alright if I call you Re-Re?" Hankree mumbled something that sounded like you can call me whatever you like or sounds like marshmellow kite, and Sherral handed Penelope two room keys. "One room will be for the boys and one room for the girls. All things being equal, you may have the room to yourself tonight, young man. I think Re-Re might stay here with me all night." At that, Hankree started nodding a lot and mumbling some more. After such a long day, all the dinosaurs were tired and sleepy, and they all wished Hankree and Sherral a good night and headed off to bed. Tiny dreamed of the journey to the bank the next day, while Rouge dreamed of solving the spicy salsa mystery. Penelope dreamed of finding a cell phone charger, and Hankree, when he finally made his way to bed, dreamed of Sherral.

The Bank:

The following day the group woke up early. They had all set their alarms to ensure they got up early enough to get to the bank on time. 7 am on the dot. All the dinosaurs were huddled in the hallway, preparing to head out. Only Hankree was missing. As the dinosaurs made their way out into the lobby, they found Hankree sipping coffee at a breakfast buffet table. With all these papers and open notebooks spread out all around him. As he was taking a sip of coffee, he happened to see them approaching. "Oh, hi. About time you guys woke up."

Hankree informed the group that he had been researching DragonLand. Sherral had helped by providing old documentation. Apparently, the hotel had just about every copy of the town's newspaper. The hotel had started ordering them for guests, but the custodial staff developed a tradition of keeping a copy. Something about an inside joke the custodial staff refused to share with everyone else. What the newspapers left out Hankree obtained from Sherral via oral history as she was born and raised in DragonLand, like most dragons. He had also been drafting a map, as most dragons were native to DragonLand, and as dragons have excellent spatial memory. None of them ever needed a map as they knew where everything was. In addition, DragonLand didn't have much in the way of the hospitality industry. It seems that dragons had a terrible stigma attached to them. In most cultures, they are portrayed as very angry, with their biggest desire being to set fire to people and property alike. They were also "known" to eat people, steal valuable shiny objects, and sit atop them in a pile. Hankree could not imagine why people would say those things about dragons, seeing as how all the dragons he had met were quite lovely. At that moment, Sherral walked in with a fresh pot of coffee. "Hey, guys, about time you woke up. If you leave now, you should get to the bank right when it opens. Did you get the map Hankree drew? He's so talented." As she talked, she poured Hankree some fresh coffee and gave him a wink and a nudge. Hankree smiled at Sherral and then handed Tiny the map. "Here you go, fresh off the presses. It should take you guys an hour to walk into town, and It's 7:30 ish now. The bank opens at 9:00, so you guys should make it well within time to be the first in line. If you make it back here before 12, Sherral doesn't get into trouble for letting us stay the night. So be sure to be back before 12, now get going!"

Tiny, Rouge, and Penelope made their way out of the hotel lobby and into the street. Besides loaning them a room for the night, Sherral had also found Penelope and Rouge some shoes made more for walking than the ones they wore to the party. "Sherral is the best!" Penelope shouted once they got into the street. Tiny and Rouge quickly agreed with her. Tiny then glanced over at the Taco Cave and noticed it was open for breakfast. "Taco Cave is open; maybe we can finally try a taco!" "How are we going to do that? We don't have any Taco Change remember."

Penelope said, "That's the whole reason we are going to the bank." Rouge added. Tiny stood up a little straighter and put his hands on his hips. "I get that, but if Bart, Paul, or Jackie is still there, I'm sure they will hook us up." Rouge and Penelope thought about what Tiny said for a moment, and then they said, "Good point, let's go." in unison. As soon as the group made it to the door, they saw Jackie waving and then motioning for them to come around to the drive-thru. "Hey, guys, glad Bart's aunt could hook you up with a room. On your way to the bank?" "We sure are," Tiny said, leaning against the side of the window. "Hey, you think you could hook us up with a breakfast taco? We will pay you back plus some when we get back." Jackie just laughed. "No can do, new friend. I'm on my way out, and the day manager will not have any of that. The morning rush starts in about 30 minutes, and it's a monster. If you guys hold up for a second, I will meet you in the back, and we can walk some of the way to the bank together. My house is heading that way." The dinosaurs agreed, and in no time at all, Tiny, Rouge, Penelope, and Jackie were walking towards town, talking and joking. Jackie was waving goodby to the dinosaurs in no time at all while he turned left to walk the rest of the way home. "Just keeping going straight, the bank is only two more blocks down." It was 8:45 am, and the dinosaurs were glad to be ahead of schedule. Tiny was standing in front of the door while Rouge and Penelope sat on the curb as the bank security guard came to open the door at 9:01 am.

"Early birds, I hope worms are all yall are planning on catching today," he said to them as he held open the door for the dinosaurs to walk inside. Tinny assured him that they wanted no trouble and rushed to greet the bank teller. "Hello Mam, how are you today? We just wanted to exchange some of our dinosaur money for some Taco Change if that's alright." The teller clutched at her pearl necklace and stared at Tiny "Now I'll be! I haven't come across such a polite young man in a barrel full of days past Sunday. Where are you from young man?" Tiny and the bank teller, whose name turned out to be Ms. Kim, to everyone but Tiny, who was encouraged to call her Mama Kim. During Tiny and Ms. Kims conversation, Penelope discovered that the bank chairs had USB charging ports conveniently placed within the arms, so she was busy seeing what was new on TickTock.

Rouge found herself in a bank manager's office discussing Roth IRAs. None of the dinosaurs noticed how close to 10:45 it was until they heard a giant sneeze. They all snapped out of what they were doing to stare at the source, which was the security guard. "What? Dragons have allergies, Achoo! "Some allergies," Penelope said under her breath. Suddenly Rouge shouted as she rushed out of the bank manager's office, knocking some things off his desk as she rushed by. "Guys, we have to go! We are going to be late!" Mama Kim told Tiny, "Take you some nibbles for the road." as she handed him some homemade bread along with his Taco Change. Penelope saw the exchange and said, "nice, can I have some of that?" Ms. Kim just redirected her to the candy dish on the bank's deposit slip island. As the trio scattered out of the bank, Tiny turned and shouted. "Bye Yall! Thanks for the hospitality." to which Ms. Kim just let out a deep sigh and said, "Oh, what a polite young man."

The trio rushed back towards the hotel. It was like a race with them all cycling through bouts of sprinting, walking, fast walking, and pausing to catch their breath. The hustling paid off as they made it back to the hotel at 11:35 am, a whole ten minutes ahead of schedule. They all paused at the hotel welcome sign to catch their breath, but before they could make their way inside the hotel, the Taco Cave went up in flames. They all just stood staring with their mouths agape as fire consumed the restaurant. As the fire grew in size and intensity, the dragons did not panic. Rouge figured it was because dragons are fireproof, as they had learned the last time a building burned down around them. The dragons inside the restaurant and those waiting in the walk-through line just made their way over to the hotel parking lot to watch the flames. The ones that had made it out with their taco supplies clutched their bags close. The rest, who didn't get their orders, or those who came from inside and only had the burnt remains of their orders, just wept softly, just like the dinosaurs. Before the dinosaur trio realized it, Hankree and Sheral were standing beside them. Penelope looked at Sheral with tears in her eyes, "we got your Taco Change. Sorry, we were late." Sheral gave Penelope a big hug and told her everything was going to be alright.