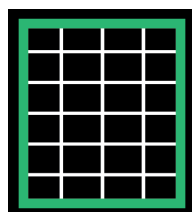


PLEASE TEACH ME ABOUT DINOSAURS!



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Ma = Makoto Sato

Mi = Midori Takami

Ka = Kaname Masahiro

Sa = Sakura Alkaev

Ak = Akari Fujimato

Mo = Momo Kotomi

Fu = Fukuri Kato

Fa = Fabien Hardy

Ju = Julian Manhouse IV

Dc = Dino-chan

Di = Dinosaur

Pt = Pterosaur

Pl = Plesiosaur

Sy = Synapsid

Cr = Crocodylomorph

Mm = Mammal

The Gobi Desert stretches as far as the eye can see. In every direction, only sand and sky greets the eye.

In the distance, the sounds of two large animals calling to each other over a large distance can be heard. Likely *Saurolophus* looking for water.

Despite their reputation as sluggish giants, the creatures are fairly intelligent, so communication would not be unlikely.

Suddenly, an impossible sight comes into view. Three girls, all in their mid-teens and wearing what appear to be school uniforms stumble over a sand dune.

On the left is a small girl with shoulder-length black hair. She seems utterly exhausted as she scans the horizon. Her name is Kaname Masahiro.

In the middle girl is a tall and thin. Her dark brown hair is kept in pigtails, which blow in the gentle breeze as she wipes her forehead. She is Midori Takami.

On the right is a girl of medium height and a stocky build. She wears her hair in a ponytail and wears glasses, which protect her from getting sand in her eyes. Her name is Makoto Sato.

For Makoto, studying these creatures close up has always been a dream-come-true. But this dream is quickly turning into a nightmare.

Mi "Aw man, this desert goes on forever! In the time the Temporal Re-locator takes to lock onto to a new time period we'll either end up as mummies or dinner for pack of *Velociraptors*!"

Ma "Actually, *Velociraptor mongoliensis* was probably a solitary predator. If they were ever in groups large groups it was most likely to mob a big animal. No real communication, just a feeding frenzy."

Mi "I can't decide if that's worse, but you're really bad at making us feel better about our situation!"

Ka "If they're anything like modern birds of prey, they probably won't pay any attention to us until we're too weak to fight back, or ..."

Ka "....."

Mi "I get the picture. We're doomed, aren't we?!"

Ma "No, we're just ... not very likely to survive."

Mi "Ugh, both of you are awful at this!"

Midori stands on one leg, pulling off her shoe and shaking sand out of it. She scowls.

Mi "Gah—! I hate this! Why didn't they send us with better shoes?!"

Ka "I'm not sure ..."

Ma "They didn't expect us to end up in the desert."

Mi "My feet hurt, the sand is getting everywhere, and we have no idea where or when we are besides 'north of China' in the Late Cretaceous period!"

Ma "Er ... Mongolia."

Makoto places a hand on Midori's shoulder, but quickly removes it. Physical contact at a time like this seems inappropriate.

Ma "We could try contacting Tokei Academy again. Maybe they've figured out a way to get us back!"

Mi "... Maybe. Let's do it!"

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Kaname has been carrying their communicator—their one link with the modern world. She pulls it out of her bag and switches it on. The girls gather around as the signal strengthens.

Ka "Tokei Academy, come in. This is Team Gingko reporting from the Gobi Desert, 73 million years BCE. Do you copy? Over."

From across time, a remarkably clear voice rings through the communicator. Time Travel Club president Akari Fujimato.

Ak "This is Tokei Academy, reading you loud and clear. Request status update?"

Mi "We're all still in one piece, but the desert isn't exactly a holiday destination. Can you give us an estimate of where and when another temporal jump would take us?"

Ak "We've scoured the database, but there are too many variables to be certain. You'll need to give us more time."

Ka "Do you have any suggestions of what we should do? There's no sign of water or shelter, and it's not even noon! The temperature's just going to get worse!"

Ak "If there are any big sand dunes, look for some shade in one. Just be careful, otherwise you could end up like the '*Fighting Dinosaurs*' fossil."

Makoto knows the fossil her upperclassman was referring to. A *Protoceratops* and a *Velociraptor* locked in mortal combat, likely suffocated by a sand dune collapsing on them. She shudders at the thought of ending up like that.

Ma "....."

Ka "Don't worry, Makoto-chan, we'll be fine! After all, no one's ever found three fossilised schoolgirls in the Gobi Desert!"

Ma "But time travel doesn't—"

Makoto begins to argue, but an sudden exclamation from Akari through the communicator distracts her.

Ak "Just a second, guys! I'm getting huge heat readings near you. It's hard to make out because of all the hot sand, but ..."

The girls look around expecting a *Saurolophus*, a huge plant eater which they have encountered before.

As long as they keep out of the way, they should be fine.

#BS

Ka "—oh!"

Mi "Um ..."

Ma "... Oh no ... !"

#CG=Tarbosaurus emerges from behind a dune.

Instead, they come face to face with a massive head. The head is connect to a short neck and a long body, covered in fuzzy sand-coloured feathers and balanced by a long, stiff tail. In all, it is probably over 12 metres long and four metres tall.

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Its large eyes, bright yellow like an eagle's, face forward and lock onto the unfamiliar animals before it.

The animal tilts its head, looking curiously at the suddenly very small-looking girls. It sniffs the air, trying to identify what they could possibly be.

Makoto knows what this animal is. She had hoped they would not run into one, but luck does not seem to be on their side.

Ma "It's ... T ... T— *Tarbosaurus bataar*!"

#Play Movie "OP - Mesozoic Girls' Song"

Tokei Academy; A girls school for the best of the best. Only top-performance students are allowed to attend, and as a result, only the brightest graduate into the world.

Though it is primarily a high school, Tokei Academy also acts as a laboratory to promising young scientists.

But among all the incredible inventions to come out of Tokei Academy, only one has the power to bend reality and change perceptions of time.

For years, scientists have used wormhole technology to look back through time to see the past. But never before has it been attempted to send a human back in time.

Some have said that such a thing would be unnatural.

But the students at Tokei Academy don't.

#CG=School library. Bespectacled girl is reading a book about prehistoric life.

Makoto Sato is 16 years old, and a second year student at Tokei Academy. Bespectacled and mild mannered, she is admired from afar by other students for her grades and intelligence, but prefers to keep to herself in the school library.

Because of this, she doesn't have many friends.

Today is like any other day for her. She sits alone, studying books of prehistoric life. She is oblivious to the world around her as images of pelycosaurs, plesiosaurs, and her favourite, dinosaurs, fill her mind.

What would it be like to travel back through time and walk with dinosaurs? That is something Makoto has often wondered.

So deep in thought is she, that she does not notice the girl approaching her.

#Akari Fujimato sprite appears.

Ak "Makoto Sato?"

Ma "Eh?! Akari-senpai, forgive me, but you startled me!"

Ak "Sorry, but this is important. There's something I need to talk to you about."

Ma "Oh, okay. Hello! Please sit down."

The girl, Akari, pulls up chairs and sits down opposite Makoto. She is mature looking and quite pretty, with fierce eyes. She is older than Makoto, due to graduate at the end of this year.

Ak "I came to talk to you about an application you sent in a few weeks ago. You may already know this, but I am president of the Time Travel Club."

Ma "Yes, that's the club I applied for. I didn't think I'd actually get in ..."

Ak "Well, I have good news. You've been reviewed and approved."

Ma "R—really?! Yay! Thank you, Senpai!"

Ak "On your application, you stated that you were interested in prehistoric animal life. Dinosaurs and such."

Ma "Yes ... I've seen them on TV, but I've always wanted to study them up close—through one of those temporal screens, I mean."

Ma "I know that studying ancient human life is more what your club does, but if at any point we could arrange ..."

Ma "Forgive, I must sound so selfish! Maybe I'm not qualified to join your club ..."

Ak "Actually, I have more good news for you. But it's not something we can discuss here."

Ak "Are you busy?"

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Ma "Not really ... I suppose."

Ak "Then please come with me. There are some people I want you to meet."

Tokei Academy is a prestigious establishment. Some parts of the building could easily be mistaken for the Versailles, while others seem straight out of Oxford.

In short, it can be hard to navigate without a guide. Fortunately, Akari seems adept at finding her way around.

She leads Makoto to the east wing. There, a pair of large doors stands before them. A sign outside it reads "Time Travel Club".

Ma "I never thought I'd actually be here ..."

Ak "Do you want to go in?"

Ma "Oh—yes!"

Makoto's heart races as Akari pulls open the doors, revealing the wondrous room inside.

#BG = Computer room

15 other girls occupy this room. Some sit at desks working on computers, while other stand around a table looking at something laid out across it.

A large screen on the far side of the room shows a world map. Cursors point to several individual parts of the planet.

Ma "...! Amazing ..."

Ak "Do you like it?"

Ma "It's so cool! How did you get all of the equipment?"

Ak "The school funds everything. As long as we use it, and we do, we get to keep it."

Ma "So cool ..."

Akari leads Makoto through the room. A few of the girls utter greetings to their president and the newcomer.

As they reach a door on the far side of the room, one girl runs up to them. She is short and plump, sporting a bob-cut. She breathlessly addresses her president.

Mo "Akari-senpai, welcome back! Is this Makoto-chan?"

Ak "Yes. Makoto-san, this is Momo Kotomi, our cartographer."

Ma "It's an honour to meet you, Kotomi-senpai! Please excuse me, but I'm a little overwhelmed right now ..."

Mo "Wow, you don't need to call me *senpai*! I'm an underclassman ..."

#SFX=Momo_giggle_1.ogg

Mo "Anyway, we've been expecting you! Follow me."

#BG = Backroom

Going through the door, Makoto, Akari and Momo enter a small lounge and are greeted by three other girls sitting around a coffee table.

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One of the girls Makoto recognised as Midori Takami, a second year, and top student with a rebellious attitude. She has short black hair and wears thigh-high socks.

Next to her is a short girl with pale skin and the classical looks of a Japanese doll. She is Kaname Masahiro, a first year known as *the* number 1 student at Tokei Academy, with top grades in all her classes. She has many fans throughout the school.

Hunched over a series of diagrams is a young, vaguely foreign looking girl. She is Sakura Alkaev, a Russian transfer student in her first year. She caused major excitement when she began attending Tokei Academy because of her reputation as a computer prodigy.

Mi "Ah, so this is the *Dinosaur-Girl*?"

Ma "D—*Dinosaur-Girl*?"

Mi "Finally, we can get started! Kaname-chan and I have been getting restless."

Ka "Not at all. Sakura-san and I have been most comfortable looking over these diagrams."

Sa "Humph! I've been working night and day on these, and Takami-san hasn't looked at at any of them!"

Mi "That's your job! I'm just here to find out what Hardy-sensei wants to talk to us about."

Ma "Eh—?! Hardy-sensei?!"

The other girls seem startled at Makoto's sudden outburst. Makoto realises why, and looks embarrassed.

Sa "*Oh no!* Not another one!"

Ma "No I—I don't mean it like that! It's just that Hardy-sensei never talks to students privately ..."

Ak "He's faculty advisor for the Time Travel Club. Also, he's a government appointed witness to any new discoveries made by our club."

Ma "Wow ..."

Suddenly, the door opens. A tall, handsome man walks through the door.

Fa "Sorry I'm late, but I had to take care of some very important paperwork."

Fabien Hardy is a very popular teacher at Tokei Academy. Originally from France, he emigrated to teach natural history. Many students have confessed to having crushes on him.

Mi "Now that we're finally all here, can you tell what this all about?"

Fa "Yes. It has taken much preparation, but now I can reveal the reason you were all summoned here."

Fa "Takami-san, Sato-san, Masahiro-san, you have been officially ranked as the three top performing pupils at this school."

Ma "Eh?! Really?!"

Mi "Wow, Dinosaur-Girl, you're sharper than I thought."

Ka "Congratulations to both of you!"

Fa "No offence meant to any of you, girls. You are all outstanding in your fields, but it happens that these three are specialised in one particular subject."

Ka "What do you mean?"

Fa "Since coming to this school, you have all shown particular interest in prehistoric life."

Makoto's eyes widen. So she isn't the only one ...

Mi "Hm ... It's true that I did a presentation on prehistoric marine life ... I didn't try that hard with it, though."

Ka "The evolution of birds has always interested me. I worked with the art club to create models of prehistoric birds for the science fair!"

The two girls look at Makoto. Timid Makoto is unsure of how to respond for a moment. A thousand things run through her head before she blurts—

Ma "I love Dinosaurs! I love them! Ever since I was little, I ... Um ..."

Mi "Ha! I wouldn't expect anything less from Dinosaur-Girl."

Ak "It's true. Anyone who knows anything about you will say you're always buried in a book about Dinosaurs."

Ma "R—really? People say that about me?"

Mi "Yep! Your love of prehistoric animals is legendary!"

Ka "I think it's wonderful you have something you're so passionate about!"

Fa "This is precisely why you three have been chosen to participate in a new experiment."

Experiment? Makoto, moments ago excited, suddenly became nervous.

Fa "The Time Travel Club routinely sends disguised drones back in time using wormholes, but never before has it been attempted to send a person through time."

Ak "Whenever it's been attempted, people have experienced terrible side-effects. Mental breakdowns, radiation poisoning, catatonia ..."

Momo cringes. Midori gasps theatrically.

Mi "Wow, I never knew that! I just thought you'd die if you went back in time!"

Fa "But now it has been discovered that human beings can safely travel through time if the right procedures are in place."

Ak "Sensei, may I show them the diagram?"

Fa "Go ahead, Fujimato-san."

#BG = Computer Room

Akari led the group back into the main room. She hailed one of the girls working on a personal computer.

Ak "Fukuri-chan, open the Temporal Vaccine document."

Fu "Roger!"

Fukuri Kato, another bespectacled girl, smiles at the nervous-looking Makoto before opening a file on her computer.

#CG = Temporal Vaccine

Mo "I've heard of this, but I never understood how it works ..."

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Fu "This may look simple, that's because it is. I studied every case of a humans travelling through time and discovered something fascinating."

Fu "The shorter the temporal distance of time-jumps, the less serious the effects were."

Fu "There was one subject who traveled through time twice. The first time was to 500 years ago. He returned with a nonfatal brain aneurism which he recovered from."

Fu "He later did a second jump, this time to 10,000 years ago. He came back in a state of catatonia, but recovered. He has since suffered epilepsy, but is otherwise completely normal."

Mi "I don't get it. What's so special about that story?"

Fu "Two others have attempted to go back 10,000 years ago, but they both remain in comas to this day. Why would this man recover while the others didn't?"

Fu "I wanted to find out, so I experimented with mice. I sent one back 10 years, and sent another back a week."

Fu "The mouse that was sent back one week survived with no problems. So, I sent it back two weeks."

Fu "I continued sending that mouse through time, doubling the weeks as the experiment went on. Eventually, it added up to ten years."

Fu "Finally, I sent it back ten years at once. It came back in perfect health. The other mouse didn't survive."

Makoto stammers. The concept of actually travelling through time without negative side-effects ... Could such a thing be possible?

Ma "S—so what you're saying is, if someone is exposed to time travel in small doses, a big leap won't harm them?"

Fu "That's right. It's the same idea as getting a flu shot!"

Ak "That's why it's called a temporal vaccine."

Ma "Wow! That's so cool!"

Fa "Because of Kato-san's experiments, the vaccine has been tested with humans as well. It has a 100% success rate."

Ka "Hardy-sensei, are you saying that we ..."

Fabien smiles, nodding.

Fa "You have been selected to be the first humans to safely travel through time to the Mesozoic Era."

Makoto nearly faints on the spot. The Mesozoic Era—the Time of the Dinosaurs—was a time she had always dreamed of experiencing with her five senses.

Kaname and Midori both look surprised, and very excited.

Mi "The Mesozoic?! Seriously?!"

Ka "The Time of the Dinosaurs ... But Sensei, why us? Why not some palaeontologists?"

Fa "First, please understand that this is top-secret, and must not be spoken about outside these four walls."

Fa "Such a large breakthrough must be kept under wraps until the time is right."

Fa "You have been chosen, not only because of your expertise, but also because you are unknown to the world at large."

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Fa "Your mission will not be covered by media, as it might be with high profile naturalists or palaeontologists."

Makoto nods, breathless at the concept of complete isolation with the animals she has always loved.

Ma "I can't believe this ... We can really go back in time?"

Fa "Yes, after undergoing the proper procedures of course."

Fa "The three of you will come to the Time Travel Club every day for the next month to prepare your bodies for the stress of time travel."

Fa "You must also attend extra-curricular lessons on prehistoric life on weekends."

Fa "Besides that, why don't the three of you get to know each other? Since you will be spending a lot of time together it would be for the best if you are on friendly terms."

Makoto looks at the two girls who flank her. She has never been good at making friends, and has also never spoken to either of her new ... what is she supposed to call them? Team-mates?

Well, the fact of the matter is that she has never spoken to either of them before today. Kaname seems easy enough to talk to, but Midori intimidates her.

Mi "Sure! I love making new friends. You guys want to go out to karaoke?"

Ma "Wha—?! Um ... I don't know ... I might have plans."

Ka "I won't be doing anything tonight, so count me in!"

Mi "Come on, Dinosaur-Girl! You've gotta leave the library once in your life! That's what those "plans" are, right?"

Ma "I've just never ... I mean, I don't have any money, right now! Sorry!"

This is a lie told on the spur of the moment, but Makoto is frightened at the prospect of hanging out with people she has only just met.

Ka "Oh no! Well, it would be rude to leave Makoto-senpai behind. Let's do something else, then."

Ma "Er—you don't have to go to the trouble of—"

Mi "Geez ... Hardy-sensei, is that all you need us for?"

Fa "Yes, you may go if you want. You will need to sign some forms, but those will be sent to your dorms."

Mi "Great! We have some things we need to discuss with Dinosaur-Girl."

Ma "Eh?! I don't want any trouble ..."

Makoto raises her arms over her head as if in futile effort to protect herself from a volley of missiles. Midori claps her on the back.

Ma "Hya!"

Mi "Come on, Dinosaur-Girl. We're going to get to know each other very well, if you know what I mean ..."

#BS

#BG=Midori's House Entrance

It had been a struggle for Makoto to be convinced to enter an unfamiliar house. The house, in this case, is Midori's.

Mi "I'm home! Don't worry about dinner, I'm going out with friends!"

Midori calls out to the seemingly empty house. No reply comes.

Mi "Oh, they must be out. Come on, my room's this way."

Hesitantly, Makoto follows Midori and Kaname into the house, up a flight of stairs, and through a door at the top.

#BG=Midori's Room

Mi "Sorry it's a mess."

Ka "It's quite all right. You have a lovely house, Midori-senpai!"

Mi "Argh, drop the 'senpai', okay? Honourifics like that give me a pain."

Makoto gives her team-mate's room a quick scan. It seems more or less what she supposes an ordinary teenager's room looks like.

Posters of rock bands and movies adorn the walls. In the corner is a desk with well-used looking laptop on it.

Makoto desperately searches for something to use as a conversation piece. She finally sees something of interest on one of Midori's shelves.

It is a small, plastic sauropod toy. Horribly outdated and inaccurate, but a dinosaur nonetheless.

Makoto goes over to it and picks it up. She knows from experience that toys such as these usually have the species name engraved on the stomach.

"*Brontosaurus*"

Ma "... Hey, this is pretty cool ... Um ... Did you know *Brontosaurus* was thought to be a mismatch of *Apatosaurus* and *Camarasaurus* bones until 2015, when they finally classified it as its own genus?"

Kaname and Midori turn their heads to look at Makoto. Midori shakes her head while Kaname giggles.

Mi "You know, it doesn't have to always be business. Just because we're assigned to the same project doesn't mean we can't talk about other stuff, too."

Ma "I ... well ... I don't know what else to talk about ..."

Ka "I know! Why don't we talk about food?"

Makoto and Midori both look at Kaname with surprised expressions. Food?

Mi "Food? What's so great about food?!"

Ka "Everything! There's nothing that's not great about food!"

As Kaname and Midori bicker, Makoto observes the two closely. Reading people is something she has never been good at, so now seems a good time to improve.

Midori definitely seems to be a carefree girl. It's a wonder she was selected for this assignment considering the effort she apparently put into the deciding school project.

Still, she must have some qualifications that Makoto is unaware of. She only just met Midori, after all. Getting to know her might be difficult, though. Their personalities are too different.

Kaname acts more serious, but is she? Suddenly going on about food like that was completely unexpected. Frankly, she seems to be a bit of an airhead.

At least she loves birds, the only living Dinosaurs, but still it seems like she's just an average high-performance student.

Makoto doesn't quite know what to think.

Ka "... For example, donuts can be covered in chocolate-glaze, or have creme-filling, or _"

Mi "Agh! Enough about sweets and pastries! You're making me hungry for all kinds of unhealthy stuff, now!"

Ma "... D—do you guys want to go get something to eat?"

The two bickering girls cease and look at their new acquaintance. Makoto looks away, suddenly fearful of making any further sounds.

Mi "... Uh, yeah, of course! I invited you, remember!"

Her words seem confrontational, but her expression shows a friendly amusement.

Mi "Come on, then! Kaname-chan, you're definitely hungry."

Ka "I could eat a ... well, a *Brontosaurus*!"

Midori laughs loudly at this, but Makoto is too shy to do the same. Instead, she smiles through a nervous blush.

Maybe she has gone too long without having friends ...