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I am

Leonardo da Vinci

"Smart, fun and
inspirational."

—WALTER
ISAACSON



BRAD MELTZER

illustrated by Christopher Eliopoulos

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DIAL BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS

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I am **LEONARDO DA VINCI**.

I was born in Italy, in a small town called Vinci.

People think da Vinci is my last name—but it's just where I'm from.

In Italian, da Vinci means "from Vinci."

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT, LEONARDO?

EVERYTHING.



Back in the 1400s, Italy was one of the most exciting places to live.

Something called the Renaissance was happening, and people started using art, science, architecture, and even politics, to see things in brand-new ways.



As a young boy, I went hiking one day
and found this amazing cave.

I wanted to know:
What was inside?

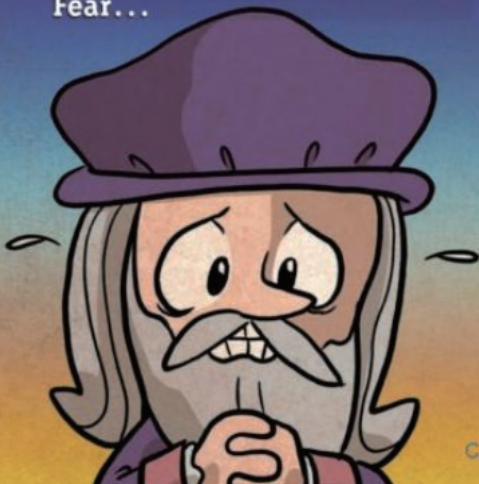
WHOA!



At first, I tried peeking in,
but the cave was too dark.



Right there, I felt two things:
Fear...



And desire, because I *really* wanted
to know what was in there.



I bent the other way, but still couldn't see anything.



The closer I looked, the darker it seemed, like the shadows themselves would swallow me whole.



Standing at that cave,
I made my decision.
If you want to learn
something new, you
have to follow your
curiosity.



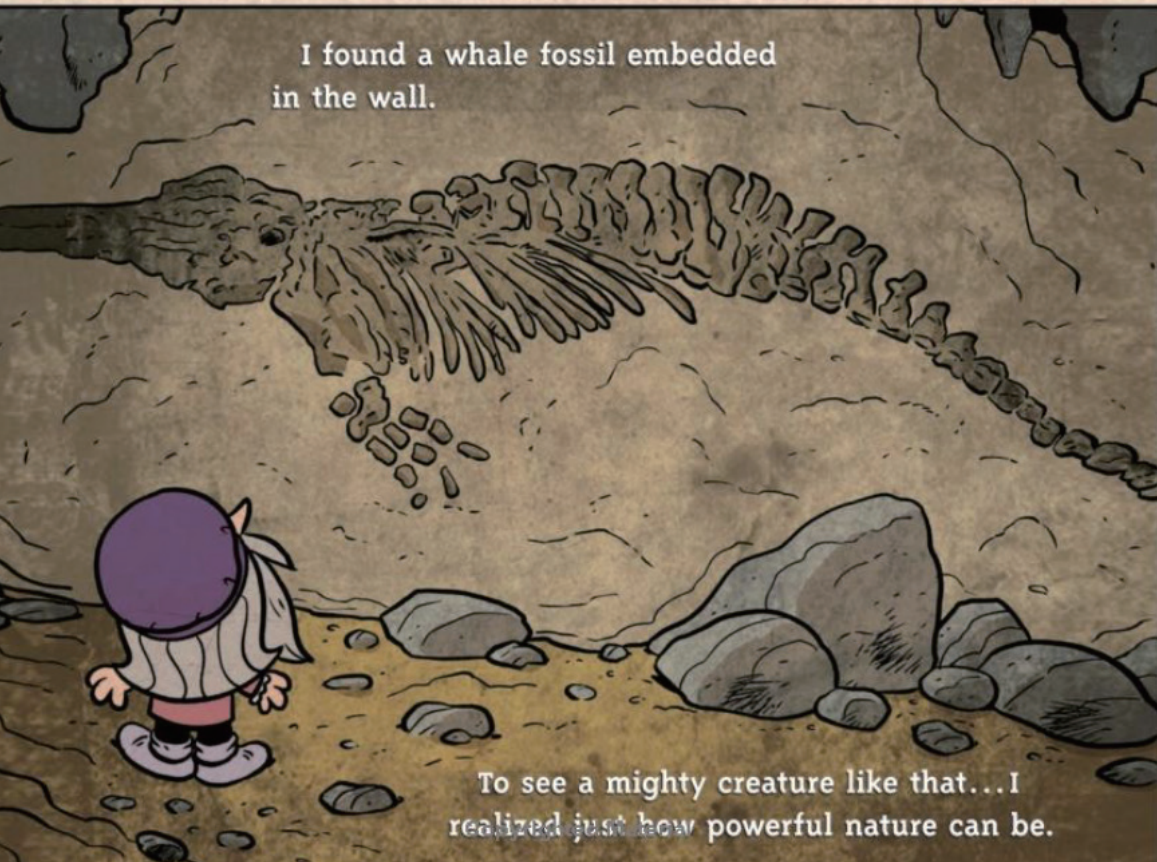
The rewards are unimaginable.

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WHPAA!



I found a whale fossil embedded in the wall.



To see a mighty creature like that... I realized just how powerful nature can be.



"Wisdom...is the sustenance and truly dependable wealth of the mind."

—LEONARDO DA VINCI

Timeline

APRIL 15, 1452

Born near Vinci, Italy

C. 1468

Joins Verrocchio's studio in Florence

C. 1473

Makes first known drawing (a landscape)

1477

Opens own workshop in Florence

1482

Starts keeping notebooks; moves to Milan

C. 1490

Finishes Vitruvian Man





Tourists photographing the *Mona Lisa* in the Louvre



Self-portrait in chalk, age fifty

Vinci, Italy



1495

Begins working on:
The Last Supper

1498

Makes first attempt
at a flying machine

1502

Becomes an engineer
for the military

1503

Begins painting
the *Mona Lisa*

1505

Makes second
attempt to fly

MAY 2, 1519

Dies in Clusac, France