

JON SCIESZKA

# THE **TIME** **WARRIOR** **TRIO**<sup>®</sup>

No. 7



SUMMER **READING** IS  
**KILLING** ME!

## O N E

“**C**LUCK, CLUCK,” the thing rumbled in a deep voice.

“Is that thing talking to us?” said Fred.

I looked around the small playground. Fred, Sam, and I stood at one end against a chain-link fence. A very large, white, feathered thing stood next to the swing set at the other end. It had yellow, scaly legs as big as baseball bats, little red eyes, and a dog collar.

“I think it’s a giant chicken,” I said.

Sam cleaned his glasses on his T-shirt and took another look at the other side of the playground. “Yes, that is a two-hundred-fifty-pound chicken standing there.”

The sun glittered in its hungry little eyes.

“And yes, he looks like he’s planning to hurt us,” added Sam.

“Hey, it’s not my fault,” said Fred. “I didn’t touch *The Book*.”

“You did too,” I said.

“Did not,” said Fred.

“Did too.”

“Did not.”

“Did too.”

“Excuse me, guys,” said Sam. “Did you ever get the feeling that all of this has happened before, exactly like this?”

The super-size chicken eyed us. He gave another gut-rumbling “CLUCK.”

“Well, except with maybe a black knight instead of a giant chicken, of course.”

Fred pushed back his Red Wings hat and scratched his head. “Hey yeah. It’s like ‘a la mode’ or something.”

The chicken pecked the ground hungrily with jackhammer blows of its beak.

“You mean ‘déjà vu,’” said Sam, backing up against the fence. “And Joe, isn’t this right about when you should do some magic trick and get us out of here?”

I stood there stunned, looking at a giant white chicken on a city playground. The swing set, the

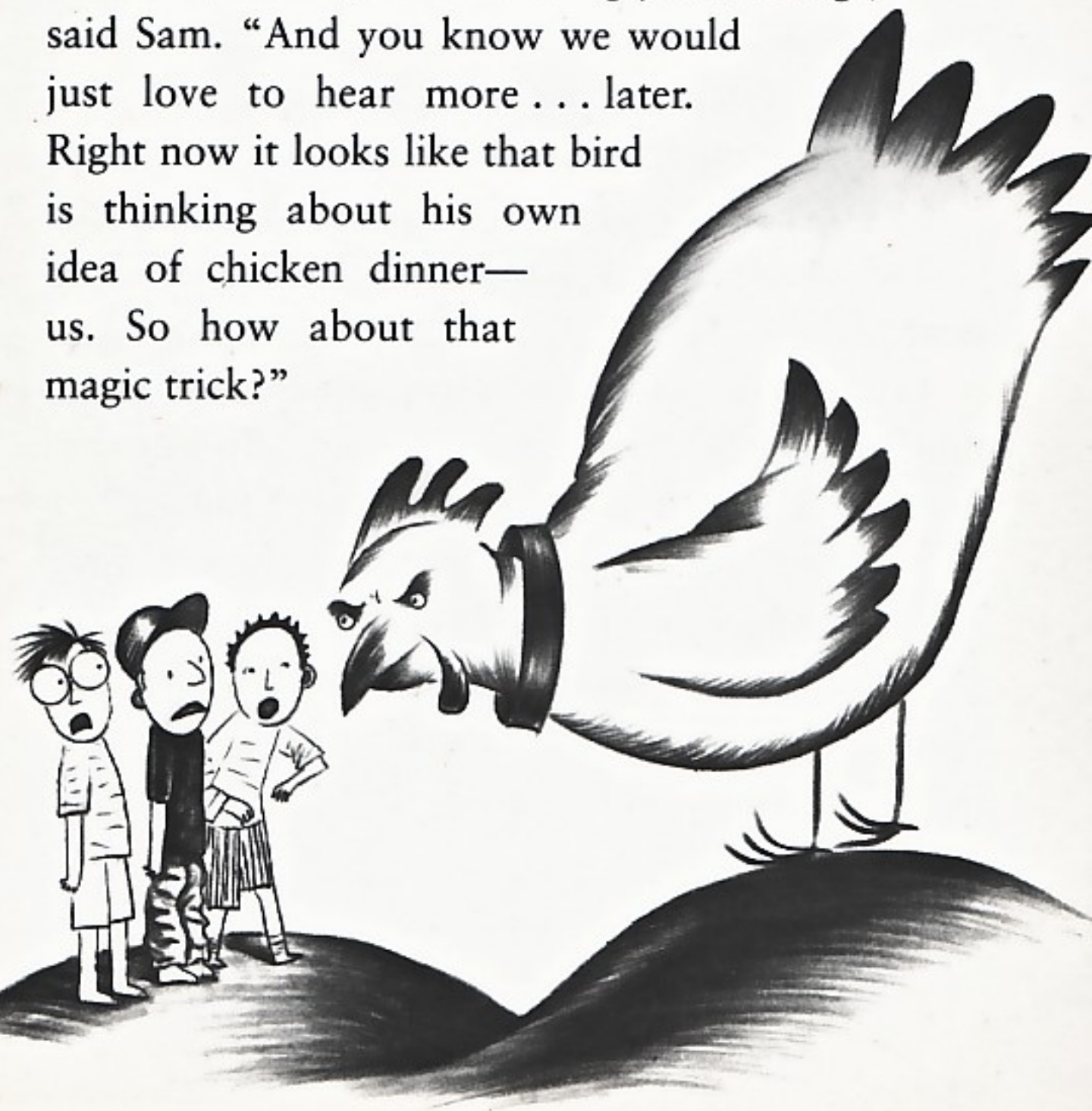
slide, the gravel, even the impossible chicken . . . Sam was right. Everything did look familiar, but not really familiar. I couldn't put my finger on it.

"Uh, Joe. *Joe?*" said Sam, elbowing me in the ribs while keeping his eye on the hungry chicken. "The magic trick?"

"It's like I've been here before, but I haven't really been here before," I said.

The monster bird twisted its head. It looked us over with one eye, then the other.

"Well, thank you for sharing your feelings," said Sam. "And you know we would just love to hear more . . . later. Right now it looks like that bird is thinking about his own idea of chicken dinner—us. So how about that magic trick?"





## Summer reading can be a real killer....

**J**oe, Sam, and Fred just want a relaxing summer. But when Fred accidentally places their summer reading list inside *The Book*, the guys find themselves trapped in Hoboken while villains from children's classics run amok! The intrepid trio must find *The Book* before the Headless Horseman, Long John Silver, and a dastardly Mr. (Teddy) Bear do away with the heroes of their stories. Will the gang be in time to keep *Alice in Wonderland* from becoming (horrors!) *Frankenstein in Wonderland*?

★ "[The Time Warp Trio's] tongue-in-cheek humor makes for laugh-out-loud reading."  
—*SLJ*, starred review

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