

THE LIGHTKEEPERS

Leo and the Blackout

Going deeper

One adventure.
Two reading editions.
A story to share.

Book 01
Family pilot edition



Print on US Letter at 100% / Actual Size.
Pages are in reading order; no booklet setting needed.
For double-sided printing, flip on the long edge.



The city's glass towers shone above the old stone streets. One day, the true King would return. Until then, the Lightkeepers had work to do. Leo walked with Evan, Marcus, and Sadie beneath the lights. He was already a few steps ahead.



"You know this is a walk, right?" Sadie called.

Leo slowed down. A little.

His speed made lots of things easy: reaching the next corner, catching a falling cup, winning a race. Leading the team ought to be easy too. He just had to get there first.



A white flash split the sky. Lightning struck the tall tower.
BOOM!

Every streetlight went dark. For a moment, Leo could hear only rain. Then someone screamed.

He turned toward the tower. High above the street, something huge was moving.



The tower's great glass light tipped forward. Metal groaned. Far below it, people stumbled away through the dark.

Leo's heart hammered. If that light fell, it would strike the street.

There was no time to stand around. He had to do something.

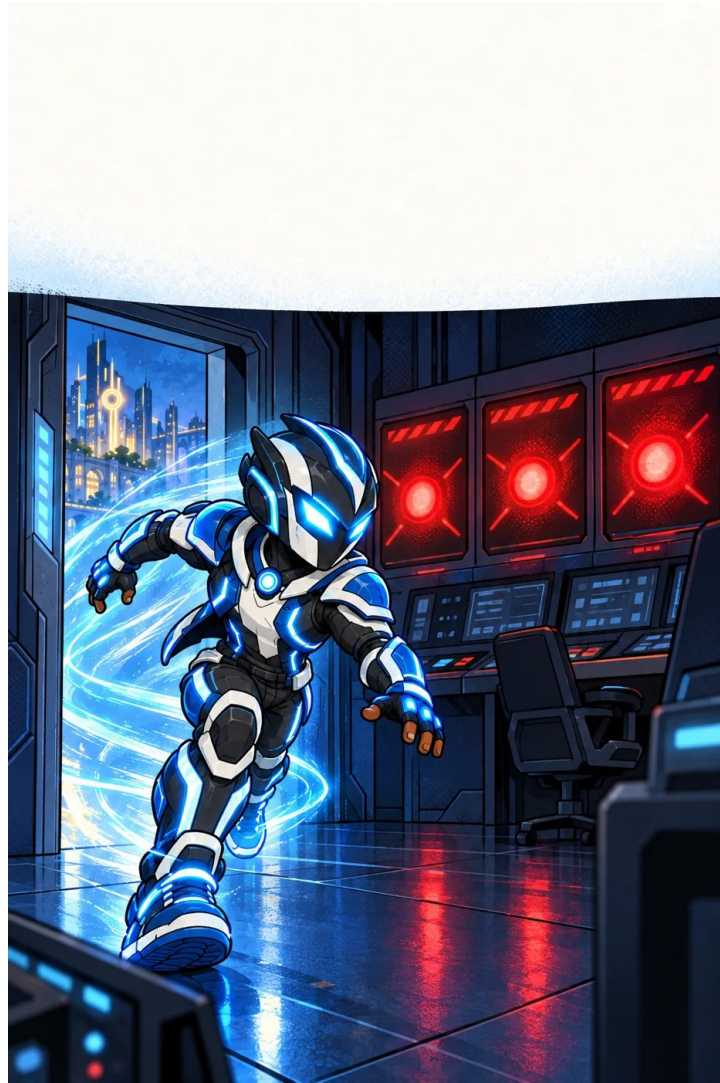


"Helmets on!" Leo shouted.

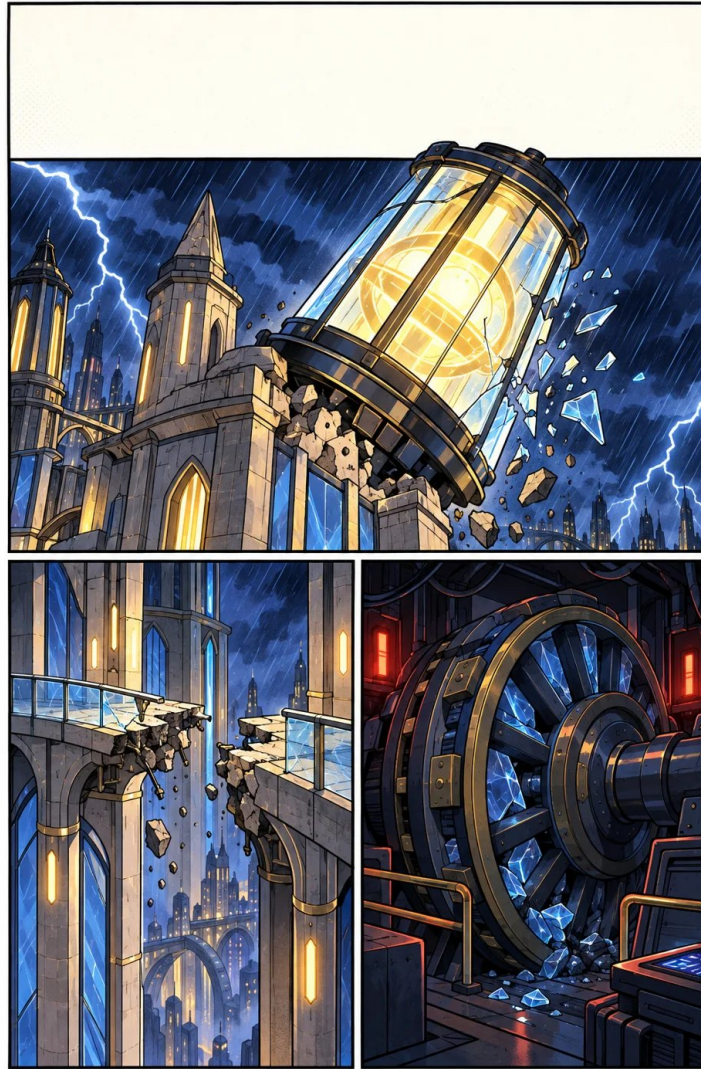
Armor closed around the four friends. Gold, orange, and violet lights shone through the rain. Blue light burst from Leo's shoes.

"Leo, wait-" Evan began.

But Leo was already a streak of blue, racing toward the tower.



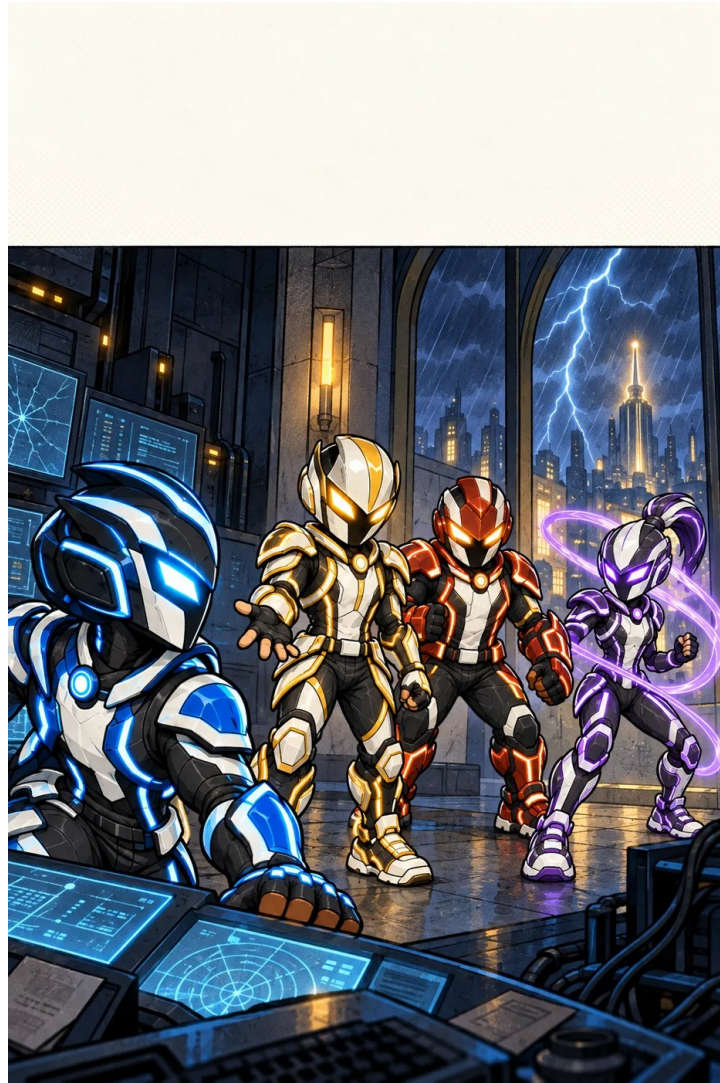
Inside, three red warning lights flashed above a row of switches. Leo reached the wall before he had worked out what any of them meant. He glanced from one warning to the next. Three problems. He could run between them faster than anyone. Surely that would be enough.



Through the open tower, Leo saw the trouble. The great light was slipping from its support. A raised path had broken, trapping people on one side. Below the light, the wheel that lifted it had jammed. Each problem needed an answer. All three needed one now.



Leo pressed one switch, then another. Nothing moved.
He could reach every part of the tower, but he could not hold a falling light
and carry people across a gap at the same time.
If he called for help now, would they still need him to lead?



Boots splashed behind him. His friends had arrived.

"What can we do?" Evan asked.

Leo had expected a complaint about running ahead. Instead, Evan was looking at the broken path. Marcus watched the falling light. Sadie was already testing the reach of her light rope.

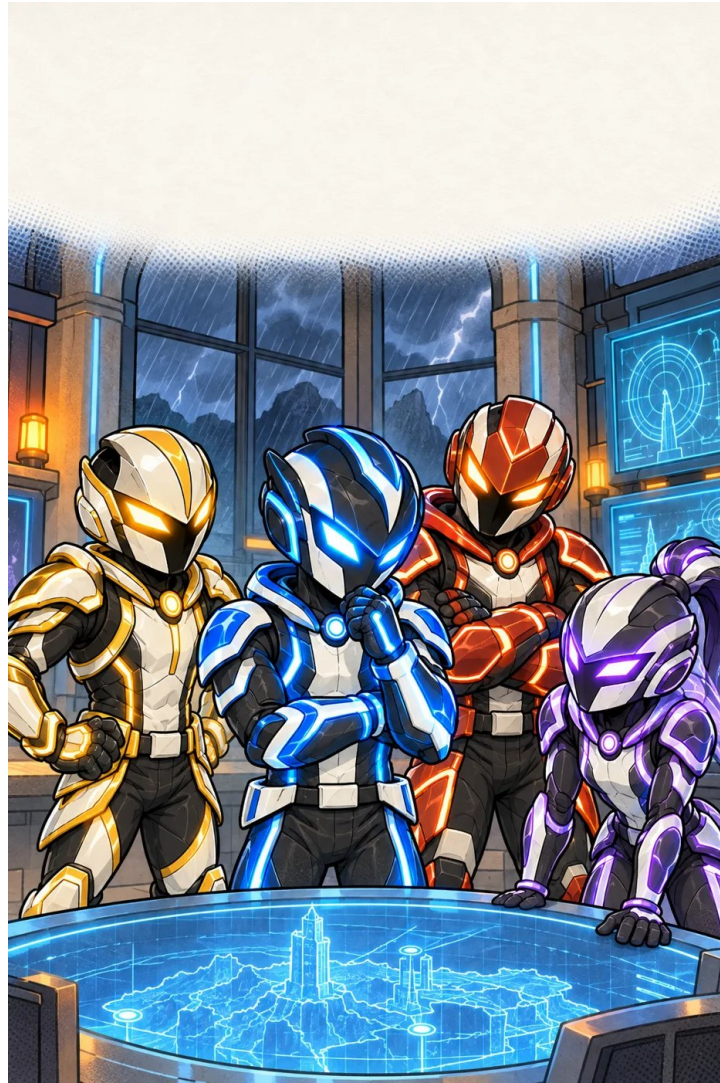


"I have to fix all three," Leo said.

Marcus looked from the light to the wheel. "Why do you have to fix all three?"

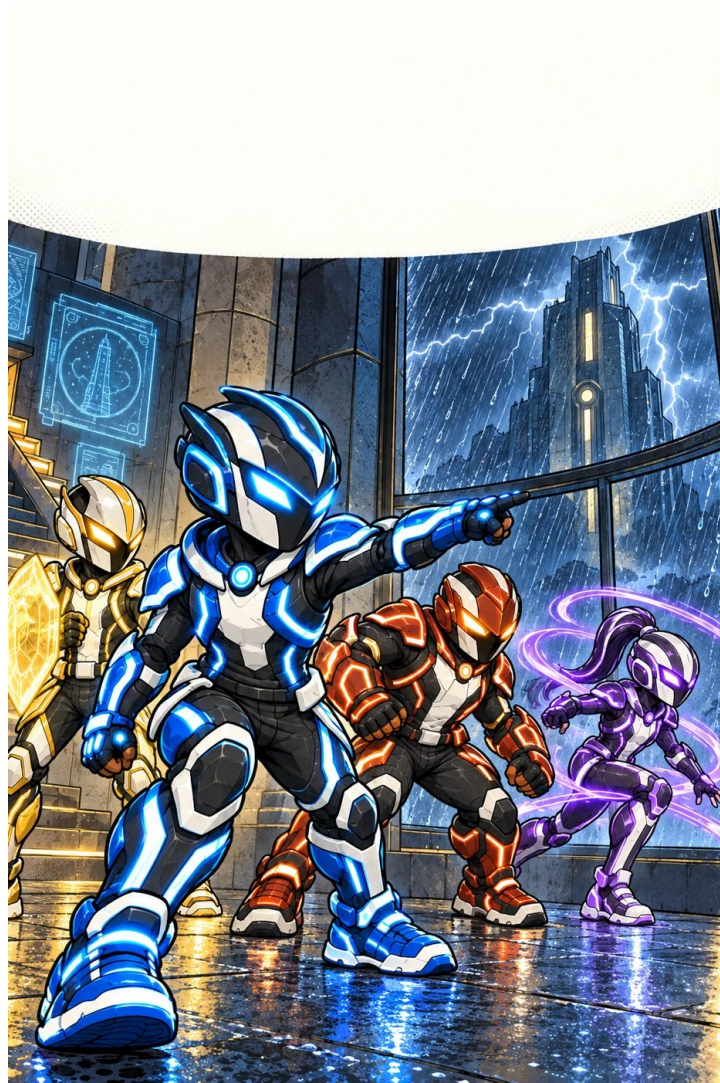
"Because I'm-" Leo stopped.

"The leader?" Marcus finished. "Good. Tell us where you need us."

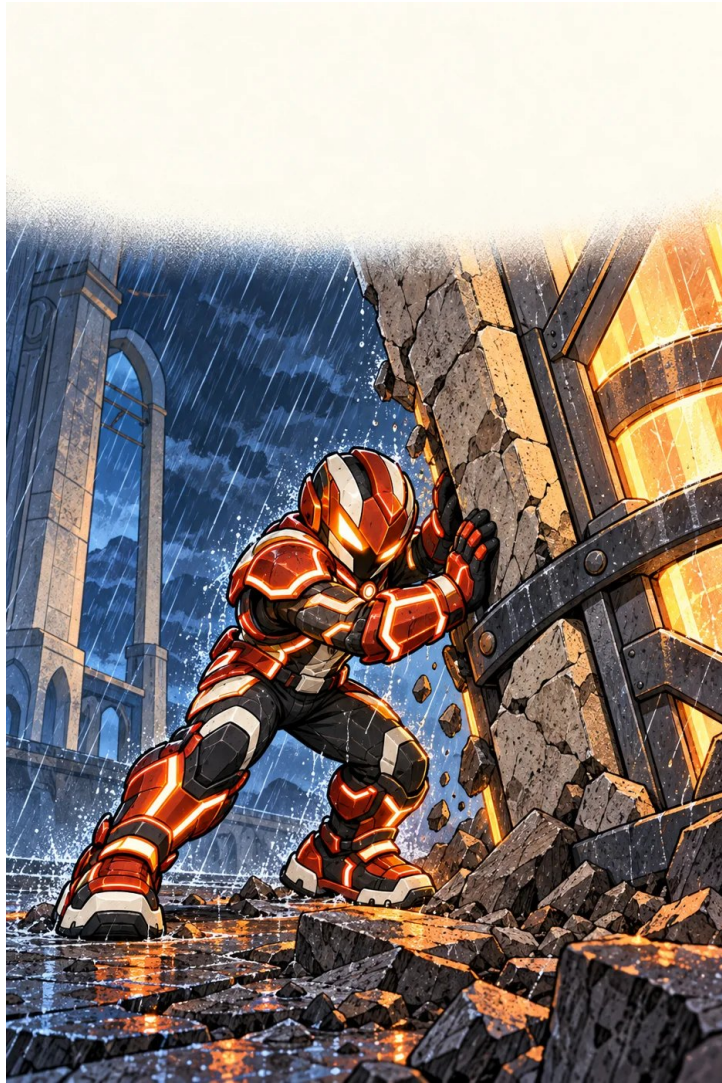


Leo looked at his friends again. Marcus could hold weight that would crush Leo. Evan could make a safe way across the gap. Sadie could reach the light from above.

They were not waiting for him to prove he was the best. They were waiting for a plan.



Leo took a slow breath. Rain hissed against his helmet. For once, he stood still long enough to look at the whole problem. If they lifted the light together, the wheel might turn. But first, everyone on the broken path needed a safe way out. He began giving each friend a job.



"Marcus, hold the big light. Keep it off the street!"

Marcus planted his boots and pushed upward. The glass stopped sinking.

"Got it," he grunted.

Leo almost ran on without looking back. Then he saw Marcus's knees bend under the weight. This job could not last forever.

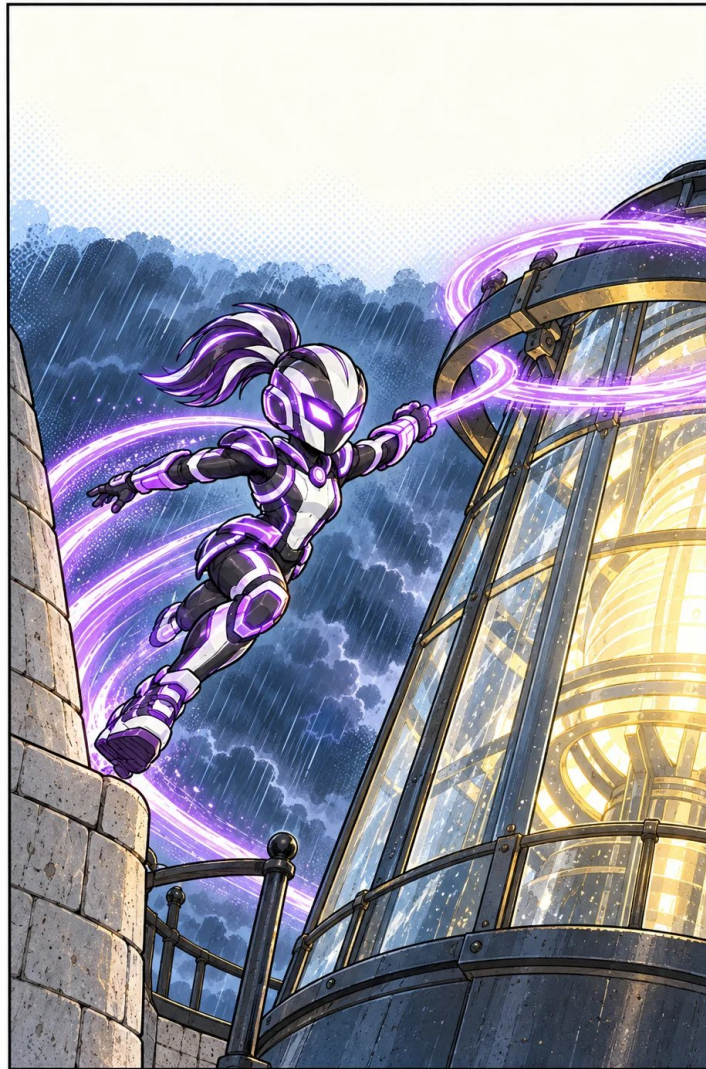


"Evan, help the people cross!"

A golden bridge spread across the broken path. Evan held out both hands, keeping it steady.

People stepped onto it, one by one.

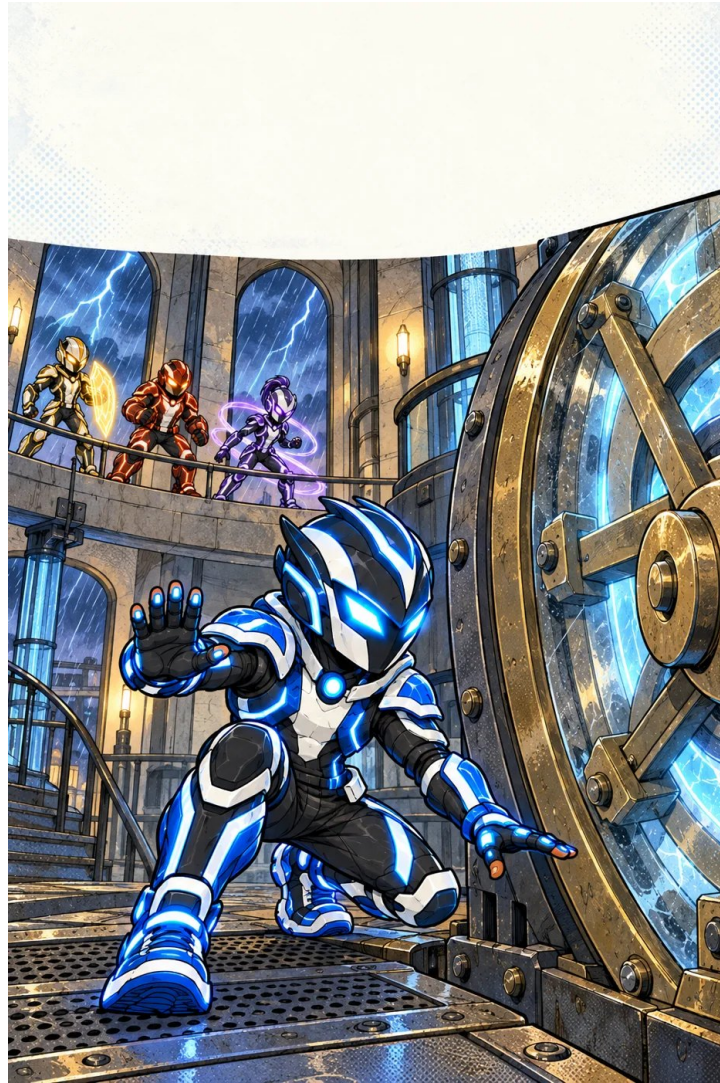
Leo wanted them to hurry. But a small child clung to an adult's coat. Safe mattered more than fast.



"Sadie, tie your light rope to the big light. Pull when I say go!"

Sadie swung upward through the rain. She looped the violet rope around the glass support.

From below, Leo could see how small she looked beside it. He would need to watch her signal carefully.



"I'll turn the wheel," Leo called. "It lifts the light. Marcus, push when Sadie pulls. Evan, keep the bridge steady."

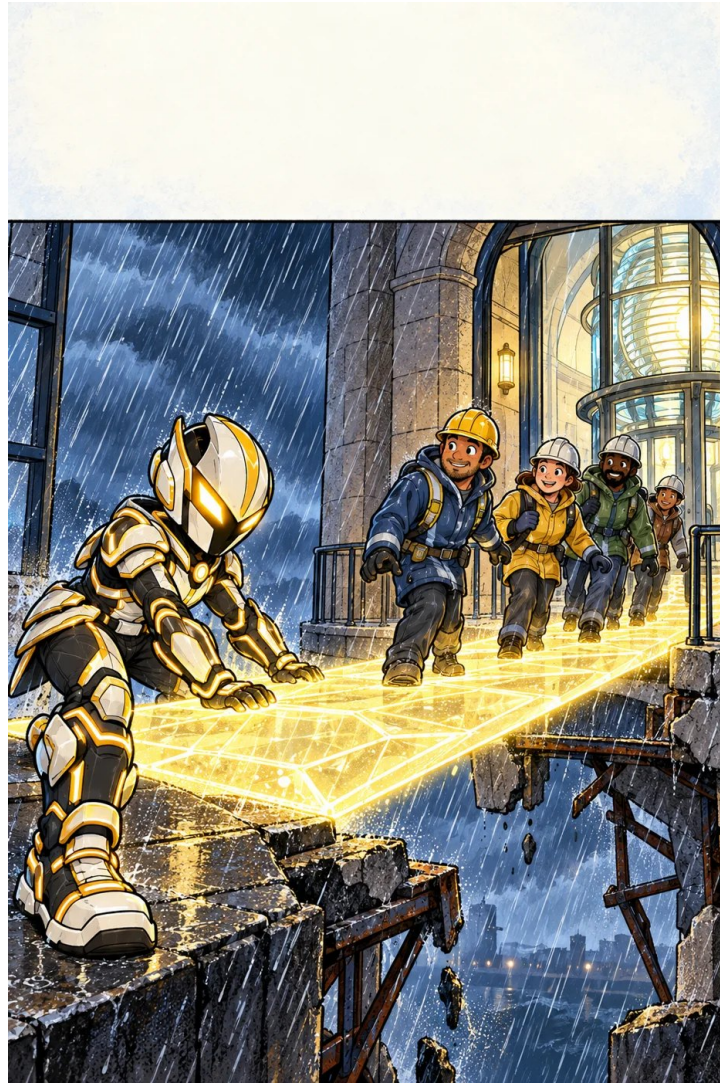
He looked at each friend before he moved.

"Wait for me to say go."

This time, he made sure everyone had heard him.



Marcus pushed harder. A crack split the ground beneath his boots. Leo turned at the sound. Every part of him wanted to rush over and take the weight. But he could not do Marcus's job. "Still holding!" Marcus called. Leo had to trust him and get ready to do his own part.

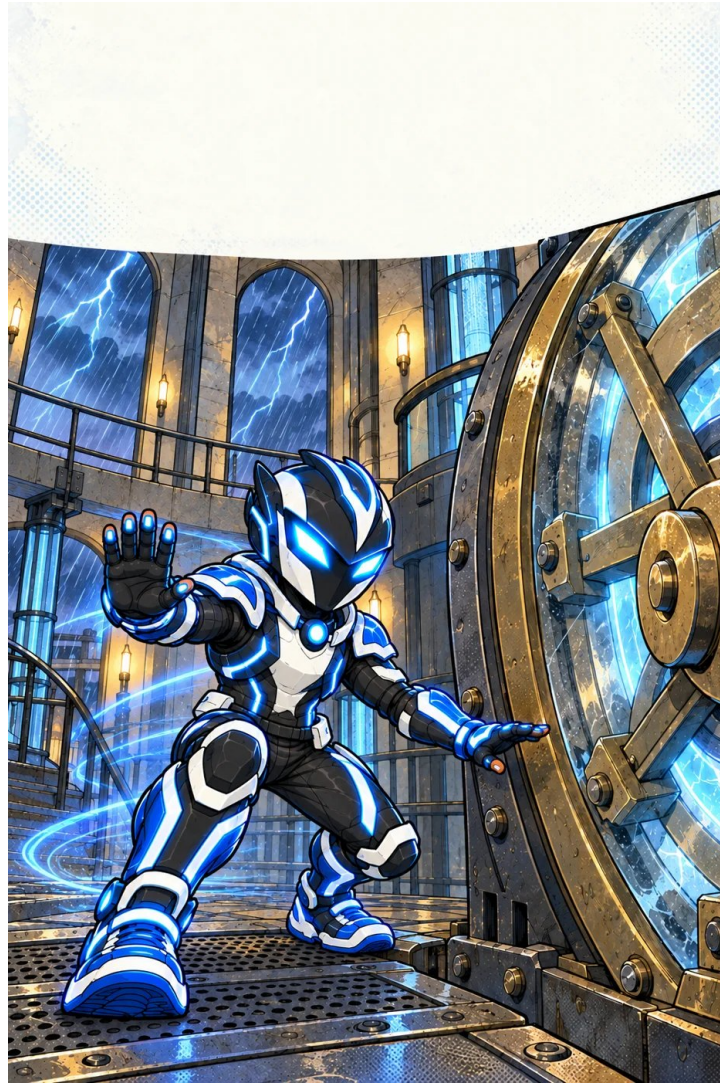


Rain drummed against Evan's golden bridge. The last people hurried across. Evan kept his hands steady, though his arms shook. Leo watched the small child reach the other side. He could not make Evan finish faster. He could give him the time he needed.

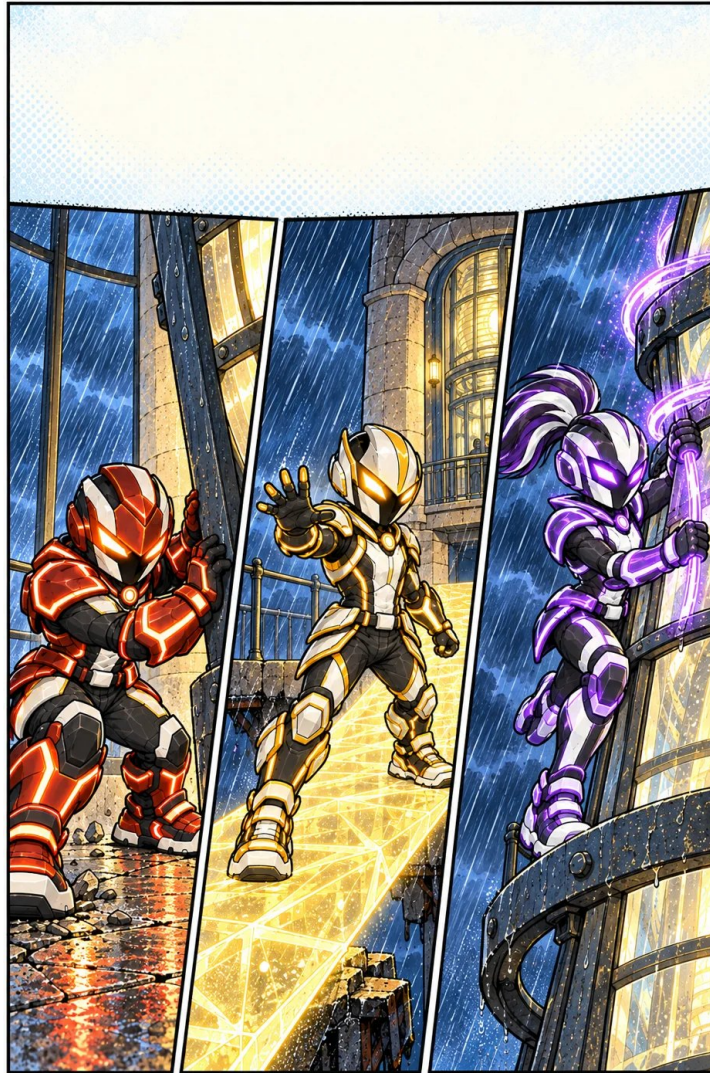


Sadie's rope slipped loose. Leo saw it fall and raced to catch it. He tossed it back. "Try again!"

Sadie caught the rope, swung closer, and pulled it tight. This time it held. Leo did not take over. He stayed just long enough to see that she was ready.



At the wheel, Leo braced his hands against the metal. He wanted to turn it now. Every second put more weight on Marcus. But Sadie was still setting her feet. Evan still had people near the bridge. Going too soon could hurt the very friends he meant to help. Leo waited.



"Marcus?" Leo called.

"Ready!"

"Evan?"

"Everyone's safe!"

High above, Sadie pulled the rope tight. "Ready!"

Leo checked them one last time. Waiting had felt harder than running. Now it was time to move.



"Go!"

Marcus pushed. Sadie pulled. Evan held the bridge steady. Leo drove the wheel around with all his speed.

For a moment, nothing happened. Then the wheel gave a great shudder and turned.

The weight began to lift from Marcus's hands.



The great light rose into place. Across the city, windows and streetlights blinked on.

"We did it!" Leo shouted.

This time, the word we felt exactly right. He had not fixed every problem himself. He had helped his friends solve them together.



After the rescue, Marcus held out a broom.

"You can lead us as we clean!"

Sadie laughed. Evan found another broom. Leo looked at the wet floor, then at his friends.

"Fine," he said. "But I get the biggest puddle."

For once, being first meant getting started on a job everyone could share.

When did Leo become a better leader?

Jesus taught that a great leader serves others. Leo first thought leading meant getting to every problem first. He became a better leader when he listened, trusted his team, and helped everyone do their part.

The Lightkeepers wait for the King by serving their city. Christians wait for Jesus, our King, to return. We can love and help people while we wait.

Mark 10:43-45 (paraphrase, not a quotation)

Jesus, help us lead by listening, helping, and serving others.

These are pilot editions, not formally assessed reading levels or a phonics curriculum. Choose by reading comfort, not age. AI helped create the adaptations and illustrations.