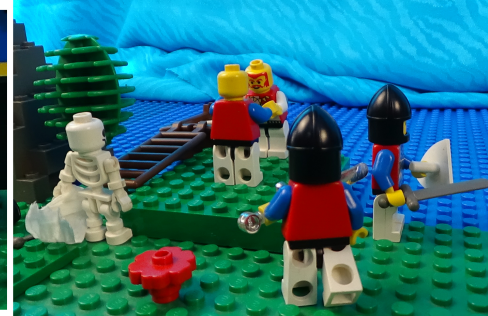
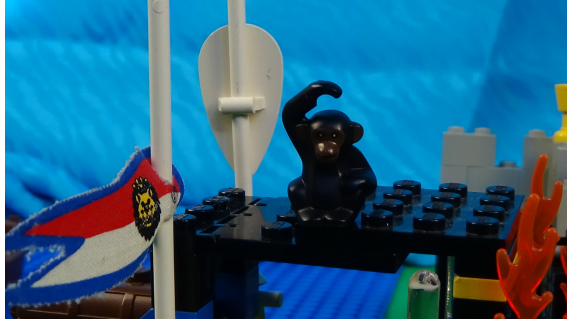




H

OW THE KING LOST HIS NAPPY

WRITTEN BY

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Every jump into the unknown is frightful
...even though one only decides to forego wearing nappies!

Bravely descending into the unknown
is possible only for one,
whose sight is set on something **far greater**
...than nappies, of course.

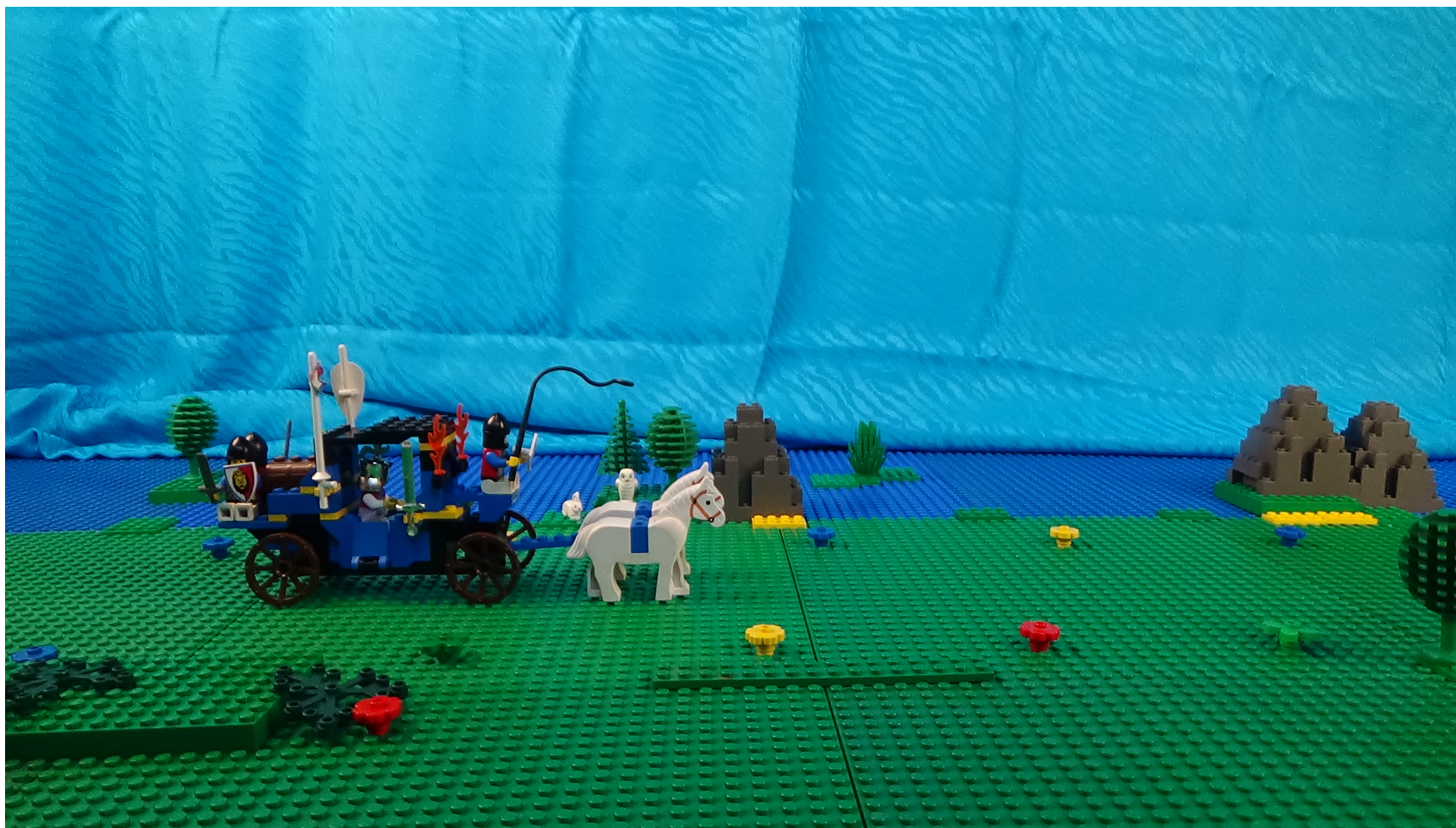


King within his kingly nappies

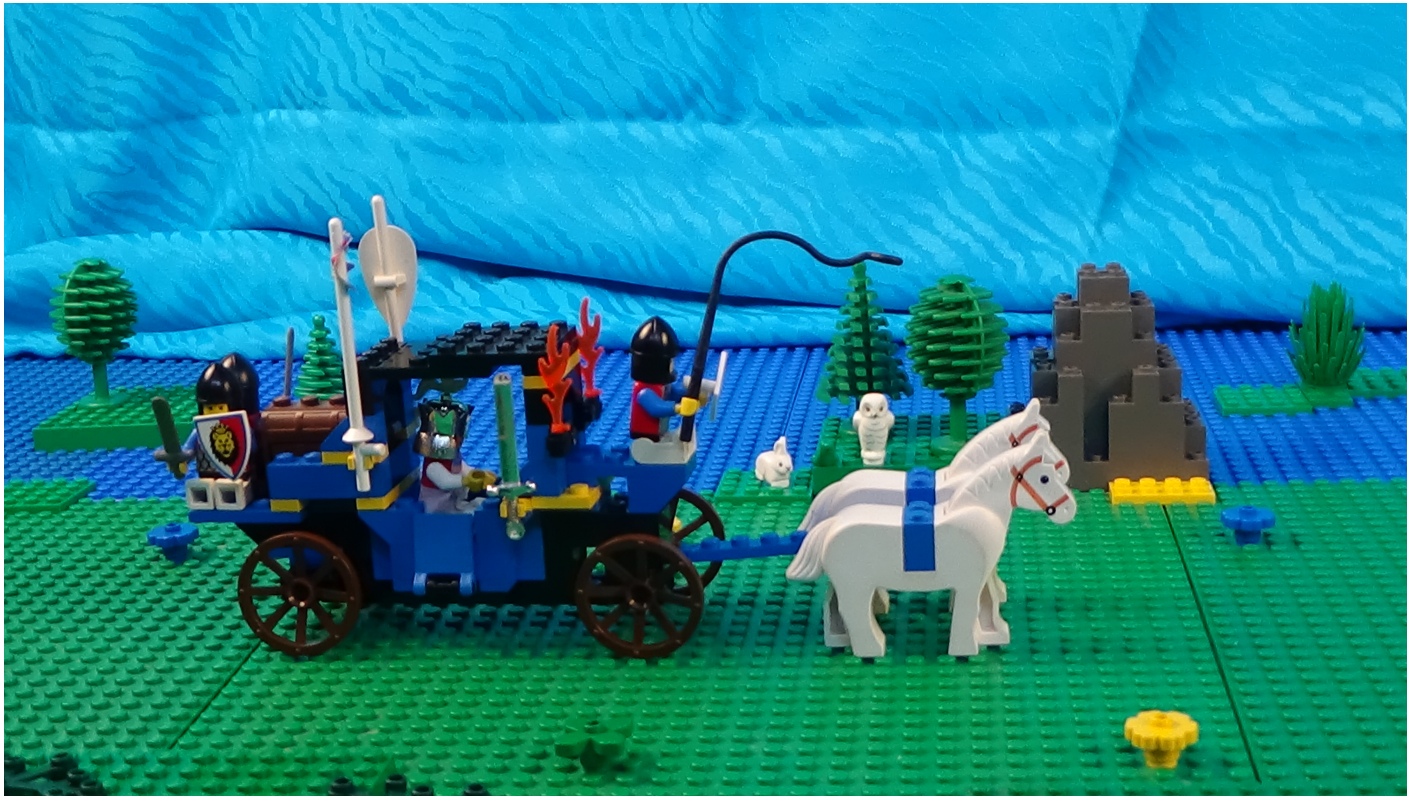
Very long time ago in a kingdom far far away there lived a king, who constantly wore nappies. He wore them in many colors – white, blue, even gold. Nobody could reason with him, not even with the argument that nappies are not befitting for a king – actually, very few people even dared to mention nappies in his presence! He was their king, after all - a bit daft, balmy, but with a good heart and much care for his people. The reason for him wearing nappies wasn't even in him requiring them for their toilet-replacing function, as he was perfectly adept at using the outhouse. He explained a few times that he is wearing nappies for their looks, that they compliment his figure – people always used to stifle their giggling when hearing this, only once an old gaffer cried out in disbelief. However, as he was otherwise very competent as a king, people forgave him this peculiarity of his, and he had their respect and trust. If only he were to ditch those stupid nappies and make himself presentable!

A few people in the kingdom however knew the real story of why their king is wearing nappies, and most of them were wizards. It is not for fashion, nor for their outhouse-negating function, but it is out of fear that their king is making such an ass out of himself. When he was a boy, son of one of the wizards used to harass him in such a way that whenever the future king-to-be did not wear nappies, something horrible happened to him (he would start farting rapidly in most unfortunate circumstances, or the outhouse would catch fire as soon as he left it, causing everyone to howl with laughter, and so forth). Soon the young boy started wearing nappies everywhere out of fear, for he did not know what is causing this persistent bad luck of his whenever he does not have his nappies on. In this story we will find out how a skeleton named Archibald, one of magickal beings protecting the kingdom, helped the king to finally shed his fear of not wearing nappies.

It was a beautiful summer day when the king decided to make a trip around his kingdom, to enjoy its beauties and check on his people. He drove along a beautiful path, marked by flowers and surrounded by wild animals jumping about and hiding in the bushes and tall grass on the side of the road.



As the trip led king near to a lake, enjoying in the singing of the birds and looking out of his carriage window upon the shores, his carriage driver, Fergus, called upon the horses to slow down. As they were well trained and well behaved animals, they needed no whip, and they responded to his command quickly – Fergus however did keep the whip around, just in case, and maybe more for himself if he was about to doze off. Knights Benedict and Tristan observed the surroundings for any dangers that might lurk in the bushes.



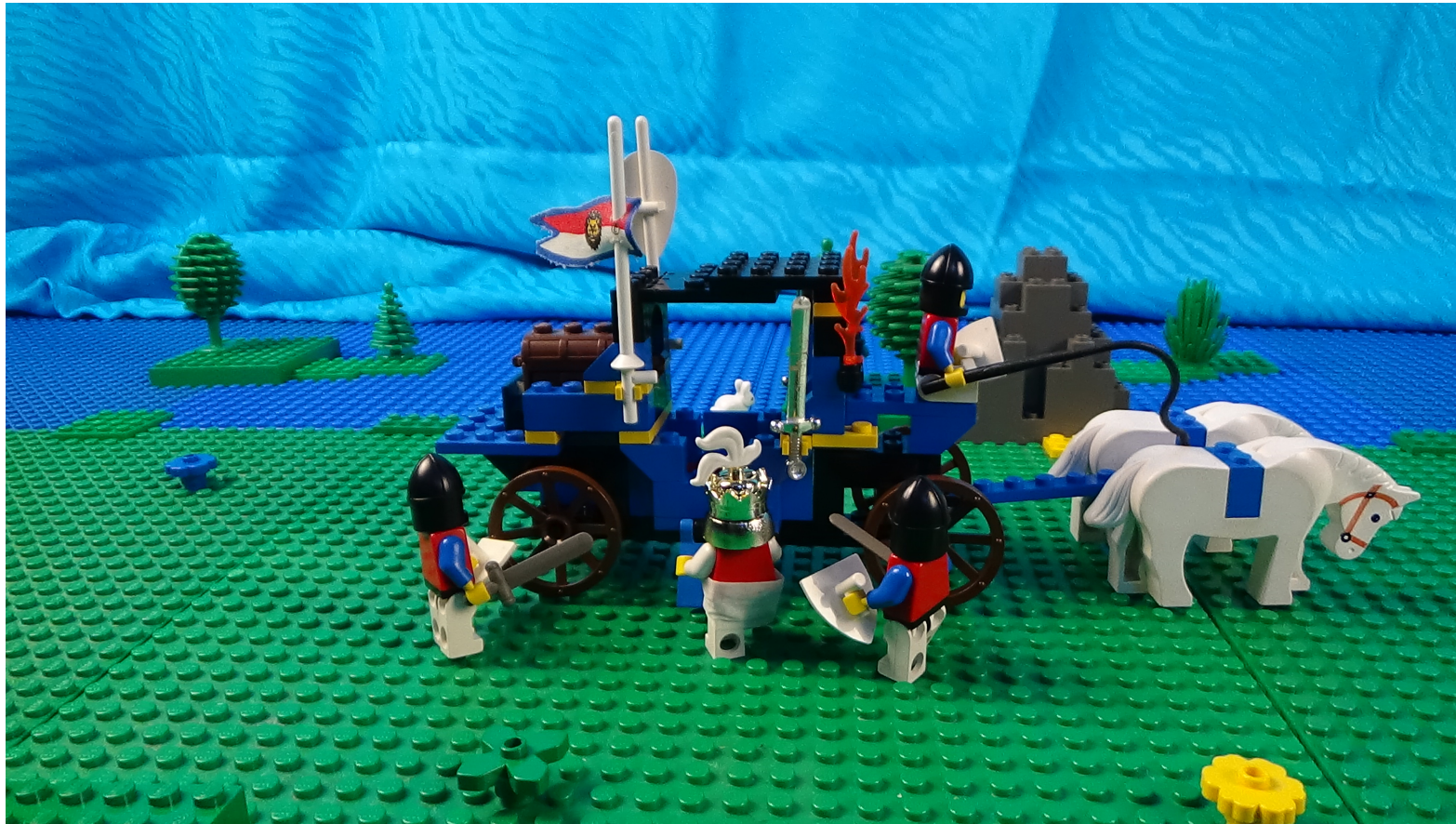
The king had to go to the little boys' room, but as there was none, shore of the lake would have to do. He commanded the carriage to stop, jumped off and went to the shore of the lake, hiding behind the trees.



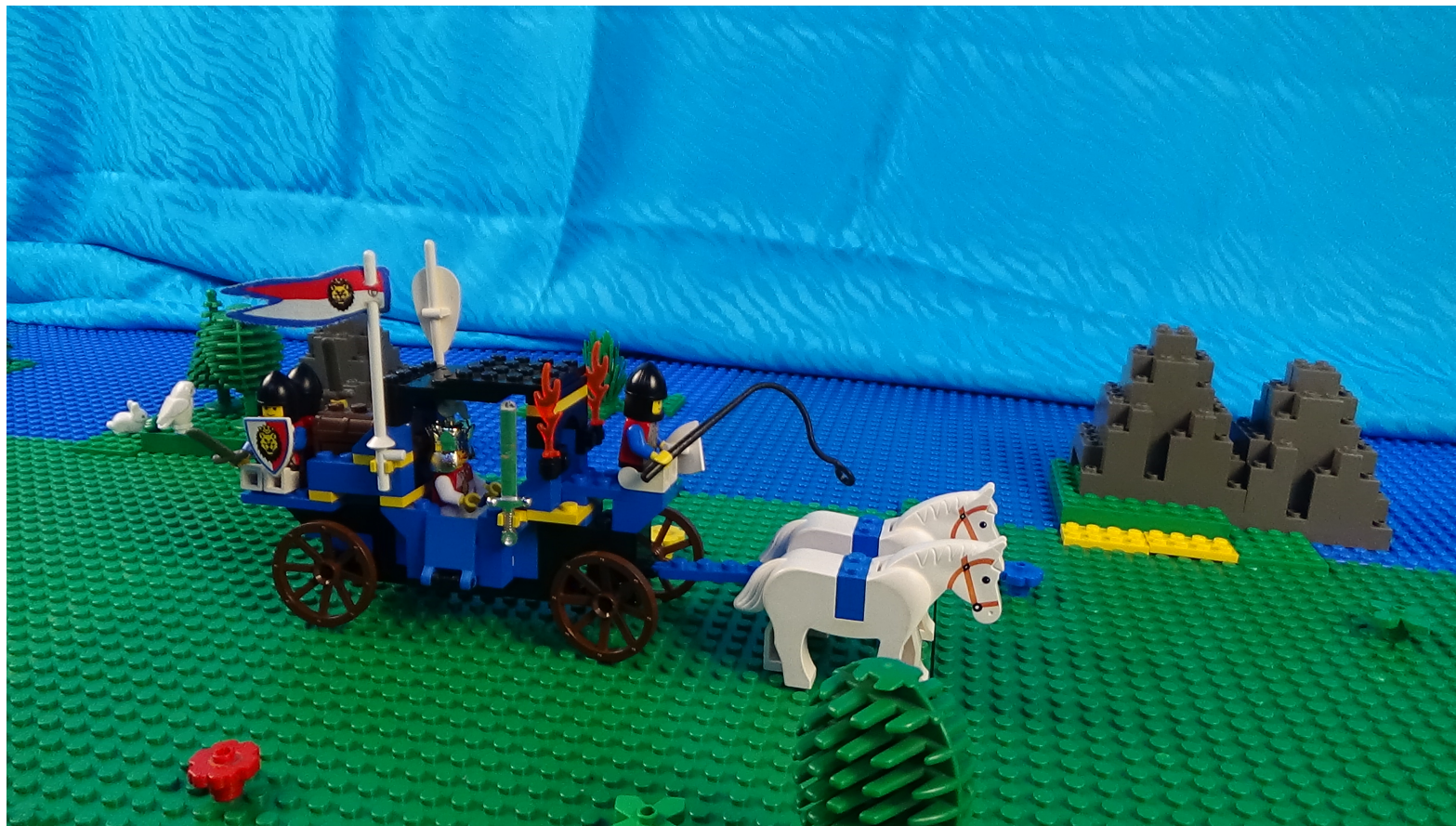
King dug a hole and left in it a not so kingly gift, hidden behind the trees and rocks, his knights on the guard around him. Animals – an owl, rabbit and frog – observed him with great interest.



As he used the water from the lake to clear his bottom, as well as some fresh tree leaves, the king again wrapped his nappy around himself and went back into the carriage.



As the king, much lighter and relieved, comfortably sat in his nappy, the carriage hurried on.



The knights as well as the carriage driver were well used to the king wearing nappies.



After a long way, the carriage finally reached the residence of the wizard Algernon. Like the king, Algernon had a guard too, Briar, who stood outside the residence and observed the road, as well as an apprentice, Dorian. Seeing the king's carriage approach, Briar bowed down and ordered Dorian to inform their master Algernon of the king's visit.



As the king descended from the carriage, Briar spoke a few words of welcome and then opened the entrance into the Algernon's house.



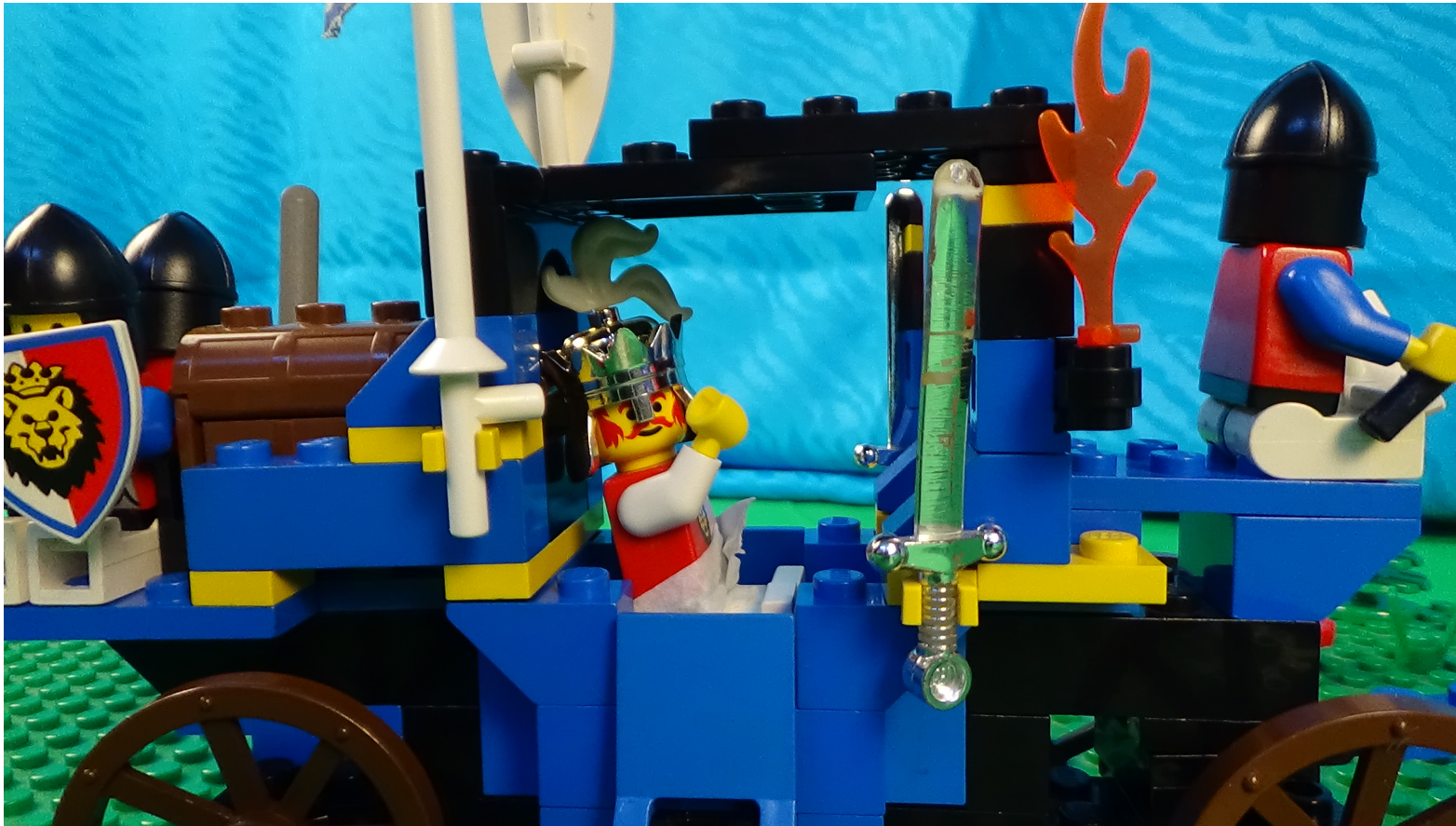
Wizard Algernon was very glad to see the king, but as he just emerged from meditation, he did not join the king right away, sitting in his room above the main room of the house and greeting the king downstairs. He however went straight to the point, asking the king when is he going to quit wearing those ridiculous nappies! The king felt ashamed – to be honest, he was afraid to even fondle his diapers too much except when relieving himself!



Algernon suddenly jumped down the ladder, passing his apprentice Dorian, who stood quite nervously by the king, not knowing how the king will react to this berating. Algernon bowed before the king and offered him some honey cakes which they baked in the morning and which they were saving for after lunch. “Don’t be afraid, your highness, no spell can touch you, I assure you!” He seemingly knew for what really is bothering the king. The king gave him a half-hearted smile, bowed to them all and left.



Fergus, Benedict and Tristan all occupied their posts on the carriage as the king returned. He was quite thoughtful, maybe even forlorn.



Nearing the borders of his land, the king thought far and wide about Algernon's words. Observing his nappy, he attempted to touch it, but was afraid to go any further. He certainly would want to stop wearing it!

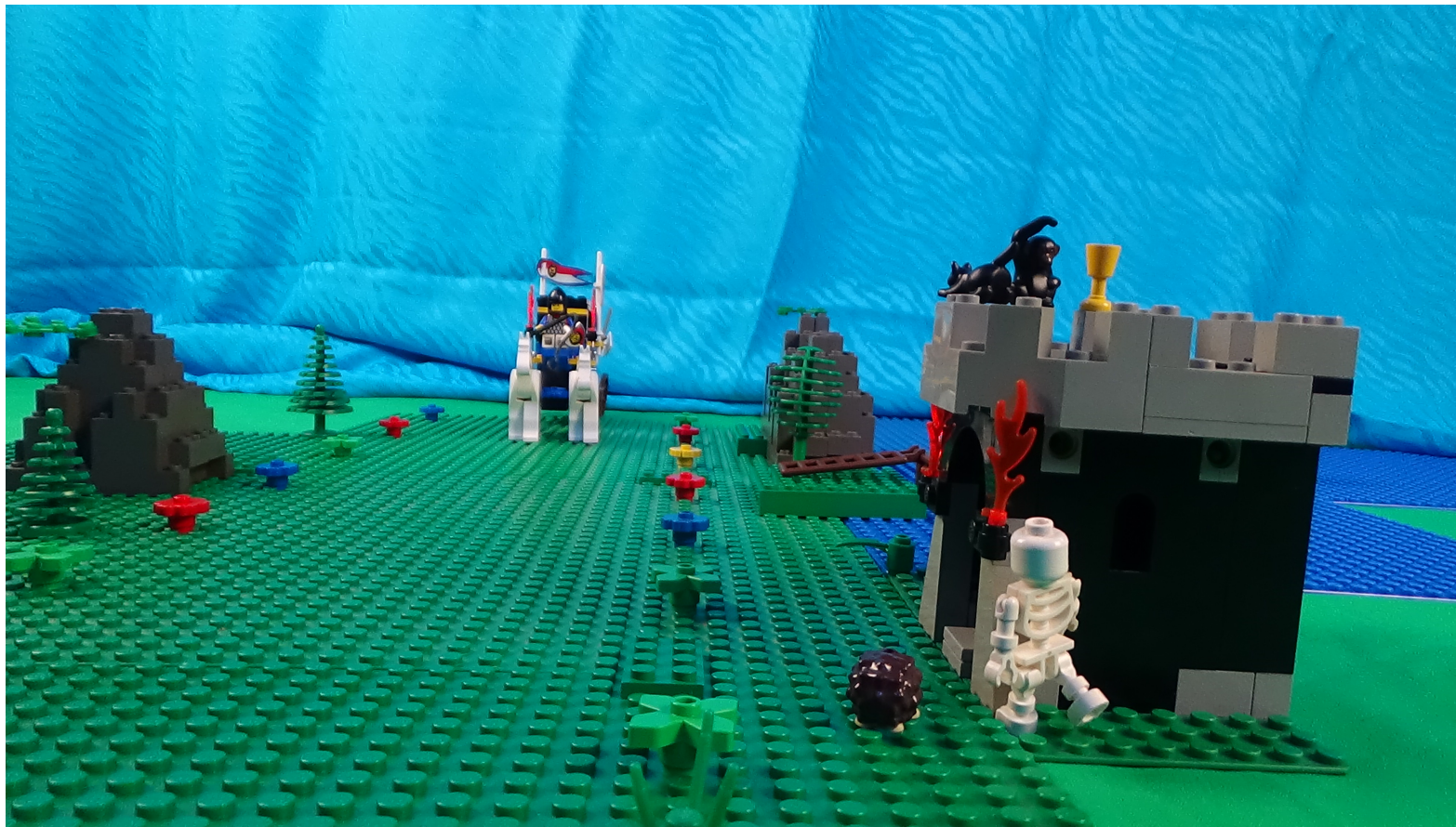
He was no longer afraid even of petty if not disturbing accidents from the childhood, which happened everytime he appeared anywhere without the diapers. What he was really afraid of was the concept of the unknown – his whole life he spent in diapers, how would he even do without them? Would he still be the king?

The magickal borderlands

The kingdom was from the western side protected by the Magickal borderlands, which were a series of fortifications, some small and others large, and vast wastelands in between, where no life flourishes. It is even said that time passes differently when one spends time in there, that chasms can open out of nowhere, and that there one can see many apparitions and magickal beings, some benign, others not so much. Very few dare to venture there, and even fewer ever return.

No one knows what the Magickal borderlands even are – were they made by the magicians for the protection of the kingdom, or were the magicians who live there made by some force beyond the borderlands, and are now merely tasked to inhabit them? People generally avoid the wizards, and the wizards in turn seldom enter people's affairs, except as wanderers who teach the folk about the nature, about the healing and world in general. Some legends however say that the wizards are not all they choose to appear to be, that they know the nature of time itself, that they have no fear of death and that sometimes they venture beyond the bounds of very existence.

There are many types of beings who haunt the Magical borderlands apart from the wizards and thus in turn serve the king – some of them are skeletons. Very few people know of them, except that they are employed for their protection. If only they knew that at least one of them, a skeleton named Archibald, possesses as well some sense of humor, they would without doubt pay more attention to them.



As the king's carriage drove on the outskirts of the borderlands, along the road, Archibald observed his approach. He lived in his little fortress which had a main chamber and some battlements on the top. His friends – the hedgehog, cat and monkey – were already well aware of Archibald's mischief, which however was always directed towards the wizards or other unaware guests – he had yet to deal with the king!



Archibald hid himself in the fortress, awaiting for the people to arrive in order to frighten them!

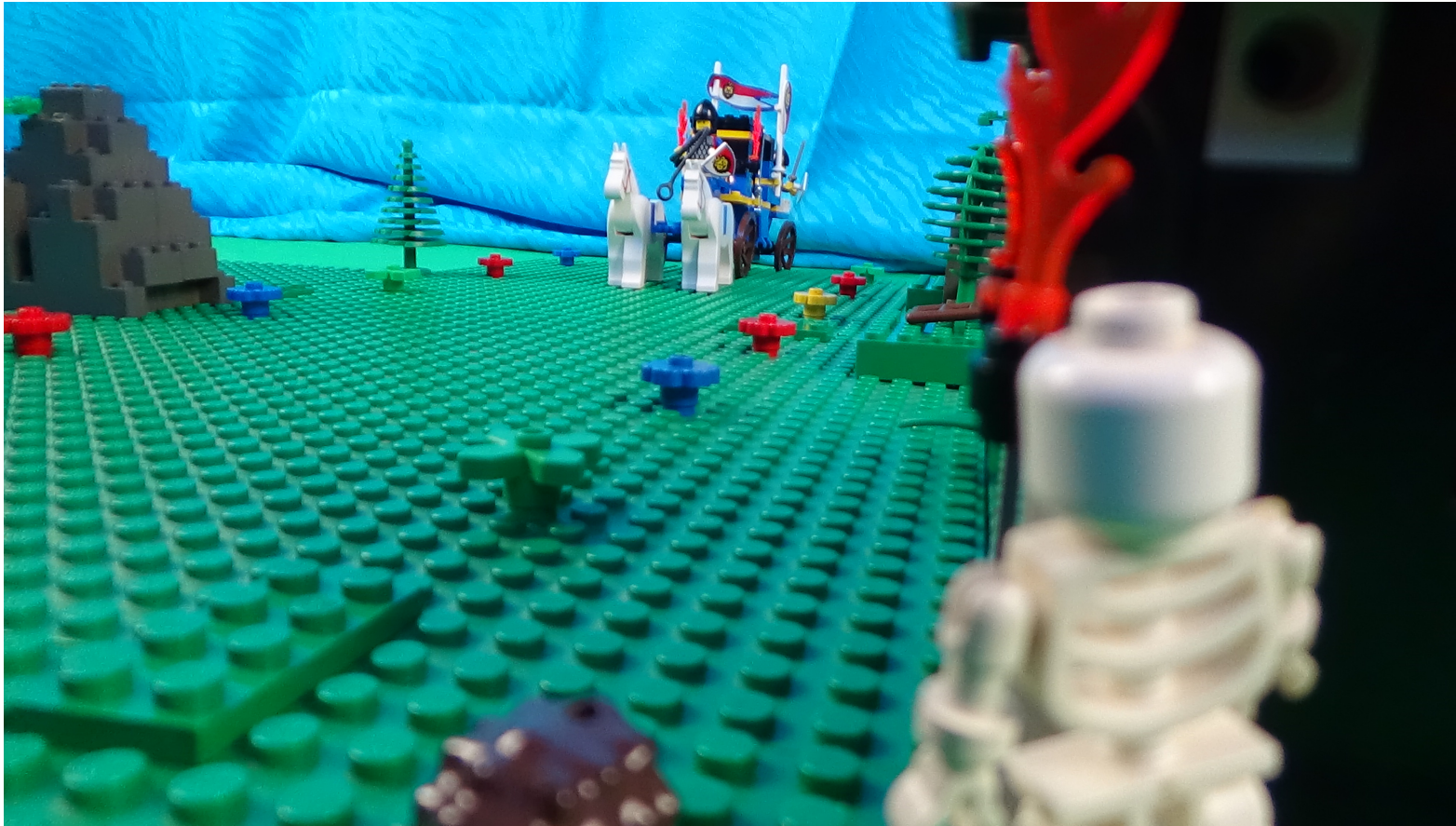


The monkey on the roof loudly proclaimed Archibald upcoming mischief – if only the people knew the language of the monkeys, they would avoid Archibald's fortress and drive as far away as possible!

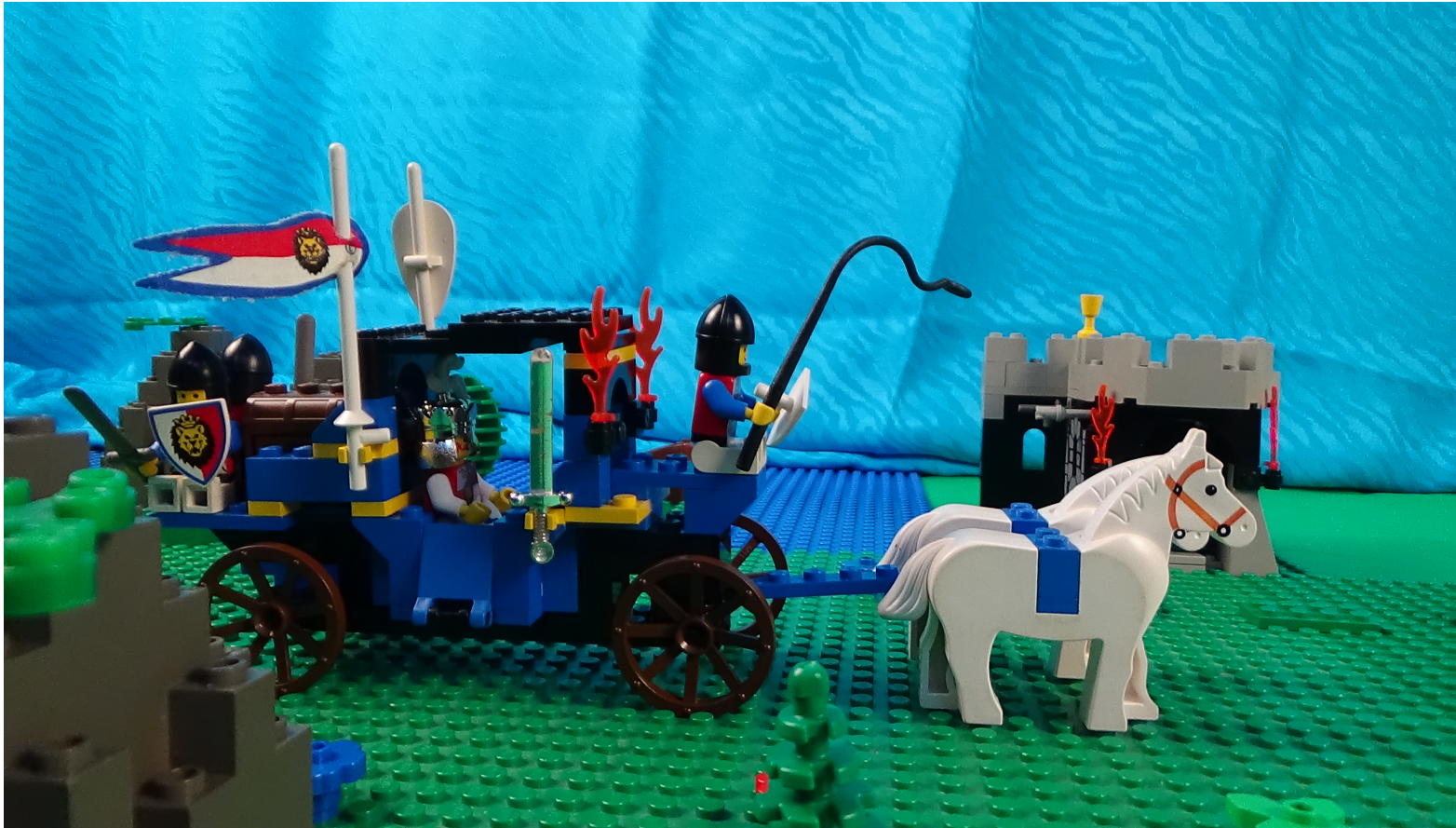


The king, oblivious to what is going to happen, let the carriage approach the fortress

...



Observing the fortress, the king felt slightly nervous – Magickal borderlands are even for him pretty unknown and frightening, as if even the air within it were strange. Luckily, his knights and the carriage driver were well trained and accustomed to the borderlands, being here quite often in the past.



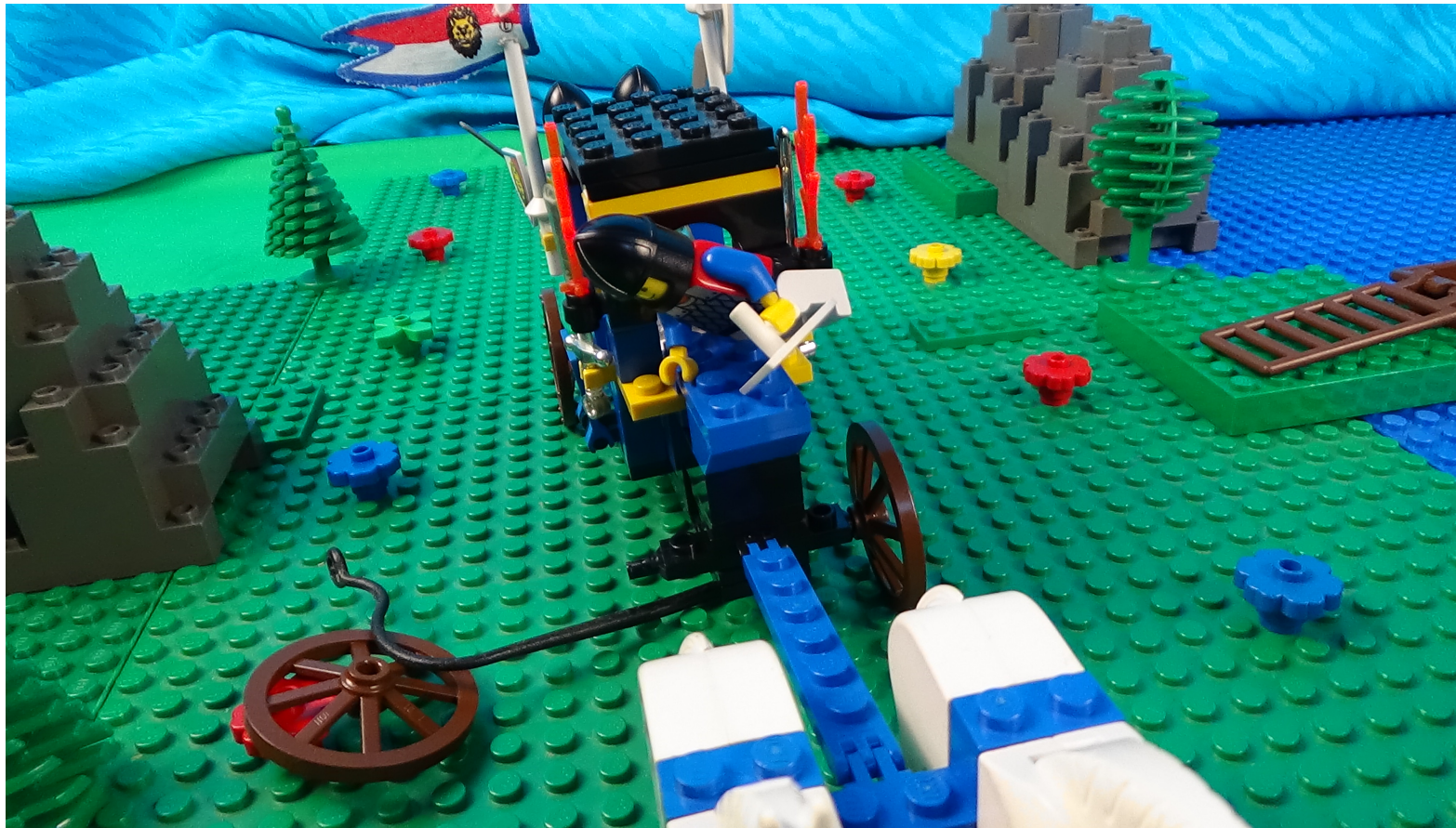
Suddenly there was a bang and the first left wheel of the carriage snapped off. Fergus flew into the air.



The whip joined the broken wheel on the floor while Fergus himself still struggled to remain behind the reins. The horses luckily stopped on their own.



Both knights, Benedict and Tristan, jumped off the carriage to take up positions around it, while the king emerged battered and with a damaged diaper – being thrown around inside the carriage made him hit the sides of it several times and some of the seams within the diaper gave way.



All the willpower which king managed to gather after the visit to wizard Algernon dissipated – he no longer thought of ditching his nappy, but instead got afraid that another bout of bad luck will befall him because of his damaged nappy. Tristan leaped after him – he needs to protect his king!



The nappy is sliding down – panic!



Completely disregarding his knowledge about the Magickal borderlands and how these fortresses can be dangerous and bewitched, king directed himself directly into the one in front of him!



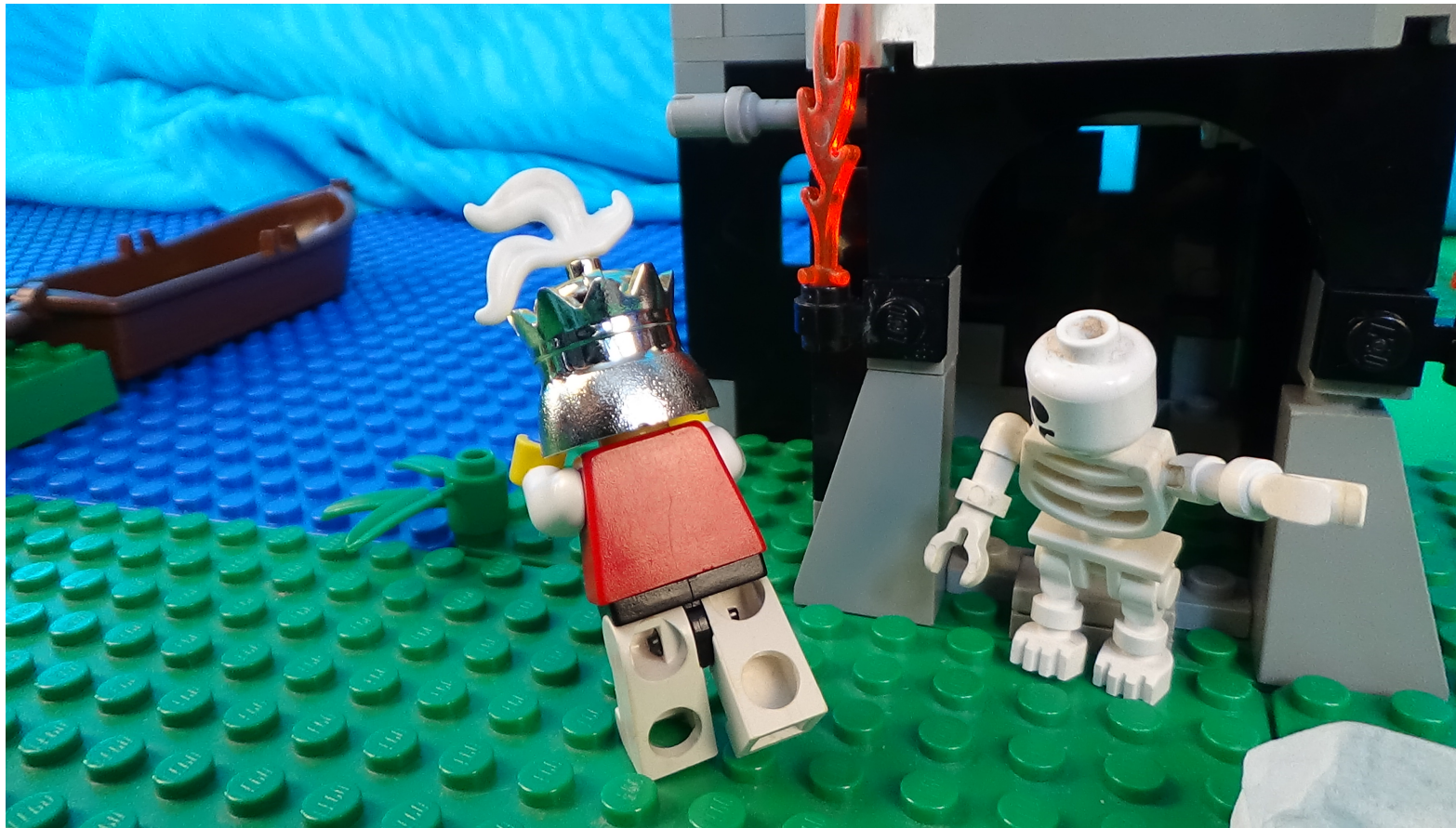
Not even thick spider web above the entrance could stop the king as he leaped across the doorstep, however something within started moving ...



Aaaaaaaaarrggghh a skeleton!!! Archibald descended before the king with a wide smile, while the king yelped, dropped his nappy which got completely torn in two by him running and bolted.



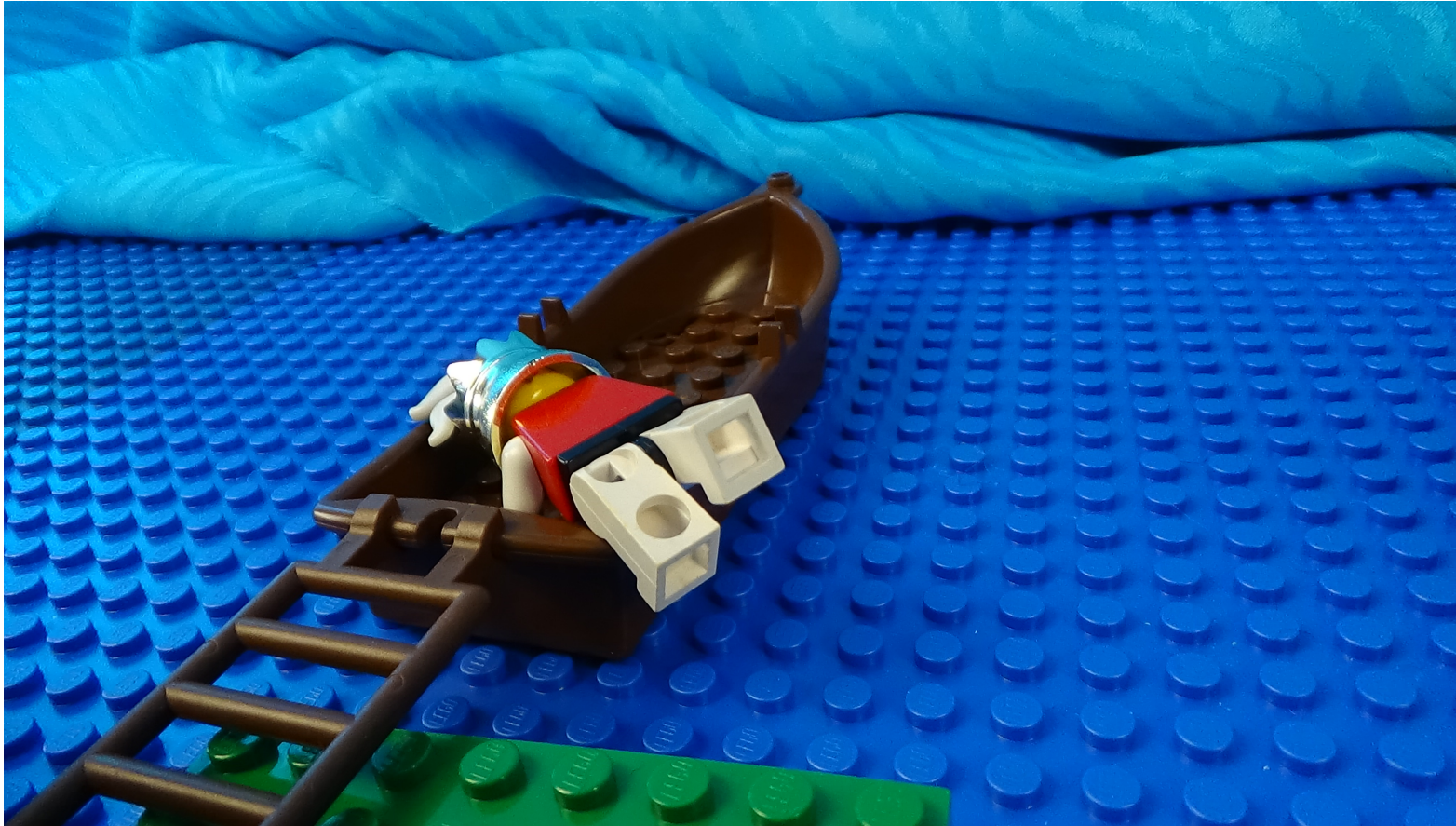
The nappy fell to the floor and the king ran towards the boat which was tied to the shoreline next to the fortress. Archibald already felt sorry for scaring the king so badly – the wizards normally don't get that frightened. He grabbed the diaper on the floor and ran after the king.



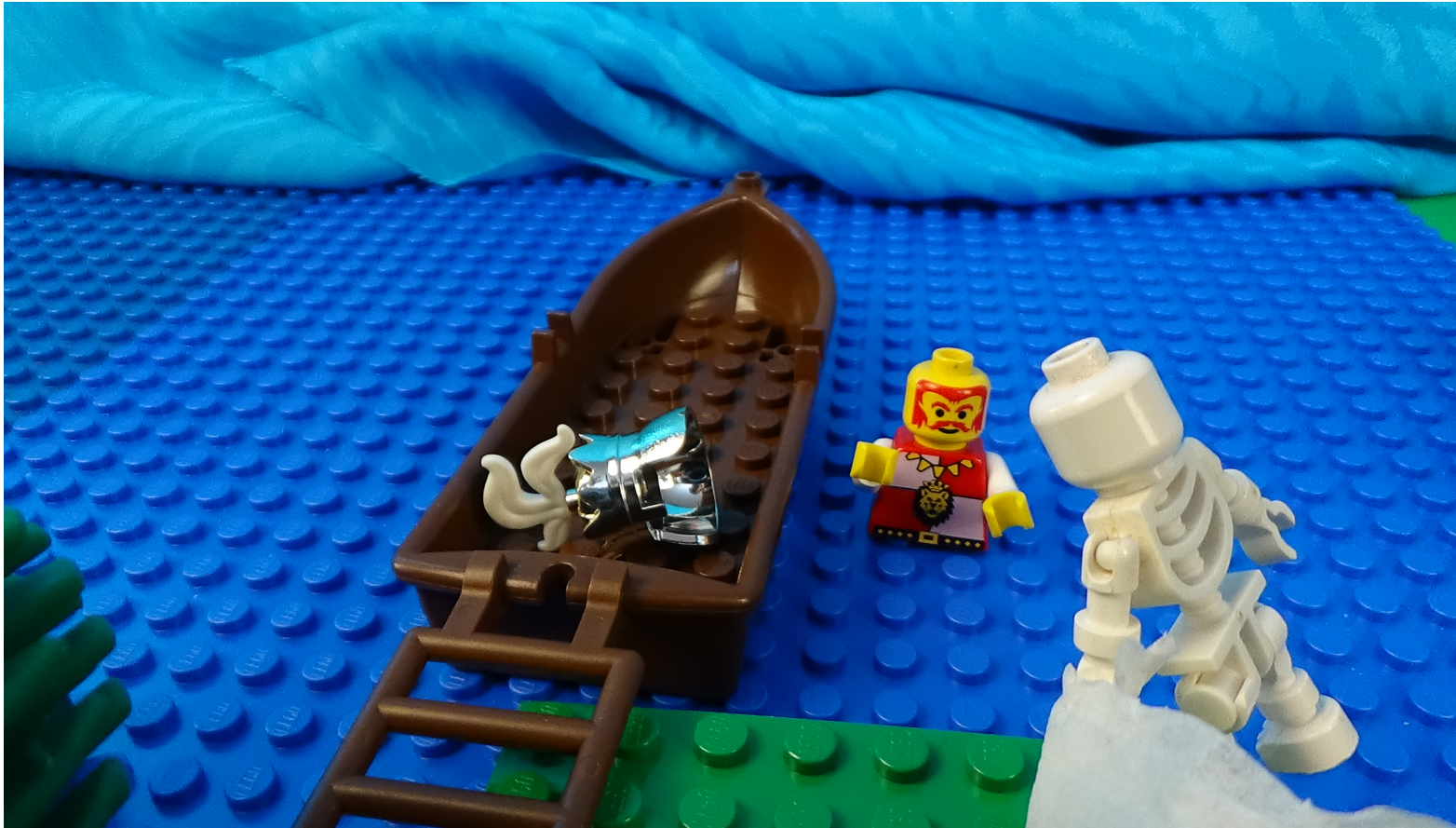
Not only the king, his knight Tristan got badly scared as well, however he managed himself quickly, as he had to do his duty and protect the king. Seeing the skeleton leaping after the king, king's nappy in his hands (or rather, bones), also helped Tristan muster his courage.



The king flung himself into the boat, but landed poorly. He bounced off and fell into the water, leaving just his crown in the boat.



Falling into the water made the king come to his senses. As the water was not very deep, he rose up and looked towards the carriage. Observing the frightened skeleton, he noticed he is no longer afraid. He actually found him rather cute, in a bony way, thus holding his diaper – his diaper! His nappy is not on him! He started laughing ...



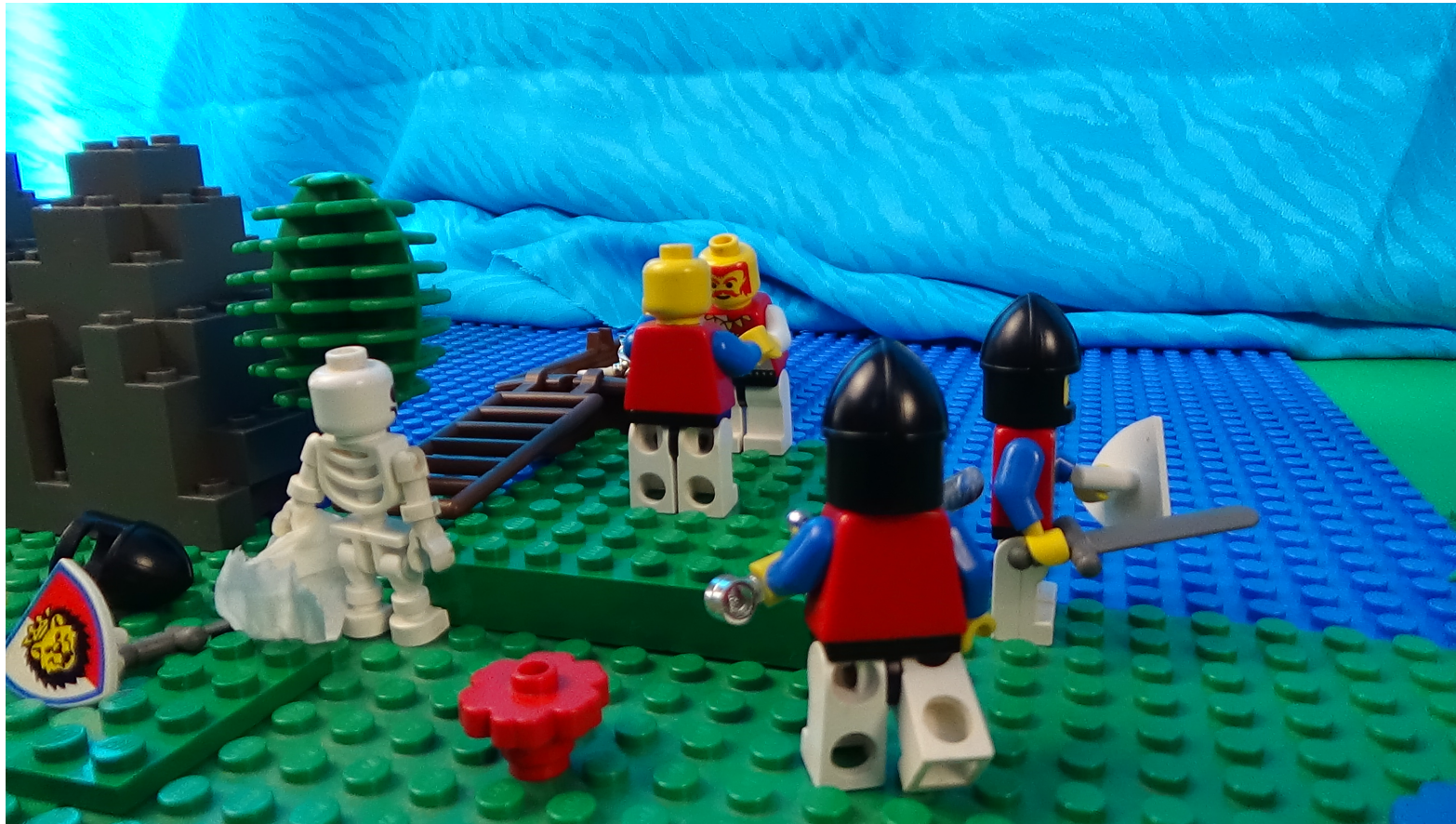
The king knew how to swim, however this water was treacherous and he got stuck into some undergrowth. Both Archibald and Tristan helped the king get out of the water.



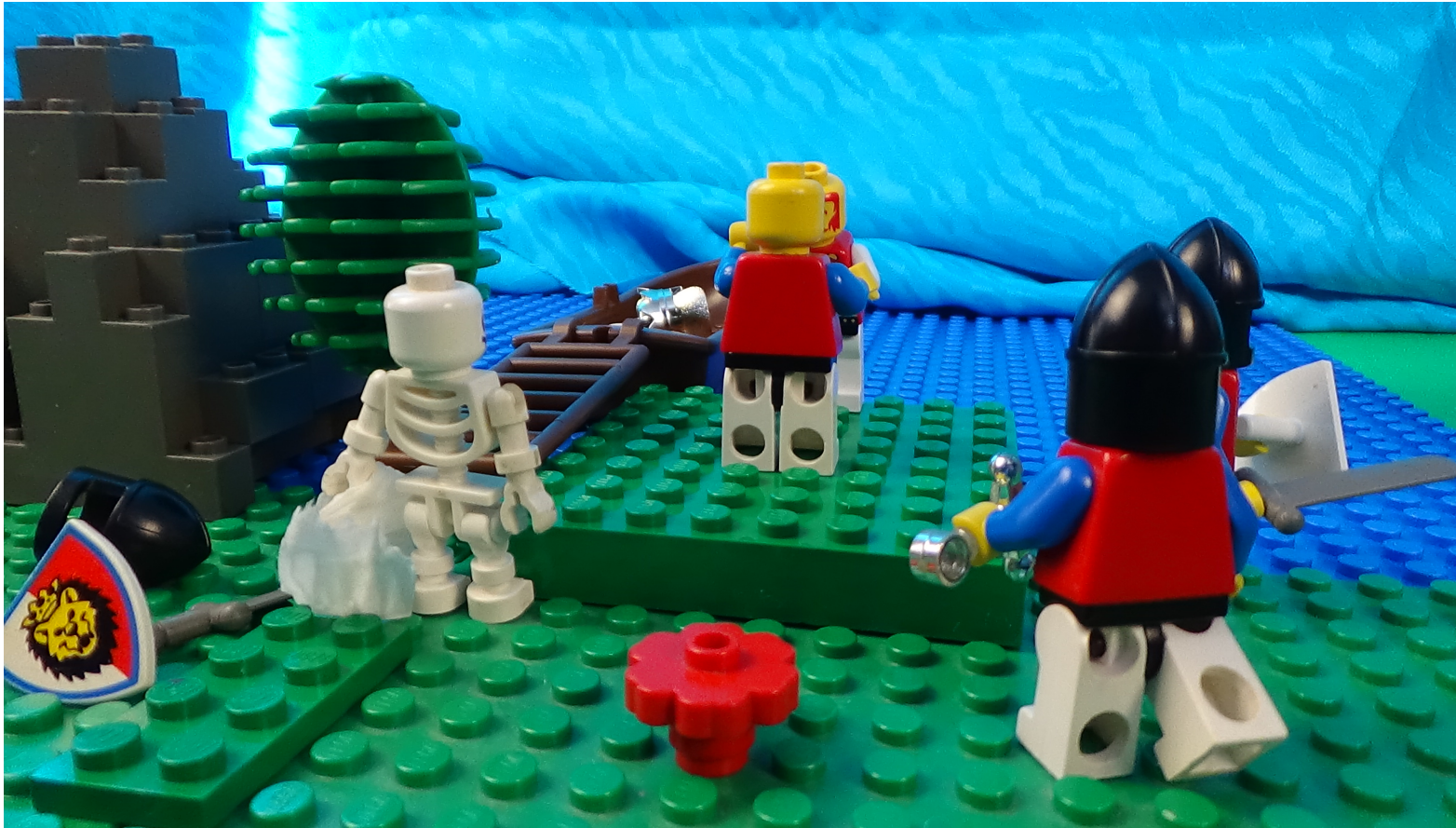
Being touched by Archibald's cold bones, king felt some fear again, however just for a moment. Tristan helped him out of the lake, while Archibald stepped backwards.



Other knight, Benedict, approached and took the post on the other side of the king, guarding him, while Fergus had an idea. He went to fetch king's sword and approached the king with it.



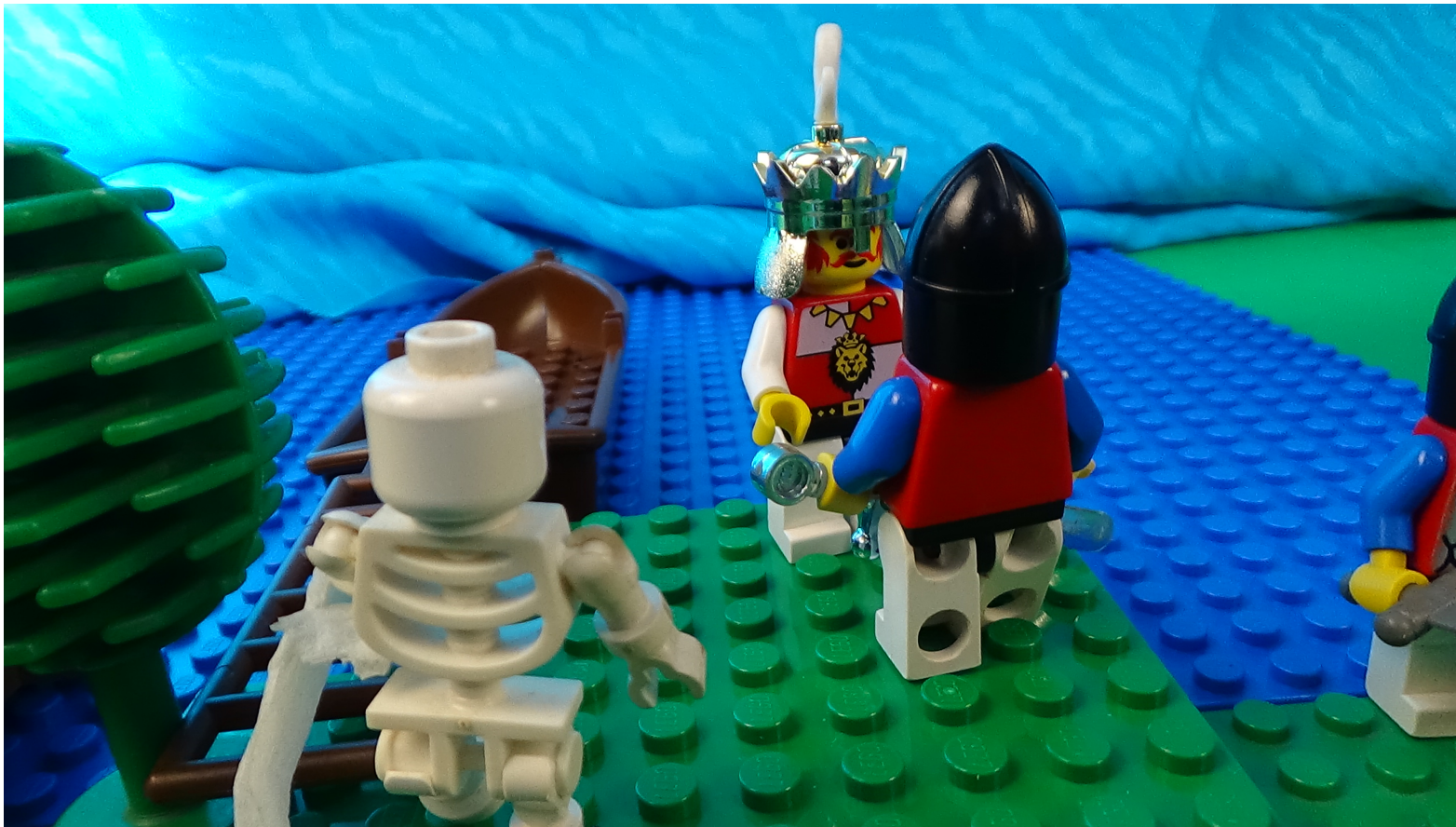
Seeing Archibald standing on the side quite dejected, holding the diaper of the king, while king himself was very wet but also seemed tall and sure of himself, Fergus saw this as a perfect opportunity for the king to claim his dignity back – as he is finally without the diapers!



Tristan, giving the king his crown, stood back. King accepted Archibald's apology, after which Fergus approached and handed the sword to the king.



Now that the king has finally lost his nappy, it is high time for him to reclaim his dignity!



King looked at his diaper in Archibald's hands once again, smiled, lifted his sword and cried aloud kingly words of power and strength, such that the monkey on the fortress got aroused and started yelling again.



“ Hurray, the king lost his nappy!”



Everyone cheered the king and escorted him back to his carriage. The cat and the hedgehog also hailed the king in their own way.



The monkey kept yelling on the roof of the carriage as it drove around the borderlands, proclaiming his approach far and wide.

King's last diaper was kept in Archibald's possession, but his future adventures already belong into another story ...



Alexei Leonov performed the first spacewalk (EVA) on 18th March 1965, during the Voshod 2 expedition. In the emptiness of space he floated for 12 minutes and 9 seconds, and he almost could not make it back inside, as his suit got inflated. Only after he released some air from it he was able to fit back inside into the airlock.

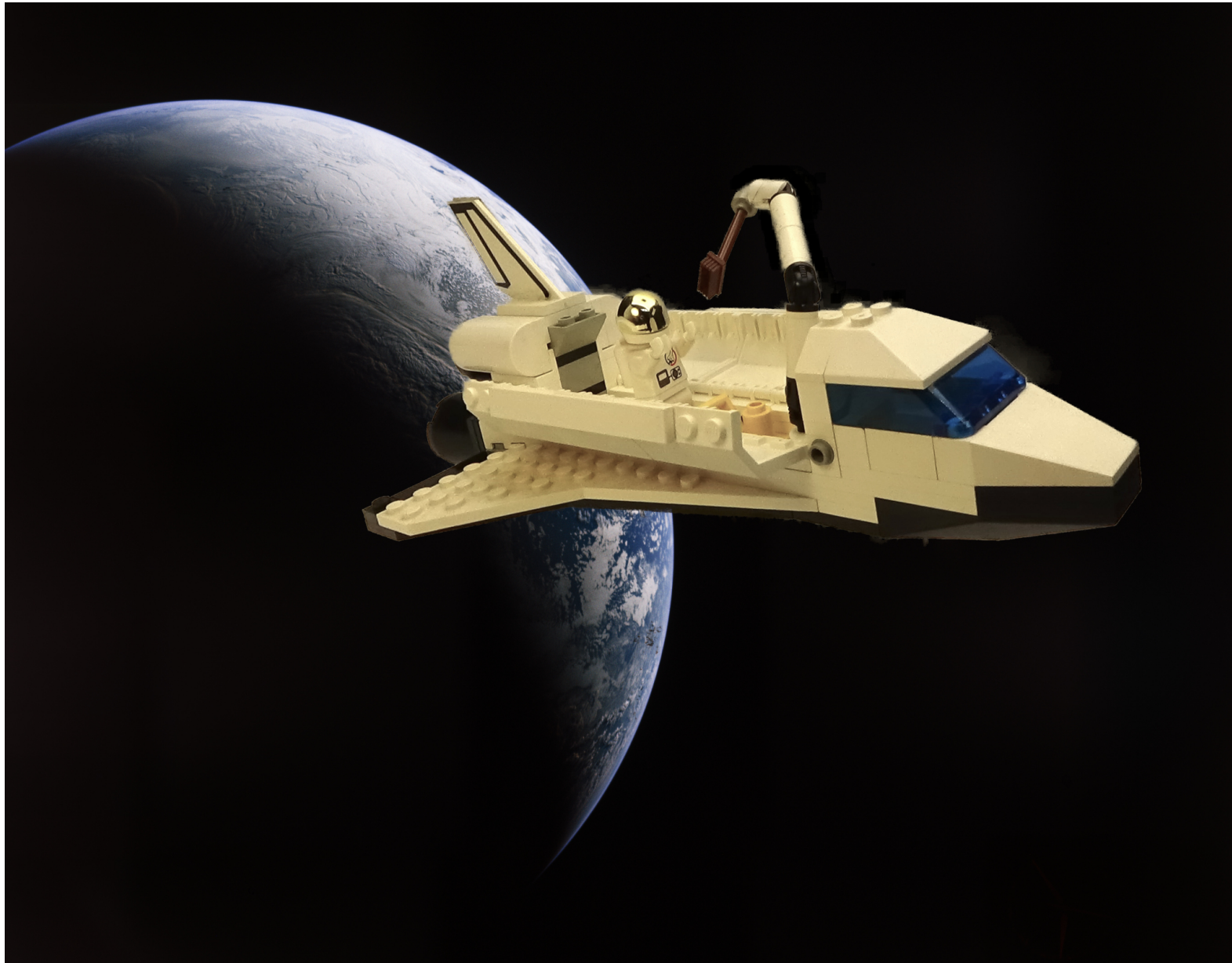


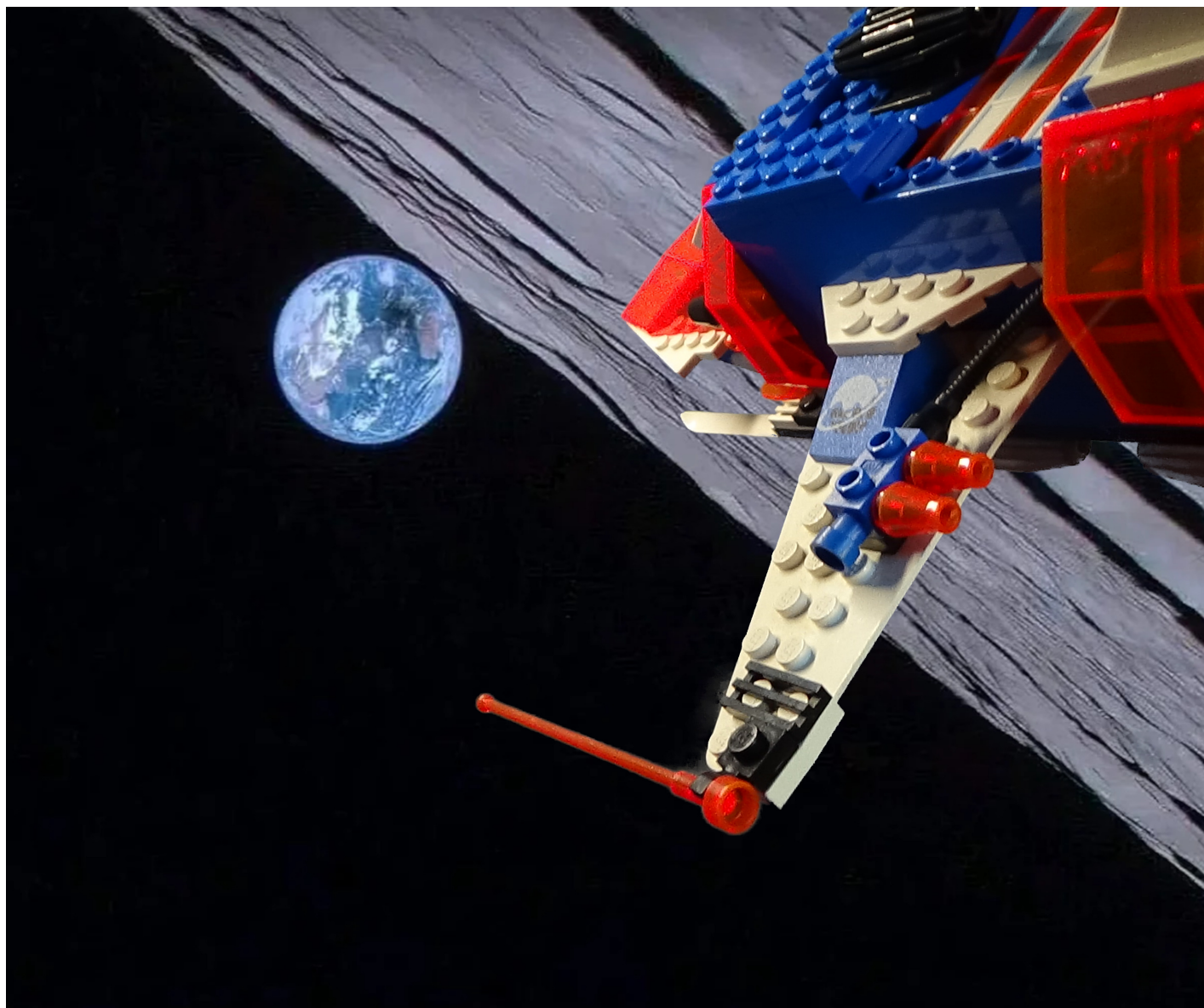
Ed White was the second human to do a spacewalk (EVA), on 3rd of July 1965. The emptiness of space was conquered, path to the Moon was finally open for the humankind!



Just like the king conquered his fear from not wearing the nappy, or like Ed and Alexei conquered their fears of the nothingness of space, will Maks conquer his fears also? Surely he will!







Metadata

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