

Beached

by Isaac Seder

Part 1

There's nothing worse than playing Action Man with my brother Ed. It's the hottest day of the year and he wants an adventure.

"Action Man is going to melt if you bring him outside," I say, pretending to burn my finger on the sidewalk. Ed just shakes his head.

"No way," he says. "Action Man has an insulated super suit."

"Okay, Ed," I say, "Let's go to the beach."

"I'd rather stay here," he says, "and play Action Man undercover."

I just ignore him and stuff my backpack with two towels, water, some oranges, and a couple of sandwiches. The subway is mobbed, and I have to keep telling Ed it will be great when we get there. Then we get there.

Part 2

Every square inch of sand is covered with a beach blanket, a chair, or a stranger in a swimsuit. Thousands of people are jammed into the sand.

"I hate the beach," says Ed, "and so does Action Man."

"Well, it's a good thing he's not here," I say.

Then my brother pulls Action Man out of his pocket. "What do you mean?" he says. "Action Man is here. I never go anywhere without him."

I just grab Ed's hand and pull him into the crowd. We find a tiny patch of sand with room for one towel. Then we run to the water. It hardly seems possible, but it's even more crowded in the ocean. You can't take three steps without bumping into somebody. Ed's lip trembles, and he almost cries.

Part 3

I grab his hand again and head back to our towel. Someone has set up a chair on top of it, so we dig it out and head for the boardwalk, but the shops are overflowing with people. Ed's lip is quaking when I spot a break in the boardwalk. We crawl through and discover a secret shaded patch of bliss. It's quiet, empty, and cool—the perfect spot.

Ed's mood perks up right away. "Action Man is a desert explorer!" he announces, plunging the plastic figure headfirst into the sand.

"He'll never find the secret orb of Dr. Doom," I say, holding one of the oranges behind my back. And all at once, in the cool shade under the boardwalk, playing Action Man with my brother doesn't seem so bad.

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Resource Links RDI Book 1: p. 372

SAM Keywords: Setting

Analyze Setting

The **setting** is the time and place of a story. The setting can affect events in the plot, the mood of a story, and the way a character behaves.

Use this chart to show effects of the setting.

Passage: _____

Place

Time

| Details About the Setting | How the Setting Affects the Story |
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