

Jason Francis ran home from school to pack for the family vacation. They were going to the beautiful beaches of Florida this summer. This trip had to be better than visiting Aunt Melissa and Uncle Ron in Utah, which is where they had gone last summer. Utah would have been fun but Aunt Melissa wouldn't let Jason climb mountains. She didn't want him to get hurt.

The next morning, the Francis family set out for Florida in Mom's big station wagon. Mom and Dad sat in the front seat with maps and a thermos of coffee. Jason and Ruffles, his pet dog, sat in the middle section, and Lonnie, Jason's little sister, sat in the very back with her toys.

On the way there, they saw many sights. Big farms with rows and rows of cotton and corn were scattered throughout Alabama. There were streams and lakes and a few big cities. Jason saw some boys riding horses and wished he lived on a farm. There were also many fruit stands. Dad stopped to see what they were selling. Jason and Lonnie saw melons, oranges, onions, grapes, and plums.

When they finally got to the motel, it had begun to rain. Mom suggested they play cards in the motel room until it stopped. Lonnie and Jason played until the sun came out. Then they put on their swimsuits and ran to the beach.

They could not believe their eyes. They saw shiny, purple shells everywhere. Jason chased sea gulls up and down the beach as Lonnie ran from the little white sand crabs.

Mom and Dad came down to the beach with a kite that Dad had bought for them as a surprise. It was green and white and had a long

tail. They each spent time flying the kite in the strong wind from the Gulf of Mexico.

Jason and Lonnie made fabulous castles from the sand and shells while Mom and Dad took pictures. Jason knew it would be difficult to pack up and return home at the end of their vacation.

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