

The Staycation Situation



Ruthie Finney Age 12

One thing you should know about me is that I love summer. It's my favorite season. My sister loves it too. She pretty much likes anything I do. This year we are going to the beach for our summer vacation. I can picture my name written in the sand on the beach, the crashing waves, the sea salt smell. It will be great. "Charlie! Can you come here please? Bring Rosie too!" my mom yells from the kitchen.

"Ok! Coming!" I yell back. Rosie is my sister's name. She's seven years old. I'm Charlotte. I'm twelve years old. Rosie couldn't quite pronounce my name when she was little so I got stuck with the nickname Charlie. I love it though. It's got a nice ring to it. Charlotte Onerboxer. Or Charlie Onerboxer.

I run into Rosie's room. She's laying on the floor playing on her i-pad. I realize I'm in trouble. Rosie *hates* it when you force her to get off her i-pad. It's the same with barbies and playing outside. She has a disease called autism. Autism is hard to explain. It's like a mental issue where you can't be focused and have a hard time socializing with others. She can't make eye contact and she *does* the same thing over and over again. For example, she memorized the entire movie of *Inside Out*. She quotes lines all the time and sometimes acts out scenes with her barbies. I sometimes have to play with her. She always chooses Joy and I have to be everyone else. It's annoying.

"*I wish I never ran away in the first place!*" I hear on Rosie's i-pad. Inside Out? Again? That used to be my favorite movie until she liked it.

"Rosie, mom wants to talk to us." I say calmly. Rosie turns her head around.

"Why?" she says.

"She wants to tell us something. Can you please come?"

"I'm watching my movie though!"

"I know, but you can pause it and come back to it."

"Fine." Rosie says, pausing the movie. We head downstairs to see what mom wants. She looks at us with a sad expression on her face. *Oh great. Dad probably has to work late again. Whoop-dee-doo.*

"A plane just had a crash landing and hit the station. Everything caught on fire and now we can't go to the beach!" she says. I see a tear roll down her cheek. My eyes start to water. Soon, all the tears will roll down my cheeks. Rosie just stands there. She probably had no idea that we were even going to the beach.

"I already told dad. He has some sympathy for it. I'm sorry, Charlie. I know how much you wanted to go on that trip." mom says hugging me. Rosie sneaks back to her room. I don't see her for the rest of the day.

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I slouch on my bed and stare at my i-pad. I'm still so upset about the beach. I look on *youtube* for a beach background so I can feel like I'm there. I hit play and listen to the palm trees blowing in the wind. Suddenly, I hear a knock on my door. "Yes?" I say. Rosie slips inside.

"I made something for you." she says. She slips back out of the door again. I have no choice but to find out what it is. I walk out of my bedroom and down the stairs. I look around and see darkness. All the lights are out. I hear the lights click and I see Rosie in a grass skirt hula dancing in front of some hand-drawn palm trees. I also see a sign that says "Welcome to Florida Charlie!". Rosie really did think of everything. I start crying again. I run up and hug Rosie.

"Thank you so much!" I say to her. She hands me a grass skirt too and we start to hula dance together. Even though Rosie is different, she is still a person. You have to respect her, just like we all respect and be kind to others.

This really is the best vacation ever. Or should I say staycation...