

- 3 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Improve this text by rewriting the underlined clauses or sentences with *there* or *it*, as in the example.

Book of the week

The Beach

BY ALEX GARLAND

(0) People say that somewhere in the tropical waters of Asia lies an uninhabited island with a perfect beach. Rich in animal and plant life, surrounded by virgin jungle and watered by sweet underground springs, the beach could be the setting for an idyllic and easy life.

The Beach is the story of a young man who yearns for, seeks out and eventually finds just such a place. (1) But to discover that, far from being the source of contentment and inner fulfilment that he expects, the beach turns out to be a place of savage violence, terror and death, comes as a shock.

Alex Garland takes the reader on an exotic journey from the steaming tourist-packed hostels of the Khao San Road in Bangkok to the laid-back islands of the remote seas around Thailand. (2) Not to be impressed by the author's skill in describing the unfamiliar oriental locations and his ability to empathise with the obsessions of today's young backpacking 'new-age' travellers is difficult.

Taking in personal memories of the Vietnam war, jealousy, shark-infested waters, the psychological dynamics of communal living and the clash of cultures, Garland spins a tale which both enchants and shocks the reader. (3) What gives the novel its haunting sense of unease and horror is the author's unique blend of these disparate elements.

(4) It contains all the traditional ingredients that make up a successful thriller: an exotic location, a central mystery, good versus evil, and dangers around every corner. (5) In the book is a strong sense of good and evil. (6) but to decide who is right and who is wrong Garland leaves to the reader. (7) Few moral certainties exist in this exotic corner of the world.

Events unfold at great speed, and be warned, (8) to put this book down once you have started it is impossible. With an international cast of well-observed characters Garland creates a nail-biting narrative that keeps the reader hooked until the final bloody climax.

0 *It is said that somewhere in the tropical waters of Asia lies an uninhabited island with a perfect beach.*

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