Correcting Dangling Modifiers

Sometimes in a sentence it is difficult to tell what a modifying word or phrase is describing. That modifying word or phrase is called a dangling modifier.

Example: Working hard all afternoon in the kitchen, the cake I baked tasted terrible.

Working hard all afternoon in the kitchen is a modifying phrase. It is difficult, however, to understand who or what worked hard: *the cake* or *I*. Obviously the cake can't work hard, so the phrase must be modifying *I*. This confusion is the basis of a dangling modifier.

Correcting a dangling modifier often requires more than just moving words around. Usually the correction requires adding a word or phrase or rewording the sentence.

I worked hard all afternoon in the kitchen, and the cake I baked tasted terrible.

OR

Even after working hard all afternoon in the kitchen, I baked a terrible tasting cake.

Rewrite each of the following sentences correcting the dangling modifier.

1. After centuries of lying on the ocean floor, the treasure hunters found the Spanish galleon.

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2. Watching carefully for hours, the flock of butterflies never arrived.

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3. Thirsty, the glass of water was swallowed in one gulp.

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4. Driving down the street, the park came into view.

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5. Resolving to study more, the textbooks seemed more interesting.

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