

Transcript for Story On Podcast: When the Eggs Hatch... - Setting (Where)

Chapter 1: Opening

Hello friends! And welcome to Story On!

I'm Laura, your host and I am so glad that you are able to join us here today!

(Laura): Today we have a special guest who's going to talk to us about the setting of a story! Welcome! Would you like to say your name and something special about yourself?

(Margot): Hi, I'm Margot and I like unicorns!

(Laura): Oh, that's neat Margot! Thanks for helping us out today! Are you ready to talk about setting?!

(Margot): Yeah! Let's get started! The setting of the story tells us the time and place that the story happens.

(Laura): That's right! So, knowing details about when and where the story unfolds helps us to understand the bigger picture of the story.

Today, when we talk about the setting of a story, we're just going to focus on the places that the story unfolds. We'll look closer at time in another episode.

Sometimes, a story takes place only in one location, like if the whole story unfolded in a classroom, but, most of the time, the characters move around and visit different places throughout the story. Listen carefully during my story and see how many places it happens in.

I will tell you the setting of my story by using describing words so that you can easily imagine what the characters see, hear, smell and feel. Pay special attention to any describing words that I use. I'm going to ask you later if you can remember any!

Thanks for talking with me about setting today, Margot! Would you like to set us up for the story?

(Margot): Thanks for having me! Now, time for the story.

[fading chimes]

Chapter 2: Story

This is When the Eggs Hatch...

“Race you to the water!” John yelled over his shoulder, as his feet thumped loudly down the dirt path just around the corner from the neighborhood pond.

“Alright, see you there!” Clara shouted, as she sped past her little brother and rounded the corner to the pond. Her footsteps kicked up the dry dirt path, leaving a cloud of dust trailing in the air after her.

A few minutes later, John joined her at the pond, panting heavily. Oh, he wanted so badly to beat her someday.

Clara gave him a sympathetic smile and patted John briefly on the shoulder. “Good try, buddy,” she said encouragingly. “Maybe next time.”

John bent over and coughed quietly. [cough cough] “Water,” he choked.

Clara handed him his water bottle from her backpack.

It was mid-spring in their peaceful, small town.

Clara and John so loved playing at their cute little neighborhood pond, especially during this time of year.

So many little creatures were just waking up or being born after a long and cold winter. The water was bursting with life.

Tiny fish flickered back and forth. Water bugs zipped around on the pond’s surface. Tall grasses and budding trees, surrounded by bright wildflowers, tightly enclosed the small pond, drawing large black and blue dragonflies and silky yellow and black butterflies.

There was a constant hum of activity in the air, from the buzzing of insects, to the joyful singing of birds, and the chirping of crickets.

But today, Clara and John had come hoping to find some eggs. Tiny little frog eggs, or even little tadpoles. They LOVED frogs and were fascinated by their lifecycle from eggs to tadpole to frog.

The kids wanted so badly to take some eggs home and watch the frogs develop, before releasing them back to the wild. This was the third weekend in a row that they had come to the pond with the goal of catching frog eggs.

“I’ve got a good feeling about today,” nodded Clara optimistically, hands on her hips, chin high in the air, as she stood on her tippy toes and peered into the shallow water

near the edge of the pond. "Remember, we're looking for masses of eggs. They'll be in bunches and will be mostly see-through. Cloudy. Kinda look like jelly with a dark spot in the middle. Or, even with a little tail starting to stick out as they turn into tadpoles. They'll be near the edge of the pond, where the water is shallow... and make sure to look carefully around plants. They could be hidden nearby."

John stood next to Clara, listening intently as he raised to his tip toes, leaning forward above the water. A dragonfly buzzed quickly past him, just missing him. John jerked his body away in surprise. He lost his balance, stumbled to the right, then to the left and...splash!

He landed with a plop down in the cool water of the pond right on his bottom. Classic John. He always seemed to be falling down or running into things for no apparent reason. He's just super clumsy.

He quickly stood up, water dripping down his legs. He looked at his feet as he stood in the pond. The water was shallow here. It went up just above his ankles. His sneakers were totally soaked. He sighed. [ugh]

"Are you ok?" Clara asked from the edge, trying not to giggle.

"Yeah, just lost my balance...." John's voice trailed off as he looked down in the water just in front of him. "Clara! I think I see something!!" he shouted, excitedly. "Right here, next to this rock" He pointed with his right hand and bent down closer.

"What is it!? Eggs???" Asked Clara, keenly. From outside the pond, Clara craned her neck but couldn't see. The rock was in the way.

"I think so!" answered John, "There's a little clump with maybe 5 or 6 jelly-looking things, just like you said! Pass me the jar!!!"

Clara hurriedly unzipped the backpack and removed the large glass mason jar they had brought from home.

"Scoop them up with this, and make sure to get lots of pond water too!" she instructed, as she stretched her arm out as far as she possibly could, holding the jar out to John.

He quickly took the jar and dipped it into the water carefully, his eyebrows frowning as he concentrated with all his might.

"Got 'em!!" he announced, satisfied. He tightly screwed the lid on and began making his way out of the pond, the water sklooshing around in his shoes as he stepped out.

“Let’s get these babies home!” cheered Clara, as she took the jar from John and smiled triumphantly. They high-fived.

Clara looked closely at the eggs in the jar. They were each about the size of a marble.

“Huh bigger than I thought they’d be,” she commented, shrugging. “We’ll have to come back for more pond water, to fill the tank,” she added, as she slipped the straps of her backpack over her shoulders and carefully held the jar in her hands.

They walked slowly home, excited to watch the cloudy little eggs change into tadpoles and then frogs.

“I wonder how long it will take!?” said John, as his wet sneakers squished and squashed with each step.

Clara shrugged happily, “I have no idea!”

After about an hour, Clara and John had the little bunch of eggs all settled in to their temporary new home.

Clara had quickly peddled back and forth on her bike, hauling pond water in mason jars that she had carefully carried in her bike basket. She even brought a couple big rocks and water plants to make the aquarium as much like home as possible for the little eggs.

John had worked on setting everything up in the rectangular tank in the bedroom that they shared.

Clara and John knelt down at the tank, looking closely at the eggs. They looked pretty cozy in there. The little bunch of eggs was all settled down on the bottom of the tank, lying on the little rocks and against a small log.

“Kids! Lunch tiiiiime!” came their mother’s voice from down the hall in the kitchen.

“Coming!” they answered in unison. All the excitement had sure worked up their appetite!

Before long, Clara and John returned with full bellies and happy hearts, excited to observe the upcoming changes in their soon-to-be frog friends.

Clara wanted to learn more about the life cycle of frogs. She pulled out her big book about frogs and plunked down on her bed and began flipping through the pages.

She quickly found the section on eggs, near the beginning of the book. She looked closer at the eggs on the page.

They looked different. Smaller. Like, way smaller. And the clumps in the book had way more eggs than the little clump of 5 or 6 that she and John had found in the pond.

“Must be a different type of frog?” she wondered out loud, frowning.

“Clara! Come look at the eggs! Do they look bigger to you??” called John from next to the tank.

“Bigger?! We only got them an hour ago!” Clara laughed as she walked over to see. “Come on, John! I know you’re excited but...” Clara’s voice trailed off.

They did look bigger. Significantly bigger. Now they were about the size of chicken eggs. An hour ago they were marble size!

“How is that even possible?? And are they supposed to be that big!? Frogs are pretty small creatures! Their babies have to be teeny tiny, don’t they?!” Clara questioned as she quickly went back to her bed and picked up the book again. “I mean, do eggs even grow? Do they more than double their size in less than an hour!? Can frog eggs be the size of a chicken egg!? That doesn’t sound right....” She had so many questions!

Clara was quickly skimming the words, looking for more information about eggs.

“Clara!” John called again; his voice excited. “One of the eggs is starting to swim around!”

“What do you mean, SWIM AROUND?!” Clara asked, throwing down the book once again as she scurried over to the aquarium.

Clara and John watched in amazement as one of the eggs floated slowly around the tank. It did appear to be swimming. It made its way up from the bottom, crashed softly into the end of the tank, and then continued raising up higher and higher in the water as it floated to the other end of the tank.

Clara and John looked at each other, eyes wide. Was the egg about to turn into a tadpole right in front of their eyes!? The kids had just gotten the eggs and they were already about to transform!?

They giggled excitedly, [giggling] then focused back on the egg. It seemed to be wiggling as it floated around.

“It’s starting to change!” John whispered excitedly.

The egg wasn't round anymore. There was a little pointy part pushing down from the bottom. The point stuck out more and more until...pop! The egg burst and a little tail looking thing hung down in the bottom. The rest of the creature was curled up tightly in a ball.

"Huh? That doesn't look like a tadpole, does it...?" John was confused.

They had been expecting the egg to grow a tail, not to pop. It was hard to tell what the little guy actually looked like.

Clara was about to agree that it didn't seem like a tadpole, but she noticed some movement in the bottom of the tank. The other eggs were floating around now too. They must be getting ready to hatch too.

"John! Look at the others!" she whispered.

Now that the eggs weren't clumped together, it was easier to tell how many there were. One had already hatched and four more were floating around the tank.

"One and four more make five," John said aloud. Five little creatures who were seeming less and less likely to be frogs.

One by one, the other eggs quickly popped. Five little creatures floated around in the tank now.

They were all curled up like the first one, with a pointy tail hanging down and still pretty translucent. Kind of like frosted glass. It was impossible to make out any details about their bodies, especially with them curled up tightly in little balls.

"Clara, these aren't tadpoles..." John said slowly.

Clara nodded in agreement. "Yeah, you're right about that, John."

"What... are they?" John asked slowly.

Clara shook her head. "I don't know, John. My guess is some kind of lizard...but the size of the eggs is really confusing me. Why don't you keep observing them while I grab the computer and see what I can find? Let me know if anything changes, ok?"

John nodded, looking serious. He crouched down in front of the tank, eyes on the mysterious little creatures.

Clara went to her desk and turned on her computer, her back to John and the aquarium.

“Ok, so the most likely possibility is lizard,” she thought to herself, thinking back to the way the first little guy had seemed to use a kind of pokey tail to pop open the egg.

She typed lizard eggs in the search bar and pressed enter. She clicked on the images. There were a ton of pictures that came up.

Each one was filled with bright little white eggs. Not clear, like the ones they’d found. Also, none of them were in water. They were all in soil.

And none of the eggs looked to be anything close to the size the ones Clara and John had found. Nowhere near chicken egg size.

She sighed and tapped her fingers thoughtfully on her desk. “What else could they be? Snake eggs? No, the babies weren’t slithery like a snake...”

Clara turned around to look over her shoulder at John and the tank. “Any changes over there, John? They don’t seem to be lizards, either.”

John didn’t answer. Clara realized that he was standing up, slowly backing away from the tank, mouth gaping open, shaking his head slowly.

Clara jumped up, “What is it John! What do you see!?” She felt a lump growing in her throat. Her heart started to pound. John looked like he’d seen a ghost! And he wasn’t answering her. He just kept backing up and shaking his head, eyes wide.

She’d never seen him react like that to something. He did tend to scare fairly easily. But he was more of a screamer. This silent thing was creeping her out.

Clara bent down and peered into the tank, worried about what she might see. What could possibly cause John to react like that!? Was there something wrong with the babies? Are they some kind of poisonous creature? Something dangerous!? She gulped as she scanned the water for something disturbing.

She saw one of the curled-up babies. It looked just as it had before. Clara’s eyes quickly darted around the tank, searching for the other babies.

Another one by the little log. It hadn’t changed either. There were two more in the far-left corner. That made four. Nothing weird going on with them either.

Clara started to relax a little. Now, where was the last one.... She leaned in closer to the tank.

“Where are you hiding, little guy?” she whispered.

Out of the corner of her eye, she noticed some movement at the top of the tank, just out of the water. It was like a stretch? Or I don't know...a flutter?

"Huh?" She curved her neck and tilted her head to the left to get a better view.

It was a stretch. And a flutter. She screamed, "Ahhhhhhh!!!!" and quickly backed away from the tank.

She looked quickly over at John, eyes wide, her mouth gaping open, shaking her head just as John had done a moment earlier.

Now she understood. Now she knew why John had reacted like that. It was now quite clear what they had inside the tank.

She looked back to the movement. Wings. Opening and closing, stretching. On a scaly little body with a long and pointy tail. The color was starting to show now. Blue with yellow shimmery scales. The scales were becoming more and more visible. The curve of the spine and the small little head. Yes, it was quite clear now what Clara and John had unknowingly brought into their home and put in the aquarium.

These were definitely not frogs. Not even close. She and John looked at each other and then back at the tank, hearts pounding and eyes wide.

"B-b-b-baby dragons. Baby dragons. Five baby dragons. In our room. Baby dragons in our room! BABY DRAGONS IN OUR.." John seemed to be getting over the shock of the situation and moving on to panic.

"JOHN! I know! I know, John. There are five baby dragons in our room. Don't panic, ok? We'll figure this out... We'll figure this out, together," Clara tried to reassure John, but her voice sounded shaky.

Listening carefully, Clara realized the dragon was making a quiet chattering sound.

And it was continuing to grow at an alarming rate. It was about the size of an adult's hand now, probably two hands with its wings spread.

"Clara, look!" John's whisper brought Clara's focus back to the other side of the tank.

Two of the other dragons had floated to the top. Their dragon bodies were now more distinct. They were coming out of the water.

Settling in on either side of the corner, their feet on the glass, they began stretching and fluttering their wings like their older sibling.

“B-b-b-baby-baby dragons” John began. Clara quickly covered his mouth with her hand.

John looked at Clara, Clara looked at John. She lowered her face till she was eye level with John.

“Listen, John. Do you hear me? We gotta get them out of here. And quickly!” Clara whispered firmly. “Let’s take this one step at a time, Ok, bud? First step is just get them out of here. We already got them in here. That was super easy. So, we just need to do that again. Except this time, we’ll take them out - instead of in! I mean, sure they were cute little eggs before... and now they’re baby dragons...but we just have to take a deep breath and get them out! Then we’ll figure out the next step. OK?”

John took a deep breath and nodded. “Ok, ok. How do we get them out?” he asked.

Clara scanned the room. The tank was too heavy for them to carry with all that water in it. They needed some other kind of container, something large enough to hold five baby dragons, without being too heavy.

Oh, and they definitely needed a lid. You know to keep the dragons from flying out.

Clara took a deep breath and ran over to the closet. She grabbed the door knob and opened the door quickly and confidently. Luckily, they had just organized their closet last weekend and nothing came crashing down.

“I’m pretty sure scaring baby dragons with loud noises would be a no-no,” Clara thought to herself, smiling.

Now that the initial shock had worn off, she was beginning to feel more like herself. Remembering that she is a great problem solver helped too. I mean, she had to be smarter than a handful of baby dragons, right!?

And speaking of dragons! They had actual dragons in their house! That’s much more exciting than frogs! How many people get to see baby dragons hatch!?

I mean sure, they could probably burn down her house with a single sneeze but...

“Oooh, perfect!” she muttered quietly as her eyes came upon a blue plastic storage container.

It had a lid (check) and was not see-through, which was a bonus. Just in case they came across any adults, they wouldn’t be able to see what was inside the container.

Clara quietly removed the lid. She looked over her shoulder to John and motioned for him to come over.

“Help me QUIETLY take this stuff out,” she instructed. Emphasis on quiet. John could be pretty clumsy and noisy at times. Ok, pretty much all the time. But with his help, they could get it done much quicker and get those fearsome baby dragons out of their house faster.

John nodded quickly. “I can be quiet,” he responded, determinedly. They carefully emptied the contents of the container.

John gave himself a silent little pat on the back for not messing up.

Now all five baby dragons were stretching their wings near the top of the tank. Thank goodness there was a pretty solid cover on there.

The babies all seemed to be watching closely as Clara and John walked over. They were definitely paying attention. As they watched, the babies continued to stretch and flutter their wings, while making little cooing noises.

Now that they were all making the baby dragon noises, it was actually pretty loud. But, also pretty cute. What is it about babies that makes everything they do just so incredibly delightful!?

How were they going to get the babies out of the tank and into the container.....they looked around the room thoughtfully. What could they use?

“I know!” John whispered, kind of loudly. “How about a toy? Babies love toys! We could put something in the container that they’d like to play with!” John was proud. It was a good idea.

All five babies were facing Clara and John, watching intently. They looked very curious. Just like human babies.

“Since they’re all watching anyway, maybe we can kind of hold things up and see how they react?” Clara suggested, shrugging.

John walked over to his toy bin and lifted the lid. He dug around inside it, “Hmmm what would a baby dragon look for in a toy...” he wondered as he searched.

He picked up his stuffed green dinosaur. “Similar dangerous giant reptile kind of vibe,” he said, raising one eyebrow. “Wait! Too flammable!” His favorite stuffy going up in flames was not on his *to-do* list today. He tossed the dino to his bed.

“Ok, something less combustible....Maybe something plastic? Or metal....” His baseball bat was metal but not very fun for a baby dinosaur....he wasn’t having much luck in there.

“John!” Clara called. She’d been looking in her toy bin too. “I think I may have found something that we could try!”

She held up two hard plastic balls with spikes all over them. One was pink and the other blue and they made a glorious squeaking sound when squished, and flashed brightly when bonked.

John nodded, head to one side. “Could work! Let’s ask them.”

Clara walked over to the tank, holding both balls. The dragons all watched attentively. She held up both hands to show them the balls. One was in each hand.

The dragons looked from one hand, to the other hand, blinking and chattering away in their baby language. Then, bop! Clara banged the balls together. The balls squeaked and lit up.

The baby dragons went wild! They were thrilled! They bobbed their heads up and down, feet still clinging to the glass in that weird way and chattered even louder as they flapped their wings quickly. Clara and John smiled at each other. This may just work.

“Ok, we’ve still got to hurry!” Clara reminded John. Now that they’d gotten over the initial shock of having baby dragons in their room, they were feeling more comfortable and less afraid.

After all, the babies hadn’t done a single scary thing since they’d been born! But, they did still have to get the dragons out sooner rather than later.

Clara tossed the two balls into the storage bin. John walked over to the tank. He looked at Clara and she nodded. Time to open the lid and move to step two...getting the dragons into the container.

John slowly removed the cover, looking at Clara, eyes wide.

“Come on little dragons,” Clara coaxed, “Don’t you want to play with those fun, flashy balls? Why don’t you go get ‘em! Go get ‘em!”

You know how you use a special voice when you talk to human babies and cute little puppies? Well, it turns out the same voice applies to baby dragons.

The babies flapped their wings and bobbed their heads as they chattered excitedly.

Suddenly one of the dragons flapped its wings with a powerful fwosh. It raised up over the glass tank and soared kind of awkwardly into the air.

Clara and John watched in amazement! The baby's first flight!!! Then, crash! It bumped right into Clara's shoulder! She instinctively reached out and caught it, holding it in the palm of her hands, at eye level. She and the baby dragon locked eyes.

"I am holding a baby dragon! You are a baby dragon!" she whispered gently to the baby.

It cooed and clicked its tongue before spreading its wings again and flying down into the container.

Clara and John looked at each other excitedly. Clara had just CAUGHT a baby dragon! And their plan was working! In the bin, the baby began nudging the ball with its nose.

Another baby took off for its first flight. Clara and John quickly moved across the room. They didn't want another dragon collision. They watched, holding their breath, as the baby landed with a thump in the bin.

Clara and John quietly high fived. Two down, three more to go.

"Look! Here come two more!" John said, pointing.

"And the last one!" Clara added eagerly.

They looked down into the bin as the five baby dragons happily pushed the two balls around. The babies were having an absolute blast in there.

Smiling, John closed the lid. "Time for step three," he announced.

Carrying the dragons out of the house. Clara nodded and took a deep breath. They stood on either end of the container.

"Count of three and we lift," Clara ordered. "One, two, three!"

They slowly and steadily lifted the container. It kind of wobbled as the dragons ran around in there but wasn't too heavy.

The kids entered the hallway, John walking first and facing backwards, Clara guiding them. They gracefully turned the corner. Not so much as a bump or a stumble. John was doing great! Now they were just steps away from the entryway.

“Almost to the door!” Clara whispered encouragingly. John nodded, his face remaining focused.

Steadying the container with one hand and carefully reaching behind for the doorknob, John’s fingers began to slip off the handle.

He tried desperately to hold on but... BOOM! The container thumped onto the floor right at the doormat.

The force of the bump raised the lid...just enough...for a sneaky baby dragon to fly out.

As it soared into the air... there were footsteps coming from the kitchen.

“What the...!? Is that....a.....b..b.bbbb...BABY DRAGON!?!?!” It was their mother. She stood frozen in the hallway. John and Clara looked at each other in panic.

“Ugh...Remember the frog eggs we found in the pond today!? Surprise! Turns out they’re....dragon eggs...” Explained Clara cautiously. “But we’ve got it under control! I mean...sort of...”

Clara’s eyes followed the escaped baby dragon who was now somehow perched in the middle of the wall. It flapped its wings.

Their mother seemed to shake off the shock of the whole dragon situation pretty quickly.

“How many are there?” she asked, watching the dragon intently.

“Five,” Clara and John answered in unison.

“And the others are in there?” she asked, pointing towards the bin. They nodded. “OK, You guys keep heading out with that container. And keep the lid on tight! I’ll handle this little guy,” she rolled up her sleeves.

Clara and John quickly picked the container back up. “Of course, mom would be on our side!” Clara whispered to John.

“She always has our back!” John smiled in agreement.

They cautiously carried the bin down the stairs and put the container down gently in the grass.

Seconds later, the door opened and out came their mother, cradling a baby dragon with one hand while it happily chattered and nudged the plastic toy unicorn in her other hand. She shrugged and smiled triumphantly.

(Mom): "I know how to take care of babies!" she said, winking. "What next? Where are we taking these guys?"

Clara and John looked at one another. They hadn't gotten that far in their planning. But now that they had the babies outside and the help of their mother, the answer seemed obvious.

"The pond." John replied.

"Oh, I'll bet their mother is looking for them!" Clara added sympathetically.

They loaded the container of baby dragons in the trunk and drove quickly to the pond. Where their adventure had begun just hours earlier.

The kids quickly carried the container over to the edge of the pond.

"The final step," said John, somewhat sadly. "Release the dragons."

Clara slowly removed the lid. The dragons peered out. They began chattering loudly.

Their wings flapped excitedly and one by one, they all took off into the air and flew to the middle of the pond, their noises growing louder.

"Look in the middle!" cried their mom.

Ripples. They started small but got bigger and bigger as the circles cascaded out towards the edge of the pond.

Suddenly, a large head rose out of the water, followed by wings. Their mother. She was beautiful. Absolutely breath-taking. About the size of a small horse. Her body and wings were a beautiful bright aqua, and her scales were a shimmery silver.

She looked incredibly strong and powerful. She opened her mouth wide and bellowed loudly. The babies flew toward her, and instinctively climbed on to her back. She tilted her head back, and breathed out an impressive stream of fire before lowering herself to the water and disappearing into the ripples with a powerful splash.

The kids and their mom looked at each other in astonishment.

"Whoaaaaa," their mother whispered.

“W...w...w.wwww..water dragons....” John stammered.

Clara smiled, “I know bud, I know....”

The END

Chapter 3: Discussion

[Sigh] How remarkable would it be to watch dragon eggs hatch!?

How do you think you would feel if you found yourself with baby dragons in your home?! Would you be scared? Or would you be more focused on the incredible experience??

I think I would be pretty nervous about them burning my house down....

So, remember, today we are focusing on setting, which is where and when a story happens. But we are thinking mostly about place today.

How many places do you remember from this story?

Let’s see, the story starts out at the pond where they find the eggs (that’s the first place) and then they take the eggs to their house (that’s the second place) and then they return the eggs back to the same pond.

So, this story was set in two places.

Did you notice how I described the places to help you imagine them in your mind?

Think all the way back to the beginning of the story when the kids arrived at the pond. Could you imagine what it looked like? Could you imagine what it sounded like? What about the kids’ bedroom at their house?

If you’d like to draw a picture of either of the places from the story, you can send your picture to me laura@storyonpodcast.com.

Today I’d like to say a special thank you to Margot, for helping me to explain setting in a story!

I’d also like to say a big thank you to Athena, for naming my characters Clara and John. I loved those names for this brave sister and brother.

Thanks for joining us today. We hope you'll all come back and listen again soon.

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