

南师一康万馨英语文库

Paul Stewart

The Australian Connection



情系澳洲

Cornelsen

南京师范大学出版社

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by

Paul Stewart

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Contents

CHAPTER ONE: The trip of a lifetime	1
CHAPTER TWO: Hello Australia	6
CHAPTER THREE: The island and the mountain	11
CHAPTER FOUR: The big decision	17
CHAPTER FIVE: The face in the crowd	23
CHAPTER SIX: Into the rain forest	28
CHAPTER SEVEN: Father and son	35
CHAPTER EIGHT: Up to the top. . .	42
CHAPTER NINE: . . . and down to earth	46
CHAPTER TEN: New Year's Eve	53
Names	55

CHAPTER ONE

The trip of a lifetime

Alex sat on his bed and played the **guitar** quietly. The letter, in its official brown **envelope**, lay on his desk unopened. Alex looked at it, but made no move towards it.

He had been waiting for his exam results for eight long weeks. Now that they had finally arrived, he was too nervous to look at them. If he had passed, then everything was going to be **fantastic**. He would not only be able to go to university, but he would also be able to travel. That was all part of the deal. His mum had promised him that if he studied hard and got good grades, she would buy him a return air-ticket to anywhere in the world he wanted to go.

Alex looked across at the photograph on his bedside table. It was a black and white picture of a man and a boy. They were both sitting on the grass next to a pond, and **grinning** into the camera. A toy **yacht** lay on the boy's knees.

Alex **sighed**. He had been two-and-a-half, and his father had left home soon after. He hadn't seen him since then. Now – sixteen years later – he had the chance to meet him once again. So long as he had passed!

“Come on,” Alex said to himself angrily. “What are you waiting for?”

And with that, he **laid** the guitar on the bed, got up and walked over to the letter. His fingers were shaking, as he opened the envelope. The next moment he **screamed** out with **delight**.

“YEAH!!!”

“Oh, that's wonderful news!” his mum **exclaimed**. “Well done, Alex! It's so good to know that you won't make the same mistake that I made.”

guitar [gi'ta:]

n. 吉他

envelope

['envəleɪp] *n.*

信封

fantastic

[fæn'tæstɪk]

adj. 极好的

grin [grɪn] *v.*

露齿而笑

yacht [jɒt] *n.*

游艇

sigh [saɪ] *vi.*

叹气, 叹息

laid [leɪd] (lay

的过去式) *v.*

放, 搁

scream

[skri:m] *v.* 尖

叫, 放声大笑

delight

[di'laɪt] *n.* 高

兴

exclaim

[ɪks'kleɪm] *v.*

呼喊, 惊叫, 大

声说

regret [ri'gret]

v. 后悔, 遗憾

qualification

[ˌkwɒlɪfɪ'keɪʃən]

n. 资格, 合格

证

embarrassed

[ɪm'bærəst]

adj. 窘迫的,

烦恼的

Australia

[ɒs'treɪljə] n.

澳大利亚

nod [nɒd] v.

点头, 同意

criticism

['kritisizəm]

n. 评论, 批评

defensive

[di'fensɪv]

adj. 保护性的

despite

[dis'paɪt]

prep. 不管, 任

凭

optimistic

[ˌɒptɪ'mɪstɪk]

adj. 乐观的

When Alison had married Tom, she had thrown away the chance of going to university. It was a decision she had **regretted** since then.

"Now you can keep studying," she said, "and get some real **qualifications**."

Alex smiled uncertainly. "But next year, yes?" he said.

Alison Reid smiled back. "It's all right," she said. "I haven't forgotten our deal. Have you thought about where you'd like to go?"

Alex looked down. Now that the moment had come, he felt **embarrassed**.

"Well?" she said.

"**Australia**," came the answer.

"Australia," his mum repeated.

Alex **nodded**.

"You want to go and visit your father?" she said.

"Do you mind?" he asked and expected the worst.

But his mum shook her head. "No," she said. "I don't mind. I always knew that one day you'd want to go. It's only natural. In fact, it's a pity Tom has been so bad at staying in contact."

Hearing her **criticism** made Alex feel strangely **defensive** towards the father he had grown up without.

"He's probably very busy," he said.

"Probably," his mum said quietly. "Anyway, I think the best thing now is for you to write him a letter. Tell him what's..."

Alex grinned. "I already have," he said.

Although short, the letter had taken him ages to write. To start with, he hadn't been sure whether to write *Dear Tom* or *Dear Dad*. After a lot of thought, he chose *dad* – after all, he was his father.

What was more, he knew that writing before he had received his exam results might be stupid. **Despite** the danger of being disappointed however, the week before – feeling both **optimistic** and excited – Alex had written.

Up in his room again, Alex wrote his address on the airmail envelope and read the letter through, especially the most important part.

*I'll arrive in the second week of January, and plan to travel around Australia for six months – as long as my **visa** allows. I'd really like to see you.*

visa ['viziə] *n.*
签证

It was all right, but was it clear enough what he wanted? Alex thought not, and added an extra sentence.

Would it be possible for me to come and stay for a little while?

“That’s better,” he said.

Satisfied at last, Alex put the letter into the envelope and took it down to the post-box on the corner. “Please write back soon,” he said **quietly**, as the letter **disappeared** from view.

quietly
['kwaɪətlɪ]

The next few months seemed never-ending. Although his mum was paying for the air-fare, it was **up to** Alex to earn his spending money, and so he had found work in a local factory.

adv. 平静地,
轻声地

KayCee Ltd. made kitchen cleaners, and it was Alex’s job to fill, label and box the various soaps, **bleaches** and **disinfectants** they produced. The people he worked with were nice enough, but the job itself was unbelievably **boring**. Every day, he had to remind himself that it was only **temporary**; that by Christmas he would have saved enough to travel round Australia for six months.

disappear
[,dɪsə'piə] *v.*

不见,失踪
up to 从事于,
正在干

bleach [bli:tʃ]

n. 漂白剂

disinfectant

[,dɪsɪn'fektənt]

n. 消毒剂

boring

['bɔ:riŋ] *adj.*

令人厌烦的

temporary

['tempərəri]

adj. 暂时的,
临时的

The weeks passed, but no word came from Tom. Every morning Alex raced downstairs to check the post; every morning he was disappointed.

“I’m sure he *will* write,” his mum said. “He was never very good at letters,” she reminded him.

“I know,” said Alex sadly.

As Christmas came nearer, Alex’s sadness changed to

due [dju:] *adj.*
应当的, 约定的

triangle
['traɪəŋɡl] *n.*
三角, 三角形
hesitate
['hezɪteɪt] *v.*
踌躇, 犹豫
grab [græb] *v.*
(急速地) 抓住
spare [speə]
adj. 空余的

enclose
[ɪn'kləʊz] *v.*
把……封入
Sydney
['sɪdni] *n.* 悉尼
(澳大利亚城市)

photocopy
['fəʊtəʊkəpi]
n. 照相复制本

worry. Perhaps the letter had got lost in the post. Perhaps the Connells had moved. Or worst of all, perhaps Tom had decided that he didn't want to see his son at all.

Then, on 20th December – two days before he was **due** to stop working at the factory – the letter finally arrived. Alex was brushing his teeth when he heard the postman pushing the post through the letter-box. He hurried to the top of the stairs and looked down.

Lying by the door were several Christmas cards, and in among the white envelopes was a **triangle** of blue. There was no question. It was the corner of an airmail envelope.

This time Alex didn't **hesitate**. He raced downstairs, **grabbed** the letter and opened it.

Dear Alex,

*Sorry I haven't written sooner, but I've been up to my eyes with work. It was great to hear from you, and we're all really looking forward to seeing you – I don't know what your plans are, but we've got a **spare** room and you're welcome to stay as long as you like.*

*By the way, congratulations on doing so well in your exams. Of course, I always knew you were clever. You drew the picture I'm **enclosing** when you were two years and nine months old, and there aren't many children that young who can write!*

*Let me know when you are arriving in **Sydney**, and I'll pick you up at the airport.*

All for now.

Love, Tom

Alex laid the letter down next to the telephone, and slowly opened the piece of paper which Tom had sent with the letter. It was a **photocopy** of a child's drawing.

There were three smiling people – all face and no body. The arms and legs were joined to the heads. Under the first person was the word *mummy*. Under the second, smaller person, Alex. And under the third, *daddy*.

As Alex stared at the picture he could almost remember drawing it. Suddenly his head was filled with other thoughts too, as if the picture had opened a door to the past. He remembered the orange and red ball they'd **kicked** around the park, he remembered sitting on his dad's lap as they went down the water-**chute** at the swimming-pool, he heard his dad as he explained that **wasps sting** but flies don't. And, for the first time, his dad was something more than the man grinning out of the photograph.

This was his real dad. The dad he was going to see in less than a month's time.

There were tears in his eyes as Alex **folded** up the picture and put it back into the envelope.

kick [kɪk] v.

踢

chute [tʃu:t] n.

急流水道

wasp [wɒsp] n.

黄蜂, 马蜂

sting [stɪŋ] v.

刺, 螫

fold [fəʊld] v.

折叠, 对折起来

CHAPTER TWO

Hello Australia

queue [kju:]

v. 排队

confused

[kən'fju:zd]

adj. 混淆的,
疑惑的

guilty ['gilti]

adj. 有罪的

passport

['pɑ:spɔ:t] n.

护照

barrier

['bæriə] n. 栅

栏,海关关卡

ungrateful

[ʌn'greɪtful]

adj. 忘恩负义
的,不领情的

departure

[di'pɑ:tʃə] n.

启程,出发

lounge

['laundʒ] n.

休息室,休息
处

reunion

['ri:'ju:njən]

n. 重聚,团聚

Athens

['æθinz] n. 雅

典(希腊首都)

Singapore

[,sɪŋgə'pɔ:] n.

新加坡

toddler ['tɒdlə]

n. 学步小孩

As Alex **queued** to have his passport checked, he felt more and more **confused**. Half of him was excited about meeting his real father, half of him felt **guilty** about leaving his family behind.

He looked at his **passport** photo. It made him look younger than his eighteen years and the name next to it suddenly looked just as strange. Alexander Patrick Reid. His mum had changed his name from Connell when she'd married again, but Alex had already decided to change it back – as long as Tom didn't mind.

He looked round. His mum and Peter, Lucy and Danny, were still standing at the **barrier**. They waved happily at him.

"Have a wonderful time," Peter called.

Alex smiled as he tried to fight back the tears. He knew he was being **ungrateful**. Peter couldn't have been a better father to him – yet the fact remained that Tom Connell, not Peter Reid, was his real father. And as Alex finally walked through into the **departure lounge**, all he could think about was their coming **reunion**.

Thirty-eight hours later – after stops in **Athens** and **Singapore** – the plane landed at Sydney airport at 7:42, Tuesday, 8th January.

"Alex! Alex!" he heard as he left customs.

When he looked round he noticed a tall woman with two small children. All three were waving at him; but why were there only three of them? Alex wondered. Where was Tom?

"I knew it was you," the woman said. "You haven't changed a bit!" she laughed and showed him the photo of the smiling **toddler**. "I'm Mary," she said. "Tom's wife. And these are our two kids, Dominic and Luke."

"Hello," said Alex. "They're... younger than I thought they'd be," he added to Mary.

"Yeah, six and three," she said. "Tom took a long time to settle down when he got back to Australia," she added.

Alex nodded. "Where is Tom?" he asked.

"He'll be back in a couple of days," said Mary. "He had to go to London on business, I'm afraid. He was..." Mary stopped as she suddenly realized what she had said.

"London?" Alex repeated. "Does he often go to London?"

Mary **looked away**. "Oh, **now and then**," she said **vaguely**. "And the trips are always so **hectic**."

But Alex was not interested in her excuses. Tom had not only never written, but he'd been to London – maybe hundreds of times – and not once got in contact. What kind of a man was his dad anyway?

By the time Alex had **showered**, changed into cooler clothes and had some breakfast, he was feeling less angry. Tom was in London. So what? Alex was going to have a fantastic time in Australia with or without Tom Connell.

"Now, are you sure you wouldn't like to have a sleep?" Mary asked for the tenth time.

Alex shook his head. "I'm too excited," he said.

"What about going swimming, then?" she asked.

"That would be great!" Alex grinned.

Half an hour later, they were all on **Bondi Beach** and put down **blankets** and towels on the hot, white sand. Mary had packed a huge picnic lunch, but Alex was neither hungry nor thirsty. All he wanted to do was get into that deep blue water, gently **splashing** on the sand.

"Be careful of the **rip**!" Mary called out, as he ran down to the water's edge.

Alex stopped. "What's that?" he asked nervously. "A kind of **shark**?"

From the way Dominic and Luke started laughing, Alex

look away 目光转移

now and then 时而, 不时

vaguely

['veigli] adv.

含糊地

hectic

['hektik] adj.

紧张忙碌的

shower

['ʃaʊə] v. 淋浴

浴

Bondi 邦迪(澳大利亚地名)

blanket

['blæŋkit] n.

毯子, 毛毯

splash [splæʃ]

v. 溅水, 泼水

rip [rip] n. 巨

澜, 浪

shark [ʃɑ:k]

n. 鲨鱼

Aussie ['ɔ:si]

adj. 澳大利亚
(的)

current

['kʌrənt] n.

水流

rescue

['reskjʊ:] v.

援救

dart [dɑ:t] v.

急冲,突进

breaker

['breikə] n. 碎

浪,激浪

surf [sɜ:f] v.

冲浪

brilliant

['briljənt] adj.

棒极了

You've

certainly

caught the sun.

你真的被晒黑
了。

incredibly

[in'kredəbli]

adv. 令人难以
置信地

up and down

上上下下

up to date 直到

最近的

babysitter

['beibisɪtə]

n. 照看婴儿者

monster

['mɒnstə] n.

怪物,妖怪

knew at once that whatever else “a rip” might be, it was certainly not a shark.

“It's the **Aussie** word for **current**,” Mary explained. “It can take you right out to sea if you're not careful.”

“I *will* be careful,” Alex promised.

“I'll go with him, mum,” said Dominic and raced down the beach.

Alex smiled at the thought that a six-year-old would be able to **rescue** him. But as he watched the boy while he was **darting** around like a fish, his smile disappeared. The small kid was as much at home in the water as he was on land.

“Come on,” Dominic shouted, as he swam out towards the **breakers**. “I'll show you how to body **surf**.”

“That was **brilliant**,” Alex said over tea, later that afternoon.

“**You've certainly caught the sun**,” said Mary. “If you like, we could go down to one of the beaches south of Sydney tomorrow. Bateman's Bay is nice.”

Before Alex could answer, the back door opened and a girl walked in. She was tall, about his age and – Alex thought – **incredibly** beautiful.

“Hi!” she said.

“Hello, Dani,” Mary said. “Would you like something to drink? This is Alex.”

“Yes, I guessed,” she said as she looked him **up and down**. “I've heard all about you,” she smiled.

“All good, I hope,” said Alex shyly.

She grinned. “But not quite **up to date**,” she said.

“Dani lives next door,” Mary explained. “I don't know what I'd do without her. She's the **babysitter** for our two little **monsters**.”

Dani smiled and turned back to Alex. “So,” she said. “Tell me a little bit about yourself.”

And Alex did. He explained about Tom and his mum, and

how he'd wanted to meet his real dad. And about the air ticket to anywhere in the world if he passed his exams...

"Good-looking *and* clever!" Dani laughed.

Alex turned red. "What do you do?" he said.

"Now you're asking!" Mary said. "Dani's famous. Our local pop star!"

It was Dani's turn to **blush**.

"You're in a pop group?" said Alex. He tried not to sound too **impressed**. "What are they called?"

"*The Beat Crew*," said Dani. "You won't have heard of us in England yet. But you will!" she added.

"You're good then, are you?" Alex said.

"We're on tonight at **Coogee Bay**," she said. "Why don't you come and see for yourself?"

Alex smiled. "Okay," he said.

"So, what did you think?" Dani shouted above the sound of the disco music which had **replaced** the band.

"You were good," he shouted back. "Very good." Alex had known she would ask that question and it was nice not to have to lie. *The Beat Crew* really were good. Two guitars, **saxophone**, **drums** and **keyboards** - Dani was on the keyboards.

"No **criticisms** at all?" she asked.

"Well," Alex said. "The **bass** guitarist's not much good, is he? I could do better than that!"

Dani shook her head. "Awful, wasn't he? He was just standing in for the night. Our **bassist** left for Japan last week and we haven't been able to replace him yet. I..." Dani went quiet as she realized what Alex had just said.

"You play the guitar?" she said slowly.

Alex nodded.

"Do you play well?"

"Not bad," he said **modestly**.

Dani **breathed** in and looked at him. "Right," she said.

blush [blʌʃ] v.

脸红

impressed

[im'prest] adj.

打动的

crew [kru:] n.

成员, 队员

Coogee Bay n.

库吉湾 (澳大利亚地名)

replace

[ri'pleis] v. 取

代, 代替

saxophone

['sæksəfəʊn]

n. 萨克斯管

drum [drʌm]

n. 鼓

keyboard

['ki:bɔ:d] n.

键盘

criticism

['kritizəm] n.

批评

bass [beis] n.

低音部

bassist

['beisist] n. 低

音吉他手

modestly

['mɒdistli]

adv. 谦虚地

breathe

['bri:ð] v. 呼

吸, 敬口气

audition

[ɔ:'diʃən] v.

试演

sensation

[sen'seɪʃən] n.

轰动

stare [steə] v.

盯着

whisper

['wɪspə] v. 低

语

heaven ['hevən]

n. 上帝

"I'll pick you up at one o'clock tomorrow and take you to meet the others. If you can play, we could try you out tomorrow night." She suddenly stopped. "I'm going too fast," said Dani. "Sorry. I'll start again. Would Alex Reid..."

"Connell," said Alex.

5

"Would Alex *Connell* like to **audition** for a place in the up-and-coming pop **sensation**, *The Beat Crew*?"

"Oh, yes," Alex grinned. "He certainly would."

The following night, Alex let himself into the Connells' house quietly. It was past one o'clock, and Mary and the kids were already asleep. Alex made his way to his room, threw himself on the bed and lay **staring** at the ceiling.

10

"That was the best day of my life," he **whispered** happily.

"I'll never forget it."

And to make sure he didn't, he picked up his diary and began writing.

15

11 January - 1:45

I've been in Australia for exactly 66 hours and 3 minutes. And what a time I've had!

Tom wasn't at the airport to meet me (he's in London!!), but Mary, Dominic and Luke have all made me feel really at home. Been body surfing on Bondi Beach. Played my first live concert - \$ 40 to show for it! And met Dani.

20

*Dani Klavans - the most beautiful girl in the world. Long dark hair. Blue eyes. Golden skin. Perfect! Thank **heavens** Tom came from Sydney!*

25

CHAPTER THREE

The island and the mountain

The next morning, Mary woke Alex at 10 o'clock with a cup of coffee.

"Did you have a good night?" she said, as she opened the **curtains**.

Alex **winc**ed at the bright light. Yes, it had been a good night; a very good night – and he had the headache to **prove** it.

"Perfect," he said quietly. "It's a pity it was just for the one night."

"I *am* glad," said Mary. "Now, I had a phone call from Tom while you were out. I'm afraid he's been delayed and won't be back till the 17th."

Alex sighed with **irritation**.

"He wanted to tell you himself how sorry he was," Mary continued. "But you weren't... Anyway, I've had an idea. I think you should use the **opportunity** to see a bit more of the country. My brother lives in **Adelaide** and he's got a son, Kevin, who is your age. If you'd like to go, you're welcome to stay with them. South Australia is beautiful."

A phone call later, it was all arranged. Alex would spend the following week in Adelaide.

It was the **vastness** of the country – so different from anywhere he'd been in Europe – which struck Alex as the **coach** drove through the Australian countryside. There were, of course, small towns along the **route**, but beyond and between them, there were no houses or people to be seen.

Alex closed his eyes and remembered the figures he'd read in his guide book. Australia was the size of **mainland** USA; half as large again as Europe – yet its population was only 15 million. And, with his head full of the wonderful empty

curtain

['kɜ:tən] *n.* 窗帘

wince [wins]

v. 畏缩, 退缩

prove [pru:v]

v. 证明

irritation

[iri'teɪʃən] *n.*

恼怒, 生气

opportunity

[ɒpə'tju:niti] *n.*

机会, 良机

Adelaide 阿德

莱德 (澳洲地名)

vastness

['vɔ:stnis] *n.*

巨大, 广阔

coach [kəʊtʃ]

n. 客车

route [ru:t] *n.*

路线

mainland

['meɪnlænd] *n.*

大陆

landscape
[ˈlændskeɪp]
n. 风景
sleepily
[ˈslɪ:pɪli] *adv.*
昏昏欲睡地

mate [meɪt] *n.*
老兄, 老弟

trainer
[ˈtreɪnə] *n.* 运
动鞋

starve [stɑ:v]
v. 挨饿
sense of humour
[ˈhju:mə] 幽默
感

Kangaroo
Island 坎加鲁
岛 (澳大利亚
岛名)
koalas
[kəʊˈɑ:lə] *n.*
考拉

emu [ˈɪmju:]
n. 高大不飞的
鸟, 鸸鹋
possum
[ˈpɒsəm] *n.*
负鼠
nuisance

[ˈnju:ns] *n.*
讨人厌的东西

landscape that no photograph could ever show, he fell asleep.

It was dark when they finally arrived in Adelaide. Alex picked up his travel bag and **sleepily** left the coach.

“You must be Alex,” came a voice.

Alex looked round. “Kevin Williams?” he said.

5

The young man grinned and held his hand out. “Welcome to Adelaide, **mate**,” he said, and shook Alex’s hand warmly.

“How did you recognize me so easily?” Alex asked. “Do I look that English?”

“Yeah, I can always tell a pom!” Kevin laughed.

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Alex looked down at his jacket, jeans and **trainers**. Did he really look so different? Kevin saw Alex’s confused face and laughed all the louder.

“I’m just joking, mate,” he said. “Aunt Mary told me you’d be carrying a green and yellow bag. Come on, the car’s parked round the corner. Are you hungry?”

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“**Starving!**” said Alex happily. He liked Kevin’s **sense of humour**, and already knew that they were going to get along really well.

As he talked over dinner with the Williams family – mum, dad, Kevin and his three younger sisters – Alex once again felt completely at home. Australians were *so* friendly. And as the meal came to an end, Kevin laid a map on the table and began to explain to Alex all the things he’d planned for that week.

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“I thought we’d take the tent over to **Kangaroo Island** first,” he was saying.

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“Oh, you’ll love it,” said Mr Williams. “The animals there aren’t afraid of people. They’ll eat from your hand.”

“What, kangaroos?” said Alex excitedly.

“And **koalas!**” the three girls added excitedly.

30

“And **emus**,” Mrs Williams said. “And the **possums** can be a bit of a **nuisance!**” she laughed.

Twenty-four hours later, Alex was finding out for himself just what she had meant. All evening their camp-fire was