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Different Seas sample
NOT FOR SALE

DIFFERENT SEAS

Level 3 - A2/B1 Intermediate (1) Graded Reader from I Talk You Talk Press

Copyright

Different Seas

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ISBN: 978-4-907056-54-4

Publisher: I Talk You Talk Press

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A Dangerous Celebration

1. No worries

This is heaven, thought Chrysa. She was lying on a sun lounge under a huge old eucalyptus tree. The sun was hot, but there was a soft breeze. Chrysa could smell the sea air.

I feel so relaxed and happy. I could stay here forever.

She turned her head and looked at Akina. Akina was lying on a sun lounge next to her. Akina had a big sunhat over her face. She was asleep.

“Get it! Get it!” It was Jarmo’s voice. Chrysa sat up, and looked across the grass to the beach. Jarmo and Shelley were playing beach volleyball with Pachai and Hehu.

She watched the game for a while. Blond Jarmo and red-haired Shelley were much shorter than Pachai and Hehu, but it seemed Jarmo and Shelley were winning.

It’s nice to have this time at the beach, thought Chrysa. *We did so much during our first week in Sydney. I loved the bike tours around the harbour, the museums and the great restaurants and bars. And that crazy rugby league match we went to. I didn’t understand the rules, but it was very exciting. This is quiet, but it’s fun too. I love it here in Australia. There is no pressure. No stress. Everyone is so relaxed.*

Chrysa laughed quietly. *Everyone says ‘no worries’. I asked the baggage handler in the airport to lift my bag off the carousel. He smiled at me and said ‘no worries’. When I asked the woman on the front desk of the hotel in Sydney about the weather, she said ‘No worries. It won’t rain today’. That’s why I feel good – no one has any worries. Everything is OK.*

The volleyball match was finished. Shelley was pulling a T-shirt on over her bikini. Jarmo and Pachai were taking down the net. Soon the four friends were walking up from the beach towards the grass in the front of the house.

“Was it a good game?” asked Chrysa.

“Very good,” said Shelley, laughing. “Jarmo and I won!”

“I’m thirsty,” said Pachai. “Does anyone else want a drink?”

“Yes, please,” said Shelley. “Coke would be nice.”

“Coke for me too, please,” said Jarmo.

Jarmo and Shelley sat down on the grass next to Chrysa’s chair.

“I’ll help you,” said Hehu to Pachai. “Chrysa? Do you want anything?”

“Some iced water, please,” answered Chrysa.

Pachai and Hehu went up the steps and into the house.

"This is a magical place," said Jarmo. "We're lucky to stay here. Your mother has very kind friends, Shelley."

Shelley smiled. "Well, I don't know this friend very well. I only met him once. But I guess he is very rich. Big houses like this one in Hawks Nest cost a million dollars, or maybe more."

"Is he your mother's boyfriend?" asked Jarmo.

"I think so. I hope so. My father died almost twenty years ago. My mother must be lonely sometimes."

Pachai and Hehu came onto the grass with two trays of drinks and some snacks.

Jarmo stood up and went to Akina's sun lounge. He lifted the sunhat off her face.

"Wake up!" he said. "Time for a drink and a snack." He took his coke from Pachai and dropped an ice cube on Akina's neck.

"Waaa!" shouted Akina. She sat up and punched Jarmo.

"Ow!" said Jarmo holding his arm. "That hurt!"

Everyone laughed.

"Be careful, Jarmo," smiled Pachai. "Akina is a tiny person, but she can punch very hard. It's dangerous to tease her."

Hehu passed a glass of iced water to Chrysa.

"Thank you." Chrysa smiled at Hehu.

"No worries," answered Hehu.

2. Planning a party

More than 200km away in Darling Point, Sydney, a man and a woman were sitting in the living room of a large modern house. The huge windows were open, and the sun shone through onto the white furniture and the dramatic modern art on the walls.

The woman was casually dressed in a white T-shirt and shorts. She was quite small, and had red hair. She looked about fifty years old. Her name was Barbara Rakena.

The man was older. He had white hair, and was very tanned. He took an open bottle of champagne from the table between them. He poured two glasses and handed one to the woman.

"Are you sure?" he asked. "Are you sure you want to marry me?"

Barbara laughed. "Of course I am sure I want to marry you. Why do you ask?"

"I was thinking about your daughter. I have only met her once. She looks a lot like you. She is an only child. Since your husband died, you have been a family of two. I'm worried she will not want you to marry me."

"Why not? Shelley has a good job here in Sydney. She has many friends. Her school friends and her work friends. And the group that came to Australia last week. Shelley is very close to them too."

"You told me about them. It's unusual isn't it? They are six young people from different countries, and with different lifestyles. And they meet twice a year for a vacation. How did it happen?"

"Well, Hehu is Shelley's cousin. She has known him all her life. He is a farmer from the north of New Zealand. When Shelley was working in London, Hehu went to visit her. They booked a cycling trip in France, but it was cancelled. The others, the young man from Finland, the Indian man who lives in Paris, and the two young women from Japan and Greece planned to take the same tour. Somehow they got together, and rented a holiday house on the coast of Brittany. That's how it started. Then they saved the life of an old Frenchman. When he died, he left money to the six of them in his will. They use it to get together when they can.

"It was nice of you to lend them your beach house in Hawks Nest. Shelley called me yesterday. She said they were having a wonderful time."

The man laughed. "I wasn't nice. I wanted to make sure we would be alone this weekend, so I could propose to you. I want to make a toast."

The man refilled his champagne glass and held it up towards Barbara.

"To Barbara, the future Mrs Bill Curtis."

He drank the champagne. He leant across the table and kissed Barbara.

"I am so happy," he said. "I want everyone to know we are engaged, and plan to marry. Shall we have a big party?"

"I guess so," smiled Barbara. "Will we have it here?"

"We could have the party here, but I was thinking about my yacht. We could have a party on my yacht."

"Your yacht! You have a yacht?" Barbara was very surprised.

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