

**Unrequited love or just a misunderstanding? Will Deshi's story have a happy ending?**

Hi Lang

I'm going to write to you in English from now on because we both need the practice. Thanks for your email. I'm sorry I didn't write back to you before now, but I started school the day after we arrived in Boston and I've been too busy. I hate it here. I can't understand a word that anyone says to me. Their accents are really weird.

I miss Shanghai so much and I miss playing in the band with you. CRASH! were the best rock band ever. I haven't found anyone else to play with yet. I try to practise the guitar, but the neighbour who lives opposite came and complained yesterday. He was furious. He said that his daughter played the violin and my 'dreadful noise' was disturbing her. Then later on, I saw her staring out of the window at me. I think she hates me too. Did I tell you she's really beautiful ...

Hey, I've got to stop now. Mum just got back from work and I haven't finished my homework.

Please write back soon. I want to hear more about what you're doing in London. Have you found anyone to play music with? Can you understand the accent yet?

Deshi

PS: I think I'm in love!

Deshi turned off his computer and opened his English book. He had a pile of homework to do but it was just impossible to concentrate on phrasal verbs and mixed conditionals. He couldn't stop thinking about the girl in the building opposite. She had such beautiful eyes. He opened his bedroom window and looked across the street. Her window was open too and he could hear her practising a classical piece. It sounded really sad and beautiful. She was good. Deshi sighed. 'I bet she hates rock music,' he thought. 'Have you finished your homework yet?' said Deshi's mum, opening the door. 'Hurry up, dinner will be ready in half an hour, and you haven't tidied your room since last week.' Suddenly, Deshi didn't feel very hungry.

That night, Deshi couldn't sleep and he was late for school next morning. He ran out of the house with his shoelaces undone and looked down the street to the bus stop. Oh no! The bus was just leaving. He bent down to tie his shoelaces. There was no point in rushing, he was going to be in trouble anyway. He looked up and, suddenly, there she was! She was sitting in her dad's car with the window open. Deshi dropped his schoolbag and she turned to look at him. He couldn't move. Her eyes were green. He'd never seen anyone with green eyes before. He smiled at her but she just stared at him like he didn't exist. Deshi could feel his face turning bright red. He picked up his bag and ran off down the street.

School didn't go well that day. He failed another maths test and the English teacher shouted at him for daydreaming in class. He had to look up 'daydreaming' in the dictionary. At lunch time, he couldn't eat. The

food in the cafeteria was disgusting. How could they eat this stuff? And then, worst of all, he had to stay late after school for extra English and that made him miss the bus again. He decided to walk home; he needed to think. He was crossing the park near his street, thinking about his school back in Shanghai and his friends. He thought about his dad too and that just made him feel worse. His dad had died three years ago. He was an engineer and there had been an accident at work. He wished they didn't have to live in Boston, but Mum had to go where the company sent her. Then he saw her ... She was just sitting on a bench with her dog. Deshi froze. 'Oh no, she's seen me,' he thought. 'OK, be brave!' he urged himself. He smiled and waved at her but she completely ignored him again. 'Idiot!' he said to himself. 'Why did I wave? Now she really hates me.' Later that evening, Deshi was practising blues scales on the guitar with the headphones on. His friends in Shanghai thought he was really good. It was his idea to start a band with his friend Lang and they'd even done a concert at school. But now he didn't want anyone to hear him playing, especially her. He was thinking about getting a classical guitar when his mum came into the room. She was holding a letter. 'The postman has delivered this to the wrong flat,' she said. 'It's for the building opposite. Can you take it across while I'm cooking dinner? And for the last time, will you please tidy your room!' 'OK, Mum!' he said. Deshi put down his guitar. Now, on top of everything, he felt guilty too. Mum looked really tired. She was out working all day and then she came home and had to cook for him. Maybe he should do more to help.

Deshi was feeling miserable as he went down the stairs. It had been so hard for him and Mum since Dad died. Mum's job took up all her time. School was really difficult for Deshi and neither of them had made friends in Boston. He had just reached the opposite building when the door opened. 'Oh no, it's her again,' he thought. It was too late to turn around. The girl was about to come down the steps towards him when she dropped something. It clattered as it bounced down the steps and stopped at Deshi's feet. Without thinking, he picked it up. 'Hello?' she said, sounding frightened. 'Who's there?' Deshi was confused. 'Er, I live across the street. Are you OK?' 'Oh, are you the boy who plays the guitar?' she said. 'Hi, I'm Helen. I really like your music. I'm sorry my dad complained. He worries about me too much.' Deshi looked at what he was holding. It was a white stick. She was blind.

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