



The Voyage

Murray Bail

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Murray Bail is best known for his internationally best-selling novel *Eucalyptus*, a *New York Times Book Review* Notable Book of the Year and winner of the 1999 Miles Franklin Award. *The New York Times Book Review* wrote that Bail's writing "exhibit(s) a surfeit of imagination, skill and style... (they contain) stories within stories, of enigmatic characters and sly questions with many possible answers."

In *The Voyage*, Piano manufacturer and salesman Frank Delage travels to Vienna from Sydney, hoping to introduce a new design to replace the respected old pianos of Europe. He walks the great musical city, offering an impassioned defense of his piano's technical superiority to any who will hear it. When his ambitions are ignored by the city's staid musical elite, Delage's finds his situation suddenly transformed by a chance meeting with Amalia von Schalla, an elegant grande dame of Viennese society.

Now sailing home to Australia aboard the container ship *Romance* with his new bride, Amalia's daughter Elisabeth von Schalla, Delage and his story begin to come to light in a hypnotic sequence of memories, voices, and snatches of conversations.

Bail's prose sidewinds like a slipstream as Delage's story moves between the glittering society of the von Schalla's Vienna and the rough landscape of Australia. *The Voyage* is delightfully Joycean--conveying a sensuous physicality and the immediacy emotion, as well as revealing a great basin of interior life.

The Voyage was a finalist for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards Christina Stead Prize for Fiction, WA Premier's Book Awards, and the Queensland Literary Awards.

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