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CHRISTMAS IN PRAGUE

JOYCE HANNAM



CHRISTMAS IN PRAGUE

Do you know everything about your family – your parents, your grandparents, your brothers or sisters, your uncles or aunts? Does your family know everything about you? All families have secrets – they can be big secrets, small secrets, things to laugh about, things to cry about.

Jan lives in Oxford with his English wife Carol, and his father Josef, who is Czech. Jan was born in Prague, but he came to England with his father when he was a baby. He never knew his mother – she died soon after he was born. And he knows nothing about her because his father never talks about her. But Josef still carries a photograph of his wife in his pocket – after all these years.

Carol plays the harp in an orchestra, and the orchestra is giving some concerts in Prague at Christmas. Carol wants to go, and she wants Jan and Josef to go too. 'Prague is a wonderful place,' she says, 'for a family Christmas.'

But there are family secrets waiting for them in Prague – wonderful secrets, happy secrets, and very sad secrets . . .





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Human Interest

Christmas in Prague

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Christmas 1957

*I*t is night, and the fields near the village are white with snow. The village is quiet, but not everybody is sleeping. Eyes are watching the roads and the fields near the village, because this is Czechoslovakia and the year is 1957. Across the fields, only half a kilometre away, is the Austrian border, but the people of Czechoslovakia are not free to go to Austria. The border guards watch day and night – and they carry guns.

In a house in the village a man and a woman are talking. The woman holds a six-month-old baby boy in her arms.



The border guards watch day and night.