

This wasn't the last time that the shop windows were smashed, but every time it happened Mr Janáček replaced them within a day or two. And then, one evening, as Kalena was playing hopscotch on the street, the squares marked off in chalk on the pavement, and Alfie was sitting on the kerb watching her, an army van appeared and pulled up outside number six; when Mr Janáček opened the door they told him that he was to

come with them immediately or there'd be trouble.

'But I have done nothing wrong!' he protested.

'You're a German,' shouted Mrs Milchin from number seven, whose two oldest boys had already been killed at Ypres and whose youngest son, Johnny, was about to turn eighteen. (No one had seen Johnny in weeks; the rumour was that Mrs Milchin had sent him to her sister-in-law in the Outer Hebrides.)

'But I'm not!' protested Mr Janáček. 'I am from Prague. You are aware of this!' *You are aware of zis!* 'I have never even been to Germany!'

Kalena ran to her father and he threw his arms around her. 'You're not taking us,' he shouted.

'Come on now,' said the army men. 'It'll be easier for you if you come peacefully.'

'That's right, take him away. He's a spy!' shouted Mrs Milchin, and now Margie was out on the street too, looking aghast at what was taking place.

'Leave him be,' she shouted, running down and jumping in between the Janáčeks and the soldiers. 'He just told you that he's not German, and anyway, he's lived here for years. Kalena was born on this street. They're no threat to anyone.'

'Step aside, Mrs,' said the army man, signalling to one of his colleagues to open the back doors of the van.

'You're a traitor, Margie Summerfield!' cried

Mrs Milchin. 'Cosying up to the enemy! You ought to be ashamed!'

'But he hasn't done anything! My husband's a soldier,' she added, as if this would help.

'Step aside, Mrs,' repeated the army man, 'or you'll be taken into custody too.'

A lot of fighting happened then, and it took almost twenty minutes for the Janáček's to be loaded into the van. They weren't allowed to go back into their house or to take anything with them. Mr Janáček pleaded to be permitted to take a picture of his wife, but he was told that they could take the clothes they were standing up in and nothing else. Kalena ran to Alfie's mum and threw her arms around her, and one of the soldiers had to drag her away as the little girl screamed and wept. The last Alfie saw of them was Mr Janáček weeping in the back of the van while Kalena stared out of the window behind her at Alfie, waving silently. She looked very brave, and Alfie knew there and then that she *would* become Prime Minister one day, and when she did, she would make sure that nothing like this ever happened again.

Later that night, Margie explained what had happened. '*Persons of special interest*, that's what they call them,' she told him. 'Anyone German. Anyone Russian. Anyone from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, if I have it right. And that's where the Janáček's come from. Maybe it's for the best.'

Answer these questions:

1. What was Kalena doing when the van arrived?
2. Why did Kalena run to her father?
3. What does 'aghast' mean?
4. Where did Margie jump?
5. Why did Mrs Milchin call Margie a traitor?
6. What does 'cosying' mean?
7. How long did it take to get the Janacek's in the van?
8. Why did Margie hope that saying her 'husband's a soldier' would help?
9. What does 'permitted' mean?
10. Where did Kalena run?
11. Why did she scream and weep when the soldier pull her away?
12. What does 'Persons of special interest' mean?