

Themes: war, conflict, change, discrimination, peace, hope, love, care, justice, politics

Inspired by: the experience of a Jewish child, (Lord) Alf Dubs and his flight from Nazi-occupied Prague at the start of World War II.

Opening Words

Are you ready for a story?

From now on keep your eyes looking down.

Let's turn this upside down.

Now we have time to breathe.

In a circle of trust we listen and explore feelings.

There's space to wonder and play, in love.

Your story, my story, our story. Let's be curious about this story.



Words

Actions (storyteller's perspective)

There is a land of rivers and forests. In the centre of this land lies the beautiful city of Prague

Look at the beautiful scene you have made.

where a six year old boy named Alf lived with his family.

Place Alf and his mother in the house on your right. Pause. Place three people in the house in the middle on your left, and two in the house on your left.

On 15th of March 1939 the Nazi army poured into the land.

Show the presence of the soldiers with your hands moving in from the sides and then hold them above the city.

Suddenly everything had changed. There were Nazi soldiers everywhere. Even the picture of the president had to be torn from Alf's schoolbooks, to be replaced with a picture of Hitler.

When you say 'everywhere' look at the buildings. When you say 'Even the picture...' look at Alf.

The Nazis did not like anyone who was not like them, especially the Jewish people. They took everything that the Jewish people had, even their homes.

Move the three people out of the middle home and put them in front of the house.

Form a train on your left with five grey blobs overlapping each other so they reach from almost the centre to the edge of the circle.

The Jewish people were put on trains, and sent to concentration camps. Many people died.

Place the three people who were evicted from their home onto the grey blobs (which is going east). When you say 'died', hold the people, one at a time in your palms, and place them back in the basket.

Words	Actions (storyteller's perspective)
	<i>Form a train to your right with 5 grey blobs.</i>
But Alf was taken by his mother and put on a different kind of train, one that would take him to safety, hundreds of miles away.	<i>Bring Alf and his mother to the train. Place Alf in the train going west.</i>
Alf's mother had given him a knapsack of food	<i>Hold the felt heart in the palms of your hands like a gift before you lean it up against Alf.</i>
but he felt confused and overwhelmed and could hardly eat anything.	
Finally, the train arrived in London. He was safe.	<i>Put Alf in front of the train. Place the knapsack next to Alf.</i>
Alf was one of nearly 10,000 children rescued on the 'Kindertransport' or children's train, finding safety and a future in a foreign land.	
Alf stayed in the UK. He became a politician.	<i>Move Alf across to the centre.</i>
He campaigned to improve the care we give to refugees - people like him who are forced to leave their homes and their country.	<i>Pick up and hold the heart in the palms of your hands like a gift as you say 'campaigned'.</i>
Alf is now 89 years old and is still doing this work today.	<i>Place the heart in front of Alf.</i>

Please see our training resources or come on an OutoftheBox course to develop in the art of holding a safe and brave space for contemplation, reflection and dialogue.

Wondering

You are now engaging with the group so look up, and say: Let's be curious about how we feel.

I wonder what part of this story you like?

I wonder what part you don't like?

I wonder what the story reminds you of?

Community Play

Facilitate play with the materials to further explore feelings and to focus on an issue or idea, e.g.

How are you feeling? or What does your day look like? or What does your community look like?

Who are we welcoming? Who are we excluding?

You may invite people to place themselves in the picture using one of the wooden figures.

Closing Words

Before the story is put away, ask: Is there anything else that needs to be said or done?

Hold out your hands as you say: For all that's been said and for all that's not been said - thank you.

Invite participants to remove the objects they put down, then put the other objects away in reverse order.

Personal Response

Time to play and contemplate, e.g. in movement, art & craft, writing, playing with the story materials.

Celebration

Share food and drink to allow people to connect socially and prepare to leave the session.