

CHRISTIAN HEROES: THEN & NOW

# BROTHER ANDREW

God's Secret  
Agent

**JANET & GEOFF BENGE**

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## At the Border

Andrew pulled the car to a halt at the border. He had just crossed the Danube River from Bulgaria and was waiting to enter Romania. Four cars were stopped in front of him, and Andrew was relieved. *Surely it will take only a few minutes to get across the Romanian border,* he thought. He soon found out how wrong his assessment was. Forty minutes later the border guards were still inspecting the first car. When finally they waved that car on, the next car in line pulled up to the barrier. The guards then set to work inspecting it. An hour later everything inside the car had been meticulously spread out on the ground, along with the car seats and the hubcaps. The guards were now busy taking apart the engine.

Andrew stuffed his hands into his pockets and tried to look unfazed, though his heart was jumping through his chest. He had crossed the border into Communist countries numerous times before, but this was the first time he had seen anything like this.

*What about my cargo—those precious Bibles!* Andrew thought. If the guards stripped his car, they would be sure to find the contraband items. The Bibles would be taken from him, and he would end up in a Romanian prison, with no one from the outside knowing where he was. It was a heavy price to pay, but with God's help, Andrew hoped to smuggle the Bibles through right under the guards' watchful eyes.

Andrew did what he always did when facing such situations: he prayed silently about it. Then he did the exact opposite of what would seem to be the best chance of getting the Bibles over the border. Instead of keeping them hidden in the backseat of his car, he pulled out several of the Bibles and piled them beside him on the front seat, where the border guards would be sure to see them.

Finally, four hours after Andrew had pulled to a stop, a guard waved him forward. *Now is the time to stay cool, calm, and collected,* Andrew told himself as he drove his car up to the barrier. He smiled as he greeted the guards. "Nice day," he said pleasantly as he reached for his Dutch passport.

Being calm and collected under pressure was something Andrew knew how to do. As a boy growing up in Holland, he had learned how to face danger

coolly and calmly, first in the form of a game he used to play to challenge himself and then, for real, actively opposing the Germans after they had invaded his country.

Sample



## Pretend Spy

**A**dventure! That was just what eight-year-old Andrew van der Bijl needed, and it was what he was missing. As he walked down the main street of the Dutch village of Sint Pancras, Andrew was overcome with how boring life was. He knew every house in the village and every family who lived in them. He knew what everyone did, or was supposed to do. It was 1936, and he assumed that twenty years from now he could walk down the same street and find that things were just the same. He imagined himself as a blacksmith like his father, going deaf from the constant banging of metal on metal and his skin pockmarked with burns from embers flying out of the furnace. He sighed. Where was the adventure he read about in library books? *In my*

*imagination and nowhere else, that's where*, he told himself.

Andrew was halfway along the elm-tree-lined dike road when he decided to pretend that he was a spy creeping up on the Whetstras' house. He checked to see that no one was watching, and then he ducked behind a bush. Slowly he crept up to the window of the house. He had to step over a spare pane of glass that was propped against the house. He peered in the window and watched Mrs. Whetstra humming to herself as she put a tray of cookies into the woodstove.

Suddenly Andrew was struck with an idea. What if he climbed up on the roof and blocked the chimney with the pane of glass at his feet? How funny it would be to see the smoke billowing into the kitchen and Mrs. Whetstra trying to figure out what had happened. It would be funny, too, to see whether Mr. and Mrs. Whetstra got really angry once they discovered that their chimney had been deliberately blocked. Andrew had never seen a member of the Whetstra family frustrated or upset. The Whetstras were the Holy Rollers of the village, always reminding others to praise God when things went wrong. It would be interesting to see what *they* did when things went wrong. Why, they might even cuss!

With this happy thought in mind, Andrew grabbed the pane of glass and crept around to the side of the house to where a ladder lay against the wall. He slipped off his wooden clogs and started climbing the ladder, using one hand to steady himself