

# Prague: My Long Journey Home: A Memoir of Survival, Denial, and Redemption

Charles Ota Heller

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# Prague: My Long Journey Home: A Memoir of Survival, **Denial, and Redemption**

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Prague: My Long Journey Home: A Memoir of Survival, Denial, and Redemption Charles Ota Heller Author Charles Ota Heller's early childhood in Czechoslovakia was idyllic, but his safe and happy world didn't last long, Three years after his birth, Germany forced an occupation of his country; afterward, most of his young life consisted of running and hiding. His life, just like those of the other youths who lived in Europe during the late 1930s and early 1940s, was shaped forever by the dangers, horrors, and unsettling events he experienced. In this memoir, Heller, born Ota Karel Heller, narrates his family's story-a family nearly destroyed by the Nazis. Son of a mixed marriage, he was raised a Catholic and was unaware of his Jewish roots, even after his father escaped to join the British army and fifteen members of his family disappeared. Prague: My Long Journey Home tells of his Christian mother being sent to a slave labor camp and of his hiding on a farm to avoid deportation to a death camp. With the war coming to a close, Heller tells of how he picked up a revolver and shot a Nazi when he was just nine years old. Heller, now an assimilated American, left the horrors of the past-along with his birth name-behind to live the proverbial American Dream. In his memoir, he recalls how two cataclysmic events following Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution brought him face-to-face with demons of his former life. On his personal journey Heller discovered and embraced his heritage-one which he had abandoned decades earlier.



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