

# Two Lives

Helen Naylor

## Before reading

1. Look at the front cover. What sort of story is this? Now read the back cover and see if you were correct.
2. Look at the maps on page 4. Where is the village of Tredonald?
3. Look at the picture of the miner on page 5. What do you know about this job?
4. Read the chapter titles on page 3. Can you say what will happen in the story?
5. If you have the cassette, listen to the Prologue and Chapter 1.

## Check your reading

### PROLOGUE

1. In her letter to Huw, Megan wrote: 'We had so many plans when we were younger, didn't we?' (page 6) What do you think their plans were?

### CHAPTER 1

1. Look at the words in italics. Who is *you*, *he* etc.?  
 a '... it's important that *you* do well at school.'  
 b *He* had only been a miner for six weeks, but it felt like longer.  
 c '*...we're* lucky to have jobs.'  
 d 'Where does *he* get the money from to go to the pub?'  
 e *They* used to sit together at school ...  
 f ... *he* was worried about their continuing friendship.

Mr Thomas    Huw    Megan    Gareth and Huw  
 Huw and Megan    Mr Jenkins

### CHAPTER 2

1. Tick (✓) the events which you think will probably happen.  
 a Huw will stop working at the coal mine.  
 b Huw will go to London.  
 c Huw will become an artist.  
 d Megan and Huw will get married.  
 e Megan will go to college.

### CHAPTER 3

1. True or false?  
 a Life in Tredonald was a lot easier when the war ended.  
 b It was too cold for Megan and Huw to go for walks in the winter.  
 c Huw loved dancing with Megan.  
 d Megan lied to her parents about what she was doing on Saturday night.  
 e The necklace Huw bought Megan was new.

### CHAPTER 4

1. Match the beginnings and endings.  
 1 Gareth and two other men were  
 2 Huw's father was angry because  
 3 Huw's father did not want him  
 4 Huw told Megan that he felt alone  
 5 Megan accepted immediately  
 a now that his brother was dead.  
 b killed down the mine.  
 c when Huw asked her to marry him.  
 d death had taken three people he loved.  
 e to go back to work at the coal mine.

### CHAPTER 5

1. Match the lines of conversation between Megan and Huw.  
 1 'And do you want to go?'    a 'I will, Megan ... I know I'll never change.'  
 2 'Can't your Dad go on his own?'    b 'He won't go and leave me working in the mine.'  
 3 'And what about us, Huw?'    c 'You are the most beautiful thing in my life, Megan ... I won't lose you.'  
 4 'You seem to have everything planned.'    d 'No, I haven't, but do you think it's possible?'  
 5 'Do you think we'll feel the same about each other in a year's time?'    e 'Oh, Megan, how can you ask that?'

2. Do you think Huw's plan will work?

### CHAPTER 6

1. Megan, Huw or both? Fifty years later, who ...  
 1 has a daughter called Beth?  
 2 discovers a box of letters?  
 3 has a son called Mike?  
 4 was married for twelve years?  
 5 still lives at the same address?  
 6 realises an old love is still strong?

### CHAPTER 7

1. Huw's thoughts about Megan:  
 'So ... she never got married.'  
 'Maybe she was happy to be single.'  
 'Or maybe she was married and something happened and she changed her name back to Jenkins.'  
 What do you think happened to Megan between 1945 and 1996?  
 2. 'What does it matter? It's all in the past now.' (page 32)  
 What do you think Huw should do?

## CHAPTER 8

- What information is old or new for Beth?
  - Her father's name is Huw Thomas.
  - Her mother has not spoken to Huw for fifty years.
  - Huw wrote about fifty letters to her mother.
  - Her grandfather hid the letters.
  - Her mother still has strong feelings for Huw.
  - Her mother was seventeen when she had Beth.
- Was Megan right not to tell Huw about Beth in her letter?

## CHAPTER 9

- Huw thinks about Megan and Beth: 'It'd be very difficult for all three of them – there was fifty years of nothing between them.' (page 38)

How would you feel in Huw's position?

## CHAPTER 10

- Put the events in the correct order.
  - Huw received a reply from Megan with a photograph of two women.
  - Megan realised that it was time she and Beth made a decision about Huw.
  - Huw stood in front of the studio window and cried.
  - Megan received a letter from Huw.
  - Huw waited impatiently for an answer from Megan.

## CHAPTER 11

- How did Huw feel? Match up the sentences.
 

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 He realised that he was afraid of          | a when he saw the place again.      |
| 2 He was a man who liked to know             | b what might happen.                |
| 3 The nearer he got to Tredonald,            | c his life had been well-organised. |
| 4 Before he'd received Megan's first letter, | d the more unsure he became.        |
| 5 He had no idea how he was going to feel    | e what he was doing and why.        |

## CHAPTER 12

- What did Megan tell Huw? Write YES or NO.
  - Beth was married, with three grown-up children. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Megan's father had hated Huw. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Beth had an unhappy childhood. \_\_\_\_\_
  - She often thought about Gareth. \_\_\_\_\_
  - She helped make the coal mine into a tourist centre. \_\_\_\_\_
  - She was going to marry Paul. \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 13

- Put the events in the right order.
  - Beth told Huw her mother was going to marry Paul.
  - Huw promised Beth that he would never hurt Megan again.
  - Huw told Beth he wanted to marry Megan.
  - Megan went shopping and left Huw and Beth alone.
  - Huw saw Megan was wearing his necklace.
  - Megan drove Huw to Cardiff to meet Beth.

## CHAPTER 14

- Complete the summary.
 

Megan planned to marry Paul on ..... and move away to ..... She asked Huw to join them for ..... so he could meet Paul. Huw asked Megan if she was ..... every time she heard Paul's ..... Huw wanted to be sure that Megan was doing the ..... thing. He still loved Megan, and he only had ..... weeks to make her feel the same. But Megan didn't like him organising her life after fifty .....

## CHAPTER 15

- What did Huw and Megan talk about at Huw's hotel? Tick (✓) the boxes.

- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| a The north of Canada.      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b Megan's feelings for Huw. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c Their future.             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d The art world in Canada.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e Their daughter, Beth.     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f Schooldays in Tredonald.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- Do you think Megan will marry Paul?

## CHAPTER 16

- What happened at dinner? Who ...
  - wanted to know about Huw's art?
  - compared Huw and Paul?
  - knew an artist who had bought one of Huw's paintings?
  - didn't ask many questions about the past?
  - hoped Megan and Paul would be happy?
  - planned to meet the next day.

Beth Philip Huw Paul Megan

## CHAPTER 17

- Megan or Huw? Who said what?
  - 'There's no reason for me to stay any longer.'
  - '... I feel as if I'm just getting to know you again.'
  - '... I wish with all my heart that the ending could be different.'
  - 'I can't let you leave me again. You're part of me ...'
  - 'Ask me to marry you again.'
  - '... marry me. Be my girl again.'

## After reading

Choose some of these activities.

1. Can love can be as strong at sixty-six as when you were sixteen?
2. Imagine Huw didn't leave for Canada. How would the story continue after chapter 4?
3. Which actors could play either the young or old Huw and Megan in a film of *Two Lives*?
4. What was life like for young people in Wales in 1945?
5. 'He had hidden the letters and watched her unhappiness.' (page 26) Would a father do the same today?
6. Who is your favourite character? Think of adjectives to describe him/her.
7. Finish writing the letter which Megan begins reading on page 26.
8. Write a letter from Megan to Paul, saying that she has decided to marry Huw.
9. Make your own activities for other students to do. e.g. Write some True/False questions.
10. Here is the blurb from another book at this level.

### Just Good Friends

It's Stephany and Max's first holiday away together and they want to get to know each other. They go to Italy and stay at Stephany's friend Carlo's flat in a Mediterranean village. But Carlo's wife is not very happy to see Stephany – and the two couples find out why, and a lot of other things about each other, in a hot Italian summer.

Do you want to read *Just Good Friends*?