

Home and Away: A World War II Christmas Story by Dean Hughes

The year is 1944 and Glen Hayes is in Holland, fighting with the 101st Airborne Division. He's not in a good place, in fact, as Christmas approaches he's lying in a frozen foxhole, trying to keep from either freezing to death, or being shot by the Nazis. His memory of home is enhanced by the smell of a sprig of lavender that he has kept to remind him of his mother. As the sprig grows wet, the aroma grows stronger in spite of Glen's resignation to the fact he will never see his mother again.

At home in Utah, Glen's parents, younger brother Dennis, and two younger sisters, Linda and Sharon, pray for Glen's safety and wonder how to financially keep afloat. Dennis wants to do something nice for his mother, knowing she needs the support. He sees a beautiful dress, and approaches his father for some additional money to help purchase the dress. The realities of war, the struggles of family and faith, and the kindness of strangers all combine to create a short, heart-warming Christmas tale about a time many older Americans still remember.