



Tibet Through the Red Box: Through The Red Box (Caldecott Honor Book)

Peter Sís

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A father's diary, an artist's memoir.

By the author of the best-selling *Three Golden Keys*.

While my father was in China and Tibet, he kept a diary, which was later locked in a red box. We weren't allowed to touch the box. The stories I heard as a little boy faded to a hazy dream, and my drawings from that time make no sense. I cannot decipher them. It was not until I myself had gone far, far away and received the message from my father that I became interested in the red box again . . .

In New York, Peter Sís receives a letter from his father. "The Red Box is now yours," it says. The brief note worries him and pulls him back to Prague, where the contents of the red box explain the mystery of his father's long absence during the 1950s.

Czechoslovakia was behind the iron curtain; Vladimir Sís, a documentary filmmaker of considerable talent, was drafted into the army and sent to China to teach filmmaking. He left his wife, daughter, and young son, Peter, thinking he would be home for Christmas. Two Christmases would pass before he was heard from again: Vladimir Sís was lost in Tibet. He met with the Dalai Lama; he witnessed China's invasion of Tibet. When he returned to Prague, he dared not talk to his friends about all he had seen and experienced. But over and over again he told Peter about his Tibetan adventures. Weaving their two stories together - that of the father lost in Tibet and that of the small boy in Prague, lost without his father - Sís draws from his father's diary and from his own recollections of his father's incredible tales to reach a spiritual homecoming between father and son. With his sublime pictures, inspired by Tibetan Buddhist art and linking history to memory, Peter Sís gives us an extraordinary book - a work of singular artistry and rare imagination.

Tibet Through the Red Box is a 1999 Caldecott Honor Book and the winner of the 1999 Boston Globe - Horn Book Award for Special Citation.



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