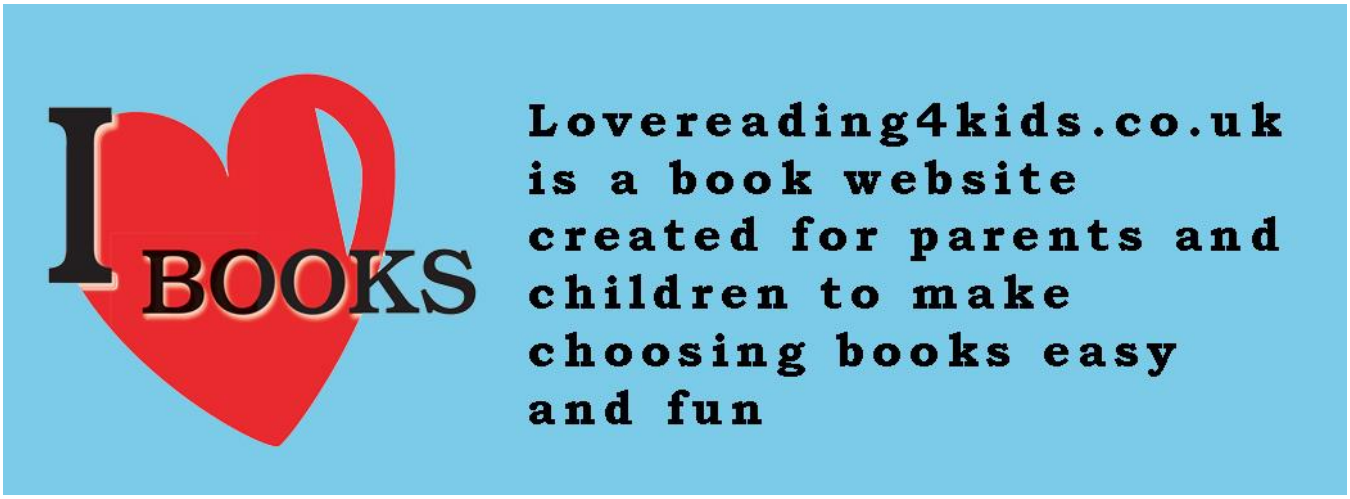

Opening extract from

Missing Arabella

Written by

Kathryn Siebel

Published by

Oxford University Press

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Through the Windows

And so it begins in front of the fire, the story of two twin sisters. One remains with her family in their lovely country house where yellow roses perfume the air. The other waits for her in another house where she stands alone at huge arched windows. She is restless, pacing wooden floors that creak in the night when a cat jumps down from the bed to chase at shadows.

"What are their names?' the girl asks. 'The sisters.'

'Henrietta and Arabella.'

'Are they lonely?' asks the girl.

'They belong together,' says the mother. 'And it makes them sad to be apart.'

'Can't you tell a happy story?' the girl asks.

'With puppies and a garden?'

'Yes!' says the girl.

'I'm only telling it the way my mother told it to me,' the mother says.

'And will there be puppies?' the girl persists. 'Or only gloomy girls at windows?'

'Well, their dog Muffin wasn't exactly a puppy, but she was very small. And in fact there was a beautiful garden. I can picture it perfectly. But we should begin at the beginning.'