

Gay Tha Transcription

“My Family Story”

My name is Gay Tha and I was born in Burma. When we lived in Burma, we didn't live in peace because of constant civil war between ethnic rebels groups and the Burmese military regime. Burmese soldiers always came to our village and burned down our houses. They also killed people in villages and raped our women who were captured. My family always had to be afraid of them.

One day, my parents thought of moving to a new place to avoid danger. If we didn't move to a new place, we would never get to live peacefully and have a happy life. Living in Burma was not easy for my family because we always had to be on alert and constantly had to run away from Burmese soldiers. In addition, we did not know what would happen to us in the future if we continued to live here.

In 2003, my family moved to a refugee camp in Thailand. It was called Mae La Oon camp and most of the refugees were Karen people. The situations in the camp was better than in Burma. We had school in the camp as well as hospital to help the people. I attended schools here with my siblings. There schools and hospitals were formed by NGOs and the UN.

In 2013, my family moved to the United States from the refugee camp. I have been in Saint Paul, Minnesota now. Our lives have changed so much since I left the refugee camp. There have been challenges and successes along the way.

Our life in Minnesota has been challenging. Learning another language is difficult. It has not been easy to communicate with other people. For example, my 12-year-old brother goes to school every day but he says “I go to school but I do not know how to speak English and I do not know how to ask questions.” But living here has also been full of hope and exciting because I have a chance to go to school and meet different friends. I am happy to study. We are very glad that we immigrated to America. We have learned a lot and have opportunities.

Now, I am excited for my family because I don't need to worry about Burmese soldiers anymore. My family gets to live happily in this country. However, we are not sure about the future and what will happen to us. We have to believe that everything will go well.