

**Liang Xiong
Narrator**

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Interviewer**

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LX: When my parents came to America in 1987 my father made sure to bring his, uh, super hip SONY stereo with him to the new land. Um, according to my mother, he packed it carefully in his carry-on luggage so that it would not get scratched or would not break. My parents lived in Chiang Khong Refugee Camp and uh, my mother sewed Paj Ntaub as a way to bring in income and with some of her first earnings, she bought my dad this brand new stereo in 1984. Um, it was the latest model and it generated a lot of popularity. Whenever my dad pulled it out to listen to the radio, um, the neighbors in the refugee camp would gather around, like a, a really big community, to listen with him. But in America, my parents used it to record their voices on cassette tapes to send over to their relatives still living in Laos. And as children, my mom would make us record our voices as well. Uhm, because we were young we didn't really know what to say. She would say a line and then we would repeat word for word after her. I remember recording one of these voice messages to my mother's sister in Laos. Uhm, my mother would have me say, "Nyob zoo os tais mee. Kuv yog maiv liag os. Kov puas nyob zoo os? Kuv nco nco koj os. Kuv xav nrog maiv xee uas sib os." "Hello Aunty Mee, My name is Mai Liag. And um, how are you? I miss you and I want to play with Mai See." Uh, and Mai see was, was my Aunty Mee's daughter. And, I remember sending um these voice messages to her specifically because,

um, she had a daughter who was my age and my mother would always try to connect us together. So, this stereo has been, um an effective device in helping us communicate with our family members on the other side of the globe, um, when my parents were fairly still new to the country. But today it sits on a shelf collecting dust but even so it's still my father's most treasured item.