

A Story In My Life

Toua Her

I remembered the orange dirt road, huge corn field, giant stone buddha, pitch dark nights, and bathing in the rain. I grew up in a refugee camp in Saraburi, Thailand and experienced many things a standard kid would not have experienced. When I was four to five years old, my parents were occupied with my two little brothers and did not have time to spend with me. I was always alone. Due to this, I got bullied by the other kids because I was always running freely around the camp with no restriction. I recall witnessing a little boy getting beaten up for being friends with me. I tried to help him, but was beaten up along with him. Some grown ups also treat me badly for being a loud and wild kid. I would always come home with bruises, but I kept it a secret from my parents. Although I had experienced many harsh things in the refugee camp, I am thankful for it because it helped me walk my own path. It allowed me to not judge others, and appreciate what I have.

Due to what I have been through, thanks to the bullies and the memories growing up in Thailand it has helped me stand on my own two feet. Growing up being mostly unaccompanied, I can tolerate walking alone. I did not make a lot of friends in my life because of how I got treated when I was little. Experiencing bullying before, I never look down on people because I consider myself equal to them and them equal to me. If I leave someone out, it would be the same as when the bullies left me out. If I consider myself better than others, then I would be acting like the grown ups that treated me like a pest. Therefore, I try to make things fair for everyone and consider other people's perspective. Especially in my family since I am the oldest son and I have five younger siblings.

As the oldest son, I have no older brother to follow, but I did have younger brothers following me. It was when I was playing alone in the refugee camp that made me wish I had an older brother who would play with me and be there for me. As of now, I want to be there for my little brothers when they needed me. Knowing the feeling of not having an older brother when I was in need. I decided to accept my role of being the oldest brother and started to make my own path so I can use it to create a map for my little brothers to follow.

Throughout my eighteen years, there had been countless stories that impacted who I am today. The most significant of them all is my childhood living in a refugee camp because not

many kids get to grow up in a camp with a bad neighborhood, poor family with a mother going through mental illness. The way I live in the future will stay unchanged unless I encounter a torn page in my life that will change me. As of now, the future is still unclear for me, but I am still going to continue walking with my head up trying to not let what had happen to me happen to people I love in the future.