

# [PDF] Lucky Child: A Daughter Of Cambodia Reunites With The Sister She Left Behind

Loung Ung - pdf download free book

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## Books Details:

Title: Lucky Child: A Daughter of Ca

Author: Loung Ung

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## Description:

**From Publishers Weekly** Starred Review. In her second memoir, Ung picks up where her first, the National Book Award-winning *First They Killed My Father*, left off, with the author escaping a devastated Cambodia in 1980 at age 10 and flying to her new home in Vermont. Though she embraces her American life—which carries advantages ranging from having a closet of her own to getting a formal education and enjoying *The Brady Bunch*—she can never truly leave her Cambodian life behind. She and her eldest brother, with whom she escaped, left behind their three other siblings. This book is alternately heart-wrenching and heartwarming, as it follows the parallel lives of Loung Ung and her closest sister, Chou, during the 15 years it took for them to reunite. Loung effectively juxtaposes chapters about herself and her sister to show their different worlds: while the

author's meals in America are initially paid for with food stamps, Chou worries about whether she'll be able to scrounge enough rice; Loung is haunted by flashbacks, but Chou is still dodging the Khmer Rouge; and while Loung's biggest concern is fitting in at school, Chou struggles daily to stay alive. Loung's first-person chapters are the strongest, replete with detailed memories as a child who knows she is the lucky one and can't shake the guilt or horror. "For no matter how seemingly great my life is in America... it will not be fulfilling if I live it alone.... [L]iving life to the fullest involves living it with your family."

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**From** \*Starred Review\* Ung's autobiographical *First They Killed My Father*, 2000) chronicled her harrowing childhood under Pol Pot's genocidal regime, which claimed the lives of her mother, father, and two sisters. In an essential companion timed for release on the thirtieth anniversary of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge takeover, Ung unflinchingly continues her memoir with her arrival in Vermont alongside her sister-in-law and brother, who, able to "borrow enough gold to take only one of his siblings with him," chose his tough youngest sister as the "lucky child." Ung agonized over everyone she left behind, but especially regretted her 15-year separation from her last surviving sister, Chou. Here she tells their parallel life stories, effectively interleaving her own narrative of an '80s, valley-girl adolescence (laced with posttraumatic episodes) with chapters about Chou's growth to adulthood amid threats of land mines and Khmer Rouge raids. By daringly (and remarkably successfully) assuming her sister's point of view, Ung brings third- and first-world disparities into discomfiting focus and gracefully dramatizes the metaphorical joining together of her haunted past with her current identity as a privileged Cambodian American. When the narratives fuse at the sisters' long-awaited reunion, their clasping of hands throws wide the floodgates to tamped-down memories--a cathartic release that readers will tearfully, gratefully share. *Jennifer Mattson*  
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