



Beautiful Hero: How We Survived the Khmer Rouge

Jennifer H Lau

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Beautiful Hero: How We Survived the Khmer Rouge Jennifer H Lau

With only half a canteen of water and one baby bottle, a family of eight fought for their lives in the killing fields and land mines of Cambodia. Heroes emerge in the most unlikely places, under the most dangerous conditions. They are often the most ordinary of people facing extraordinary times. Surrounded by unimaginable adverse forces, one woman would ultimately lead her entire family to survive. Beautiful Hero is an autobiographical narrative told from a daughter's perspective. The story centers around Meiyeng, the eponymous Beautiful Hero, and her innate ability to sustain everyone in her family. Meiyeng's acumen in solving problems under extreme circumstances is thought-provoking and awe-inspiring. She shepherded her entire family through starvation, diseases, slavery and massacres in war-torn Cambodia to forge a new life in America. Over two million people—a third of the country's population—fell victim to a devastating genocide in Cambodia. The rise of the Khmer Rouge posed not merely a single challenge to survival, but rather a series of nightmarish obstacles that required constant circumvention, outmaneuvering, and exceptional fortitude from those few who would survive the regime intact. Beautiful Hero suspensefully unravels the layers of atrocity and evil unleashed upon the people, providing a clear view of this horrific and violent time of the Cambodian revolution. The story highlights the most basic impulses of man: good vs. evil, individual vs. group, democracy vs. tyranny, and life vs. death. It is the ultimate story of love, sacrifice, survival, and redemption—and lives pushed to the limits. It reaffirms the good in humanity by showing how one family lived and survived with grace and dignity.

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