

Name of Interviewer: Loanvy Nguyen

Method of Recording Interview: Digital Audio

Language of Interview: English/ Vietnamese

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Themes: Immigration, War, Childhood Memories

Name of Person Interviewed: Lam Nguyen

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Name _____ Transcript _____

Time Start: [0:02]

Loanvy: Ok, Ready? Question one, what was it like when you grew up?

Lam: Uh, it's like a war time when I grew up

Loanvy: Just talk naturally Bo, [laughs] [Translated Vietnamese] Dad can talk in Vietnamese if dad wants to

Lam: [Translated] if I talk in Vietnamese how would you understand?

Loanvy: Ill translate it later

Lam: Ok

Loanvy: Ok, Question number one, what was it like when you grew up?

Lam: I don't know because I live with my parent and go to school and go to, go home like normal person

Loanvy: What was your life like as a child?

Lam: Pretty good boy. I live in a really rich family, and I was spoiled, so.

Loanvy: How were you discipline as a youth?

Lam: How?

Loanvy: [Translated] Do you understand?

Lam: [Translated] No, who did?

Loanvy: Anyone. Teachers, parents?

Lam: Nobody discipline me.

Loanvy: [Translated] There was nobody who disciplined you?

Lam: No, I'm a good boy [laughs]

Loanvy: Ok, What was the typical daily routine in Vietnam?

Lam: Go to school go back home, and eat, sleep go back to school again.

Loanvy: [Translated] You didn't do anything else?

Lam: yeah, once awhile play basketball.

Loanvy: What occupations did you have in Vietnam?

Lam: I was draft after college. So my last occupation was I was soldier.

Loanvy: Were you involved in any cultural organizations?

Lam: Not really, no.

Loanvy: Did you practice any traditional arts?

Lam: No.

Loanvy: [Translated] I thought you did Vo Vi Nam right?

Lam: No

Loanvy: [Translated] No huh? So dad didn't do anything at all? [Laughs]

Loanvy: Ok, where did you live during the war?

Lam: I lived in Saigon.

Loanvy: Where did you move? Did [Dad] Move?

Lam: No?

Loanvy: What occupation did [dad] have in the war?

Lam: Soldier, I was a lieutenant.

Loanvy: Lieutenant?

Lam: Lieutenant, yeah.

Loanvy: So [dad]involved in the war?

Both: Yes.

Loanvy: How? As a Lieutenant?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: [Translated] What did you do as a lieutenant? What did [dad] do as a lieutenant?

Lam: Platoon Leader, and also commander of companies. Company commander.

Loanvy: Ok, [Translated] Do you have any family members involved in the war?

Lam: No

Loanvy:[translated] Just yourself right?

Lam: uh huh.

Loanvy: [Translated] No brothers? No....?

Lam: No

Loanvy: Did [dad] come in contact with any American soldiers?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: What did [you] think of them?

Lam: Majority of them are uneducated.

Loanvy: That's it?

Lam: Yeah, and they don't know what they come to Vietnam for.

Loanvy: [translated] Did you like them?

Lam: Yeah, they ok.

Loanvy: [Translated] During that time did you know how to speak English?

Lam: [Translated] Yes.

Loanvy: How did the war affect you and your family?

Lam: After lost by communist, the majority of the officers go to jail right? And I was part of that.

Loanvy: [translated] You went to jail right?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: For how long?

Lam: Four years.

Loanvy: [Translated] What did you do in jail? Explain for me each day what you would do.

Lam: Five o'clock in the morning wake up, right? And go to work. Go to chop the tree in the jungle.

Loanvy: [Scoffs]

Lam: Yeah, chop the tree in the jungle.

Loanvy: For what?

Lam: Just chop the tree, and clear the land for them to plant for communist soldiers planning something. And bring the tree back to the station so they can sell it. They make money for themselves.

Loanvy: What do [you] remember most about the time period?

Lam: When they beat me up, beat me up in the jail.

Loanvy: [Translated] What did they do to you?

Lam: Anything, [Translated] They hit us. Beat us up, they do anything else.

Loanvy: Were you ever captured by enemy forces?

Lam: Yeah

Loanvy: Yeah.

Lam: I was captured in the battle. Battle field guy They..

Loanvy: [translated] How did they not know you weren't communist? Dad knows how to speak Vietnamese though.

Lam: [I] wore a uniform.

Loanvy: [Translated] Why didn't you just lie?

Lam: No, no, no way. We carry gun and everything, we fight with them, we're right in front of them.

Loanvy: What was the experiences like? Bad?

Lam: Bad. [Utters] Yes, very bad.

Loanvy: Anything else?

Lam: Not really.

Loanvy: [Translated] When you got captured, were you captured with friends?

Lam: Yeah, my platoon

Loanvy: Platoon?

Lam: the whole platoon about like half of them die and half of them captured by Viet Cong

Loanvy: How many people were in your platoon?

Lam: 30 people so like 15 people was captured

Loanvy: [translated] all your friends?

Lam: My soldiers

Loanvy: Yeah, were you or anyone ever in a re-education camp?

Lam: Yes, that's what was jail. Re-education camp means jail.

Loanvy: Re-education camp meant jail?

Lam: Yes, it *is* jail.

Loanvy: What was it like?

Lam: They using the old jail before, and also some of them they put in the jungle and surround by communist soldiers.

Loanvy: [translated] did they die? Did a lot of them die?

Lam: Oh yeah, about like 20% of people died. 20-25%

Loanvy: Did you or your family suffer any disabilities as a result from the war?

Lam: Not really, no.

Loanvy: [translated] So there were no injuries, nothing at all?

Lam: [Dad] got injury.

Loanvy: [Translated] does it effect you now?

Lam: Nah, a little bit, stepped on a mine.

Loanvy: You stepped on a mine?

Lam: Yeah, local mine. Right here [points to the bottom of his foot] Still have a scar. Scar right there.

Loanvy: Ahh, that's what that is.

Lam: [laughs]

Loanvy: [laughs]

Lam: [translated] You didn't know about this

Loanvy: [translated] No, I'd never pay attention. What was life like after the war?

Lam: In Vietnam or in here?

Loanvy: Doesn't matter

Lam: Life in Vietnam....

Loanvy: What as life after the war!

Lam: Bad! Because I go to jail right?

Loanvy: That was after the war? That was after communist win right?

Lam: Yeah.

Loanvy: Ok, so life after the war is bad

Lam: Com'on hurry up, 'cause I need ten minutes more, otherwise [translated] the rice will burn

Loanvy: How was it bad?

Lam: how was it bad?

Loanvy: Yeah

Lam: Because they revenge.

Loanvy: Like what did they do to revenge?

Lam: They take all the officers to the jail, to jail!

Loanvy: [translated] Did they do anything for the people? For your family? Only officers right?

Lam: No, no. No, and also whoever involve the family they don't give them food they don't give them nothing. So you have to be independent.

Loanvy: [9:30] It's only 9 minutes long [dad]!

Lam: [Translated]

Loanvy: NO!

Lam: I need turn off

Loanvy: I need 30 minutes more! Give me more detail [translated] you can speak Vietnamese

Lam: [Translated] There, you just ask me and I just answer! Ask me.

Loanvy: [translated] you have to give me more details, you can't just say 'it's bad'. Of course it's bad! [Laughs]

Lam: It is bad ok.

Loanvy: [translated] of course I know it was bad, you have to tell me why was it bad

Lam: Ok why was it bad? Ok, after the war right? Every three houses they have one, they put one communist police. That policeman there watching the other two and if you do something wrong they take you to jail right away or either go to jail or kill you right away. And every year, I mean every month they give to every family one kilogram rice per family. One kilogram which is two pounds meat, for a month. And about five pounds vegetables, that's it.

Loanvy: For the whole month?

Lam: For the whole month. Hey, so

Loanvy: [translated] so everyone dies because theres nothing to eat

Lam: if you have a lot of kids or your family's a big family you hungry all the time.

Loanvy: [translated] so in your family there was one communist in your family right?

Lam: Every three houses, they have one guy watching

Loanvy: [translated] So did you have one?

Lam: Yes, they don't live with the family but they live really close. I think they've been watching us every single time. No way you can move.

Loanvy: Immigration experiences. When did [you] leave Vietnam?

Lam: I think its June 19, 1979. June 19, 1979.

Loanvy: Why did [you] decide to leave?

Lam: Escape from Vietnam because cannot live. Either leave or die. So I choose to leave.

Loanvy: [translated] Why are there so many people who live there?

Lam: If they not officer, they might be ok, but if they are officer and up, the chance is very difficult.

Loanvy: Was it a difficult decision?

Lam: Difficult? Yes.

Loanvy: Why?

Lam: Cau'se we don't want to leave the family right? We don't want to leave the parents, don't leave country.

Loanvy: [translation] Were you sad? When you left were you sad?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: Who left Vietnam with [you]?

Lam: A lot of people go on the boat

Loanvy: Who was left behind? [translated] your family right?

Lam: yeah, family. [translated] Grandma, brother, sister.

Loanvy: How many brothers, how many sisters?

Lam: One... two brother one sister.

Loanvy: All older [translated] right?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: What things did you decide to bring with you?

Lam: A gun.

Loanvy: What kind of gun?

Lam: Colt .45

Loanvy: [Laughs] [translation] Did you have anything else? Just your gun and you go naked? You didn't bring any clothes?

Lam: Nah, just one set of clothes, a little bit of water, that's it.

Loanvy: So, clothes, water, and a gun.

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: That's it?!

Lam: That's it.

Loanvy: [translated] In your backpack?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: Do you still have them? [translated] Do you still have your gun?

Lam: No no no no [laughs]

Loanvy: No more gun.

Lam: No [I] dumped the gun in Malaysia.

Loanvy: [translated] Why?

Lam: We go to Malaysia, we have all the weapons we have to dump, throw away because if they catch them they can put us in jail. So the best way just dump it, just put it.. just throw in the ocean.

Loanvy: There must be a lot of guns in the ocean [laughs]

Lam: Not really.

Loanvy: Where did you go? [translated] Like during your trip where did you go?

Lam: Trip went from Vietnam to Malaysia. And from Malaysia to Indonesia and end up in Indonesia.

Loanvy: [translated] You didn't go to the United States?

Lam: No, and then they have a refugee camp in there right? They take us to refugee camp and... All the third countries come over interview right? Canada, U.S., and Denmark and every third country. A lot of countries come, French.

Loanvy: [translated] To the refugee camp?

Lam: Whoever has the first choice they pick it up, they get it. Daddy is the first choice of the America, cause [dad] serve with Americans people.

Loanvy: What places did you see?

Lam: In Tenchupena, refugee camp.

Loanvy: [translated] what did you see?

Lam: It's very beautiful, very nice people live there. And they call it ICC, international... IRC International Refugee Camp, [whatever I'm not sure] so in other words they give us all the information, food.

Loanvy: They give you food?

Lam: Yeah, food.

Loanvy: [translated] Was it good? It was like crap right?

Lam: Nah, it's pretty good, pretty good. They give rice and the canned food and the fish and vegetables. Pretty good, pretty good

Loanvy: [translated] Is that why you can eat all that stuff now? [laughs]

Lam: Huh?

Loanvy: [Laughs] Nothing nothing. What transportation did you use?

Lam: Transportation? Majority...feet. Walking only.

Loanvy: [Translation] No, transportation as in when you came over in the US what transportation did you use?

Lam: No no no, when we received the paper to go to the United States, [translation] then we go by airplane.

Loanvy: [translation] Oh, you went by airplane right?

Lam: Yes

Loanvy: So what is this boat ride then?

Lam: Where is the boat?

Loanvy: Yeah.

Lam: What are you talking about the boat?

Loanvy: This boat right here, from Vietnam to Malaysia, to Indonesia.

Lam: Oh, we dump it, after we come to, we dump it. Yeah, we destroy the boat.

Loanvy: Why?

Lam: The little boat and the... We don't want them take it back to Vietnam or somewhere else so they bust the boat. The little boat, probably like 12 people.

Loanvy: [translation] so you took a plane from Indonesia to America?

Lam: No, [translation] they gave me a speed boat from refugee camp to Singapore. From Singapore, they use a Cathay Pacific airplane, airline. From Singapore to Hong Kong

Loanvy: [Laughs] [translation] you went back home.

Lam: [translation] around Hong Kong, we stay in Hong Kong one night and a day. They give us money and food to eat and we go Hong Kong, around Hong Kong, really nice.

Loanvy: [translation] you played around Hong Kong?

Lam: [translation] And from there we take an airplane directly to O'Hare in Illinois Chicago.

Loanvy: [translation] was there anything interesting that happened on your journey? (19:02)

Lam: Yeah, yeah.

Loanvy: Like what?

Lam: A lot of people don't understand English right? And only [me], couple people be a translator. Like people ok you need to fasten seat belt, and you know anybody have a kid want to drink milk please let me know.

Loanvy: [translated] So you're a translator?

Lam: Translator in the airplane

Loanvy: [Translated] who taught you how to speak English?

Lam: [I] go to school.

Loanvy: Anything else? [translated] did anyone die?

Lam: Not in the... Oh, in the boat. One boy sleep in the boat right? And the mother was so tired and he falls down in the water

Loanvy: [translated] He died?

Lam: And we go overnight into the morning. Nobody knows

Loanvy: [translated] Nobody knows?

Lam: So, we lost him somewhere you know, I don't know he probably died already. So the boat doesn't want to turn around.

Loanvy: for the son?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: [translated] That's sad

Lam: Yeah, that's bad.

Loanvy: [translated] So how come no one noticed? The mom didn't know?

Lam: Yeah, the mothers stupid. Should put the kid in the inside, they put the kid outside.

Loanvy: Were you ever in a refugee camp?

Lam: What? What do you have at refugee camp?

Loanvy: No no no, [translated] the refugee camp

Lam: What is it?

Loanvy: refugees

Lam: I know but what the question

Loanvy: were you ever in one?

Lam: Yeah, I was there

Loanvy: In Indonesia right?

Lam: Yeah, Indonesia. Yeah refugee camp in Indonesia

Loanvy: What was the experience like?

Lam: Ah, very hot because we live in a tank right? And don't have...

Loanvy: [translated] it has a lot of people right? Very crowded

Lam: No, not really crowded, probably like 50 people. But we don't have enough water to stand, to take a shower, so I would have to [translated] shower in the beach. Have to go to the beach everyday and..., but its fun.

Loanvy: [translated] what did you do? It's fun?

Lam: Yeah, because of freedom. It's not like communist. Nobody.... [bangs on table]

Loanvy: [translated] You went with friends right? Or did you go by yourself?

Lam: [translated] Yeah, I went with friends.

Loanvy: that's why it was fun?

Lam: yeah

Loanvy: Why did you choose to come to the United States?

Lam: [translated] I didn't choose United States. They picked me up because I was working with soldiers before, with American soldiers, American division.

Loanvy: What about your sponsors?

Lam: sponsor in the US, they ask like who wants to sponsor, and they say ok I'll sponsor for that family. So they sponsor.

Loanvy: How were you allowed to come back to the United States? Sponsorship

Lam: Yeah

Loanvy: Which lady, Barbara?

Lam: Yeah.

Loanvy: [translated] and you were picked to right?

Lam: yeah actually I was, yeah. Yeah, picked but actually [translated] I was like first choice of U.S. immigrant. Their first choice.

Loanvy: What kind of questions were you asked when you applied to immigrate to the U.S.?

Lam: I don't apply. They go in there and ask me "are you serving for Vietnam VN force?" and they said "OK", and give them the military number

Loanvy: And that's it?

Lam: They chase them down.

Loanvy: They didn't ask anything else? [translated]

Lam: [translated] yeah, just a little bit of questions like that.

Loanvy: [translated] They didn't ask for your name, birthday?

Lam: [translated] yeah, they asked for all of that. That's how they know military birthday and military... when you finished training for officer, boot camp. And what division you served? We give them all the information they check their computer to see if its right.

Loanvy: were you required to have health inspections?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: What was that like?

Lam: Check up, see if there is any disease or any sickness or anything.

Loanvy: how do you feel about your decision to move to the U.S.?

Lam: yeah, I think it was the right decision

Loanvy: Why

Lam: Because the U.S. strong country, rich and also a lot of freedom. Anytime you go fishing all you need to have is a fishing license that's it. You don't have to worry about anything else.

Loanvy: What was the hardest thing about starting a new life? Finding a mom [laughs].

Lam: Looking for job, go to school, go back to school right? And then learning new different society and its very different here.

Loanvy: who helped you find a home in the US?

Lam: Mom. No, are you talking about the apartment in the very beginning?

Loanvy: Yeah

Lam: Sponsor.

Loanvy: Was it an apartment? Small big?

Lam: 2 bedroom, 1714 West Wallan, Chicago Illinois

Loanvy: [laughs]

Lam: I got a picture too! [translated] Me and your brother just found it

Loanvy: [translated] the picture of the place?

Lam: [translated] In Google map, they have it

Loanvy: Google map [laughs]

Loanvy: [translated] When you lived there did you live there by yourself?

Lam: [translated] I lived there with a few people sharing

Loanvy: [translated] Did you know them?

Lam: beginning we don't know them but later yes.

Loanvy: How did you meet them?

Lam: Same refugee camp

Loanvy: Ok, how did you find a job?

Lam: Carefully.

Loanvy: [laughs] That's your answer for everything

Lam: Go to school and met the lady counselor and one day the counselor lady said “hey I know somewhere they open the job, you wanna work?” I said what is it there? It’s a machinist, do you have experience. I said yes! I used to do that. That’s how I found a job

Loanvy: Gun Machines?

Lam: Machinist, like doing sewing machine

Loanvy: [translated] Oh! You fix those?

Lam: [translated] No, I make the new ones, make the part and inspect. I did inspection. My first job, inspection.

Loanvy: Inspection for sewing machines?

Lam: Yes, part of sewing machine. “ Do you do it before?” I say yes.

Loanvy: [translated] Did you lie?

Lam: [laughs] [translated] Yeah I lied. I’ve never do it before. Everything “Yes!”. They said “Vietnam have Industrial Sewing Machine?” I said yes! “What’s the brand name?” I think its Saigon but I forgot long time ago. [laughs] I don’t know.

Loanvy: What are the occupations you’ve had in the U.S.? Oh, I got this. Bread truck driver.

Lam: Union specialist the name of the sewing machine. The next one will be, no the next one [translated] is I already started working with electronics already. The next one is Electron.

Loanvy: What did you do?

Lam: Supervisor of production. Production supervisor

Loanvy: Then you quit that job

Lam: [translated]Quit that job and come to Houston

Loanvy: What did you go to Houston for?

Lam: To open business

Loanvy: Ok what did you open?

Lam: Time Saver Grocery store.

Loanvy: I remember that

Lam: Three of them

Loanvy: Three of them! [translated] Then you sold all of them what did you do? I thought you and mom owned a thrift store

Lam: And then after that we opened a thrift store.

Loanvy: [translated] Why did you close that down?

Lam: go back to work for somebody else again

Loanvy: Doing what?

Lam: Schlumberger.

Loanvy: Where is the bread truck one at?!

Lam: One month only, I quit. Not even one month, after training I quit. They're so upset. Don't put in your resume, ok whatever you want to do.

Loanvy: [laughs] What are some similarities and differences about your old community and your new one?

Lam: It's about the same.

Loanvy: There is nothing different? [translated]

Lam: I cant remember

Loanvy: More cars

Both: Laughs

Lam: More cars, more black. We don't have no black, nah don't say that [laughs]

Loanvy: Why are you laughing? If there are no black people then there is no black people

Lam: because if we say that its true but we think we're racist but we don't in Vietnam we have white people we don't have black.

Loanvy: Then after you... I mean not that. Ok so what else is different? [translated] There are more people in Vietnam

Lam: More than here, yes.

Loanvy: Usually outside [translated] right? Everyone's always inside [translated] here right?

Lam: Yes. Except your mom. [Both laugh] She loves outside.

Loanvy: Did you have any memorable or funny experiences of culture shock? [explains what culture shock is]

Lam: Nah, the same. No we know, in Vietnam it's the same as here. Yes back in Saigon is really good. Anything they have, wear over here, they wear over there!

Loanvy: It's not that the same!

Lam: Almost the same, nothing really shocking here, you know?

Loanvy: [translated] Are you a citizen?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: Why or why not?

Lam: Why become citizen?

Loanvy: yeah, [translated] because you've lived here for more than 16 years. No, more like 30 years right?

Lam: And also, the job requirement has to have citizenship too.

Loanvy: Do you think of yourself as Asian American or Texan?

Lam: Texan.

Loanvy: [translated] what are you both?

Lam: Asian American better

Loanvy: Why?

Lam: Why not? I am American citizen I should be American. Asian American

Loanvy: What did you think of the US policy during and after the war?

Lam: After the war, US picked up a lot of people who served for South Vietnam. That's a really good thing for the U.S. Particular Reagan. Reagan is good he help a lot of Vietnamese people get out of Vietnam to come here

Loanvy: Were you involved in politics?

Lam: No I don't like politics

Loanvy: Do you keep in touch with your family or relatives in Vietnam?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: If so who? Older sister?

Lam: Older sister yes.

Loanvy: [translated] Nobody else? [translated] You didn't keep in touch with anybody else?

Lam: Nah, besides sister no.

Loanvy: Have you gone back to visit Vietnam?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: What was the experience like? Fun?

Lam: No. Just to visit relative and sister that's all

Loanvy: How does your family celebrate important holidays like Tet?

Lam: Not like used to anymore because of communist control.

Loanvy: How was it like before?

Lam: Before it was a lot of freedom now no freedom. You do anything you have to have a permit.

Loanvy: Does your family keep an altar for your ancestors [explains the questions]

Lam: What does that mean? Ah, the [translated] altar? Yeah.

Loanvy: What kind of traditions or celebrations you maintain from your ancestors?

Lam: Tet, New Years.

Loanvy: Name a song or music that reminds you of Vietnam

Lam: Any song?

Loanvy: Any song.

Lam: Vietnam Vietnam. [translated] Yes there is a song called Vietnam Vietnam

Loanvy: In your opinion, what will become of the Vietnamese culture in the US?

Lam: Vietnamese but cannot speak Vietnam, right?

Both laugh

Loanvy: Is it important to you to keep your culture identity?

Lam: Yes

Loanvy: Why?

Lam: Tradition.

Loanvy: Are there other memories you would like to share with me?

Lam: You already go back to Vietnam you know. So I don't need to share with you, whatever you see it I see it.

Loanvy: [translated] Done, thank you Mr. Daddy

Lam: You're welcome! Man I'm so tired.

TIME END: [37:38]

Excerpts

Subject: Daily routine in Vietnam as a child

Name _____ Transcript _____

Lam: Ok why was it bad? Ok, after the war right? Every three houses they have one, they put one communist police. That policeman there watching the other two and if you do something wrong they take you to jail right away or either go to jail or kill you right away. And every year, I mean every month they give to every family one kilogram rice per family. One kilogram which is two pounds meat, for a month. And about five pounds vegetables, that's it.

Subject: Journey to America

Name _____ Transcript _____

Lam: We go to Malaysia, we have all the weapons we have to dump, throw away because if they catch them they can put us in jail. So the best way just dump it, just put it.. just throw in the ocean.

Lam: No, and then they have a refugee camp in there right? They take us to refugee camp and... All the third countries come over interview right? Canada, U.S., and Denmark and every third country. A lot of countries come, French.

Lam: It's very beautiful, very nice people live there. And they call it ICC, international... IRC International Refuge Camp, [whatever I'm not sure] so in other words they give us all the information, food.

Summary

Life through the eyes of Lam Nguyen was not an easy one. Different stages passed through his life but that does not mean they were easy. One can interpret that the beginning of his life was easy and care-free. After turning the age of 18, Lam was drafted into the Vietnam democratic army, fighting for independence from communism and Ho Chi Minh. During Lam's capture he describes his intense journey in the re-education camps. Nguyen states, "Just chop the tree, and clear the land for them to plant for communist soldiers planning something. And bring the tree back to the station so they can sell it. They make money for themselves." Nguyen was conducting tedious work through the jungle with no knowledge even today why he was being held captive for his fight for freedom. Though Nguyen describes this as "jail" he as actually being held at a re-education camp. Nguyen also states, "Yes, that's what was jail, re-education camp means jail". This bold statement is what the true eyes of Vietnamese soldiers really felt in these so called "re-education" camps. After serving loyally for freedom by the democrats, the American government investigated his political opinion and accepted him into the United States. Nguyen describes the communist actions as, "They hit us. Beat us up, they do anything else." Heads turned into realization that not only was he in jail, he would be captive for four years without his knowledge. Being reigning lieutenant in the Vietnam war, Nguyen was chosen first in his section to come to America. This brief overall of Nguyen's life is not at all the in-depth tragedies and hardship he had to overcome to come to America and be free. I had chosen this type of rollercoaster ride in Nguyen's life because it demonstrates that though he was wealthy as a child, his life and his worldly possessions were stripped away by communism and the war.

During the transcribing of the interview, I have decided to keep the correct grammar Nguyen has spoken in. Reason being is that Nguyen has lived in the United States for over 24 years now. He takes pride in his ability to speak English fluently after learning it over a period of time. I believe that their language tells the story in a greater extent, giving it its true emotions when listening to rather than corrected English. I honestly felt that if I were to change grammar the grammar, my father would be offended that I changed his words because it takes away from his meaning and takes away from the Vietnamese culture. I believe that just because its not

grammatically correct does not mean it loses its impact as a story. If anything, changing people's words to correct grammar takes away from the intent of the story.

SUBJECT EXCERPTS

Subject: Daily routine in Vietnam as a child

Name _____ Transcript _____

Lam: I don't know because I live with my parent and go to school and go to, go home like normal person

Lam: Pretty good boy. I live in a really rich family, and I was spoiled, so.

Loanvy: How were you discipline as a youth?

Lam: Nobody discipline me.

Loanvy: [Translated] There was nobody who disciplined you?

Lam: No, I'm a good boy [laughs]

Lam: Go to school go back home, and eat, sleep go back to school again.

Lam: yeah, once awhile play basketball.

Subject: During the War

Name _____ Transcript _____

Lam: Platoon Leader, and also commander of companies. Company commander.

Loanvy: Ok, [Translated] Do you have any family members involved in the war?

Lam: No

Loanvy: Did [dad] come in contact with any American soldiers?

Lam: Yes.

Loanvy: What did [you] think of them?

Lam: Majority of them are uneducated.

Lam: Yeah, and they don't know what they come to Vietnam for.

Subject: Being captured by communist

Name _____ Transcript _____

Lam: After lost by communist, the majority of the officers go to jail right? And I was part of that.

Loanvy: For how long?

Lam: Four years.

Lam: Five o'clock in the morning wake up, right? And go to work. Go to chop the tree in the jungle.

Lam: Yeah, chop the tree in the jungle.

Lam: Just chop the tree, and clear the land for them to plant for communist soldiers planning something. And bring the tree back to the station so they can sell it. They make money for themselves.

Lam: When they beat me up, beat me up in the jail.

Loanvy: [Translated] What did they do to you?

Lam: Anything, [Translated] They hit us. Beat us up, they do anything else.

Lam: Yes, that's what was jail. Re-education camp means jail.

Loanvy: You stepped on a mine?

Lam: Yeah, local mine. Right here [points to the bottom of his foot] Still have a scar. Scar right there.

Subject: Why the war was bad

Name Transcript

Lam: Ok why was it bad? Ok, after the war right? Every three houses they have one, they put one communist police. That policeman there watching the other two and if you do something wrong they take you to jail right away or either go to jail or kill you right away. And every year, I mean every month they give to every family one kilogram rice per family. One kilogram which is two pounds meat, for a month. And about five pounds vegetables, that's it.

Subject: Journey to America

Name Transcript

Lam: We go to Malaysia, we have all the weapons we have to dump, throw away because if they catch them they can put us in jail. So the best way just dump it, just put it.. just throw in the ocean.

Lam: No, and then they have a refugee camp in there right? They take us to refugee camp and... All the third countries come over interview right? Canada, U.S., and Denmark and every third country. A lot of countries come, French.

Lam: It's very beautiful, very nice people live there. And they call it ICC, international... IRC International Refuge Camp, [whatever I'm not sure] so in other words they give us all the information, food.

SUMMARY AND EXPLANATION

I was draft after college. So my last occupation, I was soldier. I lived in Saigon. I was a lieutenant. Platoon Leader, and also commander of companies—company commander. Loanvy: Did [dad] come in contact with any American soldiers? Lam: Yes. Majority of them are uneducated. After lost by communist, the majority of the officers go to jail, right? And I was part of that. I was captured in the battle. Five o'clock in the morning wake up, right? And go to work. Go to chop the tree in the jungle. Just chop the tree, and clear the land for them to plant for communist soldiers planning something. And bring the tree back to the station so they can sell it.

They make money for themselves. They beat me up; beat me up in the jail. Yes, that's what was jail. Re-education camp means jail. They using the old jail before, and also some of them they put in the jungle and surround by communist soldiers. Loanvy: [Translated] does it affect you now? Lam: Nah, a little bit, stepped on a mine; yeah, local mine. Right here [points to the bottom of his foot]. Still have a scar—right there.

During the transcribing of the interview, I have decided to keep the correct grammar Nguyen has spoken in. Nguyen has lived in the United States for over 24 years now. He takes pride in his ability to speak English fluently after learning it over a period of time. I honestly felt that if I were to change grammar the grammar, my father would be offended that I changed his words because it takes away from his meaning and takes away from the Vietnamese culture. I believe that just because it's not grammatically correct, does not mean it loses its impact as a story.