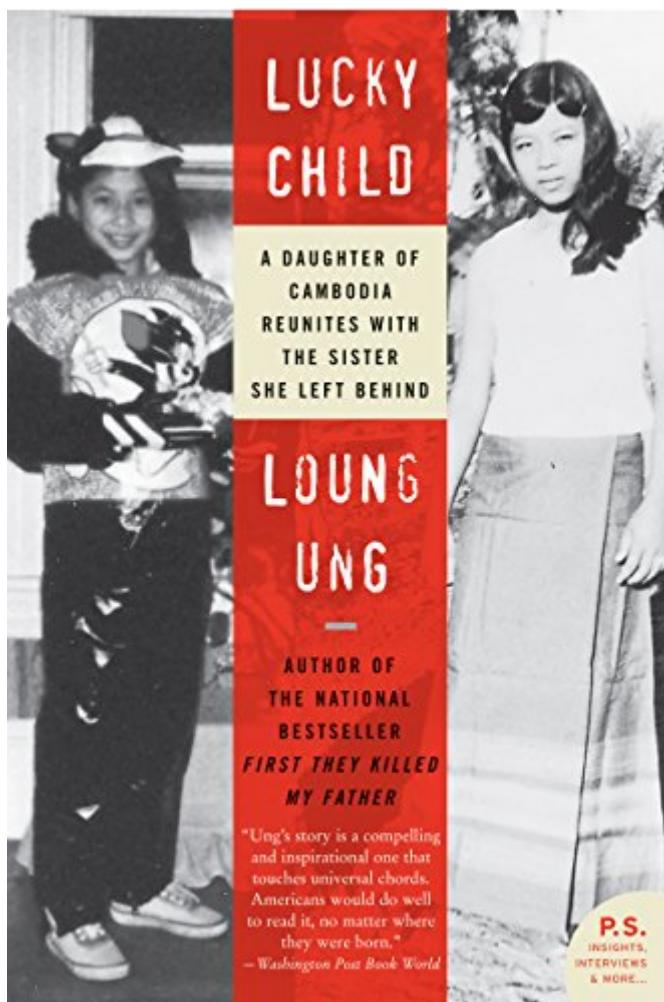


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# Lucky Child: A Daughter Of Cambodia Reunites With The Sister She Left Behind



## **Synopsis**

After enduring years of hunger, deprivation, and devastating loss at the hands of the Khmer Rouge, ten-year-old Loung Ung became the "lucky child," the sibling chosen to accompany her eldest brother to America while her one surviving sister and two brothers remained behind. In this poignant and elegiac memoir, Loung recalls her assimilation into an unfamiliar new culture while struggling to overcome dogged memories of violence and the deep scars of war. In alternating chapters, she gives voice to Chou, the beloved older sister whose life in war-torn Cambodia so easily could have been hers. Highlighting the harsh realities of chance and circumstance in times of war as well as in times of peace, *Lucky Child* is ultimately a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and to the salvaging strength of family bonds.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I ordered "Lucky Child" immediately after finishing the author's first book about her immigration from

Cambodia following the genocide of 1975-1979. Though this book can be read on its own, you will have a much more complete picture of Loung's childhood experience in Cambodia if you read "First They Killed My Father". "Lucky Child" picks up when Loung is in high school in Sacramento. Though she is trying to put the horrors of the past behind her, she has occasional flashbacks and moments of terror. She writes "...in the quiet recesses of my mind, the Khmer Rouge lurks and hovers in dark alleys, waiting for me at the bend of every corner. No matter how far I run, I cannot escape the dread they have followed me to America." Loung has lost touch with her closest sister in Cambodia, Chou, who married young and had children and has struggled to find prosperity and happiness in the deeply damaged country. Loung has always felt somewhat guilty about the fact that she was chosen to accompany her eldest brother to the refugee camp in Thailand where they were later sponsored for immigration to a small town in Vermont. Since Loung was the youngest surviving sibling, the family felt that she would have the best chance of getting an education and adapting to life in America. However, Loung's brother and his wife cling to Cambodian traditions and expect Loung to do so also. She chafes at their restrictions, hides the details of her background from her best friend in the new high school, and even changes her name to an American name - all so that she can blend in and find acceptance in her new country. Loung's brother Meng, had visited the family in Cambodia several times and sent them money which helped raise them from abject poverty. At first, Loung wasn't interested in returning to Cambodia, but eventually, Loung's brother organized a trip for them to return to a family reunion. Though their lives are very different by then, Loung reunites with her closest sister Chou. With all the siblings together for the first time in 18 years, the family honors their dead ancestors, while striving to put the past behind them. In her matter of fact and clear writing style, Loung allows to understand so much of Cambodia history and culture. Her ability to put the grim occurrences of the genocide in perspective and to find a way to move on and thrive is commendable. I look forward to reading her next book which starts when she's in college.

Amazing and powerful. I read "First They Killed My Father" while I was backpacking through Cambodia. It was so powerful to read Loung Ung's story of the brutal Khmer Rouge regime. All three are very much worth reading. Cambodia is one of my favorite places on Earth - the people are incredible and have overcome incredible odds. An entire generation was murdered and they are the most giving, kind, and loving culture I have ever come across. Thank you, Loung Ung, for sharing your incredible life story with us. We should all be so brave. You are amazing!

I loved the first book of the trilogy "First They Killed My Father". And I recently finished reading this one. I love this one for different reasons. It tells of the aftermath of the War in Cambodia. Some might think if you were a refugee from Cambodia who made their way to the United States in the war's aftermath that everything would just turn out fine and dandy. And indeed in many ways it eventually did as Luong was able to start a new life with a "higher standard of living" than she likely would have had in Cambodia had she stayed there. And she does eventually reconnect with her sister Chou and many in the rest of her family as well in Cambodia. She finds her purpose in life and as a result does some good things in helping her deal with the war's pain. But before reconnecting with her family and finding her purpose she deals with the guilt and trauma associated with PTSD survivors as well as the culture shock she encounters trying to fit in to her new country, the United States. An easy to read book coming from a woman who's native language is not English. Impressive. I'd recommend this book to anyone wanting a glimpse of what it can be like for a refugee to adjust to life in the U.S.

It's answered so many questions I had for my family that they couldn't verbalize and that I would not ask. I knew they hurt and I didn't want to risk being insensitive. Other books and documentaries will state facts and flash scenes, but I couldn't connect until reading this. I understand better when they're locked away and in tears. Thank you to the author for helping me feel closer to my family.

This book kept my attention from beginning to end. I am so glad she continues her story with what happened to her family after she left Cambodia for America. So few Americans realize the suffering Cambodians endured under the Khmer Rouge not just for the three years they were in power but for the next two decades as things sorted themselves out. The Ung family are my heroes.

This is the 2nd book in the series that I bought online immediately after returning from a life changing trip to Cambodia. I picked up the first book, First They Killed My Father, at a book store in Phnom Penh a few blocks from the White Mansion Hotel, part of the old US Embassy, where I was staying. I was looking for something good to read on the flight home that would also give me some insight into what the genocide in the 1970s was really like for the people of Cambodia. This book was exactly what I was looking for and was beautifully written. I would recommend these books to anyone! I have never read such a page turner! I read the entire first book on my flight back home and was thrilled to find this 2nd book in the series on . This book is just as much of a page turner and shows Loung Ung's life growing up in the US compared side by side with her sister's life

back in Cambodia. Loung Ung is a great author and I even got to meet her at a book reading, my first and only, at a book store in Harvard Square shortly after I read her 3rd book, Lulu in the Sky. Read the books in order and you won't regret it! The books are beautifully written!

Poetic and devastating...she is a genius.

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