

Three Rap Lyrics from *Dalama*

WELCOME

i was welcome into this world,
nineteen seventy-nine was the year.
those was the time,
the end'n of the killing field in Kampuchea.
i love Cambodia, cuz i was born there.
but during those time,
my people was living in fear.
all cramp up in camp concentration,
millions of refugees can u hear me?
are u listening?
there just gotta be a way out of there.
so i *sah-ma sah-put-toe ta sac*
then disappear.
my country crumble'n
cuz communist is conquering
from all the brok'n promises
anonymous sponsoring.
fleeing the country, knees deep in defeat.
i can't sleep. some make it through,
the others may they rest in peace.
cuz after one thousand, three hundred,
and sixty days, struggle'n for life.
dodge'n booby traps, land mines,
travel'n day and night.
we fight for our rights,
because we refuse to lose.
flee'n for freedom use'n flip-flop for shoes.

i was welcome into the U.S.
nineteen eighty-three was the year.
soon our feet hits the ground,
my mom busted in tears.
words can't describe,

a moment so rare.
and right by her side,
my father was there.
staring at the skies,
hold'n each other.
realize we survive the genocide,
and still together.
thvay bongkum (lok yey-lok ta)
and praise to Buddha.
cuz from that point on,
"it can only get BETTER!"
bright lights, big city,
we sheltered under shadows.
a refugee community,
two family per household.
needed clothes, neighborhood thrift store.
needed food, check the fridge for leftover.
our first car was like a cart,
push it to start, and once it spark,
it's already dark.
days turn to night,
night turn to day,
something gotta change,
we couldn't live that way.
so we round up the spare changes,
from over the years we save.
then bless the rest,
and move west to the Golden State.
California, Long Beach.

ART OF FACT

beyond the killing field,
a quarter of a century after the genocide.
after 2 million people murdered,
the other 5 million survive.
the fabric of the culture,
beauty drips the texture.
i find myself in Long Beach,
the next Cambodian mecca.
beside *srok Khmer, veal srae*, Angkor Wat,
some people still struggling,
from the aftermath of Pol Pot.
for some futures so bright, looks like high beams,
for others are lost in the American Dream.

for me it seems i'm on the road to nowhere fast.
hitting speed bumps, drive'n in circles,
vehicle running out of gas.
there's a gap in our generation,
between the adults and kids.
but since i'm bilingual,
i'ma use communication as a bridge.
first i'ma knock down the walls,
between me and my parents,
listen to their stories an' all
without interference.
what they experience,
was evil in its darkest form.
their mind, body, and heart,
shattered and torn.
the trauma of the war,
affect the refugee and foreigner.
suffering from deep depression,
post-traumatic stress disorder.
it's a new world order,
new threats that we're facing.
terrorist and INS deportation.
you can try to fight it go ahead be my guest,
cuz it's one strike and you're out of the U.S.
there's an epidemic that's killing us surely,
over things we don't even own,
like blocks and territories.
so-call OG recruiting young ones.
jumping them in gangs,
giving them used guns.
not even old enuff to speak,
already hold'n heat,
walk'n a dangerous route,
talk'n about "code of the streets."

seek and you'll find,
the truth is where my heart's at.
i'm speak'n my mind
and let my rhyme design this art of faCt,
line to line from front to back,
from the heart of praCh,
comes the "art of faCt."

i've been asleep snore'n,
now i've awoken from my nap.
my brain been storming,

so i put on my think'n cap.
digging deeper into my mind,
at times i find it hard to hack.
but i'm a messenger this time,
delivering you this "art of faCt."
fast track, racers love cars,
spending every dollar and cents.
getting it all fix up, mix up in bad investments.
but that's their choice to choose,
some parents are still confuse,
the difference between
discipline and child abuse.
i use to get whip and hit,
with wire and *ta-bong*.
it use to be a family matter,
until the law got involved.
for boys hang'n out,
that's OK, unlimited minutes.
for girls; what you talk'n about,
that's prohibited.
some is scared of it,
pushing them to the edge.
some parents still believe in
fixing up marriage.
i inherited all of this,
the knowledge of the facts.
being a Khmer that i am,
i feel the weight on my back.
but look what we're building,
right here in Long Beach.
a Cambodian Town,
down Anaheim streets.
the seed has been planted,
the foundation has been laid,
all it takes is time,
and *voilà* it's all great!
i was raised not to be racist,
so my judgement is color blind fold.
to judge one by their action,
and keep that mind frame on hold!
we're gonna stick together,
like cooked rice in a bowl.
open stores, markets,
products, merchandise...sold!
Business Bureau and Agencies,
to Chamber of Commerce.

fields in teaching, medical to law,
y'all we even running for offices.
there's hope in the kids,
they're learning faster than we did,
traditional dances to classical music.
old method is still used,
you get sick, you get coined.
New Year's Celebration,
everybody in the world come and join.
i am proud to say:
"i'm a Khmer" with pride.
because i praCh,
refuse to let my culture die!
seek and you'll find,
the truth is where my heart's at.
i'm speak'n my mind
and let my rhyme design this art of faCt.
line to line, from front to back,
from the heart of praCh,
comes this "art of faCt."

THE LETTER (PRISONER OF WAR)

i'm write'n you this letter from the bottom of my heart.
behind barb wires where every day is dark.
i'm tell'n you the truth behind the lies,
because life is valuable, we must survive.

on April 17th, 1975,
the rise of the Khmer Rouge,
terrorized the countryside.
innocent cries, endless shooting,
do or die it's a revolution.
population of seven million,
everyone heard it.
within three days,
the whole country is deserted.
captured by the Khmer Rouge,
while dying from a flu a survivor wrote...

while ride'n on a moped on the way to the market.
i got the farm goods in the bag, about to go trade it.
all of a sudden, there's fire and smoke,
the Earth stood still, Hell has awoke.

now...from six in the morning till the moon begin to rise,
they yell at us, tell'n us to grow more rice.
we did but it was always take'n away,
people eat'n watery soup while work'n night and day.
families separated by sex and age,
we work for food and taught how to hate.
they put us in camp, we call it cages.
our body fall asleep, but our mind stays awake.
late at night, they come with guns and knives,
flash a lil' light, then you're beat'n and tied.
drag outside, rag blinds the eye,
not knowing what'll happen...survive or die,
it's a genocide...it's a genocide!!!

those who wore glasses or different language speak'n,
either they're executed or severely beat'n.
doctors, lawyers, teachers, bureaucrats,
and merchants was killed. they say:
"intellectual people are not needed in the fields."
books burn, schools turn into barns,
there nuth'n to do but to listen and farm.

you attend political meetings to hear them speak,
they lecture about the revolution like twice a week.
that is where you're asked to criticize each other and stuff,
they wanna know if you support the revolution enuff.
if not then you're taken away to be studied,
they carry guns, you can't run, so the outcome is bloody.
as a result we learn how to hide our thoughts,
became excellent liars, cuz it's our lives if we're caught.
the killer rouge executed people for many offense,
like when complain'n about the living condition.
mourn'n the death of a family member's the realest feeling,
i remember they shot him pointblank in front of his children.
i can't maintain, the brain turn insane,
they even abolish the use of family name.
it's hell on Earth, and it's gett'n worse...

they wrap a plastic bag around his head,
then kick the air out his chest.
while choke'n on blood,
he suffocate to death.
they had a group of people,
all in a straight line,
tell'n them to face forward,
then they fired from behind.

to save bullets you know what they'll try?
throw you in bomb hole and bury you alive.
rotten body along roadside,
death is in the air.
a bastard child cries,
but can't nobody care.
i stare into the mountain side,
see'n flame'n ashes.
know'n freedom is just miles away,
from the plane crashes.
they laugh like jackal,
these assholes dressed in black.
strip me butt naked,
then tie my hand behind my back.
told me to choose one,
the gun or the axe.
i was guilty of rebel'n against the revolution,
told me i got three seconds,
then they gonna start shoot'n.

on the count of one: i pray for my soul.
on the count of two: for my family and my people.
on the count of three: i was drench in red,
i took two to the head and was left for dead.
my body turned cold, then i started see'n lights,
then a heavenly voice told me i have to fight!
and just like that my lifeless body turn alive,
and that's when i know...i will survive!

