



VANG, HUE SEE

Hue See came to America when he was five years old. He had to conform to the different culture in the United States. However, he wants to pass on the Hmong traditions to future generations so it doesn't get lost in the shuffle.

Well, being caught between two different cultures is really hard. When a person first comes to America, it is really hard to talk to some people and it's hard to really understand what other people are saying to you. You can't really get used to other foods and you can't really go anywhere if you don't have any relatives. When I first came to America, I was only five so I didn't remember much. I only remember the part when I used to live by the bridge and had a boat and I would always play under it. Then I came to Wausau and went to a different school. I didn't really learn a lot about my culture so I can't say much. But I can really say that having to be in two cultures is fun and sometimes boring. It is also cool, too. First time I went to school I got really scared because I didn't know what everybody was saying. When I tasted my very first hamburger, it was tough and it tasted weird.

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My parents want me to play the Keng but they don't want me to play with other people because you can share spit. My parents don't go with culture much but sometimes they go back and tell me how to act. You don't really listen but you can pretend to listen. My parents said that for Yang culture that if a girl's boyfriend sleeps in her bed, it could be bad luck and the spirits in the house don't like it and the girl has to go with the boyfriend and marry him. My dad also wants me to be a doctor and help people.

My mom got married very young to my father. My father was very respected when he was young because he knew how to play the Keng and send the dead people to the place where they were born. Almost wherever he went people knew him, so to throw it away is like throwing away your heart. I am trying to follow in my father's footsteps. I want to learn how to play the Keng and the flute. My mom was very helpful because she was helping everyone do their gardens. When I think back about it I really want to go back and meet the people we left behind and friends we forgot. My dad said one day he would take me back and meet my oldest friend.

I really think my parents changed a lot, forgetting the old life that they had. Once they forget and my brothers and sisters don't know what happens the Hmong culture would be lost forever. My dream is to pass all the knowledge I can to my sons and then they pass it to their sons and so on until we are no more. I heard that the Hmong could communicate with the dead if they just know how. Well, my mom's mom can. She really can and she knows a lot about the monsters in Thailand.

Now I really like to hang out with my friends but my parents really don't like me to hang around them because they think that my friend are influencing me and spoiling my brain and doing bad stuff. But now my brain really hurts from thinking too much so I better finish up. Well now I really think of going to college and then get married. My mom said that I should marry someone she chooses but I said that I should choose who I would like to marry. Well, here you don't have to do much but get a job, get good grades, and then your perfect but in Thailand the Laotions had to work for a living and plant the food in which they eat.