

A River Changes Course Transcript 83 minutes

00:08
Opening Credits
Migrant Films
In association with The Documentation Center
of Cambodia
And the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur
Foundation presents
A film by Kalyanee Mam
A River Changes Course
CARD: A Remote Jungle in Northern Cambodia
02:07
Cha Samourn: Mom, are these wild potatoes?
02:24
Cha: How about this one, Mom?
02:44
Sav Samourn: Today, everyone needs land.
02:49
Sav Samourn: They don't care who the land
belongs to.
02:54
Sav Samourn: They just come and cut down all
the trees.
02:59
Cha: Mom, you should take the potatoes out.
03:02
Sav Samourn: Carry your sister.
03:05
Cha: You carry her!
03:08
Sav Samourn: Please take her.
03:19
Sav Samourn: She just wants to cry.
03:22
Sav Samourn: And play with the potatoes here.
03:57
Sav Samourn: Let's find the lice eggs.
04:08
Sav Samourn: Check the pot. When it's
steaming, take it out.

04:13
Cha: Catch the egg, Mom!
04:19
Cha: Mom, the ducks are eating the salt.
04:25

Cha: Will they die if they eat salt?
04:28
Sav Samourn: I don't know.
04:38
CARD: On the Tonle Sap River in Central
Cambodia
05:08
Sari Math: Dad!
06:33
Sari: Dad, don't put that in!
06:35
Sari: Are you going to mix that in?
06:37
Omar Math: It should be saltier. It's too bland.

06:39
Sari: It's fine. It's already perfect.
07:16
CARD: A Village Outside of Phnom Penh
07:38
Savann Keoung: The buffalos keep eating the
rice.
07:46
Khieu Mok: The buffalos this season only want
to eat rice.
08:13
Khieu: Mom, look! The buffalo's eating all your
rice!
08:18
Savann: It's eating everything!
08:28
Savann: With Khieu here, we can work together
as mother and daughter.
08:33
Savann: And it's not too exhausting.
08:36
Savann: She helps lighten the workload for me.

08:55
Khieu: My greatest wish is for my mother to be
happy.
10:22
Omar: Row to the side here.
10:50
Fishing merchant: 2 ½ kg (5 ½ lbs).
11:07
Omar: Drive slowly. Not too fast.
11:26

Omar: Bring up the motor. And row to the side there.

11:31

Nouny Math: Why did it take so long?

11:34

Nouny: Sa asked you to call him.

11:36

Omar: The motor nearly broke.

11:37

Nouny Math: You already weighed the fish?

11:41

Om Mey Math: Mom, it's full of chhlang fish.

11:43

Om Mey: And even some rotten fish!

{00:11:45}

Om Ma Math: Rotten fish!

12:04

Nouny: Om Mey, give the baby some water.

12:06

Om Mey: Open wide!

12:09

Om Mey: You brat!

12:13

Om Mey: Eat, or I'll hit you!

12:16

Om Mey: Mom, he doesn't want to eat.

12:21

Omar: Bring the food! Let's eat!

13:27

Sav Samourn: The harvest isn't very good this year. There's very little rice.

13:36

Sav Samourn: The harvest is poor because there's no rain.

13:45

Harvester: When my husband makes money from logging, he never saves any of it.

13:50

Harvester: He spends it all on liquor.

13:55

Harvester: He never brings money to the farm.

13:59

Harvester: When I ask him, he says he has no money.

14:04

Harvester: The little money I have, I spend on food and medicine.

14:12

Sav Samourn: Why are you calling me?

14:13

Cha: The baby is crying!

14:15

Sav Samourn: Try to comfort her.

14:17

Sav Samourn: Why did you take her out of the shade? Give her a bath!

14:23

Sav Samourn: Ask your Dad to give her a bath.

14:27

Sav Samourn: Take off her clothes. She's probably hot.

14:48

Sav Samourn: Come and take your sister.

14:52

Sav Samourn: Go quickly and put the baby to sleep.

14:56

Sav Samourn: Take her to your Dad and ask him to tie the hammock.

15:00

Sav Samourn: Walk carefully! Don't step on the rice plants!

15:04

Sav Samourn: If you scratch the baby, I will hit you!

15:10

Cha: Sister, hurry up!

15:26

Cha: Let's look here first.

15:28

Cha: Then we'll look somewhere else.

15:33

Cha: When are YOU going to find any?

15:36

Cha: You should go look over there!

15:42

Cha: Where are the potatoes?

15:44

Yun: Where are they?

15:47

Cha: Do you see any?

15:51

Cha: Sister, come here!

15:58

Cha: Put the basket down.

16:06

Yun: Here's a potato.

16:10

Cha: This is my potato.

16:29

Cha: Why did you fill up so much water?

16:33

Cha: Are you trying to take a bath?

16:38

Yun: You said you're going to grandma's farm?

16:40

Cha: I never said that!

16:42

Yun: I'm also going tomorrow!

16:45

Cha: You're lying!

16:52

Cha: That one's not clean yet.

16:54

Yun: Which one?

16:55

Yun: Where?

16:57

Cha: That one.

16:58

Cha: That's my potato. Wash it carefully.

17:04

Yun: YOUR potato?

17:05

Cha: Yes, they're all mine!

17:16

Sav Samourn: The elders say that on the fourth month of the indigenous calendar

17:21

Sav Samourn: the butterflies fly north to Laos.

17:25

Sav Samourn: They fly to Laos to paint colors or flowers on their bodies.

17:33

Sav Samourn: When they first fly north, they have no colors.

17:37

Sav Samourn: They're only yellow or white. {00:17:40}

Sav Samourn: But when they return, 17:42

Sav Samourn: their bodies are painted with bright colors.

17:46

Sav Samourn: They're painted all the colors that ever existed.

18:10

Sari: I've been fishing since I was little.

18:14

Sari: So I've never studied very much.

18:26

Sari: I decided to quit school because it's too hard for my family.

18:30

Sari: I want to make money so that my brothers and sisters can go to school.

18:40

Sari: Most of the villagers here are illiterate.

18:44

Sari: I'm lucky I studied to Grade 7.

18:47

Sari: In my village, no one studies this far.

18:51

Sari Math: By Grade 5 they quit.

19:12

Children: The left has five. The right has five.

19:14

Children: Five and five commands ten.

19:17

Children: Five and five commands ten.

19:20

Teacher: Okay, now one more time.

19:21

Children: The left hand has five fingers.

19:25

Children: The right hand also has five.

19:28

Children: The left has five. The right has five.

19:31

Children: Five and five commands ten.
19:33
Children: Five and five commands ten.
20:08
Savann : I feel sorry for my daughter. She's worked hard for years, but still has nothing to show for it.
20:15
Savann: She works hard just to support her younger brothers.

20:28
Khieu Mok: We had to borrow money from the bank this year.
20:30
Khieu Mok: To help make ends meet.
20:34
Khieu Mok: We needed the money to buy land and a buffalo.
20:47
Savann: You're here so early! Don't you know we're busy harvesting?
20:51
Savann: Excuse me for speaking without removing my hat.
20:55
Savann: You know we're busy with the harvest. Why did you come so early?
20:59
Savann: You need to make your payments early.
21:04
Savann: I'm just short 22 cents.
21:06
Debt Collector: Then bring it.

21:08
Debt Collector: Leave your money here. No one will take it.
21:10
Savann: You're stealing my money.
21:11
Debt Collector: She lost her money and she still acts sassy!
21:14
Debt Collector: She wants everyone else to repay her debt.
21:21
Savann: We just paid off two months.

21:24
Savann: How many months do we have left?
21:27
Savann: Another 7 months? We have to make 11 payments total.
21:33
Savann: Thank you. I'm in a rush to get back to the harvest.
21:36
Debt Collector: I only have two cents in change.

22:44
Savann: That's enough.
22:48
Khieu: Mom, what do you want me to do if it hurts?
22:52
Khieu: It's not turning red.
22:55
Savann: Don't coin so hard; a little more softly.
23:01
Savann: I've had this cold for a few days, but I haven't had a chance to coin.
23:07
Savann: I'm always busy doing something.
23:16
Khieu: You're fidgeting too much, that's why it hurts.
23:19
Savann: It hurts, that's why I keep turning to look.

23:23
Khieu: I haven't coined your waist yet.
23:26
Savann: It's too painful! That's enough!
23:29
Savann: Now coin this side.
23:31
Savann: It hurts too much.
23:37
Savann: Just stop. It's too painful.
23:39
Khieu: Really, Mom. What do you expect me to do?
23:42
Savann: Start from here.

23:46

Savann: That's enough.

23:48

Savann: You keep coining the bony parts.

23:51

Khieu Mok: How can I coin the meaty parts when you're all bones!

23:59

Savann: You're not doing it right.

24:03

Khieu: You're not satisfied?

24:18

Savann: Palm trees have many uses.

24:22

Savann: The palm liquid can be boiled into a sugar - palm sugar.

24:27

Savann: The trunk of the palm tree

24:29

Savann: can be cut to build houses.

24:34

Savann: Palm leaves can be sewn to cover the walls.

24:39

Savann: Or used to cover the rooftops of houses.

24:47

Savann: Place them carefully.

25:03

Savann: I owe a lot of money.

25:08

Savann: Before, when the kids were little, we never borrowed any money.

25:13

Savann: But when the kids got older, we began to borrow.

25:25

Savann: Are there any more palm stems?

25:44

Savann: The palm stems are too big.

25:46

Khieu: Let me cut it for you.

25:48

Savann: I'll just tear it off.

25:56

Savann: Tomorrow, Khieu is leaving for Phnom Penh to find work.

26:01

Savann: She will look for work in Phnom Penh.

26:07

Savann: She will look for work in a garment factory.

26:17

Savann: All the young people have gone, by the truckloads.

26:22

Savann: Some aren't even of age yet, and they've gone.

26:26:

Savann: he young kids want to follow the older kids who can work.

26:30

Savann: Those who find work in the factories first, help the ones who go later.

26:39

Savann: So that everyone is able to find work.

26:45

Savann: All the young people in the village have gone. Only the old people are left.

27:02

Savann: When my daughter goes, I will miss her.

27:22

Savann: The car leaves at 11 o'clock.

27:35

Khieu: Place it in the middle there.

27:38

Savann: Don't put it in your pocket.

Khieu: Mom, why are you acting so afraid?

27:59

Man: Will the car take me all the way?

Fare Collector: Yes.

28:03

Khieu: What's the fare?

28:05

Fare Collector: 3.75 USD.

28:06:20

Khieu: 3.75 USD is a lot.

28:08

Fare Collector: That's the right price. It's what we charge everyone.

28:14

Khieu: Can I sit in the front?

0:28:16

Fare Collector: Sure, there's a seat in the front.

28:19

Khieu: How about 3.25 USD?

28:20

Fare Collector: Everyone in this car is charged the same price.

28:23

Fare Collector: It's 3.75 USD for all the stops.

28:31

Khieu: I'm afraid of getting carsick.

Fare Collector: There's no need to be afraid.

28:37

Fare Collector: They say if you kiss the driver, you won't get carsick.

28:41

Fare Collector: Driver, will you kiss her?

28:43

Khieu: I'm too old.

28:44

Fare Collector: He won't kiss you then. You're too old!

28:53

Driver: Are you ready? We're in a hurry!

28:56

Khieu: Good-bye, Mom!

Savann: Okay, have a safe journey.

29:49

Noung: Hurry! The rain is coming!

29:53

Noung: Hurry, it's going to rain! All the wood will get soaked!

29:57

Noung: Get down! I'll do it! It'll be quicker.

30:03

Noung: Om Mey, carry the wood to the back!

30:47

Omar Math: Straighten up your penis!

30:53

Om Ma: Point it straight, Akai!

30:55

Omar: Go ahead and point it! Your antenna is sticking up!

31:00

Omar Math: Point your antenna for good reception!

31:14

Sari: Leave me alone!

31:15

Om Mey: The baby was trying to poke you!

31:18

Noung: Om Mey, put the baby to sleep.

33:26

Sav Samourn: The kids make such a mess around the house.

33:31

Sav Samourn: No one helps to keep the place clean.

33:50

Pesles Samourn: Mix the rice with the soup.

33:57

Sav Samourn: Sit properly when you eat.

34:03

Sav Samourn: Don't be awkward.

34:08

Sav Samourn: Sit properly.

34:10

Sav Samourn: If I knew you kids were this messy, I wouldn't let you eat.

34:22

Yun: Mom, I'm not full yet.

34:59

Boy: Now, it's your turn to recite it.

35:06

Boy: Repeat it yourself.

35:07

Cha: I can't do it.

35:16

Boy: Recite it!

35:19

Boy: Just say it! Why can't you do it?

35:25

Boy: Just do it!

35:28

Boy: Come on!

35:30

Boy: Read it!

35:34

Boy: She can't even read the letter " .

35:38

Sav Samourn: I've never seen her study.

35:42

Boy: Whether she studies or not, she should at least know the alphabet.

35:48

Boy: Let's try again - " .

Cha: - " .

35:50

Boy: What's this?

Cha: - " .

36:34

CARD: The Capital City of Phnom Penh

37:47

Sewing School Owner: A lot of factory workers come study here.

37:51

Khieu: How much for an hour lesson?

37:53

Sewing School Owner: 60 cents per hour. Or 12 USD for a complete lesson.

37:56

Sewing School Owner: A complete lesson takes five days.

37:59:00

Khieu: Five days for a complete lesson?

Sewing School Owner: Yes.

38:01

Sewing School Owner: Up to what grade did you study?

Khieu: I've never studied.

38:04

Sewing School Owner: Then it'll be hard.

Khieu: It really is hard.

38:07

Sewing School Owner: Can you write your own name?

Khieu: Yes, I can.

38:10

Khieu Mok: Are there many students?

Sewing School Owner: Only a few students at a time.

38:14

Sewing School Owner: After they learn how to sew, they go straight to work.

38:27

Khieu: Where should I put it? Should I put it here?

38:29

Sewing Instructor: Yes, that's fine.

38:31

Sewing Instructor: Sew! And place your feet here.

38:33

Khieu: Pedal forward?

38:34

Sewing Instructor: Yes, normally when you sew, you pedal forward.

38:38

Sewing Instructor: Push it in.

38:40

Sewing Instructor: Now, go.

38:48

Sewing Instructor: Yes, turn it around.

38:50

Sewing Instructor: Now, do it all by yourself. And place it close to the seam.

38:53

Sewing Instructor: Keep it straight.

38:58

Sewing School Owner: It seems like you've done this before.

39:01

Khieu: I've never done this!

39:03

Khieu: I don't know anything.

40:06

Omar: Sari, don't drive like that!

40:10

Omar: You'll break the motor.

40:16

Farid Math: Turn off the motor.

40:30

Omar: Wake up!

40:32

Omar: Come on, get up!

40:35

Omar: Gather up the net.

40:37

Omar: Shake it.

40:40

Omar: Turn the boat.

40:42

Omar: Turn it, just past the net.

40:55

Om Mey: After this one, I'm done!

40:57

Farid: No, we still have more fish to clean!

41:07

Fisherman: What size fishnets are you using?

41:09

Omar: 2.5 or 3.5 cm?

41:13

Omar: Did you catch a lot of fish today?

41:15

Fisherman: We've been fishing all day and we only caught 2 kg (4 lbs)!

41:37

Sari: If we can't catch anything, we should just go home.

41:40

Omar: Not yet.

41:44

Sari: There's no wind today.

41:46

Omar: We should try 2 or 3 more times.

41:48

Omar: At noon, we'll go home.

41:59

Omar; We'll probably lose money today.

42:04:

Omar: Is the duck roasted?

42:06

Om Mey: Mom's been cooking it since morning.

42:17

Sari: Om Mey, has the teacher been asking for you?

42:23

Om Mey: The teacher asked why we weren't going to school.

42:29

Om Mey: The teacher will build a bridge to the school.

42:33

Omar Math: Did they build the bridge yet?

42:36

Om Mey: I heard Pao say they will build a bridge in 4 or 5 days.

42:40

Omar: The fishing season will end in a few days.

42:42

Sari: Then you should go back to school.

42:47

Sari: If the teacher asks why you took such a long break...

42:50

Sari: Tell him, "I'm too busy taking care of my little brother."

42:53

Sari: "And my parents are both fishing." Tell him that.

42:58

Omar: No, tell him we don't have an extra boat to row to school.

43:00

Omar: It's too hard.

43:01

Om Mey: And we also have to row past the island.

43:03

Sari: And tell him the school doesn't even have a bridge.

43:06

Sari: There's no bridge to cross.

43:10

Om Mey: I need to fix my hair properly.

43:15

Om Mey: I didn't get to comb it yet.

43:24

Om Mey: My hair smells nice even though I haven't washed it yet.

43:29

Omar: Om Mey, row the boat.

43:31

Omar: We will pull in the nets soon.

43:38

Fishing Merchant: You didn't catch much today?

43:40

Omar: No, today was not so good.
43:46
Omar: This is all we have.
43:48
Fishing Merchant: 4 kg (9 lbs)!
43:50
Fishing Merchant: No! 8 kg (18 lbs)!
44:27
Omar: Om Mey, watch out for the sides.
44:43
Akai: If you marry a city man, you will be short of money.
44:47
Akai: But if you choose me, you will have dollars to spend.
44:50
Akai: Darling, you will have a Lexus and a villa.
44:54
Akai: Wherever you go, you will be modern and stylish.

44:57
Akai: If you marry a city man, you will be short of money.
45:00
Akai: But if you choose me, you will have dollars to spend.
45:03
Akai: Darling, you will have a Lexus and a villa.
45:07
Akai: Wherever you go, you will be modern and stylish.
45:10
Akai: If you marry a city man, you will be short of money.
45:13
Akai: But if you choose me, you will have dollars to spend.
45:17
Akai: Darling, you will have a Lexus and a villa.
45:20
Akai: Wherever you go, you will be modern and stylish.
45:24
Akai: That's it.

45:33
Television: I also have a magic pill to bring wind.

45:38
Television: Big sister, let me borrow your magic fan!
45:41
Television: I will let you borrow my fan.
45:48
Television: I will bring the fan for you. Just leave me quickly!
45:51
Television: Leave me!
45:53
Television: Leave me!!!
45:58
Noung: Tomorrow I want to fish early in the morning. We're not catching anything.
46:04
Noung: Maybe we can catch at least 5 kg (11 lbs).
46:10
Television: You can exchange your lucky draws from all Black Horse liquor branches nationwide.

46:16
Television: Don't forget to look under your bottle cap to win the lucky draw!
46:20
Television: Black Horse!
46:23
Television: Raid will kill ants and cockroaches on contact!
46:27
Television: Drink this! There are no added colors or preservatives.
46:30
Television: But why should I drink it?
46:31
Television: Because...
46:32
Television: I love you!
47:04
Sav Samourn: Your hair is so dirty. You really need to wash it.

47:07:
Cha: Can't I just take one basket?

47:09

Sav Samourn: No, don't go yet.

47:25

Cha: Mom, let me hold the kettle

Sav Samourn: Let's go!

47:53

Cha: Don't wash your snot in here!

48:53

Radio: Please join us as we continue our program...

50:00

Khieu: I feel my life is divided in half.

50:14

Khieu: Honestly speaking, all Khmer girls working in factories,

50:19

Khieu: are divided in half.

50:27

Khieu: We work in the factory, because there aren't enough rice fields to work on.

50:43

Khieu: The Ministry of Labor increased the base wage to 61 USD a month.

50:48

Khieu: But if you work overtime, you can make about 100 USD a month.

52:41

Khieu: The factory pays its workers on the 10th of every month.

53:22

Khieu: How much is this?

Vendor: 1.25 USD per kg (2 lbs).

53:26

Khieu: You charge by the kg?

Vendor: Yes.

53:34

Khieu: I come home from work, cook, and eat.

53:37

Khieu: The next morning, I wake up and work for someone else again.

53:42

Khieu: I never have time to think about the future.

54:28

Factory Girl 1: I work in a garment factory.

54:30

Factory Girl 1: In the village, I can only work during the planting and harvest seasons.

54:37

Factory Girl 1: In the factory, I can work every day.

54:40

Factory Girl 1: So I can save some money and send it back home.

54:44

Factory Girl 2: I'll work in any factory that pays the most.

54:49

Factory Girl 2: The base wage is 61 USD a month.

54:53

Factory Girl 3: I came here to work because my parents are poor.

54:55

Factory Girl 3: If I don't work, who will take care of us?

54:59

Factory Girl 2: I've worked in the factory for many years but I've saved nothing.

55:04

Factory Girl 2: Not even 100 USD.

55:06

Factory Girl 2: I have to buy all kinds of things.

55:08

Factory Girl 2: I have to buy everything.

55:10

Factory Girl 1: Right now, everything is much more expensive than before.

55:13

Factory Girl 1: Even food is more expensive.

55:17

Factory Girl 2: I tell all the young people not to come. They should find work at home instead.

55:25

Factory Girl 1: After one more year, I'll probably stop working.

55:29

Factory Girl 2: I'll probably work one more year.
I want to go home and
raise the cows.

55:34

Factory Girl 3: I definitely want to go home,
raise pigs, and work in the
rice fields.

55:41

Factory Girl 1: I will stop working and return to
the country.

55:46

Factory Girl 1: I have a three year old child in
the village.

55:58

Landlady: Here, I'll give you 23 USD in change.

56:02

Khieu: I really can't believe it!

56:05

Landlady: Just take it.

56:06

Khieu: Okay, give me the change.

56:08

Khieu: I can't believe the bill is so high!

56:11

Landlady: Here.

56:21

Khieu: 10 USD! | Can you believe it?

56:24

Landlady: And it's 9 USD, not 10!

56:27

Khieu: Isn't that already 10?!

56:49

Khieu: Every month, I budget | 80 USD to send to
my mother...

56:58

Khieu: ...to pay back our debt.

57:41

Sav Samourn: Before, we wouldn't dare walk
through here.

57:46

Sav Samourn: There were tigers, bears, and
elephants.

57:49

Sav Samourn: Now, all the wild animals are
gone.

57:53

Sav Samourn: We used to be afraid of wild
animals and ghosts.

57:57

Sav Samourn: Now, we're afraid of people.

58:00

Sav Samourn: The elders say they're afraid of
people cutting down the
forests.

58:13

Sav Samourn: We burn the land every year to
destroy the roots and make
the soil fertile.

58:21

Sav Samourn: Once the soil is fertile, we can
plant rice here.

58:27

Sav Samourn: But when the soil goes bad, we
leave it fallow and clear out
more land.

58:34

Sav Samourn: Cut new forest and clear new
land.

58:38

Sav Samourn: Soon, new forests will take over
again.

58:42

Sav Samourn: When the trees grow big again,
we will return to cut and
clear once more.

58:47

Sav Samourn: Come get this!

58:49

Sav Samourn: Here, take it!

58:57

Sav Samourn: If we don't burn, the soil will
become dry and barren.

59:04

Sav Samourn: And it will be hard to grow rice.

59:14

Sav Samourn: I've been feeling sick for nearly
ten years now.

59:19

Sav Samourn: My body shakes and my muscles
ache.

59:24

Sav Samourn: My head aches and I feel dizzy.

59:28

Sav Samourn: I don't feel like eating and the sight of food makes me ill.

59:34

Pesles: I was so sick I almost died.

59:38

Sav Samourn: The baby vomited and had diarrhea so we connected her to an IV.

59:42

Sav Samourn: Only after one or two bags did she get better.

59:46

Sav Samourn: They say it's a sickness of the chest and the intestines.

59:49

Sav Samourn: After we finished harvesting, she was sick for about a week.

59:56

Sav Samourn: I don't know why so many people are getting sick.

01:00:00

Sav Samourn: Maybe it's from eating other people's foods.

01:00:03

Sav Samourn: Before we ate salt, chili peppers, and all our own fruits and vegetables.

01:00:11

Sav Samourn: Now, we buy food from other people.

01:00:15

Sav Samourn: We were never sick like this before.

01:00:20

Sav Samourn: I just know that these days, everyone is getting sick.

01:00:25

Sav Samourn: I'm not sure what causes it.

01:00:30

Sav Samourn: Maybe it's from the food that we buy.

01:00:33

Sav Samourn: Or maybe it's from the water.

01:00:57

Khieu: In the beginning, we agreed I should come here and work.

01:01:03

Khieu: So that we could pay off our debts.

01:01:06

Khieu: And help ease the burden.

01:01:08

Khieu: But when I came here, my Mom changed her mind.

01:01:12

Khieu: I really want to work. Mom and I agreed that I would come here and work.

01:01:17

Khieu: And make money to pay our debts.

01:01:21

Khieu: But now Mom's having a tough time.

01:01:25

Khieu: It's so hard for me to think about it.

01:01:28

Khieu: Half of me wants to stay. The other half wants to go.

01:01:32

Khieu: I feel sorry for my Mom if I don't go.

01:01:38

Khieu: My family said, "Think about it, Khieu. Is it more worth it to stay or to go?"

01:01:42

Khieu: "If you farm, we will have food to eat."

01:01:46

Khieu: "And Mom won't be so tired."

01:01:49

Khieu: "Since you will be there to help her."

01:01:52

Khieu: "If you stay, of course you'll make money."

01:01:55

Khieu: "But it may not be enough to buy food."

01:01:59

Khieu: I don't know. I'll have to ask Mom.

01:02:05

Factory Girl 4: How much per minute?

01:02:10

Shopkeeper: 12 cents for two minutes.

01:02:16

Khieu: Is this Aunt Vun? Where's Mom?

01:02:20
Khieu: Hurry! I need to talk to Mom and I don't have much money.

01:02:24
Savann: It's too hard...

01:02:28
Khieu: What's so hard, Mom?

01:02:31
Savann: There's so much work to do.

01:02:34
Khieu: Is it too hard for you to plow?

01:02:37
Khieu: I don't know. It's really up to you, Mom.

01:02:38
Savann: And my waist is really bothering me.

01:02:41
Khieu: You should wrap some rubber around your waist.

01:02:47
Khieu: Okay, just tell me once and for all. What should I do?

01:02:52
Savann: I'm telling you to come home.

01:02:57
Khieu: What day?

01:02:59
Savann: Sunday.

01:03:01
Savann: We're planting rice on Monday.

01:03:04
Khieu: Why so soon?

01:03:08
Khieu: What if I just stayed one more week?

01:03:13
Khieu: Ok, Mom. That's enough, then.

01:03:15
Savann: Fine, but make sure you come on Sunday!

01:03:18
Khieu: Let me see first. How can I get there by Sunday?

01:03:23
Khieu: Ok, that's enough, Mom.

01:05:49
Savann: Daughter, I didn't think you would come home.

01:05:52
Savann: Your brother said, "Mom! Mom! Sister is here!"

01:05:54
Savann: I said, "You guys have lied to me so many times. I'm not going."

01:05:58
Khieu: Where's the other cow?
Savann: At the neighbor's house.

01:06:01
Khieu: What?

01:06:03
Khieu: It's our cow, and you let someone else take it?

01:06:09
Savann: The cow didn't even finish feeding and they came to fetch me.

01:06:16
Savann: We had to sell the big generator and buy a small one.

01:06:20
Savann: We sold it for 10 USD and bought a small generator.

01:06:22
Savann: How can we save any money? We're always spending it all.

01:06:26
Savann: We spent 1.25 USD to fix the small one, but now it's broken.

01:06:30
Savann: It's pitch dark at night with no light.

01:06:34
Savann: We can never save anything.

01:06:52
Omar: Our son, Sari, went to plant cassava for the Chinese.

01:07:00
Omar: He's been gone a month now.

01:07:08
Omar: He went to help relieve the family burden.

01:07:15
Omar: As his parents, we forced him to go.

01:07:21
Omar: He really didn't want to go.

01:07:24

Omar: But we forced him because he needs to help make money.

01:07:29

Omar: If we didn't force him, he wouldn't have gone.

01:07:33

Omar: But as a son, he can't challenge his parents.

01:07:43

Omar: We decided he should work over there because we are struggling here.

01:07:51

Omar: We are struggling because we can't catch any fish.

01:08:01

Omar: Sari's future can only be a struggle.

01:08:07

Noung: He will be a fisherman.

01:08:09

Noung: He will follow in his parents' footsteps, unless he works for the Chinese.

01:08:23

Omar: For the future generations, all the fish will be gone.

01:08:29

Omar: All our Muslim brothers and sisters in Koh Manoh village, will go work for the Chinese.

01:08:38

CARD : A Cassava Plantation in Western Cambodia

01:08:52

Sari: I'm not sure how I ended up working here.

01:09:01

Sari: Some of the villagers said, "If you're not catching any fish, why don't you go work for the Chinese?"

01:09:06

Sari: "You can plant potatoes and dig ditches."

01:09:09

Sari: "It's very easy."

01:09:20

Sari: There's no work at home.

01:09:22

Sari: There's work, but we can't catch any fish.

01:09:37

Sari: They say before, this was covered with dense forest.

01:09:41

Sari: Now, all the forests have been cleared.

01:10:36

Sari: Mom, are you able to catch anything?

01:10:40

Sari: Have you cast the nets?

01:10:46

Sari: If everything's fine over there, I don't need to go back.

01:10:52

Sari: I haven't received my wages yet. How can I go back?

01:10:57:15

Mom, I'm just afraid we can't make any money over there.

01:11:05

Sari: I can make money here while you make money over there.

01:11:10

Sari: I have about 25 USD saved up.

01:11:16

Sari: But I want to work another month.

01:11:21

Sari: It's hard over there. I'm afraid you'll swear at me for not catching any fish.

01:11:30

Sari: Hello?

01:12:00

Khieu: In my heart, I really want our village to be like Phnom Penh.

01:12:07

Khieu: We could construct a large factory with many buildings.

01:12:12:

Khieu: The wetlands over there belong to the government.

01:12:17

Khieu: They're planning to clear out that land and build a factory.

01:12:22

Khieu: If they build a factory here, life would be so easy.

01:12:26

Khieu: If we want to buy food at this time, we can.

01:12:29

Khieu: Or we can wait until evening, because there would be roads.

01:12:33

Khieu: If they build a factory, they will also build roads. We won't have to cut through the rice fields.

01:12:41

Khieu Mok: It would be so easy. If we wanted to buy fruit, we'd just have to turn our heads.

01:12:47

Khieu Mok: I want this place to transform into Phnom Penh.

01:12:50

Khieu Mok: Whatever Phnom Penh is like, that's how I want my village to be.

01:12:53

Khieu Mok: And we would have lights shining everywhere.

01:12:57

Khieu Mok: Who knows how happy we would be if we really could do this.

01:13:04

Khieu Mok: We would be so happy.

01:13:47

Sav Samourn: We bought the rice mill this month.

01:13:50

Sav Samourn: With money from the cashew harvest.

01:13:55

Sav Samourn: Since we're not planting right now,

01:13:59

Sav Samourn: we're charging people a few cans of rice to use the mill.

01:14:13

Sav Samourn: I love the land and the forests.

01:14:16

Sav Samourn: These days, almost all the trees and forests have disappeared.

01:14:21

Sav Samourn: There are less and less forests now as they continue logging this place.

01:14:27

Sav Samourn: The forests are almost all gone.

01:14:30

Sav Samourn: I'm scared.

01:14:32

Sav Samourn: We have no more land or forests to run to.

01:14:35

Sav Samourn: We've worked so hard on this land. And now they've come to destroy it all.

01:14:40

Sav Samourn: Sooner or later, it will all be gone.

01:14:44

Sav Samourn: The future generations will have no land.

01:14:48

Sav Samourn: With no land, it will be even more difficult for them.

01:14:52

Sav Samourn: What can they do, but become a laborer for someone else?

01:14:57

Sav Samourn: And it's hard to work for someone else.

01:15:01

Sav Samourn: It's not like working for yourself.

01:15:06

Sav Samourn: You're always moving forward when you work for yourself.

01:15:11

Sav Samourn: When you work for someone else, you have nothing.

01:15:20

Sav Samourn: All the villages are selling their land to the companies.

01:15:25

Sav Samourn: We're the only ones who haven't sold our land and forests.

01:15:29

Sav Samourn: They say the companies are coming to the forests here.

01:15:33

Sav Samourn: They say later the companies will come.

01:15:35

Sav Samourn: They will come settle and clear the land.

01:15:39

Sav Samourn: Very soon, the companies will come.

01:15:44

Sav Samourn: People are selling land all over the place, so we must also sell.

01:15:50

Sav Samourn: We can't live alone. We can't beat them.

01:16:31

Sari: I don't want to think about the future. I just want to work hard and make money.

01:16:36

Sari : Wherever I can make money, I will go.

01:16:45

Sari: Money.

01:16:49

Sari: We all search for it until we find it.

01:16:53

Sari: Until we are old.

01:16:54

Sari: But we can't keep it with us forever. We make money and then it's gone.

01:17:01

Sari: Whether you're a fisherman or a slave of the Chinese.

01:17:08

Sari: It might be easier if I worked where I could hold a book and a pen.

01:17:12

Sari: Now, I just work with a hoe everyday, sweating all over my body.

01:17:18

Sari: I don't even dare take a break.

01:17:20

Sari: I heard people say it would be so easy.

01:17:24

Sari Math: But when I came here, this wasn't so.

01:17:27

Sari Math: We were all shocked.

01:17:37

Kalyanee Mam: Do you remember when I came in Oct 2008? How old were you at the time?

01:17:45

Sari: I was 16 years old.

01:17:50

Sari: No, I was 15 then.

01:17:53

Sari: I was studying in Grade 7.

01:17:56

Sari: I don't know how we met.

01:17:59

Sari: We navigated the boat with my uncle.

01:18:03

Kalyanee: Do you remember that time?

01:18:04

Kalyanee: We rode to the middle of the lake.

01:18:07

Sari: I drove you to see the water hyacinth blossoms.

01:18:15

Sari: We hung out until dusk, and then returned home.

01:18:19

Kalyanee: Do you still remember what you said?

01:18:24

Sari: You asked me about fishing and about my family's living condition.

01:18:28

Sari: Do you remember talking about your future and what you said?

01:18:34

Sari: Yes, I remember.

01:18:35

Kalyanee: What did you say?

01:18:42

Sari Math: It's hard for me to say. Ask me something else.

01:18:44

Kalyanee: You don't want to talk about it?

01:18:51

Sari: If my parents would let me study...

01:18:54

Sari: and get a diploma...

01:18:56

Sari: and I could work...

01:18:59

Sari: I would buy land for my parents to live on.

01:19:04

Sari: I won't let them live on the water.

01:19:06

Sari: If we had money, it would be okay. But even on water, we have nothing.

01:19:10

Sari: If I don't change my profession, I will be a fisherman for the rest of my life.

01:20:12

MUSIC AND CREDITS