

When Jesus Came to Laos-Part Two

Who could it be? No one ever traveled this high in the mountains, except last year, when the pastor came. He came with the Bible and told them about Jesus and how He loved them. The pastor had stayed with them ever since, teaching them from the Bible.

A terrible thought chilled Thao and sent a tremble down his back and through his feet. What if they were men from the government? What if they had found out many of his neighbors believed in Jesus?

What if they arrested his mother? The Bible she had hidden was the only one the village had. They all shared it. But it was illegal to have a Bible.

Suddenly, he had an idea. He grabbed the Bible and the plastic bag the villagers kept it in to keep it dry and clean. Then he ran out the door.

“Thao, come back!” his mother called.

But he ignored her. If it was the government, they would not find his mother with the Bible. He would hide deep in the jungle until it was safe.

He ran through the high grass and bushes, deeper and deeper. The branches grabbed at his legs and beat his face. But he knew he had to keep going.

Something wet landed on his arm.

He looked down. Blood. He reached up and touched his cheek. The branches had opened the gash on his face. It was bleeding, more than a little.

Thao slowed his steps as he pushed on into the jungle. When he knew his legs would buckle if he tried to run another step, he stopped and looked around. He could not see much through the heavy curtain of trees and brush that surrounded him. Thick tree trunks shot up to the sky where the tops grew together in such a jumble that Thao couldn't tell one tree from another. The blistering sun shot darts of heat all around him. He sank down into the grass at the base of a tree where the canopy of leaves would shade him. He felt like he had swallowed his banana that morning without chewing it. It was lying in his stomach in one lump. Maybe he should just rest for a minute.

The next thing Thao knew, his arm was wet, soaking wet. This time, it was not from blood but from rain!