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# One Poem: Light

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## Creative and Literary Works

### One Poem

**Sengarone Peter Vetsmany**  
**Minnesota State University, Mankato**

#### Light ຄຳສັ່ງ

My grandma rubs my chest, says *bo lukkkun*,  
I listen to her, not rising from table, I open my eyes  
to dining room light warming my memories back,  
commotion eats my ears – uncles argue, Xok cries.

Ma weeps down light when I look at uncles  
kneeling beneath window with tumbling sun,  
on floor Xok screams with no legs, his hand gone.  
Light is striking – silent flash, an eruption.

I drift off from agony. I recall tree branch  
I held onto when Xok came running to tree,  
a cloud diminished his smile, a land mine stole  
his laughter, a flash brought me back down to dirt.

Eyes open to incense smoke dims light,  
roams in shadows of war-torn house.  
Grandma starts to chant a prayer, uncles follow  
her cadence, I knew when Ma stood beside light.

My brother, who followed me around Lao jungles,  
who I promised to buy chocolate for when we reach America,  
will never taste escape. In window, spirits comfort Xok  
away, his eyes extinguish in candlelight set beside him.



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## **About the Author**



**Sengarone Peter Vetsmany**, is pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing with an emphasis in poetry at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He is expecting to finish in 2020, which will be just in time for the 45th anniversary of the Lao Diaspora. Born and raised in Boise, Idaho, Peter is a graduate from the University of Idaho with a BS in philosophy. His work has appeared in *Little Laos on the Prairie* and the Asian American Writers' Workshop. He is the Graduate Assistant for Asian American Affairs at Minnesota State University, Mankato and resides in Minnesota.



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