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Two Poems: My Interaction with Other SE Asian Communities, Struggle to Laotian Community

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My Interaction with other SE Asian Communities

The bell rings
The scorching sun out and about
Burning into the back of our necks
It's lunch time.

One brought banh,
The other brought Prahak,
I brought my laap
Together we bond through
One theme: underrepresentation
We teach each other
We learn from each other
So we can fight the same problems that we all have

We create communities at school
To invoke discussion
And bring forth new ideas
To help cure the illness that we all suffer from
We can’t fix this on our own
We need to find others who are similar to us
The three boys with the same home-made lunches

We all seek equality and resources
The matter is how we work together to succeed
We are the next generation
We need to be the one to change
If we never work together things will stay the same
We must learn from the past to succeed in the future

Struggle to Laotian community

The history of my people is beginning to fade
The elders are emotionally scarred
It hurts for them to relive the war
Or think “what would happen if we stayed?”
Yet this is something that our generation must work around
We must realize that we must be wholesome to get to the dark answers we seek
Direct questions will only drag us down
Little steps are the only way
We need to ask questions that bring fond memories
That lead into a deep dark hole
Where the answers are that you seek
The answers that you need to preserve the history of our people

About the Author

Prinston Pan was born in Kansas and is currently living in Southern California. Growing up he spent most of his summers in Kansas at his grandparents’ Lao grocery store, where he interacted with many customers and learned about their lives in Laos. He is also the author of Kong’s Adventure, a children’s book about his grandfather’s journey from Laos to America.
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