

Dany : Firstly, may I have your full name?
Rom : Yes!
Dany : Your name?
Rom : My name is Sok Rom.
Dany : How old are you?
Rom : 54 years old.
Dany : Where is your hometown?
Rom : Yes!
Dany : Where is your hometown?
Rom : My hometown is in Takeo province.
Dany : What is the village?
Rom : It is in Kiri Vong.
Dany : It is in Kiri Vong district. During a period of 3 years, what was Kiri Vong's number?
Rom : Yes! It was number 109.
Dany : Kiri Vong district was 109! What was the number of Takeo sector at the time?
Rom : Sector 13. But now I don't know how the sector is changed because I have never gone there.
Dany : Yes! 13 what was the commune [you live in] at the time?
Rom : Kampeaeng commune.
Dany : Kampeaeng commune! Kampeaeng commune is near Prey Kabbas, right?
Rom : Kampeaeng commune is on one side!
Dany : Oh! Yes! Kampeaeng commune! What is the village?
Rom : Ta Peou village.
Dany : Ta Peou village. Ta Peou or Ta Pang?
Rom : Ta Paeou!
Dany : Ta Peou, right?
Neighbor : Ta Peou, yes!
Dany : Ta Peou! What village do you live in today?
Rom : Chakri village. But now, the village is geographically located in Barang Thleak Commune, Phnum Proek District.
Dany : What Commune? Barang Thleak Commune, right?

Rom : Yes! In the past, it was Chakri village, Chakri commune, but now it is geographically located in Barang Thleak village.

Dany : Barang Thleak Commune, Phum Proek District is here?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : What province?

Rom : Battambang Province.

Dany : Battambang Province. It is not in Banteay Meanchey province, right?

Rom : Yes.

Dany : What is your husband's name?

Rom : My husband's name is Chhuon.

Dany : Chhuon! What Chhuon?

Rom : Chhon Chhuon.

Dany : How old is he?

Rom : He is 3 years older than me.

Dany : He is 3 years older than you. He is 57. Is he at home now?

Rom : He is at home, just returned from the farm. He is yet to take a shower.

Dany : Where is his hometown?

Rom : He comes from Sing Sahang.

Dany : Yes! Where?

Neighbor : Sing Sahang!

Dany : In Svay?

Rom : It is on the north side of Svay.

Dany : What is the district?

Neighbor : Serei Saophoan district.

Dany : Serei Saophoan district, Banteay Meanchey province.

Neighbor : Yes! It was in Battambang province in the past.

Dany : When did you meet your husband?

Rom : I met him in 1981.

Neighbor : He knows Lai Vireak, right?

Rom : He knows! He was a soldier.

Neighbor : A Khmer Rouge soldier.

Dany : What are your parents' names?

Rom : My parents are dead.

Dany : What is your father's name?

Rom : My father died when I was about 5 months old, I didn't know his name.

Dany : Oh! [he died] when you were young?

Rom : Yes! My mother died 2 years ago. Her name was Sieng.

Dany : Your mother was Sieng?

Rom : Yes

Dany : How many siblings do you have?

Rom : I have 3 siblings.

Dany : 3 siblings?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : You are the last child?
Rom : I am the middle.
Dany : How old were you when your father died?
Rom : I was 4 months old. However, my mother married to her second husband.
Dany : Oh! You have three siblings right?
Rom : Yes!
Dany : All of them are females, right?
Rom : Yes!
Dany : Did you go to school when you were young?
Rom : I did not go to school when I was young.
Dany : Really!
Rom : At that time, children studied under trees or bamboos and often the US bombed[the area]. Most of the children did not go to school.
Dany : When did the US bomb?
Rom : During Lon Nol regime.
Dany : Are you able to read and write?
Rom : I am able to read and write a little. However, I forgot a lot now that I am getting old.
Dany : Can you read and write when you were young or did you have go to school when you became an adult?
Rom : In 1977, the KR sent me to Svay, Battambang. There, the KR assigned me to teach children. Therefore, I tried to self-study.
Dany : You just read and write a little, but the KR assigned you to teach children, right?
Rom : Yes! I taught them based on what I learned.
Dany : Oh! You didn't go to school. What did you do when you were young?
Rom : When I was young and while living at home I was asked to chase away sparrows.
Dany : When you were young at school you didn't stay with your parents, right?
Rom : I stayed with my parents. But I left my parents at the age of 9. I came to live in a child unit.
Dany : You lived with your parents until the age of 9?
Rom : Yes! When I left my parents, I came to live with the child unit. The children and orphans were put [in the child unit]. I lived the child unit for 4 years.
Dany : When did you come to live in the child unit?
Rom : Yes
Dany : When?
Rom : It was not until 1975 that I came to live there.
Dany : 1975! You came to live there?
Rom : In 1976, 1977!
Dany : You were in the child unit!

Rom : Yes, it was not until 1977 that I came to live in Battambang province. I was asked to live in Battambang province.

Neighbor : You came with Ta Phat.

Rom : Yes! I came here before Ta Phat. Ta Phat came after me. At that time, I got 500 girls Oh! 500 male kids and 500 female kids came from Battambang province.

Dany : In 1975, when Phnom Penh city was liberated, you came to live in a child unit?

Rom : Yes! I lived in the orphan unit.

Dany : Where was the orphan unit?

Rom : The orphan unit was off the Tonle Bassac [Bassac River] near to the Yuon [Vietnamese] border.

Dany : Oh! It was in Kiri Vong district too?

Rom : Yes! It was near to the Yuon border.

Dany : What is the district called?

Rom : It was off the Tonle Bassac, you don't know Tonle Bassac?

Dany : Tonle Bassac?

Rom : Yes, don't say that you don't know.

Dany : Tonle Bassac, that is all the way in Phnom Penh, right?

Rom : Oh! Tonle Bassac that is near the Yuon border.

Dany : Oh!

Rom : [You] ask Ta Phat! Ta Phat knows it as well. He fought there. Ta Phat's unit waged war with the Yuon at the time.

Dany : Tonle Bassac is in Kiri Vong district right?

Rom : After leaving Tonle Bassac, I came to Kampong Ampil.

Dany : Were there many kids in the child unit?

Rom : There were many kids. [We] built the reservoir and dam.

Dany : Oh!

Rom : By this time in the evening, I was asked to chase away sparrows.

Dany : At the time, you were just 9 years old right?

Rom : [At the time], I was only suitable to chase away sparrows.

Dany : [You were] 9 years old, right?

Rom : No, I left home at the age of 9.

Dany : After you left your home at the age of 9, where did you stay?

Rom : I lived on Tonle Bassac.

Dany : In 1975, you came to chase away sparrows?

Rom : Yes

Dany : You were a little older than this [kid] at the time?

Rom : She is just 3 years old. If someone is older than her, he/she can talk. He/she can walk at the age of 9.

Dany : Oh! You can chase away sparrows?

Rom : I chased away the sparrows along with the Yuon who rang the bell. Yuon was on the one side of the creek and I was on the other side. We chased away the sparrows together.

Dany : You didn't have any arguments?

Rom : No! Yuon [Vietnamese] kids on the other side always raised their hands, begging for water convolvulus and we picked and threw it to them.

Dany : [You and Yuon] could cross Tonle Bassac from Cambodia to Vietnam or Vietnam to Cambodia, right?

Rom : That side of the river was Yuon's territory and the other was ours.

Dany : Is Tonle Bassac [Bassac River] big or small?

Rom : The river is big but the creek is small, like the creek at our border. [There were areas that were] large and slim.

Dany : At the time, you were 9 years old. Did you remember many people who went to build the dam?

Rom : Many people [went to build the dam]. I was 9 years old at the time. At the age of 12, I was here. I was promoted to be in the female unit. At the age of 12 or 13, I matured and was in a female unit.

Dany : Who was the leader?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : Who was the leader in the orphan/child unit?

Rom : [The person] was sent to be killed.

Dany : Who?

Rom : [The person] persecuted the people. When people provided rice, salt, prohok [type of dish], [he] dropped them in the water. He didn't give clothes [to people]. People shuddered, cut the grass and threaded roofs. He didn't give the tent to the people, instead floated them along the river. No one was allowed to eat salt. Yuon reported that there was a container full of salt and hammocks and short pants. [But he] floated them along the river and buried it in mud at the Yuon creek. Yuon reported it. He was not yet killed but tied and walked. At that time, I was there and after the superiors were all captured, I came here.

Dany : The superiors of the orphan/child unit?

Rom : Yes

Dany : What was his name?

Rom : Oh! I don't want to tell you.

Dany : He is dead. Just tell me his name!

Rom : He is dead. However I do not want to tell you about his name.

Neighbor : He is dead. It doesn't matter in telling him. If you don't tell, how would he know about him?

Rom : Because his relatives are around. I don't dare to tell.

Dany : Oh! Who was the Kiri Vong district committee?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : Kiri Vong district committee?

Rom : I don't know his name. My mother knew them. When she visited me when I was in the child unit she knew them. I forget about them because at the time. I was not matured. I remembered only the unit chief and village chief.

Dany : What were the village chief's name and unit chief's?
Rom : The regiment leader named Reth 105 and the small cell leader named Doeun.

Dany : Are they alive?
Rom : They were captured.
Dany : They were captured!
Rom : I don't know to where they were captured and sent. But his relatives asked me about him. [They] haven't seen him for ages.

Dany : Rice and salt were dropped in the water?
Rom : No! For a 50 people unit, only 3 cans of rice were in a large pan mixed with water convolvulus and water lily.

Dany : Where was rice taken to?
Rom : Rice was dipped in the water. They were not allowed to eat salt.
Dany : [They] were angry with the young and for that reason rice was taken away?

Rom : No! The young might have been traitorous and so were the female youth. The army had enough food.

Dany : What kind of committee captured them?
Rom : Perhaps, he was searched and captured. If I saw him, I talked to him. He was stripped of bicycle and radio. I just looked at him and I didn't dare to say anything because I was afraid of being killed. If we don't mind our words, we will be dead. We will be taken away and killed.

Dany : Have you ever seen a killing?
Rom : Yes, I am scared until today.
Dany : Where did you see?
Rom : I was scared because I saw it with my own eyes. I was deterred.
Dany : Where did you see the scene with your own eyes?
Rom : Many people were killed. People were walked in a line and killed. For a young kid like this one, [he] would be dead. [They] will throw the kids onto bayonets.

Dany : For your generation, you were in Kiri Vong?
Rom : Yes! Off the Tonle Bassac.
Dany : You were at the Tonle Bassac, right?
Rom : The scene was so ferocious.
Dany : Tonle Bassac was in Kiri Vong as well?
Rom : [The people] at the place who shared the border with the Yuon [Vietnamese] were so ferociously treated.

Dany : Did you remember the execution site?
Rom : Yes!
Dany : The execution sites were off the Tonle Bassac?
Rom : Yes! People in Ampil and Yaol village were all dead.
Dany : Kampong Ampil and Kampong Yaol?
Rom : They were killed and were put out for the fish to eat. I didn't dare talk about it because I was afraid of it. It reminded me of my

mother and I would pray for her protection. In a 10 people village, there were only 2 people left alive.

Dany : Who?

Rom : The other person was in 32.

Dany : Where is 32?

Rom : At hall 32.

Dany : What village?

Rom : It was called 32.

Dany : In 32.

Rom : It is before Sasda downtown.

Neighbor : On National Road N° 9.

Rom : It is beyond 404.

Dany : The name is Rou?

Rom : The name is Rou.

Dany : Male or Female?

Rom : Male

Dany : You are the same age?

Rom : I am the same age.

Dany : You said you went there at the age of 9 and were enlisted into a female unit at the age of 12.

Rom : Female unit.

Dany : The female unit was still in Bassac?

Rom : I came [with the female unit] from Tonle Bassac [and arrived] here [Svay, Battambang].

Dany : At the age of 12, you were in the female unit and after leaving Tonle Bassac where did you go?

Rom : I came to live in Battambang province. I was forced to come to Battambang province.

Dany : What year?

Rom : In 1977

Dany : What month in 1977?

Rom : Maybe April or June. During the rainy season, I folded the two ends of the sarong [long skirt] and tucked on the [my] back and then planted the rice saddling. People were asked to fold up their trousers and they were afraid of their blood being sucked by leeches.

Dany : June was the month of [Khmer] New Year?

Rom : Yes

Dany : The month began with little rain?

Rom : In June, people came to grow rice.

Dany : How did you know that you would be transferred from Kiri Vong to Battambang province?

Rom : I didn't know about it. At the time, I took the train. I arrived in Takeo province and stayed there for 2 nights and headed to Phnom Penh. On my arrival in Phnom Penh, I was allowed to walk for 3 days. And I left for Svay at 11 o'clock at night.

Dany : How many people left from Kiri Vong to Takeo?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : How many people?

Rom : 500 ladies.

Dany : You all left Kiri Vong?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : 500 ladies left Kiri Vong and they were all at similar age or older?

Rom : Some people were older than me. While I chased away sparrows, I was called to come with them.

Dany : You were just 12 years old?

Rom : Yes! I was knocking the grub-hoe in the middle of the field. I didn't know about the call.

Dany : Did you tell your parents or say good-bye to them?

Rom : No, I was not allowed to do so. I wrote a letter to my mother and near to my arrival in Takeo, I threw a letter to the people growing rice, asking them to send it to my mother, but I don't know whether the letter reached her or not.

Dany : When you were young without education, how could you write a letter?

Rom : The people in the fifty-member unit loved me so much because I did what they ordered. I never had the time to stay at home. They usually like me. They could use me so they loved me. Honestly, they loved and like me so much.

Dany : Among 500 ladies, who was the leader?

Rom : Ta 15 allowed us to come.

Dany : Ta Mok?

Rom : Ta Mok.

Dany : He allowed 500 ladies to come?

Rom : We were sent to Svay and then separated.

Dany : I wanted to know who transported you all.

Rom : I don't know.

Dany : You didn't know?

Rom : I don't know because we were in different units.

Dany : But did Ta Mok go down to Kiri Vong?

Rom : Yes

Dany : He said he would send 500 ladies?

Rom : People were selected through names and units. People were selected based on their background.

Dany : Ta Mok was also a leader in Kiri Vong?

Rom : He led the female youth. Every 1 week or 3 days, he would arrive there. When seeing ladies carrying bags of rice, Ta Mok would pick up a wooden stick and hit the men. [He asked] who allowed the ladies to carry bags of rice while the men stood smoking cigarettes?

Dany : With what did he give the men a whipping?

Rom : He used his walking stick to hit the men. [He asked] who ordered ladies to do so? Ladies should not carry anything.

Dany : Didn't Ta Mok's brother-in-law control the place?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : What was his name?

Rom : Yes! His brother-in-law, but it was not him. There were other cadres in the district [who] forced us to work hard.

Dany : He didn't blame his brother-in-law?

Rom : No

Dany : In Kiri Vong?

Rom : [Ta Mok] blamed him for making mistakes.

Dany : Have you ever heard the blame?

Rom : Blame! And hit.

Dany : Hit?

Rom : [Hit] other youth as well.

Dany : If he said he would hit someone, he would hit the person right away?

Rom : He hit and said, "don't use the ladies". He watched from a distance and saw the men standing but the women carrying. He would hit the men right away.

Dany : At the time, wasn't Ta Tit a Kiri Vong district committee?

Rom : He was a district committee but very little went down [at the base]. He went to meet with the people at most.

Dany : At the time, did you know Ta Tit?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Knew Ta Tit?

Rom : I knew. My mother visited me. She made An Som [type of Khmer traditional cake, cylindrical, wrapped in banana leaves] for me. I asked [the Khmer Rouge for permission] to visit [my mother] but they told me to wait until January 17 celebration. By this time in the evening I cried, missing my mother. When they told me not to cry but wait until January 17 celebration, I wasn't allowed to visit (cannot catch up with the recording).

Dany : April 17 celebration?

Rom : Yes, April 17. I wasn't allowed to visit her. Learning from the others about me, she [my mother] missed me so much that she came to visit me once and then I missed her [even] more and ran away.

Dany : Ran to where?

Rom : I ran home but couldn't find the way and [I] was down at the Yuon [Vietnamese] creek. At night, I assumed the white reflection was soil. But it was a rice field and while going down the rice field, I fell deeper and deeper. [Then] I was captured on my return. I was chased and hit around the house. After 10 to 20 rounds, I was allowed to work in the unit. Oh! Misery.

Dany : When did you know Ta Tit? You have just said that you ran away?

Rom : While working, the unit members said, "Ta Tit is here; don't talk! [we should] work hard". As the superiors came, the unit members told each other not to talk. We didn't dare to stop to work because we were afraid of them.

Dany : At the time, you knew and saw him?

Rom : Oh! I forgot now.

Dany : At the time?

Rom : [He] was younger than me. I didn't know him.

Dany : His wife was Ta Mok's biological sister?

Rom : Biological sister.

Dany : You knew her name! You knew the name? You knew the name of her children?

Rom : No

Dany : Anyway, in June 1977, Ta Mok selected 500 women from Kiri Vong?

Rom : Kiri Vong.

Dany : He brought them to [Svay]?

Rom : He brought them to Svay and divided [them] into groups.

Dany : All of the women were educated for 2 days upon their arrival in Takeo?

Rom : [They] were educated for 2 days.

Dany : What were they educated on?

Rom : We were educated on the situation, how to work with people, and we were divided into group units and [sent] to the cooperative or villages – each village with 8 or 9 women. The base people tried to kill the women. They said we were April 17 people. Many women were killed, many of whom were from Sre Ambil.

Dany : How about you?

Rom : I ran to hide in a barn. I was small so I could hide anywhere.

Dany : Upon your arrival in Takeo in June, was it Ta Mok who taught you for 2 days?

Rom : Ta Mok didn't teach me.

Dany : Who?

Rom : I don't know the person but it was a person who brought us here.

Dany : Brought you [here]?

Rom : Yes

Dany : You didn't know the name?

Rom : Yes

Dany : What did they teach you? Being among the 500 people who were selected from Kiri Vong, were you told to go somewhere or do something?

Rom : We were told to go to the northwest and then divided into cooperatives.

Dany : What did they tell you about the northwest zone for the reason that you were selected to go there?

Rom : We didn't dare ask why they divided us into cooperatives.

Dany : Were you [told] to be cautious?

Rom : To be prepared

Dany : How were the people there? How were they traitorous?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : You were told to be cautious?

Rom : We were told to be cautious about working with them, minding our words. We were cautious about being alone because we were persecuted. I couldn't go anywhere I wanted.

Dany : Were you told to be cautious about being reported to the superior?

Rom : Yes! We were cautious about minding our words. In short, we were cautious about everything [after we were] educated in the meeting.

Dany : After 2 days of education, you were sent to Phnom Penh?

Rom : Phnom Penh.

Dany : Along with 500 women?

Rom : I came to Phnom Penh for 3 days. I had a meeting a whole day and then the KR took [me] to visit some places in Phnom Penh.

Dany : You came to Phnom Penh for 3 days, you didn't attend the class?

Rom : I attended the class for 1 day.

Dany : With whom did you study?

Rom : I don't know.

Dany : Did you see Pol Pot's clique?

Rom : I don't know.

Dany : You don't know?

Rom : I didn't ask them. I preferred to listen to them.

Dany : You studied for just 1 day and where did you go for visits?

Rom : I was taken on a truck to see the throne.

Dany : The Royal Palace?

Rom : Some [other] places included Watt Phnom,

Dany : Where did you stay, then?

Rom : I stayed near to the Chhruoy Changva Bridge and I took bath in the river there.

Dany : Off the Chhruoy Changva Bridge?

Rom : Yes

Dany : How often did Ta Mok come to your place?

Rom : Never saw [him].

Dany : What did you take from Takeo to Phnom Penh? You came by truck or train?

Rom : I took the train.

Dany : Train! On your arrival in Phnom Penh, you were taken on a truck to go sightseeing?

Rom : I was taken on a truck to go sightseeing.

Dany : How many cars [took] to carry 500 women?
Rom : Their tourist cars could carry many people. We didn't have rice but [have] bread with beef or pork soup.
Dany : Just only bread?
Rom : Just only bread.
Dany : It was delicious?
Rom : The bread was like this size. I ate only bread.
Dany : You didn't eat rice?
Rom : I didn't eat rice! I wasn't given.
Dany : But you were full with bread?
Rom : Each was given 5 loaves.
Dany : Each with 5 loaves?
Rom : Each with 5 loaves.
Dany : You could eat all?
Rom : No! [I left some] to eat in Svay.
Neighbor : Were there many people in Phnom Penh?
Rom : People were not like people nowadays. I saw soldiers in Phnom Penh.
Dany : Not so many people traveled in Phnom Penh?
Rom : No. There were many people [who] were in the garment factory. On my arrival in Phnom Penh, we had a meeting with the KR [and they] asked us of which location will we to go to work.
Dany : At the time, you were just 12 years old?
Rom : Yes
Dany : Just 12 years old?
Rom : I may [have been] 13 or 14 years old. I became a teenager when I was in Battambang province.
Dany : 14 years old?
Rom : Yes! I hit puberty in Samroang, Battambang province. Did you know Samroang village?
Neighbor : Near the west side of the creek.
Rom : I was in the village off the road.
Neighbor : Salakraham Samroang Damrey.
Rom : Yes
Dany : After leaving Phnom Penh, where did you go? What did you take [to go] from Phnom Penh to the southwest zone?
Rom : Train.
Dany : All 500 women took the train?
Rom : All 500 women took the train. I could see how long the train was when the train turned to the other side.
Dany : Were you happy with the train?
Rom : Happy! I slept on a hammock.
Dany : You didn't miss your mother or siblings?
Rom : I missed them but I struggled valiantly. If we were attacked and killed, let it be destiny because there were many people.
Dany : Were there many people?

Rom : There were many people.

Neighbor : Did you know comrade Chan Tha?

Rom : I knew her.

Dany : Where did you stop over after going up to Battambang Province?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : Where did the train stop over on the way from Phnom Penh?

Rom : On the way to Svay.

Dany : Did you stop at Battambang province on your way to Svay?

Rom : No

Dany : No?

Rom : I didn't know the direction of Battambang. From Phnom Penh up to Svay, it took many long hours. The train arrived in Svay at 1:30 pm.

Dany : I used to meet with Yeay Chem. She said she took the train from Takeo province. Did you meet her?

Rom : Yeay Chem?

Dany : Yes!

Rom : Yeay Chem came after me.

Dany : You came before her?

Rom : I came about 3 months earlier than her.

Dany : You came before her about 3 months?

Rom : I came about 3 months earlier than her. I came before Ta Phat, Ta Bo about 3 months.

Dany : Who is Ta Bo?

Rom : Ta Bo! Yeay Aot.

Dany : Did Ta Bo come to live with Ta Phat?

Rom : Ta Bo was a superior as well. Ta Phat was a superior but Ta Bo was superior to Ta Bo.

Dany : But he!

Rom : He is dead! Ta Bo died last year. Ta Phat died this year.

Neighbor : How about his wife?

Rom : His wife is alive. She was sitting right there.

Dany : You came here before Yeay Chem?

Rom : I came here about 3 months earlier than Yeay Chem.

Dany : I met her. She said she took the train with many people.

Rom : Yes! Yeay Chem came with the people. I came with only the female comrades. 500 female comrades and 500 youth all amounted to 1000 people.

Dany : How could you know you came about 3 months earlier than her?

Rom : I was asked to come. I don't know.

Dany : But how could you have known that she came after you?

Rom : I came here about 3 months [after] and then 1000 families came after.

Dany : It was said that 1000 families came after, including Yeay Chem?

Rom : Yeay Chem came. I went to Svay to pick up my mother. I met her in Svay.

Dany : Oh! You came to pick her up?

Rom : I came! All of the women were in black at the time.

Dany : When people came there, were you happy there?

Rom : When many people came here, we were happy. If [I] come here alone, I couldn't [have] gone to sleep.

Neighbor : Did you know Bo and aunt Marn?

Rom : Marn of what village?

Neighbor : Bo and Yeay Marn?

Rom : I used to hear the name but I would [only] know if I saw them.

Neighbor : Bo was a cooperative leader at the time.

Rom : Yes

Neighbor : Did you know Chan Tha?

Rom : I knew her well

Neighbor : Chan Tha was my superior. She was short.

Dany : Yes!

Rom : She was talkative.

Neighbor : Her appearance looks like you. She was my biological aunt. Marn was with Bo.

Dany : You took the train in Phnom Penh and then just stopped in Svay, right?

Rom : Stopped in Svay.

Dany : Where did you stop in Svay?

Rom : I got lost at the time. I arrived at 1 o'clock. I arrived and slept for a while and was awakened to have [some] rice. I ate bread on the train. I was awakened by a woman to eat rice on the 2nd floor of a 2-story house.

Neighbor : This brick house! At the creek's bank.

Rom : Yes at that creek's bank. And in the morning I had water from that creek.

Dany : Where did you get off the train? Where did you go then? You went to Svay or Sam Raong?

Rom : No! I stayed in Svay for 3 days and then was divided into a unit.

Dany : You stayed in Svay for 3 days?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Where did you stay within those 3 days?

Rom : I stayed in a 3-story brick house. Women were allowed to stay there. We stayed near the creek but I didn't know the exact location. I got lost and nowadays, I still get lost in Svay.

Dany : 500 women were summoned to the meeting for 3 days?

Rom : A 3-day meeting.

Dany : With whom did you attend the meeting?

Rom : I don't know. [But] I remembered the faces.

Dany : Did you know Ta Rin at that time?

Rom : I knew Ta Rin.

Dany : Why did Ta Rin come to the meeting?

Rom : Ta Rin came to attend the meeting.

Neighbor : How about Ta Cheal, Ta Trak?
Rom : Ta Cheal also came. Many superiors came.
Neighbor : How about Ta Val?
Rom : There was another one who I knew well.
Neighbor : Ta Riem
Dany : Where was he? Did you know Ta Chay?
Rom : Yes! Ta [male elderly] Chay.
Dany : Ta Chay led the meeting?
Rom : Yes
Dany : He was the top superior at the time?
Rom : I don't know.
Dany : But it was Ta Chay?
Rom : Another woman. That woman was also a superior. She expressed the idea on education.
Dany : Yeay Chem attended the meeting as well?
Rom : She was older than Yeay [female elderly] Chem.
Neighbor : Let me think!
Dany : Ta Chay led the 3-day meeting?
Rom : He led the meeting, divided people into groups and cooperatives in the villages.
Dany : Did you remember how people were divided?
Rom : People were divided and were taken [by truck] to the villages and communes.
Dany : Where did you go to stay?
Rom : I came to stay in Sam Raong.
Dany : How many people [were taken] to Sam Raong?
Rom : Yes
Dany : How many people stayed in Sam Raong?
Rom : 50 people came to stay in Sam Raong. Some cooperatives consisted of 12 or 13 people. Some groups consisted of 15 people because the members were young.
Dany : 15 people in a cooperative?
Rom : 15 people would perform for other people.
Dany : At Sam Raong?
Rom : Yes
Dany : Sam Raong is in Mongkol Borey?
Neighbor : Sam Raong in Mongkol Borey district or Sam Raong on the west side of the creek or Sam Raong Sala Kraham?
Rom : Sam Raong Sala Kraham.
Dany : [It is in] Serei Saophaon?
Rom : Serei Saophaon.
Dany : It is not in Mongkol Borey?
Rom : At the time, I biked to Sala Kraham.
Dany : Sam Raong, Serei Saphaon was in sector 5?
Rom : It was in sector 5.
Dany : In Serei Saophaon district?

Rom : Yes

Dany : At the time, Ta Chay was there? He was in Serei Saophaon?

Rom : Ta Chay.

Neighbor : Roofing tile houses or what kind of house?

Rom : Me?

Neighbor : Ta chay, right?

Rom : Ta Chay stayed at the tile roof house.

Neighbor : That is correct. The house still exists present day.

Dany : Ta Rin stayed at home?

Dany : Ta Rin was transferred to Kralanh.

Rom : He was in Kralanh?

Dany : Yes

Rom : Which Kralanh?

Neighbor : Kralanh in Phnom Reap.

Dany : It is called Kralanh?

Neighbor : Kralanh in Battambang Province.

Dany : [How about] Kralanh in Siem Reap? Was he moved to Kralanh?

Rom : Yes, he was moved to that area.

Dany : At the time, he was Serei Saophaon district committee?

Rom : That person was captured. He disappeared.

Neighbor : Ta Phat?

Rom : Yes, he disappeared.

Neighbor : Oh! Ta Cheal?

Rom : Ta Cheal. You might have known him. At the time I was there with them.

Neighbor : Ta Cheal was killed along with Ta Val.

Rom : Who were killed afterward?

Dany : 3 persons.

Neighbor : After Ta Cheal and Ta Trak were killed, Ta Phat was replaced and killed.

Rom : Killed the string of traitors.

Dany : At first, Ta Chay was [in charge], not Ta Cheal?

Rom : Yes

Dany : He was the first person?

Rom : Ta Chay was the first person.

Dany : Where was Ta Chay?

Rom : I don't know where Ta Chay was. At the time, I didn't know where he was when he ran to Phnom Barang Thleak.

Dany : You knew who replaced Ta Chay?

Rom : I don't know.

Dany : What did Ta Phat do?

Rom : Ta Phat was a district chief.

Dany : Was he Serei Saophaon district committee?

Rom : Yes

Dany : What was the name of the deceased you mentioned earlier? What Ta[the elderly]?

Rom : Ta Choeun was also cruel. He was a district committee.

Dany : Who lived next to his house?

Rom : Ta Bo.

Dany : What did he do? He was a sector committee?

Rom : He was courteous.

Dany : Which sector? Committee of sector 5?

Rom : Yes

Neighbor : They were all brave.

Rom : They struggled valiantly when we were in the jungle.

Dany : You came to Sam Raong to be in the cooperative?

Rom : I was in the cooperative to farm.

Dany : You were not asked to take control of the people?

Neighbor : Don't say it!

Rom : Don't unearth the past.

Neighbor : [She] was a superior.

Dany : I just wanted to know about it clearly. 5 of you came to Sam Raong to lead people to grow rice.

Rom : Grow rice.

Dany : At the time, Ta Mok used to teach all of you.

Rom : I wasn't a superior. Others were superior to me. I just came along with them. I wasn't a leader. I did what they say. I worked along with people. I was young and had little knowledge.

Dany : You were in Sam Raong commune at the time?

Rom : In Sam Raong commune.

Dany : Who was Sam Raong commune chief?

Rom : Ta Chhoeun was Sam Raong commune.

Dany : You were among the commune committees?

Rom : Yes

Dany : You were among the commune committees.

Rom : I was in the cooperative.

Dany : How about growing rice?

Rom : Growing rice in Battambang province produced good yield. I used to live in Vietnam for a couple of years but growing rice in [Vietnam] was not like that in Sam Raong. I had enough food – rice, meat. And when I came here, people said I seemed to have gained weight.

Dany : Among Serei Saophaon district committee, who is still alive nowadays?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Among Serei Saophaon district committee?

Rom : From there?

Dany : Yes

Rom : He is alive.

Dany : Who?

Rom : Ta Chhoeun lives in Kilometer 13 place.

Neighbor : Where is Kilometer 13?

Dany : Kilometer 13.

Rom : You didn't know the market that shares the border with Thailand in Kilometer 13?

Neighbor : I knew. Which side of Kilometer 9 was the place?

Rom : The place didn't stretch out to Kilometer 9.

Dany : What is his wife's name?

Rom : His wife's name is Koeun.

Dany : She was Serei Saophaon district committee?

Rom : Yes

Neighbor : How about Yeay [you mentioned earlier]? She moved to Tuol village?

Dany : Yeay Yut.

Neighbor : Do you know Yeay Yut?

Rom : Yes

Dany : She was invited to be a witness in the court.

Rom : She went to the court for a couple of times. Because of this, I didn't want to go. She was Yeay Yut.

Dany : You mentioned earlier that Ta Chhoeun was a district committee. Isn't Ta Phat a sector committee?

Rom : There was a hierarchy. There were the chief, the deputy and the members.

Dany : Who was the chief?

Vannak : There were 3 persons?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Who was the chief?

Rom : Other chief didn't need to go when he was in Dang Rek, but nowadays I don't know where he is.

Dany : Who was the chief? I just want to know the structure.

Vannak : What was the chief's name?

Rom : I forgot his name. I saw him every day because I used to live near him.

Dany : Who was the next superior?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : You didn't mention his name.

Rom : The next superiors were Ta Po, Ta Phat and others respectively.

Vannak : Where is Ta Po, nowadays?

Rom : He is dead.

Dany : Ta Po was a chief. Ta Phat was a deputy.

Neighbor : Who was the person you forgot the name?

Rom : How did you know Ta Phat?

Neighbor : I have known him since then.

Rom : Ta Phat's house is over there.

Neighbor : I was his subordinate.

Dany : Who was the chief after Ta Bo and Ta Phat, you didn't mention the name.

Neighbor : What was his name?

Rom : Ta!

Vannak : Try to think!

Neighbor : The person was short.

Rom : Yes! He was short.

Neighbor : He is dead. His wife is still alive.

Dany : Who?

Neighbor : Ta!

Dany : Ta Chhoeun was Serei Saophaon district committee. Ta Bo and Ta Phat were sector committees?

Rom : They were among the same district committee.

Dany : Who was a sector committee?

Rom : The sector committee belonged to Ta Nhen.

Dany : Ta Nhen was Yeay Chem's husband. What did Yeay Chem do?

Rom : Yeay Chem was superior than Ta Nhen.

Dany : Yeay Chem was the most superior?

Rom : She was superior than her husband.

Dany : She was superior to Ta Bo, Ta Phat?

Rom : Thousands of women were under Yeay Chem's control.

Dany : Why didn't she stay in Svay and went to Phnom Leap?

Rom : She escaped because the leaders escaped.

Dany : When she came here, did you know her?

Rom : I knew her.

Dany : You knew her upon her arrival or before?

Rom : I knew her when I was in the young pioneer unit. She was always going [there] to educate us. During April 17 celebration, she made an impression. We knew [her] through words of others.

Dany : She used to go to the April 17 celebrations in Kiri Vong?

Rom : It was in Thmar Sar.

Dany : Thmar Sar?

Rom : Thmar Sar was in Kiri Vong.

Dany : Thmar Sar in Kiri Vong?

Rom : [Thmar Sar] shares the border with Yuon.

Dany : At the time, she was a superior?

Rom : She was a superior. If she were bad, she would have disappeared. But she was good.

Dany : She was good.

Rom : Many people were taken out because of their bad [behaviors].

Dany : She was in the sector committee?

Rom : Sector committee.

Dany : What was the number of the sector?

Rom : Sector 13

Dany : Committee of sector 13.

Rom : Yes

Dany : And she went to educate the women?

Rom : Thousands of kids lined up. She came to make her impression.

Dany : What did she educate the kids on?

Rom : She educated us on how to work on economics affairs. People gave us enough rice. And when I was stripped of rice, I had to grow on dry paddy so that I could have enough food.

Dany : At the time, did you know Ta Saom?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : Ta Saom.

Rom : Who was Ta Saom?

Dany : Ta Saom was a committee of sector 13.

Rom : I knew Ta Saom.

Dany : Ta Saom used to go to educate people?

Rom : He went to educate the forces.

Dany : How about Yeay Chem?

Rom : [She was in charge of] women and the young pioneers.

Neighbor : His wife had a white complexion.

Rom : Sometimes, I met him at the meeting in Svay.

Dany : What was the number of Svay sector?

Rom : What do you mean by the number of Svay sector?

Dany : What sector was Svay called?

Rom : Today, it was called?

Neighbor : Previously, it was called sector 5.

Rom : What is it called now?

Neighbor : It is called a province, not a sector.

Dany : Bantay Meanchey was called sector 5 at the time?

Rom : Sector 5.

Dany : Yeay Chem came to Svay to be a committee of sector 5?

Rom : Sector 5.

Dany : She was a sector 5 chief?

Rom : Yes! Women were summoned to the meeting in Svay.

Dany : She came to attend the meeting as well?

Rom : Yes

Neighbor : Did you know that Samdech came to build something in Svay in 1979?

Rom : Yes

Neighbor : Did you know that Samdech came to meet Pol Pot?

Rom : I knew about it.

Neighbor : Samdech came to sleep in Svay?

Rom : Yes

Neighbor : How did you know about it?

Dany : Did you know about it at the time?

Rom : I knew about that but I didn't go to see him.

Dany : You didn't see his face?

Rom : No, I didn't see him but I sat waiting to look at the plane and the helicopter.

Dany : The plane came?

Rom : The plane came.

Dany : He took the plane?

Rom : Yes.

Dany : When did he take the plane?

Rom : [I don't know] the year. Year 1979?

Neighbor : At the time, Samdech came here?

Rom : Yes! He came here.

Neighbor : Ta Phat met [Samdech] in person.

Rom : Ta Phat went to meet Samdech in person. Most of the men went to meet him in person. Women rarely went to meet him in person.

Dany : Were Yeay Chem a sector committee during Ta Chey's rule?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Ta Chay?

Rom : Ta Chay belonged to the sector but he was in charge of the economy.

Dany : Economy?

Rom : He was in charge of economics affairs such as food and rice.

Dany : Who was [the person in] sector committee in charge of the forces?

Rom : What?

Dany : In charge of the forces?

Rom : Ta Nhen was in charge of the forces.

Dany : Ta Nhen doesn't talk much now. How could he control the forces?

Rom : Oh!

Neighbor : Ta Nhen was eloquent at the time.

Rom : He spoke the words in vain.

Neighbor : Ta Nhen was good with rhetoric.

Dany : Was he good at talking?

Neighbor : When he talked, other people respected his words. He threatened people like Hun Sen would. He was good at talking.

Rom : He talked slowly.

Dany : Was Yeay Chem's parents in Svay? Her siblings?

Rom : No, they were in Takeo. Yeay Chem didn't bring them with her. She came here with her husband.

Dany : Did Yeay and her husband lived separately? When I met her, she said she was in Phnom Leap?

Rom : He did the job separately.

Dany : Where was Ta Nhen?

Rom : What?

Dany : Where was Ta Nhen?

Rom : Ta Nhen did everything.

Dany : Was he in charge of the forces?

Rom : Forces.

Dany : Yeay Chem was in charge of the forces, people, women, and young pioneer?

Rom : Yeay Chem.

Dany : People grew rice?

Rom : Yeay Chem grew rice.

Dany : Was Ta Chay in charge of the economy?
Vannak : Were they in the same sector?
Neighbor : There were many in the same sector.
Dany : Ta Chay is alive?
Rom : Yes
Dany : Ta Chay is alive?
Rom : I don't know. I was separated from him in 1980s. In 1980, he lived near Kam Chay Mountain.
Dany : Where?
Rom : It was beyond Barang Thleak Mountain. I shook his hands when I got married in 1981. At that time, Ta Bo arranged my wedding.
Dany : Ta Po, Ta Phat, Ta Chhoeun were in the district, not in the sector?
Rom : They were in the district. They personally went down to the cooperative.
Dany : They personally went down to the cooperative?
Rom : Yes
Dany : Who was the leader in Phnom Srok at the time?
Rom : Those who were in charge of Phnom Srok mostly went to Dang Rek.
Dany : Who?
Rom : I forgot. I forgot the district committee who attended the meeting in Svay.
Dany : How about Thmar Puok?
Rom : I forgot them. I knew only those who were from Sam Raong. It was near my place.
Dany : Who was in charge of Sam Raong?
Rom : Yes
Dany : Sam Raong?
Rom : Ta Chhoeun.
Dany : Wasn't Ta Chhoeun a committee of Serei Saophaon district?
Rom : He was in Serei Saophaon, but he personally went down to the district.
Dany : Was he a member of Serei Saophaon district and in charge of Sam Raong commune?
Rom : Yes, he personally went down to Sam Raong commune.
Neighbor : How about Ta Ream?
Rom : Ta Ream was in Thmar Puok, Thmar Kaol. Ta Ream was in Ou Chaom.
Dany : I knew him. His wife is Sokha.
Rom : Yes
Neighbor : You met Sou Met there.
Rom : Yes
Dany : What did you do? What did people eat? What did people do?
Rom : I remembered.
Dany : What did people do?

Rom : People had meals in cooperative because there were plenty of fish in the district. I mentioned earlier that I gained weight. There was plenty of rice there.

Dany : Did you attend the meeting with Sam Raong district committee?

Rom : I was summoned to the meeting once per week.

Dany : After the meeting, what assignment would be assigned?

Rom : We had to deal with eating. We didn't want people to say that they ate watery gruel. When I first came here, I ate watery gruel in the cooperative. A year later, I had rice.

Dany : Did Yeay Chem come to hold the meeting to instruct you to work?

Rom : Every 10 days, [she] summoned us to the meeting in Svay. We were summoned to the meeting in Sam Raong district once per week.

Dany : Every 10 days you have a meeting?

Rom : [Every 10 days, we had the meeting] in Svay.

Dany : You all went there?

Rom : We went to Svay.

Dany : Yeay Chem presided over the meeting?

Rom : She presided over the meeting.

Dany : People didn't have enough food, faced hardship and then after you came, you managed it well?

Rom : After I had been there for 1 year, people had rice.

Dany : Those who deprived people of food were captured?

Rom : I don't know. They were taken away but I didn't know where they went.

Dany : You took them away?

Rom : No, I saw them being taken away. I didn't know why.

Dany : Who took them away?

Rom : The provincial level took them away but I don't know where they were taken to.

Dany : What province?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : At the time, there were no provinces but just sectors, right?

Rom : It was said that provincial forces took them by trucks.

Dany : What province? Battambang province or Svay?

Rom : I don't know. Provincial forces took them away. I don't know whether they were summoned to the meeting or where they were taken.

Dany : Those who deprived people of food or killed people were taken by force?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Was there a prison or security center in sector 5?

Rom : [There was] a prison in Svay.

Dany : In Svay?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Where was it in Svay? Did you know about it?

Rom : I didn't know the exact location. I didn't know [about] the security center. In 1977 or 1978, you [would] stay here and you don't know.

Neighbor : The KR killed many people on a jackfruit farm and Ta Phat knew a lot of that.

Rom : Ta Phat was a superior and [knew about that]. [Unlike him], I went down to work with people in the morning. The superior like Ta Phat didn't go down to the rice field. I did as they ordered.

Dany : I didn't meet Ta Phat. He was dead.

Rom : He died recently.

Dany : Whom should I meet to know more about this story besides Ta Phat?

Rom : Why don't you ask his wife?

Dany : How do you think his new wife [who] is still young to know [about] that event?

Rom : His new wife was a messenger of his old wife at the time.

Neighbor : She doesn't dare talk. She is scared. Ta Phat's wife dares to talk.

Rom : She is Ta Phat's wife's personal messenger.

Dany : How about Ta Phat's wife?

Rom : His wife is dead. Phal is dead.

Dany : What did she do at the time?

Rom : She was a commune chief.

Dany : What commune?

Rom : Toek Thla commune.

Dany : Ta Phat's house was in Mkak?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : What was Mkak?

Rom : Mkak commune.

Dany : I didn't know the place and so I was confused.

Rom : His wife's messenger is alive. And after his first wife died, he married his wife's messenger. You might know the story if you ask his [current] wife.

Neighbor : She doesn't dare talk about the story but for Phat's first wife, she dared to talk.

Rom : Phat's first wife dared to talk about the story in the interview last month when she was alive. People came to conduct the interview with her and she told them all.

Dany : Who interviewed her?

Rom : Organization.

Dany : Were there many interviews [with her] before?

Rom : Ta Phat summoned over 50-years-old people to a meeting at the pagoda. When asked, we were given Sarong [long skirt], Krama [scarf].

Neighbor : Lakhena allowed us to come.

Rom : Who else besides Lakhena?

Dany : Were you happy to live in Svay?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Were you happy to live in Svay?

Rom : No matter where we live. We were happy when we had enough food. We could gain weight.

Dany : When you lived there, did you miss your home?

Rom : I didn't miss my home. When performance units were prepared, they performed for us at night. Therefore, we were so happy and didn't miss home. At that point of the evening, I sat watching the performance.

Dany : Where?

Rom : At Tonle Bassac near to the Yuon [Vietnam]. Seeing the waves from a distance, I cried, missing my hometown. When I had enough food, I forgot about my hometown. I haven't visited my hometown until today. I don't dare visit my hometown. I don't know it [anymore] because my mother is dead.

Dany : How often have you visited your hometown since the defection?

Rom : Since the defection, my sister took me to my hometown once.

Dany : Your sister took you to the hometown; you didn't go there by yourself?

Rom : I couldn't go because I don't know [where]. My sister came to visit me but I said to her that I didn't have a sister because my sister left me from a young age. She turned back, crying. I asked whether she was my sister or not. She was disappointed when I said, "I don't have a sister". She cried and [then] I pity her. I asked her about her name. She told me about her story and I embraced her.

Dany : She came to find you?

Rom : She was in Takeo and would rather come to find me. She slept in Pailin for 2 days and took a motor taxi to Lem. She came to Pheng's mother's house and Pheng's mother said you came to the right place. But [at first] I said I didn't have sister. I assumed that she was dead.

Dany : This was the reason why you assumed like that?

Rom : No, I had no hope that she would still be alive. I didn't know where she went at the time.

Dany : Do you assume that she was dead because the Yuon stormed into the place and killed her?

Rom : [I assumed] Yuon[Vietnamese] killed all of the people.

Dany : You thought Yuon killed all of the people?

Rom : Yes, I didn't think she was alive.

Dany : At the time you, yourself, thought that way?

Rom : I, myself.

Dany : Why did you think Yuon came to kill Khmer?

Rom : Because it was near to Yuon. I thought no one would be alive.

Dany : This was your own thought that Yuon hated Khmer or vice versa?

Rom : Yuon hated Khmer. At that time, I didn't think [she] was alive [because I heard that Yuon] beheaded Khmer to use as stoves to boil water.

Dany : Who told you Yuon beheaded Khmer to use as stoves to boil water?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : Who told you?

Rom : No need to tell because I saw it at the border.

Dany : What did you see?

Rom : I saw Yuon beheading Khmer.

Dany : Did you see with your own eyes?

Rom : Yuon chased us. Some people couldn't escape because they had children. I was able to flee to Thailand. I asked Thai soldiers to enter into their territory. When our forces fought back and entered our territory, I saw the heads.

Dany : Where?

Rom : At our border.

Dany : You said it was near our border.

Rom : It was in our territory, not Thai territory.

Dany : Why did you say Yuon beheaded people at the Thai border?

Rom : It was in our territory because we shared a border with Thailand.

Dany : Yes

Neighbor : The border was near.

Rom : Yes

Dany : I wondered about that.

Rom : It was in our territory.

Dany : Did Yuon beheaded Khmer?

Rom : Yuon beheaded Khmer to use as stoves to boil water.

Dany : Oh! In 1980s, Yuon were able to storm into the place.

Rom : Yes! 1980

Dany : Yuon fought us on the way up to Thailand. They captured us.

Rom : Some people couldn't escape and were beheaded.

Dany : They were beheaded to use as stoves to boil water?

Rom : They were used to boil water for the superiors.

Dany : Did you see it with your own eyes or hear from others?

Rom : I saw the heads.

Dany : You saw the heads?

Rom : I saw the heads.

Dany : I asked because I just wanted to know the reality.

Rom : I didn't see Yuon because I didn't dare to let Yuon see me.

Dany : You didn't see Yuon boiling water with your own eyes?

Rom : No!

Dany : Other people came here to tell you?

Rom : No, at the time, I carried the iron bar.

Dany : Let me go back, you said when you were at Tonle Bassac, you didn't have enough food. You faced hardship and missed home. When you were in Sam Raong, Serei Saophaon, you didn't miss your home?

Rom : I stayed there for 2 years and I didn't miss home because I had enough food.

Dany : From June 1977 to 1979?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Long stay?

Rom : I had a long stay. I stayed there until I came here. I didn't go elsewhere.

Dany : At the time, did you achieve the plan?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : We got success because we followed our plan. Ta Mok told 400 to 500 people to be cautious and work hard, saying "you all are cautious about the traitors. When you came, did you see as I said?"

Rom : [I experienced] as he said.

Dany : [You experienced] as he said?

Rom : [I experienced] as I said.

Dany : What did the traitors do?

Rom : The traitors wanted to capture us. We couldn't hide in the house. I had to hide in a barn and they found me.

Dany : Who were the traitors?

Rom : I didn't know them. I heard only their voices.

Dany : The traitors were those who used to work in the village, commune, or cooperative? Or who were they?

Rom : I don't know where they came from. There were 8 women in each house. The traitors saw our shoes; they would come into our houses. Some people escaped through the windows, ran to the creek, or hid under a barn. Sam Raong people helped me by allowing me to hide under the barn. The next day, the traitors climbed the house and sought for me.

Dany : As Ta Mok told you in the meeting in Takeo province, "You have to be cautious about the traitors when you go to Svay" and so did Yeay Chem, right?

Rom : She said so.

Dany : Did she often tell you so during the meeting?

Rom : During the meeting, she told us to work hard, not to be alone. We had to go to the place in groups of 5 or 6 people. If 1 or 2 persons went somewhere, they would disappear.

Dany : Yeay Chem held the meeting every 10 days?

Rom : Yes

Dany : All people were summoned to the meeting?

Rom : All people were summoned.

Dany : All people were collected from Thmar Puok.

Rom : The messenger didn't have phones like nowadays.

Dany : All people from Thmar Puok, Svay Chek, Serei Saophaon, Preh Netpreh were summoned to the meeting?

Rom : [They were summoned] to the meeting in Svay.

Dany : The meeting took place every 10 days?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Did you feel abhorrent or afraid of the local people?

Rom : No, I regarded them like my parents.

Dany : During the meeting, were you afraid of the traitors?

Rom : I was afraid of the traitors. The local people didn't persecute or hated us. I didn't know who the traitors were. I didn't know why I got in trouble every night.

Dany : When did you feel afraid?

Rom : If the villagers hated us, they would tell the traitors to catch us. I wondered why some people helped hide us.

Dany : When you went somewhere alone, did you feel afraid?

Rom : I was afraid. Someone travelled alone and they would disappear.

Dany : Disappear?

Rom : Yes

Dany : How many disappeared?

Rom : There were many people who disappeared. Many people from Sre Ambil came with Ta Phat disappeared.

Dany : If you happened to see Yeay Chem, would you remember her?

Rom : I was with her [since I was young] and when I became an adult I have not seen her in long time. Nowadays, I have children, grandchildren and it seems she may have forgotten me, even my mother doesn't [remember me].

Dany : If you saw her face?

Rom : If I saw her face, I might remember her.

Dany : But Yeay Chem might not remember you.

Rom : She might not recognize me because we are old now.

Dany : If you tell her about [your] history, work?

Rom : She might know me, if I tell her about [my] history.

Dany : Ta Nhen knows you?

Rom : Ta Nhen might not know me. He came to say a few words to the unit or group leaders and he disappeared. He didn't come to talk much.

Dany : He didn't talk much?

Rom : He didn't talk much. He said the words that were worth its meaning.

Dany : If he had business to deal with you, he would tell right away and go back?

Rom : He told the unit or group leaders and went back. He didn't talk much. We were not the leaders. He didn't know me because I was not a leader.

Dany : Did Ta Mok visit or instruct you in Svay?

Rom : Ta Mok rarely came to Svay. He came once a month. He came to the meeting in Svay, telling us tat 1000 families and another 500 women from Sre Ambil will come.

Dany : When?

Rom : In early 1977.

Dany : You came in June, 1977. When did he come to tell you?

Rom : Yes

Dany : You came?

Rom : After I came here for 3 months, he told me. I didn't know the exact month.

Dany : In September. You came to Svay in June?

Rom : Yes

Dany : After you came here for 3 months, Ta Mok told you that 500 women from Sre Ambil would come here?

Rom : Women from Sre Ambil went to work were killed by base people. They didn't go to work with us. They formed their unique groups.

Dany : You came here 3 months earlier than the other 1000 people, when did they come?

Rom : They came here after me.

Dany : How many months did they come after you?

Rom : After I came here for 3 months, they came after me.

Dany : Sre Ambil women came after other people?

Rom : They came with other people. They took the same train and trucks.

Dany : They perhaps came in August or September?

Rom : I don't know.

Dany : There were heavy rain and you couldn't grow rice?

Rom : Some people harvested ripe rice spikes and trashed it.

Dany : They came here 3 months after you?

Rom : They came here after me. You could ask Ta Phat's wife.

Dany : At the time, you weren't married yet?

Rom : I was mature.

Dany : How old were you?

Rom : You didn't hear my word that I was not an adult yet.

Dany : How old were you that you mention that you became adult?

Rom : 15 or 16 years old. I don't know

Neighbor : You didn't know how old you were when you hit puberty?

Dany : [You] came from Takeo.

Rom : We had enough food. I gained weight. The base people liked me a lot. At this time in the evening, while taking control of this place, Phat caught Ta's group.

Dany : Caught who?

Neighbor : Ta Val?

Rom : Yes

Dany : Did you come [to Svay] while Ta Hoeng was there?

Rom : Yes, why did you know Ta Hoeng?

Dany : I read books [on him]. I am a researcher that's why I know.
Neighbor : He came to interview [you] that's why he knows [everyone].
Dany : Did you come [to Svay] while Ta Hoeng and Ta Cheal were [there]?
Rom : I knew him. When I came [to Svay], Ta Cheal wasn't taken away yet.
Dany : Where was Ta Hoeng taken to?
Rom : Ta Hoeng wasn't taken away yet but Ta Hoeng was taken before Ta Cheal.
Dany : Ta Hoeng was taken before Ta Cheal?
Neighbor : How about Ta Trak?
Rom : I didn't know the last person who was taken away after those 3 persons.
Dany : Who else besides Ta Cheal and Ta Hoeng?
Rom : At the time, 3 persons disappeared.
Neighbor : Ta Val?
Dany : Aieng Lai, Ta Lai?
Rom : I forgot.
Dany : When you came [to Svay], they were here and later taken away?
Rom : Yes
Dany : When were they taken away?
Rom : [I thought] they were taken away after we harvested rice.
Dany : Did Yeay Chem come [to Svay] while they were there?
Rom : At first, Yeay Chem came to sector 4 at Nimith. She arrived there and lived before others.
Dany : Came to where?
Rom : Came to live at Nimith
Dany : Where is Nimith?
Rom : You don't know Nimith, Poipet.
Dany : Kork Nimith, right?
Rom : Yes.
Dany : That was sector 3, right?
Rom : I don't know, sector 3 or sector 4. I didn't know the place.
Neighbor : I don't know the place. I know sector 5. Sector 3 is another place.
Rom : How about sector 4?
Dany : Yeay Chem came here while Ta Hoeng, Ta Cheal were here too?
Rom : They were here.
Dany : [Yeay Chem came here] while Ta Hoeng, Ta Cheal were superiors here?
Rom : They were in charge of here but I don't know why they were taken away and disappeared.
Dany : They were taken away and then Yeay Chem became a top leader?
Rom : While Ta Hoeng, and Ta Cheal were in office, they all had a meeting with Yeay Chem in Svay. But I don't know why they disappeared.
Neighbor : Ta Val disappeared along with others.

Rom : I didn't know about that. When I was in Tonle Bassac near to Yuon, the superiors were taken away. I don't know how they were taken away. I saw the superiors being walked away but I didn't know where they went.

Dany : What was going on when Yuon stormed into your place? At the time Yuon started to storm into your place, what plan did you have for Yuon's encroachment?

Rom : We had to withdraw our troops. We had to be prepared to escape. We knew that Yuon stormed into Phnom Penh.

Dany : You knew Yuon stormed into Phnom Penh?

Rom : I knew through the meeting.

Dany : How about the materials?

Rom : We were all armed with guns.

Dany : During the meeting, you were ordered to withdraw but rice, dishes, pans were in the cooperative, right?

Rom : I didn't know about that anymore. It was up to the cooperative and the people.

Dany : You didn't know about that anymore?

Rom : We withdrew back to the jungle.

Dany : You didn't hide the stuff?

Rom : I didn't hide anything. I had only a bag of rice and a pistol.

Dany : How was the situation?

Rom : I was scared [because] I slept in the jungle.

Dany : Where did you leave? What did you bring?

Rom : I left Sam Raong for prey [jungle] Ta Kong .

Dany : Where was prey Ta Kong?

Neighbor : Malai?

Rom : I left prey Ta Kong and stayed at Mok Heun.

Dany : Prey Ta Kong was near to Malai? It was in Mok Heun?

Rom : I walked night and day. I left Malai. In the morning, I cooked rice and walked back to Mok Heun. That was crazy.

Dany : What did you bring along?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : What did you bring along?

Rom : There were clothes, hammock, a bag of rice per person, and some dishes per person.

Dany : Did you bring jewelry with you?

Rom : No one would thought to take those stuffs. There was full of it in the warehouse in Svay.

Dany : There was full of it in the warehouse?

Rom : Yes

Dany : You didn't bring jewelry with you?

Rom : I didn't know why I should bring it with me.

Dany : When you went to the border, you used it, right?

Rom : We secretly went there. If I knew about that, I would be rich. There was a lot of jewelry. The woman like me didn't think about it.

Dany : Only Ta Ream thought of that?

Rom : Ta Ream was thoughtful. He put the jewelry in the bottle.

Neighbor : He forgot it for a night.

Rom : He left it. I picked it up and gave it back to him.

Dany : Whom did you give it back to?

Rom : I gave it back to him. He shouldn't have forgotten me. I couldn't steal someone's belongings.

Dany : Oh! He forgot a bottle full of jewelry.

Rom : He forgot it [because] he escaped.

Dany : You brought it to him.

Rom : I brought it to him. He forgot the bottle.

Dany : How many bottles full of jewelry did he forget?

Rom : He carried some and put some in the bottle. He forgot the bottle fasten with a hammock's string. I saw Ta Ream's son, Ral, crawling out of the debris when the artillery shelled his house. His son cried and I carried him and brought the bottle along. I didn't know the gold inside the bottle. I took his son to the trench and saw the gold inside. He heard about that and then came back. He reached the mountain and asked his wife "where is his son". She replied, "She left her son". She told her husband to go back and bring her child.

Neighbor : Aral was alive?

Rom : Aral is alive.

Dany : Where did he leave his son?

Rom : At the Thai territory.

Dany : Where?

Rom : It was on the west side of the Thai mountain.

Dany : He left him?

Rom : Yes

Dany : When?

Rom : I don't remember. At the time, I had two children.

Neighbor : 1982 or 1981?

Dany : Did he give some gold to you to keep for him?

Rom : He allowed me to try on the bracelet. He said the bracelet fits you. I didn't know why I needed gold. If I wanted gold, I would take it in Svay. I took out the necklace from the bottle [to see]. [But] he didn't say anything. I didn't know why I needed it.

Dany : He didn't give the gold to you and you didn't ask for it, right?

Rom : I didn't ask for it and he didn't give me any.

Dany : Did he say he would give you some now?

Rom : No, he used it to set up the gas station and opened a stall.

Dany : Do you keep in touch with him?

Rom : When I met him, he talked to me. I said to him, "You shouldn't forget the past". He replied, "Don't talk about that". If I wanted to ask for a ride from him, he would give me.

Dany : When did you come here?

Rom : I came here in 1990s.

Neighbor : From Say Thou camp!

Rom : I came to live here while UNTAC [United Nation Transitional Authority in Cambodia] littered around.

Dany : UNTAC entered our country in 1991 or 1992?

Rom : I don't know.

Dany : You came to live here before the integration and defection?

Rom : Yes

Dany : In the past, you lived in the Thai territory?

Rom : Thai territory.

Dany : You didn't live on Cambodian soil?

Rom : Yuon were around. After the liberation, female Khmer Rouge came to live along the border. And then people brought back their families, built houses and stalls.

Dany : Who was in charge of this area at first?

Rom : Ta Rin.

Dany : Who is Ta Rin?

Rom : Ta Rin was a Kralanh district chief. He died of HIV.

Neighbor : How about Ta Bay?

Rom : Ta Bay.

Neighbor : Where is Ta Bay?

Rom : He was in.

Neighbor : District council?

Rom : I saw him in a meeting in Battambang province. I saw his face on TV.

Dany : Who was the top leader?

Rom : The top leader was Ta Rum. He lives in Barang Thleak nowadays.

Dany : How about Ta Kan?

Rom : Ta Kan was in the division.

Dany : Was he the top leader?

Rom : Ta Kan was in sector 32.

Dany : Was the place sector 32?

Rom : Yes

Dany : When he was in the armed force?

Rom : Force 32 was different from us.

Dany : Who was the leader of force 32?

Rom : Yes!

Dany : Who was the leader?

Rom : Ta Rum

Dany : Ta Rum and Ta Bai, right?

Rom : Ta Rum and Ta Bai lead the forces nowadays.

Dany : Ta Kung and Ta Keo are in charge in Kamreang?

Rom : Ta Kung and Ta Keo.
Dany : But nowadays, Ta Kan is in charge. It is 7 o'clock. Thank you so much. I would like to ask you more but it is late at night. Thanks for your time with me.

[The end]