

When Jesus Came to Laos-Part Four

The leopard was closing in. Any second now—

Thao threw himself to the ground as a huge explosion behind him threw dirt and branches and leaves into the air. He covered his head with his hands and waited for the dirt to stop raining down.

When the air around him quieted, he opened his eyes and looked around. He saw the leopard lying on the ground, still.

He inched closer to it. The leopard had found another unexploded weapon, this time, a land mine.

If Thao had stepped on it instead of the leopard—

He sank to the ground. The leopard was dead, but he still needed to find his way home.

A bush rustled. Now what could it be?

He forced himself to stand. But instead of an animal, a light-haired stranger stepped from the bushes. And Thao's mother was with him!

His mother ran to him and wrapped him in her arms. She stepped back, and her eyes filled with tears when she saw the blood on his face.

The stranger scooped Thao up into his arms and followed Thao's mother back to the hut.

He laid Thao down on a mat. Thao's mother leaned close to him and poured warm tea into his mouth. He coughed once. There was something different in the tea, but he did not know what. He felt warm and sleepy.

When he opened his eyes again, his small hut was full of people squeezed tightly together. The stranger was telling a story from the Bible. Jesus had healed a man who had been blind since he was born. But because Jesus healed him on a Sabbath, the rulers were angry. They called the man in and asked him the same questions again and again. They did not believe Jesus was God. But the man believed. And because he told them so, they ridiculed him and threw him out.

When the stranger stopped his story to answer a question from a little girl, Thao pushed himself up on one arm and wondered what Jesus did next. Did He storm into the meeting and tell the rulers how wrong they were?

The stranger continued. “Jesus went looking for the man. He knew the rulers had thrown him out, and He found him. He told him more about Who He was and told him about God.”

He opened a box and pulled out a Bible. Then he pulled out another—and another! Soon, every family in the room had their own Bible!

Thao’s mother knelt by his mat. She clutched her new Bible in one hand and felt Thao’s forehead with the other. “Your fever is going down. The stranger and his friends brought medicine and Bibles. They said Christians in a country far away knew we needed them and sent them here. And they promised to come back as soon as they have more.”

Thao leaned back down onto his mat. The man in the story may have lost his friends, but Jesus had gone looking for him. And He did not stop until He had found him. Thao knew a little bit of how the man must have felt. And he knew that Jesus had known where he was in the jungle all along.