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Fifth Grade: Unit 3/ Heritage
Anthology 2002 Stories

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| My Goal | | | | | | |
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The Land I Lost: Adventures of a Boy in Vietnam

By: Huynh Quang Nhuong

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| I was born on the central highlands of Vietnam in a small hamlet on a riverbank that had a deep jungle on one side and a chain of high mountains on the other. Across the river, rice fields stretched to the slopes of another chain of mountains. | 51 61 71 80 |
| There were fifty houses in our hamlet, scattered along the river or propped against the mountainsides. The houses were made of bamboo and covered with coconut leaves, and each was surrounded by a deep trench to protect it from wild animals or thieves. The only way to enter a house was to walk across a "monkey bridge" - a single bamboo stick that spanned the trench. At night we pulled the bridges into our houses and were safe. | 91 103 116 126 138 149 159 |
| There were no shops or marketplaces in our hamlet. If we needed supplies- medicine, cloth, soaps, or candles- we had to cross over the mountains and travel to a town nearby. We used the river mainly for traveling to distant hamlets, but it also provided us with plenty of fish. | 171 182 188 199 208 |
| During the six-month rainy season, nearly all of us helped plant and cultivate fields of rice, sweet potatoes, Indian mustard, eggplant, tomatoes, hot peppers, and corn. But during the dry season, we became hunters and turned to the jungle. | 217 228 239 251 |
| Wild animals played a very large part in our lives. There were four animals we feared the most: the tiger, the lone wild hog, the crocodile, and the horse snake. Tigers were always trying to steal cattle. Sometimes, however, when a tiger became old and slow it became a maneater. But a lone wild hog was even more dangerous than a tiger. It attacked every creature in sight, even when it had no need for food. Or it did crazy things, such as charging into the hamlet in broad daylight, ready to kill or to be killed. | 261 271 285 295 309 321 325 335 347 |
| The river had different dangers: crocodiles. But of all the animals, the most hated and feared was the huge horse snake. It was sneaky and attacked people and cattle just for the joy of killing. It would either crush its victim to death or poison it with a bite. | 359 372 374 |

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In
Two

Worlds: A Yup'ik Eskimo Family 13
By: Aylette Jenness and Alice Rivers

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| Alice and Billy Rivers live with their children in the small | 36 |
| town of Scammon Bay, Alaska, on the coast of the Bering Sea. | 47 |
| They are Yup'ik Eskimos. Their story really begins long, long ago. | 53 |
| Alice and Billy's parents, grandparents, great- | 61 |
| grandparents, great-great-grandparents- all their ancestors for | 71 |
| several thousand years- have always lived here. They were part | 84 |
| of a small group of Yup'ik Eskimos whose home was this vast area | 94 |
| of tidal flats bordering the sea, with inland marshes, ponds, | 105 |
| creeks, and rivers lacing the flat treeless tundra, broken only by | 110 |
| occasional masses of low hills. | 121 |
| Each year, as the northern part of the earth tilted toward | 133 |
| the sun, the long hours of sunlight here melted the snow, melted | 145 |
| the sea ice, melted the rivers, melted, even the frozen land down | 159 |
| to the depth of a foot or so. Briefly, for a few months, birds | 172 |
| came from the south to lay their eggs and raise their young. The | 182 |
| fish spawned, plant grew, berries ripened. And then the earth | 193 |
| tilted away from the sun. Days grew shorter, the sun weaker, | 202 |
| temperatures fell. The rain turned to snow, plants withered, | 212 |
| birds flew south. Ponds, creeks, rivers, and finally even the | 222 |
| Bering Sea froze, and layers of snow covered the whole | 232 |
| landscape. Fish, sea mammals, and land animals all moved beneath | 238 |
| thick blankets of ice and snow. | 246 |
| The small, scattered groups of Yup'ik Eskimos know | 258 |
| exactly how to survive here. Living as single families, or in small | 269 |
| groups of relatives, they moved with the seasons to catch each | 281 |
| kind of fish, bird, or mammal when and where each was most | 290 |
| easily available. They harpooned the whales that migrated north | 303 |
| along the coast in spring and south in the fall. They shot and | 314 |
| snared birds nesting on the tundra, and they gathered the birds' | 326 |
| eggs. They netted saltwater fish coming to lay their eggs in the | 335 |
| rivers and creeks, and they caught freshwater fish moving | 346 |
| beneath the ice of inland creeks. They trapped small mammals on | 359 |
| the land for meat and for fur clothing. They knew where to find | 371 |
| and how to catch dozens of different fish and animals for food, | 383 |
| for clothing, even for light and heat for their small homes. | |

The West Side

By: Peggy Mann

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Juan Morales has come from Puerto Rico to New York City to live with his Uncle Esteban. Juan's mother believes that he will receive a better education in New York than in Puerto Rico. When the plane lands and his uncle's arrival at the airport is delayed, Juan is told that the airline will give him a free flight back to Puerto Rico if his uncle does not arrive to pick him up. Juan misunderstands and believes he will be able to return to Puerto Rico any time he decides to do so. After a few days in his uncle's apartment and some unsuccessful attempts to make friends with the English-speaking boys who live on his street, Juan is unhappy and is determined to return to Puerto Rico. In the meantime, however, he agrees to go on a shopping expedition for Puerto Rican food in a neighborhood on the West Side of New York.

Juan stepped off the bus at Columbus Avenue. It was as though he stepped off the bus into Puerto Rico. The street was alive with children and Spanish music. Some of the children, barefoot and wet, played around the water gushing from the fire hydrant, ran in and out screaming laughter and Spanish words. Latin music came blaring from radios on windowsills... from a young man who sat on a box in front of Bodega Rivera strumming a guitar and singing a Spanish love song... from a bongo band on the corner playing hard rock with a loud Latin beat.

Women leaned out of windows shrilling in Spanish to children on the street. A group of men sat around a bridge table on the sidewalk, playing dominoes. Women in bright cotton dresses sat on the front steps gossiping in Spanish. And the stores! At home the stores often had americano names: the Blue Moon Bar Restaurant... Joe's Shop... the Cooperative Mercado's Barbershop... But here: everything Spanish! Farmacia Flores... Tienda La Favorita... Zapatería El Quijote... Respostería Borinquén...

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| A pair of rubber gloves that smelled of the sea used to hang in my grandma's kitchen. One day I asked her if I could try it on. | 34 36 43 |
| " <i>Chuibungbung</i> ," she replied, meaning stinky-stinky in Taishanese, our Chinese dialect. She broke noodles into a pot of boiling water, and shoved the gloves away from us. Steam rose into her face. | 54 65 68 77 |
| I spent nearly every Saturday with <i>GninGnin</i> in her Chinatown apartment while Mother and Father went to work. She taught me how to make <i>doong</i> , sticky rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves, and I taught her how to dress a fashion doll. At lunchtime, she'd make the best meals, clearing room for me in her tiny kitchen where salted butterfish and flounder hung like laundry above our heads. | 86 97 110 122 132 136 147 |
| "I wear my gloves for cracking crabs at the crab <i>chong</i> ," she explained as she peeled shrimp, my favorite, in the pot, "to keep the jagged shells from cutting my hands." As she reached for some chives to cut into our soup, I looked at her hands. Her skin was baggy around the finger, and delicate, like the rice paper around candy. Her gloves were the opposite: thick, with patches from a tire repair kit. | 159 170 184 195 205 211 218 |
| "Why do you crack crabs?" I asked. | 230 |
| "Only job I could find," she said. "Nobody wants to hire an old woman who can't speak English." She tasted the soup on her dark wooden spoon, then ladled some into bowls. The chives floated like confetti among the shrimp. | 242 252 258 269 |
| "Maybe if I knew English," she said, "I would have become a famous actress!" | 272 283 |
| "Really?" I stared at my grandma. She posed her head like the movie stars on the calendars the shopkeepers gave her at Christmas. Her eyes twinkled. | 294 298 307 |
| "Sure," she said. "Katie, in America, you can become whatever you dream." | 310 |

Journey
By: Kathryn Lasky

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| Rache lives with her parents, Ed and Leah, and her grandmother, Rose; and her great-grandmother, Sashie. Rache's parents and grandmother warn her not to upset Nana Sashie by asking her about tsarist Russia and the persecution Jewish people were subjected to there. However, Rache is fascinated by the story Nana Sashie has begun to tell about her family's dangerous escape from that country. | 24 35 44 53 65 70 82 |
| In an old trunk Rache finds a piece of the brass samovar, or tea urn, that figures largely in Nana Sashie's story. The samover was the one thing that Sashie's mother Ida, chose to take with her from Russia. The selection begins on the evening when Rache's father surprises the family with a rebuilt samovar. That night, Nana Sashie continues her story for Rache after the others have gone to bed. | 93 104 115 125 136 141 151 |
| The first night the samover would belong to Nana Sashie and Rache alone. At least, that was the thought in Rache's mind as she moved across the hall carpeting to Sashie's room. It was 2:30 in the morning and Rache had not even needed the alarm to wake her for this short hike toward the long journey through time, through Nana Sashie's time, to the world that might not be strictly their preserve for much longer. She stepped into the bedroom. The polished good soldier loomed before her in the night. The street lights were lawns away in the suburbs, and yet the samover seemed lambent and luminous, as if catching the reflections from a distant mirror. | 163 175 188 199 211 221 231 243 253 258 263 |
| "I knew you'd come tonight." | 272 |
| Rache jumped in surprise. The voice sounded so young. | 274 |
| "Nana Sashie!" | 276 |
| "Who else?" | 286 |
| Like iron filings pulled into a magnet, Rache's and Sashie's eyes were drawn to the glow of the samovar. The old eyes flickered with new color. Time melted. A century bent. There was a young voice. | 298 308 314 |

Parmele

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By: Eloise Greenfield

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| Every summer we took a trip down home. Down home was Parmele. To get ready for our trip, Daddy would spend days working on our old car, putting it in shape to go on the road, and Mama would wash and iron all of our clothes. Then everything would be packed in the tan leather suitcases and the black cardboard suitcase, and we'd be ready to go. | 15 26 41 52 63 71 82 |
| Mama and Daddy would sit in the front with Vedic in Mama's lap, and Wilbur, Gerald, and I sat in the back with our legs on top of the suitcases. This was before cars had trunks. Or radios. Or air conditioners or heaters. And there were no superhighways. The speed limit was forty-five miles an hour, and we went thirty-five to keep from straining the car. | 95 107 118 129 139 150 |
| It was an eight-hour trip to Norfolk, Virginia, where we always went first. Grandma Pattie Ridley Jones and Grandpa had moved there by that time, and we'd spend about a week with them, then go on to Parmele for another week. | 160 172 181 193 |
| On the road, I played peek-a-boo with Vedic between her naps. Or my brothers and I would count all the cars on the road. We'd say, "There go one! That's twenty-two. There go another one!" And we'd read out loud the rhymes on the red signs advertising Burma shaving cream, and wave at people sitting on their porches, and argue with each other until one of us got real mad and real loud and Mama told us we were giving her the jimjams and to be quiet. | 207 218 230 240 253 266 271 282 |
| One thing that we saw on the road frightened me. Chain gangs. We saw them often, the lines of black men in their black-and-white striped jail suits, chained by their ankles and watched over, as they repair the roads, by white men with guns. | 295 306 317 329 |
| I wasn't afraid of the men, and I didn't think about maybe getting shot. But for a reason I didn't understand. I was afraid of the whole thing. Those bent-over striped backs, the sharp points of the picks the men swung, the sound of the picks hitting the concrete, the sight of the men with long guns, pacing. It scared me. | 241 252 265 277 279 |