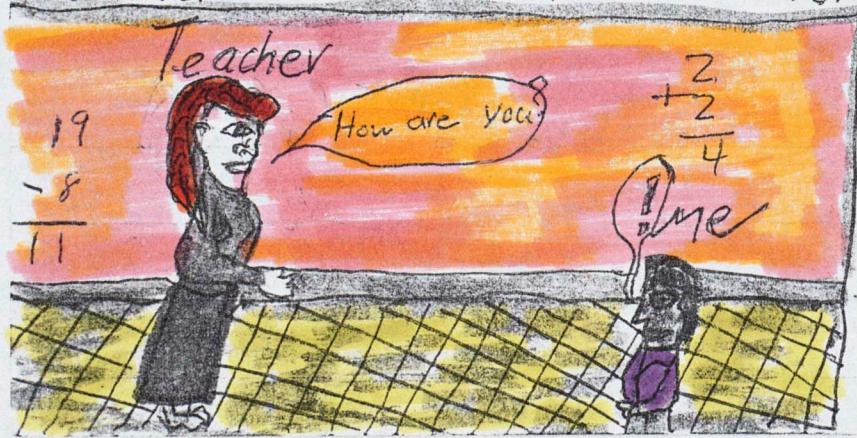


Ponn Pet

# An Immigrant In The United States

I am a Cambodian immigrant refugee living in the United States. My family and I left Cambodia because of the war in my country where I was born. I can't believe that we are free in this country. I was eight years old when I first saw different colored people. How strange scary and frightening to see white and black colored people red and brown and yellow hair, blue, green and brown eyes. I thought they had costumes on. My eyes had only seen brown skinned people with black hair. The only pictures in book I had ever seen in my country were of Cambodian people who are of the brown race. Every thing was different. The climate was so cold and when I saw something white on the ground I thought somebody went up in an airplane and dropped lots and lots of tiny pieces of paper down on the ground. It was the first time I saw snow.

When I went to school I couldn't speak English and the teacher didn't speak khmer. I couldn't understand what to do. It was very difficult. Eating in the cafeteria at the beginning was so different. I had never seen or tasted milk and never eaten cheese or butter. I had



never used a fork or knife. There were about five other Cambodian kids in my room who had been in America longer so they showed me how to use a fork and a knife. ①