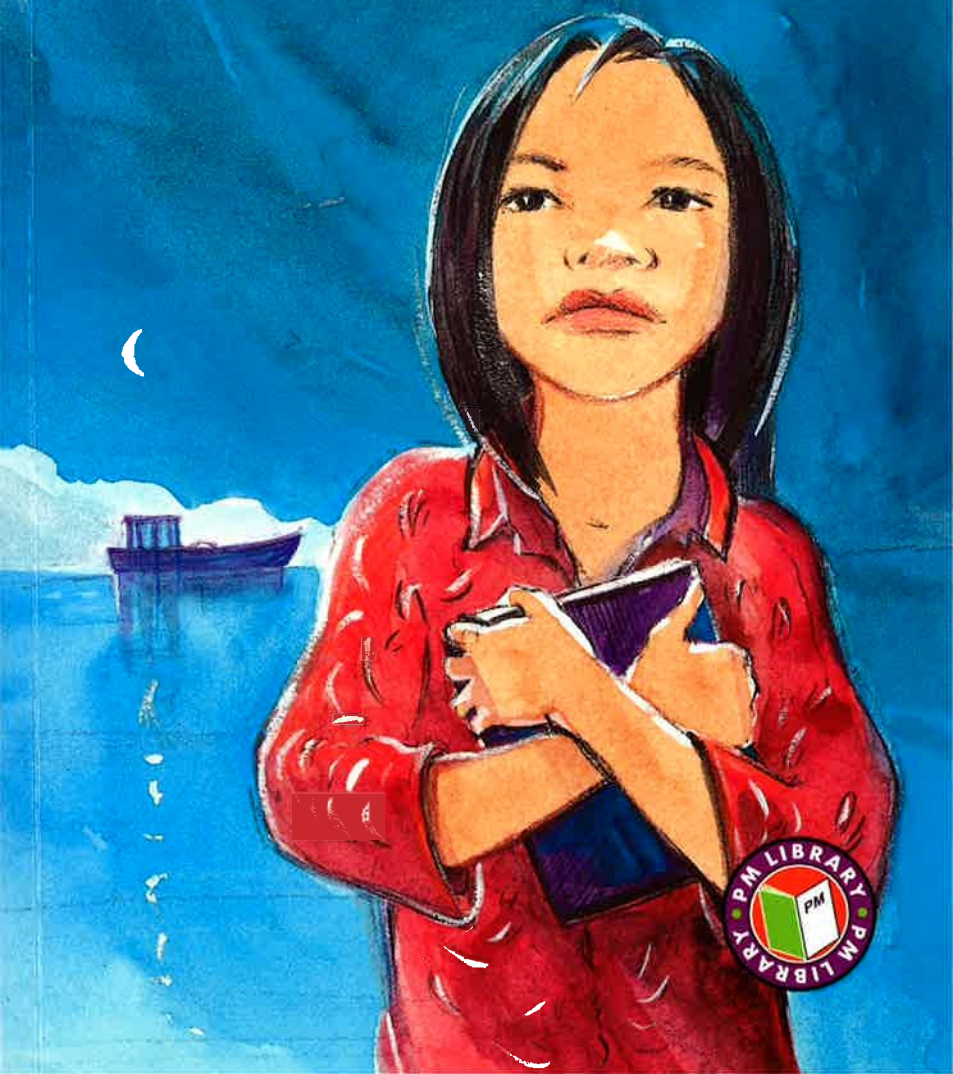
Phan's Diary

Story by Louise Schofield

Illustrations by Meredith Thomas



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For Review Only

This fictional story is based on true stories told by Indo-Chinese refugees in the years following the Vietnam War. Journeys like the one described in this diary really took place.

Pronunciation of names:

Phan — Fung
Hong — Hong
Huy — Hwi
Ma (Mum) — Ma
Bo (Dad) — Bo
Bà (Grandma) — Bu
Ong (Grandpa) — Ong

Chapter 1

14 June



I'm very sad tonight — so sad I don't know what to do. When Huy and Hong were asleep my parents told me some very bad news.

We have to leave our home and travel to a new country. We're going on a long and dangerous journey in a boat — and we may never come back.

Bo says we're not safe here any more. We have to go.

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Tomorrow at midnight Ma and Bo will wake me up. We'll go to the river and get in a boat with some other families. We can't take anything except for some food and a few clothes.

In the morning I'll say goodbye to Bà and Ong — my grandma and grandpa — but I can't say goodbye to my friends. If the soldiers find out what we are doing they might put us in jail. I mustn't tell anyone.

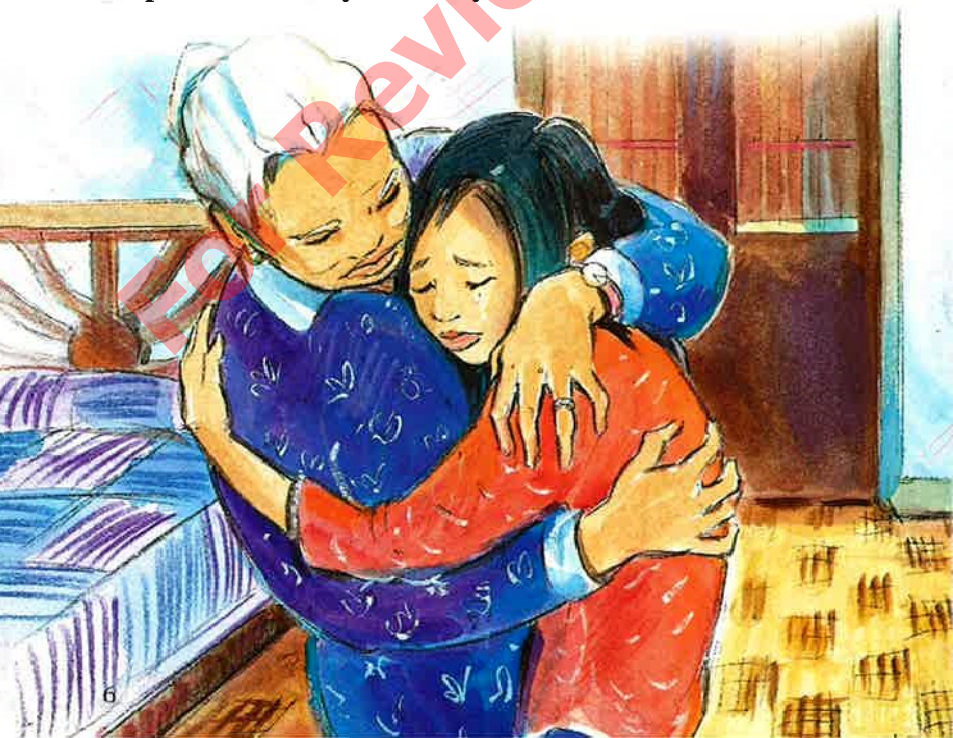


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15 June

Today I am so sad that I feel sick. Bà wants me to eat well so I will be strong for the journey, but I'm not hungry. I don't even want any noodles.

When I said goodbye to Bà and Ong I couldn't stop crying. Bà cried too, and when she hugged me she couldn't let me go. Then she gave me some sweets to put in my pocket. They are my favourite sweets.



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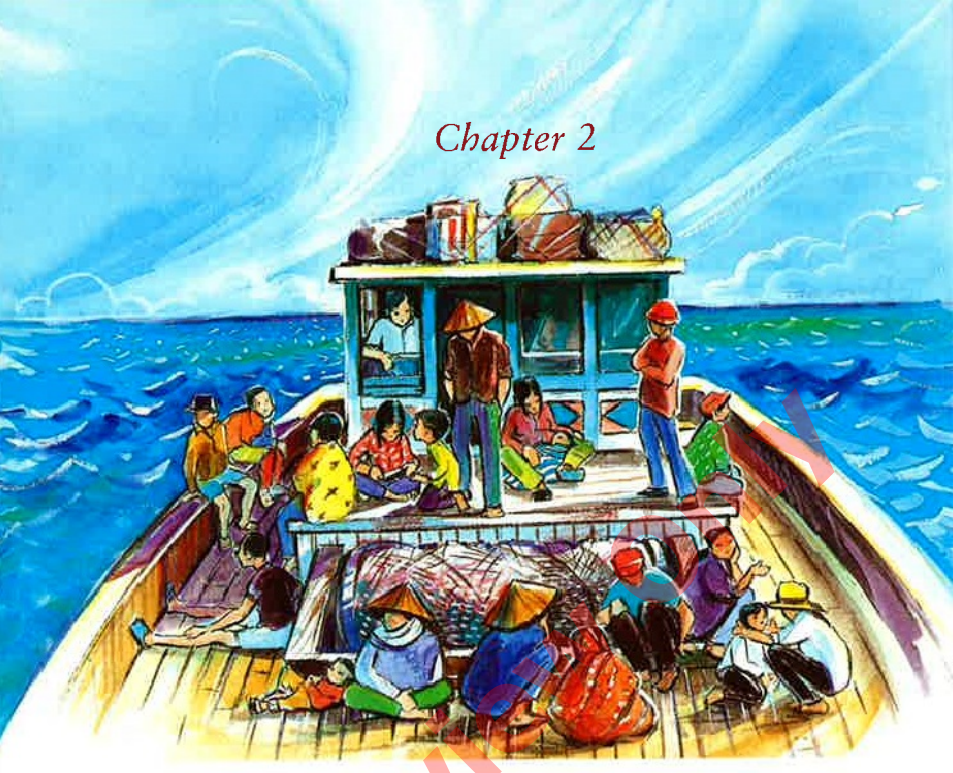
Ong says I've got to be brave. He says that when I'm frightened at night I should look at the stars and remember that he and Bà can see those same stars too.

I'm going to miss Ong and Bà very much.



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Chapter 2



16 June

I'm on the boat now.

It's not easy writing here. The waves make the boat go up and down. Huy wanted to draw in my diary, but I told him that what I am writing is very important and I need to save the paper. He started crying, so I gave him one of Bà's sweets. I gave Hong one too, a red one. It's her favourite colour.

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