

WHEN BROKEN GLASS FLOATS

By

Chanrithy Him

LOGLINE: “When Broken Glass Floats” is the story of CHANRITHY HIM, tracking along with her harrowing childhood in Cambodia under the brutal regime of the Khmer Rouge and her ultimate triumph as an award-winning author and a world-traveling renaissance woman, known for telling her inspirational narrative to audiences around the globe.

CONCEPT: An adapted memoir set in Cambodia and the United States during the turbulent late sixties and beyond. It is based upon the autobiographical, internationally acclaimed book by Him entitled: "When Broken Glass Floats: Growing Up Under the Khmer Rouge, W. W. Norton & Company" (April 2000).

THE MEET: *All the President's Men* meets *The Killing Fields* from the point of view of a child survivor.

TAGLINE: God created heaven and earth in six days. The US and the Khmer Rouge created hell overnight. She survived it.

SYNOPSIS: CHANRITHY HIM is a much beloved child who lives a bucolic existence in beautiful Cambodia with her parents and many siblings.

Chanrithy’s life changes forever when, at the age of three, in 1969, her home is destroyed as her country plunges into war. She grows up under the genocidal regime of the Khmer Rouge, who ruled Cambodia from 1975 through 1978.

Through desperate prayers, she experiences miraculous divine providence in the form of storms and human angels. Despite losing her parents and several siblings, enduring torture, work camps and observing executions in the infamous killing fields, Chanrithy’s spirit remains unbroken. She dreams of fleeing to America, a country where her father promises there is freedom.

Chanrithy perseveres against incredible odds, and ultimately does get to America, only to learn that the country in which her father so idealistically believed in was directly involved in propagating the very horrors that she and her countrymen endured.

Chanrithy becomes an award-winning author, telling her story in order to make the world aware of the Cambodian genocide and to help the survivors deal with the trauma of

their experiences. She also becomes a social activist, speaking at lecture halls and universities internationally.

And, as fate has it, thirty-five years after Chanrithy witnessed the vicious US carpet bombing campaign that devastated her home country, she comes face to face with one of America's most powerful leaders...

At the 56th Annual NAFSA Conference, the former Secretary of State MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT and Chanrithy are both scheduled to speak. There, Chanrithy confronts Albright about the United States' secret support of the Khmer Rouge returning to power in order to fight its proxy battle while the Vietnamese occupy Cambodia. As a result, Secretary Albright also becomes aware of H. CON. RES. 399 – a request for the allotted funds for the Khmer Rouge tribunal intended to seek justice against the top Khmer Rouge Leaders. Chanrithy's bravery in speaking out now has a direct influence to bring about real change.

Returning to Cambodia to speak for the first time since her escape, Chanrithy feels a sense of peace, as her talk is recognized on the Cambodian national TV.

Chanrithy has gone from being a frightened little girl, to a world-weary casualty of war, to a redeemed and empowered figure on the world stage, who uses her voice to bring about real change.

After the horrors she's encountered and the obstacles she has overcome, Chanrithy embraces her new life as “a kind of reincarnation.”