

Letter from Le Su

To: Tinh Thuong Foundation

Dear benefactor, firstly I send my best wishes to you.

Dear benefactor, before 1975 I was a member of a reconnaissance unit in Quang Ngai, under US command. I was injured on the eve of the Tet Offensive in 1968 when my unit was ambushed by the enemy from the west of Quang Ngai airport. I was then taken to the Repatriation hospital. I had shrapnel lodged in my right eye; my left leg suffered a severed nerve; I lost a finger and right leg was broken. After 2 weeks I was transferred to a civilian hospital in Saigon for further treatment to remove the fragments from my eye and mend my leg. However my eye could not be saved. After 4 months in the civilian hospital I was transferred back to the Repatriation Hospital in Quang Ngai where I remained until 21 January 1969. I was classified under category 3 by the military doctors. When I was finally discharged I was provided with a year's support along with 50kgs of rice.

At that time I lived in fear for my safety and because I was an ex-serviceman, I was soon condemned by the revolutionaries. I was forced to leave my home and family in the countryside. With my blind and limping body I ended up in Saigon selling papers, lottery tickets and whatever I could to support myself. It was at night that I truly felt the loneliness. In the struggle with poverty, I not only had to support myself, but also needed to send remittances to my family.

After 1975 I still dared not return home. However local authorities demanded my repatriation to my hometown. Only after 2 days of my return home, I was forced to enter the re-education camp. My family's lives at this time deteriorated considerably as the children had to give up their education and started working in the fields. My 2 eldest children became labourers to support their younger siblings. I was in the re-education camp for 2 years. Upon my release I returned home and also worked the fields. Since then our lives have been filled with poverty, working hard at the fields and yet barely making enough to survive. I am now an old man, too weak to keep tending the fields and therefore I am writing this letter to request your help to save my family. I look to your compassion and humanity to understand the poverty and misfortune that has befallen upon our lives. Please look kindly upon this humble request.

From the bottom of my heart I thank you and sincerely wish all of the best for you and your families.

Yours Sincerely

Le Su

(Translator: Nguyen Tuong To Uyen)