

Broken Glass: A Young Girl Named Ginger

Sex, drugs and gambling on love in today's Cambodia

Based on a true story told to Utara Norng

The first time I met Ginger, a young model at the Millionaire restaurant in Phnom Penh, she looked beautiful but a little scary. Later she asked me to go with her to Spark, the biggest nightclub in the city. I declined. I was just a student. I didn't realize how meeting Ginger would eventually change my life.

As part of my work with the Victim of Torture Project (VOT) at the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), which focuses on identifying traumatized victims from the Khmer Rouge regime, I decided to write a book about Ginger, entitled *Broken Glass: A Young Girl Named Ginger*. The book is about Ginger's world, as a bar girl who survived three abortions at a very young age, and about her mother Malis's world, as a survivor of the Khmer Rouge regime.

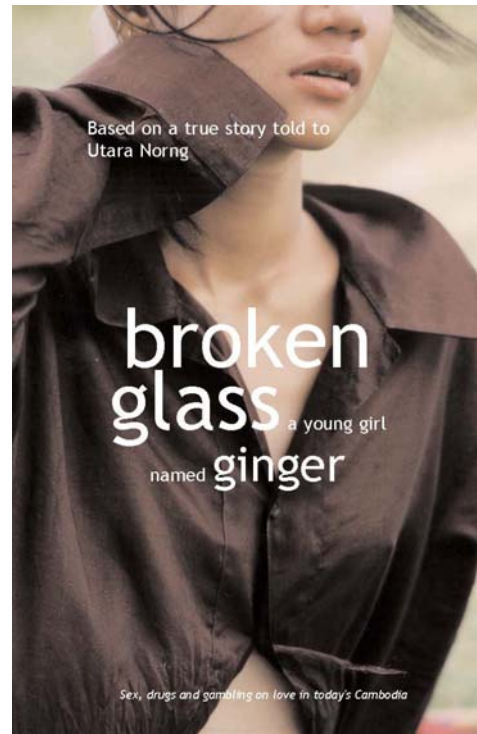
In Ginger's world, sex, drugs, gangs and guns rule. She considered herself better than the others around her. "I don't care if my friends are prostitutes. I'm not," she said. In fact, though, she often acted just like the rest of the flock. Her mother compared her to educated people with well-respected jobs in the society. Ginger did not listen. Now she says, "I wish I could turn back time. I want to change my destiny."

When Malis was a teenager, a generation earlier, her world was shockingly different from Ginger's. Malis struggled to survive one of the most brutal genocidal regimes in recent history. She lived separately from all her family members, including her fiancé and experienced the suicide of her closest cousin Lin. With courage and luck, she endured. Together, Ginger and Malis struggle to re-tie the strings of two broken generations.

Through my friendship with Ginger I was able to break through the strong class and social barriers so intrinsic in Cambodia society. Thankfully, two remarkably strong women have chosen to tell their stories with honesty and insight.

About the Author

Utara (Tola) Norng was a staff member at the Documentation Center of Cambodia from 2003-2007, where she assisted the Victims of Torture Project. She received her Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Foreign Language from the Royal University of Phnom Penh in 2007. She was a Witness Assistant under Witnesses/Experts Support



Unit at the Extraordinary Chamber in the Court of Cambodia from 2007-2009. She is now pursuing her Master of Arts in Development Economics at Williams College under Fulbright scholarship.

The book is available at the Monument Bookstore in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
134 pages in English; 25 USD.

Or you can buy it directly from the Author, please contact:



Utara (Tola) Norng

Williams College
Center for Development Economics
1065 Main Street
Williamstown, MA 01267, USA
utara_norng@yahoo.com

Cover and book design © Kim Sovannpany
Photos by "G" Private Collection and Phat Rachana

Published by Northshire Bookstore
Copyright © 2010 Northshire Information, Inc.
4869 Main Street Manchester Center, Vermont 05255, USA
802-362-2200; 800-437-3700 and the Documentation Center of Cambodia.

Printed in the United States of America