

# **Eunice Teo**

To my Grandsons - Jordan and Jared

From Grandpa and Granny

This is a real life story about part of Grandpa's life when he was a boy.

Grandpa was about eight years old when the Japanese invaded Singapore. Grandpa had two brothers and three sisters. His father, who was a teacher, was taken away as a prisoner by the Japanese and the family never saw him again. His mother was left with five children and she could not afford to look after them, so they were sent to an uncle who could take care of them. This uncle and Grandpa's father were brothers. The uncle was a very kind and caring person. Besides having to look after his own family of seven children and his own four sisters, he willingly accepted and took care of Grandpa and his siblings.

The Japanese sent them to a place called Bahau in Malaysia together with many other families. They had to make their homes in a deserted jungle-like place where there was nothing except thick jungle. Each family had to build their own home, grow their own vegetables and rear their own animals. Life was difficult and they all had to work hard and struggle to keep themselves alive.

Grandpa was only a young boy. He and all the members of the family had to work hard in the fields to help his uncle. Imagine a young boy

with no toys to play with and no books to read. Their house had no beds only hard wooden planks to sleep on. They led a very spartan life, food was scarce and they struggled to survive. Diseases like malaria were often the cause of death in Bahau. They also had to be aware of snakes as some of them were poisonous and people would die from snake bites. Despite the hardship, the uncle and all the family survived and returned to Singapore when the war ended.

Life was not what it is now. Just think how fortunate we all are today, Grandpa and I would like to let you know how blessed both of you are and that we should thank God for even the smallest things in our lives. Always remember that a little kindness to someone goes a long way and we hope that there is always someone like uncle who is always ready to give a helping hand when and where help is needed.