

A True Victory of Love Story from Brazzaville, Congo

Pamela Stein (Mlle. Pamela Fifer)

November 1975

Excerpted from "Trials in the Congo" a testimony published in Today's World April 1981

Edited August 2024



Note: In May 1975, I joined hundreds of missionaries sent out to the world by True Parents. I was appointed the American overseas missionary to Congo-Brazzaville, which in 1969 was the first nation in Africa to become communist. It was dangerous to go to a communist country during the 1970's, and it was amazing that I could obtain a tourist visa from the Congolese Embassy in Paris. I went to give my life on behalf of True Parents, and for the providence of heaven's will. I joined my German sister Annette Bierau where we spent time together in Brazzaville and also Pointe-Noire. From July, I stayed longer in Pointe-Noire where I met my spiritual son Lamin Mendy and joyfully taught him the Principle. He was originally from the Gambia, and I devoted my heart and soul to testify to him of True Parents. Since the Congo was a communist country, we could not witness openly or create a center, so I traveled four days by land to Gabon with Lamin for him to study in the Libreville center. That plan didn't work out due to Lamin's visa status, so we parted ways on the border, planning to meet up again in the Congo. When I returned to Pointe-Noire from Libreville, I became very sick with malaria, and lived with the family of Caroline Diogo, one of our earliest contacts. In October I traveled to join Annette again in Brazzaville.

Return to Brazzaville Sick and Hungry

Returning to Brazzaville on October 15, 1975, I was able to quickly find where Annette was residing in a Christian church compound in one of the cités that surrounded the capital. We embraced and then I collapsed on my sweet-smelling lumpy grass mattress. Our small room, located on the second floor of a cement housing building, was open and airy. The backside of the room was practically all sky due to two huge windows. When we looked out the windows to see below, we were affronted by a muddy compound yard with garbage troughs and fat snorting pigs. Annette said they were owned by the Chinese Embassy. The smell and flies were a bit challenging, but I was so glad to see my sister again and to be together in our humble little room.

Nevertheless, it was not easy for us to harmonize. We faced every day the pressure of survival - food, water, health, transport. Our very different personalities created conditions for irritation and conflict. Annette was cautious and nervous. I was an open friendly American girl, not much comfort in a covert mission. I was often sick, and soon I had a relapse of malaria, flat on my back in bed again. It was a depressing situation. Although grateful to be together, we only had one meal a day most of the time, and therefore I could not get stronger. Finally, Annette went to our Japanese nurse friend, Takako-san who was a missionary for the Tenrikyo Buddhist mission, and she came over to see me. What a treat, dressed in her sweet summer dress, her little parasol and special shoes. God bless our Japanese sisters everywhere! But then she reached into her bag and took out an enormous hypodermic needle and said she needed to give me a vitamin B shot to fight malaria. I was not in favor of that long hypo, looking like a whole pint of vitamin B. She coaxed me and I agreed; and she took five minutes to get it all in. I felt like one big vitamin B, consumed by the taste and smell. But somehow, I gained strength and could get up that evening.

Annette and I liked a certain tiny restaurant, which was a long walk, through lantern-lit dirt roads of a neighboring cité. We strolled along the night marche road full of potholes and other dangerous traps for people who did not see well. We were willing to walk this route just to eat some delicious beans with rice and a little mutton. We were always greeted warmly by the Mama and made sure we were full when we finished. Then we would walk all the way back through the dark night. No one ever harmed us, and we felt pride in the Congolese people, knowing we could walk through the streets of the cités at night, the

only two white girls in the entire quartier, and feel so safe.

After the vitamin B shot from Takako-san, I gathered all my strength to make the journey for our beans and rice. My hunger gave me the physical fortitude to walk so long, although I had to hold onto Annette. We slowly made our way, accompanied by Mieraganda, Annette's Congolese spiritual son from Tenrikyo, to whom she had taught the Principle. As we walked, we spoke to him about True Parents, and he was finally able to understand that True Father was the Messiah. He was very happy and made a commitment to follow the Principle. There was joy in our journey that evening, and we ate a wonderful meal together. I told Mieraganda many stories about our crusade work in America and how young people from all over the world were helping True Parents. He was so inspired. After we got back to our room, Annette and I decided we would try to help Mieraganda go to France to study and live with the church family in Paris.

After a few days I felt stronger again and determined to apply for a job since my visa would expire in a few weeks on November 25, 1975. I did not have the confidence to ask for another tourist visa, as I was already a six-month tourist in a communist country where there really wasn't anything to tour. So I went to the World Health Organization (WHO) and applied for a secretarial position. I met a wonderful Vietnamese man, Mr. Nygo, who had American citizenship. He had lived in New York for some time, and we made a comfortable relationship right away. He wanted to hire me, and promised he would present my application to the personnel department and to the Director of WHO. During my visit I met many young Africans from other countries who spoke English and I thought it was a wonderful place where I could work and even get a permanent visa to remain in the Congo. Each day I bicycled to WHO, which was located about 5 miles outside of Brazzaville, to see if there was an answer. One day in particular, Mr. Nygo told me that there was a freeze on hiring, and so I volunteered to work there. I really wanted to do my best to fulfill the Will of God which was to remain in my assigned nation for three years.

Returning the next morning, instead of walking my bike uphill, I peddled in the hot sun, using this condition to demonstrate to God my determination to remain in Congo. Tears rolled down my face because of the physical effort being too much for me, and I thought that I would collapse in the end. With all my heart I made this indemnity condition because I had nothing else to offer God on the altar for Congo but my physical suffering. When I arrived at the WHO offices, the answer to hire me was a definite no. I was told they did not want to hire an American because there was no American Embassy in the Congo for some years. They even refused my offer to volunteer.

Biking back to our room I cried, unable to see any way to remain in Congo. I cried not only from disappointment, but also from a sense of hopelessness to complete my mission in the country where True Parents had sent me. After six months, I felt defeated, with a sense of despair for going there in the first place. I was a person that strived to accomplish substantially, but I felt exhausted and desperate from having to live an invisible life, hiding behind a façade. On that day, I was given no hope to bring victory to our True Parents. Then things got worse.

Captivity and Duress

When you become a true person, you need not worry
about hell, heaven, the world, or God.
As long as you are genuine gold
you will continue being genuine in whatever
circumstance you may find yourself.
- True Father

Very soon after being denied the job at WHO, we had visitors. Two security policemen from the Immigration Office arrived on a Sunday morning. Annette went downstairs to see them and came back to tell me that our friend Augustin, the Director of Immigration, wanted to see us in the morning. There was no formal demand for us to come, just a casual message on a Sunday morning. The next morning, November 17, we showed up at 8:00 as requested and were asked to wait in a room until Augustin returned. Then our passports were taken away. We were kept against our will without being told why; and there we remained for three days.

On the first day we were told every few hours that soon we could go home. Yet we were also rudely interrogated without knowing the reason behind all the questions. We were scared and realized that Satan had trapped us. We had to be careful what we said so there were never contradictions. It was a blessing that I could not speak French and that they could not speak English, and so Annette and I could match our stories in English and Annette could tell it in French. She got the impression that they thought I was part of some conspiracy. We were not separated because without her they could not communicate with me. Although Brazzaville fairly small town, I did not know at the time that a war had broken out in Angola on the border of Zaire in the region of Shaba, with western-backed troops and communist troops fighting over mineral-rich land.

In those first few hours I experienced panic - feelings of being trapped, tricked, betrayed, helpless. I

sensed a treacherous path ahead. I wanted to scream inside and outside. I was so upset being kept against my will by strangers. As an American in a foreign land, it was the first time I experienced not having freedom to just walk away. It was horrible, claustrophobic, difficult to breathe. Struggling to accept the situation, I was mentally tortured for hours as I sought peace and courage for what had become my new reality.

The holding room was on the second floor of the police station. It was barren except for two vinyl bench-style couches, a side table, and a potted palm. The floor was cement, the walls and high ceiling were whitewashed cement. There was one window, barred and screenless; the bottom ledge was even with the top of my head, so I could only look out by looking up. And behold, surprise, a lovely thing to see - a large avocado tree, green and heavy with fruit.

I claimed one of the vinyl couches and in no time, it became hot and sticky from my body heat. Annette claimed the other couch. We had nothing with us but our clothes and water bottles. Although there was an open window with a shade tree, the room was not breezy; it was airless and cloying. The only way to exit was through the one heavy wooden door. But that was locked. And there was an armed guard on the other side. We were trapped.

By the afternoon, Annette and I had stopped asking each other what was going on and started discussing a plan to manage our situation. It was obvious that our friend Comrade Augustin was not around, and that it was not he who had called us; we were being kept for some hidden reason. Worse, none of our contacts knew where we were. We had disappeared. Annette was upset that she couldn't contact Mieraganda or Caroline, her spiritual children who both knew the Divine Principle and our mission. She wanted to somehow warn them that we were at the police station, and they should deny knowing anything about our mission.

I was still weak from malaria, having had fevers off and on. I could not stand up very long; my heart pounded loudly, interfering with my hearing. Despite my physical condition, Annette and I resolved that we would fast until we were released. I told her what True Father had said in the 120-day missionary training program at UTS: if you go to a prison in a communist country, you should fast because it unnerves the guards; it is the best indemnity to pay. Annette prayed for us, and we began our condition of fasting and prayer. I was aware that I might die under the circumstances. Weak and fevered, I gratefully found peace at last in offering my life in place of True Parents for the nation of Congo.

We decided a plan: our first task was to somehow get in touch with Mieraganda, and through him Caroline, and then the German consul. Annette was nervous that should Mieraganda cooperate with us he would be risking his life. We feared if they caught him helping us in any way, he would be imprisoned and tortured. Most people in a communist country lived in fear. If the security police arrested someone, even their own family could not help. It was terrible and there we were experiencing it. Nevertheless, our situation was urgent and we knew no one else at all to help us but Mieraganda.

That first evening an event occurred which surprised us. At 6:00, the guards changed and we met the new soldiers. They were eager to present themselves to us, the pretty prisoners. In their military fatigues, with their young curious faces, they looked to me like large friendly boy scouts. I relaxed a bit. They informed us they had no way to provide food and suggested that they escort us to the French supermarket. This was a surprising chance. Even though we were fasting, it was our chance to get out of the holding cell, and so we agreed to go. We also requested to pass by our room and change our clothes. They agreed to take us to the supermarket and drive us to our room at the Christian compound. They were not very well supervised, so it was easy to befriend them.

We entered the French grocery market Monoprix like all the other foreign people, but unlike them, we were prisoners of the state and not free. Shoppers observed we were escorted by soldiers, and yet it was impossible to cry out for help to anyone. Even if I did, I was sure no one could have helped us. It was too much risk to be noticed or singled out. I felt separated and isolated watching all the free people walking around shopping and going home. We could not. Many emotions swirled inside me. I thought of the Christians in Russia and China, and how much worse their situation was than ours. I felt humble, then proud for a moment, then I looked at Annette and felt immensely grateful. We represented our True Parents who could not come to Congo, and we wanted to make the best conditions for Heaven to bless the nation. I gathered courage. To cooperate with the purpose of the outing, we bought a few yogurts and bread and cheese, and even chocolate. But these things were just for show. We really needed to get to our room.

When we arrived, we informed the other residents that we had to stay in the police station and did not know why. They were concerned but also afraid. While the guards waited in the courtyard socializing with the residents, we went upstairs to gather some fresh clothes, and to use the common lavatory down the hall from our room.

When in our room, we locked the door and instead gathered up all our mission materials and letters from

Headquarters, and photos from Europe and USA, and put them into a satchel. How badly Annette wanted to get that satchel to Mieraganda and have him burn everything! Then we proceeded to rip up any papers to do with FLF or VOC or True Father's speeches. Even if they were in English, we did not want to take any chances of them being translated. Annette tore up photos we had taken in the Congo so our contacts could not be identified. All of it we put in a trash bag, and Annette hurried it down the hall to the bathroom trash bin. The remaining religious materials like books and journals and letters from my husband Dan, we put in another satchel, and that was hidden under my bed, because the soldiers banged on our door, and we had to leave and return to the holding cell.

That first night was spent on the hard vinyl couches. I tossed and turned, waking up with nightmares of murder and rape and terrible spirits attacking me. In the dark wee hours I again faced the reality that I might die; and that I was not ready to go to the spirit world; and that my faith was very shallow indeed. I cried because I did not want to die. I did not want to leave my new husband whom I barely knew, and I cried because I had no children, no lineage for Heaven. I did not want to disappear off the face of the earth into the spirit world when I had not accomplished my mission and could not comfort God. I was nothing, zero, and I quietly sobbed with remorse.

Before dawn I awoke, finding myself still in the same miserable situation. I agonized to the core and again panicked, could not get a deep breath, and I still had a fever. I tossed and turned. How to escape!

Slowly the light in the room changed with the sunrise. I began to think of Jesus and relate my situation with his. I experienced my own agony, and as I prayed, I felt his having lost his mission, of having to go to the spirit world early, of having no bride or family. I was in the same position as Jesus, and the crucifixion was before me. I whispered, "Beloved Jesus, my elder brother, what was that love you carried to the Cross? I want that love, too. Please give me that love."

I was living as a disciple of the Lord of the Second Advent, our precious True Father that Jesus anointed to fulfill his mission. Jesus had returned. I needed to be noble and courageous, but I could only repent. I was terrified that I may have sinned against God without realizing it, and I reflected within myself trying to find what I had done wrong. I could find nothing but the usual pride and arrogance and fallen desires which were my inheritance from birth. I wanted to shake off those sins and be free to go forward into the new day strong and confident.

But one terrible thing kept haunting me and I could not overcome my emotion - the fear of torture. I was terrified. I was weak, and my nerves were completely worn out; I cried again, having little courage and stamina to face the day ahead. I found myself in a fierce battle against Satan. The more I resisted my reality, the more anguish I felt. I wanted Jesus to give me the love that conquered death, the love that could win the hearts of the people. I wanted to love the soldiers that kept me captive.

A Spiritual Battle to Live or Die

"What if something goes wrong with God's computer
and you die prematurely? When God discovers it,
He will come down and lift you up saying,
"Don't worry. You will have eternal life, and
furthermore, I will personally take over your mission
and finish it for you."
- True Father

Annette and I lived in fear that the soldiers would search our room and find the satchel containing the Divine Principle notebooks, the witnessing pamphlets, journals, and the letters from other pioneer missionaries that we had received over the months. It all revealed that we were part of some bigger organization. We huddled together that second morning and agreed on the story that I was a member of some religious organization that she did not know about, and that I had come to visit her in Congo. The best-case scenario was that I would be deported, or imprisoned, and Annette could be free. We didn't discuss the worst-case scenario.

Most of the second day we were pushed and shoved from interrogation to interrogation, and threatened if we did not tell the truth. And the reason why we were there? We still did not know. We were constantly asked who we knew, how did we meet each other, why did I make a trip to Gabon, where was the Japanese fellow, did he know the same people in Gabon as I did, who did we know in Zaire, etc. We were anxious when answering the questions because we did not know how much they already knew, or why they were asking us. Anette shared with me that she overheard they were trying to find us (especially me) guilty of some anti-communist activities, and a connection with the CIA. At one point they separated us and kept us apart for about two hours.

During this time, I had gone to the bathroom and was slowly returning to our cell, burning up with fever and holding onto the wall. When I could not walk any longer, I laid myself down on the cool foyer floor

of the grand colonial building that had formerly been the city hall. On the hard cold floor, I lay on my stomach and turned my face side to side to keep my temperature down. I whispered to God, "I am ready to die dear Heavenly Father! I know I'm going to die." I surrendered at last to the inevitable. It was at that moment when Annette passed by on her way to the bathroom, and although she spoke softly, her voice echoed loudly bouncing off the high vaulted ceiling of the grand foyer. Waving her arms in a great mansei, she said, "Pamela, I have so much courage, don't worry!"

Hearing those words and seeing my bright sister full of strength and hope and determination gave me a great shot in the arm. I laughed for the first time in days, I felt real joy. I suddenly felt courage and knew for sure that God was on our side. It was as if she were possessed, and she dared to defy the orders given to us not to speak to each other. Later as we continued to be interrogated, I could tell that the comrade officials were becoming tired, not getting much out of us and were concluding by themselves that we were perhaps innocent victims of a ploy. Annette's ability to communicate in French, and her persuasive power of speech, saved our lives. But we still had to find out why we were there and who caused the situation.

Later, back in the cell I was flooded with fear that our rented room would be searched, and they would find the hidden satchel. They would find evidence to misinterpret and accuse us. Annette feared that Tsukasa, still in Pointe-Noire, would write a letter to us and the officials would check our mail. We were both very paranoid. We decided that we needed to get to our room again and destroy all evidence and photos that could still incriminate us.

I spent hours lying flat on the vinyl couch, sweating and sticking to it. I became weaker, my heart pulsing loudly in my ears. I couldn't walk without dizziness and clinging to the wall. At one point I cracked. I began sobbing and couldn't stop. I missed my mother. I banged on the large hard wood door, beside myself in grief, crying "Mama! I want my Mama! I want my Mama!" The soldier on duty opened the door and looked at my pitiful state. I cried loudly in total surrender - I want my Mama! I did not know that Mama was a password that could unlock any heart in Africa; that every person, even a soldier, was also a child inside who always wanted their Mama. The soldier's sympathetic face soon calmed me.

My distress was obvious, I was weak and fevered and becoming totally undone. Annette decided that I needed another Vitamin B shot or I couldn't keep going. She managed to get the soldiers of the day shift to drive us to the Tenrikyo dispensary, where Takako-san was working. The soldier who carried me to the vehicle had strong comforting arms, and I relaxed, feeling safe and secure for a brief moment. I looked up to his face and whispered to him, "I want my Mama." He looked at me with very kind eyes and said, "Mama."

At the clinic, Annette was relieved to also discover Mieraganda, his work shift almost finished. While I was having the unending hypo poured into me, Annette took Mieraganda aside and spoke quietly in English. He was more than willing to notify the German Consul and to help us as much as possible. It seemed that the German Consul was also responsible for any Americans in Congo. They would be able to notify the American Embassy across the river in Kinshasa, that an American was captive in Brazzaville. Mieraganda also agreed to her request that he take his French Divine Principle book and bury it in the sand along the shore of the Congo River. He also agreed to tell Caroline to bury her English Divine Principle book in the ground as well. Annette wanted to give him the key to our room and have him bury our hidden satchels, but that was such a risk if he were caught. No one could be trusted; if anyone saw him enter our room and exit with something, he could be reported and might suffer quite an ordeal.

We returned to the police station in a happier mood which lasted about one hour. Suddenly the Comrade interrogators burst into the room with such aggression as to give me a fright. They demanded to know if we were friends with a certain Lamin Mendy!

OH HO!! Did we know Lamin? He was my precious spiritual son!

Annette and I looked at each other and we both had a revelation at the same time; externally we appeared cool, and Annette simply said he was a friend of Pamela. She did not say he was my spiritual son who knew everything about our mission. Then began questions about our relationship with Lamin and finally they announced that they were going to bring him by the following morning to have an interrogation. So finally, we knew the cause of our being kept captive.

The Comrades left, and at 6:00 the guards changed. We made a request to go to our residence room again that evening to "clean up and change our clothes." The kind boy-scout-comrade soldiers agreed to take us. A big rainstorm was pouring from the sky by the time we arrived. I will never forget that intense twenty-minute period in our room, the deafening noise of that great deluge outside. We opened the windows to let cool air into the room and drown out the noisy work we had ahead of us. We also turned up the cassette music. My heart was in my throat and my body trembled the whole time when we brought out each satchel and began ripping pages as fast as possible. The sound of the tearing papers seemed too loud despite the deafening storm raging, I kept saying to Annette, "Ssshhh...!" We destroyed every letter and

speech and anything that identified us with an organization. We stuffed all this into a plastic trash bag.

I almost had a heart attack during this time - the soldiers waiting in the courtyard downstairs; the storm filling the dark sky, thunder and rain pouring in from the windows, our loud cassette music drowning out the ripping sounds of paper. My heart in my throat, I was aghast with agony, and then the enormous sack of incriminating evidence, and death outside the door. Adrenalin flooded my being in what I thought was my final hour. I peeked out the door and saw the soldiers socializing downstairs under the eaves. Given my chance, despite the great risk, I scurried to the community bathroom at the end of the corridor. I slipped into one of the shower stalls and added water to the sack, making sure no one could ever piece together the scraps of paper even if they tried. I dumped the entire bag into a huge waste can by the bathroom entrance. Returning to the room, I fell in relief onto my lumpy grass mattress until the soldiers banged on our door shouting it was time to go. We returned to the prison room in relief, giggling and winking at each other, proud of our accomplishment. Yet we had still left the Divine Principle books and the Barrytown missionary training materials hidden in a far corner under my little bed.

As the evening passed, the soldiers realized that although we had bought food, we had not eaten it. They questioned us, and encouraged us to eat, but we refused. They finally understood that we would not eat until we were released. They came in one by one and begged us to eat something. They became worried, especially for me, whom they knew had fever and seemed fragile. They begged us, told us about the harm which came to a body that did not receive nourishment. But we smiled and told them that God was greater than food and since we were innocent, we did not have to eat. We had inner strength from our Heavenly Father. They were impressed and nodded; then we spoke to them about our faith in His power.

It dawned on me that these young soldiers, and in fact all our persecutors, started to care for us and to think of us in a protective way. Before they had become communists, they had grown up Catholic and Christian boys. We discovered during the final captive hours how precious the nation of Congo really was, and we began to love the soldiers. That night I felt for the first time a sense of mission emanating from my heart to the people of Congo. I told Annette that True Father said we must comfort God and be responsible for the people of our nation, because Heavenly Father had been responsible for all mankind throughout history.

For the first time in my captivity, I cried for Heavenly Father and His unfathomable course of restoring mankind. I thanked Him for his constant love for sinners and begged Him to share this love with me. I told my precious Heavenly Father that I would fast and stay in a prison cell for as long as necessary and that I would witness to all the prisoners and my persecutors, and finally to the President of the nation. This was my noble plan in the silent hours of the night, my heart beating loudly, my body sweating, my eyes swollen.

In absolute faith I felt that God accepted my indemnity, and at last I was ready to go to the spirit world. Annette and I decided that if we died, we would continue our work in the Congolese spirit world, witnessing and teaching to all the ancestors. We were excited about this plan and were no longer afraid of death; it was a wonderful moment of freedom for me. I cried tears of gratitude realizing the precious truth living in me. Satan could never ever take away from me the Divine Principle; he could never take away my True Parents and Heavenly Father; nor could he take away my Blessing. Instead, I would attack Satan in the spirit world with the Word of God and the formidable power of God's true love. I would teach the Divine Principle even to evil spirits, and I would work for the restoration of mankind for all eternity.

With these wonderful thoughts and inspiration, Annette and I spent another night in the security police station, hidden away and guarded by soldiers who longed for our release as much as we did.

The Interrogation from the Minister of Defense

God knows He needs us, that is why we met. . .
to save the world, to liberate God
and to bring Heaven to earth.
- True Father

The next morning at dawn, Annette and I were allowed to walk around the courtyard of the police station. It was surrounded by a high stone wall. I cautiously managed to get down the stairs with trembling legs and great joy in my heart. We listened to the birds and the early morning noises of the street beyond the stone wall. We heard the Mamas chattering and children running around and a radio playing the soukous music of Franco and Rochereau. What a beautiful morning! What a gift to see the majestic green avocado tree and the blue sky. How precious the earth and all the things that God had created! That morning was exceptional, love in the air.

Unfortunately, Annette felt nervous and seemed attacked with anxiety. I could see that Satan would have us divided. It was so easy to get negative in our situation, so easy to feel anger or resentment towards each other. Especially towards me, because it was Lamin who seemed to be the source of our problem, and it

was I who had witnessed and taught him the Divine Principle, not knowing he was a communist. Annette and I were innocent of wrongdoing, and I refused to be afraid of what he would say or do. I knew also that the soldiers were starting to care for us as their sisters and that they wanted us to be proven innocent. Nevertheless, were they not trained in espionage? Surely, they did not want to be deceived by their own hopefulness. A showdown was pending.

Around noon our interrogators came for us and took us to our residence room one more time, to have it searched. It was a nerve-wracking experience. This time it was the Minister of Defense and Security, Comrade Denis, who escorted us. He and his soldiers tore the place apart and finally discovered under my bed the remaining satchel. They opened it up and whistled as if they had found a great treasure. They thought they had caught us at last, and that this American girl must be a spy. My heart fell to the floor, and I thought to myself, "Oh, this is it. The end."

But actually, a wonderful experience ensued as they began to rummage through the satchel of books and a few remaining photos. Comrade Denis examined the Divine Principle book and looked a long time at the photo of Father in the front. All the many years since, I have never forgotten his sudden smile, large and wide like sunlight. As he gazed on the photo of True Father he commented "look here, a good man, he is very religious." I was so amazed and encouraged. Then he found photos of the True Family and of our members in the USA. He got excited over the crusade work of young people and showed the other comrades. They said that True Father's family was beautiful, and that True Mother was especially a good and beautiful woman. I became so energized that I forgot my fever and weakness, and I jumped up and witnessed to Comrade Denis about True Parents and the restoration for world peace. I testified as best I could with Annette translating.

The soldiers stared at us hard and long, seeing our sincere hearts and our hope for them and their nation. Then Comrade Denis gave a big sigh and dropped his head; and there was silence.

Next, they turned on the cassette recorder, eager to hear it because of course all spies have secret tapes! But this tape was different. The sound that came out was True Father speaking in Korean through an English translator to the 120-day trainees at UTS in Barrytown. Father was telling a funny story along with singing, and the room filled with the laughter of brothers and sisters. Between Father's Korean, the English translation and the laughter, our prosecutors became confused, disappointed that there seemed nothing political about us. Annette translated it all into French, and in the end, they decided that I was just a religious girl and Annette was my friend.

They packed all the stuff off to the police station, and I could tell they wanted to finish the whole ordeal because it wasn't as interesting or intriguing as they had thought. Annette and I were cautiously relieved, and we prayed that we would sleep in our lumpy grass beds that night. We returned to the holding cell at the police station.

Later that afternoon, Comrade Denis and three other officers burst into the room, roughly pushing Lamin before them and dragging plastic chairs. I was so shocked by the look of Lamin. His head was shaven, and his face was cruel and hard. He had a small beard, and he looked like a black Lenin to me. I was startled to see him angry and mean, his narrowed eyes fixed on me. We gazed at one another, and I nodded; he looked away arrogant and self-confident. It was painful and I was confused. More humiliating for me was that I could hardly sit up and my heart was still pounding violently; I had to remain lying down on the vinyl couch. The doctor at Tenrikyo medical center had decided the day before that I was having heart problems and he wanted to give me some medication. But I knew that the problem was due to fasting, which I had not revealed to him. So I told him to wait a day or two. After seeing Lamin, it truly felt like a heart attack was pending.

During the interrogation the story emerged that Lamin had been discovered in the airport spying on the war planes just flown in from Russia for the Shaba conflict playing out in southern Zaire near the Angolan border. America was assisting the war with CIA cooperation, using the airport in Kinshasa. Russia was using the airport in Brazzaville. The CIA hired soldiers from Israel, the Russians hired soldiers from Cuba, and the fighting was in the mineral rich territory of Shaba. I had known nothing of this, which was fortunate.

When Lamin was caught spying at the airport in the middle of the night, he was accused of espionage. He responded that he was actually a communist, but he knew of two young women who were teaching anti-communist ideology - Pamela Fifer, an American; and Annette Bierau, a German. He said that I was sent by the CIA.

The interrogators questioned us over and over again using Lamin's story to attack us. When Lamin got to the part of us being members of the Unification Church, which our interrogators had never heard of, we felt a little panicky about how to proceed because of True Father's fame as the world leader of anti-communist ideology. At that time, the North Koreans, who had an embassy in Brazzaville, knew the extent of True Father's global anti-communist teachings. Had they known that Annette and I were there,

we could never have been acquitted. We had to be careful during this interrogation.

My heart continued to pound in my ears as the hours passed; sometimes I could hardly hear - or breathe, so loud was the thrashing within my chest. It was overwhelming, and I instinctively clutched my breast to still the leaping. Our interrogators were agitated and expressed concern that I would pass out. Annette and I were dramatic in responding to the questions when they asked about Helen in Gabon and Tsukasa in Pointe-Noire. Sometimes Annette and I had to lie to protect others and our spiritual children. Then Lamin, who spoke English and French, got upset and yelled at us. He accused us of lying and fabricating the answers. My aching heart was breaking, from both betrayal and physical exhaustion. But the precious hope provided by Jesus, and the model from our True Father of total sacrifice to attain the victory of love, kept me going.

Annette and I were a great team: me lying on the couch clutching my heart and speaking very slowly the answers in English; and Annette wringing her hands while encouraging me what to say. Our gestures were sincere, and our answers thoughtfully discussed between us, because our lives were on the line, as well the nation that we prayed fervently would side with God after all was said and done. We were also concerned for the lives of others; including our friend Comrade Augustin, the Minister of Immigration, who had dined with us several times. When he returned from his travels, and should we be found guilty, the soldiers would arrest him also. We feared for any of our contacts that had helped us throughout our six months in Congo. None of them suspected us of any wrongdoing, and they were as innocent as we were. Especially our precious spiritual children.

After two hours, they ushered in Mieraganda, Annette's spiritual son, and questioned him. He united with Annette, being very Abel-like in his support. He didn't promote the Divine Principle or religion. He simply said he enjoyed a friendly relationship with Annette and learned a lot from her. But Lamin also wanted to save his own life - he got angry and began to accuse us all, standing up and shouting. The police forced him into a chair, told him to calm down. But he was fuming because he could understand English, and the story Annette and I were presenting, where we had to deny that we were covert missionaries of True Parents sent to start a new church in Congo. Denying that was painful for us, but necessary.

Our interrogators kept asking where the French DP books were, and in fact stated that they were interested to read one. We said we had only one DP book, and it was in English. This made Lamin really mad; he knew there were French copies because he had borrowed one for study. He began to accuse us again. He got so confused and frustrated; and in the end he shouted to the security police that they were reactionaries. That is what finally caused them to grab Lamin to haul him out of the room. You don't call the communist police reactionaries.

As they wrestled him away, my heart ached, and I rolled over to bury myself in sorrow. Lamin was not lying. Annette and I were denying our mission to save the nation. We said that we should lie so that we might live to restore Congo. If Lamin would only testify to True Parents, the Comrades would listen. They had seen and heard True Parents just hours before and received my witnessing testimony. They only needed confirmation.

At last Comrade Denis seemed satisfied with the answers and declared us innocent and Lamin guilty. They handcuffed him and dragged him back to his prison cell. I was so sad when he left. If only I could have spent a short time with him, to remind him of God's love and the time we had spent together learning the Divine Principle. He was a Muslim from Gambia; I was an American Christian girl and we met in a foreign communist country. This was the loving will of Heaven for us both; and I thought for sure he understood well about True Parents.

After Lamin was roughly escorted out, I rested in momentary silence and pondered with disbelief that we had actually been found innocent. Of course, we were; but I still couldn't follow the story and the translating and the yelling. Also, I was waiting for my heart attack. I still had a fever and was breathing laboriously. Then I heard Comrade Denis begin to chuckle and make a joke and noticed that Annette tried not to smile. Soon everyone was laughing. I couldn't believe what I saw. Laughing? I asked what was so funny!! Annette said that our interrogators' believed Lamin was in love with me and because I wouldn't respond to him, he wanted to revenge his pride.

They found this to be very funny; Annette told me it was a typical drama of African life, the unending battle between men and women. I didn't laugh at all. I was shocked. I was devastated and embarrassed. I did not believe that idea for one minute, after all the deep spiritual talks that Lamin and I had about God and Africa and history and the True Parents. I wanted to cry. I was offended and humiliated, being laughed at. Yet, I was a woman and he was a man. God was color-blind. And the history of Congo was still unknown to me.

I felt sorrow for Lamin who had to remain in prison until they deported him. They would be laughing at him for sure. It was revealed that he had already been thrown out of his own country, the Gambia, for

anti-government activities, and now he would have to wander throughout Africa having no nation.

What's worse was that he knew the Divine Principle and he had denied True Parents by his betrayal. I was sad, quietly curled up with repenting tears.

Then something very special happened. Annette translated the words of Comrade Denis, "Mlle Pamela, we must deport you because there is no American Embassy here in the Congo. We wish you could stay in our country. You are a good woman. We are sorry to see you leave. Maybe should the American Embassy be here again in the future you will be able to return."

I was so surprised and moved, I couldn't believe my ears. Was I truly invited to return to this nation of Congo? I sat up. "Oh, Annette," I cried, "we got the victory of love!"

And that victory meant eternal life for us all.

After 77 hours of captivity and nerve-racking spiritual battles, Annette and I were given our passports back and we were free to leave. The soldiers drove us once again to our compound. It was dusk, a beautiful array of color, the big orange sun ball on the horizon. We heard the soukous music of Franco and the OK Jazz Band floating in the air as we drove along the bumpy dirt roads, waving to the faithful mamas busy with their cookfires. Annette and I said to each other, "Look, the Mamas are always here with food, beckoning us to eat."

Holding hands in the backseat of the car, we cried together with gratitude and relief. We had offered our lives willingly on the altar for the nation of Congo. We had passed through death and found ourselves reborn. We didn't even mind that the police still had some of our church stuff, as well my journal, which they might try to decipher. Actually, the majority of my writing was about True Father's life story and his imprisonment in North Korea. I had been handwriting it for weeks to keep my sanity and my faith pure. I was happy for them to read it.

After all was said and done: I discovered that the Congolese people were remarkable in their astute awareness and intuitive knowing. I was a witness that they recognized when good was good and evil was evil. They could see that True Father and True Family, that Annette and I, were good. They did not want to harm us.

On November 25, I boarded Air France and was lifted into the sky, leaving Brazzaville. I wept copious tears. I prayed and hoped that God was not disappointed. It seemed to me that although I had failed in substance, Heavenly Father could truly love the Congolese people because the government officials had united with the side of God. Annette and I were found to be innocent under persecution and accusation from one of their own communist comrades. The government showed itself to be righteous in our case. The victory of love and true freedom was our reward. I prayed that Heavenly Father would accept our condition for the restoration of the nation and that someday I could even return to join Annette.

As the plane flew over the Ituri Forest, which stretched far into the horizon, I cried with conflicting feelings of relief and sorrow. I thought that I must certainly be a failed missionary. Then Heavenly Father spoke to me, and my tears stopped.

"My daughter Pamela, stop crying. In three years, the American Embassy will return to Brazzaville." I was so surprised and thought it was my imagination. But it wasn't. Indeed, the American Embassy did return to Brazzaville in 1978 and I was invited to cross the river, and return as a staff member of the Peace Corps.

Epilogue A:

After I left the Congo, I spent a few weeks in France, and then arrived in New York on a cold December night. I was escorted to Belvedere and assigned a room with Judy Fong, who cared for me with love and respect. I was again sick with malaria; and broken in heart to think I had failed heaven. Judy made me feel safe. She made sure that I woke up each morning and had breakfast and she reminded me that True Parents asked about me often. I was so grateful for her loving care and attention. Yet I still spent many hours praying and worrying about my sister Annette, whom I had left behind in Congo.

On February 9, 1976, True Parents sent me back to Africa, this time to Kinshasa Zaire, (aka, DR Congo) across the river from Brazzaville. I continued my mission to Africa, pioneering Zaire for three years with other missionaries, who like me had not been able to stay in their nations. We built a wonderful center in Kinshasa and enjoyed a very busy mission. In 1978, three years after I had been deported in 1975, I was hired by the Peace Corps, headquartered in Kinshasa, as the Executive Assistant to the Director, Baudouin de Marcken. One day he approached my desk and said, "Pamela, the American Embassy is opening up again in Congo. The Peace Corp will be setting up an office. Would you like to have the position of the

Director's Assistant in Brazzaville?"

God is truly great and amazing. I accepted with trepidation - for how could I leave the growing mission in Kinshasa? The problem was solved when a week later Mr. de Marcken asked me a question: "Pamela, did you know your name is on a blacklist and you cannot enter Brazzaville?" I could not explain my story to him, so I simply smiled and said, "Oh, I won't be able to accept the position, I guess." I was disappointed, but very grateful to be asked.

Epilogue B:

In 1982, I put my two babies - a daughter 18 months old, and a son 4 months old - into the care of Jacob House and flew back to Africa on God's Day, to attend the first Africa 40-day training in Bangui, Central Africa Republic. I had been working with Rev. David Hose at Headquarters in New York City for three years, developing the 40-day International Training Workshops.

After the program ended in Bangui, I visited Kinshasa, Zaire. I stayed six months and developed four Mobile Fundraising Teams, training members to create a stronger financial foundation for the mission. During that time, I was able to visit again Congo-Brazzaville, crossing the river by a water taxi from the Kinshasa side, accompanied by Roger V Mulonda, Annette's spiritual son. I entered the nation without any problem. It was very moving for me to see again the streets and the police station, and the view of Kinshasa from the Brazzaville side of the river shore.

Over the years I have often thought of "Comrade Denis" Sassou-Nguesso, the Minister of Defense and Security in Congo 1975. I was amazed to discover decades later that after I had left Zaire in January 1979, he had become President of Congo-Brazzaville just two months later in March 1979. During his first tenure he transitioned the nation from communist to democratic. God is so great. I had always thought about both nations as the United Congo of Africa.

I am deeply grateful to Heavenly Parent's unconditional love for humanity throughout history; and I am grateful to True Parents for their victorious life in completing the long historical course of restoration. In God's Providence for seeking the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, nothing is lost; every sincere effort and sacrifice is not forgotten but blossoms in another season.

For many years, the UPF activities for Cheon Il Guk have been prospering in both countries. God is so great, True Parents are victorious, and our Beloved True Mother, the Only Begotten Daughter, has liberated the entire continent of Shin Africa to build the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!

All glory to Heavenly Parent and True Parents! Aju!