

It was 10,000 BC. There were no towns or even villages in the world. There were no farms or gardens, either. Like everybody else, Klom and her family travelled from place to place. Sometimes they travelled alone and sometimes with other families. When they found a place with a lot of food, they stayed there. Then, when there was no food left, they moved somewhere else. Life was always difficult for Klom and her family, but summer was the least difficult time. It was warm in summer and there were seeds and fruit to eat.

After the long winter, there was nothing left to eat except for a few seeds. So, the families decided that it was time to move.

Klom's father lay quietly beside the fire. He was worried. It was now five months since his accident, and he was still not able to walk. He could not leave with the others, but he knew that his family needed more food.

"You'd better go with the others," he said to his family, "and leave me here."

One by one, the other families left, but his own family stayed.

Although there are many interesting places to visit in Bangkok, I must tell you about our traffic problem, first.

There are so many cars in Bangkok! It can take a very, very long time to get from place to place. It sometimes used to take me more than two hours to get to school! I often slept or did my homework in the car!

If you want to get somewhere on time in Bangkok, you must make sure you leave early. Lots of people take tuk-tuks because tuk-tuks can get through the traffic more quickly. Tuk-tuks are like little cars with three wheels.

As usual, just before his birthday, many cards and presents arrived for Ben from his grandparents and other relatives in the USA. Ben opened the first one. It was from his grandparents and there was money inside.

"How are you going to spend that money?" asked his father.

"I'll buy a model car with some of it and keep the rest," said Ben.

His aunt sent him a T-shirt. He thought it was great and wore it for the rest of the day. He loved the new watch from his uncle, too. It had a voice! It told him what time it was!

When his grandfather died, Sam's uncle came from the city to take care of the farm. He had a lot of money, but he didn't know much about farming. He cut down all the trees to make more fields and grow more vegetables.

Without the trees, the wind blew less gently across the land. Year after year, it carried away more and more of the soil. So did the rain. The land grew poorer and poorer and Sam had to work harder and harder to get the plants to grow.

"Grandfather," Sam thought. "You said that we needed those trees, and you were right!"