

Chapter Eight

A God-sent gift that remained with us for twenty-two years

My father's return was truly a gift for us all. He was physically dilapidated but his stamina and high spirit helped him to regain his old self. He was well aware that he faced many challenges in terms of adjusting to society, to his immediate and extended family, to the job market and to the Party milieu, none of which remained the same eleven years on.

We had visitors all the time, family, friends, well-wishers and ARF ungers. Among them was a man who visited my dad several times and who, unlike other visitors, always spoke with him in private. From conversations between my parents, I gathered that he was a US Embassy employee with quite an attractive offer, that is, immigration to the United States for our family with all expenses paid and living conditions guaranteed. Then his visits stopped. My father had turned the offer down. Eleven years of coexistence with the crooks of