

VINH(CONT)

I will pick you up in the morning. I am here to take care of you for the time you are in Saigon.

(VINH exits and the lights dim)

(Spot on EMILY as she addresses the audience)

EMILY

It was 2016 when I went to Vietnam. I would have been lost without Vinh. He made my trip so much better. Just meeting him, well, — it changed my life.

(EMILY pauses)

But that's way ahead of where the story begins. We have to go back to 1968, the year I graduated from high school. The military had a draft in 1968 and all 18 year old men had to register. When they graduated from high school, they had to think about more than who they might ask to the prom — they were deciding what to do about the military. They could join, get a deferment and go to college, move to Canada, or sit around and wait to be drafted. The ones who wanted to protest the system itself — burned their draft cards.

(EMILY raises her fist.)

“Hell no, we won't go!”

(EMILY puts her fist down and pauses)

Women weren't included in the draft. If they did serve, it wasn't in combat. When I got out of school, I only had to decide if I wanted to go to college, and which one....until I met Craig, that is. It was our senior year, 1968.

(EMILY moves downstage.)

(CRAIG and YOUNG EMILY enter. They are affectionate with each other —kissing and hugging throughout the scene.)

START

CRAIG

Peterson's history test was a bummer. How'd you do? Your class took it this morning, right?

YOUNG EMILY

Well, I studied for it — so I think I did okay.

CRAIG

Oh, yeah — studying. I should try that.

(He looks impishly ashamed for not studying then changes the subject.)

That cheerleader chick wondered if I was going to ask her to the dance.

YOUNG EMILY

Sheila? Serious? What did you tell her?

CRAIG

I told her I'm going with you, of course.

YOUNG EMILY

I bet **that** shocked her. No one can believe you're spending time with a nerd. I **figured** Sheila would be after you. She's a very cute girl, and you **are** such a...fox.

(YOUNG EMILY kisses CRAIG then moves away from him.)

What did she say?

CRAIG

She laughed — thought I was kidding. “Encyclopedia Emily?” she said.

YOUNG EMILY

What?

CRAIG

Oh! You didn't know they call you that?

(He grabs her again.)

I'd be proud of it if I were you. You're definitely smarter than Sheila — and you're not just smart you're warm and you care. I can talk to you about things I've never talked to anyone about before. My mom has given me all the stuff I ever wanted but — she isn't exactly — well, let's just say if I can learn to be half as warm and open as you...

YOUNG EMILY

(YOUNG EMILY shoves him)

Oh, get real! What about everything you've taught me — how to play tennis, how to ski, how to drive a car — You **have** a car! My family doesn't have jack squat. I would have never been able to afford tennis rackets and skis — can't even believe I'm doing all of this.

(Beat)

Sheila, on the other hand, her dad is made of money.

CRAIG

She doesn't have me! Forget about Sheila — I don't ever want to be with anyone but you.

(Their lights fade, lights up on EMILY)

END

EMILY

I can still remember how it felt to be falling in love with him. I was serious about my goals in life — a boyfriend wasn't part of the plan — but I didn't seem to be able to help myself.

(EMILY watches the action as the lights come up on YOUNG EMILY and CRAIG.)

(EMILY exits)

YOUNG EMILY

You did what?