

ANTIGONE

& LETTERS TO SOLDIERS LOST

Adapted by Al Schnupp
From the Play by Sophocles
With Letters from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
Published in the Books
Shrapnel in the Heart by Laura Palmer,
Letters on the Wall by Michael Sofarelli,
Offerings at the Wall, Walton Rawls, Editor.

ACTORS/CHARACTERS

Creon
Antigone
Ismene and Ensemble Member 1 (female)
Ensemble Member 2 (female)
Ensemble Member 3 (female)
Haemon and Ensemble Member 4 (male)
Tieresias and Ensemble Member 5 (male)
Ensemble Member 6 (male)
Ensemble Member 7 (male)
Ensemble Member 8 (male)
Ensemble Member 9 (female singer)
Ensemble Member 10 (male singer)

**Letters used with permission granted by Laura Palmer, Michael Sofarelli, Turner Publishing, Inc.
John Campbell, Dan Doyle, Angela Prete Matthews, Carole Ann Page**

CAST

Principle Greek Personae:
Members of the House of Thebes
and
The Ensemble:
Citizens of Thebes
and
Authors of Letters Placed at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

ORIGINAL MUSIC

The Wall
Composed and Sung by Jaide Whitman

After the Fight
Composed and Sung by Jack Adams

SETTING

A Memorial Site Dedicated to the Victims and Survivors of War,
Revisited by the Citizens of Two Worlds

THEBES + VIETNAM THE WARS ARE OVER THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

The setting (sketch on following page) is comprised of a central platform on which a framework of pipes is mounted. Overhead is a stretched canvas, laced to the pipes. A stylized version of *Guernica* by Picasso is painted on the canvas. The wall at the back of the platform consists of enlarged letters stitched together. These letters are duplicates of letters collected at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Sculpted pillars, painted to look like granite, stand on each side of the platform. The names of individual family members from the House of Thebes are revealed on the pillars. They include: Jocasta, Laius, Polyneices, Antigone, Oedipus, Creon, Ismene Eteocles, Eurydice and Haemon. The name of Polyneices has been painted with tempera paint so it can be washed off easily with water. The other names have been painted with permanent paint. A small boat, holding a spirit house, hangs from the pipes. During the show, the pillars are rotated 180 degrees. Revealed are engraved words. These words describe one member of a familial relationship: Mother, husband, uncle, son, brother, sister, father, daughter, cousin, wife. These words can be illuminated from within. Each pillar has an open alcove that can be used as a place for holding props and creating shrines. A top light, installed within each alcove, can illuminate objects within the space.



(4 and 8, representing Eteocles and Polyneices, stand on opposite sides of the stage. Both are shirtless. They execute a series of movements that complement the opening exposition. 2 and 3, acting as narrators, utilize American Sign Language, to illuminate key words).

- 3 Eteocles and Polyneices were the sons of King Oedipus.
2 From childhood, the brothers were inseparable, each a shadow to the other.
3 Together, they roamed the forests, climbed enchanted trees, aimed their arrows at a single target.
2 If one fell ill, the other held vigil by his bedside.
3 When asked to entertain, one would sing, the other play the lyre.
2 Within the esteemed city of Thebes, they were the undisputed mark of brotherhood.
3 When their father, King Oedipus, looked into the past and was shown its truth, the king, horrified at what he saw, destroyed his eyes and renounced his crown.
2 Polyneices, the elder son, the rightful heir, assumed the throne.
3 But Eteocles, defying the law, overthrew Polyneices. (A stylized fight between the brothers occurs). He was sent into exile. (2 and 3 throw spears to the brothers who separate and move to opposite sides of the stage).
2 From a distant land, Polyneices assembled an army. (6, 10, 5 and 7 enter as soldiers in Vietnam. 6 and 10 join 8, Polyneices. 5 and 7 join 4, Eteocles).
3 Eteocles, anticipating a revolt, activated his troops. (Each group forms a tableau).
2 Polyneices, with his band of outcasts, marched on Thebes.
3 For seven years, the army of Eteocles and the soldiers of Polyneices did battle.
- 6 **On August 11, 1968, I returned to base camp. The next day was my 21st birthday. The guys gave me a pair of boxer underwear and a cold beer, along with a hot shower. After the shower, Henry came to me and advised me I was on guard for the night. I was assigned the main gate. Henry told me he would take my post - I could take his some other time. At 0120 hrs. our post was hit and overrun by Viet Cong. Henry was the first person killed when the Viet Cong threw a grenade in the bunker. He was able to kick it from the bunker before it exploded. After the grenade was thrown, Henry was shot in the chest by an AK-47. I was sleeping at the time. I heard the blast and jumped for cover. The Viet Cong were all around the camp. The fighting lasted until sunrise. Henry Bradshaw died for me that night. If he had not seen the Viet Cong, we all may have been killed. I dug the bullet that killed Henry out of the bunker wall and have kept it for twenty years. (3)**
- 2 and 3 Seven years.
3 Seven years ...
Group One. (The “group” counting the numbers includes 4, 8, 6, 10, 5, 7).
3 And neither Eteocles or Polyneices ...
Group Two.

3	Was able to defeat the other.
Group	Three.
3	So the brothers met on the battlefield ...
Group	Four.
3	Alone ...
Group	Five.,
3	One against the other ...
Group	Six.
3	Without escorts ...
Group	Seven.
3	To end an endless war.
5	For twenty-two years I carried your picture in my wallet. I was only eighteen years old that day we faced one another on that trail in Chu Lai, Vietnam. Why you didn't take my life I'll never know. You stared at me, armed with your AK-47, and yet you did not fire. (1)
2 and 3	<u>(4 and 8, as Eteocles and Polyneices, leave their group of fellow soldiers and walk toward one another).</u> The brothers approached, swords drawn.
5	You stared at me for a long time, armed with your AK-47, and yet you did not fire. (3)
2	<u>In their struggle, each received a fatal wound. (4 and 8 execute a stylized fight with imaginary swords). Together, they died in the shadow of their home. (4 and 8 slowly drop to their knees. 2 and 3 approach 4 and 8, the brothers, from behind and pour a small amount of blood onto the shoulders of 4 and 8. The blood drains over their chest and torso. 4 and 8 drop their heads).</u>
5	Forgive me for taking your life, I was reacting just the way I was trained, to kill V. C. . . . (3)
3	The bloody feud of Eteocles and Polyneices has ended.
2	The city of Thebes is at peace once again.
5	So many times over the years I have stared at your picture. Each time my heart and guts would burn with the pain of guilt. Now . . . I perceive you as a brave soldier defending his homeland. Above all else, I can now respect the importance that life held for you. I suppose that is why I am able to be here today It is time for me to continue the life process and release my pain and guilt. Forgive me, Sir. (3)
3	Creon assumed the throne.
2	King Creon decrees:

CREON

Let those who died in service to their country be given a proper burial. For Eteocles, the faithful son of Oedipus, prepare a royal funeral, worthy of the man. Have him declared "Hero of Thebes."

(Eteocles, 4, is brought on stage on a stretcher that is carried by four male actors. Other ensemble members surround Eteocles. Ismene and Antigone join the group. Ismene washes the blood from Eteocles. Antigone dries her brother. Ismene places a wreath of gold laurel leaves on Eteocles. Antigone pantomimes taking dirt from a vessel and sprinkling it over the body of Eteocles. All these actions occur during the following speech).

6

Dear 'Smitty, Perhaps, now I can bury you; at least in my soul. Perhaps, now, I won't again see you night after night when the war re-appears and we are once more amidst the hells of Vietnam. We crept 'point' together and we pulled 'drag' together. We lay crouched in cold mud and were drenched by monsoons. We sweated buckets and endured the heat of dry season. We burnt at least a thousand leeches off one another and went through a gallon of insect repellant a day. When you were hit, I was your medic all the way, and when I was blown 50 feet by the mortar, you were there first. When I was shaking with malaria, you wiped my brow. You survived 18 months of one demon hell after another, only to walk into a booby trapped bunker and all of a sudden you had no face or chest. I never cried. My chest becomes unbearably painful and my throat tightens, but I haven't cried. (2).

CREON

As to Polyneices, the traitor, degenerate son of Oedipus, who rallied his band of renegade soldiers against our city, let him rot on the battlefield! Let his stinking flesh, broiled by the sun, be carrion for wild dogs. Let vultures strip bare his bones. I forbid any show of respect to the villain. Whoever violates this decree shall be put to death!

(The name of Polyneices is washed from the pillar that bears his name).

4

(Enters and touches two pillars, located side-by-side). **Dear Dan and Rudy, I have finally begun to write my, and our, story after eighteen years. I haven't gotten to March 1, 1968, yet. I had to come down last night and tell you about it before I wrote about it. I also wanted to spend a little time alone with you on the night before you die again. I wanted to be with you again when the clock struck midnight and your numbers came up. Attached is my diary entry for that terrible day. I'm sorry I couldn't write more then, but I was too full of sadness, rage and bitterness over losing you. And of course you know we had another mission the next day. There wasn't much time for goodbyes . . . Love always. Daniel Grattan Doyle, Jr. (2).**

(4 kneels between the two pillars and touches them as 2 and 3 reenter as peasant Greek women. 2 and 3 kneel center stage and pantomime washing clothes as they speak).

2 Why should Polyneices not be buried?
 3 He was the enemy. The war was his doing.
 2 Enemy . . . is a word broadly used.
 3 He attacked our city, intent on killing our king.
 2 Polyneices was one of us.
 3 The Prince betrayed his homeland. He sought to destroy the city that nurtured him.
 2 The Prince has a family. His wife and children mourn for him. Surely, they hope his body will be entombed.
 3 I have a husband, conscripted in the army. Would his corpse be buried on foreign soil, by the enemy?
 2 The widows of the enemy are no less heartbroken than we.
 3 There are circumstances where compassion reaps catastrophe.
 2 Children of men slain have no care for kingly squabbles; they dream only of their father's touch.
 3 Have you no reverence for your country?
 2 Consider the commandments of the Gods. The dead, whether they be friend or foe, should be buried.
 3 We are beholden to our King, appointed by a higher power, ambassador to the gods. Heed the edict of King Creon!
 2 Silence. Someone approaches.

(8, 6, 5 and 7, as soldiers, enter silently and gather around a rifle implanted in the ground. A helmet rests on the butt of the rifle. Some kneel. Others drop their head. Simultaneously, Antigone and Ismene enter onto the platform and sit on the steps. They survey their childhood home).

3 Antigone and Ismene. Daughters of Oedipus. Princesses of Thebes. Sisters to the dead men.
 2 Consider their pain. Honor their loss. Give them leave to mourn.

8 **To watch you die has been the most painful encounter of my life. (1)**

6 **From the innocence of boyhood, filled with springs and summers, playing marbles and baseball, autumns, playing football, and winters ice skating – we went to the reality of manhood and to the horrors of war. I have lost a very dear friend. (3).**

5 **Learning of your death, I recalled our teenaged days when we were migrant workers in Michigan and Ohio. I remember Nacha, your mother, and how she treasured your presence. (2 - Enrique).**

7 **I'm glad you had the brief time with us that you did, and had the chance to feel the happiness and the occasional sadness of growing up in a small New England town. I think what comforts me the most is the fact that you had**

something a great many of us never get the chance to experience – you found someone who loved you very much. (1 - Lester W. Paquin).

(The group of soldiers, 8, 6, 5 and 7, exit).

ANTIGONE Here is the portal, Ismene, gateway to our father's house, where we played as children. How kind and excellent our father was.

ISMENE-1 We had an envied childhood. Who can refute the truth?

ANTIGONE Here, we learned of father's crimes. Murderer of his Father. Husband to his Mother.

ISMENE-1 There are those who say father was innocent. That he acted within the law.

ANTIGONE Innocent, yes. And guilty, too.

ISMENE-1 Our house was cursed. Who can refute the truth?

ANTIGONE I witnessed father's death. Now, our brothers are gone. It is too much.

ISMENE-1 Do not despair!

ANTIGONE We are alone in the world, without family.

ISMENE-1 We have reason to hope. Peace has been restored. Our country will nurture us and be our family.

ANTIGONE How young you are!

ISMENE-1 Be an example, an inspiration, to those who lost their loved ones in the war.

ANTIGONE An example?

ISMENE-1 Show them it is possible to endure.

ANTIGONE Surely, you jest.

ISMENE-1 What good is it to harbor such anger?

ANTIGONE Our slaughtered brother lies, unattended, on the field of battle. What law decrees one cannot bury the dead?

ISMENE-1 The law of Creon.

ANTIGONE What tradition supports his proclamation? Never has even an enemy been treated in such a base, disdainful way.

ISMENE-1 If an injustice has been committed, God will intervene. God will have his revenge.

ANTIGONE Do not speak of God! Did God renounce the war? No. God was mute. We prayed for a quick and peaceful end. God was deaf. When Creon surveyed the carnage and spat upon the corpse of Polyneices, God turned the other way.

10 (Enters and stands next to the pillar on which the name "Polyneices" had been written and then eradicated). **My Marine: There is no name for me to touch to ease the pain. Oh, it is here, somewhere, among the hundreds who, for all our skill and all our trying, we could not mend. You, you alone, are the one I remember. You are the one for whom I grieve. There you were, eighteen years old, blond crew cut, blue eyes, a tan that said "I am no cherry." You were covered in the accumulated grime of days in the bush, you were in no pain, you were lucid. You could move all extremities and someone had to point out the mosquito bite size entry wound of a piece of shrapnel on the back of your head. I got x-rays and took them in for the neurosurgeon to look at. There was no hope. The shrapnel had entered your head and run around your skull like a ball in a roulette wheel. Damage to the brain would cause**

swelling and death, operating was useless. You would be dead in three hours, in a coma within two. You were to be hooked up to a heart monitor, made comfortable, and I was to stay with you until the monitor straight lined. You were mine. I was twenty-five years old, into my second tour. I was trained in surgery, where people are asleep, have no individual identity are referred to as the part of the body being operated on, “the arm in #3,” “the leg in #5,” “head #6.” But you, you were awake, alive, an individual, and even to me at twenty five, only a boy. It was decided not to tell you that you were dying. Was that the right choice? I think that is what haunts me the most. It was only a scratch. You would be back with your buddies tomorrow, no sweat. I got some marines to put you in pre-op. We got your utilities off and you took a sponge bath, the first in eight days you said. We talked and laughed and smoked. What we spoke of, your name, where you were from, of these things I remember nothing. For me you were, and are, Viet Nam. All the wasted lives, for no purpose. Not one of us would leave undamaged. All would be forever changed by the experience and you, you would be dead. In the third hour you went to sleep, you never woke up. Thirty minutes later your heart stopped. You died in peace, in ignorance that your life was at an end. How I wish I could tell your mother. How I wish I could touch your name and say goodbye. (1 - “Doc” Michael).

ANTIGONE Ismene, help me bury Polyneices.

ISMENE-1 Antigone, consider the penalty. You are courting death.

ANTIGONE You cherish life more than your brother?

ISMENE-1 Put aside this crazed notion. Don’t question the commandments of the King.

ANTIGONE Do nothing? That’s your answer? Let hate prevail?

ISMENE-1 What’s to be done? We are women, powerless in this matter. Obey the law.

10 **My mother used to say that when we die God sends someone to greet us when we get to heaven. I hope God sends you, and I hope you will tell me your name.** (1 - “Doc” Michael).

ISMENE - I Obey the law! (*Ismene exits*).

(Creon enters. He and Antigone regard one another for a moment. There is a questioning, puzzling, unresolved quality about their silent exchange. Antigone exits. 10, 6, 8, 3, 7, 5, 4, 2 enter and stand between the pillars. This group of eight individuals represent citizens of Thebes).

CREON Citizens. God, who witnessed the death of King Eteocles, has chosen me his successor. As the newly anointed sovereign, I’ve made my wishes known. Polyneices, coveting the throne, is now dead. Silenced and cold, no longer does he dream of the crown. The rogue is to remain where he fell, unburied. May the stench of his rebellious deeds spread throughout the world, a testimony against all those who would challenge the state. May his bones, crushed by wolves, be a warning to those who would, in defiance, lead an insurrection against the realm.

7 The guards surround his body. It is impossible for anyone to pay homage to the man.

CREON Thanks be given; the war is won. Although we mourn the dead, we cannot succumb to grief. There is much to be done. We are surrounded by adversaries. We must recruit new soldiers, restock the arsenals, rebuild the army. Step forward all young, proud, dedicated men of Thebes so we reclaim our place in the world.

6 My father was killed in the war.

3 My husband is paralyzed.

2 Our sons are needed at home – to harvest the crops.

6 We need their hand – to build homes and tend the herds.

CREON To secure our borders, to assure our safety, it is necessary to impose new taxes.

3 We are destitute.

5 We have no more to give.

6 Release us from the mandates of the state.

CREON Do not complain to me of hardship. Wearing the crown is not an easy matter. As to the comrades who fell on the field of battle. Their valiant acts will not be forgotten. We've commissioned medallions for the families of the deceased.

2 We do not want emblems of our sons and their deeds. We desire their presence, here, by our side.

6 How are we to meet the demands of the state? Those with power and wealth employ us, but they pay nothing!

CREON Who speaks? Step forward. Make yourself known.

6 (Steps forward). We are indentured to the rich and they refuse to give us fair compensation for our labor.

CREON You have the sound of a malcontent!

6 Five days, I've gone without food. To fill my belly, I need more than pride or patriotism or medals made of bronze!

CREON Cuff him! Educate this fool! (7 steps forward and handcuffs 6).

5 (Steps forward). That's your solution? Silence those who would enlighten you?

CREON I am your ruler, who holds the throne with God's blessing. I am not accountable to men. I answer only to a higher power. I look to the heavens for guidance: to those who treat me with goodness, I shall be good; those who oppose me shall be crushed!

(7 pushes 6 off stage and they exit. 3 and 5 exit).

(10 joins 4 on stage right as 2 joins 8 on stage left. 4 rotates five pillars 180 degrees as 10 observes. Simultaneously, 8 rotates five pillars 180 degrees as 2 observes. 4 and 8 exit. 2 and 10 take new positions and kneel).

10 **Dear Sir, I never knew you, or you, me. I am returning the bracelet I wore with your name on it.** (1 - John H. Truesdale).

2 **Seventeen years . . . you're still twenty one – forever young, but gone.**

Murdered. And nothing will make your loss to us less of a tragedy. (2 - Carole Ann Page).

10 Last March I received the news that you had returned home after being shot down. Welcome home, sir. (1 - John H. Truesdale).

2 The first gray hairs sneak onto my head as I face thirty-seven. I look into the eyes of my teenage son and I wonder – have we done enough to changes things . . . have we done enough . . . (2 - Carole Ann Page)

10 For you, Sir, the war is over. For many of us it will never be, over. Many questions of what if go through our minds. The one question I have now is: how long were you a POW before you died? Nobody will ever know. Will they? (1 - John H. Truesdale).

2 Whaddaya say, kid – I brought you flowers. I always brought you flowers, didn't I? Picked from the neighbor's yards on the way to the school bus . . . It's how we fell in love. And then I gave you daisies in the midst of all those white slabs of death. Your slab said they gave you a purple heart – for dying. Well, this here letter is a purple heart for living. (2 - Carole Ann Page).

10 You will never know the cold and heartless world we came home to. Will never receive the thrill of being refused jobs because of your service background. Or being rejected by the VFW and/or the American Legion because “we don't want any drug crazed ‘Nam Vets in our Post”. (1 - John H. Truesdale).

2 Well, this here letter is a purple heart for living. I thought it might mean more to you. The paper is a gift from my daughter – she loves purple. She's 10 and $\frac{3}{4}$ years old and beautiful, and someday she'll have a first love too. I hope he has your kindness and humor. (2 - Carole Ann Page).

10 You will never experience the failures many of us have had. Myself? I lost my business in '82, my house in '83, my marriage and my sanity in '84. BUT, I still survive and WILL survive. Why? I don't know. (1 - John H. Truesdale).

2 It was important for me to come today . . . to touch your name on the wall that makes it all real . . . I'm still trying to say goodbye. (2 - Carole Ann Page).

10 In seven months, I will be forty. Wow. Most times I don't feel that old. Sometimes, I must admit, I feel a hundred and forty. I think most of us aged a hundred years overseas. (1 - John H. Truesdale).

2 I'm still trying to say goodbye. I never managed that very well with us, did I? But you made all of that OK and that made a big difference in my life. The only way I've ever known to pay you back for that gift is to live my life as if it

mattered and to work every day in every way for what is right. (2).

10 **The world is looking better every day. And if life begins at forty, I can't wait, because the first thirty-nine have been pure shit! (1 - John H. Truesdale).**

2 **Oh, it was wonderful to be in love the Spring of '65. That part of you will always be alive – love doesn't divide, it multiplies. And the me I bring to the wonderful life and love I share with (my husband) and our precious, precious children is a me that is a part of you. (2 - Carole Ann Page).**

10 **And get this, Sir. I'm going to get married again. And this one WILL work. (1 - John H. Truesdale).**

2 **I'll always bring you flowers. You gave me love. Goodbye, Hello, Carole Ann. (2 - Carole Ann Page).**

10 **I will be back, Sir. Because a part of me, my life, is engraved on these black stone walls. They were my friends, my buddies. (1 - John H. Truesdale).**

2 **Love doesn't divide, it multiplies. (2 - Carole Ann Page).**

10 **I'm going for the brass ring, ain't nobody gonna stop me. I'm gonna make it, for you guys who didn't get the chance. I'm tired of being kicked in the ass by the world. I'M kicking back. Sir, here is your bracelet. Welcome home. (1 - John H. Truesdale).**

9 **(Song: *The Wall* by Jaide Whitman).**

Mid September and the wind sweeps the leaves,
Dancing over footprints, yet so still in the trees.
The Wind, a watchman for the night,
Guarding the stone under a starry sky.
The dawn will break and the sun will shine,
Revealing the names of the soldiers who've died.
Notes and letters placed down with care,
Together, they whisper of lives that they shared.

You're still alive, you're still alive to me,
You're still alive, you're still alive to me,
They'll whisper, they'll whisper.

You'll see your face in the black granite wall,
You'll fall to your knees remembering them all.

8 King Creon. (CREON enters). I am a sentinel, charged to guard Polyneices.
 CREON Who gave you license to leave your post?
 8 The Captain . . . appointed by you. I am the messenger. Nothing more.
 CREON What is your message!
 8 Polyneices has been buried.
 CREON Buried?
 8 Covered by a handful of dust.
 CREON Who did this? Who defied my order?
 8 No one knows. I am blameless! It happened in the dead of night.
 CREON The guards neglected their vigil?

(During the following speech, ANTIGONE will walk slowly across the stage, gently swinging a hanging incense burner that emits smoke).

8 All night we sat near the body, by a small fire. As dawn approached, a great weight descended upon us. We struggled to remain alert, but it was impossible. It seems we had been charmed by a strange, mysterious spell.
 CREON I'm to believe some god, some magical being, entranced you . . . so the body of Polyneices might be buried?
 8 It was as I say. The events defy explanation. When we regained consciousness, the body had been buried.
 CREON A curse on your fantasy!
 8 None of the guards had courage enough to apprise you. So, we drew lots. The task fell to me.
 CREON Your true intentions do not escape me. You concoct a tale to avoid prosecution!
 8 I am innocent, Lord, of any wrongdoing.
 CREON Incompetent fools. Find the cur who did this!
 8 How am I to snare the culprit? It was a god. Or some phantom from another world.
 CREON Do not insult me with unsubstantial whims. Go! With your repugnant tongue, lick the dust from the flesh of Polyneices.
 6 Creon, be reasonable.
 CREON You profess to be an ally . . . to this lunatic?
 6 I have known this man many years. He is not one to fabricate the truth.
 CREON You vouch for a fool? Spare me your arguments. I will not entertain falsehood. And you! You are fool to defend him!
 6 What is false? What is true?
 CREON If you wish – to know the truth – consult the law. Its tenets are infallible.
 6 The law of God? Or the law prescribed by you?
 CREON They are one and the same! And our laws . . . will not be defied!

7 **I was now in Vietnam about six months. My time came for a two-week R & R to Thailand. A Sgt. told me one of my grandparents had died and my other grandparent was about to die. I cancelled my R & R so I could call home. I couldn't get a call through. They sent me back to my company. In a day or two I was on my way to R & R again. While standing there, a lieutenant**

walked by “You, soldier, they need a man at C Company. Get your gear and report to the LZ for a chopper back to the mountains.” I tried to tell him what was happening. He said, “I don’t want to hear your shit, soldier.” I said “Go Fuck Yourself,” and then went and got my gear. The Captain said, “I am writing you up for disrespect to an officer and for disobeying an order.”
(2 - Michael Massaro).

8 My Lord, we found the transgressor!
CREON To what do we credit such a swift apprehension? Did the law show its teeth?
8 While brushing the earth from the corpse, a cloud of ash engulfed us. We struggled to breathe; our throats burning with soot. When the wind settled and the dust cleared we saw, standing on the horizon, a solitary figure.
CREON So much for your theory of a wayward god or some secret phantom.
ANTIGONE I am here.
CREON Antigone!
ANTIGONE Your search is over. I am your captive. Carry out your sentence.
CREON No ward of Thebes is put to death without just cause. State your case before the people, that there be no misunderstanding.
ANTIGONE Address the people? What good is that – to plead my case? The reach of your power is known to the crowd. I am small. Will not the crowd acquiesce to you?
CREON Do you acknowledge your crime?
ANTIGONE Crime?
CREON Will you admit your part in paying tribute to the corpse?
ANTIGONE If I did, what then?
CREON The law is clear. It demands your death.
ANTIGONE I’ve heard your law. But what spirit lives within its walls? I was taught a law, proclaimed by those far greater than you – a law as old as time, without prejudice, pure, invincible as light itself – it is called love.
CREON I recognize the sentiment. You quote your father, Oedipus.
ANTIGONE Yes. My father was blind and for the last years of his life he wandered this earth, bereft of his kingly garb. But he saw through the darkness, saw the goodness of man and recognized what is true and noble. Now, my father lives in Hades, waiting to greet Polyneices, his eldest son, who will never wear the crown. The crown belongs to Creon.
CREON Your father’s wish to see his son is futile. It will not happen. Not under my reign.
ANTIGONE In this pledge, I see your true and cruel nature, Creon!
CREON You will not escape your fate by rebuking me.
ANTIGONE Crucify me! Hang me from the ramparts of your palace. Have me stoned to death. Throw my body into a pauper’s grave and I will rise up and dine, nightly, at your table.
CREON Arrogant threats!
ANTIGONE You ignored the obligations ascribed to all mankind when you defiled the dead.
CREON Is there no end to your conceit?
ANTIGONE Call it what you will. I live as my father taught me.
CREON You fear nothing?
ANTIGONE What, Creon, do you presume I should fear?

CREON Power.

ANTIGONE Your power, King Creon? What of God's power, who still rules the world from on high?

CREON You suggest my power does not concur with the sentiments of the gods?

ANTIGONE I do!

CREON Heretic! God abides with us.

ANTIGONE God abides with the enemy, too!

CREON You pronounce your own death.

ANTIGONE And, yet, my voice will live.

CREON Do not cast me as your executioner. Eteocles died with honor. Polyneices with shame. You refuse to distinguish between the two and thus indict yourself.

ANTIGONE Both aspired to be king. Both are gone.

CREON They fell, one a friend to the state. The other a foe.

ANTIGONE Reverence the dead. You, too, will die some day.

CREON Polyneices was our enemy.

ANTIGONE Men, everywhere, are brothers.

CREON His assault on our city was treason. He must be punished.

ANTIGONE Forgive those who transgress.

CREON Forgiveness! A fine word! But, for those in power, to set a law and then allow a rogue to circumvent it leads to anarchy. I've made my decision. (Grabs ANTIGONE by the wrists and forces her to kneel). Polyneices remains, exposed, on the field, where he died.

ANTIGONE (On her knees, looking directly into the face of CREON). You may end my life, but I'll return. Until all nations live in peace, I will walk the fields of battle, searching for fallen soldiers and anoint their bodies with the good and giving earth.

6 **This wedding ring belonged to a young Viet Cong fighter. He was killed by a Marine Unit in the Phu Loc province of South Vietnam in May of 1968. I wish I knew more about this young man. I have carried this ring for 18 years and it's time for me to lay it down. This boy is not my enemy any longer. (2).**

ISMENE-1 Antigone is innocent! I buried Polyneices.

CREON Sisters in crime!

ANTIGONE She lies. I had no partner.

ISMENE-1 Antigone only speaks to shield me. I assisted her.

ANTIGONE I acted alone. I will bear the punishment alone.

ISMENE-1 I should throw stones at you? Is that what you wish? No! I conspired with her.

ANTIGONE You did no such thing! Though I sought my sister's help, she refused me.

ISMENE-1 Antigone, we must stand together, as women.

ANTIGONE Your fate was sealed when you said "no."

ISMENE-1 Take my hand. Please! I wish to share your guilt.

ANTIGONE Go. Live.

ISMENE-1 You refuse my hand?

ANTIGONE I am not afraid to face my death. It is a fate I embrace proudly. You must bear your fate, untouched by mine. And if guilt finds its way into your heart, may it impel you to tell the story of our fallen brothers.

ISMENE-1 King Creon, Antigone is mad. (Kneels before CREON). Forgive her. Free her.
 CREON Madness, yes. Freedom, no.
 ISMENE-1 She is betrothed to your son, Haemon. You would slaughter her and deny your son his bride?
 CREON May he take a whore for a wife rather than marry this bitch.
 ISMENE-1 Bastard!

7 **I tried to tell him what was happening. He said, “I don’t want to hear your shit, soldier.” I said “Go Fuck Yourself,” and then went and got my gear. The Captain said, “I am writing you up for disrespect to an officer and for disobeying an order.” I said, “I was disrespectful, but I was on my way back to the LZ for a chopper.” (2 - Michael Massaro).**

CREON Hear her sentence. In the caves where dissidents and the insane are held, place this girl in a solitary chamber. Let her feast on her pride, let her drink from the cup of misguided righteousness until she starves to death. (Creon exits. Ismene crosses to Antigone to comfort her).

7 **. . . after my court martial, I was brought to the stockade in Saigon, Long Binh jail. For two months I sat in the stockade in Vietnam, in an iron connex box, 6 by 6, the boxes sat in the sun. We didn’t get out of the boxes for anything, not showers, not even to go to the bathroom. I was gassed, beaten, pissed on, kicked, not fed for a few days, no water some days. I was in the connex box about two or three weeks, cuffed to the bottom of the box. I think they wanted us to die. (2 - Michael Massaro).**

HAEMON-4 Antigone!
 ANTIGONE Haemon!
 HAEMON-4 Tell me the reports I hear are false. (Ismene withdraws, then exits).
 ANTIGONE I’ve been sentenced to death. By your father.
 HAEMON-4 It’s true?! You buried Polyneices?
 ANTIGONE I chose to follow our customs. Not your father’s order.
 HAEMON-4 You held a dead man in higher esteem than our love!
 ANTIGONE It’s unfair to think my love for my brother and my love of you are incompatible.
 HAEMON-4 I think I hate you.
 ANTIGONE Because I refuse to ignore my obligations?
 HAEMON-4 We’ve shared many tender, secret moments. Now, it seems, I hardly know you.
 ANTIGONE Don’t be bitter. Don’t be blinded by my deeds. My affections have not changed.
 HAEMON-4 There are other reports
 ANTIGONE Be careful what you say. Someone might hear and betray you!
 HAEMON-4 Reports that the people take your side, not my father’s.
 ANTIGONE That is my hope.
 HAEMON-4 I don’t mean to hate you.
 ANTIGONE I know. Your heart remains uncorrupted. Someday, you will recognize my intent and understand why I did what I did. I love you. Don’t fault me that I must leave you.

HAEMON-4 I will do or say whatever I must to save your life, Antigone.

1 Dear Allen, It is that time of year again for me to get to say my special hello to you. I feel so close to you when I am here at “the wall.” When I see, feel, and touch your name on this black granite wall, Panel 23 West, Line 57, I feel such pride for having known you during our six years of high school and the three years after, we had nine years of a very special friendship which will never be forgotten and which will be cherished forever. I want to believe that your death was not in vain, but I miss you so, it still hurts having you gone. When I leave “the wall” I leave with an emptiness and a heartache, but I also leave with a great deal of pride. You served your country well and you paid the ultimate price by giving your precious life. When I was told of your death on June 3, 1969, a little of me died with you. Matter-of-fact, I wished that I could have gone down with you when your helicopter was shot down near Saigon on that bleak June day. Many times I ask myself why you died and left me behind? But I will never forget all the good memories I have, like the Homecoming Dance of ’65 when you fell on your behind trying to impress me with what a good dancer you were. I still laugh at that memory, but a smile always crosses my face when I think of you. Remember they called you, me and Jerry Lynn Noe the Three Musketeers of Rule High School because when you saw one, you saw all three? Well, Jerry’s name is down on Panel 22 East, Line 46, you two always did stick together, but you guys left me out this time. I don’t have to tell you about Jerry being killed in June of 1967 because you guys are walking the streets of Heaven together right now. I named one of my daughters’ middle name after Jerry’s middle name, Lynn. Now don’t get all flustered, I would have named her after you, but she didn’t look like Allen Harvey. Allen, we had something special and my feelings for you have never faded and I will keep those feelings till the end of time and then through eternity. The time has come once again for me to leave, but I look ahead to next year when I will be able to come back to our special place at “the wall.” I know you are not lonely because you have Jerry there and the 58,132 brothers and sisters (2)

(The words in the ten pillars light up).

1 (Continues) . . . the 58,132 brothers and sisters whose names are on the wall with you. Remember till next year, I love and I miss you. Love you, Pattye Sampson Taylor, Knoxville, Tennessee. (2)

3 Dear Gary, Doug and Billy, Well, that time has rolled around and the Class of ’65 is having its 20th year reunion. Cheers, cheers for Old Orchard Park High School. Don’t be afraid that you will not be remembered. We all talked about you in 1975 and our thoughts are with you. I think of you all – often. Doug – they moved your house off the boulevard onto a new street. Your death was a real shock, especially since you were so adamant about hating guns. Billy – I’m sorry that we never lived out our fantasy of running into

each other in a supermarket with batches of children. And, yes, Gary, I still talk too much. I had to come. I live in Los Angeles now and I could not have gone to that reunion without first coming here. After you all died, I guess two boyfriends and several friends gone was a bit too much for me and I pretty much screwed up for ten years. Two boyfriends is just too much, too much. Now I'm much better. More responsible. I learned that the pain and loss never goes away. It just changes. Sometimes I think it is more painful now. And I'm still mad. All three of you hold a special place in my heart. I'm just sorry you had such little time to spend here. Years later I can never hear the sound of a helicopter without remembering what I have lost. In leaving today tears stain the window of the airplane on the runway. It has not rained in L. A. for months. It rains today. I have had twenty years now to reflect on this madness and it always the same. Linda Phillips Palo. Thinking of you, Linda.
(2)

ISMENE-1	(Whispers). Antigone! (Louder). Antigone. Wake up.
ANTIGONE	Ismene?
ISMENE-1	Come. The guards are asleep. Make your escape.
ANTIGONE	My freedom would be short-lived, Ismene. In the light of day I will be captured.
ISMENE-1	Make the attempt! There are those who will hide you.
ANTIGONE	If my life is to matter, I must live in openness and honesty.
ISMENE-1	Your death will change nothing! The world has no care for the cause of our sex. It does not wish to entertain the ideals of a crusading woman.
ANTIGONE	I think you are wrong.
ISMENE-1	What will you do?
ANTIGONE	Endure, I hope, until the end.
ISMENE-1	And when you're gone, what am I to do?
ANTIGONE	Break the bonds. Be champion for our sex.
ISMENE-1	To succeed, I would have to undo a yoke worn even by gods.
ANTIGONE	Yes.
ISMENE-1	You ask too much!
ANTIGONE	Sister! Are we not the daughters of Oedipus!?

8 **I did two tours of duty in Vietnam. One on a Destroyer Escort off the coast of Vietnam, and one on a Swift Boat making raids in the rivers and canals of the Ca Mau peninsula. My unit took a casualty rate of 82%. I did my share of killing and I saw my share of dying but the toughest job in Vietnam was being a nurse. I saw many of my brothers that were hit with a bullet or shrapnel or worse. Fortunately for me I only had to bear their misery for a short time until I could get them to a medivac chopper. You, on the other hand, had to live with that every minute you were there. I carry some awful memories of the horror and reality of war but I am sure I would not trade mine for yours. My job was to kill and I became very good at it. I am not proud of that, but I can't change it now. Your job was to heal and there is no doubt in my mind now which is a more honorable profession. I have traveled this country extensively. I have been in big cities and small ones. I have been to our**

nation's capital. I see statues and monuments of our military leaders. I have seen a monument that reaches hundreds of feet into the sky to honor a General. I have seen a monument of our soldiers raising a flag in some far away land. I can go to museums and see bullets and rockets and handgrenades. I can see all these heroes of our country whose job it was to kill other human beings. I can see all these wonderful machines we have invented for the sole purpose of destroying life. But if my son were to ask me, Dad, where can we go to see a monument to the women of this country who saved lives, I would sadly have to say, I am sorry son, I don't know. (1 - Joe Muharsky).

10

(Song: *After the Fight* written by Jack Adams)

It all comes back to me in the night,
The real war began after the fight.
Coming home didn't feel like my big parade,
Sometimes I wish I'd have stayed where my brothers were laid.

I've been waking up at night hearing you crying,
I've been seeing your heart turn to ash and feeling you dying.
In the morning I'm hoping that people aren't able to see
The things I can't seem to erase from my memory.

I wish I could refill the carvings made in the wall
Or pick up the pieces and try to make sense of it all.
And though it's been years and I know that my friends have all died,
I touch your names and feel a heartbeat on the other side

HAEMON-4 (Calls out in the darkness, from behind a pillar). Father. Father?

CREON (Enters, cautious). You summoned me?

HAEMON-4 Father.

CREON I surmise you heard the verdict – that I condemned your bride.

HAEMON-4 In the streets, there is talk of nothing else.

CREON Do you come in anger? Or am I still in your good grace?

HAEMON-4 I remain a dutiful son, ever mindful of your good, abiding judgment. No affairs of the heart will strain the fidelity I owe my father.

CREON This is the wish of every man: To have a son, obedient in his conduct toward his father. The man who breeds an ungrateful son has lost an ally to his friends and must bear the insults of his enemies.

HAEMON-4 I understand.

CREON The same is true of everyone within a house. A man should be afforded full allegiance. But she, who would be your wife, has unveiled her disobedience. I hope you see the worthiness of my acts – which proved what a false companion is your betrothed. Be glad that you are free of her! Be glad to know her disposition now, rather than in time, when you might have been father to her children.

HAEMON-4 Yes, father.

CREON Oh, she will cry, "Foul," and invoke the conduct of the gods! But I say, "Anyone who flaunts the law is a danger to the good." Breech the law in minor ways and soon the laws of an entire country are compromised. A rebel must be stopped, lest his exploits feed a vast, unspoken discontent or raise alarm where calm should rule.

HAEMON-4 A rebel, you say?

CREON Then there is the question of her sex. Perhaps, by rare mishap, a woman may offer up a winning course. Should a man submit to her path? "No," I say. Accept defeat only from a man. To fall at the caprice of a woman is a humiliation, to share her bed a mockery of your sex.

HAEMON-4 Father, God, in his wisdom, imbued man with a mind to reason. In this, we consult the good and the bad to inform each decision. I do not imply your ends are wrong! Still, there may be validity in thoughts that contradict yours.

CREON Validity?

HAEMON-4 In my desire to protect your interests – to be vigilant on your behalf – I endeavor to listen to what men say of their king.

CREON What do the people say?

HAEMON-4 You are feared, Father, greatly. And so your subjects are reluctant to speak their thoughts. But when their silence is broken, they say Antigone has been treated unjustly. Some even praise her, quietly, for her kind treatment of her brother. These are the rumors, Father, circulating among the people.

CREON Let the people speak their minds. Their babble will not sway me.

HAEMON-4 Father, I wish for your success and the good name of a life well-lived. But success does not occur alone – prompted by the thoughts of a single man. It takes into consideration the thoughts of others.

CREON Thoughts shared on the street or bantered in the marketplace do not interest me.

HAEMON-4 I urge you to be flexible in your view. Give way. Yield to the tide of others. And though I am young, it would serve you well to consider my thoughts.

CREON Now I'm to be instructed by the young?

HAEMON-4 Ignore my youth. Listen to my words. Are they reasoned? Do I argue for injustice?

CREON You argue for a rebel!

HAEMON-4 A rebel, perhaps. But can you say this rebel is wicked, without goodness?

CREON This rebel should not be punished?

HAEMON-4 The people of Thebes say, "No."

CREON So I'm to rule according to the sentiments of the people?

HAEMON-4 Why so impetuous? Can we not have a reasoned dialogue?

CREON The King should cast aside all judgment and follow the advice of his subjects?

HAEMON-4 No city is comprised of a single man.

CREON History does not distinguish between the city and its king. As to the common man, he rarely makes a mark in the chronicles of time. His whims are naught to me!

HAEMON-4 You sound like a king ... designed to govern a peopleless country!

CREON Everything you say ... indicates ... you stand with her.

HAEMON-4 I cannot condone your decision, Father.

CREON I acted according to the interests of the state.

HAEMON-4 You acted against the rule of God.

CREON Defend a woman! Shameful! Any hope of acquittal is futile. Grovel if you wish.
 There will be no marriage.
 HAEMON-4 If she dies, it will not be alone!
 CREON You threaten me with further bloodshed? (6 enters).
 HAEMON-4 My words are a promise, not a threat.
 CREON I have my promises, too.
 HAEMON-4 You talk and talk, but fail to listen.
 CREON Enough of your insults! You are not my son! Bequeath my crown to a brat! I
 should have the throat of the girl-slut slashed before your eyes, and put an end to
 your insolence!

(6 sits. HAEMON sits next to 6. Each is unaware of the presence of the other).

6 **As a young kid, I was raised around the lakes of Indiana. I used to live for
 nothing more than spending time boating and swimming, or being around the
 cool shore line of a lake. In Vietnam** (Reaches over and places his hand on the
 leg of HAEMON, lending his support and understanding. It is a connection of
 spirit; there is no physical recognition of one another). **at age 20, I was put in
 charge of a river boat. Now every time I get on a boat I only see the red blood
 running over the deck and into the water. I try to take my two sons fishing
 but we never stay out long. The fish don't seem to bite when I take them out,
 like they do when they go with someone else's father. They are too young to
 understand their father does not like the reflections he sees in the water.** (2 –
 Glen).

7 There is unease throughout the city. A storm is brewing.
 CREON Any signs of an uprising must be quelled.
 7 Your son is among the agitators.
 CREON Arrest him.
 7 He is surrounded by a shield of men. They prevent his capture.
 CREON Does he incite the people?
 7 He considers you a murderer and talks openly of rebellion.
 CREON Haven't we had enough bloodshed?
 7 An effigy of you has been burned.
 CREON Send in a squadron of guards. Disperse the crowd.
 7 Many soldiers share the sentiments of the mob. To activate the guards could cost
 you your life.
 CREON Fear prevents you from your duty? Burn the homes of the insurgents!
 7 Set fire to the city?
 CREON If that is the price we must pay to maintain our hold, yes! (During the following
 speech by 6, Creon slowly paces in the shadows, upstage of 6).

6 **We shared a whole lot in the time that we knew each other: pain, hunger,
 sickness, triumph, laughter, and more than a little excitement. We even
 shared a lover, Death. Both of us wooed the bitch, but you won her.**
(Suddenly, much much louder. With great force). **You've got to know we**

couldn't help you; not without risking us all. God help me. I can still smell your blood. I've been looking for forgiveness for twenty years, now. I've always said when you died, it was like killing the other half of myself. Maybe that's not necessarily true. What I did lose was youth . . . all the idealism, trust, self-confidence, and personal power we had. I'm scared, now, most of the time, and I hurt a lot. I've never been able to get close to anyone since you died. I live in the past, 'cause today hurts too much. I want out of the past. (3 - Tony C.).

TEIRESIAS-5 King, I come, compelled by a voice that won't be still.
CREON You could pass for a ghost, old one.
TEIRESIAS-5 Mock my age. Now ... admit your youthful folly.
CREON I am not in the mood for a lecture, Teiresias.
TEIRESIAS-5 I gave counsel to your father's father.
CREON Your ode to times past. I'm accustomed to its tune.
TEIRESIAS-5 Hear me! In my lifetime, I have seen men behave in valiant and in shameful ways.
CREON As have I!
TEIRESIAS-5 Admit your indiscretions. Reverence the gods.
CREON You are accusing the wrong person of indiscretion.
TEIRESIAS-5 Creon, do not presume to re-forge eternal laws. As for vengeance, it is best left to the gods.
CREON What you call vengeance I call lawful retribution.
TEIRESIAS-5 It seems you are bent on following your own narrow course. But I implore you: turn back. Don't condemn yourself to a grave injustice.
CREON Why do you refuse to die? Do you live . . . simply to hurl insults at kings?
TEIRESIAS-5 Do not add another corpse to the mound of slaughtered souls. Be merciful!
CREON What arrogance! (He grabs the cane from TEIRESIAS). To issue ultimatums, to act as rudder of my fate. I, and only I, am master of my soul! (Tosses the cane aside).
TEIRESIAS-5 I fear you are in mortal danger. An arrow launched by you has set its mark and will return to strike the archer. Its wound will prove the hunter is nothing but a man.

(TEIRESIAS and CREON remain onstage, frozen, for the following speech).

3 **Twenty-one years ago, July, 1965, a caring, gentle 26 year old pilot left for Southeast Asia – certain that by his service, he was helping one of America's allies fight for their freedom and right to self-determination. Nineteen and a half years later, a handful of bones, a small section of jawbone and two teeth were returned and positively identified as the only mortal remains of this once tall and proud American. Dana Chwas (2).**

(CREON returns the cane to TEIRESIAS. CREON exits. TEIRESIAS exits).

ANTIGONE For a brief term I have lived on this earth. What seemed an endless path in my youth has quickly come to its end. I go to my death. I go alone to pass,

unattended, between here and there. I go, not alone, but with the company of those who wished me well through life's journey. (7, 4, 5, 10, 3, 2, 9, 8, 1, 6 appear from behind the pillars to lend support to ANTIGONE). I am attended by their words of goodness, their blessings, their deliberate acts of mercy. I go to my death, unmarried. I go childless, no mirror of myself, no child to carry on the good or shameful parts of me. My legacy now ends. No more seasons. No patterns. No songs. I am not ready to say farewell.

(During the following speech by 3, a white cloth, in the proportions of a flag, is folded, military style, by two ensemble members, into a triangle).

3 **Joseph E. Sintoni.** My dearest friend of all my high school years – my college years. We grew up together – half-up anyway. I'd hoped we could grow old together. How little I knew how dependent I was on you. We could never talk about losing you – the "conflict" was unpopular. But, oh, how we felt it. Now, these past three years the Nation is coming to its senses and recognizing what you and your friends of great courage sacrificed. I knew you to be a man of sensitivity, of honor and full of a sense of responsibility. You went, you didn't have to go – a volunteer – a patriot who believed in your country and accepted the good and the difficult with that belief. I miss you now as much as I missed you then. Your death changed my life in a way I didn't even know until recently. I will always hold you in a special place in my heart. And you *will* grow old with me. For you were and always will be a part of my life and our memories do not dim with the passing of time. I have told some friends that this trip to Washington was a pilgrimage. (The flag is delivered to 3). I am coming here to honor you and the many who gave themselves for their family, friends and country. (3 takes the flag and holds it close to her heart). We have loved you always and we respect the choices you made. Perhaps someday we'll meet again. Fondest affections, Angela (2). (3 places the flag in the alcove of a pillar).

2 A lot of things changed in 19 years – your age when you died. Evan, Diana and I have all married and have kids. I married Gary, the only in-law you met, and he is now a Colonel in the Air Force so my kids move around like we did. Mom and Dad got divorced in 1979 and Mom remarried and both seem pretty happy. Do you remember that water buffalo Dad gave you when he came back from Clark AB in 1966 and I've had it ever since. (4 approaches 2, who gives the water buffalo to 4). I figure it's time to give it back to you now. I want it to be remembered that you were a real person who lived and was loved very much. Someday I'll see you again. Until then. Lots of love, your sister, Sally. (2 - Sally Van Valin)

(During the following speech 10 holds up a large empty gold picture frame).

6 **Dear David,** Talked to Kate the other day on the telephone. She said she's doing better, trying to adjust to being alone. Mom's been meaning to see you,

but the work's just never done, and Dad just seems to sit around and stare. I guess I miss you most of all. You were more than a brother, you were my friend. I thought we'd be together, but so suddenly it had to end, I never thought I'd never see you again. (2).

(10 steps forward with the empty picture frame and lowers it. 7 steps in with a golden branch. 7 inserts the "truck" into the outside upper edge of the picture frame. 10 raises the frame high overhead).

7 Goodbye, John. If there is a caring, Christian God, I hope that he has forgiven both of us and taken you with all of our brother warriors to a peaceful final reward. (3 - Tony C.).

(10 walks upstage. 9 joins 10. They stand side by side, 10 with his back to the audience, 9 facing the audience).

3 My dearest Ben, I'm bringing "Teddy Bear" and a picture of your loved race car. I realize they can't stay there long, but they are yours and I want them to be with you. (9 steps forward to accept the teddy bear and photo from 3). In time, I hope we can all be together. Love to you my dear, dear Ben. Mama. (2).

(9 rejoins 10. Together, they both exit).

(8 positions himself upstage of 1).

1 Dear Ed: It's taken me twenty-two years to get the courage, but I finally made it. There hasn't been one day in those twenty two years that I haven't thought about you – talked to you, loved and missed you! I've seen pictures of the wall and all the things people were leaving, letters-medals – pictures Just about anything you could think of. I wanted to bring something so I brought "Worry."

1 and 8 (In unison, continuing the letter). I remember how you laughed when you saw me making that rag-tag doll out of an old sock.

8 (Continues reciting the letter). I remember how you helped me finish it and how it became our mascot. I always put it in on my pillow after I made-up my bunk each morning. I even remember the night I threw it at you as you were leaving one night after we had had a spat and how you laughed. "Worry" was baptized with a thousand gallons of tears the day you went down. Somehow I feel "Worry" will be closer to you here than packed away in my trunk of memories. So here it is, tear soaked, red Viet Nam dirt and all. I'm keeping your coffee mug and flight suit. It still smells like you. I have never washed them. Everything turned to shit after you went down. (Pause). I can just see you up in "Jock" heaven, playing a mean game of poker and knocking back a

few “Pearl” beers. At least you’re not MIA or a POW. The country hasn’t done well with that issue but we sisters and brothers will never, never give up - never! God, I miss ya. It’s been almost twenty-two years. I will think of you everyday of my life. Funny, I can still smell Viet Nam, hear that great music, feel that heat.

1 and 8 **I can still see your eyes and hear your laugh.**

1 **Rest gently darling man. Sweet dreams my gallant hero. Tell we meet again, and we will. Kim (3)**

(Without visual contact, 1 offers up the sock doll and 8 accepts it).

CREON (Enters). Teiresias, your words have troubled me.

TEIRESIAS-5 Perhaps there is time . . . to change the path you have chosen.

CREON What must I do to save myself?

TEIRESIAS-5 Release the girl. Take back your condemnation of the dead.

CREON I will rescue the child myself.

ISMENE-1 There is no hope in retracting your words. The past cannot be reforged. In the dark shadow of the vault, Antigone hung herself with a noose made from her bridal veil.

CREON (Kneels before ISMENE). Summon my son. Whatever he demands of me, I will \ do. If justice means I give up the throne, I will do it gladly.

ISMENE-1 Too late. Your offer is but a hollow gesture. Haemon, too, is dead.

CREON That cannot be!

ISMENE-1 Defying your orders, Haemon demanded entry into the prison of his bride. In the light cast by his torch, when he saw his beloved, he cried out, an anguished curse against the law that decreed her death. Before the corpse he withdrew his sword and turned it on himself. Looking into the face of his betrothed, he leaned upon the weapon. But the bloodshed did not end there. Eurydice, your wife, the Queen, hearing that the Prince had thus died, also took her life. Pray the bloodshed has come to an end.

9 and 10 (Song: Sea of Heartbreak, performed by the company to sign language. Written by Hal David and Paul Hampton. Published by Casa David and Shapiro Bernstein & Co. Inc. Manhattan Records).

The lights in the harbor

Don’t shine for me.

I’m like a lost ship,

Adrift on the sea: Sea of Heartbreak

Lost love, loneliness, memories of your caress, so divine I wish you were mine again, my dear,

On the sea of tears: Sea of Heartbreak.

(Instrumental section. Ensemble members place letters and mementos in the pillar

alcoves to create shrines).

(Singing and signing continues).

How did I lose you?

Oh, where did I fail?

Why did you leave me,

Always to sail: Sea of Heartbreak?

Lost love, loneliness, memories of your caress, so divine I wish you were mine again, my dear,

On the sea of tears: Sea of Heartbreak.

(Instrumental section. ANTIGONE enters with a tray of burning votive candles. She walks across stage, between the ensemble members and the pillars. Each actor takes a candle. After ANTIGONE exits, the actors place the candles in the pillar alcoves. The actors then assume new positions throughout the stage, standing, sitting, kneeling).

(Singing and signing continues).

Oh, what I'd give

To sail back to shore,

Back to your arms once more.

Come to my rescue,

Oh, come here to me.

Take me and keep me

Away from the sea: Sea of Heartbreak.

Lost love, loneliness, memories of your caress, so divine I wish you were mine again, my dear,

On the sea of tears: Sea of Heartbreak.

CREON My life is wasted. A ruler is charged to entertain both good and evil . . . to perceive their qualities . . . and embrace the good. I acted neither wisely nor with compassion, but with an aim to ensure my reign.

6 **I dug the bullet that killed Henry out of the bunker wall and have kept it for twenty years. (3).**

CREON The city burns.

3 **We have loved you always and respect the choices you made. (2)**

CREON Teiresias, I'm told, has been consumed by the flames.

6 **I hope you don't mind, but recently I made contact with your parents. They're good people, too. I hope to meet them some day. I love you, brother. (2).**

CREON As the prophet foretold, I launched an arrow whose target was myself.

5 **For twenty-two years I have carried your picture in my wallet. (3).**

7 **Thank you, dear one – you are deeply loved and greatly missed. (1).**

10 **In the third hour you went to sleep. Thirty minutes later your heart stopped. (1 - "Doc" Michael).**

6 **Take care "Big Brother" some day you can call me "Little Brother" again. Love always. (1).**

8 **Somehow I feel "Worry" will be closer to you here than packed away in my trunk of memories. (3)**

1 **We had nine years of a very special friendship. (2)**

4 **I wanted to be with you again when the clock struck midnight and your numbers came up. (2).**

 (ANTIGONE enters).

10 **My mother used to say that when we die God sends someone to greet us when we get to heaven. I hope God sends you. (1 - "Doc" Michael).**

6 **I never said this to you while you were alive, but I love you and I miss you very much. (1).**

5 **Attached to this letter are my service medals. I don't need them to show I was there. Rest well, my brothers. (2).**

2 **My prayer, my dear and sweet husband, is that the world would forever know peace so that never again will death separate and permanently sear the hearts of families torn by the tragedies of war. I await the day when the Lord reunites us in heaven. Honey, I love you forever. Your wife, Jan. (2).**

4 Goodbye.

Antigone I am not ready to say farewell.

7 I think of you almost every day.

1 My prayer

3 In time, I hope we can all be together.

8 You are deeply loved and greatly missed.

10	You are my Marine.
4	My prayer
5	Rest well, my brothers.
3	My prayer
6	Someday I'll see you again.
8	My prayer
2	Is that the world would forever know
1	Peace.
7	Peace.
Group	Peace.

- (1) Letters on the Wall by Michael Sofarelli
- (2) Shrapnel in the Heart by Laura Palmer
- (3) Offerings at the Wall, Turner Publishing Inc., Walton Rawls, Editor