Hang, how did your family come to live in Indiana? Binh said he doesn’t know.

He don’t know because we never talk about it.

I never talk about it because Binh never ask before.

But I will tell you now.
I studied at the teaching school. So every day Binh's daddy, Viet, he dropped me at my college, and then he go to work.

I was eight months pregnant with my, Binh's oldest brother.
AND THEN AROUND 10 OR 11AM, THE WAR BROKE BIGGER, SO THE SCHOOL SHUT DOWN.

AND THEY TRIED TO TELL STUDENTS, “GO HOME, GO HOME, GO HOME.”

SO I TAKE THE BUS AND I TRY TO FIND THE TRANSPORTATION. AND I WAS ABLE TO GO TO THE SAIGON RIVER, SO I WAIT FOR THE FERRY TO CROSS THE RIVER TO GO HOME.

AND THEY STOP WORKING. THEY STOPPED RUNNING THE FERRY.

WAS THIS THE WAR WITH THE U.S.?
NO, THE U.S. ALREADY LEAVE VIETNAM.

OHH?

I’LL GO TO THE BEGINNING. FRANCE TAKE OVER VIETNAM A LONG TIME AGO.

IN WORLD WAR 2, JAPAN TOOK VIETNAM FROM FRANCE. THE COMMUNISTS FIGHT THE JAPANESE IN VIETNAM.

AFTER WORLD WAR 2 WHEN JAPAN LOST THE WAR, FRANCE TRY TO COME BACK TO VIETNAM. THE COMMUNISTS FIGHT FRANCE IN THE NORTH, AND IN THE SOUTH, THE NATIONALISTS WORK WITH FRANCE TO FIGHT COMMUNISTS TOGETHER.


IN 1965 AMERICA SEND SOLDIERS TO FIGHT IN VIETNAM. THAT WHEN YOUR DADDY JOINED THE VIETNAM NAVY.
In 1973 America sign the peace agreement with the North and take their soldiers home, leaving the South to fight alone.

In April 1975 the communist army is at the edge of Saigon.

So I'm just stand there at the river bank, worry and thinking about my family and my husband. I don't know where to go, because the ferry not working and the world broken.

So lucky I found one lady who live nearby my house, and her husband is the navy. Right? So she go there looking for her husband, too.

So I, because I carry my school books, I tear out the paper--

--and I write the letter, rushed letter, and I ask her to bring it to my family because she had to go home anyway.
BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T HAVE PHONES?

NO, NO, THAT TIME, NO PHONES! NO PHONES. 1975!

SO WHAT DID YOU WRITE IN THE LETTER?

I JUST TRIED TO SAY HELLO TO THEM, AND, UM, I TELL THEM, "DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME RIGHT NOW, AND I WILL STAY WITH MY HUSBAND, DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME."

I ASK HER TO SAY SHE SAW ME THERE, MEET ME THERE, I'M OKAY.

THEN THAT MEAN NO MORE CONTACT TO MY FAMILY. MAYBE FOREVER.
I stand there, still waiting for the ferry. Don't know where to go, everybody tried to find a way to run, really terrible things.

Your daddy, he come to that area, and then he found me.

He took me to his aunt's house, the same place he took his mother and sister.

I stayed there for 3 days.
SO YOUR DADDY, HE WAS A LIEUTENANT IN THE NAVY.

BECAUSE HE WORKED IN THE NAVY HEADQUARTERS, HE KNOW THE NAVY HAS A SHIP, AND THEY WILL TRY TO ESCAPE OUT OF THE CITY.

WE TALKING THAT, IF WE DON'T GET ON THAT SHIP THEN THE COMMUNISTS WILL KILL ALL THE MEN OR SEND US TO REEDUCATION CAMPS. WE HAD TO GET ON THAT SHIP.

SO IN THAT HOUSE WE WAITING THERE, THEY SELL THE JEWELRY. THE BUSINESS IN THAT HOUSE. SO THEY HAD THE PHONE, AND YOUR DADDY AT THE NAVY HEADQUARTERS CAN CALL AND TELL US WHAT GOING ON.

ON THE 29TH, YOUR DADDY CALL TO THAT HOUSE, AND HE SAID:

TIME TO GO.
I AND YOUR GRANDMA AND YOUR AUNT, WE DON'T HAVE ANY TRANSPORTATION. YOUR UNCLE TUAN, HE GET A MOTORCYCLE, AND THEY ALL SIT IN FRONT, WHERE IS THE GAS TANK.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. AND YOUR GRANDMA, SHE TURN AROUND AND SHE SEE I STAND THERE.

COME! SIT ON THE BACK OF THE MOTORCYCLE!

SO MOTORCYCLE HAD FOUR PEOPLE, AND I'M PREGNANT.

AND YOU WERE PREGNANT! THAT'S CRAZY.
So your uncle take us down the street, but you can’t move, because everybody try to run away at the same time.

People horn, people cry, people scream on the street, and you heard the bombing, too.

Your uncle hit somebody with the motorcycle. Oh, wow, like a person walking? Yes, because there were so many people.

We couldn’t stop.
AND THEN A HELICOPTER DROPPED OUT OF THE SKY.