

Pearl

Downstage right, there is an empty circular table and wooden chair. Downstage Left there are two ottomans and a carpet one of them has a tray and a jewelry box on top. Upstage at an angle is a piano with its cover on. MARJORIE enters wearing a blue skirt and gray shirt, a mask is hanging off one ear, carrying a package. She places the large box in front of the chair.

MARJORIE:

Yeah, mom, I just got home. Yes, the box was sitting on my front step, I'm bringing it in now. Ok ok ok, I'll open it! I love you. Bye.

She takes off her mask, puts her phone, keys, and phone in her purse and hangs it on the chair. Sits in chair, opens box. Reads the card attached to the top of the hat box.

"Marjorie, while I was cleaning out storage, I came across these items and knew they had no other home but you. I know you think you've lost your music, but I hope this surprise helps you remember who you are. Did you know a Pearl is defined as a person or thing of great rarity and worth? That's what your name means. Your grandmother was born Marjorie Eleanor Binge - 1922. You were born Marjorie Joann Gast - 1997. 74 years apart, you never met, but as I've always said —are the spitting image of her. A beautiful and rare gem reincarnated. You have her love of music, her voice, her cheekbones and her pearls, well – now you have her whole ensemble, and then some! Love you, honey. - Mom"

MARJORIE is touched and stunned. Throws card into box.

Grandma's pearls... I do have them... where did I put them? Somewhere I knew I wouldn't forget them... of course I forgot where that place is! How could I forget?

Center stage.

(out to grandma) Grandma, I did not lose them. I promise.

MARJORIE frantically searches the table next to the ottomans, visibly stressed.

Oh my god oh my god, I did not lose them.

MARJORIE then kneels behind the piano bench and "prays" to her grandmother.

Grandma. I know I haven't tried to talk to you in a long time, but please. Help me find your pearls. They were the closest thing I had to physically knowing you. I didn't mean to be careless. It's just... the pandemic happened, and I moved and then I... I don't know... Can't you answer me? Show me signs like you used to. Like 5:55 on the clock, or sunlight shining through the window (*gestures to window stage r vom*) in the place where I tucked them away? Please?

MARJORIE opens her eyes, hands still clasped, and looks around eagerly awaiting a sign from her grandmother.

Come on! This is exactly how I used to pray to you at the piano bench when I was a little girl! Remember I prayed to you — to not God, but you and Grandpa Walter!

LIGHTS SHIFT TO PAST when MARJORIE puts her elbow on the piano bench. She becomes YOUNG MARJORIE.

YOUNG MARJORIE:

Dear Grandma and Grandpa,

Thank you for watching over me and mom, and dad, and Joey and Lily and Daisy and Papa and Nana. Today I started harp lessons. I learned how to play twinkle twinkle little star and my teacher taught me how to tie harp strings — except she didn't use harp strings she used pull-and-peel-twizlers and if I tied them correctly I got to eat them! Please please please keep watch over mom and dad and Joey and Lily and Daisy and Papa and Nana so that nothing bad ever happens to them! Amen!

LIGHTS SHIFT TO PRESENT when she takes her elbows off the bench. She sits back on her calves.

MARJORIE:

Wow. It's been so long since I thought of that. So long since I tried to connect to you. I am sorry. It's not just you though, I don't really talk to anyone.

She stands and sits on the left side of the bench, looking off left vom.

I mean, the world is still shut down. I have no career, no friends in this new city because of it. Listening to music for company is out of the question. It is too emotional - I am too emotional. Instead I put on podcasts or audiobooks. Or I just prefer silence. All of my groceries are delivered because if I hear music in the aisles, I panic.

Sits center of bench.

I've lost myself, entirely. But I don't know who I am without my music, Grandma.

She touches the bench, longingly.