



– Biology –

Passing a Nashville night club the tempting sounds entice you inside. Before you know it your hand is stamped at the door, and your eyes are following a smoky spotlight to a small stage. Adjusting to the light, you focus on a tousele of red atop shapely dress. And if you're lucky enough to find a table, you sit back, forget about the world outside and just *listen* to Rachel Pearl.

Her voice is mesmerizing, transporting; her fashions are elegant, eccentric; and her mix of musical styles never fails to take her audience to places they don't expect to go... Such surprising journeys are plentiful in Pearl's world- maybe because the journey *she* expected to take had nothing to do with music, at all.



Before Rachel mixed the elements of style and substance into a formula for success, she focused her experimentations on 'The Elements', themselves. Her life's ambition was not a smoky spot-lit platform; it was taking the chemical building blocks of Life to the next stage of illumination. Back then, the rhythm of Pearl's world had nothing to do with melody and harmony...it was strictly *biology*.

Living out her teens in her grandmother's Kentucky home, music wasn't considered a taboo; it's just that it had already "been done."

Rach's mother, Jane, was the singer in the family. In between jobs like costuming for local college productions and Balloon O'Gram Artist (her Mae West was a local fave), mom scratched her musical itch with Jazz. This Jane didn't need a Tarzan to swing. Rachel's daring mother was a blues singer in - of all places -The Bluegrass state.

Of course with a role model like that, Rachel couldn't help but jump at the chance to swing from the family tree. So throughout high school, the teen auditioned for and won roles in every musical production the theatrical department offered. From Consuela in West Side Story to Jan, the comic relief in Grease, Pearl's personality lit up the stage and sparked more than a few waves of applause.

But eventually, when the time came to take the platform wearing a cap and gown, Rachel felt compelled to shimmy down the tree, plant her feet firmly on the ground and take the role of 'graduate' seriously. It was a decision her grandmother had lobbied for and welcomed, with a sigh of relief.

Life in rural Kentucky was all about planting, harvesting, getting in step with the rhythm of Nature; sinking down roots. And given that background, (along with the hope that one of her progeny would stay on 'the farm'), Grandmother Betty weeded the garden of Rach's budding maturity with words like 'foundation', 'consistency', 'roots'; none of which seemed to have anything to do with music.

With those seeds of stability planted, college-bound Rachel called her mother, (who by now had likewise graduated... to the music scene in England). Telling free-spirited Jane of her plans to start "building a good foundation," mom just glanced up at the thatch roof over her head and smiled,

"You'll change your mind. When you do, call me."

Armed with mom's blessing and her grandmother's prayers, Pearl enrolled in Western Kentucky University. And in the

time it takes to unpack your bags, she settled in to the study of Nature - or rather, the nature of Nature.

Soon Rach was trying out every scientific chair placed around the Table of Elements. She examined the roots of Botany and dissected the building blocks of Chemistry. She studied long-standing theories and debated radical resolutions. In no time phrases like 'rate of effect' and 'base pairings' became part of her daily vocabulary. And the idea of trading microphones for microscopes slowly began to take root.

But somewhere along the way the grand experiment faltered. Maybe it was the low rhythmic rumble from the speakers in an adjoining dorm room. Or, a weak moment when a glimpse of her iPod caught the corner of her eye; but somehow the sound of Ella Fitzgerald's voice found its way into Rachel's ear. In that musical moment the familiar resonance of Ella's lyric "*You're The Top*" vibrated Pearl down to her toes. And setting her slide rule aside, she realized that those words -that music- were meant for her.

The results of the scientific test were in; Rachel's 'natural selection' was - music.

Although the seeds of stability Grandma planted didn't flower in a petri dish, they did help Rachel's true desires to ultimately bloom. She cracked the books, gave it the old college try and in one short semester discovered what any good biologist will admit - you can't fight DNA.

Overnight Music became a prominent part of her curriculum. And in time, Rachel Pearl not only found her sound, she also found her voice and used it on an overseas call.

"Okay Mom... you were right."

Since then, combining her mother's style and her grandmother's sensibility, Pearl has transformed her post graduate world into a stage of endless experimentation. Taking samples of the old and mixing it with the new,

Rachel constantly tests the boundaries of where music should go. And playing with that standard formula she turns every vocal performance into a lesson in chemistry between an audience and a true artist.

Named as one of the “*Top Emerging Artists of 2006*” by American Idol Magazine, Pearl has been awarded honorable mention in Billboard’s 14th Annual list, a Semi-Finalist in Discmakers 2007 Independent Music World Series, and has gone on to win First Place in both the 2006 and 2007 American Idol Underground Jazz Competition.

Whether she’s channeling the 20th Century classics of Ella, Billie Holiday and Tina Turner, or crooning one of the self-penned compositions from her 2007 debut CD, *Love Extravagantly*, Rachel Pearl is consistently building a foundation, putting down roots in her own chosen field.

Here in Nashville’s backyard you can find her experimenting in night clubs like Mercy Lounge, The Basement, Cafe Coco and The Rutledge. Careful - her chemistry *will* entice you inside. Before you even know it your hand will be stamped and you’ll find your eyes focusing on a spot-lit stage. There you’ll see a tousele of red atop shapely dress. And if you’re lucky enough to find a table, give in, sit back, and just *listen* to Rachel Pearl. ‘Cause music runs in her family.

It may not be logical, but it is biological. You can’t fight DNA. If music is in your genes... it’s bound to be in your soul.

- Bart Green

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