

SCENE NINE

(lights up on ELIZABETH)

ELIZABETH. I had lost my mother once before. It was at the supermarket.

(The TEACHER appears, pushing a grocery cart.)

It was late in the day and it was very crowded. I remember begging my mother to give me a quarter so I could get a super ball from the gum machine. She wanted me to stay with her and help her pick out some cereal. So I went with her to the cereal section and pointed to the Lucky Charms. But she decided we should get...

TEACHER. Nutri Grain.

ELIZABETH. She said I would like it because it had raisins.

TEACHER. Honey, you'll like it. It has raisins.

ELIZABETH. She also got a box of granola bars.

TEACHER. You can have one in the car.

ELIZABETH. Her right hand had blue magic marker on the middle finger. She kept good care of her nails, but her fingers were always marked up with pen. She was wearing a plaid dress. I followed her to the meat department. The butcher was busy and we had to wait. I asked again for the quarter so I could buy a super ball from the gum machine. *(to TEACHER)* Mommy, please?

TEACHER. Honey, why do you want a super ball?

ELIZABETH. Because I need it. Please?

TEACHER. It's part of your allowance.

ELIZABETH. I don't care. *(to audience)* She dug in the pocket of her dress and pulled out a quarter.

(The TEACHER hands her a quarter.)

It was warm. I left her to go the gum machine. The machine with the super balls was broken so I put my quarter in a machine that had creepy-crawlies. I got a

green scorpion and I hated it. I went back to the meat department but my mother was gone. I went up and down the aisles, looking for her plaid dress. Mom? Mom? I listened for my mother to call back but all I could hear was the supermarket music playing, "Rain drops on roses, and whiskers on kittens..." Mommy? Mommy?

(BETTY comes on with a cart.)

ELIZABETH. *(cont.)* I saw a woman in a plaid dress bending down by the soups. *(to BETTY)* Mommy?

BETTY. What do you want, little girl?

ELIZABETH. I ran to the check-out counters and went from register to register looking for my mom. I saw a box of Nutri-grain moving on a conveyor belt.

(ED is standing in line.)

But the Nutri Grain was followed by a bag of prunes and an old man was pulling out his wallet. I ran to the parking lot to see if my mother was in the car. But a man came through with a bunch of carts.

(C.B. comes barreling towards her with a stack of carts.)

C.B.. Coming through! Coming through!

ELIZABETH. And he didn't see me and he almost ran me over and I started to cry. I ran back to the check-out counters and I saw a little girl standing there with her mother. And her mother handed her a granola bar. And I knew I would never have a granola bar again because I went to the gum ball machine and got a green scorpion which I hated and I didn't even have the quarter my mother gave me which was still warm from the pocket of her dress, the quarter that my mother's hand had touched with the magic marker on the middle finger, I lost it. I knew that she was gone. I knew that she had left without me and I would never, ever see her again.

(crying hysterically)

ELIZABETH. *(cont.)* MOMMEEEEEE! MOMMEEEEEE!
I WANT MY MOMMEEEE! GIVE ME BACK MY
MOMMY!!!!

(The TEACHER passes by with her cart.)

TEACHER. Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH. Mommy, I couldn't find you! I looked everywhere! You were gone! I thought you went home! I thought you left me!

TEACHER. Silly, why would I leave without you? Why would I do that?

(ELIZABETH is still sobbing. The TEACHER holds her.)

We'll be home in a little while.

ELIZABETH. I stayed very close to the cart.

(ELIZABETH puts her hand on the handle next to the TEACHER's hand. They start pushing the cart together across the stage.)

And when we got in the car, she gave me a granola bar.