

My Grandmother's Pearls

My Grandmother was the kindest and most gentle lady you could ever imagine. She always spoke softly and she taught me many things about the world. She gathered her long, grey hair in a plaited bun on top of her head, and around her neck she always wore a delicate and beautiful necklace of seed pearls made up of three strands twisted together to form one.

One day, I asked her why she wore the same pearls every day.

'Well, my precious child,' she said, 'They belonged to my mother and her mother before that. They are very special to me and I shall always treasure them. Something so precious should always be kept close.'

'Aren't you afraid of losing them when you wear them every day?' I asked.

'I'll never lose them, dear child, because they're in here,' she said, placing her hand on her heart, 'Besides, pearls should be **worn**, not locked away in a drawer where no one can appreciate them..... or listen to their wise words.'

'Their wise words?' I queried, 'Whatever do you mean?'

She unclasped the delicate pearls and unravelled them gently to reveal each of the three strands, bumpy and creased from many years of being intertwined.

'Each of the strands represents a gift we must treasure,' she explained. 'The inner strand is the gift of 'The World' in which we live, the middle one is the gift of 'Learning' and the outer strand is the gift of 'Life' itself and the time we are given to live in the world.'

'Why those three gifts?' I questioned curiously.

'Well,' replied my Grandmother, 'When we enter this world we are given choices. By *learning* the difference between right and wrong, we do right by the *World* and all *life* upon it. When we do this, we respect the gifts we are given and we lead a good life.'

'And what about the tiny pearls on each strand – do they mean something too?'

'Of course. Each one of them is a pearl of wisdom protecting us and reminding us how to live our lives as best we can. The oyster made them to protect himself from harm.'

'Will you share your pearls' wise words with me, Granny?'

'I will indeed, as long as you promise to keep them and pass them on to your children and grandchildren too. If not, they will be lost forever, and that would never do.'

'Write them down for me, Granny. Write them down for me now and I promise to treasure them forever, right here - next to my heart.'

And these are the words she wrote.....

To the most precious gem of all: (Name)

I give you.....

All that I do and all that I say

All the books that we read, all the games that we play,

All that's good in the world, all that's kindness and care

All the fun that we have, all the laughs that we share.

All the music around which we hear and we make

All the trust and compassion, the give and the take.

All that's gentle and true, all the love, hope and light

Are the gems that I give through these words that I write.

Little Pearls for Precious Gems by Sue Nield
Strand one: The Gift of the World
(A dozen verses: one for each month)

The Earth depends on all who tread
Upon it night and day,
The mark you make upon it should be gentle,
Come what may.
Belong to it and guard it well,
Please care for it as treasure.
Protect it as your very own
With love that's beyond measure.

Listen to its whispering breeze,
Reach and touch a star.
Follow its white moon's wandering path
To distant lands afar.
Watch its Eastern rising sun
Steal away the night
And set on Western mountain tops
As daytime takes its flight.

Swim with leaping dolphins
And watch the wondrous whales.
Marvel at the ocean depths,
The rolling hills and dales.
Chase the dancing dragonfly
Whose playful games beguile;
His dazzling colours mesmerise
In fashionable style.

(9 More verses)

Strand 2: The Gift of Learning

Little Pearls for Precious Gems by Sue Nield
(2 dozen lines, one for each and every hour)

Learn from what's beneath your feet,
What's beyond each well-closed door,
From fossils and from dinosaurs
And all that went before:
From writers who preach to scientists who teach
And poets who try to rhyme,
For all have their place in history
Next to good Old Father Time.....

IN TOTAL: 5 MORE VERSES

Strand Three: The Gift of Life

(A Baker's Dozen Verses: 52 lines for 52 weeks)

Follow stars which guide you well
And lead to all that's good.
Allow your heartbeat's quiet voice
To rule you when it should.
Listen to your head's wise thoughts,
You'll know when it is right
To leave or stay, to act or pray,
Move forward or sit tight.

Make your mark upon the Earth,
Be a unique brand.
Plant your special footprint there,
Discretely in the sand.
By doing good and being true
To all that you believe
Then no regrets will cloud your mind
Or force your heart to grieve.....

IN TOTAL: 11 MORE VERSES

A Legacy of Love

Little Pearls for Precious Gems by Sue Nield

'I love your pearls' wise words, Granny, but I think you mixed together some of the verses.'

'You're right, my precious one, you're very observant. I believe you'll go far. You see, when I unravel the strands, the pearls hang limply, and lose their appeal. We are stronger when we live and learn together to make the world a better place for everyone, now and in the future. Everything is linked, you see, just like the strands of my pearls.'

'And why is there a sparkling diamond at one end?' I asked.

'Ah, now **there's** a question,' she replied, 'You see, the diamond is the clasp that holds the pearls together. It seals them to make them **one**.'

'But why a diamond? The clasp could be made with anything.'

'Yes, indeed it could, my dear child. But why seal something so precious with just anything. Tiny pearls of wisdom deserve to be united by something of great beauty and value.'

'So the diamond is really valuable?'

'The diamond is valuable..... but what it represents is..... priceless. You see, the diamond is a symbol of love. It unites my little pearls of wisdom, binding them together so they make sense. Without it they are nothing....just words of stone. And without love..... the most precious gem of all.....there is nothing.'

'But I thought I was your most precious gem of all, Granny?'

'You are more precious to me than anything, my child.....because....I **love** you.'

'Love is the most important word of all. But it's not just a word, it's a 'legacy', which is something special you leave to those who are special to you.'

'Like your pearls, Granny.'

'Like our pearls. Their words will be our 'legacy' to children and grandchildren everywhere. So, remember.....

Look : beneath each surface, remember what you see.
Listen : to your heart's voice, what it tells you, you should be.
Learn : from life's great journey, from all that's good and true.
Love: and care deeply for those who love you too.
Light: the world, shine brightly, and be a guiding star.
Leave: legacies of happiness that reach out near and far.
Lead: by good example, show others the right way.
Live: with joy and kindness, tomorrow and today.