

Reader's Theatre: A Note from Book-It Arts Education

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MAUREEN has roles for nine readers. Characters are written with she, he, or singular they for specific characters to maintain clarity, but **pronouns can be adjusted as needed to match the pronouns of the readers in your class**. Please do not change the names of the characters.

When you read the script, try different ways of speaking as your character. Your **character voice** can sound however you want it to but start with your own voice. Imagine the world of the play, listen to the lines of the other readers, take a deep breath, and speak as if the character is really you.

Lines written (*like this*), in parentheses and italicized, are **stage directions**. They give you information about how a character is feeling or what is happening at that moment in the script. (You can read them out loud, if you want to.) **Use these guidelines to incorporate action, tableaux, or scenic art into your reading.**

This script uses **line numbering**. Use these numbers to help find your spot or to work on a certain part of the script. You can also use a highlighter to highlight your lines or responsibilities.

Happy reading!

MAUREEN

by Gillian Jorgensen

First Produced at Youth Theatre Northwest

Published by Book-It Repertory Theatre, ©2022.

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CHARACTERS

FRANKIE: (she/her) very helpful and responsible, but sometimes takes on more than she should

CHLOE: (she/her) has a habit of singing or humming when she is unfocused or uncomfortable

ELOISE: (she/her) always thinks she's paying attention but somehow isn't

STEW: (he/him) a little cynical, but wants to find the best in everything

MAC: (they/them) general goofus; loves to sing

MAUREEN NORTH: was once human

MAUREEN SOUTH: but now

MAUREEN EAST: who is she

MAUREEN WEST: no one knows

1 *A group of students is waiting in a darkening school. They've been*
2 *rehearsing a play. For some reason, everyone's parents are late to pick*
3 *them up.*

4 *Chloe is absent-mindedly plunking a sort-of melody on the piano.*

5 **ELOISE:** How long has it been?

6 **STEW:** At least 20 minutes.

7 **ELOISE:** Unghhhuwn.

8 **STEW:** This is nothing. Once my dad was 45 minutes late to pick me up
9 and he drove up and acted like he was only five minutes late.

10 **CHLOE:** I remember that. He brought you melted frozen yogurt.

11 **ELOISE:** My mom's always ten minutes early. With no yogurt.

12 *A door creaks open. Frankie pokes her head in.*

13 **FRANKIE:** Has anyone seen Maureen?

14 **ELOISE:** Didn't she leave early? I thought I saw her Mom's car.

15 **STEW:** That was Jackson's mom—they have the same Prius.

16 **ELOISE:** Oh, right. My stepdad has that one, too. You're sure Maureen's
17 still here?

18 **FRANKIE:** Yes—she was supposed to check out with me before she left.

19 **CHLOE:** She was *supposed* to check out with the stage manager.

20 **FRANKIE:** Well, I can't find our stage manager so I figured I'd check
21 everybody out until there were only two of us and then the last two would
22 wait until the last person's parent came to get them.

23 **CHLOE:** Yeah, that sounds kind of reasonable, but also it's kind of illegal?

24 **ELOISE:** It seemed like they were all in a big rush to get out tonight. The
25 adults, I mean.

26 **STEW:** Yeah, what was so urgent?

27 **FRANKIE:** That was weird. Usually they stay and talk about tech and stuff.
28 Anyway, I can't find Maureen.

29 **ELOISE:** Hey, where's Mac?

30 **FRANKIE:** Bathroom.

31 **ELOISE:** How do you know?

32 **FRANKIE:** He was singing.

33 **ELOISE:** *(sings in full voice)*

34 *[Actor may choose which snippet of song to sing—a show tune or popular*
35 *song that everyone loves to hate and hates to love]*

36 **FRANKIE:** *(interrupting her)* That's the one.

37 **CHLOE:** The acoustics in the bathroom are really good.

38 **STEW:** Did you text Maureen?

39 **FRANKIE:** I don't have a phone.

40 **CHLOE:** Here, use mine...that's weird. I was sure I packed it this morning. I
41 must have left it plugged in on my desk.

42 *Everyone looks for their phone.*

43 **ELOISE:** I can't find mine either.

44 **STEW:** Mine's missing, too.

45 **ELOISE:** That's weird.

46 **CHLOE:** What are the odds that all of us wouldn't have our phones with us
47 on the night that we're left, all alone, waiting for our parents and they're all
48 late?

49 *A burst of violin strings is heard.*

50 *With this foreboding information, everyone feels an urgency to find*
51 *Maureen.*

52 **FRANKIE:** *(loudly)* Maureen?

53 **ELOISE:** Maybe she forgot to sign out?

54 **STEW:** Maureeeeeeeeeen!

55 **FRANKIE:** Maureen, come on, this isn't funny.

56 **CHLOE:** *(creepily singing)* Have you seen the ghost of Tom?

57 Long white bones with the skin all gooooooone?

58 Ooooooooooooo, Tom

59 Wouldn't it be chilly with no skin on.

60 **ELOISE:** My mom always sings that song.

61 **STEW:** Mine, too. It creeps me out.

62 **CHLOE:** I love it. Tom is the gentlest ghost.

63 **STEW:** I thought Tom was a skeleton.

64 **ELOISE:** “No skin on” is worse than a ghost or a skeleton.

65 **CHLOE:** Poor Tom. So misunderstood. So cold.

66 **FRANKIE:** Would you three knock it off and help me find Maureen?

67 *Something moves, soundlessly in this realm, but the movement*
68 *itself is cacophonous in the spirit world, the scraping, grinding,*
69 *dragging sound of heavy tools pulled across land and home*
70 *and flesh and heart.*

71 **STEW:** What was that?

72 **FRANKIE:** It was me.

73 **STEW:** Not your voice, that...*shape*.

74 **CHLOE:** Maybe it's Tom. OooooooooOOoOooo!

75 **ELOISE:** Why? No! Why? No! No! Why would you say that, Chloe? I'm
76 already creeped out.

77 **FRANKIE:** I think it's just the shadow of a chair, Stew.

78 **STEW:** No, *that* shadow. Of the giant cat.

79 **FRANKIE:** If a cat were in here we'd know because—oh, it does look a
80 little like a cat.

81 **ELOISE:** But how would a cat get in here?

82 **CHLOE:** Here kitty, kitty, kitty—

83 **ELOISE:** Don't do that, it might be—

84 **CHLOE:** It might be what? Hungry?

85 **ELOISE:** A ghost.

86 *MAC enters, unseen by the others.*

87 **MAC:** I AM THE GREAT AND POWERFUL OZ!

88 *Frankie, Chloe, Stew, and Eloise are startled and loudly,*
89 *sharply, gasp.*

90 **MAC:** Ha! Gotcha.

91 **ELOISE:** Mac! Why would you do that! What kind of friend are you?

92 **CHLOE:** We thought you were a cat.

93 **MAC:** You're the cats. Scaredy cats.

94 **FRANKIE:** Have you seen Maureen?

95 **MAC:** Didn't she leave already? I saw her mom's Prius.

96 **STEW:** That was Jackson's mom.

97 **FRANKIE:** Maureen is missing.

98 **MAC:** Did you text her?

99 **CHLOE:** None of us have our phones.

100 **MAC:** What are you talking about? We used them during rehearsal to look
101 up lyrics.

102 **STEW:** Do you still have yours?

103 **MAC:** Of course. It's right—hey, where's my phone?

104 *There is a sound of phones not ringing. Text messages not*
105 *being delivered. Notifications not being sent. It sounds like a*
106 *gap in the universe. It sounds like the heavy thud of a bag of*
107 *flat tires being dropped into the mud.*

108 **ELOISE:** What is going on?

109 *An owl hoots. A cat meows. Everyone jumps.*

110 **STEW:** I don't like this.

111 **CHLOE:** Are we dead?

112 **ELOISE:** Chloe! Jeez!

113 **FRANKIE:** Why would you say that?

114 **CHLOE:** It's dark, none of our parents came to get us—except Jackson's, I
115 guess—and no one has their cell phone. Maybe something horrible
116 happened and we're all dead and Maureen is the only one alive and *she's*
117 looking for *us*.

118 **STEW:** You are scaring me.

119 *With the unsettling thought that they might be dead, everyone*
120 *feels a sudden urgency to find Maureen.*

121 **FRANKIE:** Maureen!

122 **CHLOE:** Maureen!

123 **ELOISE:** Maureen!

124 **STEW:** Maureen!

125 **MAC:** Maureen!

126 *There is a strange noise, a little like the universe hacking up a*
127 *hair ball. Everyone freaks out. MAUREEN NORTH appears.*

128 **MAUREEN NORTH:** What's up?

129 **FRANKIE/CHLOE/MAC/STEW/ELOISE:** Ahhhhh!

130 **MAUREEN NORTH:** I can't believe our parents aren't here yet.

131 **FRANKIE:** Maureen. Where have you been?

132 **MAUREEN NORTH:** By the window. Waiting for my mom.

133 **FRANKIE:** But you weren't. We've been looking for you.

134 **MAUREEN NORTH:** I was there the whole time.

135 **FRANKIE:** Maureen, you weren't.

136 **MAUREEN NORTH:** Are you trying to scare me? Like a joke?

137 **CHLOE:** Frankie isn't kidding.

138 **ELOISE:** Maureen. We're already freaked out and Chloe thinks we're dead
139 except for you and—

140 **MAUREEN NORTH:** I've been here the whole time.

141 **FRANKIE:** But you weren't.

142 **STEW:** We've been looking for you for twenty minutes.

143 **MAC:** This is too weird. Could we just play tag or something?

144 *MAUREEN SOUTH appears with the sound of another universe*
145 *hairball.*

146 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** Okay—you're it!

147 *This is no good. There's one too many Maureens.*

148 **FRANKIE:** Maureen?

149 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** That's me.

150 **CHLOE:** How are there are two of you?

151 **MAUREEN NORTH:** There's one of me.

152 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** And one of me.

153 **ELOISE:** This is impossible.

154 **STEW:** This is a dream, right? Someone pinch me.

155 *Another hairball. MAUREEN EAST appears.*

156 **MAUREEN EAST:** If you insist.

157 *MAUREEN EAST pinches Stew.*

158 **STEW:** Ow. Your hands are really cold.

159 **MAC:** Why are there three Maureens?

160 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH/MAUREEN EAST:**

161 There's only one of us.

162 **CHLOE:** Okay, I was kidding before, but maybe we really are dead.

163 **MAUREEN NORTH:** You're not dead, Chloe.

164 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** Not yet.

165 **MAUREEN EAST:** Everyone dies eventually.

166 **ELOISE:** Where is my mom?

167 **MAUREEN NORTH:** She's busy, Eloise.

168 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** They're all busy.

169 **MAUREEN EAST:** No one is coming for you.

170 *MAUREEN WEST* appears along with another hairball sound.

171 **MAUREEN WEST:** Except us.

172 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH/**

173 **MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST:** We're here for you, friends.

174 **MAC:** How are there four of them?

175 **FRANKIE:** *(trying to reassure herself)* There's only one Maureen. We're all
176 okay. We're all alive.

177 **MAUREEN NORTH:** That's right, Frankie.

178 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** You're all alive.

179 **MAUREEN EAST:** You're right about us.

180 **MAUREEN WEST:** There's only one of us.

181 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH/**

182 **MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST:** We are Maureen.

183 **MAUREEN NORTH & SOUTH:** You could be us, too.

184 **MAUREEN EAST & WEST:** Haven't you always wanted to be Maureen?

185 **MAUREEN NORTH & SOUTH:** So jealous, every one of you.

186 **MAUREEN EAST & WEST:** Jealous of Maureen.

187 **MAUREEN NORTH:** Jealous.

- 188 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** Petty.
- 189 **MAUREEN EAST:** Kids.
- 190 **MAUREEN WEST:** It's time for what you really want.
- 191 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH/
192 MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST:** To be me.
- 193 **MAUREEN NORTH:** Maureen.
- 194 **STEW:** Maureen, you came to my birthday party.
- 195 **ELOISE:** It was fun—that's when we started to like you for real.
- 196 **CHLOE:** Even me, Maureen.
- 197 *The Maureens are not swayed.*
- 198 **MAUREEN EAST & WEST:** A triple-threat. Unstoppable.
- 199 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** Talent courses through my blood.
- 200 **MAUREEN EAST & WEST:** Your blood will be my blood.
- 201 **MAUREEN NORTH & SOUTH:** I am perfect in every way.
- 202 **MAUREEN EAST:** Perfect pitch and perfect flesh.
- 203 **MAUREEN WEST:** None of the flaws that hold you back.
- 204 **MAUREEN NORTH & SOUTH:** You'll be better when you're me.

205 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH/
206 MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST:** Maureen.

207 *The Maureens hum together in anticipation of growing
208 their ranks.*

209 **FRANKIE:** We have to get out of here.

210 **CHLOE:** I'll distract them. The rest of you, run!

211 **FRANKIE:** Chloe, no!

212 **CHLOE:** If we all leave together, they'll get out.

213 **ELOISE:** You mean the Maureens would be...out there? Outside?

214 *This entices the Maureens. A world of them? Perfect.*

215 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH/
216 MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST:** All for Maureen.

217 **MAC:** We have to trap them.

218 **STEW:** We'll get help. We'll come back for you, Chloe.

219 **CHLOE:** Get out of here!

220 *The Maureens pull out the missing cell phones, holding each
221 one high. Phones are dialed and held near each other, creating
222 a feedback loop that stuns Chloe, Frankie, Mac, Eloise, and
223 Stew. No one can leave.*

224 **MAC:** Is that my phone?

225 *It's already too late. The feedback loop binds the students*
226 *in place.*

227 **FRANKIE:** I can't move.

228 **ELOISE:** Why can't we move?

229 **STEW:** Why didn't my mom come?

230 **CHLOE:** I was trying to help, not make things worse!

231 **MAUREN WEST:** Your dream is about to come true.

232 **MAUREEN WEST/MAUREN SOUTH/MAUREEN EAST:** You'll like it.

233 **MAUREN EAST:** You'll be me.

234 **MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST/MAUREEN SOUTH:** Just like Jackson.

235 **MAUREEN NORTH:** You're safe now.

236 *The transformation is complete. A fifth Maureen has joined*
237 *the cast.*

238 **MAUREEN CHLOE:** I am Maureen.

239 *The cellphone feedback ends. The Maureens seem and sound*
240 *tired after transforming Chloe. They are drained.*

241 **FRANKIE:** Chloe, listen to me. I'm Frankie. You're Chloe.

242 **MAC:** They had our phones!

243 **MAUREEN CHLOE:** Join us, Frankie.

244 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH/**

245 **MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST:** Be Maureen.

246 *The Maureens begin humming again, recharging for another*
247 *transformation.*

248 **ELOISE:** Please, can we go now?

249 **MAC:** If I can get my phone, we can call 911.

250 **STEW:** Come on, Mac. It isn't worth it.

251 **ELOISE:** Maybe we should try to call someone.

252 **FRANKIE:** They won't answer. There's no one left.

253 **MAC:** Give me my phone!

254 **MAUREEN NORTH:** Everything is mine.

255 *The Maureens dial the phones.*

256 **MAUREEN SOUTH:** Nothing is yours.

257 *The feedback loop begins again.*

258 **FRANKIE:** Chloe, listen to me. Help us.

259 **MAUREEN CHLOE:** I am Maureen.

260 **FRANKIE:** Run! Now!

261 *The feedback gets louder, surrounding the friends.*

262 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH:** There's no need to run.

263 **MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST:** You're safe with me.

264 **STEW:** I didn't even get to say goodbye.

265 *The Maureens advance. Stew, Mac, Eloise, and Frankie's final*
266 *word overlaps.*

267 **STEW:** No!

268 **MAC:** No!

269 **ELOISE:** No!

270 **FRANKIE:** No!!

271 **MAUREEN NORTH/MAUREEN SOUTH/**

272 **MAUREEN EAST/MAUREEN WEST/MAUREEN CHLOE:** Maureen.

273 *The phone feedback gets louder and louder and louder,*
274 *surrounding Frankie, Eloise, Stew, and Mac until there is no*
275 *sound ever again.*

276 **—THE END—**