

Characters From *Speak To Me Of Home* by Jeanine Cummins

Main Characters

Rafaela Acuña Brennan: The family matriarch. Born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, she marries Peter Brennan Jr. in 1968 and moves to St. Louis, Missouri, in 1978. Her journey explores the isolation of the immigrant experience and the loss of cultural identity.

Ruth Hayes (née Brennan): Rafaela's daughter. Moving to the Midwest as a young child, Ruth suppresses her Spanish language and Puerto Rican habits to assimilate into American life, dealing with the xenophobia of the 1980s.

Daisy Hayes: Ruth's daughter and the youngest of the three women. In 2023, she returns to Puerto Rico to reclaim her heritage. Her near-death experience during a hurricane serves as a catalyst for the family to reconcile their past.

Supporting Characters

Peter Brennan Jr.: Rafaela's American husband and a former naval officer. While he offers a path to the U.S., he represents the cultural divide and sometimes fails to meet the family's emotional needs.

Benny Brennan: Ruth's brother and Rafaela's son. Unlike Ruth, he remains more connected to his Puerto Rican roots and lives in Puerto Rico with his own family.

Titi Lola: An influential aunt who provides a cultural touchstone for Benny and Ruth during their childhood.

Carlos & Vic Hayes: Members of the extended family associated with Ruth's life in the U.S..

Stefani: Daisy's cousin in Puerto Rico with whom she spends her holidays.

Candido: A figure from the family's past in Puerto Rico.