

Letters from Lisette
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CAST:
 Lisette, a doll (female), age 11-17
 Chantal a French Poodle with the heart of a St. Bernard, ageless (in a pinch “Chantal could be “Chanson” and a male)

(The lights change to PARIS and we are back with CHANTAL hiding behind LISETTE.)

CHANTAL
 Save me!

LISETTE
 From what?

CHANTAL
 From being beautiful. How do I look?

LISETTE
 Horrible.

CHANTAL
 Thank goodness. I hate the beauty shop! My Mistress may be kind but truly – everytime she takes me to the groomer, I come out looking – well – like you! No dignity in that at all!

LISETTE
 I ... think I look fine.

CHANTAL
 That’s because you’re not a dog! We are not supposed to have bows in our fur and jewels on our collar. We’re not supposed to be all gussied up like a doll. We’re supposed to save people in the mountains. Haul carts of food to mankind and be their savior.

LISETTE
 But – you’re a poodle.

CHANTAL
 But my heart is one of a St. Bernard’s. Put a keg around my neck! Let me deliver water! Let me guide you through treacherous territory! There is no task I will not undertake! No task is too large or too small for me! Let me be useful!

LISETTE

Could I ride you to the Eiffel Tower. I am very tired.

CHANTAL

What do I look like? A St. Bernard? *I'm a poodle!*

LISETTE

Well, accompany me then. So I don't get lost.

CHANTAL

Of course! That was what I was bred for!

(They take a few steps.)

You don't happen to have a dog bone with you, do you? I usually get a bone to chew on this time of day.

LISETTE

No, I am all out of dog bones.

CHANTAL

A pity.

(They take a few steps. Very few.)

Or – some cooked chicken? Sometimes my mistress likes to cook chicken very slowly in broth and vegetables and give it to me as a midday snack. It's very healthy and nutritious.

LISETTE

I am sorry. I did not bring my cooking pot.

CHANTAL

A pity.

(They take a step)

I'm hungry!

LISETTE

Look, I don't know how to tell you this...

CHANTAL

Chantal, my name is Chantal.

LISETTE

How do you do? I'm Lisette.

(They "shake" hands, paws, a tail, something.)

But I think you really are a poodle. And you should accept that.

CHANTAL

But – the bows? The jewels? It's just not me.

LISETTE

But the bones, the chicken stewed in broth, the pampering – that *is* you.

(CHANTAL paces.)

CHANTAL

I do like my downy bed. And my treats... and the bicycle basket my mistress puts me in when my legs are tired... *you're right!* I *am* a poodle! Just not a "poodley-poodle!"

LISETTE

Definitely not a poodley-poodle!

CHANTAL

I need to return to my mistress! I need to let her understand that I understand. I need to - get clean!

LISETTE

Jump in the river!

CHANTAL

Too dirty. I'll find a fountain. Merci, Lisette. You have been a great help. Even if you don't carry dog bones.

LISETTE

You're welcome!

CHANTAL

(Running away.) I hope you make it to the Eiffel Tower!

LISETTE

(Calling out to her.) **I hope so, too! Even if I have to do it ...** alone. I'm alone. Again.