

Letters from Lisette  
75-85 Minutes  
By Claudia I. Haas

Adapted from lore

**SYNOPSIS:** There is a story that Kafka found a young girl weeping in a park. He tried to console her, but she was bereft. She had lost her doll and would never get over it. Kafka announces that he has a letter that he found and he wonders if it could be from her doll. It was! And so began a three-week correspondence where Kafka wrote daily letters for the girl from her travelling doll. Her doll was not lost. She was merely travelling to return to her beloved France. The story might have gone something like this...

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## Letters from Lisette

### **Characters**

Sofie Schwarz (f) age 8; mourning a loss

Lisette (f) ageless, a doll on a mission;

Anya Meyer (f) 25-? Sofia's nanny; motherly because Sofia's mother isn't

Franz Kafka (m) 40, a writer who is losing his battle with life

Dora Fischer (f) (25), Kafka's friend, encourager, helper

Lisette (female) as played by a human actress (16-20)

Erik (male), late teens, student, Karla's brother

Karla (female), late teens, student, Erik's younger sister

Frederick (male) 16-25 toy soldier, wants to be brave

Caruso (male) the operatic Porpoise – must sing!

Hans (male) 18-25 – in love with Hilda

Hilda (female) 18-25 – in love with Hans

Chantal (female) French Poodle with the heart of a St. Bernard

Monsieur Cocteau (male) Toymaker (ageless, heart of gold)

### **Doubling**

Sofie Schwarz

Anya Meyer

Franz Kafka

Dora Fischer

Lisette (as played by a human)

Erik/Caruso/Frederick/Hans/Monsieur Cocteau

Karla/Hilda/Chantal

### **Setting**

Steglitz Park in Berlin and various European locales. For the travelling sequences, anything goes. Have a designated stage area for these scenes and fill them with found objects to be come the carriage for the Ferris wheel, etc. Or go all-out and use projections of the European cities.

### **Time**

July, August, 1924

Letters from Lisette

Scene 1, Friday, July 25, 1924

AT RISE we are in Steglitz Park in Berlin. It is a sprawling park with ponds, gardens, children's playgrounds, hills and a great place to observe ducks, geese and birds. All you need though is a park bench. SOFIE and ANYA are near it. SOFIE is holding a doll. An exceedingly well-made, exquisite doll.

SOFIE

You promised!

ANYA

I promised to play with you. I was thinking something simple like pushing you on a swing.

SOFIE

We always do that! I want to roll down the big hill.

ANYA

And I'll be right there to catch you at the bottom.

SOFIE

No! Roll with me! Please! (Beat.) I never get to do anything fun anymore.

ANYA

The medium hill.

SOFIE

The big one!

ANYA

*Medium!*

SOFIE

Medium but two times. I'd better leave Lisette here. I don't want her to get dirty.

ANYA

Isn't that a punch in the arm? Lisette cannot get dirty but your nanny can!

SOFIE

Race you!

(ANYA and SOFIE run off. LISETTE is seated on the bench. Lights dim and change and turn colors. Lights return and LISETTE is gone.)

(FRANZ KAFKA and DORA FISCHER enter. They see the empty bench and sit down. FRANZ has a notebook. DORA fusses over him. FRANZ wears a light jacket and scarf.)

DORA

Are you warm enough? We could go to the café for a warm drink.

FRANZ

*Dora! Stop fussing.* It's July not December! I think more clearly in the air.

DORA

Are you still writing that letter to your family? I don't know why you bother.

FRANZ

I want to know that I tried to do everything to stay in contact with them. If they choose to ignore my missives, I can live with that. But the choice is theirs. Not mine. And dear Ottla always answers.

DORA

Keep Ottla. Get rid of the rest.

FRANZ

I write all of them. There are some difficult Kafkas, but they are all mine to sort out.

(FRANZ writes for a moment. SOFIE runs on followed by ANYA who is sort of running. They are disheveled.)

SOFIE

You did it! You did look silly – but you did it! (beat; SOFIE looks around) – Excuse me, sir. Can you get up? I think you are sitting on my doll!

FRANZ

I certainly hope not!

(FRANZ and DORA leap up. SOFIE checks every inch of the bench.)

Oh no, oh no, oh no – *LISETTE!* Where could she have gone?

(SOFIE lets out a wail that would break the heart of every bird and human in the park.)

SOFIE

Noooooo!

FRANZ

Oh dear child. What sounds! Can I help you?

SOFIE

Nobody can ever help me again. Never, ever, never!

(FRANZ offers her a handkerchief. SOFIE wipes her face and then commences to wail into it – again. She then hands it to ANYA who gingerly takes it and tries to hand it back to FRANZ who refuses.)

FRANZ

Please. Keep it.

ANYA

Oh no. I couldn't, Mr.....

FRANZ

Kafka. Franz Kafka. This is my friend Dora Fischer. And I insist. Consider the handkerchief a gift.

ANYA

Thank-you Mr. Kafka. I am Anya Meyer and I cannot take a gift from a stranger.

(They gingerly exchange a handshake as the handkerchief falls to the ground. SOFIE picks it up.)

SOFIE

Lisette! My poor Lisette! Someone who does not know how to properly care for her probably stole her.

DORA

This Lisette is a doll?

SOFIE

The most perfect doll ever created! She has giant curls and a grand cloak and is beautiful.

DORA

She cannot have gone far. She is a doll after all.

SOFIE

An extra-special doll. My father brought her home from his travels. It was the last thing he ever gave me.

DORA

The last thing?

ANYA

He died during the New Year. It's been ... a difficult time.

FRANZ

Well, we must find her then. I wonder - maybe a bird picked her up.

DORA

Or a wild animal.

SOFIE

A wild animal? *No! My poor Lisette.*

DORA

No! Not a wild animal..... a duck, yes. A silly duck. (Beat.) Quack.

FRANZ

Let's have a look then, shall we? I shall cover the area by the pond and you check the woods around here. Is she a small doll?

ANYA

About half a meter long.

FRANZ

Then she cannot have gotten far with those little legs. Please, split up. There's no time to waste.

SOFIE

Thank-you, thank-you/

FRANZ

/Go!

(They split up. As soon as ANYA and SOFIE are out of sight, FRANZ sits down to write. He tears the paper in half.)

FRANZ

This paper is too big for a doll.

DORA

Whatever are you doing?

FRANZ

Go, Dora. Search for the doll. Maybe she's tangled in a tree further up in the woods?

DORA

You want me to go through bramble and brush while you just sit here as comfortable as can be on the bench? Think of a better plan.

FRANZ

I don't have to search. I've already found her.

(HE writes for a second or two.)

Do you have an envelope in that great big handbag of yours?

DORA

Why would I carry envelopes for a stroll in the park?

FRANZ

I don't know. You carry everything else. Never mind. I shall fashion one.

(FRANZ makes an envelope from a piece of paper and sticks a short letter in it. He sticks it into a slot on the bench.)

Perfect! Be on the lookout for Anya and Sofie. As they approach, I shall make my big discovery.

(Meanwhile, FRANZ musses up his hair and takes off his jacket.)

Come on, get yourself mussed up. This has to be realistic. We need to look like we searched the woods.

(They mess each other up a bit and then smile. Maybe there is a kiss.)

DORA

I don't know what you're up to....

FRANZ

But you know it will be interesting.

(ANYA and SOFIE approach.)

They're coming!

DORA

*She isn't anywhere!*

SOFIE

Have you had any luck?

ANYA

The woods were empty, I'm afraid... nothing but ... why look here! I didn't notice that before.

FRANZ

Do you see her?

SOFIE

Why ... it's a letter. And look! It's addressed to Miss Sofie.

FRANZ

*That's me! Open it!*

SOFIE

“Dear Miss Sofie,  
I am sorry to tell you this. But I have decided to return to my birth place. I never did get a good look at where I came from.”

FRANZ

She is travelling all the way to France!

SOFIE

She came from France?

FRANZ

Yes. Sofie's father had some business there. It is where he bought Lisette.

ANYA

Interesting.

FRANZ

Is there more?

SOFIE

Just a little.

FRANZ

SOFIE

Let me see!

SOFIE (Reading)

“I would like to use this ...this...

FRANZ

Opportunity.

SOFIE

- opportunity to see something of the world before I become shabby. I hope you understand. You will grow up. Dolls just get worn out. I shall write you of my adventures. I hope you will like that.

When I am done travelling, I shall try to make it back to you. You have been very kind to me and I love you very much. I wish you could also write me but I will be in many different places.

Warmest wishes,  
Lisette”

SOFIE

Doesn't she have the prettiest handwriting?

(DORA and FRANZ exchange a glance.)

How will she write me? I don't think letters get delivered to a park bench.

FRANZ

But my friend Dora runs a Kindergarten and in her room there is a doll house and ... and a doll café and ...

(FRANZ looks at Dora. “Play with me here.”)

DORA

And ... a doll school... and a doll bakery...

(FRANZ gives her a hard stare.)

DORA

*And a doll post office! That's it.* I do indeed have a doll post office. Of course school is not in session right now...

FRANZ

But the mail still gets delivered.

DORA

Yes, it does.

ANYA

I've heard about a doll post office!

FRANZ

Oh good!

SOFIE

I never heard of that!

FRANZ

... Most people don't know about it... isn't that true, Dora?

DORA

Oh! Yes. Very true.

FRANZ

I would think ... that Lisette will need time to get to her new place ... and so ... there probably won't be a letter every day.

DORA

Maybe ... once a week...

FRANZ

Or – every other day. That's it! I think there will be a letter every other day.

DORA

Franz! The doctor appointment. We're going to be late.

FRANZ

I'm sorry I do need to go. Shall we meet here in two days at the same time?

ANYA

Sofie does have her piano lessons, and is trying to advance in her language study/

SOFIE

/We will be here. I am Lisette's mother and I am a much more loving mother than my own. We will see you Wednesday morning.

ANYA

*Sofie!* Wednesday morning it is.

FRANZ

Until Wednesday then....

(FRANZ walks away.)

SOFIE

Wait! Your handkerchief!

FRANZ

Consider it a present from your new friend.

(DORA and FRANZ exit.)

SOFIE

Do you think what he says is true? Do you think Lisette will write me?

ANYA

I am certain of it.

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

**Scene 2** - Sunday, July 27, 1924

LISETTE GOES TO TIVOLI GARDENS

LIGHTS up at the same park bench. SOFIE is pacing. ANYA is seated and fanning herself. It is a warm July morning.

FRANZ and DORA enter.

SOFIE

Herr Kafka! Herr Kafka! Is there news? Do you have a letter? Do you? Please say you do?

FRANZ

Why it's right here. Now settle yourself so you can listen properly.

SOFIE

*May I read it!*

FRANZ

Shall we get settled on the bench?

(The group gathers.)

SOFIE

“Dear Sofie,

SOFIE (cont'd)

The most amazing thing happened. After I left the bench to go travelling, I saw a young gentleman wearing a beret. He was reading a French newspaper. As I am a clever doll, I decided he must be French. He had a train ticket. I decided he must be going back to France. Isn't that what you would have thought?

(We transition to LISETTE'S voice.)

LISETTE'S VOICE

I jumped into this small satchel he was carrying (which smelled like cheese) and sure enough he left the park with me bouncing about in his bag and went to the train station. I was so excited about how smart and clever I was, I could hardly breathe. But then – there was a surprise.”

(Fantasy lights.)

VOICE

CO-PEN-HAGEN! Last stop Copenhagen.

LISETTE'S VOICE

“I had gone north instead!”

(We are at the Copenhagen train station.  
KARLA is there to greet her brother as he steps off the train.)

KARLA

Erik! Over here!

ERIK

Karla! What a nice surprise. I thought nobody could come to meet me.

KARLA

I thought I'd surprise you. Your trunk arrived yesterday. All of your clothes are safe and sound as are your paintings. Let me look at you! You've filled out a bit. Mom will be pleased.

ERIK

I did take a liking to all those Parisian pastries.

KARLA

You can tell me all about your year in Paris on the way to the Tivoli Gardens. I bought us tickets. I know you missed the amusements here.

ERIK

You are the most wonderful sister ever!

I know. What's in the satchel?

KARLA

(KARLA garbs it.)

Just some bread and cheese/

ERIK

/And a doll!

KARLA

A doll?

ERIK

You remembered my doll collection.

KARLA

... yes. Yes, I did.

ERIK

She's so beautiful. What is this tag? Handcrafted – in France. Why you sly fox, you said you were too poor to buy anything.

KARLA

I ... saved a few francs... by not eating.

ERIK

I am going to name her Marie.

KARLA

Lisette! My name is Lisette!

LISETTE'S VOICE

Let's get a tram to the garden. The tall Ferris wheel waits.

KARLA

Nooooo!

LISETTE'S VOICE

You still like Ferris wheels, don't you?

KARLA

The higher the better.

ERIK

(LISETTE “crawls” back into the satchel.)

(Lights change to Berlin.)

SOFIA

Lisette is the luckiest doll in the world. I always wanted to go to the Tivoli Gardens. Father went there in his travels. He said it was magical. And there’s a view of the entire world from the top.

FRANZ

I don’t think Lisette thought it was magical. Listen.

(Fantasy lights.)

(KARLA is in a Ferris wheel carriage. There could be amusement park music.)

KARLA

Erik! Get in! It’s going to start! Hurry!

(ERIK runs in carrying a newly purchased stuffed animal.)

ERIK

Here. For you. I should do something for my sister who planned this grand welcome home day.

KARLA

But you did do something. You brought me Marie.

ERIK

I did? Oh! That’s right. I did.

KARLA

I should take her out of the satchel. I’d hate for to miss the view.

LISETTE’S VOICE

Nooooo!

KARLA

It’s starting!

ERIK

Away we go!

(The Ferris wheel is climbing. ERIK and KARLA are enchanted with all. They are pointing out views of the city and maybe rocking the carriage a bit.)

KARLA

You can see the palace from here! I love this ride on a clear day.

(LISETTE throws herself on the floor.)

(Lights flash, music plays and KARLA and ERIK are having the time of their life. All will stop. KARLA and ERIK exit the Ferris Wheel.)

KARLA

That was the most splendid ride ever! Are you game for the roller coaster?

LISETTE'S VOICE

I'm putting my foot down! No roller coaster.

(You could stage LISETTE leaving the satchel. Or let it be assumed.)

ERIK

You know me so well. I think we have time to do it twice!

(ERIK and KARLA exit. With a projection or a silly staging, we see LISETTE running away surrounded by big human legs – everywhere. We return to Berlin.)

SOFIA (reading letter)

“I had to get away from those rides before my terrified, little doll heart fainted away. I saw a sign for a ferry. I hope it takes me back to Germany. This time I shall pay attention as to which direction I am going! But right now, all I can see are human legs and feet everywhere! Wish me luck!

Your loving doll,  
Lisette”

SOFIA (cont'd)

I miss her.

FRANZ

But look at the grand adventure she is having.

SOFIA

I wish I was with her.

ANYA

But you're with me! Isn't that lucky?

SOFIA

I do love you, Anya. But you're not very adventurous.

ANYA

Ha! I roll down hills.

SOFIA

Maybe someday you could take me the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen.

ANYA

I'm like Lisette. I don't like rides.

DORA

Maybe someday, your mother will take you.

SOFIA

She's in Italy so I don't think she's taking me anywhere.

ANYA

It's getting late and your piano teacher will be at our home shortly.

FRANZ

And I have work to do.

SOFIA

But you'll be back on Friday, right?

FRANZ

You can count on it.

(ALL exit as the lights change to Copenhagen. We see a sign for the Ferry. Perhaps LISETTE tries to hop on an ankle for a ride but falls off. We hear the ferry horn blare. LISETTE falls down. Next to her, a toy soldier, FREDERICK falls down. Their eyes meet. There is a moment.)

FREDERICK

Well, hello.

LISETTE

Hello.

FREDERICK

I'm Frederick.

(As LISETTE is about to introduce herself,  
a boy snatches FREDERICK away.)

BOY'S VOICE

There you are! I thought I lost you!

(As FREDERICK disappears from sight, LISETTE  
yells out to him.)

LISETTE

**Lisette! I'm ... Lisette.**

Lights fade to black.

### **Scene 3**

LISETTE MEETS CARUSO, AN ITALIAN  
PORPOISE AND LEARNS TO SING

It is Tuesday, July 29 at Steglitz Park.  
SOFIE is already there pacing. ANYA waits  
patiently. DORA and FRANZ enter.

SOFIE

Herr Kafka! HERR KAFKA! Is there a letter?

FRANZ

There is. Now where did I put it? Here? Or there? I couldn't have dropped it.

SOFIE

Please!

FRANZ

For you.

(SOFIE just about tears it open.)

SOFIE

“Dear Sofie,

I have had a new adventure. I missed the ferry at the Copenhagen Pier and was very upset. I collapsed on the pier and suddenly...”

LISETTE’S VOICE

“...suddenly – I heard singing.”

(We are at the Pier with LISETTE She is pathetically weeping. Somewhere in the harbor is Caruso, a wanna-be-opera-singer-porpoise. We hear him singing.)

CARUSO

(To the tune of *Funiculi, Funicula*, Find tune here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HH0TMmgPtjg>

*No Pizza Pie*

Some eat their weight in plates of bread and pasta.  
But not say, I; but not say I. (aye?)  
Some eat their fill of meatballs and lasagna.  
Eat or die! Eat or die!

But me, I like to feast on calamari.  
No pizza pie! No pizza pie!  
While gazing at my lady-love, Caramari  
Under sea and sky; under sea and sky.

(Refrain)

Herring! Whitefish! Cod and octopi!  
Sardines! Mackerel! Squid and fishhead pie!  
No pizza pie, no pizza pie,  
No pizza pie, no pizza pie!  
Unless it has sardines don’t feed us cheesy pizza pie!

LISETTE

That was wonderful!

CARUSO

I know. So, Signorina, did I cheer you up?

LISETTE

For a moment. But now I am remembering that I am all alone and I'll never make it home. First, I am tortured by a Ferris Wheel and then I missed the last ferry to Germany and well, nothing is going right!

CARUSO

Little Pupa, are those real tears?

LISETTE

I don't know.

CARUSO

You know what they say, if you don't cry – your eyes can't be beautiful.

LISETTE

Who says that?

CARUSO

My wife.

LISETTE

Does she cry a lot?

CARUSO

Si, Signorina. The sun comes up – she cries (CARUSO cries in imitation – boo hoo or something similar). The sun goes down – she cries. (CARUSO fake cries.) The moonlight shines above us – she cries. She cries and she cries and her eyes – oh those eyes!

(CARUSO cries now in earnest.)

I miss those rainy eyes! *Caramari!*

LISETTE

Is she in Italy?

CARUSO

Italy? It's too hot in July! She's waiting for me in Hamburg. I must be off! (He starts to go and then looks back.) Signorina, would you like me to take you to Hamburg? Otherwise you shall spend the night alone on the pier.

LISETTE

I don't know. I've never ridden on a porpoise.

CARUSO

*Never fear! Caruso-the-magnifico-singing-porpoise-with-a-purpose is here!* I can get you all the way to Hamburg. Are you up for an adventure?

LISETTE

*I am!* But... I am not sure I want to get all wet. That would make me shabby before I reach my home.

CARUSO

I have the perfect solution.

(CARUSO dives under and comes back with possibly a saddle on its back and definitely with a pretty umbrella.)

CARUSO

The umbrella will protect you from the sea spray.

LISETTE

If you say so.

CARUSO

What are you waiting for? I have a date in Hamburg. I must be going. Avanti!

LISETTE

It's hard with these shoes and the cloak.

CARUSO

Don't worry. I haven't lost a doll yet.

LISETTE

You've done this before?

CARUSO

Never.

(LISETTE manages to get on CARUSO.)

CARUSO

And now – I shall sing you across the sea. But first little pupa, have you seen the harbor? It is magnifico! And the mermaid statue – such a delight! Hold on!

(CARUSO swims with LISETTE holding on to everything: to Caruso, her umbrella, her cloak.)

Signore, not so fast, please.

LISETTE

(CARUSO slows down and sings.)

CARUSO  
(He starts “Beautiful Dreamer”)

Beautiful dreamer, out on the sea  
Mermaids are chanting the wild lorelie,

Sing, Signorina, sing!

CARUSO (cont’d)

I don’t know how.

LISETTE

But you must sing! Life is a song!

CARUSO

I never learned.

LISETTE

CARUSO

(Stops swimming.)

Now *that* is a tragedy. Here we are – “The Little Mermaid.” Bene, no?

So beautiful.

LISETTE

I know. Like me. Now let’s get ready for the crossing. Arrivederci, Copenhagen!

CARUSO

(They swim. The lights turn to dusk.)

Soon there will be nothing but moon and stars. Look up. Bella, no?

Very.

LISETTE

CARUSO  
(Sings *By the Light of the Silvery Moon*.)

“By the light” – now you –

What? No!

LISETTE

Just sing what I sing. Again.

CARUSO

“By the light”

LISETTE

“By the light”

CARUSO

“Of the silvery moon...”

LISETTE

“Of the silvery moon”

CARUSO

“I want to spoon...”

LISETTE

“I want to spoon”

CARUSO

“For my honey I’ll croon loves tune.  
Honey moon....”

LISETTE

“Honey moon, honey moon”

CARUSO

“Keep a shinin’ in June...”

LISETTE

“Or July”

CARUSO

“Your silver beans will bring love’s dream  
We’ll be cuddlin’ soon.

LISETTE and CARUSO

“By the silvery moon.”

(They swim off as the lights change to Berlin.)

SOFIE

“Caruso got me safely back to Hamburg and I must say I am exhausted so I’ll close for now. I will write more later after I explore the city.

Yours with love,  
Lisette”

What an adventure! I want to ride on a porpoise! Wouldn’t you, Anya?

ANYA

Not on purpose.

(FRANZ has a bit of a coughing fit.)

DORA

I need to get you home. You must rest.

ANYA

You should see a doctor.

FRANZ

A doctor. Yes. I do see doctors. It’s nothing but a summer cough. It will pass. But I must rest.

SOFIE

Thank-you for bringing the letter. You will be back soon?

FRANZ

On Thursday. Until then – as Caruso would say, arrivederci.

(FRANZ and DORA exit.)

SOFIE

I hope Herr Kafka feels better.

ANYA

I hope so, too. Come. It’s time for your lessons.

SOFIA and ANYA exit as lights fade to black.

SCENE 4

AT RISE KAFKA is in his sitting room, reading a letter. DORA is with him.

DORA

Good news?

FRANZ

Wouldn't that be welcome! It's the letter I wrote my father – returned by my mother. Unread. I worked for months on that letter. Forty-five pages. It's longer than my novels. I thought we could finally start a conversation. I thought wrong.

DORA

I'm sorry.

FRANZ

Neither parent wants to hear my thoughts. I am an orphan but my parents are alive.

DORA

Many people are estranged from their parents.

FRANZ

True. But many choose to be. I worked on that letter in an effort to forge better understanding. I tried to explain myself and welcomed his thoughts on building a better relationship with me. But I am left again to wander in my memories – memories of picking me up out of my childhood bed in the middle of the night and locking me on the balcony in my nightshirt. Was it to build character? Strength? Or was it sheer malice? I will never know.

DORA

I know it's hard but you need to let go of this. Keep up your relationship with your sister and understand that it may be the only family connection that will stay.

FRANZ

That's easy to say from the person who spends all holidays with her parents and siblings.

DORA

But we're also an odd bunch. We talk and laugh. But we don't speak about some things – we've learned that many things are better left unsaid.

FRANZ

Do I tell my family? About my condition?

DORA

I think you should just tell Otlá. Because she's the one who will care. And that's what you need right now – care.

FRANZ

You're right as usual. For now, I shall turn my mind to Lisette's adventures. I prefer her reality to my own.

DORA

What about Sofie's reality? She is wrapped up in this world you created. You can't do this forever.

FRANZ

I will figure out something – later. But for now, this correspondence helps her and it helps me.

SCENE 5 – Lisette Meets Frederick (again)

AT RISE, it is early Thursday, July 31 in the park.  
SOFIE is in a bad mood... waiting.

SOFIE

*Where is he? We've been here forever!*

ANYA

It's hardly been forever. We got here early, remember?

SOFIE

Nothing is going right. It's too hot to do anything here. I'm bored.

ANYA

I could read you the letter from your mother.

SOFIE

No, thank you. I'd rather hear about Lisette's adventures.

ANYA

She misses you. She wants you to write her a letter.

SOFIE

If she wants to talk to me she can come home.

ANYA

The memories here are hard for her.

SOFIE

I have memories, too.

ANYA

Of course you do. I just meant/

(DORA and FRANZ enter.)

SOFIE

Herr Kafka! Herr Kafka! Is there a letter?

ANYA

*Sofie!* How are you feeling, Herr Kafka?

FRANZ

Better, thank-you.

SOFIE

Can I see it?

ANYA

*Sofie!* And how are you today, Dora?

DORA

Very well, thank-you.

SOFIE

*Can I pleeeeee have the letter!*

ANYA

She's usually not this rude, isn't that right Sofie?

SOFIE

I'm sorry. I'm glad you are feeling better. Truly. *Now*, may I see the letter?

FRANZ

Of course.

(FRANZ gives the letter to SOFIE. Who tears it open.)

SOFIE

"Dear Sofie,

I met a soldier! He's terribly good-looking and sweet. He's too shy to say much. But he has the most charming smile...

(The lights switch to the harbor in Hamburg. It is morning and the sun is bright. LISETTE is where she was dropped off by Caruso. SHE is fiddling with her dress and her hair – trying to put herself back together. She stands and suddenly sees FREDERICK who is laying down a few feet away. FREDERICK is in a soldier suit that is way too

small for him. We hear gulls swooping down and LISETTE chases them away.)

LISETTE

Scoot! There's nothing for you here! Fly away you noisy gulls!

(FREDERICK opens his eyes and sees LISETTE. HE smiles. LISETTE smiles.)

LISETTE

Hello. (Beat.) Can you speak?

FREDERICK

Yes... hello.

(Beat. They just look at each other.)

FREDERICK (cont'd)

Thank-you... for chasing the gulls away. I thought they might peck at me.

LISETTE

You're welcome.

(Beat.)

FREDERICK

LISETTE

I...

I...

LISETTE

Yes?

FREDERICK

It's nothing.

(FREDERICK gets up and tries to pull his too short jack down – or try to button it and cannot. He also tries to pull his too short trousers down. He's embarrassed.)

LISETTE

Did you grow over night? Your uniform looks – short.

FREDERICK

Yes... it... umm... well... shrunk you see. Uniforms do that if they get wet and are put in the sun.

LISETTE

I see.

(Beat.)

LISETTE

Did you take off your clothes and wash them in the harbor?

FREDERICK

Oh no! That would be most unseemly, don't you think?

LISETTE

Most.

(Beat.)

FREDERICK

I ... fell in. That is ... I was dropped. The boy who is my human dropped me just as the Ferry was pulling in.

LISETTE

Careless boy! I hope you ran away from him.

FREDERICK

Well... no. He's a good sort of chap. Just waves me around a bit in the air and then sometimes I fall. He cried and made a fuss and a dock worker kindly fished me out of the water. I was put on the dock to dry. It's too bad my body did not shrink with the clothes.

LISETTE

Perhaps they will get you a new uniform.

FREDERICK

Perhaps. (Beat.) I didn't see you on the ferry.

LISETTE

No. I came ... on a smaller boat. The Porpoise.

FREDERICK

I see.

(Beat. They just stare at each other.)

You're very ... nice ... looking.

LISETTE

Thank-you. (Beat.) I think. And you are ...

(SHE giggles.)

LISETTE (cont'd)

I'm sorry. It's just ... the uniform.

FREDERICK

I know!

(And he laughs.)

FREDERICK

I looked better yesterday!

LISETTE

I know! I mean... yesterday... at the pier...

(THEY grow closer.)

FREDERICK

Yes?

(Even closer.)

LISETTE

I saw you and ...

FREDERICK

... and...

(There might have been a kiss. Instead there is the blare of horns on ferries and boats and gulls and finally... an arm appears? They are dolls again? There is a change and we hear the same boy's voice that we heard in Copenhagen.)

BOY

There you are! I thought I'd never find you. Come on, the train for Paris leaves soon. Tomorrow we will be on the top of the Eiffel Tower! Won't that be fun?

(And as they are separated... we hear FREDERICK call out.)

FREDERICK

*We're going to the Eiffel Tower in Paris! Please come! And - I'm Frederick!*

(And he is gone.)

LISETTE

*I know! And I'm .. Lisette.*

(Lights change back to the park where SOFIE is continuing the letter.)

SOFIE

“So now, dear Sofie. I don't know what to do. Do I make a try to meet Frederick in Paris? I hear Paris is quite lovely in the summer.  
Your loving doll,  
Lisette”

Oh! Paris! I think she should go to Paris, don't you?

DORA

Absolutely! Mr. Kafka has told me wonderful things about Paris. Such a lovely setting for an adventure.

FRANZ

The gardens are poetry. I could write loving letters – *essays! I mean essays* – about Paris.

ANYA

I think she should go to Italy.

SOFIE and FRANZ

*What?*

ANYA

Sofie's mother writes such lovely letters about her adventures there.

SOFIE

I don't want to hear anything about Italy. Just Paris.

FRANZ

So, you *do* receive letters from your mother.

ANYA

Indeed she does.

FRANZ

And do you answer them?

ANYA

Indeed she does not.

FRANZ

I would give anything for a letter from my mother. You should answer, Sofie.

SOFIE

*No!* If she wants to talk to me, she should come home and do it in person.

FRANZ

But letters are special. They are forever. Conversations come and go but you can reread a letter again and again. They should be treasured.

ANYA

I keep all the letters side-by-side in a box together with the ones from her father.

FRANZ

I would give anything for such a box. Write your mother, Sofie. She'll realize what she is missing. She will come back.

SOFIE

You don't know anything about her.

FRANZ

You'd be surprised what I know about people.

DORA

It's true, Sofie. He surprises me all the time.

SOFIE

*I only want to hear from Lisette!*

FRANZ

And so you shall. I'll see you on Tuesday. I may be a little late. I have an early appointment that day.

(FRANZ and DORA exit.)

SOFIE

I wish I could write Lisette. I would tell her how much I miss her.

ANYA

You could write your mother.

SOFIE

No.

ANYA

And tell her about Lisette's adventures.

SOFIE

*No!*

ANYA

We could ... roll down a hill...

SOFIE

It's even too hot for that. (Beat.) But I love you for asking.

ANYA

I love you, too. Now about your mother/

SOFIE

*No!*

SCENE 6

(The lights fade to black. Lights up on FRANZ's flat. He is, of course, writing. And coughing just a bit. DORA enters with tea.)

DORA

I brought you some tea. I thought it might ease your cough.

FRANZ

That's very thoughtful of you. (He takes some tea.) I've been thinking.

DORA

Of course you have. It's what you do. About your family?

FRANZ

No. About Sofie's family. I wonder if there's a way to get her to write her mother.

DORA

You probably shouldn't insert yourself too much in to her family.

FRANZ

True. I am probably the last person to help someone with their family problems.

DORA

But you are the perfect person to finish your novel. How is the work going?

FRANZ

It's not. Maybe all I am is a short story writer after all. And *they* don't seem to get much attention. But the drive to make sense of what is senseless stays with me. The absurdities of the human condition stare me in the face. Even right now, I am alone. But I am not alone. How do I grapple with both those conditions at the same time?

DORA

Which is why you must continue to write. The world needs to hear your thoughts.

FRANZ

I wish you were the world.

DORA

In a sense I am. And you are my world.

(Lights fade to black.)

SCENE 7

LISETTE hitchhikes on human legs.

AT RISE we are in the park. It is Tuesday morning, August 2, 1924.

SOFIE is in the park reading. ANYA is next to her – reading. They periodically peer over their books and look to see if FRANZ and DORA are coming. After the “second peer,” ANYA finally speaks.

ANYA

He did say he'd be late.

SOFIE

I know. I'm not nagging.

(They read. They “peer.”)

SOFIE

What is “late?” One hour? Two hours?

ANYA

I don't know.

(They read. They “peer.” They read.)

They “peer” again.” As SOFIE and ANYA speak, FRANZ and DORA sneak up on them. They have pastries.)

SOFIE

Maybe there isn't a letter.

ANYA

That's a possibility.

SOFIE

But even if there isn't a letter – wouldn't Herr Kafka come by to say that there isn't a letter?

ANYA

Yes. I believe he would.

FRANZ and DORA

*Surprise!*

ANYA

Goodness! I just aged ten years!

SOFIE

But you're already old.

ANYA

Which means I don't need to roll down hills anymore.

DORA

Listen! We have a surprise!

FRANZ

Sweets!

SOFIE

Is it someone's birthday?

FRANZ

Does last month count? And today, I had a very good check-up at the doctor's office...

DORA

So we thought why not celebrate?

ANYA

I am so pleased your check-up went well. And look at all of these pastries! With all the rations, we never get anything sweet anymore.

SOFIE

I wish there was a way to make this last forever.

FRANZ

We can make it last all morning. First, we will go on an adventure with Lisette and then we feast on sweets!

(FRANZ hands SOFIE a letter. She tears it open.)

SOFIE

I hope she made it to Paris. And found Frederick because it sounds like she might be in love with him and people in love should be together.

“Dear Sofie,

I am on a train to Paris. It was quite difficult getting to the train station. But also funny. I wrapped myself around a gentleman’s leg. It made him rather itchy and he kept trying to scratch his leg but I moved around so he couldn’t get me.”

LIGHTS change and we are back at the docks in Hamburg.

NOTE: You can have HANS and HILDA be portrayed by two performers with Lisette as a puppet doll – OR – you can have four huge legs With LISETTE as a human.

HANS

It is so beautiful here!

HILDA

Yes, it is!

HANS

And I am with the most beautiful woman in the world!

HILDA

Yes, you are!

HANS

I wish we could stay this way forever!

HILDA  
So do I!

HANS  
Let's runaway to Paris and get married!

HILDA  
What?

HANS  
So that we can stay this beautiful forever. What do you say?

HILDA  
Married?

HANS  
Yes.

HILDA  
My father would never approve.

HANS  
That's why we need to run away to Paris.

HILDA  
We'll be poor.

HANS  
But rich in love.

HILDA  
I will lose my inheritance.

HANS  
But you will always have me.

HILDA  
You will be poor.

HANS  
I'm already poor. What do you say? Will you marry me? We shall make beautiful music together. You will be beautiful. I will be beautiful. Life will be beautiful! Don't you love me?

HILDA  
Yes!

Then, marry me!

HANS

(Beat.) Okay.

HILDA

LISETTE'S VOICE  
"I heard them say, "Paris" and I knew they were my ticket there. I jumped on the gentleman's shoes and off we went."

(Perhaps we see the actors go or the legs in motion.)

"I curled my little fingers under the hem of his trousers because he moved very fast. And in a blink of an eye, we were at the railroad station."

(We hear a train blare its horn.)

CONDUCTOR VOICE  
"All aboard. Train to Paris! All aboard!"

Dear Hans!

HILDA

Dear Hilda!

HANS

I don't have a change of clothes!

HILDA

Nor do I.

HANS

Or a toothbrush.

HILDA

Oh no!

HANS

Oh yes! I cannot go!

HILDA

I understand.

HANS

HILDA

We must stay here.

HANS

If we must, we must.

HILDA

We must stay in Hamburg where I will be rich.

HANS

And you will spend your money on me.

HILDA

Of course.

HANS

And we will go about town being beautiful together.

HILDA

Very beautiful.

HANS

Until death do us part.

HILDA

Or we go broke. Whichever comes first.

(LISETTE has now dropped off of HANS  
and is making her way to the train. The lights  
change to the park.)

SOFIE

“And so dear Sofie, I made it to the train on time. I wonder if Frederick is on the train. It’s hard to say. All I see are legs. But I found a baggage compartment where I fit quite nicely and will rest until we get to Paris. It’s been a busy few days.

With affection,  
Lisette”

She’s on her way! This is so exciting. I wish I could hop on a train and join her! I miss her.

FRANZ

You love her?

SOFIE

Of course.

FRANZ

And you believe people in love should be together.

SOFIE

Don't you?

FRANZ

Yes. I do.

(FRANZ holds up a sweet.)

FRANZ

Let's make a sweet toast with our sweets, shall we? To being together? To love?

ALL

To love!

(And with that, the lights dim as they hand out the pastries, maybe feed each other and very happily partake in the pastries.)

OPTIONAL INTERMISSION

If there is no intermission, have a short montage of French music and Lisette dancing in the Paris streets (preferably at sunrise). This can be done with projections or simple cutouts of a few Paris landmarks.

SCENE 8 – SOFIE'S Home and FRANZ'S home.

LIGHTS UP on SOFIE finishing a school assignment and FRANZ opening a letter. SOFIE is deep in thought with arithmetic. ANYA enters.

ANYA

The spelling is perfect – all correct. How's the arithmetic going?

SOFIE

I hate multiplication.

ANYA

Everyone goes through that phase. I think you need a break. Look what I found.

SOFIE

A letter? From Lisette? That can't be.

ANYA

From your father. When he traveled he would often send me a letter along with a letter for your mother. He was very kind. (Beat.) Open it. It won't bite.

(SOFIE gingerly takes it. FRANZ reads his letter.)

FRANZ

At least it's from Ottila so it won't bite me.

"Dear Franz:

I am sorry to hear of your recent health issues."

OTTLA'S VOICE

"There is only one solution. You must come home and let me care for you. Forget Father and Mother. Little Vera and Helene would love to spend time with their Uncle Franz. They are growing so fast. Joseph is in agreement with me. We welcome you into our home."

SOFIE

"Dear Anya,

Thank-you so much for the care you give to Sofie and Margaret."

FATHER'S VOICE

"I wish I did not have to travel so much but a man must provide for his family. I am grateful for all that you do to help us. I miss Margaret and Sofie but I take solace in knowing they are together. It is important for families to be together as much as possible. And of course, Anya, that includes you. You are part of our family."

OTTLA'S VOICE

"It is ironic that you and me, the two youngest siblings, never did fit into the mold that was expected of us. I am sure Father and Mother have had many discussions as to what happened to make us so different than the rest of the family. But that is why we need to stick together. Please consider coming home."

FATHER'S VOICE

"I will be home soon. Until then, give Sofie an extra hug for me and remember to pick up some daisies for Margaret. They are her favorite flower and they're in season.

Most sincerely,  
Joseph"

OTTLA'S VOICE

"I await your arrival.  
Much love, Ottila"

(SOFIE and FRANZ run their fingers down the letter as the lights fade.)

SCENE 9 – LISETTE meets CHANTAL.

AT RISE, we hear some “French” music. LISETTE is sitting on a blanket that she mysteriously has. Perhaps she is somewhere along the Seine. There could be a makeshift picnic. It would be swell if there was the Eiffel Tower way in the background. She is writing a letter. Suddenly, a French Poodle who has just left the “Pet Beauty Shop” comes barreling through. SHE knocks over LISETTE and proceeds to pull bows out of her fur. Then she rolls around in the dirt – and if there is no dirt, she finds some way to get herself dirty – perhaps with a “dirt sponge?”

LISETTE

Hey!

CHANTAL  
(Not at all sorry)

Whou-whouf! Whouf! Vaf! Vaf!

LISETTE

Allez-vous en! (*Translation: Go away.*)

(CHANTAL gets the zoomies around LISETTE.)

CHANTAL

Help me! Aidez-moi! Wouf! Help! Aidez-moi! Wouf!

(The lights fade to black.)

SCENE 10

LIGHTS UP on the Berlin Park. It is Thursday, August 4, 1924. ANYA and SOFIE enter just as FRANZ and DORA are entering. SOFIE runs to FRANZ.

SOFIE

Herr Kafka! Herr Kafka! Is there a letter? Is there?

(FRANZ is having a relapse.)

FRANZ

Indeed there is. Would you mind if we sit a minute? I am tired today.

(FRANZ sits on their usual bench. DORA and ANYA join him. SOFIE paces.)

SOFIE

Can I ... do something? Rub your back? Fetch you a sandwich from the café? Well, I can't. I don't have any money - but Anya could! Herr Kafka? What can I do?

FRANZ

Just sit for a minute.

(SOPHIE sits – all jittery and twittery but she sits.)

Yes, that's very helpful.

(SOPHIE jumps up.)

ANYA

Sophie!

SOPHIE

I'm not doing anything.

ANYA

Please continue to “not do anything” in a quieter manner.

(SOPHIE sits. She twiddles her thumbs. ANYA gives her “the stare.” SOPHIE stops fidgeting and whistles – even if she cannot. SOPHIE avoids ANYA'S glare.)

BEAT

FRANZ

I suppose we should begin.

(FRANZ takes out LISETTE'S newest letter. SOPHIE leaps up and runs around the bench behind FRANZ to see it.)

Would you like to read it?

SOPHIE

I'm too excited to read properly. Would you? Please!

FRANZ

Of course.

“Dear Sophie:

“As you know, I arrived safely in Paris. I am trying to make my way to the Eiffel Tower. It is a long walk from the train station on my little doll legs. So I took a short break...”

LISETTE'S VOICE

“When I was bowled over by an unusual poodle!”

(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.

(We switch pack to the Berlin park and hear Lisette's voice.)

LISETTE'S VOICE

“and so dear Sophie, I will close. Keep your fingers crossed that I make it to the Eiffel Tower. It is still several kilometers away. I miss you Sophie. I know I wanted an adventure but now I think it would be much more fun if I did this with you. I wish we were going to the Eiffel Tower together.  
With love or as they say in France “avec amour,”  
Lisette”

SOFIE

Will we never find out if she makes to the Eiffel Tower and sees Frederick?

FRANZ

Why, I can't say...

DORA

Of course you can't. (Beat.) You must rest.

FRANZ

Yes. I wish I could spend the morning with you.

SOFIE

But – you were getting better!

FRANZ

I'm up and down. Today – I'm down.

SOFIE

I sincerely hope that when we meet again, you will be “up.” I wish I could help.

FRANZ

There is actually something you could do which would make me very happy.

SOFIE

Anything.

FRANZ

Write your mother.

(SOPHIE just stares and ????)

Promise?

... promise...

SOPHIE

Thank-you.

FRANZ

(FRANZ and DORA exit.)

And will you keep your promise?

ANYA

I think I have to.

SOFIE

LIGHTS FADE

SCENE 11

LIGHTS UP on LISETTE in Paris. It is sunset. There could be a projection of the bottom of the Eiffel Tower in the background where LISETTE looks very small. Very small indeed. LISETTE looks up.

It's a l-o-n-g way up.

LISETTE

Blackout

In blackout we hear FRANZ and then SOPHIE.

FRANZ  
“Dear Ottla,  
I sincerely thank you for the offer of your home as a safe haven. I am looking to take advantage of your hospitality. My health is giving me concern. There are a few things I need to do before I return to Prague, but I hope to be there by mid-August.  
Sincerely,  
Franz”

SOPHIE

“Dear Mother...”

SCENE 12

LIGHTS up on the Berlin park. It is Saturday, August 6, 1924. DORA and FRANZ are on the bench. FRANZ is scribbling away.

DORA

I thought you finished the letter.

FRANZ

I did! But I had a new idea. There's always a new idea!

DORA

Stop pushing yourself!

FRANZ

I cannot buy time. I must make use of what I have.

(ANYA and SOPHIE enter.)

DORA

They're coming!

(FRANZ hastily puts the letter in the envelope.)

FRANZ

I'm ready!

SOFIE

Herr Kafka, how are you feeling?

FRANZ

Strong enough to spend an hour in the park with you.

SOFIE

Is there a letter?

FRANZ

First, tell me – did you write your mother.

SOFIE

I did. I even told her I missed her. Because she wrote that over and over again in her letters. That she missed me.

FRANZ

*Do you miss your mother?*

SOPHIE

Well ... yes. But I only told her because she told me first.

DORA

We posted the letter today!

FRANZ

I am proud of you, Sofie. Now – let’s see what Lisette wants to tell us. You start.

(FRANZ hands the letter to SOFIE.)

SOFIE

“Dear Sofie,

I have so much to tell you, I don’t know where to begin. I did make it to the Eiffel Tower. It is 17 thousand and ten steps to the top! That’s a lot of steps for a doll with short legs. There is a lift but it is hard to get on – it is so crowded. I worried about being stepped on and squished.

(We switch to the EIFFEL Tower and LISETTE.)

LISETTE’S VOICE

“And *then* it started to rain. There were so many people coming down, it seemed impossible that one could go up. Finally I held on to a lady’s umbrella and made it all the way to the top.”

(LISETTE is at the top of the Eiffel Tower. There’s thunder and lightening. LISETTE peers out at Paris – a possible projection. She tries to stand on some rails and winds up standing on FREDERICK! FREDERICK is no longer in his shrunken soldier clothes but in something incongruous – lederhosen? A baker’s outfit? You decide.)

FREDERICK

Well ... hello!

LISETTE

Frederick! It’s me, Lisette!

FREDERICK

I ... know.

LISETTE

What are you doing on the ground?

FREDERICK

I ... don't know. Charles, the boy I belong to was waving me around and I was worried he would drop me off the Tower. And that would have been the end of me. So I threw myself on the ground.

LISETTE

That was the reasonable thing to do.

FREDERICK

I thought so. Then there was a thunder clap and everyone started running every which way and that way and - well ... here I am!

LISETTE

Here you are! (Beat.) You've changed.

FREDERICK

No, I haven't! Oh! The clothes. Yes. At least they fit.

(Beat.)

FREDERICK

How ... are you?

LISETTE

... fine. I am fine. A bit tired. But fine! No! Not fine. Exhausted. In the last few days, I have been on a train, a Ferris Wheel, a porpoise, another train and then I walked from the train station to here. I have been hanging on to so many human legs that my fingers went numb. (LISETTE starts to break down.) I met a busy poodle who didn't know she was a poodle ... and I ... I ... was determined ... to meet you at the Eiffel Tower and I don't know why ... I am a silly doll! (LISETTE cries.)

FREDERICK

Don't cry.

LISETTE

All right. (LISETTE stops crying.)

FREDERICK

May I – hold your hand?

LISETTE

Maybe. I think ... yes.

(And very slowly, LISETTE and FREDERICK'S hands reach for each other. At the moment of contact, there is a huge thunderclap. They jump apart.)

Goodness!

FREDERICK

Oh my!

LISETTE

Shall we try again?

FREDERICK

(And they do. And they make contact.)

This is ... this is ...

LISETTE

Wonderful.

FREDERICK

Yes.

LISETTE

Look out there.

FREDERICK

(They look out at Paris – holding hands of course. Their sight lines are probably blocked a bit because they are short – they are dolls after all.)

Paris is at our feet.

FREDERICK (cont'd)

(THEY look out and are so very content for a moment. Suddenly we hear the BOY'S (Charles) voice.)

Frederick! *Frederick!* Where arrrrre you?

BOY'S VOICE

I have to go.

FREDERICK

(But he takes her other hand.)

LISETTE

Come away with me! We can see the world together!

BOY'S VOICE

Frederick!

FREDERICK

But the boy/

LISETTE

He doesn't care for you!

FREDERICK

He needs me.

LISETTE

I care for you!

(LISETTE releases her hands.)

I ... shouldn't have ... oh my, that was forward of me.

FREDERICK

Lisette. I care for you, too. But.

LISETTE

The boy.

BOY'S VOICE

Oh Frederick! Please be here!

FREDERICK

His father died in the Great War. His mother died of the flu. He lives with his uncle and I am all that is left from his early life. Don't you have someone who needs you?

LISETTE

I did. But I ran away.

FREDERICK

Why?

LISETTE

To see for myself what is out there.

FRED-ER-ICK!

BOY'S VOICE

Lisette/

FREDERICK

/I know. Go to him. Let him find you.

LISETTE