

little mother, had left her. With a shrill scream Celeste had darted out under the horse's feet to rescue her darling. The horse had reared, and trampled on Rosine, and had come very near trampling on Celeste herself. But the young soldier, the rider of the horse, had jerked it back, and then, reaching down from the saddle, had picked up the forlorn bundle of rags which was all that remained of poor Rosine and had restored her to her weeping mother. "There, petite, do not cry," he had said to Celeste, "I will buy you another doll larger and more beautiful than this, and will bring it to you when I return from Paris." And he had smiled right down into her eyes! "Au revoir, mademoiselle," he had said and had saluted, this young officer with the three stripes on his sleeve.

Celeste believed that he would return, but Mère Marie had scolded her soundly, and had laughed to scorn her assertion that the beautiful officer would bring her back a doll, to take the place of the lamented Rosine.

"They do not always keep their promises, these soldiers," Mère Marie had said. "You had better forget about the young officer. Do you suppose he will remember our little French girl in all the things he has to remember?"

But Celeste had believed, and he had come back with the doll! Yes, it was much, much larger and more beautiful, than Rosine, though not as dear. And 'le bon soldat' had told her that he might perhaps be coming back in a month's time, and would again come to see how the doll liked her new home and mother.

"If"—he had sighed, and then stopped.

"If what, monsieur?" Celeste had enquired gently.

"Is it that you will then go forever?"

"Oui, mademoiselle," the soldier had rejoined, "if I can only obtain my release." He had sighed again deeply.

"Do you fear that you cannot get it?" asked Celeste again.

"Yes," the soldier had replied. "It is very difficult to obtain one. And oh! How I want to get away from all this!" He had passed his hand over his forehead wearily, and Celeste had noticed that it was thin, and that his face was pale and haggard.