

About „Who is Laurette?“

Who is Laurette, a play about a girl with Down's syndrome, appeals on small spectators to change their view of children who are different. Laurette's story has its moments of pain with the aggravating circumstance that she must integrate into regular school with other children, but with her pure perception of the world around her, unburdened with trivial matters, and with her sense of humour, Laurette manages with ease to experience joy in her growing-up. It is a challenge to deal with a topic such as

Although children with Down's syndrome are like everybody else in their perfection and imperfection, with their utter virtues and weak points, in some aspects of operating in everyday life disabled, but if properly worked with, activities can be discovered they pursue with great commitment and often be very successful in them. Laurette is skilful in riding a pony. In this story she gets her award and becomes accepted by the class in her ordinary school in quite an unassuming and spontaneous manner, through her love of riding. Through Laurette's companionship with the Pony her internal world is revealed. In the beginning, her companionship with the Pony is Laurette's getaway and refuge from the reality around her, but in time it becomes a means which helps her become a part of that reality.

The main intention of the play „Who is Laurette?“ is to show that diversity should not be treated as a flaw, but as a quality. That is the reason why we do not treat Down's syndrome as a „disease“ (which is a frequent mistake people make, even the highly-educated ones), but as any other characteristic.

We also tried to bring our Laurette and her bewilderment and dilemmas closer to each and every one of our little spectators, and parent or teacher in the theatre. That is why, along with the question „Who is Laurette!“, we set the not at all easy task to our audience - to try to find the answer to the question who they themselves really are ...

Milena Depolo

Who is Lorette?

by

Milena Depolo

(based on "Qui est Laurette?" by Florence Cadier)

CHARACTERS:

Lorette, 10 – character names' spelling in French

Pony, 10 lets say

Elsa, 8

Sebastian, 12

Mum

Dad

Teacher

Riding Teacher

Clara

Marie

Phillipe

Jean

Classmates

Classmates' parents

Quiet, sad music is heard. Sound of camera going off is heard. MUM, DAD, SEBASTIAN, ELSA & LORETTE are stood together as if a family photo is being taken. They are perfectly still for a while. They are "framed". It's a nice, functional, "normal" family. Suddenly, they start to move a little inside the photograph. The photograph comes to life.

MUM (to the audience):

I am Mum. A real, true Mum. I love my husband and my three children. I am gentle, caring and an excellent cook. My cherry pie is the best.

DAD (to the audience):

I am Dad. Head of the family. I go to work and on my way back I go to the market. I read newspaper and do DIY around the house.

SEBASTIAN (to the audience):

I am Sebastian. I am 12 and I am the eldest. You can tell by the way my sisters do what I say. I play video games at home and football at school.

ELSA (to the audience):

I am Elsa. I am eight. I have straight A's and most of all I am annoyed by stupid girls who have already started painting their nails.

Pause.

There is one family member left. LORETTE. The other family members turn towards her. Finally, her puppet i.e. "photo" comes to life although, unlike the rest, she exits the frame.

LORETTE (to the audience):

I am Lorette.

The rest of the puppets leave the frame now, and whilst they're saying their lines, they are getting in the position for the following scene. LORETTE remains in the middle and watches what's going on around her. As she's watching their rapid actions, she starts to spin.

ELSA (to the audience):

Lorette is our middle sister. Older than me and younger than Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN (to the audience):

She doesn't go to school.

ELSA:

She does! But her school is special.

SEBASTIAN:

They do different things there. Same as the kids in kindergarden. And she's already 10.

ELSA:

The school is called "Smile". And I really like it.

SEBASTIAN:

Because you're a kid.

ELSA and SEBASTIAN slowly move to the side of the stage. Children from "Smile" arrive. They surround Lorette. They perform a dance - "What Kids Do".

SEBASTIAN:

They draw at her school, just like kids do.

ELSA:

They play instruments and sing.

SEBASTIAN:

They woddle in PE.

ELSA:

I like them. They always smile.

SEBASTIAN:

Their eyes are tiny, different somehow.

ELSA:

But they smile.

SEBASTIAN:

Their heads are like balls, totally different to ours.

ELSA:

But Lorette is happy. Can't you see she's happy? Always!

SEBASTIAN:

That's because she's different to us.

LORETTE:

Mum, why am I different?

MUM gives her a hug then sits her in her lap.

MUM:

Maybe it's us who are different...

Now the family is in a position for a "typical family evening". And the set has transformed into a living room. Now it can all start...

"A Typical Family Evening"

It trully is a typical family evening. MUM and DAD are on the couch, watching TV. They are passing the remote etc. LORETTE sits in her MUM's lap. ELSA and SEBASTIAN are on the floor. SEBASTIAN gets up. He expertly makes shapes in the air.

SEBASTIAN:

Let's play Games Without Frontiers!

ELSA jumps to her feet and joins him in jumping around.

ELSA:

Let's!

MUM:

What about Lorette?

SEBASTIAN:

Let's bowl!

ELSA:

Let's!

TATA:

What about Lorette?

SEBASTIAN:

Let's paly Monopoly then!

ELSA:

Buying and selling! Let's!

MUM:

What about Lorette?

SEBASTIAN:

"What about Lorette? What about Lorette?" What should we do then?

MUM:

Do the puzzle.

SEBASTIAN:

That's boring. And it's for girls. I'm going to do my homework.

DAD:

And I can never get you to do it.

SEBASTIAN:

Doing homework is more fun than doing the puzzle.

He goes to his room.

ELSA:
You and I will do the puzzle.

The two girls are doing the puzzle. (It would be good to turn this into some kind of a game) Giant puzzle and the picture that slowly forms. LORETTE occasionally makes mistakes and ELSA corrects her.

ELSA:
That's a roof, see? It goes here.

LORETTE:
Yes.

ELSA:
And this? Lorette, what colour is this?

LORETTE:
Green.

ELSA:
And this tree, what colour is it?

LORETTE:
Rustly.

ELSA:
What colour?

LORETTE:
Like a leaf in the tree. Rustly, fresh... Like grass! Like leaves and grass!

ELSA:
That's right. Green.

LORETTE:
Green.

ELSA:
Well done. So, this part goes here.

LORETTE (*happy*):
And this one...

She's wrong. She can't get the part to fit but she insists.

ELSA:
Try to put it here.

LORETTE:
No!

MUM:
Elsa, be patient.

ELSA:
I am. Try here.

LORETTE:
No! No! No!

ELSA:
You're wrong.

LORETTE:
No!

LORETTE is angry. She starts destroying the picture they made together.

LORETTE:
Not here! I don't want it here. No!

There are only two pieces left that are still together.

ELSA:
Lorette don't...

LORETTE:
Not here! I don't want it here! No!

Finally she breaks the last two pieces apart. Angry, she makes some strange sounds that scare ELSA.

ELSA starts crying.

ELSA:
Why? Why, Lorette? Why?

MUM:
Calm down.

ELSA:
Why? Why, Lorette? Why?

Last three lines turn into a song. MUM, ELSA and LORETTE perform a little dance. MUM and ELSA exit the stage, leaving LORETTE alone.

The set has, during the dance, turned into a hyppodrome. LORETTE is being surrounded by the children from the school "Smile" and the riding teacher.

“New Friend”

*Riding teacher is in the middle, surrounded by the children from the school “Smile”.
[Riding teacher can be a voice over]*

RIDING TEACHER:
Welcome to the riding school!

The children are happy, jumping up and down, causing commotion.

RIDING TEACHER:
These are your ponies. Look what they can do.

A few ponies appear. They walk together and form a line. They perform a little dance. [It is the dance that PONY will do by himself later on.] They are all very agile and at the end, they even jump the obstacle. [PONY’s solo dance will last longer, of course].

RIDING TEACHER:
One, two, three! Children, form the line!

The children form a line, everyone stands next to their pony and gets on it. LORETTE is the only one left without a pony. The rest of the children ride away in a perfectly even rhythm.

RIDING TEACHER:
We’ll bring one more pony for you, Lorette. Stay here.

LORETTE is alone on stage. A sound similar to wind is heard joined by the sound of hoofs. A tail flashes before her eyes. Then four hoofs. Finally, PONY appears in front of her. LORETTE tries to pet him but he moves away.

RIDING TEACHER:
Be patient Lorette. Let Mr Pony show you what he can do. Trot.

PONY trots.

RIDING TEACHER:
Pony dance.

PONY performs a little dance.

RIDING TEACHER:
Pirouettes.

PONY does pirouettes.

RIDING TEACHER:
On your hind legs.

PONY stands up and starts doing pirouettes on his hind legs.

RIDING TEACHER:
Lorette, do you like him?

LORETTE (*overjoyed*):
Yes! Yes! That's my pony!

She tries to pet him again.

RIDING TEACHER:
Be patient, Lorette. The hardest bit remains. The obstacle jump.

Dramatic music plays. PONY gets ready, gathers speed and... Stops in front of the obstacle. Does not jump over.

RIDING TEACHER:
You are stubborn. As if you were a mule and not a pony.

Pause.

RIDING TEACHER:
You are completely different to all the other ponies.

PONY is sad. He hangs his head and starts to leave the stage. LORETTE stops him.

LORETTE:
Maybe it's them who are different...

PONY turns around and faces her. He stops. The actor takes off the Pony mask and remains on stage as PONY the Boy, LORETTE's friend. They stare at each other for a while. The two of them, alone. The set turns into a dining room.

“Family Meeting”

The family is at the table having dinner. ELSA and SEBASTIAN are throwing food crumbs at each other which is making LORETTE smile.

MUM:

Elsa, Sebastian, enough. I have something important to tell you.

SEBASTIAN:

I'm getting a dog!

ELSA:

I'm starting fencing lessons!

MUM:

It's not that.

SEBASTIAN:

We are moving to Georges' building.

ELSA:

We're going to Grandma and Grandpa's for the weekend.

DAD:

No, no. Something a lot more important.

MUM:

It's about Lorette.

LORETTE:

About me?

MUM:

Yes, about you sweetheart. I've spoken to Mr Prerre, your teacher.

DAD:

He says that Lorette could start going to your school.

MUM:

Once a week for a start.

DAD:

And then more often. That way she will thrive.

MUM:

We wanted to talk to you about this. What do you think Elsa?

ELSA:

That's great! I will look after her.

MUM:
That's right. Both you and Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN stands up. LORETTE joins him and gives him and ELSA a kiss.

SEBASTIAN:
That's a really bad idea.

LORETTE sits back down, sullen.

SEBASTIAN:
No one at school knows that I have another sister.

DAD:
Well good, now they'll get to meet her.

SEBASTIAN:
When they see her my friends will laugh at me.

DAD:
Sebastian, go to your room.

SEBASTIAN turns to leave, then he stops.

SEBASTIAN:
It's not my fault.

He leaves.

MUM:
Most importantly, we should ask Lorette. Lorette, what do you think?

LORETTE starts skipping around the stage.

LORETTE:
I'm going to school! I'm going to school! I'm going to school! I'm going to school!

She skips all the way to the school. The set turns into a classroom. LORETTE enters. The pupils are already there. So is the TEACHER.

“School”

TEACHER is stood in front of the clas. The words are being written letter by letter (figure out how). The children are reading.

CLASSMATES (*reading*):

D-E-A-R-L-O-R-E-T-T-E (comma) W-E-L-C-O-M-E-T-O-Y-E-A-R-O-N-E.

LORETTE runs towards TEACHER and gives her a kiss. TEACHER is startled but doesn't show it.

TEACHER:

Dear Lorette, welcome to Year One. We have saved you a seat. Here.

She takes her to her seat. LORETTE sits down.

TEACHER:

Let's introduce ourselves. Everyone should say something about themselves.

CLASSMATES are getting up and saying something about themselves, one by one.

MARIE:

My name is Marie. I like Bratz dolls and colour pink.

PHILIPPE:

My name is Philippe. I love my ants hill more than anything. I watch the ants work and I throw in bread crumbs.

CLARA:

My name is Clara. I like it when my Grandma bakes me an apple pie and the smell spreads around the house.

JEAN:

My name is Jean. I like robots, ninjas, karate and boxing.

TEACHER:

Very good. And now it's our new friend's turn.

LORETTE:

My name is Lorette.

Pause. Everyone is expecting her to carry on but LORETTE feels shy. She starts to laugh. Quietly at first then louder.

MARIE:

Miss, why is she laughing?

TEACHER:

Lorette is a little bit shy. Sit down sweetheart.

CLASSMATES approach her and stare.

PHILIPPE:

Why are her eyes slanted?

JEAN:

She's older than us. Look how big she is! She's funny looking.

TEACHER:

That's enough. It's not nice to talk that way about your new friend. Go back to your seats. We shall continue with our writing practice.

Sound of rustling is heard. Papers are flying everywhere. A working atmosphere. TEACHER approaches LORETTE.

TEACHER:

Lorette, why don't you draw something?

LORETTE distances herself from the class a little and starts to draw. It's a bench or something that can be found in the school yard. JEAN gets up from his seat and approaches her.

JEAN:

Look! She's drawing! We're writing and she's still drawing. And she draws like a small child.

Some of the children laugh.

TEACHER:

Jean! I don't want to hear you speak like that! Besides, Lorette's drawing is a piece of art. Well done Lorette!

School bell goes off.

TEACHER:

Allright. Off to your break everyone. Show Lorette our school yard.

Sound of children playing is heard. Now everyone is slowly gathering around the bench Lorette "drew". It's a part of the school yard. The break is on. Lorette has been sitting on the bench noticeably long. No one's approaching her. The kids have formed small groups in all corners of the school yard. Finally, ELSA approaches with a FRIEND, a girl.

ELSA:

This is my little sister. My Lorette.

FRIEND:

Ha! Her head is round like a full moon.

ELSA:
That's an ugly thing to say.

FRIEND:
What's your name?

LORETTE:
Lorette.

FRIEND:
Boppet? Puppet? Dumbet! Hahahaha! Dumbet! She's silly! I don't understand a word she says!

ELSA:
You're silly! And rude! But Lorette is good and she's not mad at you. Everyone who has Down syndrome like her is good.

FRIEND:
Down syndrome? What's that? You're silly too!

ELSA:
I'd explain but you wouldn't be able to understand. You're not smart enough!

FRIEND sticks her tongue out at them and leaves. ELSA hugs LORETTE.

ELSA:
Don't worry. She's stupid. And you are one great girl who makes a great cherry pie.

SEBASTIAN turns up with a friend (a boy). LORETTE is thrilled.

LORETTE:
Seb! Elsa, it's Seb!

ELSA:
Hey Sebastian! Sebastian, HELLO!

FRIEND:
There's your sister.

SEBASTIAN:
Mhm.

FRIEND:
Who's that with her? She's funny looking!

Pause.

SEBASTIAN:

I don't know. First time I see her.

They leave. Slowly, the rest of the children leave too. It's just ELSA and LORETTE left in the school yard. Finally, ELSA leaves too and LORETTE is completely alone. She's at the hyppodrome again.

“Sebastian could’ve said hi to Lorette”

LORETTE’s at the hypodrome. PONY (puppet) passes by. He’s a bit stuck up.

LORETTE:
Hello.

PONY turns around and looks at her. But he doesn’t say hello. LORETTE is angry.

LORETTE:
I said – hello!

PONY:
Well, hello.

LORETTE:
That seems to be some kind of a new trend. Pretending you don’t know someone.

PONY:
Trend?

LORETTE:
Sebastian didn’t say hello to me at school today.

PONY:
Maybe he was embarrassed.

LORETTE:
Why?

PONY:
For example... Because you’re a girl and he’s a boy.

PONY takes off his puppet head and becomes PONY – Boy.

LORETTE:
That’s not it. You’re a boy.

PONY:
Then... You’re younger and he’s older...

LORETTE:
That’s not it either. Why does it matter that he’s older? I say hello to those who are younger and older than me. I say hello to you too and you are a pony.

PONY:
I don’t know then. He could’ve said hello.

LORETTE:

He could've at least given me a wink. He does that sometimes when he's with his friends. *(she's beginning to understand why)* So that others don't see him.

PONY:

He could've made a little curtsy.

LORETTE:

Or a biiiiiiiiig curtsy.

PONY:

How about a biiiiiiiiig curtsy followed by a forward flip?

LORETTE:

Hehe, then I would have to do a forward flip too. In response. *(she does a forward flip)* Hey, I can do it!

PONY:

Or he could've, he could've... Jumped on one foot, clapped his hands three times and barked like a dog.

LORETTE *(laughing)*:

Yes!

PONY:

Or he could've put a big flower inside a flower pot on his head and then taken it off like a hat!

LORETTE:

Haha, you're silly!

PONY:

That's nothing! He could've juggled with a banana, a book and an armchair whilst riding a unicycle.

LORETTE:

That's the one I like the most!

PONY:

Check this out! Turn, turn, jump, turn, jump, forward flip, jump. That's my hello to you.

LORETTE:

Turn, turn, jump, turn, jump, forward flip, jump.

LORETTE and PONY *(together)*:

Turn, turn, jump, turn, jump, forward flip, jump.

LORETTE:

Ha, this has never been easier.

They perform a little dance together and slowly parents of Lorette's classmates appear. At first the parents are their audience, the dance is for them. TEACHER is also with the parents. They even clap. LORETTE and PONY take a bow. Suddenly, the makebelief becomes reality. It begins...

“She is slowing down her class”

It's parents' night at the school. LORETTE is stood by the side, she can see and hear everything. But no one can see or hear her.

PARENT 1:

That's not good enough!

PARENTS (*all together*):

I agree!

TEACHER:

I understand but it is beneficial for Lorette to be in our class!

PARENT 2:

That girl is slow.

PARENT 1:

And my little boy is quick. Do you not know his potential?

TEACHER:

I don't doubt that but I assure you that the rest of the children will not progress any less.

PARENT 3:

My girl is an angel.

PARENTS (*all together*):

You should see mine!

TEACHER:

All children are angels. Including Lorette!

PARENT 3:

My angel is now scared to go to school.

PARENTS:

Mine too! Mine too!

PARENT 3:

My little ballerina!

PARENTS:

Mine too! Mine too!

PARENT 2:

It's not appropriate to have that girl slow the rest of the children down.

PARENT 1:

That... That... Lorette!

PARENTS (*all together*):

We don't want Lorette!

Why does she not go to another school?

My child is not too fond of her.

There, we've made you aware of the situation. You let us know your decision.

They slowly make their exit. Some go left, some right and when they're all gone, Lorette's MUM and DAD are left on stage, despondent. We realise they've been there the entire time.

TEACHER:

Don't worry, I won't let Lorette suffer.

MUM:

We will give it another try, whatever the outcome.

DAD:

And if it doesn't work out... We'll take her out of school.

They leave the stage looking despondent. LORETTE is left by herself. She's smiling.

LORETTE:

I don't know why people can't stand me.

School bus horn is heard. LORETTE is getting on the bus.

“Who is she?”

School bus. LORETTE sits next to CLARA.

TEACHER:

Children, today we're going to the hippodrome. We shall ride ponies.

LORETTE:

I love ponies!

CLARA:

Pardon?

LORETTE (*clearer*):

I love ponies.

CLARA:

Me too.

LORETTE:

They know the pony-dance.

CLARA:

May I ask you something? Why don't you come to school every day?

Pause. LORETTE grabs CLARA and kisses her. CLARA is confused.

CLARA:

Miss, Lorette kissed me for no reason.

TEACHER:

You may kiss her back. Go on.

CLARA:

Ummmm... I... Don't want to.

JEAN:

Kiss her, kiss her!

MARIE:

Hahahahaha! You're friends with Lorette!

PHILIPPE:

Kiss her on the mouth!

Children are laughing.

TEACHER:

Enough, that's mean! Very mean!

JEAN:
If it's mean, why is she smiling then?

PHILIPPE:
She's always smiling...

MARIE:
Who's Lorette?

SONG:
Who's Lorette? Who is she? Who? Who?
Bobbet?
Puppet?
We don't even know her name!
Could it not be Dumbett?
Dumbett, Dumbett, Dumbett, Dumbett!

“Who am I?”

Hippodrome. LORETTE and PONY. In this scene PONY is a boy from the beginning.

LORETTE:
May I kiss you?

PONY:
You may.

LORETTE kisses him.

LORETTE:
There. What's the big deal?

PONY:
Well... I mean... Nothing.

LORETTE:
And Clara said that I kissed her for no reason. As if you need a reason to kiss somebody. I simply didn't know what to tell her when she asked me why I don't come to school every day. And all of a sudden I was pleased and I kissed her. She was surprised.

PONY:
Well that's ok, it's not like you hit her.

LORETTE:
But other children laughed at me. And they were asking “Who's that Lorette?” I never know what to answer them.

PONY:
And who knows?

LORETTE:
Everyone but me, it seems. I say: I am Lorette. And then everyone expects to hear more. And when I want to say more, I stop and I feel shy.

PONY:
You can tell me, you're not shy with me.

LORETTE:
For example... I am Lorette and I know how to make an excellent cherry pie.

PONY:
There you go. But that still doesn't say who you are. It says what you can do.

LORETTE:

Ok. I am Lorette. I don't look like the other girls. I know this because people on the street stare at me. When I look at myself in the mirror I see that my eyes are slanted and that I have a strange smile. Mum says I'm pretty. Dad calls me "my rare little pearl". The truth is, I am special.

PONY:

That still doesn't tell me who you are. You've only told me what you look like. Besides, I find you pretty.

LORETTE kisses him.

LORETTE:

There, I kissed you again. People say I act too suddenly. I startle them when I get excited or when I get angry.

PONY is rubbing his bum, remembering a kick.

PONY:

You have no idea how suddenly the Riding Teacher acts when I don't obey.

LORETTE:

What are you trying to say?

PONY:

I'm trying to say that no one knows who they are. Not only you...

LORETTE:

Do you know who I am?

PONY:

Who?

LORETTE:

Your friend.

PONY:

Yes, you are.

LORETTE:

My Mum and Dad's daughter.

PONY:

Yes.

LORETTE:

Elsa's sister. And Sebastian's.

PONY:

Yes, you are.

SEBASTIAN sneaks up and hears the end of the conversation.

LORETTE:

You know what? I don't think Sebastian knows who he is exactly. But I know. He's my big brother. To me he's the most beautiful, most clever boy in the world. I'd like to be clever like him.

PONY:

He knows that. And he loves you too.

LORETTE:

And you know what else? When I stand alone then I really don't know who I am. I know who I am when I love someone and when someone loves me back. I am all the people I love. And I love you too. Let's go!

LORETTE and PONY (*together*):

Turn, turn, jump, turn, jump, forward flip, jump.

They ride off together. SEBASTIAN is left by himself. The set turns into school. CLASSMATES gather around SEBASTIAN.

“Brother and sister”

School yard. SEBASTIAN and CLASSMATES. LORETTE arrives. She climbs some kind of a climbing frame in the yard.

CHILD 1:
There's that new girl.

CHILD 2:
I'm a little scared of her.

CHILD 3:
I find her funny.

CHILD 1:
I would never be friends with her. She's weird.

CHILD 2:
Miss said that we should be kind to her.

CHILD:
I don't care.

CHILD 1:
She speaks funny.

CHILD 2:
Yes, watch. Hey, what's your name?

LORETTE:
Lorette.

CHILD 3:
Dumbett. Ha ha, Dumbett!

SEBASTIAN approaches LORETTE.

SEBASTIAN:
Her name is LORETTE. That's her name. L-O-R-E-T-T-E. If you can't remember that then you have a lose screw in your head.

CHILD 1:
Ha! And how do you know her name?

SEBASTIAN:
She's my sister. My little baby sister.
SEBASTIAN and LORETTE hug. The school bell goes off. Children leave and the set turns into hippodrome.

“The Stars of the Circus”

LORETTE and PONY.

LORETTE:
Shall we play?

PONY:
As if you have to ask.

LORETTE:
Watch this! Welcome to our circus! Our red, green, yellow, blue, orange, white, purple and brown circus!

PONY:
You can always say colourfull.

LORETTE:
I prefer it this way. Our big, medium, small, huge and really tiny circus!

PONY:
How's that possible?

LORETTE:
Well it is. Our sweet, savoury, sour, bitter and spicy circus!

PONY:
You can't eat a circus.

LORETTE:
This one you can. Look at this little flag. Mmmmmmm. It's so sweet.

PONY:
Hm... I'll take your word...

LORETTE:
And look at his rusty grass over here. You lie down and you dream the sweetest dreams. It's as if you went on a trip somewhere.

PONY:
Straight to Cuba!

LORETTE:
Cuba's good. This is a circus for everything. It's for eating, for drinking, for playing, for watching and for listening. For nibbling but also for reading. For smelling and for tickling! For putting together and putting apart, whatever you want! This part goes here and that one goes there!

PONY:
What about these two on the side?

LORETTE:

Like this and that and zapp! And it's done!

They've managed to do the puzzle. The same puzzle LORETTE couldn't do with ELSA.

LORETTE:

I love this circus! It's ours, it can be exactly the way we want it to be!

PONY:

And we are its biggest stars!

LORETTE:

And the smallest.

PONY:

The biggest!

LORETTE:

Ok...

PONY:

Watch this!

He jumps through a hoop.

LORETTE:

Bravo! Bravo!

PONY:

And this?

He makes some kind of an intricate figure in the air.

LORETTE:

You're right, we are the biggest stars!

PONY:

We can do so much! Can we fly?

LORETTE:

Well of course! Watch.

LORETTE makes a soap bubble. She sits on it. She's flying.

LORETTE:

What do you think?

PONY:
Bravo! Bravo for miss Lorette! How about me?

LORETTE:
Try it!

PONY does the same thing (PONY the puppet of course).

LORETTE:
And now, the most difficult act!

PONY:
Say the word!

LORETTE:
The obstacle jump.

PONY's looking despondent.

PONY:
That I can't do.

LORETTE:
Come on. You can fly but you can't do this?

PONY:
Well I can't. There, I cannot!

LORETTE:
I'm counting to three.

Pause. PONY's thinking about it and finally decides to give it a go. He picks up the puppet.

PONY:
Get on.

LORETTE climbs on his back. PONY takes a few steps back.

LORETTE:
One... Two... Three!

PONY starts to run. This is followed by a really dramatic music. He runs with LORETTE on his back and... We can't see whether they've made it because the scene ends there.

“The road to hippodrome, the road to riding, the road to success”

The set is now a school bus. LORETTE is already on with her CLASSMATES (a different puppet can be used here because the first one ran off with PONY; surprise).

TEACHER:

Children, is everyone wearing their riding boots?

A bunch of small riding boots can be seen popping out from the bus.

TEACHER:

Does anyone by any chance have a jockey's hat?

A hat is popping out from the bus, but only one. It belongs to LORETTE.

TEACHER:

That's wonderful Lorette.

CLARA:

Miss, may I sit next to Lorette?

TEACHER:

If you want to. And also, if Lorette wants you to.

LORETTE:

I do, I do, of course!

CLARA:

I talked to my mum. She told me I should be kind to you. She said that you are a little girl, just like me.

LORETTE hugs her strongly and kisses her. Then she turns shy.

CLARA:

May I kiss you back?

LORETTE nods. CLARA kisses LORETTE.

LORETTE:

I am one very happy girl.

“Lorette runs the riding lesson”

Children have arrived at the hippodrome. RIDING TEACHER is there. LORETTE is wearing her jockey's hat.

RIDING TEACHER:

Good day children. Would someone like to ride a pony?

Children are apprehensively raising their hands.

LORETTE:

Me! Me!

RIDING TEACHER:

Allright. We'll get to everyone. Ponies, over here! Pair up, children.

Ponies approach in a perfect line. Children are in pairs. LORETTE is with CLARA.

RIDING TEACHER:

Get on the ponies. And one – two – three.

A dance is being performed by children riding clumsily. It's only LORETTE and CLARA who stand out, on PONY of course.

RIDING TEACHER:

Well done, you ride well! Everyone follow Lorette and her pony!

The rest of the children follow LORETTE and CLARA. Children's clumsy riding becomes better and better. In the end, they're all riding well and it looks like a little dance, a pony dance... Then they all get off their ponies. They're stood in a group and RIDING TEACHER approaches.

RIDING TEACHER:

What's your name?

CHILDREN *(all together, shouting)*:

That's Lorette! That's Lorette! Her name is Lorette!

JEAN:

Where did you learn to ride?

MARIE:

Would you lend me your jockey's hat?

LORETTE puts her hat on MARIE's head.

MARIE:

Thank you, Lorette!

LORETTE makes PONY stop.

LORETTE:

I can do something else. May I show you?

RIDING TEACHER:

Yes you may, Lorette. Go ahead.

LORETTE:

Mr Pony, are you ready?

PONY neighs.

LORETTE:

One – two – three!

PONY runs up and then, together – they jump the obstacle.

CHILDREN:

Bravo! Bravo Lorette! Would you teach us? Teach us, teach us!

LORETTE bows her head, bashfully. She whispers something to CLARA.

CLARA:

She says she'll teach you. Repeat what we do.

LORETTE:

One – two – three!

One after the other, children are jumping obstacles with their ponies.

RIDING TEACHER;

Bravo! Bravo! Children, the lesson is over. It's time for you to head back to school.

CHILDREN get off their ponies and, as a group, head somewhere. LORETTE is stood alone next to PONY. She's too shy to follow the rest of the children. Suddenly, a few of them stop.

MARIE:

Come on Lorette! Hurry up!

JEAN, PHILIPPE, CLARA:

Come on, we can't wait for you forever! Come on! Come on!

LORETTE looks at PONY. He nods his head or touches her with his hoof to give her encouragement. She kisses him and runs after the rest of the children, in her typical

“Lorette” steps. She enters the group and she no longer seems apart. They all run off together.

THE END.