

Kafka and the Doll

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[Franz Kafka](#)², the story goes, encountered a little girl in the park where he went walking daily. She was crying. She had lost her doll and was desolate.

Kafka offered to help her look for the doll and arranged to meet her the next day at the same spot. Unable to find the doll he composed a letter from the doll and read it to her when they met.

"Please do not mourn me, I have gone on a trip to see the world. I will write you of my adventures."

This was the beginning of many letters. When he and the little girl met he read her from these carefully composed letters the imagined adventures of the beloved doll. The little girl was comforted.

When the meetings came to an end Kafka presented her with a doll. She obviously looked different from the original doll. An attached letter explained: "My travels have changed me . . .".

Many years later, the now-grown girl found a letter stuffed into an unnoticed crevice in the cherished replacement doll. In summary it said,

"Everything that you love, you will eventually lose, but in the end, love will return in a different form."³



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² Kafka (1883-1924) was one of the greatest writers of the 20th century.

³ "There are many versions of the story of Kafka and the doll. I heard this one from Tara Brach, psychologist and Buddhist meditation teacher in Washington D.C." [M. Benatar's note]