**THE HUNDRED DRESSES**

**By Eleanor Estes**

**(adapted by Angie Hunt & Patricia Hesse)**

CAST:

Wanda – Polish girl (Montana

Peggy – popular girl (Anna W.) \*\*\*DANCER

Maddie – friend of Peggy (Brooks)

Imaginary Friend – Maddie’s conscience (Sydney)

Bill Byron – bully (J.P.)

Jack Beggles – school mate (Brett)

Jacob – Wanda’s brother (Fowler)

Miss Mason – teacher (Abigail)

Cecile – rich girl (Lainie) \*\*\*DANCER

Betty - Peggy’s friend (Jadyn) \*\*\*DANCER

Mary - Peggy’s friend (Lillian)

Jean – Peggy’s friend (Leslie) \*\*\*DANCER

Molly - Peggy’s friend (Madison) \*\*\*DANCER

**ACT I – SCENE 1**

(school yard – kids playing in background)

**Betty**: Hi Peggy. Hi Maddie.

**Peggy**: Hi…. Are you girls ready for another boring year of school? (*girls giggle*)

**Mary**: I hear our new teacher, Miss Mason, is really nice.

**Jean**: Yeah, and she’s pretty too!

**Molly**: Anything’s better than Mrs. Patterson. I’m so glad she finally retired!

**Peggy** (*prancing around*): How do you like my new dress? It’s so important to make a good impression on the first day of school.

**Betty**: Oooh… I like it!

**Jean**: It’s really nice, Peggy.

**Mary**: I love the color!

(*Cecile enters, girls go to her*)

**Molly**: Look at Cecile’s new dress everyone.

(*Maddie hangs back, sitting down and tying her shoes while the girls go on and on over Cecile’s new dress –Maddie’s dress is rather plain. Other girls pay no attention to Maddie*)

(*Imaginary Friend enters, sits by Maddie, and nudges her*): A little jealous?

**Maddie**: No.

**Friend**: Your parents would like you to have a new dress for the first day of school –they would like you to have a whole closet full of pretty dresses, but they just don’t have the money Maddie.

**Maddie**: I know that… (*under her breath*) Would you please be quiet. They might hear you!

(*The friend gets up, walking around group of girls, making faces, jumping up and down, etc. Girls can’t hear, see, or sense her. Friend goes back to Maddie as girls continue conversation*)

**Friend**: Silly, they can’t hear or see me –only you can!

**Maddie**: I keep forgetting that. I know you’re not real, but…

**Friend**: I’m as real as you want me to be. I’m here to help you figure things out. Growing up is hard. Someday I’ll tell you ‘Good-bye’ because you won’t need me anymore, but for now …I’ll be around.

**Peggy**: Gosh, Cecile –that’s an awfully fancy dress for school.

**Cecile**: Oh, it’s for my dancing lessons after school today. See my toe shoes (takes them out of a bag. Girls go on and on over the dress and shoes. In comes Wanda and Jacob. Girls don’t notice them. Wanda stops when she sees the girls. Jacob tugs on her arm.)

**Jacob**: Come on Wanda, I gotta hurry. I’m getting paid for helping Mr. Henry. I need to get the doors open and ring the bell.

**Wanda**: You go on. I want to stay here for awhile. (*Wanda slowly walks over to the girls, as talk resumes)*

**Betty**: Isn’t it lovely?

**Jean**: Yeah. I have a new blue Sunday dress, but it’s not as pretty as that!

**Molly**: My mother just bought me a plaid dress with little roses embroidered on the collar.

**Mary**: I’m gonna ask my mother to get me one just like your’s Peggy (*Peggy glares at Mary*)–except of course, in a different color.

(*Wanda joins the circle of girls, standing between Peggy and Maddie. Wanda taps Peggy on the shoulder. Peggy sizes her up.)*

**Peggy**: What? Do I know you?

**Wanda**: My name’s Wanda. I got a hundred dresses at home.

**Peggy**: Say what?

**Wanda**: I’ve got a hundred dresses at home.

**Peggy**: That’s what I thought you said. A hundred dresses, huh? (she is looking Wanda over). A hundred! Hey, girls –she says she’s got a hundred dresses!

**Molly**: A hundred dresses! Nobody could have a hundred dresses!

**Wanda**: I do.

**Maddie**: You must be a new girl. What did you say your name is?

**Wanda**: Wanda, Wanda Petronski

**Peggy**: Well, Wanda “Petta-boosky” or whatever your name is. I don’t believe you have a hundred dresses.

**Wanda**: But, I do.

(*Friend walks over to Maddie*)

**Friend**: Are you going to let Peggy talks to that poor girl that way? Maybe she does have a hundred dresses!

**Maddie**: (*feeling bad, but ignoring the friend*) Let’s go Peggy. The bell will be ringing any minute now. (*Girls leave. Maddie stays behind. Wanda looks at her, then also leaves)*

**Friend**: Way to make her feel welcome Maddie. (*Maddie looks at friend, then walks away.)*

**ACT I – SCENE II**

**(Classroom)**

(*Children are talking, getting books out, etc. Wanda is quiet and seated at her desk at the back. No one is talking to her. Bell rings. Children get to their seats. In walks Miss Mason*.)

**Miss Mason**: Good morning , children. My name is Miss Mason, and I’m very excited to be your teacher this year. I hope you are ready to begin what I hope will be a very rewarding year for you –as well as for me. I’ve been told that most of you have been classmates since the first grade, so you know each other quite well. However, after looking over my list I see we have one new student this year. Wanda, will you please stand. (*Wanda timidly gets up*) Children, I would like you to welcome Wanda Petronski to our class.

**Bill Byron**: Nice to meet ya. Wanda Pet-a-skunkee! (*Bill holds nose. Children laugh. Wanda sits, embarrassed)*

**Miss Mason**: That’s enough children! (*Everyone gets quiet*) Bill Byron!!! You will stand and apologize to Wanda this very minute!

**Bill Byron**: Sorry… Rhonda! I mean… Wanda! (*he smiles and sits*)

**Miss Mason**: Bill, I want you to stay after school today. Is that clear?

**Bill**: Yes, Miss Mason.

**Miss Mason**: Please get out your geography books and turn to page 127. *(Children do this*) In honor of our new student, we will begin our lesson on Wanda’s home country of Poland. (*Wanda stands up excited when she hears the word Poland.)*

**Wanda**: Polska to pee – yank-no-cry-eee –which means Poland is a beautiful country.

**Jack**: What was that? Pig Latin? (*Children laugh. Miss Mason is silently scolding them, slapping her ruler on the desk, etc.. Friend goes over to Jack, who doesn’t see her.)*

**Friend**: Why don’t you leave her alone, you big bully! If you only knew what this girl has been through! She has seen a war that brought her hunger. She has seen her family forced from their home. She has seen her father beaten to death. Her mother taken to a concentration camp. She has spent months hiding in a dark cellar with her grandfather and her brother, hoping to escape to the freedom and safety of America. And This… This is how you welcome her?!!!

**Miss Mason**: Jack. I’ll see YOU after school also! (*to Wanda*). Boys and girls Wanda was speaking Polish –that is the language of Poland. It is remarkable that Wanda is able to speak both Polish and English. I know that she is the only person in our class who can speak more than one language. That is really remarkable Wanda. (*Miss Mason pauses, looking at the class)*. Peggy, would you please stand and begin reading at the top of page 127, please?

Peggy (*standing reluctantly*): Poland is located in Eastern Europe… It’s capitol is Warsaw (*as curtain closes.)*

**ACT I – SCENE 3**

**(school yard)**

(*Children are playing. Maddie and Friend are off to one side. Wanda is by herself. Other girls are in a group talking*)

**Maddie** (*to Friend*): How did you know all those things about Wanda?

**Friend**: I really don’t know how I know. I just know. I could sense her loss, see what she’s seen. I could feel her heartache.

**Peggy** (*pointing to Wanda*): Let’s go ask her about those dresses again. (*Girls walk over to Wanda)*

**Peggy**: Hey, Wanda. Why don’t you tell us about those dresses you talked about.

**Cecile**: How many did you say you have?

**Wanda**: A hundred.

**Jean**: Then, why do you wear the same dress to school every day? (*Wanda doesn’t answer*)

**Mary**: Yeah, we’ve been going to school for months now, and that’s the only dress I’ve seen you in.

**Betty**: I think she’s lying.

**Molly**: You don’t have a hundred dresses.

**Wanda**: But I do have them.

**Friend**: Maddie, tell them to stop teasing her!

**Maddie** (*to friend*): I can’t! Peggy won’t want to be my friend anymore!

**Friend**: So… you’re going to let Peggy and the girls keep doing this to her? Stand up to Peggy for once!

**Maddie**: I can’t. I just can’t.

**Peggy**: Come on Maddie. (*Girls leave*)

**Maddie**: I’ll be there in a minute. (*Wanda is standing there all alone*)

**Friend** (*to Maddie*): You really want to believe she has those hundred dresses, don’t you?

**Maddie**: Oh, I know it’s not possible, but somehow… somehow when she talks about it, I almost start to believe her.

**Friend**: So, what’s wrong with that? Why don’t you go over there and talk to her?

**Maddie**: What if Peggy and the girls see?

**Friend**: Peggy, Peggy, Peggy!!! Do you always do what Peggy tells you to do?

**Maddie**: No.

**Friend**: Then go talk to her. (*Maddie slowly steps closer to Wanda, but then changes her mind, looking at the Friend.)*

**Maddie**: Maybe tomorrow. (*She starts to walk past Wanda, but stops when the Friend says…)*

**Friend**: What if there IS no tomorrow? *(Curtain closes*)

**ACT II –SCENE 1**

**(in front of curtain)**

(*Wanda and Jacob are walking to school*.)

**Jacob**: How are things with all those snobby girls in your class?

**Wanda**: Okay, I guess.

**Jacob**: Doesn’t seem like you are playing with any of them at recess …

**Wanda**: I try. Every day I try, but they don’t seem to like me. This one girl, Maddie, she smiles at me sometimes, but only when the other girls aren’t around. They’re okay. They just don’t know.

**Jacob**: Know what? That they treat you badly? I don’t believe that!

**Wanda**: I think I was probably used to be a lot like them before –before the war. I am glad they haven’t seen what we’ve seen. I’m glad they don’t know what you and I know. Those girls are who I was –before.

**Jacob**: It’ll be okay Wanda. Things will get better with them. Why, even this ole brother of your’s thinks you’re pretty special. (He jabs at her, grinning) You wait and see.

**Wanda**: (*shrugging her shoulders*) Maybe.

**Jacob**: Well, gotta go now, see ya after school. (*He exits*)

**Wanda**: Bye.

(*In come the girls. Before they get to Wanda, Maddie steps in front of Peggy*)

**Maddie**: Peggy, let’s not ask Wanda about her dresses again. We’ve been teasing her for a long time now. Maybe it’s time to stop.

**Peggy**: What? And take away all our fun! No way! (*Group walks over to Wanda*)

**Peggy**: Hi Wanda.

**Wanda**: Hi.

**Peggy**: I guess you still have those hundred dresses?

**Wanda**: Yes. They’re hanging in my room. All in a row. (*Girls giggle*)

**Molly**: And how many shoes did you say you had?

**Wanda**: Sixty pairs. All with the dresses they match.

**Cecile**: Yesterday, you said fifty pairs of shoes!

**Wanda**: Now I’ve got sixty.

**Jean**: All alike?

**Wanda**: Oh no. Every pair is different. The shoes are all colors and match the dresses.

**Mary**: Why don’t you admit that you are just making all this up?

**Wanda**: Oh, but I do have a hundred dresses! If you could only see them! Blue one, red ones, yellow ones, some with lace and some with ribbons!

**Peggy**: Come on girls, she’ll never admit the truth. (*They leave –Maddie is the last to leave. She looks back at Wanda, then leaves. Wanda sits, looking depressed. Friend walks over to her.)*

**Friend**: I know you can’t hear or see me, but I know what you’re thinking. You miss Poland. You miss your mother, your aunts and uncles. You miss the cousins you played with –all of them killed in Hitler’s terrible war. Everything you’ve ever known is gone. And now, all your dreams of how wonderful life in America would be have also crumbled. (*Friend kneels down and puts her arms around Wanda)* Wanda, I wish you could hear me. Never stop dreaming. Never stop hoping. Cling to your memories and let them find their way to heal you –to make you strong. Hold on to your dreams Wanda –you have to dream before your dreams can come true. (*Friend rises to leave, Wanda lays down; Friend turns to Wanda*) You know Wanda --it doesn’t really matter if you have a hundred dresses or not – even that is a wonderful dream.

*(Friend leaves. Dream music and dance)*

**Curtain closes** *–*

**ACT II – SCENE 2**

**(Classroom)**

**Miss Mason**: Children, I have some exciting news to share. We are going to have an art contest (*kids clap*). I know we have some very good artists in this class and now you have an opportunity to really show what you can do. The boys will be designing cars, and the girls will design a dress. The winners will be announced in December right before Christmas break. Each winner will receive a gold medal for his or her design. I have some drawing paper here. Each of you may use this time to begin your sketches.

(*Everyone takes paper and begins drawing*)

**Cecile**: Of course, you’ll win Peggy. You draw better than anyone in the class.

**Molly**: You should see how she copies pictures from a magazine!

**Maddie**: What color is your dress going to be Peggy?

**Peggy**: I’m not telling because all of you have the same color as mine!

**Mary**: Do you think Wanda will enter the contest?

**Peggy**: Well, why wouldn’t she! She’s got a hundred dresses she can copy for her project! (*Girls giggle and look at Wanda*)

**Maddie**: She’s got as good a chance of the rest of us of winning that medal! (*The Friend gives her a thumbs-up)*

**Peggy**: Really Maddie! Everyone knows that medal is mine.

**Maddie**: We’ll see… may the best girl win. (*Girls do basketball hand pyramid with Peggy coming out on top)*

**Peggy** (*gloating*): See!

**ACT II – SCENE 3**

**(school yard)**

**Cecile**: I can’t wait till the bell rings.

**Jean**: Yeah, Miss Mason is going to announce the winners of the contest today!

**Betty**: Of course, you’ll win Peggy.

**Peggy**: I’ve got the perfect spot for that medal in my room.

**Mary**: Can we hold it for awhile when you get it?

**Peggy**: W-e-l-l… maybe. (*Girls get excited*)

**Betty**: I don’t know about you girls, but looks like (*looking around*) Wanda Fancy Dress is not coming to school again today.

**Maddie**: She’s been absent for three days now.

**Peggy**: Nice of you to notice, Maddie. What a shame… I was really looking forward to asking about those dresses of her’s again.

**Mary**: Me too. Guess she’s going to miss the big art contest announcement.

**Maddie**: Maybe she’ll be back tomorrow.

**Betty**: Oh, who cares! I can’t think of anything except that medal now.

(*Bell rings)*

**Jean**: This is it girls! Come on!

(*They go in to the school. All the pictures are displayed. Everyone walks around admiring the pictures*.)

**Cecile**: Wow! Look at all the beautiful dresses. Oh –there’s mine.

**Maddie**: Which one is your’s Peggy? (*Peggy points to a picture*)

**Mary**: (*Betty is staring at the wall*) What are you staring at?

**Betty**: Did any of you enter more than one dress design?

**Girls**: No. (*some shake heads and all begin noticing*)

**Peggy**: I’m sure one of them might be Wanda’s, but which one of you tried to beat me by drawing all the rest?!!!

(*Miss Mason calls the class to attention. All take seats)*

**Miss Mason**: Class, would you take your seats please. …I won’t keep you in suspense any longer. I’m sure you are all wondering who won our design competition. First, I just want to say that you all did an excellent job. Sadly, there can only be two winners. The winner of the gold medal for the car design is…….. Jack Beggles! (*everybody claps*) Jack would you please come forward and receive your medal. (*he comes forward and then takes his seat again*) Now for the medal in dress design. I cannot tell you how surprised I am of the talent this girl displays. She is truly an amazing artist. (*Girls pat Peggy on the back –she is smiling*). Though most of you submitted one or two designs, this girl entered a hundred different dresses. (*Girls mouths open in surprise. Friend is celebrating*). I’m proud to award this medal to Wanda Petronski. Unfortunately, Wanda has been absent from school the past several days, so I am unable to present the medal at this time. Let’s hope she returns tomorrow so we can all congratulate her. Now you may continue to walk around and admire all the wonderful designs. Again, each of you did an excellent job.

*(Kids get up and begin admiring work*)

**Maddie**: Look Peggy. There’s that blue dress she told us about. Isn’t it beautiful?!!!

**Cecile**: Yeah, and here’s that green one with the pink sash. Boy! And I thought Peggy could draw! (*Peggy is perturbed*)

**Betty**: She was telling the truth all along. She really did have a hundred dresses!

**Molly**: Maybe she will be back tomorrow and we can apologize.

**Peggy**: We weren’t THAT mean to her.

**Maddie**: Yes, we were! (*Peggy and girls walk away. Maddie still looking. Friend comes up*)

**Friend**: You okay?

**Maddie**: No, I’m not okay. I feel terrible.

**Friend**: Not gonna argue with that. You should feel terrible.

**Maddie**: Thanks.

**Friend**: After all, you and your so-called friends never stopped teasing her about those dresses. And now you’ve found out she was telling the truth.

**Maddie**: What can I do to make it up to her?

**Friend**: Perhaps you should talk to your (*quote sign*) friends and help them understand how wrong they’ve been so all of you start treating Wanda better.

**Maddie**: And just how do I do that?

**Friend**: You’re a smart girl. You’ll figure it out.

**ACT II – SCENE 4**

**(school yard)**

(*Maddie is talking to girls. Girls look sad. Peggy walks over to them)*

**Peggy**: Gee girls, I’ve seen happier faces on a dead frog.

**Jean**: We’ve been talking and…

**Peggy**: …yes

**Betty**: Well, we feel we owe Wanda a big apology.

**Peggy**: Oh, she knows we were just kidding her.

**Maddie**: Don’t you feel bad at all Peggy?

**Peggy**: Well, yeah, but at least I never made fun of that stupid accent of her’s or said anything about that old dress she wore every day.

**Cecile**: You did too!

**Peggy**: Well, maybe once or twice. But I didn’t mean it. Come on girls, you worry too much.

**Friend**: Say something Maddie. Speak up.

**Maddie**: We were mean to her Peggy. She wanted to make friends with us and all we did was make her feel bad about the way she talked and the way she dressed. We were horrible. Somehow we have got to make it up to her.

**Mary**: Maddie’s right --we did tease her over and over about the hundred dresses.

**Peggy**: Oh, I suppose now all of you are blaming me for all of this!

(*Girls are quiet, looking at each other*.)

**Friend**: If the shoe fit!

**Maddie**: No. We’re not blaming you. Each of us is guilty of how we treated Wanda. Let’s just hope she comes to school tomorrow so we can tell her how sorry we all are.

**ACT II – SCENE 5**

**(school room)**

(*Kids are talking, moving around the room*)

**Miss Mason**: (*clapping hands*) Attention class. Everyone in his or her seat please. I want to start this morning by reading a letter I received from Wanda Petronski’s grandfather. (*She opens the letter –voice is heard).*

Dear Teacher,

My granddaughter will not come to your school anymore. Now we move away to big city. No more “holler” Polack. No more ask why funny name. Plenty of funny names in big the city. No more my Wanda alone. No friends. Life for Wanda hard in war. Life for Wanda in your school hard too. No more hard life for my Wanda.

Yours truly,

Jan Petronski

**Miss Mason**: I was very upset when I read this letter. I was unaware that the boys and girls in my class continued to tease and treat Wanda in this way --that you purposely and deliberately called her names. Even if someone has an unusual name and speaks differently than you and I, that doesn’t give you the right to hurt them. Wanda lost her parents in the war. She came all the way from Poland hoping to find a better life in America, and you made her feel unwelcome. I want each of you to think about what I’ve said. (*Teacher looks at class and wipes a tear from her eye. Then takes a breath*) Now open your history books to Chapter 4.

(*Students look at each other with guilt. You can hear a pin drop. Maddie taps Peggy on the shoulder*)

**Maddie**: Peggy, we’ve got to do something about this. I feel horrible.

**Peggy**: Not now. Miss Mason is really mad. Later.

**Maddie**: But Peggy!

**Peggy**: Lighten up Maddie. I’ll think of something.

**ACT III – SCENE 1**

**(Maddie’s Bedroom)**

(*Maddie is tossing in bed, having a bad dream. Friend enters a shakes her awake*.)

**Friend**: Wake up Maddie, wake up!

(*Maddie awakens*)

**Maddie**: What…what….where am I?

**Friend**: That must have been some dream!

**Maddie**: What? Oh… a dream?

**Friend**: Yes, wanna tell me about it?

**Maddie**: We are all in the school yard and they were laughing and teasing Wanda. She was crying and kept saying, “Stop it! Stop it!” I tried to stop them, but they just kept on and on. I yelled, “Leave her alone! Leave her alone!” But they wouldn’t! I know it was a dream now, but it was so real.

**Friend**: Making things right with Wanda does matter to you, doesn’t it Maddie?

**Maddie**: Yes, I just hope Peggy feels the same way too.

**Friend**: You can’t make Peggy feel like you do, however even Peggy would see things differently if she walked in Wanda’s shoes for awhile.

**Maddie**: (*She looks puzzled*) What does that mean?

**Friend**: It means Peggy make believes she’s Wanda, she lives in her skin. She imagines what it would be like to be Wanda instead of herself. If Peggy did that, she would understand what Wanda feels. She would know how hard it is lose your country and family, and how deeply it hurts to be treated badly by girls you hoped would be friends.

(*knock on the door*)

**Maddie**: Who is it? (*Peggy enters*)

**Peggy**: It’s Peggy. Can I come in sleepyhead?

**Maddie**: Come on in Peggy.

(*Peggy comes and sits on Maddie’s be*d)

**Peggy**: I’ve been doing a lot of thinking about that letter Wanda’s grandfather wrote. I think we should write her a letter back. Let her know that we are thinking about her --say stuff like that.

**Maddie**: That’s a great idea! Wait. We don’t know where she lives. Miss Mason said there was no return address on the envelope.

**Peggy**: No problem. We’ll just put her old address on it –the Post Office will know her new address.

**Maddie**: You think so.

**Peggy**: We’ll just have to give it a try.

**Maddie**: Okay. Let’s get started!

**Peggy**: Got some paper and pencil?

**Maddie**: Sure, right here *(gets it out of satchel*) So, what do we say first? (*Maddie is sitting on bed. Peggy paces back and forth thinking)*

**Peggy**: Dear Wanda. Miss Mason read us your grandfather’s letter in class yesterday. We are so sorry you had to move away. How do you like living in a big city instead of a town? Do you have a nice teacher? Do you know that you won the dress design contest? (*aside*) –That will sound nice. Then we could say… You sure can draw good! Jack Beggles won the boy’s car design.

**Maddie**: Slow down. I can’t write that fast.

**Peggy**: Oh, sorry. I’ll slow down. Do you have the part at jack Beggles winning? (*Maddie nods*) Now say… His car was bright orange! We all thought it was kinda ugly, but I guess the judges liked it. We hope you get to come back and visit soon so you can get your medal.

**Maddie**: Shouldn’t we say something about how we’re sorry we teased her?

**Peggy**: I don’t think we need to because it would just bring up bad memories for her. We just need to write a friendly letter. I think she’ll realize we didn’t mean what we said.

**Maddie**: But we did mean it Peggy!

**Peggy**: No we didn’t. It was just a joke.

**Maddie**: Not to Wanda, it wasn’t.

**Peggy**: You let things bother you way too much Maddie.

**Friend**: It bothers Peggy too Maddie. Why do you think she’s here? Peggy just has a hard time saying, “She’s sorry.”

**Peggy**: Are we going to finish this letter or what?

Maddie: Go on.

**Peggy**: Hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Signed your friends, Peggy and Maddie.

**Maddie**: Shouldn’t we say, your classmates Peggy and Maddie? We weren’t much of a friend to her.

**Peggy**: I know, but she can be our friend now. Wanda will know that when she reads our letter.

**Maddie**: I hope so.

**ACT III – SCENE 2**

**(Christmas Party)**

**Molly**: This is a great party!

**Jean**: I can’t wait till the bell rings.

**Betty**: Why?

**Jean**: Because it means Christmas vacation is starting!

**Mary**: Yeah, two weeks of NO SCHOOL!

**Cecile**: …and NO BOYS to bug us!

**Peggy**: You should see my Christmas tree. It’s covered with tinsel and has the most beautiful ornaments! Every year mother adds new ones to the collection.

**Cecile**: I hope I get the pink satin toe shoes I asked for –the kind real ballerinas wear.

**Mary**: I’m getting a new jewelry box because …don’t tell… I saw Mom put it in the top of the hall closet. (*Girls giggle*)

**Betty**: A shiney, new Roadmaster bicycle is what I want. What do you want for Christmas Maddie?

**Maddie**: Oh… whatever Mom and Dad get me will be okay.

**Friend**: I know what you really want for Christmas.

**Maddie**: You do?

**Friend**: Uh huh. You want a pretty new dress, don’t you?

**Maddie**: How do you know?

**Friend**: Are you kidding? You’ve stopped by Barnes General Store every day after school looking at all the dresses in the window. That kinda gave me a clue!

**Maddie**: It doesn’t hurt to look does it?

**Friend**: No, it doesn’t.

**Maddie**: Christmas is no big deal anyway.

**Friend**: Maddie, it doesn’t hurt to believe in a little Christmas Magic. Who knows… your wish just might come true.

**Maddie**: Not in my case!

**Friend**: We’ll see.

**Miss Mason**: Class, would you take your seats please? *(Students sit*) I have a letter I want to share with you. (*She holds up the letter, showing it to the class*) Guess who this is from? It’s from Wanda Petronski. If you would give me your attention I would like to read it to you.

Dear Miss Mason,

How are you and Room 13? Please tell the girls they can keep those pictures I drew of the hundred dresses because in my new house I have a hundred new ones all lined up in my closet. For Christmas, I’d like that Peggy girl to have the drawing of the green dress with the red trim and her friend Maddie to have the blue one. The other girls can choose any dress they like. I miss my old school and hope everyone has a Merry Christmas.

Yours truly,

Wanda Petronski

Miss Mason: I think it was very nice of Wanda to take the time to write us. Now that I know her new address, I will be sending her the much deserved gold medal she won. Peggy, you and Maddie may come and get the picture Wanda wanted you to have, and the rest of you girls may choose a dress you’d like to keep. (*They go and take the dress off the wall)*

*Peggy (on the way back to her seat):* She must have got our letter! Picking special dresses for us is her way of saying she liked us all along.

**Maddie**: I hope so.

(*Bell rings*)

**ACT II – SCENE 3**

**(bedroom)**

(*Maddie putting school things away in bedroom, then looks at picture*)

**Maddie**: I just can’t believe she gave me this picture after the way I treated her.

**Friend**: Wanda has a very kind heart.

(*Maddie and Friend sit on bed, still looking at picture of dress*)

**Friend**: Do you notice anything strange bout this drawing?

**Maddie**: What do you mean strange?

**Friend**: Look closer.

(*Maddie really looks at picture*)

**Maddie**: Well, the dress is very beautiful and blue is my favorite color.

**Friend**: No. That’s not what I mean. Look. Look at the face of the girl wearing the dress.

(*Maddie looks)*

**Maddie**: It has blond hair with bangs on the side and blue eyes and … it’s me! This is a picture of me!

**Friend**: That’s right! It’s you Maddie.

(*Just then there is a knock on the door and Peggy comes rushing in with her picture)*

**Peggy**: Maddie, Maddie!! You won’t believe this, but the girl in this picture looks just like me!

**Maddie**: I know (*she points to her picture*). She made this one look just like me too!

**Peggy**: See Silly. I told you she liked us –she drew these even before we sent her the letter. (*She hugs Maddie*) Gotta go! My family is invited to a big Christmas party at Mayor Thompson’s home tonight. Mom got me a special red velveteen dress with a white satin color to wear. (*She bounces out of the room, then sticks her head back in*) Merry Christmas Maddie! (*Looking up at the ceiling and being dramatic…)* Merry Christmas Wanda Petronski, wherever you are! (*She waves good-bye*)

**Maddie**: (*looking at Friend*) Peggy is always the same.

**Friend**: Yes, but are you?

**Maddie**: I will never be the same. Peggy has lost her power over me. Oh, I still like her. It’s just that…. Well, Peggy is simply who she is.

**Friend**: That sounds very grown-up Maddie.

**Maddie**: You see, I’ve been doing exactly what you said --walking around in other people’s shoes --imagining I’m them. Take Peggy, for instance, she believes that pretty dresses and being able to boss her friends around make her important. Wanda is different. The hard times in her life have taught her everyone is important. I think she has been walking in other people’s shoes for a long time now.

**Friend**: And now you will forever walk in other people’s shoes with her.

(*They hug*)

**Friend**: Maddie, I just thought of something!

**Maddie**: What?

**Friend**: You know that new dress you wanted for Christmas?

**Maddie**: Yeah.

**Friend**: You got it!

**Maddie**: No, I didn’t –what are you talking about.

**Friend**: Yes, you did! Wanda gave you your new dress. Oh, I know it’s not a real dress, but you did get your wish for Christmas.

**Maddie**: You’re right! I never thought of it that way. I did get my dress and in so many ways it is more beautiful to me than any other dress I could ever have. (*goes to front*) Merry Christmas Wanda Petronsky! Thank you being my friend. *(she freezes*)

**Friend**: Good-bye Maddie. I’m so proud of you.

(*Curtain closes. Maddie changes into blue sparkly dress for curtain call*)