

MONOLOGUE – CALEB

Play	<i>Letters</i> by Lindsay Price
Stats	Reader's Theatre, Simple Set, 25 minutes
Casting	12W+9M
Description	For many wars, letters home were the only form of communication between soldiers and their loved ones. Caleb is a WWI soldier. A common farm boy, his war experience has nothing to do with the big picture of countries fighting each other for freedom. It's not war that scares Caleb, he's firmly focused on the little things.
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Do you want to know what really scares me? It ain't the Germans. I never seen one, not up close anyway. Hard to get all bunched up over a guy I don't know.

(he goes wide-eyed) Don't tell anyone I said that. I'm 'posed to hate the Germans. Shoot! I guess I do. I'm told they've done some really bad things. And I ain't really scared of getting shot. I figure it's gonna happen or it's not.

If I do my job, I won't get shot. If some Kraut does his, maybe I will get shot.

I'm not scared of being in the trenches even though lots 'a guys die in 'em. There's a lot of dead guys around, Charlie. I hate that they leave 'em where they fall. They should be buried proper-like. I heard some guy died 'a drowning in the trenches!

It rains a lot in France. I'm glad I don't live here all the time. All the guys are always griping about the mud. That it comes up to their knees! Ain't no different than trying to wrassle the pigs. The smell's a lot worse though, I guess.

Do you want to know what really scares me? *(with wide eyes)* It's the rats. They're some mighty big rats in France, Charlie! They're all over the trenches. They run over your feet. They run up your legs, they run over your face if you're lying down.

You think the ones in the barns are big? Those French rats could eat our barn rats for breakfast. They could eat our rats with one paw tied behind their backs. They're huge and they eat everything in sight. Everything. I can't sleep when I'm on trench duty 'cause a them gosh darn rats. They'd eat a fellow's eyes out o' their head if a fellow wasn't using them.

I need my eyes! I don't want to wake up with a rat on my face and missing my eyes. *(he shudders)* Rats!