

**SIDES: ALICE**

**ALICE (female/late teens/20s) A dreamy newlywed woman, holding both fear and optimism as she sends her overseas husband a letter containing important news of new life.**

*Alice has described sending an important letter to her newlywed husband, Richard.*

ALICE

Richard is most likely in the trenches, because he's 19, and in the army. The trenches often fill with mud, and it's hard to sleep because he hears the bombs in the distance and he wonders if the sounds are getting closer or he is just imagining it. It's getting harder to tell what is really happening anymore, because none of it seems real when he thinks about it.

(pause)

A year ago, when we fell in love, he was in High School, hoping to become a university professor one day. He liked English literature courses and playing the clarinet, and he had never killed anyone, or thought of killing anyone before. Then they bombed Pearl Harbor, and this caused him to be filled with a new kind of hatred he had only read about, and it made him put his books down and begin his own, real, journey that maybe he will write about one day.

(pause)

He's happy when the mail comes. Mail is second only to food and munition, the government says, and he says that's true. Sometimes, troops get a magazine with a photograph of Rita Hayworth and the men pass it around. My Richard shakes his head at the photograph of Rita Hayworth because it doesn't seem like she can possibly be in the same world as them anymore, but he likes looking at her nonetheless. There are letters from mothers, grandfathers, school children, neighbors, girlfriends. Do you know that they even bring soldiers little classic novels, Dickens and Shakespeare? They're the size of a pear, if you can believe it. And the soldiers can put the books in their pockets and Richard can read his English literature when he has spare moments here and there. And this is one of the highlights of this war, because he reads the words of other men who have also seen wars, but who have come to see peace again. And this brings him comfort in a way literature never did when he was a student in High School. This makes him feel older, and he isn't sure if he likes this or not.

(pause)

But when he gets this envelope... This one will make him happier than any other reading material. And it will remind him that his life in New Rochelle is still as real as his life in those trenches in France.

(pause)

Because when he opens it, he will find this seed. Which I've taped to the letter, and circled, just in case he might miss it, although I know he would not.

(pause)

He will know what this means.