Dance, Dance, Doll of Mine!

Hans Christian Andersen

Yes, this is a song for very small children!" declared Aunt Malle. "As much as I should like to, I cannot follow this 'Dance, Dance, Doll of Mine!' "

But little Amalie could; she was only three years old, played with dolls, and brought them up to be just as wise as Aunt Malle.

There was a student who came to the house to help her brothers with their lessons, and he frequently spoke to little Amalie and her dolls; he spoke differently from anyone else, and the little girl found him very amusing, although Aunt Malle said he didn't know how to converse with children - their little heads couldn't possibly grasp that silly talk. But little Amalie did. Yes, the student even taught her the whole song, "Dance, Dance, Doll of Mine!" and she sang it to her three dolls; two were new, one a girl doll and the other a boy doll, but the third doll was old; her name was Lise-moér. She also heard the song, and was even in it.

Dance, dance, doll of mine!
Girl doll's dress is very fine.
Boy doll is a dandy, too;
He wears gloves and hat and shoe;
White pants, blue coat, him adorn;
On his toe he has a corn.
He is fine and she is fine.
Dance, dance, doll of mine!

Old doll's name is Lise-moér;
She is from the year before;
Hair is new; it's made of flax,
Forehead polished up with wax.
Young again, not old and done.
Come along, my cherished one,
Let us dance a fast gavotte;
To watch it is worth a lot.

Dance, dance, doll of mine!
Watch your steps and get in line;
One foot forward; watch your feet.
Dancing makes you slender, sweet.
Bow and twist and turn around;
That will make you hale and sound.
What a sight it is to see!
You are doing fine, all three.

And the dolls understood the song; little Amalie understood it, and so did the student, but then he had written it himself and said it was excellent. Only Aunt Malle didn't understand it; she had passed over the fence of youth. "Silly song!" she said.

But not little Amalie! She sings it. It is from her that we know it.