

Curiouser and curiouser!



- Cried Alice

São Paulo, 1907

I wasn't always Alice.

My earliest memories...
aren't images.

They are smells.

Damp soil.

Coffee drying in the sun.

White flowers in September...



The Rodrigues dos Campos Estate

was more than a
plantation.

It was a world unto itself.
Coffee held everything together...

...and everything carried the
scent of coffee.

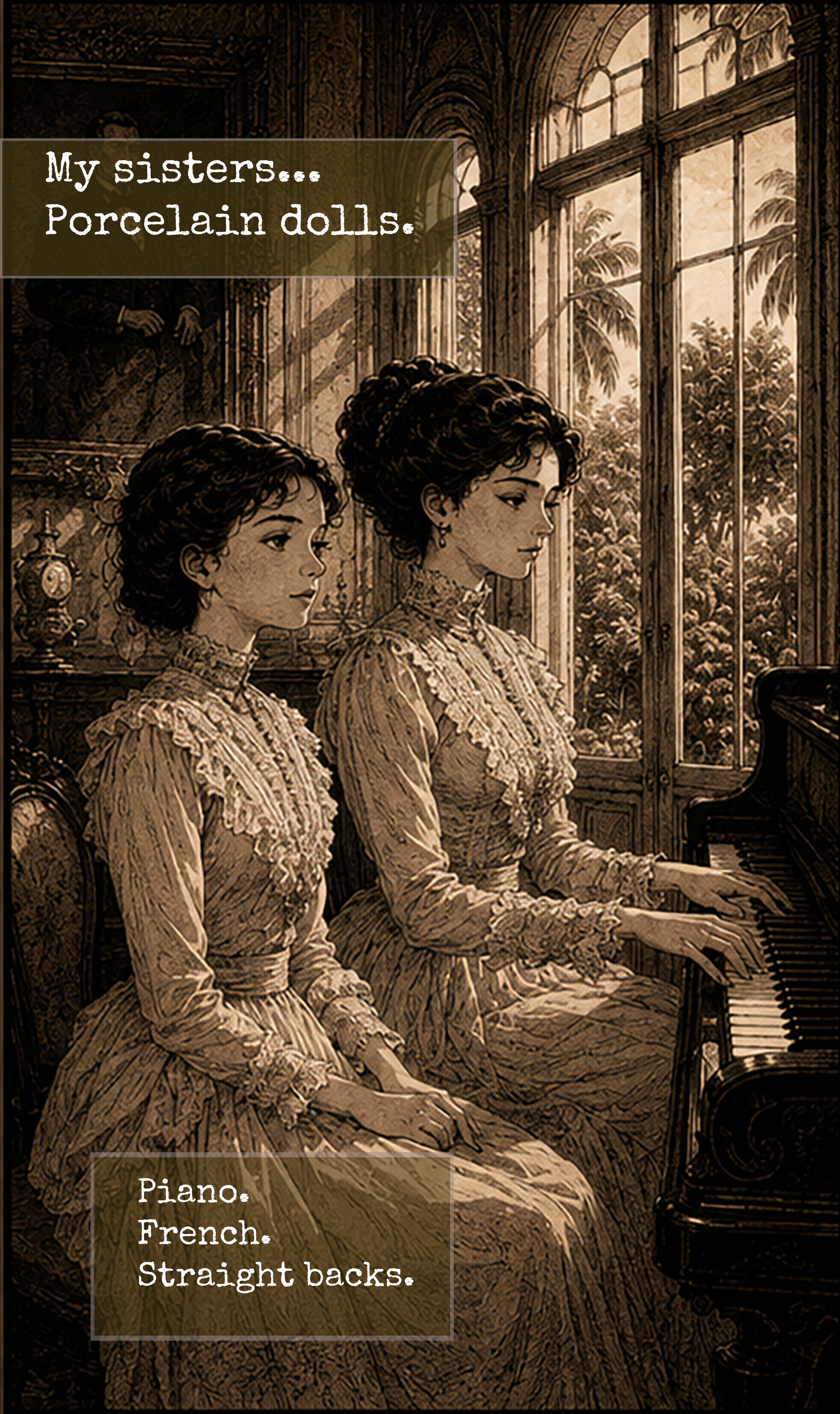


My mother... She was the perfect picture of composure.



Always imprisoned in corsets and rules.

My sisters... Porcelain dolls.



Piano.
French.
Straight backs.

My father... was a ghost.



He paid more attention to the fluctuations of the coffee market than to his own daughters.



My grandfather...
Antônio Rodrigues dos Campos.

The Man Who Held All the Power



"Bel... I won't have you
running around the
plantation grounds like
a little rascal..."

It wasn't a request.
It was the law.



But I already
understood...
which side
I wanted to be on.



I never understand well politics.
Those "nobodies."
That's what he called everyone who wasn't
"like him."

And it was with those...
"nobodies"...
that I ran away... to play.



While my sisters embroidered
and sipped tea...
I slipped away through the
back fields of the plantation.

It was Matteo...
an Italian immigrant...
who taught me
how to breathe life into the earth.

“Art speaks what words cannot.”



With him, I learned that
clay, stone, and paint...
did not merely create
shapes.

They gave voice.
Voice...

to those the world would
rather silence.



Pai Zé spoke little.

He never needed to raise
his voice.

First...

he taught me how to listen.



"Slowly, little miss...

Wood breathes too.

Before you cut...
listen."

And when night fell...

he spoke of things the Big
House pretended not to see.



It was from him that I
learned...
that hands could pray too.

Between clay, wood, and stories...
art became more than a pastime.



Oil painting is respectable.
But sculpture...?



It became a voice.



A young lady's
hands were
never meant
to look like a
laborer's



That night...
I gave a name to who I was becoming.