



Charles Dodgson, aka Lewis Carroll

LEWIS IN CARROLLAND

By Derek Webb

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Male Actors:

Male Actor 1: Charles Dodgson

Male Actor 2: John Tenniel, Tennyson, Puppeteer: Caterpillar

Male Actor 3: Robinson Duckworth, Mad Hatter, Puppeteer: Humpty Dumpty

Female Actors:

Female Actor 1: Ellen Terry, Older Alice, Voice: Cheshire Cat

Female Actor 2: Mrs Liddell, Red Queen, Puppeteer: Dodo

Child Actors:

Girl's Voice (can be pre-recorded) at top of each scene.

Girl's Voice 1 (can be pre-recorded)

Girl's Voice 2 (can be pre-recorded)

Girl's Voice 3 (can be pre-recorded)

Girl's Voice 4 (can be pre-recorded)

Puppets:

Humpty Dumpty

Dodo

Caterpillar

Cheshire Cat (projection)

ACT I**SCENE 1****SLIDE MEMORIES**

On stage there is a four foot brick wall, a simplified cartoon style, and above it a screen. As the house lights dim, we see various pictures projected on the screen. We can only faintly see that Charles Dodgson is behind a magic lantern and talks as he changes slides. NB: Dodgson has a stammer, not always indicated in the text, but the actor playing him should use it as and when he feels appropriate. He wears a white shirt and grey trousers

The first slide is of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

DODGSON: This is the great Pre-Raphaelite painter and poet, Gabriel Rossetti. A photograph I took in 1863 or thereabouts.

The slide changes to: Ellen Terry

And this is the wonderful actress Ellen Terry, a couple of years later, I think.

The slide changes to: Tennyson.

And the Poet Laureate himself, Lord Tennyson. Oh, how I admire his poetry!

The slide changes to: Agnes Grace Weld as Little Red Riding Hood.

Ah yes, here's Alfred Lord Tennyson's niece, Agnes Weld dressed as Little Red Riding Hood. I wrote a poem for her one summer.

The slide changes to: Ruskin.

And John Ruskin... what an artistic giant he is! I took this photograph of him in my study at Christ College, Oxford.

The slide changes to: Reginald Southey and skeleton.

This is my great friend, Reg Southey, the one on the left that is! He's a physician and the nephew of the Romantic poet Robert Southey. And it was he who encouraged me to take up photography.

The slide changes to: Reginald Southey

And here he is again – without his skeletal friend

The slide changes to: Alice Liddell.

And this is Alice. Beautiful Alice.

The last slide fades and the stage lights come up, so we see Dodgson properly for the first time.

You'll know Alice of course, for her adventures in Wonderland. *(He sighs)* Alice Liddell. Who could fail to be enchanted by her?

Popping up from behind the wall, Humpty Dumpty appears: this is a puppet in the shape of a large egg with arms and a small body which pops itself on the wall. The mouth is animated as it talks.

HUMPTY: Admit it. You're in love with her!

DODGSON: I admit to loving her. But I'm n-n-not *in* love with her.

HUMPTY: Tell that to the fairies.

DODGSON: I'll h-have you know, Sir, that any hint of imp-p propriety is entirely m-misplaced.

HUMPTY: Go on then, give us your side of the story from the beginning– if you dare! *(Beat)* How old did you say you were?

DODGSON: I-I'm f-fifty f-four.

HUMPTY: I didn't ask you how old you *are*. I asked you how old you *were*.

DODGSON: When?

HUMPTY: When you were seven and a half.

DODGSON: I was seven and a half, of course.

HUMPTY: 'Of course' has nothing to do with it. Start again.

DODGSON: If I must.

HUMPTY: I'm all ears.

DODGSON: Where to begin?

HUMPTY: I'd try the end and work backwards, if I were you, which I'm glad to say I'm not. *(Beat)* Goodbye. Or do I mean hello?

He disappears.

DODGSON: Right... well... *(He rubs his hands together to prepare to talk)* I was born Charles Dodgson on 27 January 1832 at All Saints' Vicarage in Daresbury, Cheshire. I was the oldest boy and the third oldest of 11 children. My f-father, Charles Dodgson, was the curate and his father – my g-grandfather was also called Charles Dodgson. Incidentally, my g-great grandfather was Charles Dodgson too. But actually my full name is Charles *Lutwidge* Dodgson – Lutwidge was my mother's maiden name. I–

He is interrupted by Humpty popping up from the wall.

HUMPTY: Desist!

DODGSON: Sorry?

HUMPTY: What are you doing?

DODGSON: Telling my story.

HUMPTY: From the start?

DODGSON: Of course, that's where it begins.

HUMPTY: You should tell it from the end, that's the proper way to tell it.

DODGSON: But I don't know how it ends.

HUMPTY: How do you think it ends? You die of course.

DODGSON: Do I?

HUMPTY: Doesn't everyone?

DODGSON: Well, yes, I suppose so. But when?

HUMPTY: You die of pneumonia following influenza on 14 January 1898 at your sisters' home, 'The Chestnuts', in Guildford.

DODGSON: I do?

HUMPTY: You do. Hah! And *Guildford* of all places! Cracks me up, that does!

DODGSON: I don't follow.

HUMPTY: Then you should pay more careful attention. We'll never get anywhere if you keep interrupting!

DODGSON: I—

HUMPTY: There you go again. Just get on with it will you?

DODGSON: I d-don't rightly know what you want me to say.

HUMPTY: Let's just skip the first few years shall we?

DODGSON: Well, when I was 11, my father was appointed Vicar in the village of Croft in Yorkshire and we moved—

HUMPTY: To be near the chuff-chuffs.

DODGSON: Pardon?

HUMPTY: You moved to be close to Darlington, isn't that right?

- DODGSON:** What's Darlington got to do with anything?
- HUMPTY:** The Darlington and Stockton railway. Or the other way round. It ran close to where you lived.
- DODGSON:** Well, yes, but I hardly think.
- HUMPTY:** Exactly! You hardly think. Admit it, you were a train spotter!
- DODGSON:** I like t-trains, yes. B-but I'm hardly a train spotter as you put it. True, when I was 14 I went to R-Rugby School as a boarder, and that did involve railway journeys. South via York-Doncaster-Grantham-Peterborough on the Great North Eastern Railway; or via Leeds-Derby-Leicester on the North Midland and Midland Railways.

Humpty waves a hand in front of his face, yawning.

- HUMPTY:** You *really* are a train spotter aren't you?
- DODGSON:** It meant time to read on the journey though. Dickens and Walter Scott – I loved them both. Tennyson and the romantic poets... all that. And I used to buy a copy of Punch from the W H Smith bookstore on the platform.
- HUMPTY:** Of course you did...
- DODGSON:** That inspired me to produce a humorous magazine of my own. For my siblings to enjoy.
- HUMPTY:** And did they?
- DODGSON:** Did they what?
- HUMPTY:** Enjoy your so-called 'humorous' magazine?
- DODGSON:** I t-think so, yes. Yes, I'm sure they did.
- HUMPTY:** And being what you'd call a bit of a brain-box you went off to hoity-toity college, is that right?
- DODGSON:** If you mean Christ Church, Oxford, yes. It was in May 1850 that I joined the college to read M-Mathematics.
- HUMPTY:** You could read then?
- DODGSON:** Of course. (*He sighs*) Reading means to *study* a subject. And I simply love mathematics. What I didn't like so much was that I had to wear the compulsory academic dress – not unlike that of a priest.
- HUMPTY:** Yes, very smart I'm sure.

DODGSON: And we had these caps to wear too.

He goes over and picks up a cap which he shows, and puts on.

DODGSON: The cap is square worn d-diagonally, covered with black cloth and has a silk tassel in the middle. Noblemen have a tassel of gold. Being a mere c-commoner I was only entitled to a plain silk tassel.

HUMPTY: We don't want to know all that, thank you very much. Just get on will you?

DODGSON: I was very happy. But my h-happiness was shattered in 1851 when my mother died suddenly. It was apparently caused by 'inflammation of the brain', whatever that is.

HUMPTY: I wouldn't know.

DODGSON: She was only 47.

HUMPTY: Tragic.

Dodgson gives him an angry look.

DODGSON: It was.

HUMPTY: Yes, yes, anything else?

DODGSON: Well, later the same year the wonder of the age opened – the Great Exhibition – and naturally I went up to London to visit. Everyone who was anyone went.

HUMPTY: Even you?

DODGSON: Yes, naturally. W-why do you put it like that?

HUMPTY: No reason. Carry on. Was it good?

DODGSON: M-my first impression upon entering was one of bewilderment. As far as you can see in any direction are long avenues of statues, fountains, all manner of exhibits–

HUMPTY: I think we get the picture. Come on, I haven't got all day you know.

DODGSON: Right, well in late October 1854 I gained a First Class Honours in Mathematics.

Humpty waves a hand in front of his face again, yawning.

HUMPTY: Bravo for you.

DODGSON: I started writing quite a bit too. Poems and short stories and the like.
And the theatre – I loved the theatre and would get down to London as
often as I could to see a play – though that was strictly against
Christchurch rules.

HUMPTY: Quite the little rebel, weren't you?

DODGSON: Well I–

HUMPTY: Yes, well I think I've heard enough for now. Goodbye.

DODGSON: Good–

Humpty disappears

Oh...

Fade to black

ACT I**SCENE 2****MEETING TENNYSON**

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE: She left the web: she left the loom:
 She made three paces thro' the room:
 She saw the waterflower bloom:
 She saw the helmet and the plume:
 She looked down to Camelot.
 Out flew the web, and floated wide,
 The mirror cracked from side to side,
 "The curse is come upon me," cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

At lights come up stage left, Dodgson enters with a large plate camera in his hands which he sets up on a tripod.

DODGSON: *The Lady of Shalott* by Alfred Tennyson, our Poet Laureate – someone I greatly admire, and it was through photography that we f-first met. I like to think I have an aptitude for it and it has given me an entrée to meeting many people for which I am very grateful.

The sister of Tennyson's wife, Mrs Charles Weld, for example, brought her d-daughter Grace to be photographed. I did so, d-dressed as Little Red Riding Hood. And it was that photograph that led me to be introduced to the great man himself.

Tennyson enters.

But his eyesight was so very poorly, I had to announce my name as I approached.

Dodgson extends his hand as he speaks to Tennyson.

Mr Tennyson, Sir... Charles D-Dodgson.

TENNYSON: Uhh?

Tennyson peers closely at him.

Dodgson?

DODGSON: Yes, Sir. Charles Dodgson. I took a photograph of your niece – Grace Weld.

TENNYSON: Grace? Ah yes, lovely girl.

DODGSON: And you indicated that I m-might call on you...

TENNYSON: Ah, yes, indeed. And here you are.

DODGSON: You are b-blessed with a very l-lovely house if I may say so, Sir.

TENNYSON: It suits me very well.

DODGSON: So what b-brought you to the Isle of Wight?

TENNYSON: I came in search of peace. *(He becomes expansive in his delivery)* Since becoming Poet Laureate, on the death of Wordsworth, my home in Twickenham had become increasingly plagued by well-wishers and passers by. It was quite simply intolerable.

DODGSON: No such p-problem here!

TENNYSON: Indeed not. I resolved to move as far as I could from London, but be able to journey up and down to the city as my commitments necessitate – while, maintaining a steady output of poetry. And Freshwater is the nicest place imaginable.

DODGSON: It most surely is. *(Beat)* And you suggested t-that you might like to have a p-photograph of yourself taken too, Sir.

TENNYSON: I did?

DODGSON: Most assuredly.

TENNYSON: Well, in that case, you had better get on with it.

DODGSON: I have my camera to hand.

Dodgson goes over and collects his camera and tripod. Tennyson watches him for a few seconds and then moves around looking for direction.

TENNYSON: Where should I stand?

DODGSON: Just there will be p-perfect. Allow me a little t-time to set my camera up if you would.

Tennyson moves to where indicated.

TENNYSON: Here?

DODGSON: Exactly. That's capital.

TENNYSON: And what brought you to this photography business?

DODGSON: Oh, it simply f-fascinates me. In m-many ways it represents the future, you know. A whole new way of looking at the world.

Dodgson sets his camera up.

But, I have to admit, it is a very involved p-process.

TENNYSON: I'm sure.

Dodgson takes a plate from his box and as he talks gets it ready to put into the camera.

DODGSON: Firstly one has to prepare these photographic plates. They're made of glass coated with a c-collodion emulsion, then covered in silver nitrate. And the making the p-picture has to be done immediately after so that it can be d-developed before the emulsion dries.

He drops the glass plate into place in the camera.

Good.

TENNYSON: Is it done?

DODGSON: Oh, no, not yet, Sir.

Tennyson becomes restless.

TENNYSON: Not done?

DODGSON: N-Not quite Sir. Just n-need to get you set up.

He goes over to Tennyson and moves him into a position which satisfies him.

That looks good. Now stay perfectly still for a good twenty seconds.

He goes back to the camera and removes the lens cap.

I do so admire your poetry, you know.

TENNYSON: I'm pleased.

DODGSON: Oh, try not to speak, please!

I s-simply love The Lady of Shallot, you know?

TENNYSON: I'm pleased, I—

Dodgson holds up his hand to stop Tennyson from speaking

DODGSON: It is, to my mind, quite the p-perfect poem.

Tennyson speaks through clenched teeth.

TENNYSON: Can I move now?

DODGSON: Not yet I'm afraid. Another few seconds that's all. I d-don't want you to be b-blurred.

TENNYSON: I need to scratch my nose.

DODGSON: Sorry, won't be long. Ah, well that's probably long enough now.

Dodgson replaces the lens cap.

Thank you, that's it. You can relax.

TENNYSON: Thank the Lord.

He scratches his nose.

I wrote The Lady of Shallot a good few years ago you know.

DODGSON: 1832. The same year I was born.

TENNYSON: You're very well informed.

DODGSON: I make it my business to be so.

TENNYSON: Can I see the picture then?

DODGSON: Not yet I'm afraid. I have to develop it first.

Dodgson takes out the plate.

TENNYSON: A great deal of palaver, isn't it? Rather more palaver than can be good for one.

DODGSON: Afraid so. Won't be long.

TENNYSON: What the—?

But Dodgson has exited with the plate already. Tennyson goes over to the camera and investigates it in a disinterested way then wanders off, muttering to himself:

Peculiar fellow...

Tennyson exits. Some seconds later Mrs Liddell enters from the other side. She sees the camera and is also investigating it when Dodgson reappears.

DODGSON: Here we— Oh, Mrs Liddell... you're not Tennyson!

MRS LIDDELL: No, how observant you are, Mr Dodgson.

Dodgson laughs.

DODGSON: Yes, I— ah, I was just taking a photograph...

MRS LIDDELL: So it would seem.

DODGSON: Of Alfred Tennyson.

MRS LIDDELL: Who is not here.

- DODGSON:** Not—? No, so it seems. *(He is momentarily puzzled)* But why are you here?
- MRS LIDDELL:** I live here.
- DODGSON:** In Freshwater?
- MRS LIDDELL:** In the Deanery, Christ Church, Mr Dodgson.
- DODGSON:** Oh, I see. Is *that* where we are now?
- MRS LIDDELL:** As you can see.
- DODGSON:** Where I first met Alice.
- MRS LIDDELL:** Exactly.
- DODGSON:** Yes, yes, of course. I remember it as if it were yesterday, The 25th of April 1856.
- MRS LIDDELL:** You have a good memory.
- DODGSON:** Not always, But I p-pride myself on remembering important dates. I was here to take a photograph of Christchurch cathedral, with a b-borrowed camera at the time, I recall. The p-pictures I took of the cathedral were less than satisfactory I fear.
- MRS LIDDELL:** But you found my three daughters sitting outside in the gardens of the deanery.
- DODGSON:** Exactly. Lorina, Edith and – Alice. And you gave me permission to photograph them.
- MRS LIDDELL:** I was pleased to do so.
- DODGSON:** Little did I realise at the time how important that first meeting was to be.
- MRS LIDDELL:** As we subsequently found out.
- DODGSON:** I don't think I expected my little book to be quite so popular.
- MRS LIDDELL:** You underestimate yourself, Sir.
- DODGSON:** One doesn't w-want to be too p-presumptuous.
- MRS LIDDELL:** No, that would indeed be an unfortunate characteristic to have.

Mrs Liddell looks Dodgson up and down with curiosity.

Tell me, why did you think you were in Freshwater?

DODGSON: It's where Alfred Tennyson lives.

MRS LIDDELL: Yes, of course.

DODGSON: I was t-taking a photograph of the great man. He invited me to the Isle of Wight f-for that p-purpose. He had seen a photograph that I had taken of his niece you see, and was very impressed by it. He has also seen the p-photograph I took of Alice, dressed as a beggar maid.

MRS LIDDELL: Ah, yes, that one.

DODGSON: He declared it "the m-most beautiful photograph he had ever seen."

MRS LIDDELL: Did he indeed? Well it is quite charming, I admit. The Dean and I are quite taken with it.

Stage right, projected, we see the photograph of Alice as beggar child slowly fading up.

DODGSON: I have to say I was m-most pleased with it myself... It does I feel c-capture something of the spirit and zest of young Alice—

MRS LIDDELL: I'm not quite sure what you mean by that, Mr Dodgson.

DODGSON: I mean... Well, I d-don't quite know myself I suppose.

MRS LIDDELL: I am bound to say, Mr Dodgson, that you do have a capacity for confusing one somewhat.

DODGSON: Do forgive me, Mrs Liddell. I assure you it is not my intention.

MRS LIDDELL: I am pleased to hear it. And I hear from my husband that you are preparing for Holy Orders?

DODGSON: I am. As a holder of a Ch-Christ Church studentship, it is of c-course expected of me.

MRS LIDDELL: Most certainly.

DODGSON: So I anticipate that I should become a deacon by 1861.

MRS LIDDELL: I wish you well. Good day to you.

DODGSON: Thank you...

But she has already moved off.

Mrs Liddell.

Fade to black

ACT I**SCENE 3****BOATING BEGINNINGS**

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE: All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
Our wanderings to guide.

As the lights come up Dodgson enters stage right. He wears a straw boater and striped blazer.

He is joined by Robinson Duckworth entering stage left, also in straw boater and striped blazer.

DUCKWORTH: I say, I say, Dodgson old chap!

DODGSON: What do you say, Duckworth?

DUCKWORTH: July the fourth, 1862. Remember that?

DODGSON: How could I not?

DUCKWORTH: That was a day, was it not?

DODGSON: No, that was *the* day! The day Alice was born, so to speak.

DUCKWORTH: *The* day. Exactly. What memories, eh? What larks!

DODGSON: You and I and the three Miss Liddells: Alice, Lorina and Edith.

DUCKWORTH: You rowed bow and I rowed stroke. Up the river to Godstowe.

DODGSON: With the three little Liddells stowed away in the stern.

DUCKWORTH: Exactly.

DODGSON: I can call it up almost as clearly as if it were yesterday. The cloudless blue above, the watery mirror below, the boat drifting idly on its way, the tinkle of the drips that fell from the oars, as they waved sleepily to and fro, the three eager faces hungry for news of fairyland. Who could say 'nay' to their plea to 'Tell us a story, please!'

DUCKWORTH: Who indeed? And who could possibly refuse the request to 'Write it down – *please!*'

DODGSON: Not I. I started it the very next morning. On the train from Oxford to London, as I recall. The 9.02 train to be exact.

- DUCKWORTH:** It always pays to be exact.
- DODGSON:** Precisely.
- DUCKWORTH:** It's a funny thing time, isn't it?
- DODGSON:** Undoubtedly.
- DUCKWORTH:** Funny that it can be half past twelve in London and 20 to one in Bristol. But the railway determines that it will be the same time in both places.
- DODGSON:** At the same time.
- DUCKWORTH:** Railway time they call it. And we all follow it now.
- DODGSON:** A jolly g-good thing I'd say too.
- DUCKWORTH:** Indeed.
- DODGSON:** Now here's a question. I have t-two clocks: one loses a minute a day, and the other doesn't go *at all*. Which would you prefer?
- DUCKWORTH:** The losing one, of course.
- DODGSON:** Really?
- DUCKWORTH:** Of course. Without a doubt.
- DODGSON:** Well, just think about it. The one which loses a minute a day has to lose twelve hours, or seven hundred and twenty minutes before it is right again.
- DUCKWORTH:** So?
- DODGSON:** So, consequently, it is only right once in two years. Whereas the other is evidently right as often as the time it points to comes round – which happens twice a day.
- Let me put it another way. Which would you prefer: a clock that is right only once every two years, or a clock that is right twice every day?
- DUCKWORTH:** Well the one that's right twice a day of course.
- DODGSON:** The one that doesn't go at all?
- DUCKWORTH:** No... I mean yes, I mean...

- DODGSON:** So, if the clock says eight o'clock, consequently, when eight o'clock comes round your clock is right.
- DUCKWORTH:** Yes, I see *that*, but how am I to know when it *is* eight o'clock? My clock won't tell me.
- DODGSON:** But you know that when eight o'clock comes your clock is right?
- DUCKWORTH:** Yes.
- DODGSON:** Very good; then your rule is this: keep your eye fixed on your clock, and *the very moment it is right* it will be eight o'clock.
- DUCKWORTH:** But that doesn't make sense.
- DODGSON:** As much sense as anything in this world.
- DUCKWORTH:** If you say so.
- DODGSON:** I find the p-problem of such things as the two clocks totally absorbing. Far b-better to involve myself in m-mathematical calculations than worrying about the p-problems of the world.
- DUCKWORTH:** Yes, I see that.
- DODGSON:** But we are digressing...
- DUCKWORTH:** Indeed we are.
- DODGSON:** To return to young Alice's request to 'Write it down, please.' I wrote the f-first draft of *Alice's Adventures Underground*, as it was then known by, and g-gave a copy of the book to Alice as a Christmas p-present, illustrated by myself. That would have been in 1864.
- DUCKWORTH:** But, in the event, you didn't illustrate the published version?
- DODGSON:** No, indeed. In fact, at that time I hadn't any thought of wider p-publication at all, but a f-friend of mine, George Macdonald, p-persuaded me to submit it to a p-publisher. And, I could hardly believe it, Messrs. Macmillan agreed to produce it! But I didn't have enough faith in my own artistic abilities to do the drawings.
- DUCKWORTH:** So you persuaded John Tenniel to illustrate it?
- DODGSON:** That was my old friend Tom Tucker at Punch magazine who suggested him.
- DUCKWORTH:** And an excellent suggestion!
- DODGSON:** Absolutely. His cartoons for P-punch are m-marvellous.

DUCKWORTH: A perfect choice.

DODGSON: P-perfect. He took a little p-persuading mind you. He was interested but wouldn't accept the commission until he'd read the whole manuscript.

DUCKWORTH: Sounds perfectly wise to me.

DODGSON: Yes, I agree. He t-told me that his animal drawings are his strongest point which is probably why the b-book appealed to him.

DUCKWORTH: But his Alice is quite charming.

DODGSON: Well, that's a case in p-point. He resolutely refuses to use a model you see. He said that he no more needed a m-model than I needed a m-multiplication table to work out a mathematical problem!

DUCKWORTH: Really!

DODGSON: I sent him a photograph of a girl he m-might use, but he ignored it and the first drawings he produced had Alice's head totally out of p-proportion.

DUCKWORTH: But, in the event, the final drawings are excellent.

DODGSON: Oh, yes, I own that. Although, to my eyes, his p-portrayal of Alice seems to me curiously more like a m-miniaturised adult than a little girl, the end result is c-curiously satisfying.

DUCKWORTH: Curiouser and curiouser!

DODGSON: Exactly!

John Tenniel enters waving a drawing pad.

TENNIEL: Ah, Charles, glad to have caught you. Could I just show you something?

DODGSON: Of course.

As Tenniel comes over, Duckworth starts to go.

DUCKWORTH: I ought to get going, Charles.

DODGSON: Oh, there's no need...

DUCKWORTH: No really. Perhaps we might meet up later.

DODGSON: Of course.

Duckworth exits as Tenniel stands next to Dodgson, opening his drawing pad.

- TENNIEL:** I thought perhaps that the Mad Hatter might look something rather like this...
- DODGSON:** Yes, yes, that's caught him to a T. An absolute T!
- TENNIEL:** I'm pleased you like it. I'll continue with the others now.
- DODGSON:** I so wish I were able to draw as well as you.
- TENNIEL:** Well, the more you do, the easier it becomes I think.
- DODGSON:** And you say you had no f-formal training?
- TENNIEL:** No, not really.
- DODGSON:** Remarkable. Had mathematics not taken such a f-firm hold of my loves and ambitions, I believe I would have w-wanted to pursue a career in artistic endeavours.
- TENNIEL:** You have a good eye.
- DODGSON:** Thank you. And I do believe I have an aptitude. Certainly I feel very m-much at home in the company of artists.
- TENNIEL:** You've met them all.
- DODGSON:** Well hardly *all*.
- TENNIEL:** Ruskin though?
- DODGSON:** Oh, yes. Interesting man. Did you know he was Alice's drawing tutor for while?
- TENNIEL:** No I didn't know that.
- DODGSON:** She became one of his star p-pupils and won f-first prize for one of her sketches one year.
- TENNIEL:** Really? And you obviously know Rossetti very well?
- DODGSON:** Oh, well, yes, I think I developed a pretty c-close relationship with Gabriel, as well as Christina and the rest of the f-family.
- TENNIEL:** I've seen many of your photographs of them, of course.
- DODGSON:** Oh indeed, they were excellent subjects. I'd often take p-pictures of the f-family in the garden of his house in Cheyne Walk. What a fantastic p-place. Do you know his g-garden was simply overflowing with animals?

TENNIEL: So I heard.

DODGSON: Besides rabbits, hedgehogs, d-dogs and dormice, there were chameleons, lizards, a wombat the size of a b-badger and Japanese s-salamanders.

TENNIEL: I don't even know what they are.

DODGSON: And k-kangaroos—

TENNIEL: Kangaroos? Surely not.

DODGSON: Oh, yes. And wallabies. And an awful talking p-parrot.

TENNIEL: Stop! I don't want to hear any more. It quite makes my flesh creep.

DODGSON: Of course it was the p-peacocks who were the worst. Their raucous, t-trumpeting was intolerable to the neighbours. It was extraordinary wandering in the g-grounds of that house.

TENNIEL: Did he have one of these?

Tenniel opens his drawing pad again and shows a drawing to Dodgson.

DODGSON: What's th— Oh, it's the Dodo isn't it? Well, bless my word, that's absolutely delightful!

TENNIEL: I'm pleased you like it.

DODGSON: Like it? I love it. Your drawings will b-bring 'Alice' alive. I have g-great hopes for our little book, John. Great hopes indeed!

Fade to black

ACT I**SCENE 4****MIDSUMMER DREAM**

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE: If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream...

At lights up, Dodgson enters. He holds a copy of a book in his hand.

DODGSON: After all the effort of getting *Alice's Adventures* into print, when I saw the first books arrive, I could have wept. Both I and John Tenniel were entirely dissatisfied by the quality of the printing. Some pages had been so heavily inked that it bled through to the following page. We took the awful, most difficult decision to scrap the offending copies and reprint.

He takes the book and ceremoniously tears page after page from the book, throwing them up in to the air as he exits.

Had to be done.

Projected we see the title page of the second edition zoom towards us as Dodgson re-enters.

The second edition came out in November 1865, in time for the Christmas market.

*Tenniel enters holding a copy of *The Times**

TENNIEL: A triumph, dear Dodgson, a triumph! You have seen the reviews?

DODGSON: Have I? I should say! *The Reader* calls it “an antidote to a fit of the blues.”

TENNIEL: What about this in *The Times*? *(He reads)* “Mr Tenniel has illustrated this little work with extraordinary grace. His neatness of touch may be seen in vignettes throughout the volume...”

Dodgson is clearly miffed.

DODGSON: Is that all?

TENNIEL: “The text of which is by Mr Lewis Carroll and may best be described as an excellent piece of nonsense.”

DODGSON: Ah! “An excellent piece of nonsense.” I like that!

TENNIEL: *The Spectator* predicts that “big folks who take it home to their little folk will find themselves reading more than they intended and laughing more than they had any right to expect.” What about that, eh?

DODGSON: Capital! Absolutely capital!

Ellen Terry enters.

ELLEN TERRY: And there are more such reviews praising the book, Charles. It’s marvellous. Very well done! Is it too soon to declare *Alice Adventures in Wonderland* a work of genius!

TENNIEL: Praise indeed from Miss Ellen Terry!

Dodgson’s response is surprisingly stiff.

DODGSON: Thank you, Ellen.

ELLEN TERRY: We should celebrate. A trip to the theatre?

DODGSON: I don’t believe that would be entirely appropriate.

ELLEN TERRY: Why not? We often go to the theatre.

DODGSON: I know.

ELLEN TERRY: Than let us see what you’d fancy. There’s a new adaptation of Hugo’s *Les Misérables*, for instance. It’s called ‘The Yellow Passport’. On at the Olympic Theatre.

DODGSON: In Covent Garden?

ELLEN TERRY: Yes! Do you fancy that?

DODGSON: No, I don’t think so.

Tenniel is unsure about what to do. For the moment he hovers uncertainly.

ELLEN TERRY: You don’t think so? What is the matter with you? You get wonderful reviews for ‘Alice’ and yet you don’t want to celebrate...

DODGSON: I can’t.

ELLEN TERRY: Of course you can.

DODGSON: To celebrate perhaps. But not by going to the theatre.

ELLEN TERRY: You love the theatre.

DODGSON: That is true.

ELLEN TERRY: Then why not?

DODGSON: I think you know. We can hardly be seen together – in public...

TENNIEL: Oh, time for me to leave I think...

Tenniel exits

ELLEN TERRY: I don't understand, Charles.

DODGSON: It is terribly hard for me too.

ELLEN TERRY: Then, why...

DODGSON: I was in love with theatre as a child, you know. I made a toy theatre to entertain my sisters and brothers–

ELLEN TERRY: Really, how lovely...

DODGSON: The thing is, I simply lost my heart to theatre.

ELLEN TERRY: That's plain.

DODGSON: And I was enchanted by you from the moment I saw you play Puck in *Midsummer's Night's Dream*.

ELLEN TERRY: That was a while ago.

DODGSON: You would have been, what ten or eleven?

ELLEN TERRY: I was nine.

DODGSON: There we are then. From that very first time I have loved you as an actress. In the past few years we have enjoyed a great many trips to the theatre.

ELLEN TERRY: We have. And we could continue to.

DODGSON: Sadly, no.

Realisation dawns on Ellen's face.

ELLEN TERRY: Is this because I've left George...?

DODGSON: You are a married woman. To walk out on him to live with... with an architect... I–

ELLEN TERRY: A man I truly love.

DODGSON: I'm mortified, but I feel you have so entirely sacrificed your social position that–

ELLEN TERRY: Don't say it.

DODGSON: – that I have no option but to drop your acquaintance.

She is stunned.

ELLEN TERRY: You don't really mean that. You cannot.

DODGSON: I have said it. That is all.

ELLEN TERRY: I was but sixteen when we married. George Watts was thirty years my senior. I was in love with his paintings, but not the man.

DODGSON: You are his *wife*!

ELLEN TERRY: What can I say, Charles? I felt that I was tied by law to a man who disowned his share of what ought to be a mutual contract.

DODGSON: How so?

ELLEN TERRY: He never loved me. And I didn't believe in God's eyes that we were man and wife. Society expected me to live until his death as if I were single – and to give up all hope of that love which I pine for, and should never get from him.

DODGSON: I understand. I think I do.

ELLEN TERRY: Edward loves me as truly and faithfully as any lawful husband. And, if a marriage ceremony were possible I would insist on it before living as I do, but it isn't possible. That's the truth of the matter.

DODGSON: And perhaps, d-dear Ellen, there we should let the matter rest.

She looks at him perplexed.

Fade to black

ACT I SCENE 5

MAD HATTER AND DODO

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE: Into the wood – the dark, dark wood –
 Forth went the happy child;
 And, in its stillest solitude,
 Talked to herself, and smiled:
 And closer drew the scarlet hood
 About her ringlets wild.

 And now at last she threads the maze,
 And now she need not fear;
 Frowning, she meets the sudden blaze
 Of moonlight falling clear;
 Nor trembles she, nor turns, nor stays,
 Although the Wolf be near.

As the light come up, Dodgson enters and addresses the audience.

DODGSON: I wrote that poem to a-accompany the photograph I'd taken of Agnes Weld, Tennyson's niece, as Red Riding Hood. I know it's n-not in the same league as the Poet Laureate's, but Agnes was very p-pleased with it.

Mad Hatter enters. He wears a frock coat and an oversized top hat with a notice 'In this style 10/6', tucked into the hat band. He is carrying a tea cup.

MAD HATTER: Hello, fancy a cup of tea?

DODGSON: Not right at the m-moment, thank you.

MAD HATTER: Please yourself. Don't mind if I do, do you?

DODGSON: No, of course not.

The Mad Hatter takes a drink from the cup, slurping loudly.

MAD HATTER: I'll be having a tea party a bit later on. Would you like to come?

DODGSON: No thank you, I know what your t-tea parties are like.

MAD HATTER: Please yourself. Anyway, talking of riddles, here's one.

DODGSON: I d-didn't know we were talking of riddles. Talking *in* riddles perhaps...

The Mad Hatter takes another slurp of tea.

- MAD HATTER:** Drop me and I'm sure to crack, but give me a smile and I always smile back. What am I?
- DODGSON:** A mirror.
- MAD HATTER:** Oh, you know it!
- DODGSON:** Yes. *(Beat)* Can we get on?
- MAD HATTER:** Alright, here's another. Why is a raven like a writing desk? That's in the book you wrote about me.
- DODGSON:** If you're referring to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* I didn't actually write the book *about* you.
- MAD HATTER:** Good as. In any case, as a riddle it's useless because it has no answer. And that, to my mind, is the beauty of it!
- DODGSON:** In fact, though, I could tell you a *possible* answer to it.
- MAD HATTER:** Oh, yes?
- DODGSON:** I wrote p-part of the book while staying at the Liddell's family home – Ravensworth Castle near Gateshead. It's where I t-took the photograph of Alice as a beggar child that's so admired, the one that Tennyson once said was his f-favourite photograph ever...
- MAD HATTER:** I don't follow...
- DODGSON:** A raven, as in Ravensworth, is like a writing d-desk because that's where I did my writing!
- MAD HATTER:** Bit obscure if I may say so.
- DODGSON:** You may.
- MAD HATTER:** My riddles are better.
- DODGSON:** So you say.
- MAD HATTER:** Well, here's one you'll like. Why is little Alice like a champion racehorse?
- DODGSON:** I don't know... why is little Alice like a champion r-racehorse?
- MAD HATTER:** Because she's the Dodgs-on favourite of course!
- DODGSON:** I don't get it.
- MAD HATTER:** Of course you do. Admit it, she's your favourite isn't she?

DODGSON: I like Alice, yes.

MAD HATTER: And you want to marry her?

DODGSON: I c-can't m-marry her. She's only twelve.

MAD HATTER: It's legal. You'd just need her parents' consent.

DODGSON: And I'm 32.

MAD HATTER: So?

DODGSON: Her father would never permit it.

MAD HATTER: So?

DODGSON: It's not possible.

MAD HATTER: What are you – a man, or a – dormouse?

DODGSON: A d-dormouse, I think.

MAD HATTER: It's time you came out of your shell.

DODGSON: A dormouse doesn't have a shell.

MAD HATTER: Might have.

DODGSON: Not the last time I looked.

MAD HATTER: A teapot then. Time you came out of your teapot!

DODGSON: That's as maybe. But what you're suggesting is mad.

MAD HATTER: It's been said. Good, so at last we're getting somewhere!

DODGSON: Where are we getting?

MAD HATTER: Further than we were. Alright, you want riddles, here's another—
He's interrupted by the sudden appearance from behind the wall of a Dodo (puppet).

What's this?

DODO: This isn't a *this*. This is me – a Dodo.

DODGSON: The very last Dodo on earth if he's to be b-believed. Which he isn't.

MAD HATTER: Well, I can't spend my time talking to dead birds. I've got a tea party to attend.

DODGSON: Goodbye then.

MAD HATTER: Huh!

The Mad Hatter exits.

DODO: I thought I'd find you here.

DODGSON: Shouldn't you be extinct?

DODO: I'm in your book.

DODGSON: That's not the same thing. Not the same thing at all. Dodos are extinct. I think I only included you because you're a pun on my name.

DODO: Really?

DODGSON: I sometimes have d-difficulty saying my name, Do-dogson you see.

DODO: Not really.

DODGSON: No matter.

DODO: Well I'm here now.

DODGSON: Did you know that there used to be an actual d-dodo in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

DODO: Like me?

DODGSON: Just like you. But stuffed.

DODO: And what happened to him... her... it?

DODGSON: It got thrown out.

DODO: What?

DODGSON: In 1755 the d-director of the museum thought it was getting a bit m-musty and he took it and threw it onto a b-bonfire.

DODO: A bonfire! What?

DODGSON: One of the m-museum employees tried to save it but only m-managed to rescue its scorched head and part of a foot.

DODO: You have got to be joking.

DODGSON: No. So that's it. That's all that remains of the Earth's v-very last Dodo.

DODO: Except me.

DODGSON: Except you. Except you don't count, b-because you're just in my head.

DODO: And now in a book.

DODGSON: Ah, yes! Indeed. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

DODO: As it is now known.

DODGSON: As you say, as it's now known. *(He sighs)* Do you know it was exactly three years after that most m-memorable row up the river, that Miss Alice Liddell received the first presentation copy.

DODO: Fascinating.

DODGSON: You sound rather cynical.

DODO: Do I? Oh, forgive me for breathing.

The Dodo disappears behind the wall. Dodgson moves away downstage and addresses the audience.

DODGSON: The end, as I saw it, of my r-relationship with Ellen Terry hit m-me hard. Although, as things stood, c-continuing it was not something I could c-contemplate.

But it was b-barely three years after 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' was published that I suffered my greatest t-tragedy... In 1868, my f-ather died suddenly and the world I had known was shattered. As none of my b-brothers and sisters had married, I was now, it seemed, head of the f-family. And, as such, it fell on me to provide for the family with a home.

After much searching we eventually c-came to Guildford in Surrey. The house we found was c-called The Chestnuts and was a stone's throw from the High Street. It has eight b-bedrooms... but for a f-family of eight women, their brothers when at home, and servants, it is only just adequate. Whenever I visit I g-generally stay at the White Lion or White Hart.

I c-continued to live primarily in Oxford in my quarters, continuing my university duties, while working on mathematical books and the like.

He relaxes and speaks in a confidential way.

But whenever there was a little time purely to myself I amused myself by embarking on another book about Alice.

Fade to black

ACT I**SCENE 6****LOOKING GLASS**

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE: 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble *in the wabe*.
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

Entering together, Dodgson and Tenniel are in conversation, as the lights come up.

TENNIEL: I'm not convinced, Charles. I'm not sure I want to illustrate it.

DODGSON: But you're absolutely right for John. Your illustrations for
'Wonderland' were just p-perfect.

TENNIEL: It's not the same. Not the same thing at all.

DODGSON: It's Alice. She's the same. It's a d-different situation that's all. With lots
of m-marvellous new characters for you to draw.

TENNIEL: Such as?

DODGSON: Well, there's a Jabberwock—

TENNIEL: A Jabberwock?

DODGSON: And a Jubjub Bird.

TENNIEL: A budjub?

DODGSON: No, a Jubjub. Oh, and Tweedledum.

TENNIEL: Tweedle?

DODGSON: Dum.

TENNIEL: Tweedledum. Of course.

DODGSON: And Tweedledee.

TENNIEL: Naturally. Can't forget him.

DODGSON: No.

TENNIEL: I'm just not– I have quite a lot of–

DODGSON: You are the only one t-to do it, John. Honestly. At least read it through properly. You'll love it I'm sure.

TENNIEL: I really don't–

DODGSON: What if I were to offer right now to pay you for five months of your time? That would be sufficient to complete the commission I believe?

TENNIEL: Well, yes, probably.

DODGSON: You're the only man for the job.

TENNIEL: That's very nice of you to say so, but–

DODGSON: So you'll do it?

TENNIEL: I– I don't know Charles... I–

DODGSON: Surely you can't refuse?

TENNIEL: Well, if I were to undertake the commission, it would have to be on the understanding that I would have to fit in the illustrations as and when my other commitments allowed.

DODGSON: Of course, it goes without saying.

TENNIEL: Then I accept.

He holds out his hand to be shaken.

DODGSON: Good man. You won't regret your d-decision. I think the second volume of Alice will be as w-well received as the first.

TENNIEL: If not better!

DODGSON: You're probably right.

They laugh.

Lights fade and Tenniel moves away. Lights come up on Dodgson solely.

DODGSON: In early January 1871 I finally c-completed the manuscript of 'Alice Through the Looking Glass and What She Found There' – as the second Alice volume was called – and sent it off to Macmillan for publication. I had great hopes of g-getting the book out for Easter but everything depended on John Tenniel being able to d-deliver the illustrations on t-time.

And there was one major p-problem. His illustration of the Jabberwock, which was designed to adorn the frontispiece of the b-book, was considered by m-many to be too frightening for children. In the event, the illustration was only used at the point when the Jabberwock is introduced and the f-frontispiece instead was a p-picture of the White Knight. I felt John's illustration m-made him look too old though and asked him to remove the whiskers. John, in turn, asked me to omit a whole c-chapter!

I had written a story entitled 'The Wasp in a Wig' which John very much t-took against.

Lights come back up as Tenniel reappears. He is obviously deep in thought.

TENNIEL: The thing is, Charles... that – and don't think me brutal – but I am bound to say that the 'wasp' chapter doesn't interest me in the slightest and I can't see my way to a picture. You said in the past that you thought the book was a little over length. In which case, this is the perfect opportunity to shorten it.

DODGSON: Well, I–

TENNIEL: You do agree, don't you, Charles?

DODGSON: Yes, I– I don't know. The thing is John, the fact is that I have to write what I write. I mean, when I am writing one of my mathematical studies – my *Two Books of Euclid*, for example – than I am guided by the necessity to communicate the facts. But when I am writing a work of fiction, no such constrain exists. So I just write what I write.

TENNIEL: What do you mean?

DODGSON: Simply that every idea and nearly every w-word of the dialogue, c-came of itself. Sometimes an idea comes at night, when I have had to g-get up and strike a light to note it down. Sometimes when out on a lonely w-winter walk, I have had to stop, and with half-frozen fingers j-jot down a few words which should keep the idea from p-perishing. But, whenever or however it comes, it c-comes of itself.

TENNIEL: I see.

DODGSON: Do you? Well you must. I mean it has to be the same for you, the idea for an illustration forms, seemingly out of nowhere. And then it takes shape slowly until at last it has form, something substantial and real...

TENNIEL: Well, yes–

DODGSON: You cannot set invention going like a clock, by winding up, so to speak. I can't believe that any original writing is ever produced that

way. If you sit down, unimpassioned and uninspired, and tell yourself to write for so many hours, you will merely produce some of that stuff which fills, as far as I can judge, two-thirds of most magazines these days. Easy to write and most weary to read.

TENNIEL: I have to agree with you there.

DODGSON: It is mere ‘padding’, and it is to my mind one of the most detestable things in modern literature.

TENNIEL: Whereas ‘Alice and the Looking-Glass’ is another matter entirely...

DODGSON: I like to think so. And, while it is m-made up almost wholly of bits and scraps, single ideas which c-came of themselves, I believe it achieves a cohesiveness – a pleasing wholeness’

TENNIEL: And you would be right. It is quite, dear Charles, simply unique.

Tenniel exits. Dodgson watches him go, then looks towards the audience and sighs.

DODGSON: You know a looking glass is, in a way, a perfect metaphor for my relationship with Ellen Terry. From one side all I can see is a wonderful actress and companion, one I’ve loved from the time she was a child actor. But on the other side of the mirror, the reverse, here is someone who I cannot, with the best will in the world, associate with. Ah, such is life...

Fade to black

ACT I**SCENE 7****OLDER ALICE**

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE: He took his vorpal sword in hand;
 Long time the manxome foe he sought—
 So rested he by the Tumtum tree
 And stood awhile in thought.

 And, as in uffish thought he stood,
 The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
 Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
 And burbled as it came!

Dodgson enters. He stands looking around, nervous.

A well-dressed woman in her mid-thirties enters. She sees Dodgson and does a double-take before speaking.

ALICE: Good afternoon, Mr... Dodgson.

Dodgson looks at her

DODGSON: G-good after— do I know you? (*He does a double-take*) Alice? Alice Liddell?

ALICE: Alice Hargreaves now!

DODGSON: Hargreaves, of course! You were m-married when we contacted you to p-publish the f-fascsimile edition of 'Wonderland'.

ALICE: I'd been married for about six years by then.

DODGSON: Of c-course. Of course. Oh, it's so nice to m-meet you again.

ALICE: Likewise, Mr Dodgson.

DODGSON: Oh, *Charles*, please.

ALICE: If you prefer, but it seems a little awkward.

DODGSON: N-nonsense. M-married, yes, I remember. And you're happy?

She's not quite sure how to answer this.

ALICE: Very. Thank you very much.

DODGSON: Oh, I didn't mean any... you know what I mean...

ALICE: Reginald is a perfect husband. And a first-class cricketer.

DODGSON: Good, good. That's l-lovely. *(Beat)* Do you know, I thought at one time that you might marry Leopold.

ALICE: *Prince* Leopold – Queen Victoria's son?

DODGSON: Yes.

ALICE: I don't think that was ever on the cards.

DODGSON: Really?

ALICE: I'm not sure Her Majesty would have approved and our – relationship – wasn't really that serious. A lovely man though, nevertheless.

DODGSON: Yes, I know. He sat for a couple of photographs for me.

ALICE: You're still taking photographs I trust?

DODGSON: Well, no, in actual fact, I gave up photography some years ago.

ALICE: Oh, that is a shame. You have a true gift, Mr– Charles.

DODGSON: Thank you. But one needs a g-good subject.

ALICE: Of course. *(Beat)* I well remember my first visit to your darkroom.

DODGSON: You do?

ALICE: Of course! What could be more thrilling than to see the negative gradually take shape as you gently rocked it back and forth in the acid bath?

DODGSON: Well, yes...

ALICE: Besides, the dark room was so mysterious, and we felt that any adventure might happen there!

There's a silence between them.

DODGSON: You're l-looking very b-beautiful still...

ALICE: I– why, thank you.

DODGSON: S-sorry that was very -imp-pertinent of me.

ALICE: Not at all. *(Beat)* Oh, it seems like an age ago.

DODGSON: It was... B-but it's s-so good to see you.

ALICE: It *has* been a long time.

DODGSON: Certainly has. You're obviously keeping well.

ALICE: Indeed. I'm exceedingly well, thank you. And you?

DODGSON: Oh, yes, I-likewise. Very well, thank you. I've been writing quite a bit – and working on new mathematical problems. And going to the theatre as much as possible too of course.

ALICE: I take it you've seen 'Alice' – the operetta?

DODGSON: Of course! Of course! Have you?

ALICE: Naturally!

DODGSON: Isn't Phoebe Carlo simply wonderful?

ALICE: Well, yes.

DODGSON: I introduced her for the part you know.

ALICE: Well, she is certainly an excellent find.

DODGSON: I've seen the show, oh, at least five times I should say. It would be difficult to speak too highly of it. And Ph-Phoebe... well! As a m-mere effort of memory, it's surely a marvellous f-feat for so young a child, to learn no less than t-two hundred and fifteen speeches.

ALICE: She's a treasure.

DODGSON: Without doubt. Quite frankly, I doubt if any g-grown actress, however experienced, could have c-carried it off so perfectly!

ALICE: It was an all-round excellent production that is true. I enjoyed it immensely.

DODGSON: Indeed. And I was, I have to tell you, most insistent, *most* insistent, that t-there would be no hint of c-coarseness in the p-production.

ALICE: There isn't.

DODGSON: No. I know. That's good. Too often these days I find that p-plays intended for children are p-peppered with vulgar jokes aimed at the adults in the audience.

ALICE: I couldn't agree more. And Phoebe, as you say, is perfect.

- DODGSON:** What I admired most was her p-perfect assumption of the high spirits, and readiness to enjoy everything – as a child out on holiday. She was you, my dear, she was *you*!
- ALICE:** I am not the child I was, Mr Dodgson – Charles.
- DODGSON:** No, of course not. But you’re still Alice.
- ALICE:** I am.
- DODGSON:** The show opened the day after the facsimile edition of Wonderland was published, you know. That really was an eventful week for me.
- ALICE:** I’m sure.
- DODGSON:** Do you still have that original c-copy of your ‘Adventures’, the one I gave you?
- ALICE:** Do I? Of course I do. How could I not? I absolutely *treasure* it! I was most insistent that they returned it to me the minute they had finished producing what they needed to print it.
- DODGSON:** I wasn’t absolutely sure that p-people would want to b-buy a copy of the original, but they certainly seem to.
- ALICE:** Why of course they do, who could fail to be enchanted by it? I was.
- DODGSON:** Well, yes, but perhaps you were rather biased!
- ALICE:** That’s true!
- DODGSON:** It is m-most gratifying to see how well it is selling.
- ALICE:** And you said that you’re still writing?
- DODGSON:** Well, yes, I’m p-pleased to say that I have several p-projects in hand at the moment. Several on m-mathematical subjects...
- ALICE:** I remember you wrote one about Euclid, didn’t you? It had a very, very long title I think... |Although, to be truthful I don’t actually recall it!
- DODGSON:** You mean ‘Euclid, Book V: Proved Algebraically So Far as It Relates to Commensurable Magnitudes – to Which Is Prefixed a Summary of All the Necessary Algebraical Operations, Arranged in Order of Difficulty.’?
- She laughs.*
- ALICE:** That sounds familiar! And remarkably – without so much as a stutter!

- DODGSON:** You m-mock me.
- ALICE:** Oh, Mr Dodgson, no, I am *so* sorry, I didn't mean to. Oh, that is unforgivable!
- DODGSON:** I have been writing good few other m-mathematical books too.
- ALICE:** No more children's books then?
- DODGSON:** Yes, I have to admit I have strayed into that area too. I have a new story in mind.
- ALICE:** Excellent. And what is it called?
- DODGSON:** *Sylvie and Bruno*. It's about two fairies and it's set in two places: Elfland and in the real world.
- ALICE:** Sounds fascinating.
- DODGSON:** I haven't really started it yet, but I did do two short stories which will p-probably form part of it. They were in Aunt Judy's Magazine a couple of years ago.
- ALICE:** Well, I look forward to reading it when it's published.
- DODGSON:** Oh, I don't know I'll find a p-publisher. It really is a bit of a flight of fancy, you know.
- ALICE:** You're a very modest man, Mr Dodgson!
- DODGSON:** Am I? Well, yes, it doesn't do to boast you know.
- ALICE:** You found a publisher for the Alice books. And look how successful they were.
- DODGSON:** Well, yes. But they were different.
- ALICE:** In what way?
- DODGSON:** I wasn't really trying to write them like *Sylvie and Bruno*. In a way, they wrote themselves, you know. I felt as if they were being dictated to me. *Sylvie and Bruno* I think will be much harder to write.
- ALICE:** But you'll persevere?
- DODGSON:** Assuredly
- ALICE:** I am pleased to hear it.
- DODGSON:** I'm not sure it's entirely s-suitable for children though.

ALICE: Of, why not?

DODGSON: It will deal with social issues which d-don't affect children... I see it c-covering various aspects of religion, society, philosophy and morality.

ALICE: I like the sound of that.

DODGSON: But will it appeal to my little child-friends?

ALICE: There's only one way to find out.

DODGSON: True.

Fade to black

ACT I**SCENE 8****CHILD FRIENDS**

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE:

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

“And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!”
He chortled in his joy.

Charles Dodgson enters.

DODGSON: O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay! They loved that, my little friends did,

Dodgson goes stage right and pulls out a large cut out card doll which is attached to a stick.

So many little friends. So many...

It is concertinaed to a dozen or more dolls. He pulls them across the stage and then swings them round so that there is a half circle of card dolls in front of him.

I've always liked to be surrounded by little girls.

He lifts up a card cut out doll. As he talks we might see a photograph of each girl projected at the back.

DODGSON: This is Grace Weld – Tennyson's niece – who I dressed as Little Red Riding Hood for the photograph the Poet Laureate so admired.

GIRL'S VOICE 1: Are you a Big Bad Wolf then, Mr Dodgson?

DODGSON: Certainly not!

You know, I've discovered something very strange about children. In the company of young children my b-brain enjoys a rest. If I've b-been working too hard or used my brain in any way... to play with children is like an actual tonic to my whole system. I become like a child myself. That's the m-marvellous thing. And another amazing thing is that I stutter far less when I'm with children. It's quite an extraordinary effect.

He lifts up another card cut out doll

So who's to be next?

He holds up the next cut-out doll.

Phoebe Carlo... of course! You played Alice in the theatre and you were simply magnificent! Ellen Terry thought you were m-marvellous too – and that's quite a compliment!

He holds up the next cut-out doll.

And this is Isa Bowman if I'm not mistaken...

GIRL'S VOICE 2: My earliest memories of Mr Dodgson are to do with photography. He was very fond of it – and very good too. When he photographed us he would have a box of costumes and props we could use. What child wouldn't enjoy dressing up as a gypsy or a beggar child? Sometimes he allowed us to go up on to the roof of the college, which you could get to through a window in his rooms.

DODGSON: Oh yes, I remember...

GIRL'S VOICE 2: I used to call him Uncle Charles. But he wasn't my real uncle of course – although he was the greatest friend children could ever have. Every year for years, he would take me to Eastbourne for a holiday too. We used to travel by train which was very exciting. And often we would walk to Beachy Head and had such fun. It was glorious!

DODGSON: I took to renting rooms in a house in Eastbourne for nearly twenty years. Number 7 Lushington Road it was, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dyer, I took lodgings with them from July to October. It was my special treat and I would often take some of my special little friends with me.

I used to take them to the theatre too. Oh, how I love the theatre! From the time I was child and made a little toy theatre which I wrote plays for – and then acted them out with puppets for my brothers and sisters.

When in London I took Isa to a p-performance of Macbeth in which Ellen Terry played Ophelia. I took Beatrice Hatch to see Ellen Terry as B-Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing too. And Margie Dymes to see her in Twelfth Night. And Muriel Taylor to see Ellen perform in The Merchant of Venice. Oh, happy days.

And happier times were due to Ellen too. George Watts d-divorced her in 1877, two years after the architect Godwin – with whom she had two children – left her. But she found happiness the following year when she m-married an actor called Charles Wardell. That was good. She deserved to be happy.

I waited a suitable interval before approaching her and asking her if she might be willing to resume our friendship in the circumstances...

GIRL'S VOICE 2: And she did?

DODGSON: Yes! She did. I was so pleased!

He pauses and looks at the next doll.

So who do we have here? Oh, this one is Annie Rogers. She went on to take the Oxford school examinations and qualified for entry to Balliol or Worcester College. But she had the offer of a university place withdrawn when it was realised that she was female, and instead they gave the place to a boy who had come sixth in the tests. I couldn't believe it when I heard it. When will the university understand that girls are more than a match for boys in terms of intelligence.

GIRL'S VOICE 3: I wasn't going to put up with that attitude though. I was able to sit examinations for women at roughly undergraduate level and gained the equivalent of first-class marks in Latin, Greek and Ancient History!

DODGSON: Well done, Annie! How long will it be before women are eligible for admission as full members of the university and are given the right to take degrees?

He lifts up another card cut-out doll.

So who's next?

Well I do declare, Beatrice Hatch!

GIRL'S VOICE 4: You said I was one of your favourite little friends.

DODGSON: I did.

GIRL'S VOICE 4: We used to play board games together – ones that you'd made up yourself. And you used to love photographing me too. I remember that you were always so kind and thoughtful. But sometimes I used to get very bored with the time it would take to be photographed – and I got cold of course when I didn't have any clothes on. But it was such fun none the less.

DODGSON: Beatrice was one of the only two child-friends whom I photographed naked. There was no harm in it. And none intended. To my mind there is nothing purer – they are pictures of innocence itself. And Beatrice's mother, Mrs. Hatch, was a broad-minded chaperone.

As my friend George Du Maurier put it... he said he would object more to *partly* clothed figures as being unpleasantly suggestive of impropriety – and have none but wholly clothed or wholly nude, which to his mind are not improper at all.

He takes the first card and circles it around in the opposite direction. We see on the back that they are playing cards....

We all have to live with the cards we're dealt in this life. But there are times when I truly believe they were stacked against me. I was destined to take Holy Orders, and that's what my father wanted of me, but I have only become a Deacon, no higher. My photography I have tried my best at and succeeded in some measure, but it can be no more than an absorbing hobby if I am honest. My great interest in mathematics has given rise to my current position at Christ Church. but I don't count that as any great success—

GIRL'S VOICE 4: Your stories, Mr Dodgson. Your stories... You mustn't forget your stories!

DODGSON: I haven't. But, truth to tell they came about by accident. It was only Alice begging me to write the first one down that prompted me to commit it to paper. It wasn't particularly planned. It simply happened. There is I think a hint of sadness, a shadow of a sigh that trembles through each of my stories. I wanted more.

And, on top of it all, my wants, my desires – and despite all my limited success, I do wonder sometimes if I have been dealt a useless hand....

He takes a pack of cards from his pocket, shuffles them and throws them into the air...

Fade to black

ACT I**SCENE 9****THE RED QUEEN**

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE: Still she haunts me, phantom-wise,
 Alice moving under skies
 Never seen by waking eyes.
 Children yet, the tale to hear,
 Eager eye and willing ear,
 Lovingly shall nestle near.

In a Wonderland they lie,
 Dreaming as the days go by,
 Dreaming as the summers die:
 Ever drifting down the stream—
 Lingerin in the golden gleam—
 Life, what is it but a dream?

As the lights come up, we see an ornate looking glass at the back of the stage. It is actually only the frame with a removable or hinged mirror in it. Dodgson enters. He slowly goes around the stage picking up the cards.

DODGSON: Enough of all this morose thinking, Dodgson! Pull yourself together!
 How the c-cards fall is in God's hand I believe. And we all have to
 make the b-best of it.

Robinson Duckworth enters, He sees what Dodgson is doing and starts picking cards up himself.

DUCKWORTH: Can I help?

DODGSON: If you'd like to... I was just c-commenting on how we have to live with
 the hand we are g-given.

DUCKWORTH: Agreed.

DODGSON: Although, looking b-back on my life, I honestly can say I wouldn't
 have ch-changed it for the world.

DUCKWORTH: Not anything?

DODGSON: N-not that I can think if. Nothing of importance anyway.

DUCKWORTH: How so?

DODGSON: In Looking Glass World you s-see things as they really are.

DUCKWORTH: I don't follow.

DODGSON: You're ahead of me then.

Dodgson goes and stands behind Duckworth.

Look at it from this p-point of view.

He goes to the side and picks up what appears to be a giant playing card. We only see the back of it until he flips it over to reveal on the other side of the card some type which reads 'ÆOLIA'.

DUCKWORTH: That all reads backwards.

DODGSON: Of course. That's b-because it is.

He holds the card in front of the mirror and now it reads 'Alice'

DODGSON: You see, to every action there is a reaction. To every d-downside there is an upside. The world in balance. So t-to speak.

DUCKWORTH: I understand. Or I think I do.

Dodgson goes round behind the mirror. Duckworth blocks the audience's view while Dodgson removes the 'mirror' itself from the frame and looks through it.

DODGSON: It's two sides of a c-coin. Two halves of the same.

DUCKWORTH: Remarkable.

Duckworth goes closer to the mirror effectively blocking the audience's view again while Dodgson replaces the mirror in the frame and comes back round to the front of the mirror.

DODGSON: See it as b-black versus white. A game of chess no less. See? Stand there – you're a p-pawn.

He points to a position a little way from where Duckworth is standing. Duckworth moves as indicated. Dodgson leaps one step forward and two to the side, grabbing Duckworth.

And I'm a knight. And I've got you!

The Red Queen enters. She is plump, blustery and pompous. She should appear as virtually a caricature of herself.

QUEEN: What are you doing young man?

DODGSON: Me?

QUEEN: Who else would I be taking to? The cat's mother?

DODGSON: The Cheshire Cat?

QUEEN: What *are* you talking about? You make no sense.

DODGSON: Few things—

She bustles off.

–do.

Except the future that is.

DUCKWORTH: Time I went too I think.

DODGSON: Oh, no, d-don't go.

DUCKWORTH: Sorry, can't stay.

Duckworth exits.

Projected behind Dodgson is the Cheshire Cat.

CHESHIRE CAT: Did someone mention my name?

DODGSON: I don't think so.

CHESHIRE CAT: Well I distinctly heard someone say Cheshire Cat.

DODGSON: Oh, t-that's me.

CHESHIRE CAT: You can't be. *I'm* the Cheshire Cat, not you.

DODGSON: No, I mean–

CHESHIRE CAT: It seems to me that you don't know what you mean.

DODGSON: I know exactly what I mean. Do you think I'm m-mad?

CHESHIRE CAT: Oh, of course you are. We're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad.

DODGSON: How do you know I'm mad?

CHESHIRE CAT: You must be, or you wouldn't have come here.

DODGSON: I can't stay here listening to you.

CHESHIRE CAT: Well go on, disappear then. I'm going to.

DODGSON: Which way though?

The image of the cat begins to disappear.

CHESHIRE CAT: That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,

DODGSON: I don't much c-care anymore.

CHESHIRE CAT: Then it doesn't much matter which way you go, does it?

DODGSON: Just so long as I get somewhere.

The image of the cat disappears more.

CHESHIRE CAT: Oh, you're sure to do that, if you only walk for long enough.

The image of the cat has virtually disappeared. Only the smile remains.

DODGSON: You think that's f-funny I suppose?

CHESHIRE CAT: Hilarious.

The image of the cat finally disappears.

DODGSON: No, don't g-go! Wait!

The Red Queen comes back.

QUEEN: Wait? What do you mean, wait? We've been waiting for *you*!

DODGSON: Sorry?

QUEEN: As I said, we're waiting for you.

She spreads her arms indicating the audience.

We're *all* waiting for you.

DODGSON: I'm s-sorry, I didn't know.

Momentarily he's confused, but then rallies.

No, wait a minute. That's not right. You've only just arrived. I was h-here already, I was *here* when you appeared.

QUEEN: A likely story. (*She snorts*) Well, now that you *are* here, there are a few questions you need to answer.

DODGSON: Such as?

QUEEN: Let us start with Alice Liddell.

DODGSON: What ab-bout her?

QUEEN: Admit it, you're in love with the girl.

DODGSON: I l-loved Alice. I wasn't in love with her.

QUEEN: You admire her though?

DODGSON: Of course I admire her.

QUEEN: Rather more than that.

DODGSON: I don't know what you mean.

QUEEN: No? That's your trouble, isn't it? Once again, you claim that you *don't* know! I put it to you again: Is Alice Liddell always in your thoughts?

DODGSON: Not all the time, no, but—

QUEEN: You dream of her?

DODGSON: Well, yes. On occasion, of course. But—

QUEEN: But?

DODGSON: Well, I— sometimes I—

QUEEN: Yes?

DODGSON: I h-have to admit t-that sometimes—

QUEEN: Out with it!

DODGSON: S-Sometimes I am a-afraid of my own dreams...

QUEEN: Spit it out!

DODGSON: T-that is to say I am sometimes t-tormented by the— by what one might call 'the inclinations of a sinful heart'.

QUEEN: At last!

DODGSON: I—

QUEEN: Yes?

DODGSON: I— I find that fixing my mind on p-problems, m-mathematical puzzles and the like... that helps.

QUEEN: Helps? In what way?

DODGSON: W-well I—

QUEEN: Come on, man! Out with it!

He takes a breath.

DODGSON: That is to say...

QUEEN: Let me help you out. Did you or did you not say in the introduction to your book about mathematics—

DODGSON: Are you talking about m-my b-book 'Curiosa M-Mathematica'?

QUEEN: I am.

DODGSON: Well. In the introduction to what is a book of m-mathematical puzzles, I suggested m-mathematical calculation as a r-remedy for disturbing thoughts that are apt to invade a wholly unoccupied mind.

QUEEN: You didn't actually say that, did you?

DODGSON: Well, yes, I—

QUEEN: That was in the second edition of your book, wasn't it?

DODGSON: I revised it, y-es.

QUEEN: Yes. Because in the preface to the *first* edition you wrote that 'fixing one's mind on mathematics as *one lay in bed* could ward off *unholy* thoughts, which torture with their hateful presence.' What did you mean by that?

DODGSON: I didn't mean anything b-by that.

QUEEN: Didn't mean anything by that! Hah!

DODGSON: No.

QUEEN: So why, in the second edition did you change your introduction and take out the reference to 'unholy thoughts'?

DODGSON: Did I?

QUEEN: You did.

DODGSON: I changed the title to 'P-problems for Wakeful Hours', instead of 'Problems for Sleepless Nights'.

QUEEN: And why did you do that?

DODGSON: It was just that in the first edition, by talking about 'Problems for Sleepless Nights', I g-gave the impression t-that I was an insomniac. Which I'm n-not. The words 'wakeful hours' are more accurate. The intention of the book is to give the m-mind something constructive to think about.

QUEEN: As opposed to something altogether unsavoury?

DODGSON: No, as an alternative to... to....

He draws a breath.

The title was not, I fear, w-wisely chosen; and the introduction to the f-first edition I f-felt was liable to suggest a meaning I did not intend to c-convey. I didn't wish to suggest that I suffered from a malady such

as insomnia or that the b-book was intended in any way to s-suggest that m-mathematical calculation could effect a remedy for the condition...

- QUEEN:** Oh, come, come My Dodgson! You changed it because it was too honest. It revealed rather too much of you. Isn't that the case?
- DODGSON:** I don't know what you mean.
- QUEEN:** Isn't it true that you asked your publisher, Macmillan, to stop supplying copies of the first edition, and to recall those already in the hands of agents, replacing them with copies of the new edition?
- DODGSON:** Well, yes, for t-the reason I have just explained.
- QUEEN:** Poppycock!
- DODGSON:** Hold on, this is *my* book that you're in.
- QUEEN:** *Your* book. This is no more your book than a squirrel collects nuts.
- DODGSON:** But a s-squirrel *does* collect nuts.
- QUEEN:** Don't contradict me!
- DODGSON:** I was merely p-pointing out that—
- QUEEN:** How *dare* you! Off with your head!
- DODGSON:** What?
- QUEEN:** Off with your head, I say!
- DODGSON:** Do I have to die?
- QUEEN:** Everyone has to die sometime.
- DODGSON:** But there's more I want to do.
- QUEEN:** You should have thought about that earlier.
- DODGSON:** But how will I die?
- QUEEN:** Pneumonia, it's only fitting.
- DODGSON:** Not beheading then?
- QUEEN:** It can be arranged.
- DODGSON:** No, no, pneumonia is absolutely f-fine by me.

QUEEN: Alright, consider yourself dead.

Fade to black

ACT I

SCENE 10

THE CATERPILLAR: EPILOGUE

In the blackout, during the scene change, we hear a young girl recite the following:

GIRL'S VOICE: Lastly, she pictured to herself how this same little sister of hers would, in the after-time, be herself a grown woman; and how she would keep, through all her riper years, the simple and loving heart of her childhood: and how she would gather about her other little children, and make their eyes bright and eager with many a strange tale, perhaps even with the dream of Wonderland of long ago: and how she would feel with all their simple sorrows, and find a pleasure in all their simple joys, remembering her own child-life, and the happy summer days.

At lights up we see a caterpillar (puppet) sitting on top of a toadstool. He is smoking a hookah. He takes a puff then looks around as Duckworth enters.

CATERPILLAR: Oh, it's you again. Robinson Duckworth, isn't it?

DUCKWORTH: It is.

CATERPILLAR: Ridiculous name if you don't mind me saying.

DUCKWORTH: I do, as it happens.

CATERPILLAR: No matter. Well, what do you want? Can we help you? Can we be of assistance, so to speak?

DUCKWORTH: He's dead, then?

The Caterpillar takes a puff of his hookah.

CATERPILLAR: Who?

DUCKWORTH: Mr Dodgson... Charles Dodgson.

CATERPILLAR: Who?

DUCKWORTH: Lewis Carroll.

CATERPILLAR: Oh, him!

DUCKWORTH: He was such a dear friend.

CATERPILLAR: A dear *dead* friend.

DUCKWORTH: Yes. And a warmer, more tolerant, more gifted man you couldn't wish to meet.

CATERPILLAR: That good, eh?

DUCKWORTH: Indubitably.

CATERPILLAR: So what of the often repeated claim that Dodgson's relationship with Alice was more than it seemed?

DUCKWORTH: I'm not sure I know what you're talking about.

CATERPILLAR: Oh, come on...

DUCKWORTH: If you're insinuating...

The Caterpillar takes a puff of his hookah.

CATERPILLAR: Who? Me? Never insinuated in my life...

He takes a puff from his hookah.

DUCKWORTH: If you're repeating the vile suggestion that there was anything improper in Charles' relationship with Alice, well I refute it absolutely.

CATERPILLAR: Good. There we are then. Refuted, as you say.

DUCKWORTH: Good. I mean his reaction to an event in his great friend Ellen Terry's life alone speaks volumes—

CATERPILLAR: Which, no doubt, you'd going to tell us...

He takes a puff from his hookah.

DUCKWORTH: When she left her husband to move in with an architect – who she later had two children with – Dodgson immediately broke off his friendship.

He takes a puff from his hookah.

CATERPILLAR: What a hero.

DUCKWORTH: A man of such high principles would not countenance anything so improper as had been suggested – wouldn't you agree?

CATERPILLAR: If you say so.

DUCKWORTH: Added to which his religious upbringing and the high moral stance he maintained throughout his life would have made such an idea unthinkable.

Yeah, yeah... *(He looks up as he notices someone approach)* Oh, talk of the devil...

Duckworth. Looks up as older Alice enters. She seems Duckworth and goes over to him.

ALICE: Mr Duckworth? It is Mr Duckworth, isn't it?

DUCKWORTH: The very same.

ALICE: I can't remember the last time I saw you.

DUCKWORTH: No, it must be, let me see twenty—

CATERPILLAR: Don't worry about that. Talk to me instead. So what did you think of old Dodgson then, eh?

ALICE: Are you talking to me?

CATERPILLAR: Or to myself.

He takes a puff from his hookah.

Do you think that's likely?

ALICE: I wouldn't know.

CATERPILLAR: It's probably this stuff. Makes me do strange things.

ALICE: I'm sure.

CATERPILLAR: So d'you want a puff?

ALICE: No thank you.

CATERPILLAR: Fair enough.

ALICE: And who are you exactly?

CATERPILLAR: Does it matter?

ALICE: Probably not.

CATERPILLAR: So back to my question...

ALICE: Which was?

He takes a puff from his hookah.

CATERPILLAR: What did you think of old Dodgson?

ALICE: Charles Dodgson?

DUCKWORTH: I've already answered that.

CATERPILLAR: Not to my satisfaction.

DUCKWORTH: Don't listen to him. He's just got a bee in his bonnet.

CATERPILLAR: A bee in my bonnet? You do talk a load of twaddle don't you?

He holds out the hookah pipe.

Sure you don't want a puff?

DUCKWORTH: No thank you!

ALICE: In what way do you mean what do I think of Mr Dodgson?

CATERPILLAR: How'd you find him?

ALICE: Kind. Warm. Funny.

CATERPILLAR: In that order?

ALICE: Not necessarily. But what I remember most about Mr. Dodgson was his kindness... his aim was to give happiness and to make life richer. Simply that.

CATERPILLAR: Very touching I'm sure.

ALICE: You're very cynical.

CATERPILLAR: Someone has to be.

DUCKWORTH: Ignore him, Alice. He's just a half-drugged caterpillar.

CATERPILLAR: With an enquiring mind.

Alice looks at him quizzically.

ALICE: Curiouser and curiouser...

CATERPILLAR: So are you going to answer then? What was it that old Dodgson and you really got up to?

ALICE: The implication of what you are suggesting I find most repellent.

CATERPILLAR: Not repugnant?

ALICE: Isn't that the same thing?

CATERPILLAR: You tell me.

Duckworth and Alice both stare at the Caterpillar with a mixture of anger and disbelief. After a while, he looks up at both of them and holds out the hookah.

Are you absolutely sure that neither of you would like a puff?

Slow fade to black

Curtain