

THE MAD TEA PARTY

By Brian D. Taylor

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DRAMA SERVICE

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THE MAD TEA PARTY

By BRIAN D. TAYLOR

CAST OF CHARACTERS (In Order of Appearance)

	<i># of lines</i>
WHITE RABBIT.....chronically late rabbit; Duchess's servant	47
MAD HATTER.....crazy hat maker; always changing hats	118
MARCH HARE.....crazy, nervous hare	94
DORMOUSEtired mouse	22
TIMEtime personified; the one who controls the clocks, that is; very proper, but sort of depressed	65
CATERPILLARsnooty and endlessly curious, with an air of superiority	88
DUCHESS/QUEEN OF HEARTSrival of the Queen of Hearts who's just as vile and demanding; plays Queen of Hearts at the end	62
FROG FOOTMAN/ PLAYING CARDthe Duchess's footman; also plays a Playing Card Guard at the end	32
CHESHIRE CAT ONE/ JABBERWOCKthe Duchess's cat with the endless grin who disappears and reappears at will; plays the Jabberwock at the end	11
CHESHIRE CAT TWO the same cat, only it's played by two actors to facilitate the cat's strange disappearing and reappearing nature	10
DEE..... daft twin who constantly fights with his sibling; wears green	76
DUM another; wears any other color	70
OPTIONAL EXTRAS..... as momeraths and birds (see PRODUCTION NOTES)	



SETTING

Time: Tea time.

Place: Wonderland.

In the woods, a table is set for tea. There are mismatched chairs for seating. Also on the table is one of the Hatter's many other hats. Fanciful trees and bushes are here and there around the table to create the feel of a Wonderland forest. One of these trees has a door that can open up, revealing a neat little cupboard with a couple of shelves stocked with tea things. A coat rack stands nearby with a coat and many hats. Several of the Hatter's other hats are hidden behind the tree cupboard, behind the bushes, under the table, and anywhere else you might hide things.

THE MAD TEA PARTY

1 Before LIGHTS UP, perhaps in a follow SPOT or while HOUSE LIGHTS are UP, WHITE RABBIT runs ON through the AUDIENCE in a panic.

WHITE RABBIT: Oh, dear! Oh, my! Oh, him and her and them! How late it's getting! Oh, my ears and whiskers! I am certainly, obnoxiously,
5 very inappropriately, entirely and considerably late! (*Runs OFF.*)

LIGHTS UP HATTER and HARE prepare the table for tea. DORMOUSE sleeps. [NOTE: CHESHIRE CAT ONE hides under the table and CHESHIRE CAT TWO hides behind the cupboard tree for their later appearances.]

10 **HATTER:** Hare! (*No response.*) Hare!

HARE: Who? Me?

HATTER: No, not me. I meant you! Hare!

HARE: Oh, yes, yes, yes. That would be me. What is it, Hatter?

HATTER: Where did I put the orange marmalade?

15 **HARE:** Oh. That one's simple. You put the orange marmalade on your toast.

HATTER: No. Not "Where do I put it?" rather "Where did I put it?"

HARE: Well, that makes a difference then, doesn't it?

HATTER: It does. Do you know the answer?

20 **HARE:** I can't remember. Perhaps you hung it on the coat rack?

HATTER: That can't be it. The jar is made of glass, not wool. How does one hang a glass jar of marmalade upon a coat rack?

HARE: Very awkwardly, I suppose. Well put, Hatter. And that solves it. It must be in the cupboard, then. (*Opens the door to the tree
25 cupboard, revealing shelves of tea cups and other tea serving items. Looks around.*)

HATTER: Why would I put it there? No, no, no! Please, stop fooling around in that cupboard and help me find it! It's five to six!

HARE: Oh, my! Tea time will be any minute now!

30 **HATTER:** Not any minute. It will be precisely the fifth one. As I already mentioned, it is five to six, not one to six, nor two to six, nor six to six.

HARE: (*Suddenly lost in thought.*) Hmm... do you think Time might arrive early?

35 **HATTER:** No. I always expect him to be precisely on time.

HARE: Yes. Quite, of course, he would be on time. Perfectly logical, after all.

HATTER: (*Clangs two teaspoons together.*) Marmalade! Marmalade!

- 1 **HARE:** *(Wakes DORMOUSE.)* Dormouse! Dormouse! Where did he put the orange marmalade?
- DORMOUSE:** *(Sleepily.)* His hat. His hat, little bat. *(Drifts off to sleep again.)*
- 5 **HATTER:** Ah, yes! *(Removes his hat, revealing the jar of marmalade on his head. He places the jar on the table and quickly swaps the hat with a new one from the table. He tosses the old hat OFF.)* I knew it had to be somewhere!
- HARE:** And somewhere it was! *(Laughs. TIME ENTERS.)* Ah! There he is! There he is! The man of the hour!
- 10 **TIME:** *(Nods.)* Good one, Hare!
- HATTER:** *(Surprised.)* Time! *(Hurries to find and put on a new hat.)*
- HARE:** *(Offers to shake TIME'S hand.)* It's about time you showed up!
- TIME:** *(Offers the "wrong" shaking hand. HARE is confused and awkward.)* Ahem. *(Nods to indicate HARE'S other hand.)*
- 15 **HARE:** *(Switches shaking hands, and they shake. Relieved and understanding.)* Oh, yes, of course! Of course! It makes perfect sense now. Of course, you would use the second hand! *(Laughs.)*
- HATTER:** *(Looks at his watch.)* You're early!
- 20 **TIME:** I like to be timely.
- HATTER:** *(Runs to TIME, shakes his hand and leads him to his seat.)* Of course, of course! We should have known. Nonetheless, I'm pleased you've come! And I'm so glad you've decided to reconsider our little conflict from earlier and to know that we're back on good terms again.
- 25 **TIME:** As am I. The past is in the past.
- HARE:** Yes, yes, thank you for allowing the time to move forward again. Six o'clock was beginning to be a drag. One can only have tea for so long before going mad!
- 30 **HATTER:** Hare!
- HARE:** Oh, yes. Yes! Oops! That's quite right. Quite right! So sorry! I shouldn't have brought that up. What I meant to say was... well... I love tea time. Who doesn't, really? I mean, after all, it's nearly tea time now, isn't it?
- 35 **TIME:** It's quite all right, Hare. We're beyond old grudges now. It's like I always say, "Time marches on."
- HATTER:** *(Sarcastic.)* You can say that again! *(TIME scowls at HATTER.)*
- HARE:** *(Nervous. Looking between HATTER and TIME, tries to keep the peace. To TIME.)* Speaking of that, how was your trip here? Did you march the entire way?
- 40 **TIME:** Flew, actually.



1 **HARE:** Time flew! Oh, how fun!

TIME: It was! I enjoy traveling, whether by foot or by flight.

HATTER: (*Thoughtful.*) Hmmm... time travel. What an interesting idea.
(*Swaps his current hat for another he finds somewhere on stage.*)

5 Oh, I've almost forgotten! You must have a look at this! (*Shows TIME his watch.*) It's working again!

TIME: Well, of course it's working again.

HATTER: All thanks to you.

TIME: But working or not, it still doesn't appear to be in the best of
10 shape.

HATTER: Oh, it's second hand. And it does seem to run a bit slow.

TIME: No, I mean what's this all over it?

HATTER: Oh, that. It's butter. The hare tried to fix it.

TIME: Butter? That won't suit the works!

15 **HATTER:** That's what I said.

HARE: (*Daydreamy.*) It was the best butter!

DORMOUSE: (*Wakes, terrified and screaming, as if from a nightmare.*)
Ah! Where is it? Where is it?!

HARE: It's all right, Dormouse. We found the marmalade. All is well.

20 **DORMOUSE:** (*Holds up his fists.*) No! The jabberwock! Where is the vile
beast? I shall vanquish him!

HARE: Oh, dear! Let's not speak of that foul creature today. Such a
terror!

HATTER: And that's precisely why the jabberwock wasn't invited to
25 tea. You're just having nightmares, Dormouse. Go back to sleep.
(*DORMOUSE looks around, then settles back into his seat and
sleeps. HARE and HATTER continue to set the tea things. To TIME,
noticing a hole in his cloak.*) Oh my! What's happened to your
cloak? It's torn here at the shoulder!

30 **TIME:** Oh, it's nothing. Just a little nick.

HARE: (*CATERPILLAR, DUCHESS, and FROG FOOTMAN ENTER.
DUCHESS pushes on a baby carriage.*) More guests! More guests!

HATTER: (*To CATERPILLAR and DUCHESS.*) Oh, good. You've arrived
just in the nick of Time.

35 **TIME:** (*Approaches CATERPILLAR.*) How timely of you! (*Offers a
handshake.*)

CATERPILLAR: (*Doesn't shake.*) Who are you?

TIME: I am Time. The one they speak of.

CATERPILLAR: What do you mean by that? Explain yourself!

- 1 **TIME:** Per Oxford's definition, I am the indefinite continued progress of existence and events in the past, present, and future regarded as a whole. Though I refuse to agree with the indefinite part.
- CATERPILLAR:** Well, I've never heard of you. (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY SNEEZES.*)
- 5 **DUCHESS:** (*To the carriage.*) What's that, pig? (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY SNEEZES. DUCHESS scowls.*) Hatter!
- HATTER:** Yes, Duchess?
- DUCHESS:** Is there pepper at this table?
- 10 **HATTER:** Yes, but just a smidge, perhaps.
- DUCHESS:** No. Even a smidge is much too much. It's giving my poor, precious child a sneezing fit. (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY SNEEZES. Yells.*) Hush, pig! (*To HATTER.*) I command the pepper be stricken from the table.
- 15 **FROG FOOTMAN:** (*Confidential, to HATTER.*) I'd do as she says if I were you.
- HATTER:** (*To DUCHESS.*) But what else would we put inside the pepper shaker?
- DUCHESS:** That's no concern of mine. Put the butter in for all I care!
- 20 **HATTER:** But how will we manage the butter knife?
- DUCHESS:** (*Incensed.*) You'll find a way, Hatter, or it'll be off with your head!
- FROG FOOTMAN:** You see what I mean?
- HATTER:** Yes! Yes, Duchess! Of course! (*Takes the pepper shaker, butter, and butter knife aside. Looks at all of them, perplexed.*)
- 25 **HARE:** (*To FROG FOOTMAN, confidentially.*) She is the Duchess and not the Queen, right?
- FROG FOOTMAN:** Right, but seeing as the Duchess has a sort of unspoken rivalry with the queen and wants to be just like her, it's
- 30 all and the same really. If she could, she'd have your head just as soon as the Queen of Hearts would.
- HARE:** Oh, my!
- FROG FOOTMAN:** You can say that again. I'd watch what you say around her if I were you.
- 35 **HARE:** Right. (*Makes nice. To DUCHESS.*) Who's watching your cat whilst you're away?
- DUCHESS:** What? My cat? Are you mad?
- HARE:** So some say.
- DUCHESS:** Well if you must know, you ought to know that cats will do
- 40 as they please. Cheshire cats in particular.

1 **CHESHIRE CAT ONE:** (*POPS UP from under the table. To HARE.*) You rang?

HARE: Oh, goodie good good! You brought him along with you!

DUCHESS: No, I didn't. Like I said, the cat does as he pleases.
5 (*CHESHIRE CAT ONE DISAPPEARS beneath the table.*)

HARE: (*Turns and bows to where CHESHIRE CAT ONE was.*) Pleased to have you with us, Cat. (*Notices CHESHIRE CAT ONE is gone.*)

CHESHIRE CAT TWO: (*APPEARS from behind the tree cupboard, opens the cupboard and looks in.*) Thank you, Hare, but I must say, you
10 really ought to have more tea cups in here if you wish to throw a proper tea party. (*Slams the tree cupboard shut defiantly, smiles to AUDIENCE, and DISAPPEARS again behind the cupboard tree.*)

HARE: (*Looks at the cupboard tree.*) Yes. Yes, we do what we can. But you mustn't be so rude about it. (*Crosses and looks for the cat in
15 and around the tree cupboard.*) How rude!

DUCHESS: Who are you calling rude?

HARE: Oh, I didn't mean you, Your Duchessness. I meant the cat. Would you agree that it is rude for a cat to accept an invitation to tea and then disappear just as soon as he came?

20 **DUCHESS:** I would. But I've told you several times over and again that cats will do as they please, haven't I?

HARE: Yes. Yes, you have, Your Duchessness.

CHESHIRE CAT ONE: (*APPEARS again from under the table.*) I'm sorry. I don't wish to be rude. (*HARE slams the tree cupboard door shut
25 and glares at CHESHIRE CAT ONE, who grins and EXITS RIGHT.*)

DEE: (*ENTERS with DUM.*) This way!

DUM: No, no! It's that way!

DEE: No, this way! See? The tea table is right here! (*Sits at the table.*)

DUM: (*Stands over DEE. Demands.*) You can't just sit at someone's tea
30 table without being invited.

DEE: No, you can't. That's why I've sat at the tea table I was invited to.

DUM: But the table we are looking for is over that way! (*Points OFF.*)

DEE: No, it's this way! (*Points to his seat.*)

DUM: No, it's thatta way! (*Points OFF.*)

35 **DEE:** No, it's thisa way! (*Points to his seat.*)

DUM: All rightsies! It's a battle, then!

DEE: You're on! Let's battle on it! (*Stands and squares up for battle with DUM.*)

HATTER: (*Jumps between them.*) No, no! This is no time for battles.
40 You've come to the correct table.

- 1 **TIME:** He's right. It's tea time, not battle time.
DEE: When's battle time?
TIME: High noon.
DUM: (*Spiteful, to DEE.*) I'll see you then. (*To TIME.*) When's high noon?
- 5 **TIME:** 18 hours, roughly.
DEE: Roughly?
DUM: So you wanna play rough, do you?
DEE: Put 'em up! Put 'em up!
HATTER: (*To DEE and DUM.*) No matter! No matter! Sit! Sit! (*DEE and*
10 *DUM glare at one another and sit on either side of CATERPILLAR.*)
CATERPILLAR: (*To DEE.*) Who are you?
DEE: I'm Tweedle Dee!
CATERPILLAR: (*To DUM.*) And who are you?
DUM: I'm Tweedle Dum.
- 15 **CATERPILLAR:** (*To DORMOUSE.*) And who are you? (*DORMOUSE*
snores. CATERPILLAR knocks upon his head as if it were a door.)
"Who are you?" I asked!
DORMOUSE: (*Wakes, briefly.*) Who am I? I am he. He is I. I am me...
(*Drifts off to sleep again.*)
- 20 **CATERPILLAR:** (*Indicates DORMOUSE.*) Who is he?
HARE: Who?
CATERPILLAR: (*Indicates DORMOUSE again.*) Who is he?
HARE: Oh, him? (*To HATTER.*) What did he say again? (*HATTER shrugs.*)
Oh yes. He is me.
- 25 **CATERPILLAR:** Who?
HARE: That is, he said, "I am he," which meant I, and I am me, which
is to say, the dormouse.
CATERPILLAR: Explain yourself.
HARE: Well, I am me, but he is the dormouse, you see?
- 30 **CATERPILLAR:** I do not see.
HATTER: He means to say that he... (*Points to HARE.*) ...is the
dormouse (*Points to DORMOUSE.*). That's him and that's the
dormouse, you see?
CATERPILLAR: I see. Carry on. (*SOUND EFFECT: CLOCK CHIMES SIX.*)
- 35 **HATTER/HARE:** Tea time! Tea time!
HATTER: Who are we missing? There's someone missing.
HARE: I believe it's the hare.
CATERPILLAR: Who?



- 1 **HATTER:** Can't be! (*Points to HARE.*) The hare's here.
HARE: Where?
CATERPILLAR: (*To HATTER.*) No, that's the Dormouse.
DUCHESS: (*To HARE.*) You're the hare. (*Suddenly suspicious.*) Or are
5 you?
CATERPILLAR: (*To HARE, now also suspicious.*) Who are you?
HARE: Oh, yes. Right. I'm the hare, but I meant the other—
WHITE RABBIT: (*Scurries IN.*) Sorry! Sorry! I know! I know! I know!
TIME: You're late.
- 10 **WHITE RABBIT:** Yes, I know! It's a terrible habit of mine. You know rabbits and their bad habits.
HARE: (*Offended.*) I have no idea what you mean by that.
DEE: That solves it!
DUM: It was the hare that wasn't here!
- 15 **WHITE RABBIT:** I prefer to be called Rabbit, thank you very much! White Rabbit to be precise.
DEE: But if you're the rabbit...
DUM: Then who's the hare?
CATERPILLAR: Precisely! (*To DORMOUSE.*) Who are you?
- 20 **ALL:** (*Impatient.*) That's the dormouse!
CATERPILLAR: Aha! Thank you. Proceed.
HATTER: Very well. Our table is now complete. Seats! Seats, everyone! Take your seats! Tea will be served in due time. I just have to change my hat. (*As the OTHERS take their seats, HATTER goes to the cupboard tree and takes a feathered hat from behind it, swaps it out with the one upon his head, then returns and takes his place at the table. CHESHIRE CAT ONE ENTERS RIGHT.*) Very well! Now, who takes the Earl Grey? (*A great hubbub arises as ALL each announce their tea preference and reach for the various offerings. HARE and HATTER fill teacups and pass the food. BABY cries throughout, as FROG FOOTMAN desperately tries to comfort it. DORMOUSE, remains asleep the entire time, but while sleeping, still manages to grab his teacup and hold it out, while HARE fills it up. [NOTE: This can be ad-libbed, or it could go something like this...]*)
- 30 **DUCHESS:** (*Over.*) That'll be me!
DEE: (*Over.*) Nothing but green for me!
CHESHIRE CAT ONE: (*Over.*) Anything with catnip? (*Looks around for a bit then disappears beneath the table.*)
CATERPILLAR: (*Over, to DUCHESS.*) Who is this earl fellow?
- 40 **HARE:** (*Over, to DEE.*) I have it right here!

- 1 **FROG FOOTMAN:** *(Over, to BABY.)* Hush, little baby!
DUM: *(Over, indicates DUM.)* Green for him. I'll take the purple.
WHITE RABBIT: *(Over.)* Pass the cakes my way!
- 5 **DUCHESS:** *(Over, to CATERPILLAR.)* You mean you don't know Earl Grey?
- CHESHIRE CAT TWO:** *(Over, APPEARING from behind the tree cupboard, crossing to the HATTER and playing with the feather in his cap.)*
Ooh, now this is fun!
- TIME:** *(Over, to HARE.)* Nothing for me, thank you.
- 10 **HATTER:** *(Over, to WHITE RABBIT.)* Cakes are on the right. *(Swats CHESHIRE CAT TWO away. CHESHIRE CAT TWO smiles and eventually DISAPPEARS again behind a bush.)*
- HARE:** *(Over, to TIME.)* But you're our guest!
- FROG FOOTMAN:** *(Over.)* I said, "Hush, pig!"
- 15 **CATERPILLAR:** *(Over, to DUCHESS.)* No. Who is he?
- DEE:** *(Over, to CATERPILLAR.)* He's earl.
- HARE:** *(Over, to TIME.)* Ooh! Have the oolong! It'll make you tick!
- TIME:** *(Over, to HARE.)* Sounds delightful!
- HATTER:** *(Over, to WHITE RABBIT.)* No. Not your right. My right.
- 20 **DUM:** *(Over, to CATERPILLAR.)* You know, the one who wears gray all the time! *(CHESHIRE CAT ONE APPEARS again from under the table, looks at HATTER'S HAT and plays with the feather some more. HATTER swats him away and changes hats. CHESHIRE CAT ONE DISAPPEARS beneath the table.)*
- 25 **WHITE RABBIT:** *(Over.)* Now where's the butter?
- DEE:** *(Over, to DUM.)* No. It's green he wears!
- FROG FOOTMAN:** *(Over, to BABY.)* Hush! Hush! Don't say a word!
- HARE:** *(Over, to WHITE RABBIT.)* It's there, in the pepper shaker.
- DUM:** *(Over, to DEE, as the hubbub begins to fade.)* Ah! It's nothing but
- 30 green with you!
- DUCHESS:** *(Over, to CATERPILLAR.)* Oh, I just love the Earl!
- CATERPILLAR:** *(Over, to DUCHESS.)* Never heard of him.
- HATTER:** *(Stands and clangs his tea cup with a spoon. Clears his throat for a speech.)* Before we begin, I'd like to share a few words of
- 35 thanks. *(Holds up a finger.)* First of all, I'd like to thank myself for inviting you all to tea. *(OTHERS politely applaud. HATTER holds up two fingers.)* Secondly, I'd like to thank each and every one of you for coming to tea. *(OTHERS nod to one another in agreement. Holds up four fingers.)* And forthwith, I'd—
- 40 **HARE:** No, no! You mean thirdwith!

1 **HATTER:** Yes. Thank you, Hare. (*Holds up three fingers.*) And thirdwith,
I'd like to thank our special guest, our esteemed guest of honor,
Time, who has so kindly released us from the torturous bonds of
endless tea time.

5 **DEE:** But it's tea time now!
DUM: No, he means the tea time when it ain't supposed to be tea
time!
DEE: You're mad!
DUM: Am not!

10 **DEE:** Are so!
DUM Am not!
TIME: (*Stands and interrupts.*) Ahem! Thank you, Hatter. It is true that
I once held a grudge with you and made it so that time stood still
and tea time lasted for days and days. But the past is the past,
15 and it is my pleasure to have released you from such madness.
(*Sits.*)
HATTER: (*Tips his hat to TIME.*) Utter madness, yes, and thank you again
for that. But if you wish to release me from complete madness, I'm
sorry, but you'd have better luck convincing the Queen of Hearts to
20 be kind. (*OTHERS laugh. Lifts his tea cup.*) To Time!
OTHERS: (*Lift their glasses.*) To Time!
HATTER: (*Lifts again.*) To tea time!
OTHERS: (*Lift again.*) To tea time!
DORMOUSE: (*Wakes.*) Oh. Hello, everyone. I was just having the
25 strangest dream. (*Looks at a few of them, one by one.*) And you
were there... and you were there... and you were there... and,
oh! There's no place like home! (*Drifts off into sleep again. SOUND
EFFECT: STAMPEDE. The gazes of all tea party GUESTS look out
over the AUDIENCE, their eyes following a stampede of momeraths
30 as they travel from RIGHT to LEFT. [NOTE: For alternate staging
suggestions with the option to include a real herd of momeraths,
see PRODUCTION NOTES.]*)
FROG FOOTMAN: Well, that was odd!
WHITE RABBIT: No. Not odd in the least.
35 **DUCHESS:** And oh! They're so cute! Oh, I could just squeeze them to
pieces! (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.*) Hush, pig!
CATERPILLAR: But who are they?
DEE: Those are the momeraths.
CATERPILLAR: And why are they running off in such a wild stampede?
40 **DUM:** Oh. They're outgrabing.

- 1 **CHESHIRE CAT ONE:** *(APPEARS from under the table.)* Outgrabing, you say? *(Twirls and EXITS.)*
- CHESHIRE CAT TWO:** *(APPEARS from behind a bush.)* Outgrabing from what? *(Bats eyes, grins, and DISAPPEARS behind the tree cupboard.)*
- 5 **WHITE RABBIT:** From the jabberwock, of course!
- CATERPILLAR:** So... if they're outgrabing now...
- DEE/DUM:** Then that means...
- ALL:** The jabberwock is coming! *(EVERYONE panics and runs about. Utter madness! SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH! The sound of the jabberwock! ALL stand motionless as the SCREECH continues. Then, more mad panic. EVERYONE runs about once more. ALL ad-lib "It's here! It's here! The jabberwock is coming! Cover the butter! Run for you lives! Wake the Dormouse! [Etc.]" until... SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH! And ALL stop, freezing in fear once more. Once the screech is gone, more madness ensues! Repeat as desired, until... BLACKOUT. When the LIGHTS finally come UP, ALL of the GUESTS lie on the ground, cowering in fear, except for DORMOUSE, who slept through the entire thing. EVERYONE slowly rises and looks around.)*
- 10
- 15
- 20 **FROG FOOTMAN:** Oh, my! That was dreadful!
- DUCHESS:** How disgraceful! Hatter, if this is how you throw a tea party, then I'll have no more to do with them! *(HATTER ignores her and changes his hat.)*
- TIME:** Pardon me, Your Grace, but I feel your anger is misplaced.
- 25 **DEE:** Yeah. It wasn't the hatter who done it.
- DUM:** It was the jabberwock what done it.
- DUCHESS:** Hush, pigs! *(SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES. To baby carriage.)* Not you, pig! Something must be done about this jabberwock!
- FROG FOOTMAN:** Yes, yes. Something must be done!
- 30 **CATERPILLAR:** But what?
- WHITE RABBIT:** Yes. What are we to do?
- DEE:** I propose a battle!
- DUM:** Yes, a battle with the jabberwock!
- WHITE RABBIT:** That's impossible!
- 35 **DEE:** What if we were to catch him by surprise?
- DUM:** Yes! Catch him in a trap!
- DEE:** Yes! Like a Jabbergrabber!
- DUM:** Like a Jabberwock stumbling block!
- FROG FOOTMAN:** But we've just missed him!
- 40 **WHITE RABBIT:** It will never work!



1 **CHESHIRE CAT ONE:** (*ENTERS.*) But there is a way. (*DISAPPEARS behind a bush.*)

CATERPILLAR: What way?

CHESHIRE CAT TWO: (*APPEARS from behind the tree cupboard. Leans on TIME.*) You know the way. (*Slowly, "SINKS" below the table, crazily shifting its eyes right to left.*)

5 **CATERPILLAR:** What way? (*To DUCHESS.*) What is that odd cat of yours going on about?

DUCHESS: Don't ask me. That cat is an enigma, and I barely know

10 him.

DORMOUSE: (*Stirs.*) Time will tell! Time will tell!

CATERPILLAR: Excuse me, but who are you? And what are you talking about?

TIME: He speaks of me. The cat is right. I know the way. And the

15 dormouse is right. Time will tell.

CATERPILLAR: (*To DORMOUSE.*) Aha! So you're the dormouse! Finally, some answers!

HARE: What are we to do about the jabberwock, Time?

TIME: If you wish to capture the beast, you must use time to your

20 advantage.

HATTER: (*Thinks.*) Use time to our advantage. Hmm... Use time to our advantage... I'm not sure what that means.

DORMOUSE: (*Wakes.*) Yes, you do! You brought the idea up yourself!

HATTER: Did I?

25 **DORMOUSE:** Yes.

HATTER: When?

DORMOUSE: Before tea time. Remember? Time travel? (*Drifts off.*)

HATTER: Oh, yes! Time travel. That's it! We'll have to travel through time.

30 **DUCHESS:** (*Laughs.*) Hahahaha! Have you gone mad as well? Travel through Time!

DEE: But how?

DUM: (*Pokes TIME.*) Yeah, he's as solid as a rock.

HATTER: Not through Time, but through time. You know, turn back the

35 clock.

HARE: Is such a thing possible?

HATTER: Why, surely it's possible. Don't you remember he froze time once before? If he can do that, then surely he can turn the clock back. (*To TIME.*) Isn't that right?

1 **TIME:** That is right. Even you can turn back time if I allow it, and in such dire circumstances as these, I shall grant it. Just give your watch a spin and try it out.

HARE: But what I mean to ask is... *(To HATTER.)* ...will it really work?

5 **HATTER:** I don't know. Why not give it a spin?

HARE: A spin? You mean on the clock?

HATTER: Yes. Turn the second hand back by three and see what happens.

HARE: *(Does so.)* Will it really work?

10 **HATTER:** I don't know. Why not give it a spin?

HARE: A spin? You mean on the clock?

HATTER: Yes. Turn the second hand back by three and see what happens.

HARE: *(Does so.)* Will it really work?

15 **HATTER:** I don't know. Why not give it a spin?

HARE: A spin? You mean on the clock?

HATTER: Yes. Turn the second hand back by three and see what happens.

HARE: *(Does so.)* Will it work?

20 **DUCHESS:** *(Exasperated, shrieks.)* Yes! It will work!

HARE: How would you know?

DUCHESS: I just know. *(SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.)* Hush, pig!

WHITE RABBIT: Oh, my! This is so exciting! I must use this trick so I'll never be late again! Say, why don't we go back to just before tea
25 time so that I won't be late?

DUCHESS: No! We don't have time for such foolishness. We must go back precisely to the moment in time when the jabberwock arrived here and catch him by surprise! All in favor? *(OTHERS look at one another with uncertainty. SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.)* Hush, pig!

30 **FROG FOOTMAN:** The duchess is right. Something must be done about this terrible, ferocious jabberwock, and this is the most logical plan.

HATTER: Very well, then. Everyone turn back your clocks.

CATERPILLAR: How far?

35 **DEE:** Now, there's a question.

DUM: Did anyone mark the time when the Jabberwock arrived?

DEE: Or when the momeraths ran by? *(ALL look around at one another, but no one thinks to look at TIME.)*

CATERPILLAR: Yes... what was the time? What was the time?

- 1 **FROG FOOTMAN:** Think about it, everyone! Try to remember.
HATTER: Yes! I'll put my thinking cap on. (*Swaps hats.*)
CATERPILLAR: Doesn't anyone know? (*Finally, ALL turn their heads to TIME.*)
- 5 **TIME:** (*Sighs.*) Sometimes it's as if no one ever pays attention to me. (*Long pause. The OTHERS still await his answer. TIME sighs.*) It was precisely six after.
HATTER: That settles it. Everyone turn your clocks back to just before that. Five after, everyone! (*EVERYONE turns their watch back. [NOTE: If anyone moved places since the previous jabberwock attack, they should return to their places at the table.] HATTER lifts his tea cup.*) To Time!
- 10 **OTHERS:** (*Lift their glasses.*) To Time!
HATTER: (*Lifts again.*) To tea time!
- 15 **OTHERS:** (*Lift again.*) To tea time!
DORMOUSE: (*Wakes.*) Oh. Hello, everyone. I was just having the strangest dream. (*Looks at a few of them, one by one.*) And you were there... and you were there... and you were there... and, oh! There's no place like home! (*Drifts off into sleep again. Just as before, SOUND*
- 20 *EFFECT: STAMPEDE. GUESTS watch the herd of momeraths.*)
FROG FOOTMAN: Well, that was odd!
WHITE RABBIT: No. Not odd in the least.
DUCHESS: And oh! They're so cute! Oh, I could just squeeze them to pieces! (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.*) Hush, pig!
- 25 **CATERPILLAR:** But who are they?
DEE: Those are the momeraths.
CATERPILLAR: And why are they running off in such a wild stampede?
DUM: Oh. They're outgrabing.
CHESHIRE CAT ONE: (*APPEARS from behind the bush.*) Outgrabing you say? (*Leaps OFF RIGHT.*)
- 30 **CHESHIRE CAT TWO:** (*RISES from under the table.*) Outgrabing from what? (*Leaps OFF LEFT.*)
WHITE RABBIT: From the jabberwock, of course!
CATERPILLAR: So... if they're outgrabing now...
- 35 **DEE/DUM:** Then that means...
ALL: The jabberwock is coming! (*EVERYONE panics and runs about just as before. SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH! More panic. EVERYONE runs about once more, ad-libbing. BLACKOUT. SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH. LIGHTS UP. EVERYONE is on the*
- 40 *ground. They rise and look around.*)

- 1 **FROG FOOTMAN:** Well, that didn't work!
DUM: Yeah! We were supposed to catch him! Why didn't someone catch him?
DEE: Well, if you're so tough, why didn't you catch him, wiseguy!
- 5 **DUM:** Hey, who you callin' wiseguy, wiseguy?
DEE: Oh yeah?
DUM: Yeah!
DEE: Oh yeah?
DUM: Yeah!
- 10 **DEE:** All right then, put 'em up! We'll see who's the wiseguy! (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.*)
DUCHESS: (*To DEE and DUM.*) Behave yourselves! (*To BABY.*) Hush, pig!
CATERPILLAR: Why didn't it work?
- 15 **WHITE RABBIT:** We didn't seem to be ready for him.
DORMOUSE: (*Wakes.*) Too many watches! Too many watches! (*Goes back to sleep.*)
CATERPILLAR: What did you say?
HATTER: That's a thought. Too many watches. Perhaps it has something to do with all of us setting our watches back.
- 20 **CATERPILLAR:** What do you mean by that?
HATTER: We all set our clocks back. It was all of us who traveled back in time, to just before the jabberwock arrived, and no one knew he was coming. It was all the same as before.
- 25 **HARE:** Aha! So just one of us will set his watch back, and he will be the only time traveler.
CATERPILLAR: How will that help?
HARE: Then, the rest of us will know the jabberwock is coming. We'll catch the beast!
- 30 **DUCHESS:** What perfect nonsense that is!
DEE: Doesn't sound so dumb to me.
DUM: Yeah. Me neither. And Dum is my last name!
FROG FOOTMAN: (*To TIME.*) What do you make of the hatter's idea?
TIME: It might work. It might not. That is the mystery of time.
- 35 **CATERPILLAR:** You mean you don't know? The master of time doesn't know how time works?
TIME: No. I simply mean that some things are better left unknown. (*To HATTER, who stares at a tear in TIME'S cloak.*) Why are you staring at me like that?



- 1 **HATTER:** Oh. It's just that you still have that awful tear in your cloak.
TIME: Of course I do.
HATTER: It's quite a distraction. Why don't you have it repaired?
TIME: I haven't had the time!
- 5 **WHITE RABBIT:** Ah, now that makes me feel better. Even he doesn't have enough time!
DUCHESS: Enough arguing! It's time we caught this jabberwock!
CATERPILLAR: Who will set his watch back, then?
WHITE RABBIT: I'll do it! I'd rather not be a part of the jabberwock
- 10 catching if that's all right with everyone else.
HATTER: Very well. The rabbit will be the one who sets his clock back, and we will catch the jabberwock. Ready, Rabbit? (*WHITE RABBIT nods, holds up his watch.*) Ready, everyone? (*OTHERS nod in uncertain agreement.*) Go. (*WHITE RABBIT sets his watch back.*
- 15 *HATTER lifts his teacup.*) To Time! (*Now the scene repeats in an extremely fast pace. The faster, the funnier. Characters can speak over one another and lines can be dropped. Seriously, as fast as you can play it. Go!*)
OTHERS: (*Lift their glasses.*) To Time!
- 20 **HATTER:** (*Lifts again.*) To tea time!
OTHERS: (*Lift again.*) To tea time!
DORMOUSE: (*Wakes.*) I was just having the strangest dream. (*Looks at a few of them, one by one.*) And you were there... and you were there... (*Drifts off into sleep again. SOUND EFFECT: STAMPEDE.*
- 25 *The GUESTS watch the MOMERATHS scurry by quickly.*)
FROG FOOTMAN: How odd!
DUCHESS: They're so cute! (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.*) Hush, pig!
CATERPILLAR: But who are they?
DEE: The momeraths.
- 30 **CATERPILLAR:** And why are they running off?
DUM: They're outgrabing.
CHESHIRE CAT ONE: (*Swirls ON RIGHT.*) Outgrabing? (*DISAPPEARS underneath the table.*)
WHITE RABBIT: From the jabberwock!
- 35 **ALL:** The jabberwock is coming! (*SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH! Panic. BLACKOUT. LIGHTS UP. EVERYONE covers on the floor. Resume at normal speed.*)
WHITE RABBIT: Well, how did it go? Did you catch the beast?
DUCHESS: What does it look like?

- 1 **FROG FOOTMAN:** It slipped right by us before we even knew what was happening.
- HARE:** Everything was moving so fast.
- DEE:** It was all like a blur.
- 5 **DUM:** It all happened in the snap of a finger. (*Snaps his fingers.*)
- WHITE RABBIT:** (*Looks at his watch.*) Hold that thought. (*Taking HATTER'S words literally, DUM holds the snapping gesture. To TIME.*) What is the time?
- TIME:** Seven and a half minutes past six. (*DEE looks at DUM, rolls his eyes, and smacks DUM on the head.*)
- 10 **DUM:** Hey! What'd ya do that for?
- DEE:** He meant hold the thought up here in your head— (*Points to DUM'S head.*) —not up in the air.
- DUM:** What ya gotta hit me for?
- 15 **DEE:** 'Cause you're a numbskull, that's why!
- DUM:** Oh, yeah?
- DEE:** Yeah.
- DUM:** Oh, yeah?
- DEE:** Yeah.
- 20 **DUCHESS:** Enough!
- CATERPILLAR:** Why is he holding that thought anyway, Rabbit?
- WHITE RABBIT:** (*Still looking at his watch.*) He said it all happened in the snap of a finger. And that solves it.
- CATERPILLAR:** How does that solve it?
- 25 **WHITE RABBIT:** Time says it's seven and a half past six. I show ten after. My watch is fast.
- FROG FOOTMAN:** No wonder you think you're late all the time!
- WHITE RABBIT:** But I am late all the time!
- FROG FOOTMAN:** Precisely because your watch is fast.
- 30 **WHITE RABBIT:** Oh.
- HARE:** Although he was late to tea.
- WHITE RABBIT:** That's right. I was. I'm always late. (*Bangs his head on the table in utter frustration.*)
- DORMOUSE:** (*Wakes.*) It was the best butter! (*Sleeps.*)
- 35 **CATERPILLAR:** (*To DORMOUSE.*) What an odd creature you are. (*To whomever.*) What does butter have to do with it?
- HATTER:** My watch. (*Gleeful.*) Dormouse, you're a genius!
- CATERPILLAR:** What do you mean?
- DUCHESS:** Yes, what's the meaning of this?

- 1 **HATTER:** My watch! It runs slow due to a misapplication of butter by one March Hare. (*HARE buries his head.*) If we want to catch the jabberwock, we must slow down time! I should be the one who turns his watch back!
- 5 **DUCHESS:** He's gone mad!
TIME: Mad... perhaps... but it's certainly logical.
CATERPILLAR: (*To TIME.*) Really? How can such a plan be logical?
TIME: It's perfectly logical. You couldn't catch the jabberwock when he was too fast for you. Thus, slowing him down makes perfect
10 rational sense.
CATERPILLAR: But will it work?
TIME: Who am I to say?
DUCHESS: You're Time! If you don't know, then who does? What nonsense is this?
- 15 **TIME:** It isn't nonsense. It's perfectly logical, just as I said before. But that still doesn't mean it will work.
DUCHESS: Oh, I see. You're mad as well.
TIME: (*Smiles.*) Aren't we all, madam?
HARE: Give it a try, Hatter. It can't hurt to try.
- 20 **HATTER:** I shall. On the count of three. Ready, everyone? (*EVERYONE readies themselves.*) Three! (*Sets back his watch. Lifts his teacup.*) To Time! (*The scene repeats in extreme slow motion. All gestures and movements are exaggeratedly slow, as are the lines. The slower the funnier. Go!*)
- 25 **OTHERS:** (*Lift their glasses.*) To Time!
HATTER: (*Lifts again.*) To tea time!
OTHERS: (*Lift again.*) To tea time!
DORMOUSE: (*Wakes.*) Oh. Hello, everyone. I was just having the strangest dream. (*Looks at a few of them, one by one.*) And you
30 were there... and you were there... and you were there... and, oh! There's no place like home! (*Slowly drifts off into sleep again.*)
SOUND EFFECT: SLOW-MO STAMPEDE. *The GUESTS watch the herd of MOMERATHS scurries by slowly.*
- FROG FOOTMAN:** Well, that was odd!
- 35 **WHITE RABBIT:** No. Not odd in the least.
DUCHESS: And oh! They're so cute! Oh, I could just squeeze them to pieces! (**SOUND EFFECT:** BABY CRIES.) Hush, pig!
CATERPILLAR: But who are they?
DEE: Those are the momeraths.
- 40 **CATERPILLAR:** And why are they running off in such a wild stampede?

1 **DUM:** Oh. They're outgrabing.
CHESHIRE CAT ONE: (*RISES from beneath the table.*) Outgrabing you say? (*DISAPPEARS below the table again.*)
CHESHIRE CAT TWO: (*Leaps ON LEFT.*) Outgrabing from what?
5 (*DISAPPEARS behind the tree cupboard.*)
WHITE RABBIT: From the Jabberwock of course!
CATERPILLAR: So... if they're outgrabing now...
DEE/DUM: Then that means...
ALL: The jabberwock is coming! (*EVERYONE panics and "runs" about just as before, but in slow-mo. SOUND EFFECT: SLOW-MO JABBERWOCK SCREECH! More mad panic in slow motion. EVERYONE "runs" about once more, ad-libbing. BLACKOUT. SOUND EFFECT: SLOW-MO JABBERWOCK SCREECH. LIGHTS UP. EVERYONE cowers on the ground, then rise and look around. Resume at normal speed.*)
10
HATTER: Where is it?
CATERPILLAR: Where is what?
HATTER: The jabberwock.
CATERPILLAR: It got away.
FROG FOOTMAN: But everything passed by so slowly.
20 **DUCHESS:** Surely someone could have caught the beast!
HARE: I'm afraid I was too slow to catch him.
DUCHESS: That's no excuse.
WHITE RABBIT: But it is. I agree with my rabbit friend. We two are the fastest among you all, but once we slowed time down, even the
25 two of us were too slow for the jabberwock.
DEE: So if slowing down the time doesn't work...
DUM: ...what will work?
CATERPILLAR: That is precisely what I would like to know. What will work?
30 **DUCHESS:** Something must be done! We can't let this foul creature terrorize us like this!
DORMOUSE: (*Wakes.*) Change! Change! Change the story! (*Sleeps.*)
CATERPILLAR: What are you talking— No. That's it. I'm done with you, you sleepy rodent. I'm not even going to ask.
35 **DORMOUSE:** (*Wakes, sings.*) "Oh! The times they are a-changin'!" (*Sleeps.*)
DEE: That sounds—
DUM: Important.
DEE: Yes. Important. That's precisely what I was going to say.



- 1 **DUM:** I said it first.
DEE: You didn't wait your turn!
DUM: I was first.
DEE: Why I oughta...
- 5 **DUCHESS:** Enough! (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.*) Hush, pig!
HARE: Now there's a thought!
WHITE RABBIT: What?
HARE: Change! Perhaps what the dormouse said was important.
WHITE RABBIT: What about it?
- 10 **HARE:** Nothing changed. When we went back in time, we didn't change anything. If we want to capture the jabberwock, we must change the course of history.
DUCHESS: Foolishness, once again
HARE: Quite sensible actually. Each time we set back the clock, we've
15 all said and done the very thing we did the very first time.
FROG FOOTMAN: You're mad!
HARE: I am mad, so I ought to know best. After all, they say the definition of madness is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.
- 20 **DORMOUSE:** (*Wakes.*) Nothing has changed!
HARE: Precisely! We must change the past.
DUCHESS: I shall not stand for such foolishness. Now I demand to know who will do something about this jabberwock!
FROG FOOTMAN: Let's hear him out. Perhaps he is onto something.
- 25 **DUCHESS:** Excuse me. Whose servant are you?
FROG FOOTMAN: Yours, yours, of course, or course. But perhaps the hare is onto something. (*To TIME.*) What do you think?
TIME: I agree that the hare is onto something.
DUCHESS: What he means to ask is, "Will it work?"
- 30 **TIME:** It could.
DUCHESS: Not "can" it work, but "will" it work?
TIME: I heard the question just fine, my dear. It could work.
DUCHESS: That is entirely unacceptable. I demand certainty and I will wait here until you answer me clearly.
- 35 **TIME:** Wait all you want, my dear, but as they say, "Time waits for no man"... (*DUCHESS scowls, offended.*) ...or woman.
DUCHESS: Fine. I will ask you only once more. Will it work?
TIME: And I again respond with... it could.

1 **CATERPILLAR:** Perhaps this is why they also say, “History repeats itself.”

HARE: It’s worth a try, isn’t it? What if we change something?(*To HATTER.*) Instead of saying, “To Time,” say something else! That

5 way, history will be changed and maybe we can catch it.

HATTER: Very well. But we need a watch that works properly.

DEE: Here you go. (*Offers his watch.*)

DUM: No, use mine! (*Offers his watch.*)

DEE: I offered first.

10 **DUM:** Well, mine works better.

DEE: No better than mine!

DUM: Does so.

DEE: Does not!

DUM: Does so.

15 **DEE:** Does not!

DUCHESS: Enough! (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.*) Hush, pig! The footman’s will do.

FROG FOOTMAN: But I spent a year’s wages on this timepiece!

DUCHESS: A year of wages that I paid for, and you’ll do what I say or

20 else!

FROG FOOTMAN: As you wish, madam. (*Offers his watch extremely begrudged.*)

HATTER: (*Takes the watch.*) And as long as we’re changing things, I’ll need a change in hat. (*Swaps his hat with another from the coat rack, then sets back the watch and lifts his tea cup.*) To... to... the

25 jabberwock!

TIME: Excuse me?

HATTER: To the jabberwock!

TIME: To the jabberwock? But I thought I was the guest of honor.

30 **HATTER:** Oh you are, you are, but we were going to change something, remember?

CATERPILLAR: What are you saying?

HATTER: We agreed—remember?—that something needed to be changed.

35 **CATERPILLAR:** I agreed to nothing.

DUCHESS: Nor did I!

FROG FOOTMAN: Nor I!

TIME: (*Slowly seething.*) Nor I.

HATTER: But what of the jabberwock?

1 **CATERPILLAR:** What of him?
HATTER: We all planned to capture him.
DEE: No we didn't!
HATTER: Of course we did.

5 **DUM:** No, he's right! We didn't!
HATTER: We did!
DEE/DUM: Didn't!
HATTER: Did!
DEE/DUM: Didn't!

10 **HATTER:** Did!
DUCHESS: Enough! (*SOUND EFFECT: BABY CRIES.*) Hush, pig! (*To OTHERS.*) You're all mad! All of you!
HATTER: But the jabberwock is coming this way! Right now! Isn't he, Time? Tell them!

15 **TIME:** Don't drag me into this.
HATTER: What's the trouble? We need your help!
TIME: Frankly, I'm offended.
HATTER: Offended?
CATERPILLAR: Offended by what?

20 **TIME:** I'm offended that I was asked to be the guest of honor for tea time and yet there is no toast in my honor, even after all I've done for the hatter.
HATTER: But you said it could work.
CATERPILLAR: That what would work?

25 **HATTER:** He said we could capture the jabberwock if we changed things.
TIME: I never said that.
CHESHIRE CAT ONE: (*APPEARS from under the table.*) He's right, after all. (*DISAPPEARS behind a bush.*)

30 **CHESHIRE CAT TWO:** (*APPEARS from behind the tree cupboard.*) He never said that. (*EXITS LEFT.*)
TIME: See? I'm right. And I won't stand here and be made the fool. (*HATTER eyes the tear in TIME'S cloak and touches it, scowling. TIME brushes his hand away.*) Would you please leave that alone?!

35 (*Huffs.*) I've had enough embarrassment for one day! Good day to you all! (*EXITS, hurriedly.*)
HARE: No! No! Don't go! We put together our finest—
WHITE RABBIT: (*Consoles HARE.*) It's too late, my friend. See, there? Time is running out.

1 **HARE:** But we did everything we could.
WHITE RABBIT: I know how you feel. Despite your best efforts, Time
always somehow gets away from you.
HARE: That may be your problem, but it isn't mine. I'm going after
5 him! (*EXITS.*)
HATTER: No! Stop! The jabberwock!
CATERPILLAR: What are you talking about, Hatter?
HATTER: The jabberwock is coming! (*SOUND EFFECT: STAMPEDE.*
Because things have changed, this time instead of Momeraths, the
10 *GUESTS watch a flock of BIRDS.*)
FROG FOOTMAN: Well, that was odd!
HATTER: Yes, it was! I was expecting momeraths, not a bunch of
birds!
DEE: Was that a dodo?
15 **DUM:** Hey, who you calling names? (*DEE and DUM square off again.*)
CATERPILLAR: What do you suppose they are running around for?
DORMOUSE: (*Wakes.*) I propose a caucus race! (*Drifts off to sleep*
again.)
DUCHESS: A caucus race? What foolishness is this?
20 **WHITE RABBIT:** Yes! A caucus race! That makes perfect sense! I've
heard the Dodo likes to run such races with his feathered friends.
HATTER: Then... if the momeraths aren't outgrabing, but rather it's
the birds having their caucus race... then that means...
CATERPILLAR: What are you mumbling about, Hatter?
25 **HATTER:** It's working! We changed the past. It's working! (*Calls OFF.*)
Time, Hare, come back! Come back! It's working!
CATERPILLAR: What is working?
HATTER: The plan!
CATERPILLAR: What plan? (*SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH!*)
30 **HATTER:** Uh-oh.
CATERPILLAR: What do you mean, uh-oh? Explain yourself!
HATTER: Everyone, get down! (*SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK*
SCREECH! EVERYONE panics, hits the floor. BLACKOUT. SOUND
EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH. LIGHTS UP. EVERYONE begins to
35 *rise and look around.*)
DUCHESS: Enough! Enough! I'm done!
CATERPILLAR: Why is that?
FROG FOOTMAN: (*Dusts himself off.*) Surely it should be clear.
CATERPILLAR: Who's Shirley?



- 1 **DUCHESS:** This is enough madness for me! Footman... bring the pig.
(*Turns to go.*)
- FROG FOOTMAN:** Yes, madam. But what of the cat?
- DUCHESS:** Leave him. You know as well as I that the cat does as he
5 pleases.
- FROG FOOTMAN:** That I do, madam.
- HATTER:** No! Please. You can't go.
- DUCHESS:** We can. I won't stand for such madness! All of you! You're
all mad, you are!
- 10 **CATERPILLAR:** Who are you to call us mad?
- DEE:** Yeah!
- DUM:** Who are you?
- DUCHESS:** (*Seethes and shouts.*) Who am I? Who am I! I am the
duchess of this land, and I will do as I like! That's who!
- 15 **DEE:** Very well!
- DUM:** As you wish! (*DUCHESS harrumphs and EXITS. FROG FOOTMAN
follows her OFF with the baby carriage.*)
- DEE:** Jeepers!
- DUM:** Bleepers!
- 20 **DEE:** I wonder what made her so mad.
- DUM:** It was you that done it!
- DEE:** Me? No, it wasn't! It were you!
- DUM:** Wasn't!
- DEE:** Was!
- 25 **DUM:** Wasn't!
- DEE:** Was! (*Finally, they battle, struggling and wrestling with one
another, tumbling onto the ground. OTHERS sigh.*)
- CATERPILLAR:** What are we to do now?
- HARE:** (*ENTERS with TIME.*) I've done it! I've done it!
- 30 **CATERPILLAR:** Calm yourself. What have you done?
- HARE:** I caught up on Time!
- HATTER:** A stupendous achievement, Hare!
- WHITE RABBIT:** Yes, yes, you must teach me how that's done.
- DEE:** (*Still wrestling.*) Ouch!
- 35 **DUM:** Owie!
- DEE:** That hurt!
- DUM:** You hurt me first!
- DEE:** You hurt me first! (*Shows a scratch to OTHERS.*) Look at what he
done to me!

1 **DUM:** (*Shows a scrape to OTHERS.*) Look at what he done to me!
TIME: Let me have a look at that. (*Crosses to DEE and DUM and attends their wounds.*)
HARE: So did you catch it?

5 **CATERPILLAR:** Catch what?
HARE: The jabberwock.
WHITE RABBIT: No.
HARE: You didn't? What are we to do, then?

10 **HATTER:** (*Despairs.*) I'm afraid there's nothing that can be done.
Nothing that can be done but sit here and have our tea time. Sit here and finish our tea.
TIME: There, that should feel better.
DEE: You're right!
DUM: It is better!

15 **DEE:** I can't feel a thing!
DUM: It's like new again!
CATERPILLAR: What did you do to them?
TIME: Just what I do best.
CATERPILLAR: And what's that?

20 **DORMOUSE:** (*Wakes.*) Time heals all wounds! (*Takes a long drink of tea and drifts off to sleep again. HATTER sits in utter despair and drinks tea. OTHERS watch for a moment, then sit with him, also disappointed, and finish their tea. Silence while they ALL sip, despondent. CATERPILLAR scrapes at the butter jar with a knife*
25 *several times, seemingly unaware of how loud and obnoxious it is.*)
CATERPILLAR: Is there no butter?
HARE: No. There's not. I—
HATTER: (*Stares off, longing.*) It was the best butter!
HARE: Oh, Hatter, don't despair!

30 **TIME:** The jabberwock will be caught in due time, I assure you.
WHITE RABBIT: It's never too late to catch a jabberwock!
DEE: I concur.
DUM: Likewise! (*HATTER sighs. OTHERS fall silent as well. More despair. More drinking of tea. Eventually, HATTER gazes on the tear in TIME'S*
35 *cloak.*)
HATTER: You must have something done with that.
TIME: With what?
HATTER: That nick in your cloak.
TIME: That again? Why can't you let it go?

1 **HATTER:** I can't. I simply can't. How can you stand it?
TIME: I suppose I've just grown accustomed to it over Time.
HATTER: Well, you ought to look into having it stitched up. It's an
 eyesore and an utter annoyance.

5 **HARE:** Hatter!
HATTER: Don't scold me, Hare. I won't apologize for my good taste.
HARE: No, that's it!
CATERPILLAR: What's it?
HARE: The nick of time! Fix it! Sew it up for him and we'll all be saved!

10 **TIME:** Fix my cloak? What kind of a solution is that?
CATERPILLAR: Yes. What nonsense are you talking about, Rabbit?
WHITE RABBIT: No, he's the hare!
CATERPILLAR: *(To WHITE RABBIT.)* Who are you?
HARE: You're a hatter, Hatter! You can do it yourself! Sew it up!

15 **HATTER:** *(Suddenly excited.)* Hare, you're mad!
HARE: That I am, thank you very much!
HATTER: So mad I could kiss you! *(Thoughtful and excited.)* It's so
 illogical that it makes perfect sense! *(Looks around.)* But there are
 only eight of us left. It won't work! We need one more!

20 **HARE:** No. No. You're forgetting the cat.
CATERPILLAR: Is the cat still here?
DEE: You may not see him now, but he's here.
DUM: He's always here.
CHESHIRE CAT ONE: *(APPEARS from behind the bush.)* You can say
25 that again. *(DISAPPEARS behind the tree cupboard.)*
DEE/DUM: He's always here.
CHESHIRE CAT TWO: *(ENTERS LEFT.)* You've got that right.
HARE: Lovely! That makes one, two three, four... *(Counts, muttering
 the numbers to himself and pointing.)* Yes. There are nine of
30 us present. Exactly enough! *(CHESHIRE CAT TWO DISAPPEARS
 beneath the table.)*
HATTER: Marvelous! Then we shouldn't waste a moment more! Quick!
 Someone, turn back a watch. Time, will you do the honors?
TIME: Very well, but I'm not sure what good it will do. *(Sets back his
35 watch.)*
HATTER: *(Lifts his tea cup.)* To Time!
OTHERS: *(Lift their glasses.)* To Time!
HATTER: *(Lifts again.)* To tea time!
OTHERS: *(Lift again.)* To tea time!

- 1 **DORMOUSE:** *(Wakes.)* Oh. Hello, everyone. I was just having the strangest dream. *(Looks at a few of them, one by one.)* And you were there... and you were there... and you were there... and, oh! There's no place like home! *(Drifts off into sleep again. SOUND EFFECT: STAMPEDE. GUESTS watch as the herd of MOMERATHS passes.)*
- 5
- HATTER:** There go the momeraths. Quick, there's no time to lose! *(Rushes to TIME and starts sewing up the tear in TIME'S cloak frantically. [NOTE: This can be mimed so that actual needle and thread aren't necessary.]*
- 10
- CHESHIRE CAT ONE:** *(APPEARS from behind the tree cupboard.)* You better hurry, Hatter. *(EXITS RIGHT.)*
- CATERPILLAR:** Hurry? For what?
- HARE:** To save us from the jabberwock.
- 15 **WHITE RABBIT:** Then, yes! Quick, quick, quick! Before it's too late!
- TIME:** I fail to see how this will help anything!
- DEE:** For starters, you won't have a hole in your cloak.
- DUM:** Yeah, there's that at least.
- HATTER:** It will work! I know it will! Trust me!
- 20 **CHESHIRE CAT TWO:** *(APPEARS from under the table.)* Don't forget this is a mad man you put your faith in.
- HARE:** Go away and stop causing trouble, you dastardly cat!
- CHESHIRE CAT TWO:** As you wish. *(Turns to go.)*
- HATTER:** No, you fool! We need him here for the plan to work! Stop
- 25 him! *(WHITE RABBIT, HARE, DEE, and DUM race to grab CHESHIRE CAT TWO. They catch him just before he disappears. SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH.)*
- DEE:** It's coming!
- DUM:** Hurry!
- 30 **HATTER:** Just one last stitch! *(Races to make the last stitch and then ties it off.)* There! Done! Just like new!
- HARE:** We're saved! *(SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH. EVERYONE braces themselves.)*
- WHITE RABBIT:** Not quite. *(JABBERWOCK ENTERS RIGHT. It's a giant, black shadow of a beast with great horns and a long tail.] JABBERWOCK screeches and goes after various characters. A mad chase and fight sequence ensues. CATERPILLAR does his best to stay out of it. OTHERS use butter knives, chairs and other tea things as weapons against the beast. HATTER uses his hat like a bull fighter as he fights it. CHESHIRE CAT TWO hisses and scratches*
- 40



1 at the JABBERWOCK, then races OFF LEFT. It's utter insanity for a moment, until...)

DORMOUSE: (Wakes, stands on the table and shouts.) Enough! (EVERYONE stops and looks at DORMOUSE.) I've had enough of
5 this jabberwock! (SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH as the JABBERWOCK stirs.) Hatter, your sewing needle, please. (HATTER hands the needle to DORMOUSE.) Time, we need a net. Remove your cloak.

TIME: But I've just had it mended!

10 **DORMOUSE:** Now! (TIME quickly removes the cloak. SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH and the JABBERWOCK stirs again and readies to attack.) On my count! One! Two! (SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH.) Three! (JABBERWOCK bolts for them and they move into action. DEE, DUM, and WHITE RABBIT grab
15 the JABBERWOCK by its tail, halting its progress. TIME, HARE, and HATTER work together to toss the cloak over the JABBERWOCK. As it struggles to get free, DORMOUSE leaps off the table and proceeds to "sew" the open part of the cloak together until they have it captured. [NOTE: This is done easily if the edges of the cloak are lined with Velcro. DORMOUSE mimes sewing motions while connecting the two sides.] SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH as it struggles
20 but cannot free itself. EVERYONE cheers, except DORMOUSE, who returns to the table and drifts off to sleep.)

WHITE RABBIT: We've done it!

25 **DEE:** That'll show him!

DUM: What a battle that was!

DEE: Yes, it was! Fine work, brother!

DUM: You too! Splendid battling!

CATERPILLAR: It was remarkable! How did you do that?

30 **HARE:** Simple! All it took was a little know-how and cleverness.

CATERPILLAR: What do you mean?

HARE: The Hatter fixed Time's cloak.

CATERPILLAR: That's completely illogical. What does that have to do with anything? Explain yourself.

35 **HARE:** Like I said, it's simple...

HATTER: And it's like they always say...

HATTER/HARE: A stitch in Time saves nine!

CATERPILLAR: Remarkable!

WHITE RABBIT: Ah! Nine guests! All saved! Brilliant!

40 **HATTER:** Yes, but we have the Dormouse to thank as well. He was the one that thought to stitch it up even further.

1 **HARE:** (*Indicates DORMOUSE, who sleeps.*) And he can't even stay awake long enough to enjoy it! (*SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH as the JABBERWOCK struggles.*)

CATERPILLAR: Well, what are we to do with the beast now that we've
5 caught it?

QUEEN OF HEARTS: (*From OFF.*) Off with their heads! Off! Off, I say!
(*ENTERS.*) What is all the racket here?!

WHITE RABBIT: My queen! My queen!

10 **QUEEN OF HEARTS:** Who's responsible for making all this noise? Is it you, Rabbit?

WHITE RABBIT: No, no, no, my queen! It wasn't me! It was all of us!

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Then, off with your heads! Off! (*Calls OFF.*) Guards!
(*A PLAYING CARD GUARD ENTERS.*)

15 **WHITE RABBIT:** No, no, no! I didn't mean that we were responsible for the noise!

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Then, who is responsible?

WHITE RABBIT: It was the jabberwock!

QUEEN OF HEARTS: (*Frightened.*) The jabberwock! Oh my! (*To PLAYING CARD.*) Quick! Off! Off we go! Quick, quick, quick! (*Hurries to leave.*)

20 **WHITE RABBIT:** No, no, no! It's all right! We've captured the beast!

QUEEN OF HEARTS: (*Turns back.*) You have?

WHITE RABBIT: Yes. Well, the Hatter did.

HARE: And the Dormouse.

DEE: And we helped!

25 **DUM:** Yes, it was all of us, actually.

CATERPILLAR: I took no part in it, but it was the Jabberwock that made all the noise.

HATTER: Yes, it was!

30 **HARE:** And here it is, Your Majesty! You can take it and do with it as your heart desires.

35 **QUEEN OF HEARTS:** (*Excited.*) Really? (*HARE nods.*) Whatever my heart desires? (*ALL nod. She bubbles and bounces with excitement.*) In that case, Guard, lead the beast away! (*PLAYING CARD bows and leads the JABBERWOCK OFF by the tail. SOUND EFFECT: JABBERWOCK SCREECH.*) As for the rest of you, carry on! (*EXITS, bounding with joy. OTHERS cheer.*)

TIME: Well done, Hatter! I must admit, you surprised me with your cunning. Quite a feat for such a mad man.

40 **HATTER:** Madness is merely an illusion, Time. You should know that, you being something of an illusion yourself.

1 **TIME:** That I am. And that is true. Still, I must say, three cheers for you! And three cheers for the rest of you as well! Calooh! Calay! Three cheers for all who defeated the Jabberwock today!

ALL: Hip hip—

5 **HATTER:** (*Shouts.*) Wait! Stop!

CATERPILLAR: What are we waiting for?

HATTER: A celebration such as this begs for a change of hat. (*Reaches under the table for a new hat and swaps them out.*) That is all. Carry on!

10 **OTHERS:** Hooray!

TIME: Hip hip!

OTHERS: Hooray!

TIME: Hip hip— (*BLACKOUT.*)

END OF PLAY

CURTAIN CALL

A manic curtain call should ensue. Make it as crazy as possible. At
15 the end, finish the cheer that was left hanging from the end of the play by having the entire cast leap into the air and shouting “Hooray!”
BLACKOUT. Time for a mad cast party!

PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES ONSTAGE

Long table with at least twelve chairs and a variety of tea, tea cups, silverware, a butter jar, and other servings things, food, extra hats (one with a feather), fanciful trees and bushes (one tree has a door that can open up, revealing a neat little cupboard with a couple of shelves stocked with tea things), coat rack.

PROPERTIES BROUGHT ON

Jar of marmalade (HATTER)

Baby carriage (DUCHESS)

TREE CUPBOARD

The tree can be two-dimensional, like a tree-shaped flat, with a door opening for the shelving, or it can be a fully realized tree unit that opens. Also, if a tree cupboard proves too difficult to create for your space and budget, it could be replaced with a more simple tea cart or cabinet.

SOUND EFFECTS

Baby cries, baby sneezes, clock chimes, stampede, jabberwock screeches, slow-mo jabberwock screeches.

COSTUMES

All characters have a pocket watch.

TIME wears a large cloak. The insides of the opening should be lined with Velcro so that DORMOUSE can quickly “sew” it together when capturing the jabberwock.

JABBERWOCK is a giant, black shadow of a beast with great horns and a long tail.

CHESHIRE CATS ONE and TWO should look as identical as possible with costuming and makeup. They are the same cat, just played by two actors.

FLEXIBLE CASTING

While most of Carroll’s characters are referred to with masculine pronouns, there’s no reason why most if not all of them could be played by females. It doesn’t matter if HATTER is played by a male or a female actor, nor most any other character. The exception of course would be DUCHESS, who must be female.

For a larger cast, eliminate the doubling so that the following roles are played by an additional actor: JABBERWOCK, QUEEN OF HEARTS, PLAYING CARD. For more on increasing the cast size, see below about adding MOMERATHS and BIRDS.

MOMERATHS/BIRDS

For an even larger cast, the herd of MOMERATHS can be staged so that they actually appear on stage, played by extras. Simply have them stampede through the tea party setting, wildly weaving in and around the tea party guests and off again. If using actual MOMERATHS, imagine their costumes resembling some sort of cute, colorful and fluffy creature. Let your imagination run wild!

Also, when HATTER changes the past, the MOMERATHS are replaced by the BIRDS running a caucus race. If using extras for the MOMERATHS, they will also become the BIRDS for this moment with silly beaks and feathers. Their staging is similar. They simply run on, weave through the tea party guests, and off again.

For extra fun with the MOMERATHS, you can have them fearfully recite the first stanza of the “Jabberwocky” poem (or even the entire poem), at the top of the show. Here is the full text of the poem:

’Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the momeraths outgrabe.

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

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!

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.

’Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the momeraths outgrabe.

PACING

This play works best if done with a driving pace. Quick and light, or as my high school drama team used to say, “Pop and snap!” The entire thing should be crisp and quick. That is the key. (Of course, the slow motion part, is the only exception.)

The ad-libbed section where everyone is speaking “over” one another may be done in two ways. Both ways should be done quickly—with pop and snap—but either way can and will work. How you choose to present these sections depends on your group and your production needs.

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