

Alice in the Bedroom, X-Rated Adaptations for Patrons

Written by Ken Sawdon

Characters and Original Cast

Nikki Nanaimo, <i>Director</i>	Played by Hannah Madsen
Shannon Savant, <i>Head of Reference</i>	Played by Carlene Slobodian
Cate Cartier, <i>Cataloguing and Access</i>	Played by Kyera Landry
Bernard Bard, <i>Programming and Reference Librarian</i>	Played by Kenneth Sawdon
Laverne Lucas, <i>Financial Officer</i>	Played by Pamela Fong
Narrator	Played by Michael Ngo

All players worked together to edit the play from its original form to the presented version.
This version is a mix between the two.

General Scene

The play takes place in an average Canadian medium-sized public branch library. Like most libraries, the workers are continually busy due to insufficient staff, but everyone tries to remain cheery and avoid cynicism. The library's culture is open and welcoming: staff and patrons are encouraged to flaunt their differences. The staff believes there is no problem that cannot be overcome or situation that cannot be accommodated, and their primary mission is to help their patrons learn and grow as individuals and members of the community. The library is large enough to have most modern services, including computer stations, study and discussion areas, and a good collection of diverse materials in a wide array of formats. The staff rooms are close to some of the less quiet areas of the library, and occasionally some loud laughter or other noises can be heard. Additionally, and more consistently, there are sounds of some light construction in other staff areas. The Financial Officer's office is one of those being renovated, and she has been moved to another desk. The construction has been going on for a little over a month, and the patrons are continual, so none of the characters take notice.

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It is late afternoon in early fall. The windows show the tops of trees, just starting to change colour, suggesting the scene takes place on the second floor of the library. The sky is calm, and several buildings of the city are seen.

The scene takes place in a multipurpose staff room, home to two work stations, a secondary break area, and many miscellaneous materials for storage or transition. All available wall space is used by filled shelves. On the left rear wall there is a doorway to the staff-area hallway, open, with some posters and memos shown on the hallway wall. The occasional light construction, mostly moving and dropping materials or screwing, can be heard from this door. In the left front, a few feet away from the wall and shelving, there is a well-used couch. Beside the door on the back wall are a couple carts of books between homes, and shelves of administration documentation. To the right of these resides the desk and work area of the Finance Officer, a long-term temporary arrangement. Her desk is meticulously organized, "correct" and contained, with only a single personal item: a daily-calendar with inspirational quotes. To the right of this desk is the workspace of the Head Cataloguer. Her workspace gives the appearance of a careful chaos, unorganized to anyone but the initiated. Work sprawls off the desk onto the nearby shelving and a book cart. Many personal items take up desk space, and stickers and pictures are taped to the side of the desk. All possible items are shades of pink: pink sticky notes line the two computer screens, pink pens and pencils are scattered around and under materials, there are pink framed photos of house pets, and a stack of pink books. Between the two desks

is a small open area, with a single chair turned towards the audience and the cataloguer's desk. To the right of the cataloguer's desk, in the rear, is another doorway. This doorway leads to the stacks, and some patrons can be heard making use of the space. Right front acts as a secondary break area, with a large comfortable chair and a couple other less impressive, left-over, chairs and a small table. There are three windows on the back wall, one behind each desk and another in the centre.

Four people are already in the room. The Finance Officer, Laverne Lucas, is at her desk, engrossed in mundane administration. She is wearing attire best described as professional. Her top is a bland and pale brown, smart but with no embellishments. She has dark pants, with a sharp crease, and simple shoes with a low heel. She wears only two accessories: a thin watch and a pearl necklace. Her hair is a maintainable short bob. She is a diligent worker, but has only been working at the library for a couple months. She is calm, but rarely at ease: she is not entirely comfortable being open with her own thoughts and feelings, and may not be fully accepting of others'.

The Head of Programming, Bernard Bard, is seated in the chair between the two workstations with his back to Laverne. He has a laptop in front of him, open and resting on one of the more stable piles of the cataloguer's desk. He is also a new hire, with only three and a half months at the library, but he has managed to fit in and became fast friends with the Head Cataloguer. He has an easy-going and warm personality, and gives the impression of introspection and ingenuity. He wears ordinary dress shoes and dark jeans. His dress shirt is a deep green, and he has a patterned green sweater-vest. His hair in a designed mess, and he keeps a pencil behind his ear. He has thick black glasses. He is talking with the cataloguer, and occasionally tapping on his laptop.

The Head Cataloguer, Cate Cartier, is at her desk talking with Bernard Bard and working, though she doesn't need to put much attention into the process. She bubbles with energy, and looks like a woman that loves to laugh. She is comfortable in the library, in which she has worked for years, but gives the impression that she would speak her mind regardless of comfort. She telegraphs her thoughts with dramatic facial and hand gestures. She wears only shades of pink. There is a pink clip in her hair, which flows down her back. She wears a pink dress with lace overlay which goes down to her knees, and pink seamed nylons. She has pink pumps with a bow and kitten heels.

Finally, the Head of Reference, Shannon Savant, sits in the comfortable chair in the right front of the stage. She has a calm that cannot be removed; she extrudes experience and the wealth of knowledge in her almost shines out of her. Her outfit is a beautiful clashing chaos: no theme of style or colour is consistent, but it all comes together and draws attention. Colours and designs are bright and pop out, but do not disgust the eye. Each individual part of her attire is a fashion fantasy. She does not notice her own outfit, and likely put little thought into it in the morning. She is finished on the reference desk for the day, and is going through a stack of materials for an in-depth research question. She has a book, or other resource, in one hand, and is writing on a pad of paper in the other. The book, or resource, she holds does not cover her face, but she very rarely looks up from her project. It is clear that she pays attention to the conversation around her, though, because she has subtle changes in facial expressions, or may give a slight nod.

CATE--(to Bernard, counting on her fingers) Well, I remember we did Shakespeare, of course, *The Wizard of Oz*, there was one on *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the year the film came out, but we had to supplement that. That led to the week on *Discworld*, OH! (exciting herself, forgetting her finger counting) and we had one on influential poets, but people wanted Canadian stuff so we had to do one on Canadian poets, then later on famous Canadian works! Since we have the local author's shelves we haven't done a week on them. The Alan Moore week was great! We managed to get most of his works in for that.

BERNARD--(bringing her back on task) Okay, so, this time is *Alice in Wonderland*. How did that get

decided?

CATE--Well, each Theme Week we have out a suggestion box for the next event. Alice has been kicking around in there for awhile. We also just try to observe the interests of people.

LAVERNE--(*has been listening with one ear to the conversation, now decides to give her opinion*) Well, it is going to be easy to select materials for *Alice in Wonderland*: two books by Carroll, two films by Disney. Done.

(*BERNARD stands and wanders left to sit on an empty corner of LAVERNE'S desk while CATE talks. LAVERNE is clearly uncomfortable with him sitting on her desk, and being surrounded by CATE and BERNARD, who just wants to add her to the conversation*)

CATE--(*with some shock and disbelief*) But...there are just so many adaptations...

LAVERNE--(*rhetorically*) But, are they worth watching?

BERNARD--(*calmly*) I don't think it is worthwhile to judge a huge swath of adaptations as 'good' or 'bad'...we're just presenting our patrons with...a universe of ideas...(*struggling to find the words*)

SHANNON--(*noticing BERNARD is struggling, she speaks, though she does not look up*) We present them with a large chunk of the 'phase space' surrounding a work. A concept refined by Margaret Mackey, "it's the notional space which contains not just the actual [story] of the present moment, but all the possible [stories]" (19). Mackey, Margaret. "Playing in the Phase Space: Contemporary Forms of Fictional Pleasure." *Signal* 88 (January 1999): 16-32. Print.

(*BERNARD looks shocked, less because of what she said than how she said it*)

CATE--(*excited again*) Right! We don't limit the Theme Week to just 'official' or 'popular' works and adaptations. We try to give our patrons a view (*miming binoculars*) into uncharted lands, so they can explore (*miming cutting through vines*) works and find their own treasures (*beaming happily*)

BERNARD--(*getting up from LAVERNE'S desk, to her relief, and starting to pace between the desks, front centre*) Okay. So, we can have the well-known Carroll works and Disney adaptations displayed front and centre (*LAVERNE looks satisfied with herself*), but we'll surround it with lesser known adaptations. (*Thinking*) Actually, we'll have stuff around the entire library. We'll encourage people to go through different areas to find different stories taking pieces from the Alice phase space. We can't give out potions and cakes, but we can dress the library up a bit to represent portions of the story and get people to explore. Physically and mentally. (*Pausing in thought, standing on the right side of CATE'S desk*) What about the adults?

CATE--(*confused*) Adults? What about them?

BERNARD--Well, most people think of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and the sequel, and

adaptations that are child oriented. But, there's a lot of works that are more adult oriented.
(*CATE nods; LAYERNE looks confused*)

(*NIKKI enters through the door rear left. She has the appearance of one who is professional and diplomatic, but perhaps eccentric. She has fostered the library's culture of professional service while also encouraging energy and almost unrestrained experimentation. Her hair is in a tight bun, and she has silver glasses around her neck hanging by a chain. She wears a voluminous white blouse with an array of buttons promoting various organizations and causes. She has bell-bottom blue jeans, with an embossed design at the ankles. She has running sneakers on, which are primarily a bright orange and clash with her outfit. When she enters the others acknowledge her, even Shannon briefly turns to nod. NIKKI smiles at them, and then drops onto the couch front left, stretching her legs out*)

NIKKI--(after letting out a sigh, which screams of a stressful but not unusual day) Adult oriented materials? What are we talkin' about?

CATE--(smiling mischievously) Bernard was just suggesting that we have a collection of pornographic Alice-themed materials for the pervs coming in for Alice Week.

BERNARD--(quickly) I didn't say pornographic, and I certainly didn't call any of our patrons perverts.

NIKKI--(waving off his concern) You might not, but I would (*CATE softly laughs*). I found another one looking up porn and touching her bits while on a computer station. In any case, I think it's a good idea. It would be easy to set up another table with adultish Alice adaptations.

(*BERNARD attempts to find a spot to sit on CATE'S desk, but quickly gives up. He takes a smaller chair from the right side break area and turns it around to see everyone before sitting on it*)

LAYERNE--(absolutely shocked that this is getting traction) You cannot be serious! And a whole table?! There cannot be that many books!

CATE--(placating and condescending, with pseudo-sympathy) Oh, dear. Dear, there's tons of material we already have in the system. Actually, I think I even saw something on that cart over there (*starting to stand up*)

NIKKI--(quicker to her feet, and making motions to CATE) Hold on, I'm closer. This little cart-y? Now, let me look...(bending down to scan a book cart near the rear left door) Ah! I suspect you meant this: *Alison's Wonderland?* (*Holding up Tyler, Alison, ed. Alison's Wonderland for all to see*)

BERNARD--(pleasantly surprised) Oh! I've read that one! I don't think it actually has an Alice adaptation, but it certainly has tons of fairy-tale adaptations (*LAYERNE looking more and more appalled, noticed by BERNARD*). I think you'll find a good quote in the introduction explaining why fairy-tales are popular for adaptation. First paragraph.

NIKKI--(flipping to page 9, scanning briefly before finding what BERNARD referenced. She speaks with the voice of a practised reader) "Why fables and rhymes and stories of years gone by? Because the familiar cadence of these magical tales clings to us like the fabric of dreams. The *once upon a time* is already in place--the *happily-ever-after* is waiting for us" (*interrupting herself*) 'once upon a time' and 'happily-ever-after' are italicized. (*Returning to the reading*) "It's

the part in the middle that's rich with promise, the sticky-sweet candy-coloured goodness of a whole new type of 'Hansel and Gretel' story."

BERNARD--(*enthusiastic*) Exactly! The authors and readers get to expand the...the phase space (*smiling at SHANNON, though she doesn't appear to notice*), and take the familiar and rework it into something else.

(*NIKKI returns the book to the cart, and sits on the same corner of LAVERNE'S desk that BERNARD was previously in. LAVERNE is, again, uncomfortable, but tries to hide it*)

CATE--(*expanding*) Not every author wants to spend time and page space building a whole new world when they can take something, with respect and care, from another. It's like there's a sliding scale of intertextuality, and authors can have subtle allusions to a work, or bluntly trace over the same lines.

BERNARD--(*thoughtfully*) Fairy tales, and children's literature generally, are "easy targets for retelling."

SHANNON--Page 135, Tribunella, Eric L. "From Kiddie Lit to Kiddie Porn: The Sexualization of Children's Literature." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 33.2 (2008): 135-155. Print.

BERNARD--(*again shocked at SHANNON'S statement*) Was...was I quoting something? Also, I can hear the italics in your voice. (*To the others*) Can anyone else actually hear the italics in her voice?

LAVERNE--(*shocked and indigent*) We are not going to suggest people read child porn, are we? I still cannot believe that the library would suggest anyone read pornography!

NIKKI--(*diplomatically*) Laverne, are you uncomfortable with, or offended by, this conversation?

LAVERNE--(*thinking then answering slowly*) I am not suggesting that this is inappropriate, or trying to shut down the conversation. But, I think the library should be careful about what is displayed.

NIKKI--I think it's appropriate for us to have pornographic works available to our patrons. Besides the obvious intellectual freedom and access debate, there's a long history of repressing and then slowly accepting the artistic, and otherwise, merits of pornography. (*NIKKI stands, and wanders, collecting stationery into a bundle for some unknown task*). I read a very interesting article by David Bennet. I think it was, "The Postmodern Ends of Obscenity: Pornography, Self-Parody, and Aesthetics." Bennet described the move from the moral philosophy of Shaftesbury and Kant—

LAVERNE--(*interrupting*) Shaftesbury? You are making that name up! That name came from a porno! (*CATE and BERNARD laugh*)

NIKKI--(*continuing, ignoring the interruption*) And they, "preached subjugation of the body's interest to the mind, or the sublimation of sensual experience toward positive, rational ends." They attempted to remove the body and sensation from works, and focus all art and efforts towards more sterile aesthetics. They wanted art to be, "disinterested," where pornography elicits interest. There was one quote in particular that I love: "Sex could be a great leveller, standing

for a truth of Nature that divided through social hierarchies: pornography argued that everyone--priests, monks, and monarchs included--had bodies with sexual desires and organs that defecated and urinated; hence its utility to satirists for mocking the pretensions or hypocrisies of religious and political authorities which preached the denial or sublimation of individual, sensual interest because of its potential to disrupt community." So, pornography or any obscene work is subversive in both format and content. I think Bennet said it was, "the late Victorian and early modernist period that the dichotomy between art and pornography...began to break down." Though, some people still argue that pornography should be kept out of fiction, because it is too real to be fiction. At least the hard-core stuff.

SHANNON--Pages 64-6, and 68.

NIKKI--(*SHANNON'S citing bringing little response from NIKKI*) Sure. The point is that porn shouldn't just be dismissed out of hand. There are important reasons for porn, besides just getting people off. And porn is frequently intertwined with parody and satire. It's a legitimate medium for expression of ideas and criticism. Besides, just because we display an item does not mean we endorse the ideas within. (*NIKKI is finished collecting the papers, envelopes, and labels that she was collecting, and dumps them onto the couch. She then stands behind the couch, and leans on the back*) Bernard, did you have any works in mind to highlight in the adult area? Pornographic or not.

BERNARD--(*standing and, once again, pacing front between the desks*) Well, we could have some of the Erotica, like *Alison's Wonderland*, but I'd prefer to highlight other works. Ideally, we could get some unusual mediums, too--not just books.

NIKKI--*American McGee's Alice*. (*Seeing BERNARD and LAVERNE'S blank looks*) It's a video game, and a pretty popular one at that. We had some girls dress up as Alice from the game last Halloween--you should remember that Cate (*CATE nods*)--the costume includes a bunch of blood splattered on the dress, and a knife (*CATE mimes stabbing*). Two of the girls actually brought actual knives into the library, and Cate had to keep them back here until they left (*CATE'S miming intensifies*). It's not pornographic, or really very sexual, but it is certainly adult oriented. We can have that up in the display, but it's already well known to our target patrons.

SHANNON--(*picking up on the mention of costumes*) "Every year around Halloween adults take the opportunity to dress up in 'sexy' adult-sized versions of [...] Alice's white pinafore refashioned as lingerie-like costumes, whose marketability hinges on the carnivalesque pleasure in adult nostalgia, revelry in the taboo, and exertion of adult agency over the artifacts of childhood." Tribunella, page 136.

CATE--(*excited, memory jogged by SHANNON*) Oh! *Lost Girls!* From Alan Moore Week! Alice is one of the three main characters, and it should be in the system (*starting to type furiously on her keyboard*)

BERNARD--I've read that one. As I recall, Moore and Gebbie, "embraced the label 'pornography'...and discussed it as an effort to reunite artistic and pornographic endeavors."

SHANNON--Tribunella, page 136

(*BERNARD looks shocked, knowing he once again unknowingly quoted the article*)

BERNARD--(*still defeated*) I guess I should just read that article...

CATE--(*happily*) Here it is! It's out right now. But there's no hold, so we can get it for Alice Week.

LAVERNE--(*unhappily*) Joy of joys. Child porn in the library.

NIKKI--My understanding of pornographic children's literature is that, usually, it's more about identifying as the child, in a sort of return to innocence and reimagination of youth. Further, the children are not entirely children: they're sort of a hybrid between children and adults.

SHANNON--Pages 138 and 141-3 (*NIKKI nods, accepting this citation*).

BERNARD--(*trying to return to Lost Girls*) Besides, the story is more of a feminist exploration of trauma. The graphic novel, "traces a path from abuse to women re-discovering their own desire." The heroines come, "to terms with different forms of exploitation and abuse." The story gives an account of Alice's fall, due to rape and a repressive Victorian society, and her resistance strategy: "entering the world beyond the looking glass, a world where she is the arbiter of her own pleasure." Escapist, but necessary. Then she rises through solidarity with other abuse victims.

SHANNON--Pages 83, 85-86. Brigley-Thompson, Zoë. "Theorizing Sexual Domination in *From Hell* and *Lost Girls*: Jack the Ripper versus Wonderlands of Desire." *Sexual Ideology in the Works of Alan Moore: Critical Essays on the Graphic Novels*. Eds. Comer, Todd A., and Joseph Michael Sommers. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2012. 76-87. Print.

BERNARD--(*exasperated*) It's like every thought I have isn't my own. (*With sad sarcasm*) Thanks, Shannon...

SHANNON--(*apparently not catching BERNARD'S tone*) You're welcome.

CATE--(*thoughtfully, with more calm than is usual for her*) Now, I read *Lost Girls*, too.

BERNARD--(*interrupting*) The second volume caught your eye, did it? (*BERNARD picks up a pink pen and spins it*)

CATE--(*picking up another pink pen, and throwing it at BERNARD. He laughs softly and returns both pens to her desk as she continues*) I read the comics, and I agree that it's about overcoming trauma. What I want to be clear on, though, is that I don't feel as though the comics would be actual 'trauma advice,' for victims of abuse.

BERNARD--Well, we're not displaying the graphic novels as abuse advice (*CATE nods*). I get your concern, but I think our patrons would be interested in the...philosophy underlying the work.

NIKKI--(*matter-of-factly*) And the boobs (*CATE laughs*).

BERNARD--(*continuing, nodding affirmation*) And the boobs. *Lost Girls* is also an excellent example of adaptation. Generally, "Moore uses extensive, connected patterns of intertextual reference to

nuance his work." In this adaptation, specifically, "the structure...recreates [the audience's] revisiting the memory of a text while experiencing a new version of a text] in narrative terms...In this way *Lost Girls* both is an adaptation and thematizes adaptation." The reflections used throughout the work are integral to this. "The narrative is structure in terms of characters reflecting on past sexual experiences," and "there is a literal mirror featured prominently throughout the narrative, most notably in the context of Alice's stories." It's both symbolic, and references the *Through the Looking-Glass* sequel.

SHANNON--Pages 124-5, Dicecco, Nico. "Reflections on the Looking Glass: Adaptations as Sex and Psychosis in *Lost Girls*." The same anthology as the previous article, pages 124-35.

(*BERNARD puts his face in his hands, and CATE smiles at him. CATE starts typing on her keyboard again*)

BERNARD--(*after a moment, he collects himself and continues*) *Lost Girls* is a great study on both adaptation and metaphor, because of the complex and ambiguous uses of both. It's about storytelling, and the first line is even, "tell me a story." Soon after, Alice discusses her own theories of storytelling to another character: they have a brief conversation about mimesis, art reflecting reality and ideals. Alice even uses mirrors and adaptation as her coping mechanism. She escapes to this other world, or puts an idealized self there, to keep and interact with some portions of her innocence. It's probably a sign of her psychological collapse.

SHANNON--Pages 128-9 and 132-34 (*BERNARD sighs heavily*).

CATE--The anthology is also in the system. We'll have it for Alice Week, so we can display it with the series.

NIKKI--(*nodding*) Good. I'll be back.

(*NIKKI takes the pile of stationery and leaves through rear left*)

LAVERNE--I wonder if Moore and Gebbie really had that much theoretical background to their work. I suspect that a lot of that stuff is just read into their work.

BERNARD--(*starting to pace again*) I suspect they based their work on Angela Carter's work. She studied the Marquis de Sade, and read some feminist theories into his work. She believed that pornography could be used to serve women, and that Sade did, "promote a kind of sexual freedom," outside of reproductive ends. "*Lost Girls* [frees the] characters from their traditional bonds and [forges] new ones based on moral connections that do not require women or men to conform to despotic structures."

SHANNON--Pages 138-9 (*BERNARD stops pacing and his shoulders sag*), Laity, K. A., "'Avast, Land-Lubbers!': Reading *Lost Girls* as a Post-Sadeian Text." Same anthology, pages 138-49.

BERNARD--(*sighing, and continuing his pacing*) Well, I guess there's something to back up my thoughts. So it's clear that the authors used a medium usually dismissed to subvert and reclaim classic patriarchal pornographic norms. It attempts something like a moral pornography, complete with feminist bonds and a, "journey of confession and release." They relive, but reframe, their pasts as a sort of cathartic release and acceptance. *Lost Girls* really, "[dances] on

the tightrope between art and pornography." I would argue that it succeeds at being both, although that may be debatable.

SHANNON--(*largely ignored*) Pages 139-40, and 145-7.

LAVERNE--(*incredulously*) You would masturbate to *Lost Girls*?

BERNARD--(*thoughtfully*) No. Not as such, but it certainly succeeds at being erotic, some images more than others. Very little of the pornography actually centres on the children, and the stuff that does is traumatic retellings. Besides, it's a graphic novel: pure ink images, with no children. "If we are to be truly free, we must be able to imagine with impunity things we would not actually wish to do without feeling fear or inhibition."

SHANNON--Page 148.

(*BERNARD crashes onto the couch, front left, dramatically splaying with one leg on the couch, the other on the ground. His arm covers his face*)

BERNARD--I'm done with *Lost Girls*. It will be displayed. It contains a lot to think about. Though, it doesn't appear as any new ways to look at the text will come from me today. How about a film?

(*NIKKI re-enters the set, from rear left, sans stationery. She takes note of BERNARD*)

NIKKI--(*to BERNARD*) You look defeated.

BERNARD--I am. *Lost Girls* and some articles will be displayed, but I can't seem to do anything but spout ideas from others.

NIKKI--(*patting BERNARD, and resuming her previous spot leaning on the back of the couch*) Aw, don't worry. It's not like Moore is some underground figure. He's kinda popular. I heard something about a film?

CATE--We were just getting there. We've got tons of Romance novels, a video game, a series of comics, and it would be good to also showcase a film.

NIKKI--(*hesitantly*) Well, one comes to mind...but, I don't really think it would be good for this.

CATE--(*always excited to hear about something offensive*) Ooo, do tell!

NIKKI--Well, it's a Czech film by Jan Švankmajer, called *Něco z Alenky*, or just *Alice*.

LAVERNE--Wow, those are a mouthful.

NIKKI--So, it's stop motion--

LAVERNE--(*interrupting*) Oh! I love stop motion!

NIKKI--(*continuing*) Taxidermy.

(Several seconds of silence pass)

CATE--(shaking her head vigorously) Noooope. Nope nope nope. Nope.

BERNARD--(surprised, removing his arm from his face) Really? Taxidermy?

NIKKI--(hesitantly) Well, I'm not certain that actual dead animals and skeletons--

CATE--(interrupting, physically turning around for a moment) NOPE.

NIKKI--(continuing, still hesitantly) Were actually used. But that was clearly the look they were going for. The film won an award at a film festival. There's also *Tideland*--a film by Terry Gilliam that was heavily influenced by *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

BERNARD--I've seen that one. Jeff Bridges gets preserved through taxidermy, and I think the Alice-y protagonist crawls inside him (*LAVERNE puts her hand over her mouth in shock and disgust*).

CATE--(mouth agape) Nikki, seriously. What the hell is with you and the taxidermy suggestions?! I'm not going to look for those in the system, and I seriously doubt they'd be there anyways (*NIKKI shrugs in embarrassment*).

BERNARD--(thoughtfully) I'm surprised there isn't some scholarship on taxidermy and the Alice phase space. I suppose it might be a sort of juxtaposition of the life and vitality found within the original story against the pseudo-life of the preserved dead. Or a comment on the conflicting youth of the characters and age of the story--Alice and the denizens of Wonderland preserved in time. They are continually re-stuffed and stitched back together by continual adaptation.

CATE--(wrinkling up her nose) Ew. In any case, I have a much better suggestion: *Alice in Wonderland: an X-Rated Musical Comedy*, from 1976, directed by Bud Townsend.

BERNARD--(bolting up from his sitting position and pointing at CATE, both smiling) I've seen that one! I love that musical! That's perfect! I have a copy at home!

NIKKI--(thinking) I doubt that is in our system, either. But, I suppose we could display your copy, if you don't mind, Bernard. We can put a note on, telling people it's not for loan, but with enough interest we could proly do a showing or purchase a copy.

LAVERNE--I have my doubts that this film, or any other pornographic film, could have much fidelity to the original. (*Catching CATE jumping at the word "fidelity"*) Even if we have said that fidelity is only one of several ways to judge an adaptation.

NIKKI--(looking up at the ceiling) Well, as I recall, the Beavis and Butthead porno, *Beaver & Buttface* by Buck Adams, had a neat way to show fidelity. In the original show Beavis would only look to the left or right, and Buttface was always faced the audience. The actors replicated this in the adaptation, and it stood out way more in live-action than it did in animation. So, directors and writers can have neat moments of fidelity, even in porn.

BERNARD--(*CATE and BERNARD are grinning from ear to ear*) So, you've seen *Beaver & Buttface*?

NIKKI--(*suddenly embarrassed*) I plead the fifth.

CATE--(*jumping on this*) The fifth what? Sandwich at Tim Horton's? We're not in the 'States.

(*BERNARD starts laughing*)

BERNARD—(*calming down*) Well, this musical actually has an interesting way to remain true to the story. It follows Alice, a librarian--

LAVERNE--(*with mock shock*) Oh, really? I cannot believe that anyone would accept a librarian as a person that promotes and engages in perversion.

BERNARD--(*smiling at LAVERNE, but continuing*) She's a librarian that is sexually repressed, or at least unimaginative and inexperienced. She is in the library alone at night, lamenting, when the White Rabbit character leads her into the film's interpretation of Wonderland. Like the book, she goes from one scenario to the other, meeting some of the familiar characters: Mad Hatter, the Tweedles, the King and Queen, and so on (*BERNARD looks at SHANNON suspiciously, but when she doesn't say anything he looks somewhat smug*).

CATE--I would say it's another sort of sort of feminist interpretation within the Alice phase space. It's about Alice's sexual growth: her becoming more comfortable with the sexual liberation that was popular in that era, as well as herself.

NIKKI--I'm having trouble imagining a pornographic musical...

BERNARD--Well, the genres have similarities. "Both musical numbers and sex scenes can be read as expressions of desire or fulfillment...The narrative aspects of both genres, endlessly ridiculed as being secondary to the musical numbers or sex scenes, are nonetheless intrinsic to the ways each genre resolves [the character's motivations]." People in the genres do not resolve their problems through realistic talking, but through fantastic expressions of song or sex.

CATE--(*excited, standing up*) Oh! Wollman! (*The others look at CATE quizzically, even SHANNON, as she pulls out a hot pink book from the pile on her desk, and flips through it to a section she remembers*) Here it is, Wollman, Elizabeth L. This is, *Hard Times: The Adult Musical in 1970s New York City*. There's a chapter that discusses the Musical Fantasy a bit. You just quoted page 155 (*CATE sits back down; SHANNON returns to her work*).

BERNARD--(*holding his hands over his heart, as if stabbed*) Et tu, Cartier? (*CATE laughs heartily, head thrown back, and NIKKI smiles*)

LAVERNE--(*sarcastically*) Oh goodie. More scholarship praising pornography.

CATE--(*still smiling*) Well, I wouldn't say this article is praising the film, particularly. I enjoyed the film more than the author seemed to. But, it's a good look at the film, which was apparently one of the first, or the first, (*reading from page 156*) "narrative, feature-length, pornographic adult musicals to be released as [a] commercial film." Wollman didn't view it as a particularly good feminist film, as she says on the same page: "it...serves as a testament to the fact that during the second wave, female empowerment was often easily conflated with the patriarchal ideals inherent in the sexual revolution." So, it has many of the same flaws and assumptions of the era.

Hell, Alice even starts exploring her own sexuality at the behest of her boyfriend, who feels sexually frustrated more than Alice seems to be.

BERNARD--(*now standing up and stretching his arms up. While talking he wanders to CATE'S desk, takes his laptop, and returns to the couch with it*) The film is also hetero-normative. All of the scenes, whether masturbatory, one-on-one, or orgy, focus on the female or heterosexual actions, like a mainstream hetero porno would. That said, it seemed, to me, to have a pretty open view of sexuality that would not preclude homosexual or other sexual lifestyles. It's a lot of, "if it feels good, do it," sort of talk. The film may portray the patriarchal norms of sex, but is open to other ideas that they decided not to film (*BERNARD looks at CATE suspiciously, expecting a citation*).

CATE--(*smiling*) Don't worry, Berny, it's not a long article. It spends most of the time going through the events depicted (*NIKKI also smiles at BERNARD; BERNARD tries not to look sullen*). A bit later, here on 158, Wollman says, "throughout the film...a sharp distinction is made between those who are sexually liberated and everyone else." It really looks down upon people that disagree with the sexual revolution, which is kind of problematic. It could probably be more respectful to people that are comfortable with asexuality or their own views of sexuality.

BERNARD--(*nodding*) True...(*looking back fondly*) But the music is so hilarious. Wollman may think the film fails, but I think it's entertaining. It's not perfect, and someone could argue that, "[it] was too silly to function as a hard-core and to explicit to be taken seriously as a musical--"

CATE--(*interrupting, happily*) Wollman does, page 176.

BERNARD--(*groaning loudly, to the amusement of CATE and NIKKI. Leaving his laptop on the couch, BERNARD once again starts to pace front*) Wollman can argue that, but it was a worthwhile exploration into the world of musical pornos. Musical pornography, I firmly believe, should still be a popular thing. Further, it doesn't just slap Alice into a regular old porno--the film legitimately tries to find a place in the phase space. Like the original novel, the film follows Alice through a journey of self-discovery: there's an attempt to be empowering. It fails to have the depth of *Lost Girls* or the wit of Dodgeson's original, but it has a message and some laugh-out-loud lines. The characters are recognizably the characters of the novel, and there's an attempt to remain true to the character's interactions and dialogue--though, not always successfully.

NIKKI--So, you think it's a film with heart.

CATE--(*jumping on this, smiling to herself*) Among other organs.

BERNARD--(*laughing with CATE, he sits down in his original chair between the desks*) Yes, it seems honest.

LAVERNE--(*excitedly, and in a rush*) Oh shoot! It's almost quitting time! I have to rush to catch my bus! (*LAVERNE quickly works on her computer, shutting everything down, and grabbing a coat exits rear right as the others continue*)

NIKKI--Okay, everyone start closing up shop. There's tons of work to do before we're done here at work (*NIKKI turns and starts to leave rear left*).

CATE--(*disheartened, starting shut down the computer*) Oh, I know it. When are you getting me that assistant?

NIKKI--(*pausing at the door*) Just use Bernard (*exit*).

CATE--(*smiling at BERNARD*) Hear that? You're now my personal assistant.

BERNARD--(*standing, and grabbing his laptop from the couch*) You don't need an assistant, you need a therapist (*both laugh*). Ugh. I just realized that I've created even more work for myself with this adult Alice stuff.

CATE--(*standing and smiling*) Of course you did. You're a diligent masochist--continually making your life harder for the benefit of the patrons (*CATE and BERNARD laugh*). Come on, let's go. G'night, Shannon!

(*CATE and BERNARD exit rear right*).

(*SHANNON puts the final book down on her pile, stretches, and exits with books and notes in tow*).

(*Curtain*)

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