

## SCENE SEVEN | THE DUCHESS' COTTAGE

A TABLE IS SET WITH EVERYTHING FOR THE KITCHEN ROUTINE. THE DUCHESS ENTERS: **MUSIC CUE: DUCHESS PLAY ON**

DUCHESS: Hello boys and girls! Do you like my new frock [NAME OF MAN]? It's my Ryanair dress! Everything seems above board but once it's taken off you find the hidden extras! I've got so much to do in the kitchen and not a pot washed nor sausage pricked! I need to start the tarts!

THE KNAVE ENTERS UNSEEN BY THE DUCHESS: **MUSIC CUE: EVIL STING**

KNAVE: Here I am at the Duchess' dwelling. I need to find out all I can about that troublesome tot Alice and her plan. If there's anyone who knows too much it's the Duchess! Now, to charm her with my rugged good looks! [*To the Duchess:*] Beautiful lady!

DUCHESS: [*Looking behind:*] Where?

[THERE ARE LETTERS ON THE TABLE. THEY PICK THEM UP WHEN THEY ARE MENTIONED IN **BOLD**.]

KNAVE: Can it be? Are you Lady **D**?

TAKING THE 'D' FROM HIM.

DUCHESS: 'Lady **D**'?

KNAVE: The Duchess? **U C**?

DUCHESS: **O D! I C! S...**

KNAVE: **U R**?

DUCHESS: **I!**

THEY HOLD UP THE LETTERS TO SPELL C.U.R.I.O.U.S.

KNAVE: **CURIOUS!** Why do you have all these in your kitchen?

DUCHESS: It's because I like to follow a recipe to the letter!

KNAVE: So you're the Duchess!

DUCHESS: Well if I'm not this bra is a remarkably good fit! Who are you?

KNAVE: I'm the K.N.A.V.E

DUCHESS: K-Nave?

KNAVE: It's pronounced Knave...

DUCHESS: That's what I said! K-Nave!

KNAVE: Knavel

DUCHESS: K-Nave!

KNAVE: You're getting on my K-nerve! The 'K' is silent! Just what I wish you'd be!

DUCHESS: I've never heard of a silent 'K'. I've heard of Special K! I tried that two bowls, two meals, two weeks challenge the other month. I put on so much weight...and eating all that china was murder on the teeth!

KNAVE: Enough nonsense, I'm looking for Alice.

DUCHESS: I've heard of her! I keep my ear to the ground.

KNAVE: Is that so? Well, a few of your other body parts are on their way down there too! Do you know where she might be?

DUCHESS: What's in it for me?

KNAVE: You can spend the night with me and get a BIG surprise!

DUCHESS: Not half the surprise you'll get! She's always chasing after the White Rabbit!

**SFX CUE: THUNDER**

KNAVE: [*Aside:*] The White Rabbit?! The Queen's loyal lackey lapin! He'll lead her straight to the palace and so to me! With Alice out of the picture, there's no one who can stop me!

THE KNAVE EXITS LAUGHING: **MUSIC CUE: EVIL EXIT**

DUCHESS: He sounds happy! Oh! Look at the time! I need to get things cooking! I'll never be able to get all the tarts done by myself. Help me shout for the White Rabbit as loud as you can after three, one, two, three! White Rabbit!

THE WHITE RABBIT HOPS ON.

RABBIT: I'm late! I'm late! Hello everyone!

DUCHESS: Listen funny bunny, you know the tarts for the Queen of Hearts?

RABBIT: Yes! I'm here to collect them!

DUCHESS: Well, there's a problem...I haven't made any!

RABBIT: Oh no! What are we going to do?! With no tarts, there'll be no party and with no party we'll have no heads!

DUCHESS: Don't you fret yet! I've managed to find some of the most efficient culinary companions in all Wonderland.

THE TWEEDLES ENTER IN GREGGS UNIFORM: **MUSIC CUE: TWEEDLES ENTRANCE**

RABBIT: What could possibly go wrong?!

DUM: I'm Tweedle Dum!

DEE: And I'm Tweedle Dee!

BOTH: We're twins you see!

DUCHESS: Now, listen here baker boys, I need you both to concentrate hard.

THEY BOTH STRAIN ATTEMPTING TO CONCENTRATE.

DUCHESS: Not that hard! We have so many jammy tarts to make but remember, whatever you do, don't make a mess...

**MUSIC CUE: KITCHEN UNDERSCORE**

RABBIT: Where do we begin?

DUM: Start at the beginning!

DEE: Yes! And when you get to the end...stop!

**SFX CUE: KNOCK**

TWEEDLES: Who is it?!

ALICE(OFF): Alice!

DUCHESS: Alice from the palace?

ALICE(OFF): No, from [YOUR TOWN]!

DUCHESS: Never heard of it!

THE DUCHESS OPENS THE DOOR. ALICE ENTERS.

ALICE: White Rabbit!

RABBIT: Alice it's you!

DUCHESS: How wonderful to meet you, Alice!

ALICE: You two again – how do you do?

TWEEDLES: That's better!

RABBIT: What are you doing here?

ALICE: I've lost my muchness and was told to try the Duchess.

DUCHESS: That's me! But I'm afraid I'm far too busy to help you look for it.

RABBIT: You could help us bake the tarts for the Queen of Hearts!

ALICE: Oh, I love baking and I'd love to meet the Queen of Hearts. I've heard so much about her!

DUCHESS: I bet you have! So much time and so little to do!

TWEEDLES: You meant that contrariwise!

ALICE: What do we need first?

DUCHESS: Flour!

THE RABBIT HAS A TOY AIRPLANE.

ALICE: What kind of flour is that?

RABBIT: Plane!

ALICE: I don't think I've ever made tarts this way before.

DUCHESS: It's the Wonderland way! Now, we need eggs!

DEE: Here they are! Eggs!

DUM: Fresh from the coop!

DUCHESS: The coop?

DUM: [*Reading the box:*] Sorry! Co-op!

SHE CRACKS AN EGG AND PUTS THE SHELL INTO THE MIXING BOWL.

ALICE: You put the wrong bit in!

DUCHESS: Oh no I didn't. I'm far too poor to shell out! Now, beat it.

THEY ALL WALK OFF.

DUCHESS: Where are you going!?

TWEEDLES: You said beat it!

DUCHESS: Beat the eggs!

DEE: With what?

DUCHESS: Do I have to think of everything? Use your head!

DUM: Ok!

T.DUM STICKS HIS HEAD INTO THE EGG BOWL.

RABBIT: What's next?

DUCHESS: Sugar!

THE WHITE RABBIT PULLS A WHEEL OUT OF A BAG OF SUGAR.

ALICE: What type of sugar is that?

RABBIT: Caster!

DUCHESS: The recipe calls for brown sugars but they're really hard to get a hold of...*Demerara*! Now, there's just one final ingredient. Toilet roll!

ALICE: Toilet roll?! What's that for?

DUCHESS: It prevents a soggy bottom!

RABBIT: Duchess, this is going to be very difficult to kneed.

DUCHESS: We need someone who's good with his hands...oh [NAME OF MAN]! Look at him! He can't wait to get his hands on my shortcrust!

ALL: Duchess!

DUCHESS: Sorry!

ALICE: What now?

DUCHESS: Into the oven!

THE DUCHESS PUTS THE WHOLE BOWL INTO THE OVEN.

ALICE: How long will they take to bake?

DUCHESS: How long's a piece of string?

THE TWEEDLES PULL A PIECE OF STRING BETWEEN THEM.

TWEEDLES: This long!

DUCHESS: Perfect! Then that's how long we'll bake them for! But I must say, my oven gets very, very hot. If the tarts burn we'll be done for.

RABBIT: Maybe my friends out there can help us! Boys and girls, will you keep an eye on the oven and make sure the tarts don't burn? Thank you!