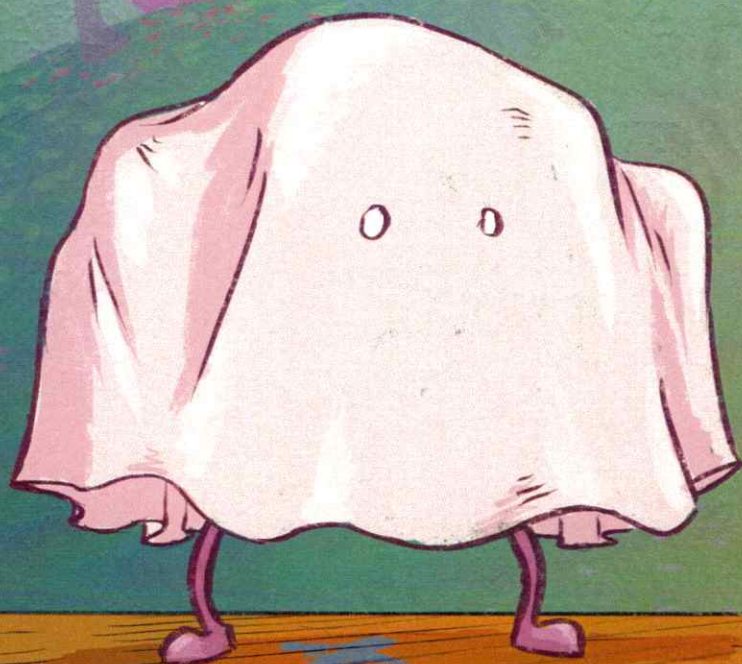




“CUT!” yelled Maybe. “LIGHTS!”
As she strode from behind the curtain,
the lights went *snap, crackle, and pop*,
and the crazyland disappeared,
and the sky was a ceiling,
and Joe stopped the wind machine,
and the ground was a wooden stage,
and some children looked down
from somewhere above, giggling.

The wind said *wh*
as the wind machine slowed.



“Monster!” Maybe cried. “You’re too close to Poodle! Stand over there on your mark—that blue x on the floor.

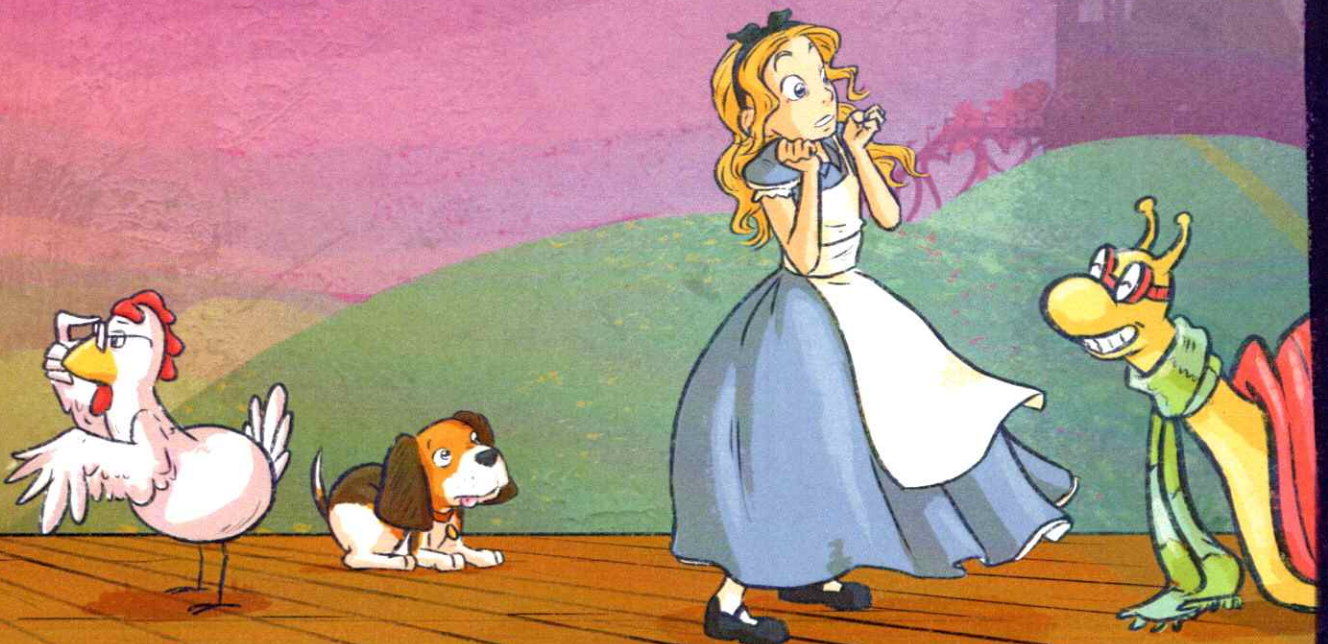
Throw that cape over your face, and hold that megaphone to your mouth.

I want LOUD stopped consonants!
I want you roaring *grbrt skrptle grbrk*
all the time!

Remember, you’re a monster.
And where is Sidney?
SIDNEY?!”

Sidney crept out
from the behind the curtain.

There she was!
She had that spiral shell prop
strapped on her back.





“Sidney,” Maybe said, looking sternly
at her, “you were supposed to enter
the scene just as the monster came on the page.

Stay alert! All right, everyone,
ACTION! STAGE RIGHT!”

which is what directors say,
and she vanished behind the curtain.

Snap, pop, and crackle went the lights,
and the stage grew dark,
and the crazyland arose around them,
and some lady in the balcony
screeched, “Off with their heads!”

Once more, on cue, on came the monster,
bristling with harsh stopped consonants—
the worst, such as *k* and *g*—
and the monster was almost upon them,
and suddenly, Sidney zapped into view
and streaked across the stage,
yelling, “Follow me
back to Chapter Two!”
And there was no choice.

Up they jumped,
back to Chapter Two.