

**Poetical Photographs: The Nostalgic Image of Victorian Children in the Frame Poems of
Alice in Wonderland and *Through the Looking Glass***

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The introductory and concluding frame poems of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* are significant works apart from the *Alice* books. They are autobiographical and describe Carroll's intense relationship with Alice Liddell, his favorite child friend. While many critics readily analyze Carroll's psychological association with children, particularly Alice, the frame poems reflect Victorian culture through both the image of the child and a fear of the loss of innocence. The poems mourn Carroll's own loss of innocence, lament his child friend's loss of innocence, and depict the author's attempt to preserve an image of happy childhood. Each frame poem depicts the same image: the July 4, 1862, boating expedition that sparked Carroll's invention of Wonderland. Though the same image is projected in each poem, all three reveal different reactions to the event and have different tones, which indicate Carroll's changing perspective on Alice Liddell as she ages, his increasingly artificial recollection of the boating expedition, and his growing nostalgia for the event. Because each poem was written separately and at different stages of Carroll's relationship with Alice, readers experience the grief Carroll felt as he watched her age and as she forgot the memory that he constructed so carefully in his own mind. Carroll's memory of July 4, 1862, and his attempt to remind Alice of the "Golden Afternoon" reinforces Carroll's portrayal of and desire for the idealized child; however, his recollection also disestablishes his view of Alice as the idealized child. In many ways, the poems act as Victorian portrait photographs of children, and they provide a snapshot of the boating expedition. By examining the poems as photographs, the reader observes Carroll's nostalgic perception of innocent childhood morph into an inaccurate, almost delusional, image of the ideal child.

Photography was a brand new art form in the 19th century, and Victorians used it to embody the ideals of their time. Lynne Vallone claims that Victorian photography served two essential purposes: documentation and portraiture (193). Helmut Gernsheim, author of *Lewis Carroll, Photographer*, claims that photographic portraiture was particularly important to Victorians because the lower classes were able to easily and inexpensively obtain pictures of their families—a luxury typically enjoyed by the wealthy (6). For the middle classes, the parlor album "served as an illustrated book of genealogy and expressed a form of hero worship" (Gernsheim 8). For the first time, Victorians were able to show guests pictures of family members who may have lived far away, and they were able to display pictures of political figures whom they supported and entertainers whom they endorsed.

Vallone also informs readers that not only did the Victorians take portraits to record their family histories, but many photographers also took pictures to tell stories or reenact folktales (193). These story pictures, particularly those of children, are perhaps the most interesting of all Victorian photographs because they express the views and perspectives of adult photographers toward the stories and the children in the pictures. Victorian artists often associated with children because they thought the relationship would rekindle memories of ideal childhood and reaffirm spirituality. Stephen Gurney, author of *British Poetry of the Nineteenth Century*, suggests that Victorian artists, specifically writers and photographers, tied the idealized child

directly to their art because they wanted to transcend the ordinary to attain something more beautiful, and they felt that associating with children would help them portray their emotions more freely. In the story pictures, the children are often stylized and posed deliberately, and the photographers captured the nostalgic adult looking backward. Catherine Robson claims the “nostalgic construction” of the children in Victorian photographs is “associated with the past, often with stasis and sealed perfection, and very frequently with death” (136). Carroll’s story photographs like “Agnes Weld as Little Red Riding Hood”¹ or “Alice Liddell as the Beggar-Maid”² certainly serve this purpose because not only can the viewer see an entire story told in the singular images, but also the age of the children is ambiguous. Contemporary viewers may even find these photographs of Agnes and Alice unsettling because the photographer’s true intention is cryptic: was he simply telling a story, or was he trying to do more?

Lewis Carroll the photographer used his talent for portraiture as a means to two ends: foremost, it provided him a way to meet famous people, and secondly, it offered him an avenue to meet children (Gernsheim 16). Because photography was mentally taxing and time-consuming, sitters seldom turned Carroll, a talented amateur, away. The collodion process of wet-plate prints required meticulous chemistry for both the exposure and the printing; the equipment was heavy and cumbersome, and photographers would often hire porters; and finally, each exposure required forty-five to ninety seconds to develop (Gernsheim 24-26). Carroll took pictures of Tennyson and his family, the Rossettis, and the Crown Prince of Denmark, and countless child friends.

For Carroll, one of his life’s most significant events was the day he began telling the story of Alice and her adventures, and he captured that image in the frame poems to *Wonderland* and *Looking Glass* much like he captured moments in his photographs. On Friday July 4, 1862, Lewis Carroll, his friend Robinson Duckworth, and the three Liddell sisters—Lorina, Alice, and Edith—went on a rowing expedition on the Thames. On this particular trip, the three sisters prompted Carroll to tell them a story to enliven the “drolleries” of the afternoon, so Carroll “sent his heroine straight down the rabbit hole” (qtd. in Gardner 22). Many years later in her “Recollections of Carrollian Days,” Alice Liddell Hargreaves described July 4, 1862, as “burning”; she recalls that the party left the boat to find shade from the scorching sun, and when they were cooling off, the sisters begged Carroll for a story (Gardner 22). Duckworth claims that the story “was actually composed and spoken *over my shoulder*” in the rowboat (qtd. in Gardner 22). In “All in the Golden Afternoon,” the introductory frame poem to *Wonderland*, Carroll, too, suggests that the story was composed in the boat, and he wrote in his article “Alice on the Stage” (1887) that the sky was a “cloudless blue” (Gardner 22). However, when Martin Gardner actually researched the weather at the London Meteorological Office, “records indicated the weather near Oxford on July 4, 1862, was ‘cool and rather wet’” (23). Regardless of the differing accounts of the boating expedition and the circumstances surrounding the preliminary composition of *Alice in Wonderland*, Carroll calls the afternoon “golden” in the introductory frame poem to *Wonderland* (“Golden Afternoon” 1). Carroll saw that afternoon as a pinnacle of spirituality and naturalness.

¹ “Agnes Weld as Little Red Riding Hood” can be viewed online in the Princeton University Department of Rare Books and Special Collections in Lewis Carroll Album I, Image Z-PH-LCA-I.24.

² “Alice Liddell as the Beggar-Maid” can be viewed online in the Princeton University Department of Rare Books and Special Collections in Lewis Carroll Album II, Image Z-PH-LCA-II.65.

When examining the frame poems as separate Victorian “photographs,” the reader finds that each establishes both a static image of the expedition and Carroll the photographer’s artistic commentary on the image. As the poems progress, the depiction of the boat on the Thames fades from them: Carroll devotes fewer lines to his depiction of the expedition and more lines to his personal commentary about the significance of the memory. Carroll became less reliant on the actual recollection of the boating expedition and more reliant on the nostalgic and idealized child he saw represented in his mental picture. The symbolism in and composition of many Victorian photographs of children represent the adult photographer’s perspectives of childhood and reflect many adults’ nostalgia for childhood during that time period (Robson 133). Carroll used portraits of children and story photography to remind himself of the beauty of childhood, and the composition of the image in his frame poems maintains the same kind of symbolism found in Victorian photographs of children such as Carroll’s picture of Ethel and Lilian Brodie.³ With each poem, Carroll attempts to remind Alice Liddell of July 4, 1862, and reinforce the happiness of the “golden afternoon” because it will solve the adult problem of time and forgetting and allow both him and Alice to remain simultaneously adult and child.

The introductory frame poem to *Wonderland*, “All in the Golden Afternoon,” focuses primarily on recounting the realistic image of the boating expedition. Carroll couples the natural image with the innocence of the Liddell sisters’ unskilled rowing by punning on their last name:

For both our oars, with little skill
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretense
Our wanderings to guide. (3-6)

As the poem progresses, the children demand a story from the narrator, and he playfully begrudges a fantastic tale “of wonders wild and new” (22). Only when the story is complete can the “merry crew” return home (35). The last stanza of “Golden Afternoon” explains Carroll’s perception of Alice as an idealized child and how he symbolically associates her with both nature and spirituality:

Alice! a childish story take,
And with a gentle hand
Lay it where Childhood’s dreams are twined
In Memory’s mystic band,
Like pilgrim’s withered wreath of flowers
Plucked in a far-off land. (37-42)

In line 37, Carroll asks Alice, not all three sisters, to keep the story because as an idealized child she can retain the innocence and joy of the memory. The capitalization of *childhood* and *memory* in lines 39 and 40 emphasizes Carroll’s correlation between the two. He then proceeds to intertwine memory and childhood in a wreath of flowers in line 41, which confirms the naturalness of childhood and memory. Furthermore, that particular wreath of flowers belongs to

³ Ethel and Lilian Brodie can be viewed online in the Princeton University Department of Rare Books and Special Collections in Lewis Carroll Album II, Image Z-PH-LCA-II.83.

a pilgrim, a symbol of Christianity, who has traveled far to obtain them, which reflects the idea of the adult looking back to childhood because the adult must metaphorically journey to regain connections with his or her childhood and his or her spirituality. William A. Madden reflects upon the wreath of flowers:

This image integrates the several dimensions of time evoked in the preceding stanzas, extending backward to the past as a memorial of a sacred occasion (“pilgrim’s wreath”) that gave birth to the tale and forward as an image of the tale itself, a wreath of words woven into artistic form, a circular image of the promise of eternity and—in the present—a lover’s gift, a bouquet . . . (367)

Madden’s assertions reflect the adult’s attempt to traverse simultaneously between childhood and adulthood, and because Carroll’s story traverses as the wreath of flowers, it symbolically represents the journey both he and Alice make during the telling of the story. Jan B. Gordon, Carroll scholar and author of “The *Alice* Books and the Metaphors of Victorian Childhood,” asserts that Victorian artists were reminded that “the golden world [of childhood was] a place of vicarious participation” and acknowledged that “the more real world of childhood ha[d] disappeared” (27). This acknowledgement of vicarious participation allowed writers to simultaneously act as their adult artistic selves while revisiting the naturalness of childhood. Furthermore, the mood of “All in the Golden Afternoon” is light and playful. The journey between adulthood and childhood is not arduous or frustrating, and Carroll has no fear that Alice or he will forget this memory; maintaining it is entirely natural because it is a significant point of reference to both their lives.

The simplest of the three frame poems, “All in the Golden Afternoon” has little purpose other than to provide the reader with the mental photographic narrative of a group of children and a sour, old story-teller in a rowboat. With precise word choice and present-tense action, the poem reveals a vivid picture of a short amount of time. Madden claims that this poem’s “primary function is . . . to evoke a past communal event by creating from it a lyric present” (368). In lines 13-18, each child is depicted with a distinct personality that can easily be envisioned by the reader: Prima “flashes” (13); Secunda is gentle (15); Tertia is bothersome because she interrupts the story (17). The narrator describes himself throughout the poem with words that indicate exhaustion: he is “weak” (9), he is “poor” (11), and he is “weary” (27). The descriptive words for the characters in this poem may seem scant, but this only enhances the notion that the scene described is what Robson terms a “moment of real existence.” Because the poem takes place in the lyric present, “the scene [becomes] endlessly renewable as the action resumes each time we read the poem” (Madden 366). The children and the narrator are frozen in their states of expression “beneath the setting sun” (36), and every time one reads the poem, the children and the narrator appear in exactly the same physical state. For Carroll, this image provides him eternal access to the idealized child and embodies Kincaid’s suggestion that “the pedophile does not really want to own the child, but the idea of the child, so the vision seems to provide permanent access to the idea” (227). Furthermore, Robson suggests that through his photographs, Carroll could “be present without being present” (152), and his recollection of the event through this poem provides the same function—through “Golden Afternoon” he could relive the event even if he could never physically return to July 4, 1862.

The picture in “Golden Afternoon” is happy and without the burden and anxiety of the reality of forgetting, and all of the characters and action are cleanly composed much like the children found in Carroll’s photographs. His child portraits do not depict stiff children in uncomfortable clothes shoved into uncomfortable chairs; rather, the children often seem to be playing against natural backgrounds, as can be seen in his picture of Hallam Tennyson⁴. The photographs tend to be full body portraits, and they are “both sensitive and immensely personal; they have charm, grace and naturalness” (Gernsheim 30). The children of Carroll’s portraits appear to be captured in only a moment of time—he wanted them to appear, as Vallone claims, “ordinary” and as natural and spontaneous as possible because, for him, children looked unnatural sitting still (199). Because Carroll has captured one such enrapturing image in “Golden Afternoon,” he expects that he and Alice by reading “Golden Afternoon” will be able to relive the boating expedition without hesitation or question, and he does not yet foresee that Alice’s recollection might not be as fixed and clean as his, nor does he understand that her experiences as a child may not create the same nostalgic force that binds him to childhood.

The meter of “Golden Afternoon” reinforces the tone of contentedness and the simplicity of the picture. Carroll’s use of iambic tetrameter mimics the sound of rowing, but more importantly, the meter reflects the cadence of English speech. Most of the action in the poem is talking, whether it is the goading children or the narrator’s story-telling. The third stanza portrays the children talking and includes actual quoted speech:

Im-per-ious Pri-ma fla-shes forth
 Her e-dict to be-gin it
 In gen-tler tones Se-cun-da hopes
 “There will be non-sense in it!”
 While Ter-tia in-ter-rupts the tale
 Not more than once a mi-nute. (13-18)

The girls’ speech follows right along the iambic meter, and the sound enhances the happy image of this poem. The lilt keeps the tone light, playful, and simple. It reinforces the joy of the children:

⁴Hallam Tennyson can be viewed online in the Princeton University Department of Rare Books and Special Collections in Lewis Carroll Album I, Image Z-PH-LCA-I.32.

It is next time!' / The hap-py voi-ces cry. (29-30);

the playful contentedness of the narrator:

Yet what can one poor voice a-vail / A-gainst three tongues to-ge-ther?" (11-12);

and the carefree nature of the expedition:

full lei-sure-ly we glide" (2).

Carroll's skillful use of iambic meter promotes the simplicity and happiness of his mental picture and does not suggest further depth within the poem.

"Child of the Pure Unclouded Brow," the introductory poem to *Looking Glass*, recalls the boating expedition as well, and even though Alice is much older when this novel is published, Carroll refuses to believe that his idealized child will not recall the memory of the boating expedition with the same nostalgic perfection as he because he suggests that they perceive the world similarly. In the first and fourth stanzas of "Child," Carroll reconnect himself with Alice by suggesting that they are the same age: "[. . .] I and thou / Are half a life asunder" (3-4) and "We are but older children, dear" (23). While he acknowledges that both of them are adults, in his mind, they concurrently remain children, thus reaffirming their "vicarious participation" in childhood and adulthood. In Carroll's photographs of little girls, as Robson suggests, "the form's technical ability to combine past and present within a single image is complemented by the subject's simultaneous existence within the realms of childhood and adulthood" (144) as can be seen in "The Elopement."⁵ If he can imagine Alice as simultaneously both child and adult, then he, too, can simultaneously be child and adult, and by encouraging Alice to remember July 4, 1862, he can ensure their ability to be both child and adult together. Carroll tells Alice that she will remember their golden day because childhood's hearth will help her recall it:

Without, the frost, the blinding snow,
The storm-wind's moody madness –
Within, the firelight's ruddy glow,
And childhood's nest of gladness.
The magic words shall hold thee fast:
Thou shalt not heed the raving blast. (25-30)

These lines can be read in two ways. In a surface reading, the child of the poem pays no attention to the horrible weather outside because he or she is enraptured by a story being told next to the fireplace. However, upon closer inspection, *without* could also mean the outside world as a whole with its stormy trials and upsets. Inside, in the mind, the dream, or the imagination, the older Alice can find comfort in a return to the hearth of her child-self.

⁵ "The Elopement" can be viewed online in the Princeton University Department of Rare Books and Special Collections in Lewis Carroll Album II, Image Z-PH-LCA-II.120.

Furthermore, she will retain her child-self because of the “magic words” (28) that Carroll has composed for her—Carroll is the central figure of the hearth, and she will refuse to give in to the “raving blast” because of his story(30). The last two lines of “Child” prove these claims: “It shall not touch with breath of bale / The pleasance of our fairy-tale” (35-36). Carroll believes that no force can uproot the memory he and Alice maintain, and these sentimentalities are certainly directed toward Alice because “Pleasance was Alice Liddell’s middle name” (Gardner 174). If she refuses to forget Carroll’s story, she will refuse to grow up. She can remain pure in child-mind, unburdened by adult complications, and she can help Carroll return to his child-self as well.

Carroll’s desire to regress from adult to child is illuminated by the photographic analysis of “Child of the Pure Unclouded Brow,” and Carroll uses dramatically fewer lines to recall the picture of the boating expedition. Unlike the simple recollection in “Golden Afternoon,” “Child” expresses Carroll’s deep need to retain his idyllic mental picture along with his actual depiction of the boating expedition. He intertwines his narrative photograph with the suggestion that memory can stop time:

A tale begun in other days,
 When summer suns were glowing –
A simple chime, that served to time
 The rhythm of our rowing
Whose echoes live in memory yet,
 Though envious years would say ‘forget.’ (13-18)

In line 13 of “Child,” Carroll reestablishes the memory. In lines 14-16, the memory is reinforced. And, in lines 17 and 18, he claims to solve the problem of forgetting with the “echoes” of a memory. Carroll sought the most logical solutions to the problem of time and forgetting, and photography provided one solution. Robson clarifies how photographs capture time:

Photographs of human beings have the potential to speak more directly to our sense of mortality. The normal movement of a breathing body like our own is reduced to deathlike stillness, a moment of real existence is captured to tell us, ever after, that that moment of human life existed and exists no more. (243)

Carroll’s photographs of children are, in essence, echoes of memories because they exhibit nostalgic happiness of childhood; however, they also remind viewers of the brevity of childhood because they capture a “moment of real existence” in Carroll’s and the children’s lives that can never be reclaimed or recreated.

In “Child,” Carroll is no longer simply able to recall the mental picture of the boating expedition so clearly developed in “Golden Afternoon.” Instead, he must inject the memory with reasons why neither he nor Alice should forget it. Carroll will always see Alice Liddell in the confines of his mental picture of the boating expedition; however, his image of the boating expedition in “Child,” as opposed to the clear image presented in “Golden Afternoon,” seems almost overexposed, as if he knows what the picture is supposed to be, but also as if the picture

is difficult to actually see. He must remind himself and Alice of the contents of the photograph and why the picture is important. Not only is Carroll's recollection of the boating expedition now saturated with nostalgia, but he also begins to create other imaginary pictures of Alice, much like the narrative photographs he composed of dressed-up children. "Child" offers a profound example of one of Carroll's created images:

Come hearken then, ere voice of dread
With bitter tidings laden
Shall summon to unwelcome bed
A melancholy maiden! (19-21)

These lines amplify the symbolic death that Victorian photographs of children promoted; Kincaid recalls that the "child does not grow or even grow up; it becomes extinct" (226) and that "[p]hotographing children before they slip away, before that "bloom" can no longer be caught, is a need felt by Lewis Carroll . . ." (227). The lines imply that Alice's child-self is dying and that the older Alice is reluctant to let her child-self pass away. However, these lines also confirm that Carroll believes his idealized child will be averse to come to terms with sexual womanhood. By the time he composes "Child," Carroll knows that his child friends will grow up, and like taking a photograph, Carroll "sees them and their setting in a nostalgic haze and tries to fix them in a memory before they fade" (Morton 286). His idealized, created image of Alice suggests that if she remembers the *real* picture of the boating expedition, even if the picture is cloudy, the memory might hold her in childhood at least a little longer.

The complexity of Carroll's changing emotions for Alice and the overexposed picture of the boating expedition in "Child of the Pure Unclouded Brow" are reflected in the meter. Like "Golden Afternoon," "Child" is in iambic meter; however, the meter alternates between tetrameter and trimeter. Certainly, the meter serves to reflect "the rhy-thm of our row-ing," (16), but the alternating meter adds depth to "Child" that "Golden Afternoon" simply does not have. Carroll uses meter to recall the picture of the boating expedition and reinstate the established picture from "Golden Afternoon":

And though the sha-dow of a sigh
May trem-ble through the stor-y,
For 'hap-py sum-mer days' gone by
And va-nished sum-merglor-y— (31-34)

In line 31, the meter emphasizes the word *shadow*, and in line 32, the meter emphasizes the word *tremble*, and these two words repeat Carroll's knowledge that Alice's memory is fading. He

recalls the depiction of talking and story-telling in “Golden Afternoon” by quoting “happy summer days” in line 33, and in line 34, he suggests that those days cannot be regained. He knows that the “Golden Afternoon” can never be completely eradicated because it will be recalled fondly within the confines of a mental picture. However, he also knows that the picture may not necessarily be recalled as an actual event, which reasserts the notion that photographs allow viewers to recall events without actually being able to return to them. But the iambic meter of “Child” maintains the easy mood of “Golden Afternoon,” and though the poem focuses more on hope than recollection, Carroll believes that he can win against time and forgetting by remembering and encouraging Alice to remember the narrative, thus enforcing his photographic legacy.

The concluding poem of *Looking Glass*, “A Boat beneath a Sunny Sky,” is much darker than “All in a Golden Afternoon” and “Child of the Pure Unclouded Brow.” Carroll realizes that he cannot stop time and that the natural order of the world makes children grow up. Time has destroyed Alice Liddell’s memory of that day, but Carroll implies that this destruction is natural: “Long has paled that sunny sky: / Echoes fade and memories die: / Autumn frosts have slain July” (7-9). Carroll comments that sunny sky from “Golden Afternoon” has paled and that the memories and echoes of “Child” have faded, but these progressions are inevitable just as July turns to Autumn. However, Carroll maintains that his infatuated recollection of July 4, 1862, is also natural: “Ever drifting down the stream— / Lingering in the golden gleam— / Life, what is it but a dream?” (19-21). Carroll is the one “ever drifting,” and he tries to justify his obsession with Alice and this particular memory by calling the natural brevity of life “a dream.” He can never move on from this memory, so Lionel Morton claims that Carroll has “neither youth nor age and so is outside life, which seems unreal and dreamlike” (307). Still, readers of the poem gather the impression that Carroll prefers his dream state to actual life because Alice haunts his dreams: “Still she haunts me, phantomwise, / Alice moving under skies / Never seen by waking eyes” (10-12). Through Carroll’s writing of this poem, Alice Liddell is “fixed in the firmament of the poet’s poetic universe, reigning there as an emblem of wholeness and integrity” (Madden 307). In the story photographs, Carroll, the unseen adult photographer, fabricates the situation surrounding the photographed child, and he is able to create the perfect circumstances to surround the child. Gernsheim suggests that Carroll would entertain the child and “when she was thoroughly happy and amused by his stories, he would pose her for a photograph before the right mood had passed” (20). Kincaid is not referencing Carroll or photography, but his argument regarding the voyeur’s need to create the world as an object describes Carroll’s need for the photography of children: “By turning the world into a permanent object, I become permanent subject, no longer threatened and now completely (if neurotically) in control” (227). Carroll’s nostalgia for this memory allows him always to remain with Alice Liddell, even if she has forgotten him; therefore, he remains in his most untainted, most natural, most child-like state.

In this third poem, Carroll’s mental picture of the boating expedition is out of focus when compared with the image in “Golden Afternoon.” He devotes the first two stanzas to his recollection, but his depiction is relatively uninformative:

A boat, beneath a sunny sky
Lingering onward dreamily
In an evening of July—

no longer stop, or even slow, time; so he claims that life is only a dream anyway, which may be beautiful but forgotten upon waking.

Carroll's mental image of the boating expedition became much more than a recollection. It came to represent perfection in spirituality and naturalness, and when Carroll's idealized child-friend no longer held fast to the memory, he could no longer self-actualize. He lost the link he had found to his own idyllic childhood through this memory, and after Alice forgot it, he knew his link could never be regained. Certainly, Carroll spent countless hours with child friends after he disassociated with Alice (Gattégno 94), but not one of them could fill the void she left.

The introductory and concluding frame poems of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* are important to the study of Lewis Carroll because, through these three poems, readers see the nostalgic mind of a Victorian poet. However, the true significance of the frame poems lies not in that they are a part of the *Alice* books but in that they are a part of Carroll the man. By taking them out of the context of the novels and genuinely admiring the poems for what they represent—beauty, memory, nostalgia, love—we find a man torn and saddened. Peter Coveney explains that “The misery on the face of [Carroll . . .] was there because [his] response towards life had been subtly but irrevocably negated” (241). As a result, he protected himself in a cover of nostalgia to cope with the world around him like so many other Victorians. Coveney continues, “[Carroll] indulged nostalgia because [he] refused or failed to come to sensitive terms with the cultural realities of the times” (241), and Kincaid claims nostalgia “is one of the penalties and rewards of trying for an impossible permanence, of loving and losing” (228). Carroll's child friends grew up and became adults who were able to inhabit a society he could not comfortably live in. All he could hope for was that the continuous cycle of children would still listen in wonderment at the telling of his fantastic tales.

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