

THE "CHESS PROBLEM" IN THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

THEORETICAL CHECKMATING:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE MANNER IN WHICH
THE "CHESS PROBLEM" IN THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS
RESISTS AND SUBVERTS CRITICAL INTERPRETATIONS
OF THE NOVEL'S CHESS MOTIF.

By

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TITLE: Theoretical Checkmating: An Analysis of the Manner in Which the "Chess Problem" in Through the Looking-Glass Resists and Subverts Critical Interpretations of the Novel's Chess Motif.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is essentially divided into two parts: the first three chapters form the section in which I critically examine a number of theories regarding Carroll's use of the chess motif in Through the Looking-Glass, while the fourth chapter deals with my own interpretation of the chess *problem* as a metaphorical device that serves to resist and subvert a superficial thematic interpretation of the text. Furthermore, because the thesis involves a significant amount of chess theory, three appendices have been included for the reader's convenience.

The first chapter examines an article by Mr. Gerry Forbes for the Canadian chess forum En Passant, entitled "Lewis Carroll Teaches You How to Play the Sicilian", a piece which promotes the idea that Carroll was writing his novel as an opening treatise on the game of chess in the guise of a children's story. The thesis attacks Forbes' article on the basis that the author ignores Carroll's own chess problem, given at the novel's outset, while admitting to cite the text selectively and non-sequentially in an effort to prove his central hypothesis.

The second chapter of the thesis focuses on Carroll's curious *Dramatis Personae*: a cast list of characters that the author eventually saw fit to replace with his "Preface to the 1896 Edition". I examine primarily the opinions of critics Martin Gardner and Francis Huxley, who persist in drawing associations between

characters in the novel and the chess piece equivalents to which they were originally assigned by Carroll. Through an examination of the individual positioning, movement and behaviour of these characters, the thesis shows that the relationships Gardner and Huxley draw are consistently subverted by the chess problem.

Chapter Three attempts to refute Gardner's idea that the apparent madness of the chess game is the result of the "mad logic" of Looking-Glass Land. The thesis demonstrates that the solution to Carroll's chess problem becomes perfectly logical when one accepts the game as a contest *among its individual participants* and not between two unseen entities who silently manipulate the Looking-Glass pieces.

The concluding chapter sees my own interpretation of Carroll's chess problem as a symbolic device which reinforces and reveals the novel's underlying implications through a systematic refutation of its surface theme. Utilizing a metaphorical analysis of Alice's regimented pawn journey, her capturing of the Red Queen and subsequent checkmating of the Red King, I endeavour to illustrate that the novel is not about Alice's "victory" in making a successful dream-journey from innocence to experience, but rather, about the young girl's realization that the notions of freedom and independence she once associated with womanhood are illusory, existing only in the hearts of those who have not yet made her journey.

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INTRODUCTION

Said Downey to
Carroll, "Its time that
I quarrel
with
Gardner
and others,
who've botched up
your chess.

While the critics
acquit you,
they never
'fess up to
the fact
that their meddling
has made quite a mess.

Without rhyme or reason
they commit
acts of treason,
by ignoring
the point
of your ingenious game.

Sit back, *good grief.* its my turn!
I'll have
everyone learn
that my "meddling"
has not
made me go
do the same!

When Lewis Carroll undertook to write the sequel to Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, he replaced the loose motif of the card game in his original tale with a more structured framework based on the game of chess. Indeed, Carroll went to the extent of formulating both a chess problem and its detailed solution as the basis for the individual actions and behaviours of specific characters in Through the Looking-Glass (please refer to Appendix 1, "Looking-Glass Chess, both for a diagram of the problem as well as Carroll's descriptive solution). Unlike Wonderland, where our young heroine merely encounters characters that serve as representations of playing cards and the like, the plot of the Looking-Glass Landscape is structured around an actual chess position that is played out by its numerous inhabitants.

An interesting debate that has recently surfaced among Carroll's critics raises the question of whether or not the chess problem actually makes any "sense" as a game, and if not, whether this incoherence can be reasonably justified. The lack of alternating turns between the two sides and the apparent discordance among the movements of the various pieces led Falconer Madan, in his Handbook of the Literature of the Rev. C.L. Dodgson (1962), to observe that, "the chess framework is full of absurdities and impossibilities...Hardly a move has a sane purpose, from the point of view of chess" (Gardner AA 170). From Madan's rigid stance seems to have developed three streams of thought regarding Carroll's chess problem: (1) Mr. Gerry Forbes, a Carrollian critic and Candidate Chess Master, takes the extremist view of ignoring Carroll's specific problem in an

effort to interpret the whole novel as a treatise on the game of chess. (2) The critic and mathematician Martin Gardner is quick to discredit Madan's viewpoint and give a mark of approval to the chess problem. He does so, either by dismissing the apparent eccentricity of Carroll's moves on the basis that they are the result of the madness of the Looking-Glass reality, or like the critic Francis Huxley, by incorporating suppressed material to argue his case (i.e. Carroll's infamous cast list of characters, the *Dramatis Personae*). (3) Critics Richard Kelly, Alexander Taylor and John Fisher seem to take the most satisfactory approach in seeking an explanation for the chess problem's inherent curiosities. While Fisher searches for an answer to the problem's surface features, Kelly and Taylor appear to understand that Carroll's solution has a significance beyond itself, although their interpretations are not ones with which the present critic is entirely satisfied. It is evident that Carroll was deeply concerned about such diverse critical response to the chess problem, for in his preface to the 1896 edition of the novel, he included the following disclaimer in an attempt to defend himself against the criticism that was likely to surface:

As the chess-problem...has puzzled some of my readers, it may be well to explain that it is correctly worked out, so far as the *moves* are concerned. The *alternation* of Red and White is perhaps not so strictly observed as it might be, and the "castling" of the three Queens is merely a way of saying that they entered the palace; but the "check" of the White King at move 6, the capture of the Red Knight at move 7, and the final "checkmate" of the Red King, will be found, by any one who will take the trouble to set the pieces and play the moves as directed,

to be strictly in accordance to the laws of the game
(Carroll CW 126).

It is the present critic's intention to examine closely the manner in which Carroll's chess problem both resists and subverts the interpretations of Gardner, Forbes, Huxley and others regarding the function of the chess motif in Through the Looking-Glass, ultimately proposing the theory that the problem serves as a device which supports and reinforces the novel's underlying implications through a systematic rejection of its surface theme.

The opening chapter of the dissertation deals with a theory that has its genesis in Gerry Forbes' intriguing article "Lewis Carroll Teaches You How to Play the Sicilian" (1986). This particular interpretation *ignores* Carroll's chess problem in an effort to demonstrate that the elements of chess in the novel serve as a treatise on a particular opening system of moves known as the Sicilian Defence. By using the text of Through the Looking-Glass to examine a game played at the grandmaster level (Keres vs. Botvinnik, The Alekhine Memorial, Moscow, 1956), the author makes the inference that Carroll's genius might well have included a vast amount of theoretical knowledge about an opening system of moves that was held in general contempt at the time. Furthermore, an analysis of Forbes' approach seems to leave one with the task of addressing the delicate question of whether or not Carroll's use of the chess motif in Through the Looking-Glass can be examined from the standpoint *that it has nothing to do with the chess problem itself*. The thesis endeavours to prove that this can not be the case

and that Forbes' interpretation is constantly resisted and subverted by the realities of Carroll's text.

Early editions of Through the Looking-Glass were prefaced with the following cast list of characters:

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

(As arranged before the commencement of the game.)

White		Red	
PIECES	PAWNS	PAWNS	PIECES
Tweedledee	Daisy	Daisy	Humpty Dumpty
Unicorn	Haigha	Messenger	Carpenter
Sheep	Oyster	Oyster	Walrus
W. Queen	'Lily'	Tiger-Lily	R. Queen
W. King	Fawn	Rose	R. King
Aged Man	Oyster	Oyster	Crow
W. Knight	Hatta	Frog	R. Knight
Tweedledum	Daisy	Daisy	Lion

(Gardner MAA 161)

Although Carroll permanently replaced the *Dramatis Personae* with his "Christmas 1896" preface, some critics still attempt to construe associations between characters in the story and the pieces or pawns that they are imagined to represent (these characters often have little or no relationship to the game of chess that is being played out on the Looking-Glass landscape). Naturally, Carroll saw that the *Dramatis Personae* would not be taken by critics in the simple sense that it demonstrated the story was about chess, but rather, in the erroneous sense that it served as a literal interpretation of the functions of specific characters with

regards to the chess problem. In Chapter Two of the thesis, we demonstrate that through an examination of their positioning, movement and behaviour, the characters of Carroll's *Dramatis Personae* (apart from those which are themselves chessmen, i.e. 'Lily', the Red and White Knights, Queens and Kings) can be seen to resist the notions of both Gardner and Huxley that they serve to function in the capacities of the pieces or pawns with which the author initially associated them.

Chapter Three examines yet another theory regarding the interpretation of Carroll's chess problem in Through the Looking-Glass. This theory sees the "madness" of the game as conforming to "the mad logic of the looking-glass world" (Gardner AA 172). This is the view of Gardner who, in attacking Madan's narrowmindedness about the chess problem, seems to go somewhat too far in asking the rhetorical question: "What else could one expect from the mad creatures behind the mirror?" (170). I would argue that the chess problem both resists and subverts Gardner's interpretation by demonstrating (1) that the madness of the Looking-Glass creatures' "exceedingly careless game" (170) is not entirely without sense and (2) that those parts of Carroll's solution *which appear to be without sense* (i.e. the preponderance of moves for White, the leaving of the White King in check, etc.) are easily accounted for when one considers the inherent limitations of the so-called "mad creatures behind the mirror". Endeavouring to interpret the chess problem in Through the Looking-Glass, critics like Gardner are apt to succumb to the temptation of initially recognizing that the sequence of moves does not conform to those found in a normal or standard

game of chess and then hastily concluding that the madness of the chess problem is merely conforming to the madness of the Looking-Glass World.

The dissertation's final chapter deals with my own interpretation of Carroll's employment of the chess problem in Through the Looking-Glass as a symbolic device which serves to reveal the novel's underlying thematic implications. Through a systematic refutation of the novel's commonly accepted, surface theme (that Alice's attainment of queenhood serves as proof of a successful dream-journey from the imprisonment and isolation of youth to the freedom and community of womanhood), the metaphorical implications of the chess problem expose Alice's futile quest as a regimented progression which, for the most part, deprives the young girl of the freedom to negotiate the paths of her own existence. The thesis examines the significance of Alice's pawn journey, her capture of the Red Queen and checkmating of the Red King in an effort to raise significant questions about the validity of a mere superficial interpretation of the text. For instance, what does it mean that Alice is forced to "capture" the Red Queen, a female figure of authority, in order to "win" the game for her side? Does this not make her attainment of womanhood come at the expense of womanhood? Furthermore, is it not significant that the powers that Alice attains in her transformation from a pawn into a queen prove fruitless, because the game soon ends? Finally, since Alice does not function in any sort of unison with the pieces on her "side" nor is aware of the ramifications of her actions in the game, is not her attainment of womanhood and maturity one which is ultimately gained through condescension and submission?

CHAPTER 1

Forbes' Theory: Through the Looking-Glass As a Chess Treatise

A rather blatant misinterpretation of Carroll's use of the chess motif in Through the Looking-Glass has its genesis in an otherwise intriguing article by Mr. Gerry Forbes, entitled "Lewis Carroll Teaches You How to Play the Sicilian". Written for the periodical En Passant (#79, June 1986), the article involves an analysis of the story's concern with the game of chess. Forbes ventures down an apparently unexplored path by endeavouring to ignore Carroll's own problem, given at the novel's outset, in deference to viewing the work as an informative treatise for the chess aficionado on a particular opening system of moves, known as the Sicilian Defence. Characterized by the moves, 1. e4 c5, 2. Nf3 Nc6, 3. d4 (please refer to Appendix 2 for a discussion of Algebraic Notation), the Sicilian Defence was in its embryonic stages during the time of Carroll's literary career and did not, "undergo serious examination until many decades later" (Forbes 43). It seems rather dubious to assume that Carroll was aware of the revolutionary opening at all, for as Forbes is forced to admit: "It is possible that the only evaluation available to Mr. Dodgson was that of Paul Morphy from his annotations of the MacDonnell - Labourdonnais games" (43). Even if Carroll did know of Morphy's annotations, these were so "abruptly dismissive" as to dissuade even the

most courageous of theorists from any serious consideration of analyzing the Sicilian thoroughly (especially through an opening treatise written in the form of a children's story):

[Morphy] says after 1. e4 c5, 2. f4: "The moves of 2. Nf3, or still better 2. d4, are those now generally recognized as best. The latter move is indeed so strong that it has gone far towards disabusing the public mind of that pernicious fondness for the Sicilian Defence" (43).

Since Forbes readily admits that his interpretation of the novel requires both the careful selectivity and non-sequential citing of textual passages, I endeavour to demonstrate its lack of validity on the basis that a competent reading of Carroll's novel provides no concrete evidence to support the critic's dubious claims. I then turn my attention to the question of whether or not Forbes even makes sense to suggest such a theory when it ignores the existence of Carroll's own chess problem.

To reinforce the validity of his hypothesis, Forbes investigates the relationship between the chess elements of the novel and a game played at the grandmaster level between Paul Keres and Mikhail Botvinnik (in which the latter essays the Sicilian Defence). The author chooses this particular game on the basis that it is, "far enough out of date...that [a] discussion of strategic features won't be obscured by a plague of topical variations" (43). If Mr. Forbes is prepared to defend his conviction that Through the Looking-Glass is Carroll's cleverly disguised treatise on the Sicilian Defence, it seems dubious for him to

introduce a piece of supporting evidence (the Keres - Botvinnik chess game) which only comes into being some eighty-five years after the fact. His contention might be somewhat more believable if he were to locate a game from Carroll's own time that employs the Sicilian Defence and demonstrate how *its* basic principles are elucidated by the text of Through the Looking-Glass. He would subsequently not be forced to rely on the excuse that, "it is unlikely...any theorist could match the insight and brilliance of two of the world's top players, especially a century in advance" (45).

Forbes' central hypothesis, that Through the Looking-Glass serves as a treatise on the Sicilian Defence, rests on what the critic sees as the novel's representation of three distinguishing features which often characterize this opening system: (1) The White King's Knight and Black Queen's Knight's struggle over the d4 Square, (2) The weakness of Black's Pawn on d6 (or of the d6 square in general), and (3) The White Queen's Knight's struggle to control or influence d5. Forbes makes the same error as his more literary, critical counterparts (principally, Gardner and Huxley), in initially *assuming* that certain characters in the story are representative of specific chess piece equivalents and then subsequently *demonstrating* how their actions justify a somewhat unbelievable hypothesis. In examining the struggle over the d4 square by White's King's Knight and Black's (Red's) Queen's Knight, after the moves 1. e4 c5, 2. Nf3 Nc6, 3. d4 cxd4, 4. Nxd4, Forbes quotes the text (and follows this up with explanation) in an effort to show that these pieces are actually the characters of Tweedledum and Tweedledee:

"Well, that square belongs to Tweedledum and Tweedledee" - The White KN and Black QN stage a battle for d4. While the White N seems to have established its superiority at the moment, we shall see later on that occupation of this square is not always best. By the way, you might have noticed that Alice has run off with the Black c-Pawn, and given up her dreams of becoming a Queen. But you didn't tell little girls things like that in Victorian England (44).

The difficulty with accepting Forbes' conjecture, that the Tweedle brothers are actually enemy Knights, is certainly two-fold. In an effort to convince the reader that Tweedledum and Tweedledee represent opposing sides, Forbes finds himself without any *real* evidence to support his inferences. Since both characters live in the same house (and thus, on the same square), it is fruitless to argue that they represent chessmen at all, based on the fact that no two pieces can ever occupy the same square at the same time during the course of a game. Furthermore, it makes even less sense to assume that pieces of opposing sides would live together under the same roof on the regimented Looking-Glass landscape. Secondly, the chess elements of Carroll's novel work towards demonstrating the process by which a Queen's *Pawn* travels up the length of the board and promotes to become an actual Queen. For this reason, writing a treatise on the Sicilian Defence would not work well with Carroll's plans when one considers that this particular opening system invariably sees the early exchange of White's d-pawn for Black's c-pawn. This means, as Forbes is forced to admit, that "Alice herself disappears at move three" (45). The present critic certainly sees no evidence in the text to suggest that Alice's mortal form disappears on the d4 square, only to

be replaced by a simulacrum which silently continues her journey up the d-file to queenhood. Forbes attempts to make up for such inconsistencies by claiming that "Carroll may have had difficulty adapting his 'analysis' to the 'plot' of the book" (45). However, this statement seems to point dangerously in the direction of an artistic deficiency on Carroll's part.

In the character of Humpty Dumpty, Forbes sees Carroll's representation of Black's weak d6 pawn in the Sicilian opening system. His logic is based on the fact that this character eventually succumbs to his terrible fall, both in the novel as well as in the chess game between Keres and Botvinnik. However, a black pawn on d6 would impede Alice's progress to the extent that she could neither occupy nor pass through that particular square on the d-file (only one piece may occupy a given square at any one time). In the novel, Alice crosses the brook into the d6 square without any difficulty at all, ensuring us that no enemy piece or pawn currently inhabits that square:

"The egg seems to get further away the more I walk towards it. Let me see, is this a chair? Why, it's got branches, I declare! How very odd to find trees growing here! And actually here's a little brook! Well, this is the very queerest shop I ever saw!"

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  *   *   *   *
*   *   *   *   *

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So she went on, wondering more and more at every step, as everything turned into a tree the moment she came up to it, and she quite expected the egg to do the same (Carroll CW 191).

If, as Forbes contends, Humpty Dumpty is an enemy pawn, then Alice has no hope of ever occupying the d6 square while the egg is stationed on his majestic perch. Humpty Dumpty does eventually fall, but only *after* his encounter with Alice. It makes little sense to assume that Alice, as the White Queen's pawn, has somehow managed to finagle her way past the Red Queen's pawn, and that in turn, this may be somehow responsible for the latter's subsequent fall or capture.

Forbes further misinterprets Alice's meeting with Humpty Dumpty when he examines the position of the Keres - Botvinnik affair after the first seventeen moves of the game have been played out (1. e4 c5, 2. Nf3 Nc6, 3. d4 cxd4, 4. Nxd4 Nf6, 5. Nc3 d6, 6. Bg5 e6, 7. Qd2 h6, 8. Bxf6 gxf6, 9. O-O-O a6, 10. f4 h5, 11. Kb1 Bd7, 12. Be2 Qb6, 13. Nb3! O-O-O, 14. Rhf1 Na5, 15. Rf3 Nxb3, 16. axb3 Kb8, 17. Na4 Qa7). Forbes analyzes the current state of the d6 square by quoting Humpty Dumpty's definition of impenetrability:

"Impenetrability! That's what I say!"

"Would you tell me please," said Alice, "What that means?"

"Now you talk like a reasonable child," said Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. "I meant by 'impenetrability' that we've had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you'd mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don't mean to stop her all the rest of your life" (Forbes 44).

With his eighteenth move, Keres forges ahead with 18. f5!, a move that Forbes sees as a response to Humpty Dumpty's advice. However, this move has nothing to do with the Alice Pawn (Keres is moving his f-pawn, not his d-pawn) and so

Humpty Dumpty's comment is not directed at the piece which actually moves in the current chess game. Once again, the relationship drawn between the text and the game makes very little sense.

The conclusion of the Keres - Botvinnik affair sees White winning the d6 (Humpty Dumpty?) pawn and Black's subsequent resignation, but this is not at all similar to the closing moments of the chess game in Through the Looking-Glass. In the novel, the dream-game ends when Queen Alice captures the Red Queen during the "feasting and fun" of Chapter IX, not when Humpty Dumpty falls at the close of Chapter VI. Are we to assume that Carroll's analysis of the chess game ends somewhere in the middle of the novel, the last fifty-or-so pages merely being an attempt to round out the story? If Carroll was to write a treatise on the Sicilian Defence, I can not imagine that he would have permitted himself to go about it in such a distinctively loose fashion. Therefore, while we easily concede that the control and attainment of the d6 square is of vital importance in the Keres - Botvinnik game, it has very little to do (apart from being a square through which Alice passes) with the chess game that is played out on the Looking-Glass landscape.

Forbes also seems to go wrong in his analysis of how Carroll is supposedly explaining the White Queen's Knight's control of the d5 square. The game continues: 18. f5! Be7, 19. fxe6 fxe6, 20. Rxf6! Rh7, 21. Rg6 b5, 22. Nc3 Qc5, 23. Na2!, after which Forbes mingles a quote from the text with his own analysis:

What is the N doing here - *The Knight looked surprised at the question. "What does it matter where my body happens to be?" he said. "My mind goes on working all the same. In fact, the more head-downwards I am, the more I keep inventing new things"*. The new things here are an attack on a6 and a tempo [by a "tempo", Forbes means a gain in time] on the Black Q by Nd3. The same old thing is that from b4 the N once again watches d5 (45).

The problem with using the White Knight's quotation in analyzing this position from the Keres - Botvinnik game stems from the fact that we know the Knight to be on an entirely different square (e7) when Alice confronts him. Even if we temporarily ignore Carroll's own chess problem, we know that Alice is on the d7 square when she meets up with the tumbling Knight. Nowhere in the text is there any evidence to suggest that the White Knight (whom Forbes believes to be the Queen's Knight, but is, in all probability, the King's Knight) ever finds himself on the a2 square. Once again, this is the sort of difficulty that arises when Forbes begins to dissect the text with such a marked abandon.

If Forbes' approach to the novel's chess motif appears somewhat skewed, his ideas serve as the basis for a very interesting debate. Is it possible to look at the chess motif of Through the Looking-Glass with a complete disregard for Carroll's own chess problem? Forbes ignores it (or is, perhaps, ignorant of it - this would explain a great deal), concentrating only on the evidence supporting his claim that the novel is an opening treatise. However, in doing so, Forbes overlooks certain crucial realities of the novel that might have altered his particular outlook. For instance, he sees Through the Looking-Glass as a tool for instructing

the "conscious" chess player (that is, one who can see beneath its concealed approach) on the finer points of the Sicilian defence. Carroll's own chess problem, however, concerns the strategy of queening a pawn, an idea which is the heart of the novel, but is nowhere to be found in Forbes' analysis. The latter admits that while Alice wins the game for her side in Through the Looking-Glass, she disappears at move three in the Keres - Botvinnik game, but he can offer no explanation for the discrepancy. Furthermore, his remark about not telling such things to Victorian girls seems to be a deliberate attempt to utilize wit in deflecting the reader's attention from his failure to provide an adequate explanation for his proceedings. Ultimately, Forbes' most damaging admission is that his selection of passages from Through the Looking-Glass have been taken, "selectively and, at times, non-sequentially" (45). This makes for an interesting, but certainly misinformative reading.

CHAPTER 2

Carroll's *Dramatis Personae*

Lewis Carroll's quiet removal of the *Dramatis Personae* from later editions of Through the Looking-Glass, in deference to his Christmas 1896 Preface, should have warned contemporary and future critics that any attempt to interpret specific characters in terms of their associated chess piece equivalents would be a exercise in futility. Through a close examination of their positioning, movement and behaviour, both in relation to the chess problem and the novel as a whole, the characters of Carroll's *Dramatis Personae* (with the exception of those who are themselves chessmen) resist and subvert the critical interpretations of Gardner and others, who see them as the literal representation of actual pieces in the Looking-Glass chess game.

We begin our analysis of Carroll's *Dramatis Personae* by examining the difficulties of associating the character of the Fawn with the White King's Pawn in the game. Alice meets the Fawn near the end of Chapter Three ("Looking-Glass Insects"), while she is making her way through the White Queen's Fourth Square (d4). If we erroneously assume, as Gardner does, that the Fawn represents a pawn which is now adjacent to Alice (Gardner MAA 211), then the former must be situated on either the White King's Fourth Square (e4) or the White Queen's Bishop's Fourth Square (c4). This follows from Alexander Taylor's

argument that the chessmen "are always on the square next to [Alice] on one side or the other" (Taylor 100). However, it does not make sense to say that there is a White Pawn situated on e4, since the sleeping Red King inhabits this square throughout the course of Carroll's problem. Even with the liberties that the author takes in his solution to the chess game, he never goes so far as to place two pieces on the same square (unless, of course, a capture is taking place). However, it is just as pointless to argue that the White King's Pawn has made its way to c4, for a close scrutiny of the current position of Carroll's solution reveals that its progression to this square is clearly impossible. In order to make its way over to Alice, the King's Pawn (which begins a chess game on e2) would be required to make a series of two captures, the first of which would bring it to d3 and the next, to c4. Since we have already established that two pieces can not occupy the same square, it must be assumed that the Pawn performs its first capture before the Red Queen makes her way to e2. We must further assume that the Red King (who sleeps throughout the course of the chess problem) is allowed to ignore the check given by this piece as the latter passes into d3. Finally, the King's Pawn would be required to capture another enemy piece in order to reach c4. If we accept that this Fawn/Pawn must capture two enemy pieces to put itself on the square next to Alice, is it then possible to discern who these victims are? Clearly, none of the Flowers who are linked with the Red Pawns are captured by this piece, as Alice talks with them at a time when the Fawn (as a Pawn) would have already passed by their sector of the board.

Presumably, this takes care of Red's King Pawn, Queen Pawn and Rook Pawns (respectively associated with the characters of the Rose, the Tiger-lily and two of the Daisies). The White King's Pawn can not have captured the Oysters, as we know that they are yet to be eaten by the Walrus and the Carpenter in Tweedledee's poem (this would eliminate the characters associated with the Red King's Bishop Pawn and Queen's Bishop Pawn). Alice learns of Humpty Dumpty's Messenger (the Red Queen's Knight Pawn?) and actually meets the Frog (the Red King's Knight Pawn?) later in the game, so neither of them could have been the subject of the Fawn's captures. The latter can also be said of Humpty Dumpty (the Red Queen's Rook?), the Carpenter (the Red Queen's Knight?), the Walrus (the Red Queen's Bishop?), the Lion (the Red King's Rook?), the Red King and Queen, and the Red Knight. Alice comes into contact with all of these characters after her encounter with the Fawn. Hence, there are no pieces in the game that the Fawn / (Pawn?) can possibly have captured to put her on c4. It thus makes little sense to argue that she has done so.

What of the Fawn's personality and/or behaviour in the novel? Can we say unequivocally that this creature acts like the White King's Pawn in a game of chess? The Carrollian critic Fred Madden draws a dubious and fragile linguistic association between the character of the Fawn and its supposed chess piece equivalent when he observes of this episode, "that Alice, a pawn, is here meeting a fawn, and that in Carroll's game of doublets the change of a single letter turns 'pawn' to 'fawn'" (Gardner MAA 211). This is all well and good, but it fails to

explain why at no time during the Fawn's brief appearance in the novel does the character ever exhibit the characteristics of a pawn. The Fawn's personality seems much more akin to the marked aloofness exhibited by the Red Queen than anything or anyone else. For instance, when Alice tells the Fawn that she is unable to remember who she is, the latter replies with the rather cold rejoinder: "Think again...that wo'n't do" (Carroll CW 163). Gardner's acceptance of the notion that Alice and the Fawn are not only of equal importance in the game, but also members of the same (White) side, fails to address adequately one very perplexing question: Why does the Fawn bound away from Alice after learning who she is? It appears that the creature is more concerned with Alice's identity as a human being than the identity she assumes as particular piece in the game of chess that is being played out: "I'm a Fawn!" it cried out in a voice of delight. 'And dear me! you're a human child'" (164). If the Fawn were a pawn in Carroll's chess game, it would distrust Alice only until it was able to determine whether the young girl was a member of the Red or White side (the reverse of what actually happens in the story). Finally, we might also mention that the manner in which the Fawn quickly flees from Alice upon discovering her true identity is most unlike a Pawn's movement: "A sudden look of alarm came into its beautiful brown eyes, and in another moment it had darted away at full speed" (164).

Considering the discrepancies that arise in examining the Fawn's positioning, movement and behaviour in relation to the chess problem, it therefore makes very little sense to interpret this character as the White King's Pawn in

Carroll's game. When Alice meets the Fawn, the latter is supposedly located on a square to which its chess piece equivalent could not possibly have progressed during the course of the game. When the Fawn initially meets Alice it trusts her, but then flees when it determines her true identity. This behaviour is completely uncharacteristic of a pawn, which is only at ease when it can determine that it is surrounded and supported by friendly pieces and pawns, and which is, given its inferior mobility, unable to escape a given situation quickly.

We might now endeavour to point out the difficulties in associating two of the Oysters of the Tweedle twins' poem with White's Bishop Pawns in the chess game (or with the notion of pawns in general). According to Carroll's poem, the Oysters are described as "All hopping through the frothy waves, / And scrambling to the shore" (170). This indicates that the Oysters (including those that serve as White's Bishop Pawns) come out of the water only after being enticed by the Walrus and the Carpenter to do so. In Looking-Glass Land, the only bodies of water to be found (apart from the one on which Alice and the metamorphosed White Queen/Sheep find themselves in Chapter V ["Wool and Water"]) are the brooks that horizontally divide the chess board into ranks. If the Oyster bed was located somewhere on the d5 square, it is likely that Alice and the Sheep would have caught up with the "eldest Oyster" who remained behind when the others were led off to their infamous slaughter. Therefore, while it follows that the Oysters must inhabit one of these brooks, it is *for this very reason* that they can not be a part of the chess problem. The difficulty arises from the fact that the

Oysters do not initially inhabit a particular square, but rather, exist *between squares*. How can they be considered White's Bishop Pawns when they not only fail to begin the game on their proper starting squares, c2 and f2, but they do not begin on any square at all? Furthermore, since in Carroll's chess problem, a pawn (like Alice) is only aware of things on either side of it, how are we to assume that the four Oysters (presumably, the Red and White Bishop Pawns) along with the Walrus and the Carpenter (the Red Queen's Bishop? and Queen's Knight?) are somehow situated on the board so as to be aware constantly of one another's presence during the course of their encounter.

Can we even be sure that the Oysters (and for that matter, the Walrus and the Carpenter) are fixtures of the Looking-Glass Landscape? They come to us in a poem recited by Tweedledee, but it is nowhere confirmed in the text that these events occur on some portion of the giant chessboard:

*The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright--
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night (168).*

Since there is no indication, either in Alice's remarks when she first sees the giant chessboard landscape or in Tenniel's subsequent illustration, of any visible large body of water apart from the d5 square, the poem's mention of the "sea" appears to place the events of the poem outside the borders of Looking-Glass Land: "For some minutes Alice stood without speaking, looking out in all directions over the

country - and a most curious country it was. There were a number of tiny little brooks running straight across it from side to side, and the ground between was divided up into squares by a number of little green hedges, that reached from brook to brook" (150). If this is the case, then Carroll's *Dramatis Personae* lists six Pieces that are not to be found anywhere on the chessboard landscape of the Looking-glass world.

Superficially, it seems quite logical to assume that Carroll intended Haigha and Hatta, characters who are incessantly endeavouring to satisfy the culinary needs of their eccentric King, to be White's Knight Pawns. However, because Alice meets these characters while she is on the White Queen's Sixth Square (d6), they would naturally be forced to occupy one of the two squares adjacent to her, c6 or e6 (Alice can not have fellow pawns inhabiting her square). In the current position of the chess problem's solution, the White King's station on c6 leaves only one available square (e6) for his two servants. Furthermore, in order for Haigha (the White Queen's Knight Pawn?) to get to e6 he has to make a minimum of three captures along the way (going from the b-file to the e-file), while Hatta (the White King's Knight Pawn?) must make a minimum of two (going from the g-file to the e-file). None of their captures can be of Red Pawns since: (1) the Oysters that supposedly represent Red's Bishop Pawns have already been accounted for (they have been eaten by the Walrus and the Carpenter), (2) the Daisies, the Tiger-lily and the Rose (by association: Red's Rook Pawns, King's Pawn and Queen's Pawn) are not within Haigha's or Hatta's range of capture,

being most likely situated on c2, and (3) the Frog (Red's King's Knight Pawn?) is yet to be encountered by Alice. Similarly, we know that even if Haigha and Hatta are really Knight Pawns, they do not capture the Red King (Alice eventually checkmates him), the Lion or the Red Knight (Alice is yet to meet them), Humpty Dumpty (the White King tells Alice that during this character's calamity, Haigha and Hatta were conveniently "both gone to town" [205]), or the Red Queen (Alice will meet her yet again at the coronation feast). This leaves the Walrus and the Carpenter (the Red Queen's Bishop? and Knight? - whom we can not even be sure exist in the Looking-Glass reality), the Messenger (the Red Queen's Knight Pawn? - to which the same applies), and the Crow (the Red King's Bishop?) as possible targets for capture. However, Haigha and Hatta would have to make a combined minimum of five captures to be anywhere near Alice when she meets them. With only four available pieces to be captured, this remains an obvious impossibility. We must finally ask ourselves how Haigha and Hatta can be pawns if the King has sent them into town and they are now returning. Their movement violates the fact that pawns can only travel in one basic direction (apart from when they capture an enemy piece) along the length of a chessboard.

Completing the row of White's Pawns, Carroll's *Dramatis Personae* indicates that White's Rook Pawns are, in fact, two of the Daisies in the Garden of Live Flowers. We know, however, that the Garden of Live Flowers is on one of two squares, c2 or e2 (since Alice is on d2 and can only be aware of chessmen that are beside her). Of these, c2 seems the most logical choice since the Red

Queen inhabits e2 when Alice comes to find herself beside her. As the starting positions of White's Rook Pawns in a chess game are on the squares a2 and h2, it makes little sense to draw a correlation between these Pawns and the Daisies of the Garden. Pawns are simply unable to move in a lateral direction. Furthermore, how are we to expect that these flowers could have uprooted themselves on a2 and h2 and waltzed their way over to the centre of the second rank? Carroll never makes reference to the fact that anything in the Garden of Live Flowers has ever moved (or been transplanted, for that matter!). In fact, the author stresses the flowers' *immobility*: "'Silence, every one of you!' cried the Tiger-lily, waving itself passionately from side to side, and trembling with excitement. 'They know I ca'n't get at them!' it panted, bending its quivering head towards Alice, 'or they wouldn't dare to do it!'" (145). This lack of mobility is reinforced when the Rose first mentions the existence of the Red Queen: "'There's one other flower in the garden that can move about like you,' said the Rose. 'I wonder how you do it'" (146).

We now turn our attention to the characters who are associated with the White *Pieces* in Carroll's chess game. Alice meets Tweedledum and Tweedledee (the *Dramatis Personae* gives them as White's Rooks) near the end of her progression through the Fourth Square. The Red Queen has previously warned Alice that this Square belongs to the curious twins, which seems to suggest that they both occupy the same square at once. Naturally, this disqualifies Tweedledum and Tweedledee from being chess pieces, as only one piece is

permitted on each square at a time. Furthermore, the presence of a rook on d4 would have prevented Alice from making her way into this square in the first place. Understanding this, is it easier to imagine that the Tweedle brothers stand on opposite sides of our heroine? Again, this seems to be a problem. According to Carroll's diagram, the sleeping Red King permanently inhabits the e4 square. One of the Tweedle Rooks would have to share this square with the Red King, which makes as little sense as assuming that either Haigha or Hatta (as Knight Pawns) would share the c6 square with the White King. Another problem with the contention that the Tweedle brothers inhabit the squares on either side of Alice is found when one asks the question that Denis Crutch does in a lecture on Carroll's chess problem: "'If the Tweedle brothers are the two white rooks...then who is the white rook on the first row of Carroll's diagram?'" (Gardner MAA 161). This Rook is certainly not one of the Tweedle brothers, as it does not remove itself from the King's Bishop's file and make its way to c4 before Alice reaches the d4 square. Furthermore, Tweedledum and Tweedledee act like Rooks only in the sense that they dress themselves up like fortresses before they do battle. However, the fact that they are supposedly both members of the same side in the chess game does not seem to arise when they step forth to contest against each other in ritualistic battle. Finally, there is no indication that the Tweedle brothers move in a lateral fashion, as they would if they were really White's Rooks. When the black Crow sweeps down upon them, they are merely described as taking "to their heels and...out of sight in a moment" (Carroll CW 178). It further seems ridiculous that

two White Rooks, a very potent combination on the chessboard, should be so terribly afraid of a lone Red Bishop (the Crow's corresponding chess piece equivalent).

While it seems superficially appropriate to see Haigha and Hatta as ideal choices for White Pawns, it seems even more fitting to associate the Unicorn with one of the White Knights. This character not only has the shape of a Staunton chess Knight, but it is locked in a perpetual battle with the Lion, presumably one of the Red Rooks. However, there is very little beyond these rather pedantic observations to warrant consideration of the Unicorn as White's Queen's Knight. First of all, the Unicorn does not mimic the movement of the other (and true) White Knight, whose numerous tumbles from his horse are much like a chess knight's L-shaped movement (Gardner AA 179). Secondly, the Unicorn is locked in a battle with the Lion for the White King's crown, even though it is a member of the White side and can not hope to gain anything by being victorious, as the monarch quickly assures Alice: "'Does-- the one-- that wins-- get the crown?' she asked, as well as she could, for the run was putting her quite out of breath. 'Dear me, no!' said the King. 'What an idea'" (Carroll CW 208). Finally, when Alice meets the White King, the latter mentions that he did not "send all the horses [to Humpty Dumpty's rescue] because two of them are wanted in the game" (204). Gardner correctly observes that the King does so because two horses are needed as steeds for the White Knights (Gardner AA 279).

Understanding this, it seems logical to ask the question that if the Unicorn is really one of the White Knights, why does it need a horse for a mount? It is a mount!

Perhaps one of the most paradoxical associations that we find in Carroll's *Dramatis Personae* is the one existing between the character of the Sheep and the White Queen's Bishop of the chess game. The reason that the relationship is so perplexing stems from the fact that the Sheep is not a Bishop at all, but the metamorphosed White Queen who changes before Alice's eyes as the two cross together into the Fifth Square:

"Then I hope your finger is better now?" Alice said very politely, as she crossed the little brook after the Queen.

* * * * *

"Oh, much better!" cried the Queen, her voice rising into a squeak as she went on. "Much be-etter! Be-etter! Be-e-e-etter! Be-e-ehh!" The last word ended in a long bleat, so like a sheep that Alice quite started.

She looked at the Queen, who seemed to have suddenly wrapped herself up in wool (Carroll CW 185).

The only way to explain Carroll's initial relationship of the Sheep to a Bishop is that the transformed White Queen moves like one after she leaves the shop, travelling from the c5 square to f8. This does not mean, however, that the Sheep is a Bishop or that Carroll saw it as one. He clearly implies that this is not the case in the instructions that accompany his chess diagram at the beginning of the book. Here he describes the third move of the problem (for pieces other than Alice) as:

"White Queen to Queen Bishop's Fifth (*becomes Sheep*)". Reluctant to let go of the relationship between Sheep and Bishop in Carroll's *Dramatis Personae*, Huxley attempts to salvage some kind of defence through a ridiculous linguistic association: "The Sheep is what happened when the White Queen cried, 'Oh, much better! ... Much be-etter! Be-etter! Be-e-e-etter! Be-e-ehh!' so that she at least starts off like a Bishop" (Huxley 28). Certainly, if the Sheep *is* a piece in the chess problem, it is the White Queen and not the White Queen's Bishop.

With the association between the Aged Aged Man and the White King's Bishop in Carroll's chess game, we arrive once again at the problem of deciding whether or not a specific character actually exists in the reality of Looking-Glass Land. The White Knight's song is given in the first person, which might perhaps indicate that he actually met this curious creature somewhere along his travels, but there is no proof of this in the text. Furthermore, he only claims that the *tune* is of his "own invention" and not necessarily the words which accompany it. If the Aged Aged Man is not a part of the Looking-Glass reality then it makes little sense to associate him with *any* piece in the chess game. Even if he is a part of it (which I would be very hesitant to admit), his movement and behaviour in the poem in no way confirm the validity of an association between himself and the White King's Bishop. As far as movement is concerned, the Aged Aged Man spends all of his time "A-sitting on a gate", unlike a Bishop, who is often found traversing the board in great stretches. With regards to this character's identity, Huxley feels that he has found a link in the following observation: "As for the Aged

Aged Man, he is not only the caricature of Wordsworth's Leech Gatherer, the incarnation of Resolution and Independence, but Carroll himself, for he dubbed himself by that phrase in the whimsical journal he wrote for Isa Bowman after she had visited him in Oxford (28). However, while the Aged Aged Man's muttering speech and general demeanour certainly points to Rev. Dodgson's self-representation, it does not follow that this necessitates linking the character with a Bishop in the chess game.

We now turn our attention to the characters who are associated, through Carroll's *Dramatis Personae*, with the pieces and pawns of the Red side. We begin with the Daisies, the Tiger-Lily and the Rose, who are respectively associated with the Red Rook Pawns, Queen's Pawn and King's Pawn. Since these particular Daisies begin on the a7 and h7 squares, they would not suffer from the same problem as their sister Daisies in having the impossible task of moving laterally across the board. However, they would have the problem of being required to make a successive series of captures in order to find themselves on either the c2 or e2 square. All in all, the Daisies (as Red Rook Pawns) would be forced to capture a total of seven enemy pieces and pawns in order to make their way to either c2 or e2, a ludicrous notion since it is evident that they have captured nothing when Alice confronts them in the Garden. If Alice is yet to meet any of the characters who are to be linked with the White side of Carroll's chess game, how could these supposed Rook Pawns have captured nearly half of the enemy force? The Tiger-lily and the Rose (if we are to associate them with Red's

Queen and King Pawns) would find it necessary to make a total of between one and three captures, possibly passing through squares occupied both by friendly and enemy pieces, all without having the slightest evidence of the ability to move.

In examining the problems of associating two of the Oysters with the Red Bishop pawns, we discover that they face an additional dilemma beyond that of their White counterparts. The dilemma centres around the fact that these Oysters find themselves in the same camp as the two pieces which eventually consume them, namely the Walrus and the Carpenter (Red's Queen's Knight and Bishop). According to Carroll's poem, by the time the Walrus and the Carpenter are through with the Oysters, they have "eaten every one" (Carroll CW 172). By association, the Red Queen's Knight and Queen's Bishop have just accomplished the impossible feat of consuming their own Bishop pawns. Hence, we have not only demonstrated the difficulty in associating the Oysters with Red Pawns, but in further associating the Walrus and the Carpenter with members of the Red camp. There is no evidence to support that the Walrus and the Carpenter behave in the manner of the pieces they supposedly represent (and neither is there similar evidence in support of the Oysters). The Walrus acts like a Walrus and not a Knight. The Carpenter acts more like a Walrus than a Carpenter, but not at all like a Bishop!

What of the Frog and the Messenger, the characters who are associated with Red's Knight Pawns? The Frog is certainly not a Pawn, since Alice meets him while she is standing on the d8 (Queening) square. Since Red

pawns begin a chess game on the seventh rank, it makes little sense to assume that the Frog has somehow moved both laterally and (perhaps even) backward from its starting position on g7 to end up on one of the squares near Queen Alice. Furthermore, the Frog does not act like a Pawn in any respect whatsoever, serving only to scold Alice away from knocking on the door marked with her name: "What did it ask you?' 'Nothing!' Alice said impatiently. 'I've been knocking at it!' 'Shouldn't do that - shouldn't do that--' the Frog muttered. 'Wexes it, you know' Then he went up and gave the door a kick with one of his great feet. 'You let *it* alone,' he panted out, as he hobbled back to his tree, 'and it'll let *you* alone, you know.'" (238). The Messenger, who we must assume is the character in Humpty Dumpty's poem, has as little to do with a Red Knight Pawn as anything one could possibly imagine. The very fact that a messenger travels back and forth between two parties disqualifies it from being a pawn on the basis of its enhanced mobility.

If, as the Red Queen tells Alice at the start of the latter's journey, "the Sixth Square belongs to Humpty Dumpty" (153), this removes any possibility of Humpty Dumpty being the Red Queen's Rook. Situated on the d6 Square, Humpty Dumpty would form an impenetrable barrier for poor Alice, who could neither capture the egg nor move past it because of her limited mobility as a pawn. From d6, Humpty Dumpty (as a Rook) would check the White King at c6, necessitating the latter's movement sometime during the course of the game. We know, however, that the White King never moves from its station on c6 because Carroll does not tell us so in his diagram at the beginning of the story. There can

thus be no enemy rook on d6. In fact, the d6 square must be vacant of any piece for the simple reason that the White Queen's movement from c5 to f8 requires that she pass over the d6 square unhindered (d6 is a square on the c5-f8 diagonal).

The above helps us in understanding that the Lion can not be one of the Red Rooks either, as a misinterpretation of Carroll's *Dramatis Personae* might perhaps indicate. As the Red King's Rook, the Lion would not only face the difficulty of sharing a single square of the chessboard with three enemy pieces (the Unicorn, Haigha and Hatta!), but it would be placing a permanent check on the White King at c6, once Humpty Dumpty falls from his perch. Furthermore, Alice would be unable to effect the checkmate that ends the game because this piece would be interposed between her and the Red King. We know from the Nursery Rhyme that "*The Lion beat[s] the Unicorn all around the town*" (208), and this might perhaps be explained as the superior force of a rook exerting itself on the inferior mobility of a knight, but to draw such associations for the sake of explaining the relative strength of these individuals is ludicrous at best. In the present episode, the Unicorn seems to get the better of it anyway: "'I had the best of it this time?' he said to the King, just glancing at him as he passed. 'A little - a little,' the King replied rather nervously. 'You shouldn't have run him through with your horn, you know'" (210).

The last character whom we wish to examine is the curious Crow, whose quick descent upon the unsuspecting trio of Alice and the Tweedle brothers seems to mimic the long range diagonal powers of the Bishop piece with which it

is linked. However, this is where even the remotest of associations abruptly end. We simply do not know enough about this character to consider seriously Huxley's ambitious assumption that the Crow is both the Red King's Bishop in Carroll's chess game and also somehow linked with the White Queen as well:

We can now deduce that the White Queen screams like the whistle of a steam-engine because she is a ghost on a well-trimmed board - the kind Carroll used to play chess on, in fact, when travelling by railway. But whose ghost is she?

That of the Crow, for a start, which left its footprints on the face of the Aged Aged Man: for after it comes like a cloud, along comes the White Queen, 'running wildly through the wood, with both arms stretched wide, as if she were flying...'. Of course, the Crow is a Bishop in the chess game, and its move has alarmed the White Queen who then removes to another square (Huxley 164).

What square is this Crow / White Queen / Red Queen's Bishop supposed to be attacking anyway? If Tweedledum and Tweedledee "belong" to the Fourth Square (d4), does the Crow land on this Square to frighten away the curious pair. This seems unlikely, as a Red Bishop on d4 would prevent the White Queen's eventual push to c5, a square which she soon occupies. As a Bishop, the Crow would also prevent Alice's eventual checkmate of the Red King because it could interpose itself on e5 when the Red Queen is captured.

Certainly, Gardner is reasonably correct in saying that Carroll's relationships between the characters of his novel and their associated chess piece equivalents are made, "for no discernible reason" (Gardner MAA 161), although this does not prevent the critic from occasionally falling victim to his own

observations. It is evident that Carroll's *Dramatis Personae* is merely the author's attempt to demonstrate that his novel is based on a chess problem that may or may not conform to specific rules of the game. The author's eventual removal of it in deference to his 1896 Preface confirms the fact that he realizes its inherent potential to confuse readers into drawing associations between characters and chess pieces, which he did not otherwise intend. However, there are still critics who fall into the very trap that Carroll desired his future readership to avoid. For instance, Gardner tells us that it is wise to ignore the confusion of the *Dramatis Personae*, but instructs us that the relationships still exist:

Carroll replaced it [the *Dramatis Personae*] with his 1896 Preface. Removing it was wise because it only adds confusion to the chess game...

...[this is directly followed by] The arrangement of the words in the starting position of a chess game makes it easy to identify each piece and pawn (161).

CHAPTER 3

A Resistance to Gardner's "Mad Logic" Theory

With reference to Carroll's chess problem, Gardner has observed that the apparent "madness" of the game's solution conforms to "the mad logic of the looking-glass world" (Gardner AA 172). While he argues that Madan has been too critical in his attack upon the problem, Gardner seems to be equally unfair to Carroll in passing off the complexities of his chess game without examining the possibility that the author's solution of moves merits serious examination. I would argue that the Looking-Glass chess problem can be seen to resist and subvert Gardner's dubious interpretation if the game is examined from a perspective which is capable of explaining all of its perceived curiosities (i.e., the missing of simple mates, the lack of coherence among the pieces, etc.).

Although Gardner's idea seems superficially reasonable, we must understand first and foremost that there is a great deal more sense in Carroll's solution than for which he is often given credit. What Alexander Taylor applies to Alice's inability to function in unison with the other White pieces can be said of all the game's competitors:

It would be...illogical for a pawn [or a Knight, Rook, King or Queen] which can see only a small patch [or incomplete portion] of the board to understand the meaning of its experiences. To understand one's part in

a game of chess, one would have to be aware of the room and the unseen intelligence which is combining the pieces. Deprived of any such knowledge, the chess-men have to explain things as best they can. Nor is this a game between two players. To have made it that would have been tantamount to a confession that he believed in two separate and opposite Powers above us (Taylor 228).

If we accept Taylor's line of reasoning then we must think of Carroll's chess game, not as a contest between two opposing entities (the "White player" and the "Red" player), but as a struggle between individual pieces, each with a restricted sense of its own surroundings. Hence, Alice and the other pieces in the game are only able to act on what their inherent limitations allow them to understand (please refer to Appendix 3 on the "Areas of Awareness for Looking-Glass Chessmen"). Taking this under consideration, we shall now examine the solution to Carroll's chess problem, move by move, in an attempt to demonstrate that the various actions of the pieces are not merely conforming to the madness of the Looking-Glass realm, but have a very precise logic of their own.

The first actual *move* of Carroll's chess problem is the Red Queen's journey from e2 to h5 (1. ...Qh5), as we must suppose that the White side has relinquished its turn by allowing Alice to appear suddenly on the d2 square. The Red side's move appears to be weak since it allows an obvious mate in three by White: 1. ...Qh5??, 2. Ng3+!, Ke5 (if Kd4 or Kd3, White simply plays 3. Qc3#) 3. Qc5+, Ke6, 4. Qd6#. It seems that if Carroll wishes to illustrate the Red Queen's departure from Alice then 1. ...Qa6+! is a far better try than Qh5. On 1. ...Qa6+!,

the Red Queen harasses the White King stationed on c6 and indirectly aids her own King. White will inevitably be required to create a shield from attack with its Qc1 or face the dismal prospects of enduring perpetual check from a superior position. However, 1. ...Qh5 is not merely played for the reason that its inherent madness conforms to the madness of the Looking-Glass World, nor is it made because Carroll misses 1. Qa6+. We must understand the Red Queen's somewhat limited scope from her outpost on e2. On e2 she can only see three of the remaining seven pieces on the chessboard landscape: Alice on d2, the sleeping Red King on e4, and the mysterious White Rook on f1. The Red Queen does not immediately capture Alice on d2 or the White Rook on f1 because it is likely that one or more of these pieces is protected by a friendly piece (and, in fact, both are protected by the White Queen stationed on c1). The Red Queen also knows enough to stay away from d1, e1, f2 and f3, squares on which she can be immediately captured by the Rook (and also e3, where she can be captured by the Alice pawn on d2). This leaves g4, h5, d3, c4, b5 and a6 as the only logical alternatives for the Red Queen's move. Of these, h5 and a6 would be seen by the Red Queen as the safest, for although chess pieces control less squares when they are at the edge of the board, here there are fewer directions from which they might be attacked. Furthermore, the Red Queen is evidently ignorant of the White King's location and so 1. ...Qh5 is a very logical move in an otherwise hopeless position.

Instead of checkmating Red with the three move combination mentioned above, Alice moves for the White side to d4 (2. d4). This move seems to be a clear blunder as it allows Red time to play 2. ...Qg6+, after which might follow 3. Nd6, Kxd4 and poor "Alice" is lost to the marauding Red King. Red also appears to have the interesting (although, obviously, still losing) 2. ... Qxf5?!, and after 3. Rxf5, Ne7+!?, 4. Kd6?! Nxf5+, 5. Kc5, Nxd4, and Alice is prey to the Red Knight. However, 2. d4 is quite an understandable move when one considers that only two of the White pieces can possibly know that the Red Queen has just played to h5 (that is, Alice and the White Rook). The White Rook does not appear in Carroll's novel and never gives any indication that it is going to move throughout the course of the problem. Furthermore, we can assume that if the Red Queen "vanishes", as Alice seems to think, then the Rook might not see the monarch pass by on its journey through the f3 square to h5. Hence, it is likely that only Alice really knows it is White's turn to take action: "Alice began to remember that she was a Pawn, and that it would soon be time for her to move" (Carroll CW 153). After the Red Queen makes her curious departure, Alice is left unaware of any other piece on the board, as c2 and e2 (the squares which form Alice's limited "area of awareness") are now both empty. The reason that Alice moves to d4 (and not d3) is due in large part to the Red Queen's previous instructions: "A pawn goes two squares in its first move, you know. So you'll go *very* quickly through the Third Square - by railway, I should think - and you'll find yourself in the Fourth Square in no time" (153).

With 3. Qc4, the critical observer might immediately question Carroll's knowledge of the game in permitting the White side to move again before Red is able to respond to 2. d4 (if it *was* Red's move then 2. ...Qe6+ or ...Qe8+ would probably offer the most reasonable chances). However, are there any Red pieces that have seen Alice move to d4? From h5, the Red Queen's area of awareness does not include either the d3 or d4 squares. The Red Knight only maintains control over the e7, f6 and h6 squares and is thus unaware of Alice's movement. The Red King does overlook d3 and d4, but the fact that he is *asleep* rules out the possibility that he is aware of Alice's movement. It is therefore quite simple to understand why the White side makes two moves in a row.

We might further ask ourselves why the White Queen moves to c4 and not to one of a number of seemingly superior alternatives. For instance, 3. Qb1# is checkmate as the Red King has no escape squares. The Alice Pawn on d4 is immune from capture as the White Knight on f5 protects it. The d5 square is guarded by the White King, the e5 square is guarded by the White Pawn (Alice), and the f3, f4, f5, and d3 squares are guarded by either the Queen on b1 or the Rook on f1. The only other square, e3, is guarded by the White Knight. Similarly, 3. Qc2# is checkmate for the same reasons as those given above; the White Queen is merely choosing another square along the b1-h7 diagonal. The move, 3. Qe3#, is also mate. The White Queen cannot be captured as she is protected by the Knight on f5. Finally, there are moves by other White Pieces which also seem to be winning. The Knight move, 3. Ng3+?!, while dubious (since there are

three (!) mates on the board) at least wins the helpless Red Queen through a forking check at g3. The bizarre 3. Re1+?, essentially a poor move, is winning after 3. ...Kxf5, 4. Re5+!, skewering the Queen. If instead, Red plays 3. ...Kf3, (Note: on 3. ...Kd3, 4. Re3# is mate), 4. Qe3+, Kg4, (if 4. ...Kg2 then 5. Qg3#! is mate), 5. Qe4+, Kg5, (if 5. ...Kh3 then 6. Rh1# is mate), 6. Rg1+, Kf6 (forced), 7. Qe5, Kf7, 8. Rg7+, Kf8, 9. Qb8+, Qe8 (forced), 11. Rxc8, Kxc8, 12. Qxe8, Kh7, 13. Qf7+, Kh8, 14. Qg7#. Why then does the White Queen move to c4? Before Alice moves to d4, the White Queen is aware of three pieces on the board: Alice, on d2, the White Rook, on f1, and the White King, on c6. The Queen's movement to c4 is merely a reaction to Alice's disappearance from the d2 square. The White Queen (like her Red counterpart) knows that Alice can only move a maximum of two squares on her first move. On c4, the White Queen will either be beside Alice (if she has moved to d4), or, at the very least, supporting her advance (if she has moved to d3). The White Queen does not attempt to effect checkmate at b1, c2, or e3, because from c1, she cannot hope to know what square the Red King inhabits. Finally, we must assume that she moves at this point because she reacts "so fearfully quick" (quicker, at least, than someone like the Knight on f5).

With 4. Qc5, White deprives Red of its turn once again, causing critics like Madan to rail against the apparently, building madness. However, there is no evidence to suggest that any of the Red pieces on the board are aware of the White Queen's previous move to c4. From h5, the Red Queen's broad scope (which extends up and down the h-file, along the fifth rank to f5 and along the e1-

g4 and g6-e8 diagonals) does not afford her the opportunity of noticing the White Queen's movement, as the c2, c3 and c4 squares are not within the former's area of awareness. The Red Knight (who currently exemplifies the motto "grim on the rim") overlooks e7, f6 and h6, and is thus unaware of the White Queen's movement. The Red King extends his range of influence over the squares, d3, d4, d5, e3, e5, f3, f4, f5, and so he is equally unaware of any movement by the White Queen (or of any piece for that matter, as he sleeps throughout the course of the novel/game). Hence, it makes a great deal of sense that the White side retains its privilege to move, since the Red pieces have apparently failed to realize what is happening.

In sallying forth with 4. Qc5, White appears to miss several forced wins. Both 4. Qc2#, the elegant 4. d5!?, Ke5 (forced), 5. Qd4# and the bizarre 4. Ng3+, Ke3 (forced), 5. Qc3#! are apparently neglected. Furthermore, with 4. Qc5, White also fails to take advantage of the Ng8 which is lying *en prise*. Lastly, 4. Qc5 breaks the mutual protection of White's major pieces, removing the only defender of the Rook on f1. Regardless, 4. Qc5 is certainly a logical move for the White Queen. She has no desire to capture the Knight on g8 because she does not know if it is being protected by a friendly piece. Furthermore, she is still unaware of the location of either the Red King or Red Queen, because Alice's presence on d4 shields her from the first, and her own outpost on c4 prevents her from noticing the second. On c5, the White Queen likely hopes to find where the rest of the enemy pieces are located.

By advancing up the d-file, Alice now plays 5. d5. Whether or not she is aware of it, she takes advantage of the fact that the Red Pieces are ignorant of the previous 4. Qc5 (so once again, it makes sense that a piece on the White side moves). With 5. d5, White naturally misses: 5. Qc2# (winning the game), 5. Ng3+, Ke3, 6. Qc3#!, Nd6+ (winning the Queen), and Qd5+ (winning the Knight). Even the bizarre 5. Rf4+?!, Kxf4, 6. Qe5+, Kf3, (on 6. ...Kg5??, 7. Ng7! or Ng3! wins the Queen), 7. Qg3+, Ke4, 8. Qxg8, Kxf5, 9. Qd5+, Kg6, 10. Qxh5, Kxh5, 11. d5! is seemingly neglected. However, the move 5. d5 makes a great deal of sense when one considers that Alice is merely trying to keep up with the advancing White Queen. Alice knows the location of the Red King, but is in no position to capture him. She never tells the White Queen his location, probably because the Queen never asks.

The White Queen now moves to f8 (6. Qf8), missing mate at e3 and d4 - but the fact that her knowledge of the current position is so poor warrants such a response. On the surface, this move seems dubious in that apart from missing mate, it also loosens the protection of the Alice pawn, although Red, in such an inferior position, requires further help from White in order to win it. After 6. ...Qg6+, 7. Qd6, Qxd6?, White must not play the dismal 8. Nxd6?? for it loses Alice to 8. ...Ne7+!. Rather, White should not bother to interpose with the Queen, but simply play 7. ... Kc5!, as no opponent is eccentric enough to give away his Queen to win a pawn, with 8. ...Qb6+?! , 9. Kxb6, (forced) Kxd5. The move, 6. Qf8 affords the White Queen her first opportunity to spot the Red King (as she

passes through the e-file at e7), while moving ever closer to the Red Knight to determine whether or not it is protected by an enemy piece.

Alice now makes White's sixth move in a row, playing 7. d6. We might ask why the Red Knight on g8 does not decide to move, as he must certainly see the White Queen pass through the e7 square. The problem facing the Knight is that he knows the White Queen is now positioned on f8, guarding all of his escape squares, that is, e7, f6 and h6. Thus corralled, he remains where he is. It appears that White has a much better series of moves in 7. Qb4+, Kd3 (on Ke5, 8. Qd4 mates), 8. Qd4+, Ke2, 9. Qd1#! or even 7. Rf4+!?, Kd3 (if Kxf4, 8. Ng7 dis +, wins the Red Queen!) 8. Qa3+, Ke2, 9. Qe3+, Kd1, 10. Rd4+, Kc2, 11. Qd2+ and mate-in-two. However, Alice progresses to d6 immediately after the White Queen/Sheep disappears from the c5/d6 region, and this subsequently blocks the White Queen's ability to return to b4. Furthermore, 7. Rf4+ is not possible as the Rook is left in the dark as to what is going on.

White plays 8. Qc8, neglecting the capture of the Red Knight, and the win resulting after: 8. Qg7 (threatening 9. Qd4#) ... Qe8+, 9. d7, Qa8+, 10. Kd6, Qd5+, 11. Kc7, Qc5+, 12. Kd8, Qb6+, 13. Ke8, Nf6+?!, 14. Qxf6!., Qxf6, 15. Ng3+, winning the Red Queen and the game. The move 8. Qc8 is entirely logical, however, as the White Queen is still unaware of the Red Queen's current location (the former may flee the Red Knight because she fears an eventual discovery attack). With this move the White Queen passes through the e8 square (a square in the Red Queen's area of awareness) and so comes to understand the position

of all the remaining Red pieces on the board. This is yet another consecutive move for the White pieces, but it is really no surprise as Alice's 7. d6 is played without the knowledge of any of the Red pieces (none of the Red pieces presently holds influence over the d6 square). The sole paradox of 8. Qc8 is that Alice is able to see the Queen as she scurries across the countryside:

For a minute or two Alice stood silent, watching him. Suddenly she brightened up. "Look, look!" she cried, pointing eagerly. "There's the White Queen running across the country! She came flying out of the wood over yonder-- How fast those Queens *can* run!"

"There's some enemy after her, no doubt," the King said, without even looking round. "That wood's full of them" (210).

Carroll temporarily foregoes limiting Alice's small scope, apparently for the purposes of foreshadowing her near future acquisition of power as a Queen. If this is indeed the case, then Alice sees the White Queen as she passes through d8 on her way to c8. This hypothesis is more or less confirmed by the fact that the White King does not see the Queen's movement to c8 (he is described as not bothering to look around - but this merely cloaks the fact that he could not see the Queen even if he did look!). Alice's new found powers will soon eclipse his own, as the young girl begins to understand: "'But aren't you going to run and help her?' Alice asked, very much surprised at his taking it so quietly. 'No use, no use!' said the King. 'She runs so fearfully quick. You might as well try to catch a Bandersnatch!'" (210).

We now come to the last in a series of eight moves in a row by White. The curious 9. d7 neglects the immediate wins afforded by 9. Qe6+, Kd3, 10. Qe3+, Kc4 (Note: if 10. ...Kc2, then 11. Rc1+, Kb2 (forced), 12. Qc3+, Ka2, 13. Ra1#), 11. Rc1+, Kb4, 12. Qb6+!, Ka3 or Ka4, 13. Ra1#, or 9. Ng3+, Ke3, 10. Qe6+, Kd3, 11. Nxf5, followed by QxN as the Knight is trapped). The move, 9. d7? also allows the bad but irritating 9. ...Qxf5?!, 10. Rxf5, Ne7+, 11. Kc7, Nxf5 ++/--. We might wonder why Alice (and not the Red Queen or Knight) moves at this point, but this is easily explained by examining the current position of the board. Although the White Queen's journey to c8 does cut through the Red Queen's area of awareness, the latter has a couple of reasons for remaining on h5: (1) The Red Queen may suspect that the White King is somewhere on the fifth rank (and not the sixth) and that this is the reason why the White Knight has not played a Royal Fork at g3. If the White King were on the fifth rank, a Knight move would expose him to capture. The Red Queen may believe that by stationing herself on h5 she is maintaining a pin on the f5-Knight which does not actually exist. (2) The Red Queen can not know for certain whether the White Queen has moved to d8, c8, b8 or a8, let alone whether or not the latter has effected some sort of check on the Red King. Keeping this in mind, the Red Queen might not feel she is in any position to move. The Red Knight does not move at this point because the White Queen's movement to c8 does not cut across e7, f6 or h6 (thus, he must assume that it is still White's turn). When Alice spots the White Queen running for c8, she is already in the process of moving

through the Sixth Square and does not bother to consider whether she is playing out of turn.

Although entirely lost, the Red pieces finally take the opportunity to move by playing 9. ...Ne7+. This seems dreadful, for even with the bizarre and hopeless 9. ...Qxf5?!, Rxf5, 10. Ne7+, or the equally losing 9. Qg6+, Red shows more life than with the text move. However, 9. ...Ne7+ makes sense from the standpoint that it follows a few basic principles of chess. The Red Knight doubles the number of squares over which it holds sway by transferring itself to e7. At e7, the Red Knight overlooks c8, c6, d5, f5, g6 and g8, a total of six squares (compared with only three while it was stationed on g8). By moving into Alice's scope, the Red Knight attempts to frighten the young girl by threatening her capture (a capture which he cannot actually effect), temporarily halting White's progress in queening its d-pawn. The move also checks the White King and "royally" forks both King and Queen, the sole drawback being that the White Knight (of whom the Red Knight is obviously unaware until the latter has completed his move) guards the e7 square.

White plays a very sound move with 10. Nxe7. However, Red is so lost that White need not have even played this move, since after 10. Kc5?!, Nxf5 (if Nxc8, 11. dxc8=Q wins easily), 11. Qc6+!, Ke3, 12. Qe6+ and White regains the Knight. Hearing screams of "Check!" from his crimson counterpart, the White Knight feels compelled to remove the threat from e7, and subsequently, aid in ushering the Alice pawn to d8. The White Knight is not so ludicrous as he may

seem in crying "Check!" himself, for although he does not effect a check, his inability to know the current position of the Red King makes this an honourable gesture (for if he does have a check on e7, he is nobly warning the opposing King).

Although the Red Queen must have noticed the White Knight's movement from the f5 square, the fact that he is crying "Check!" prevents her from taking any action. The Red Queen does not have influence over e7, and could therefore do nothing to prevent what she only must assume is an actual check by the White Knight (she does not know whether or not the Red King has awoken and moved to a square on which he could be harassed). Thus, the Red side is prevented from moving as White retreats its Knight to f5. Unfortunately, the White Knight does not know enough about the position to understand that a superior move is 11. d8=Q, since it meets 11. ...Qh6+ with 12. QAd6!.

With 12. d8=Q, Alice finally reaches the d8 square and, amid pomp and ceremony, becomes a cherished Queen. Since this move is made at the same time as 11. Nf5 (Alice waves goodbye to the Knight and then jumps over the remaining brook), the Red Queen is deprived of her move. By the time the White Knight has returned to f5, Alice has her crown. While 12. d8=Q seems to be a very strong move (as it gains White a second Queen), Alice's decision to "Queen" exposes the White pieces collective lack of fully understanding the position, since either 12. Ng3+! winning the Red Queen, or 12. Qe8+, exchanging Queens and promoting Alice on e8 with check are far superior: 12. Ng3+!, Ke3, 13. Nxe5, Ke2,

14. Ng3+, Ke3, 15. Qe8+ (not 15. d8=Q stalemate!), Kd3, 16. d8=Q+, Kc3, 17. Qe1+, Kb3, 18. QAd5+, Ka4, 19. Qa5#, or 12. Qe8+, Qxe8, 13. dxe8=Q+, Kd3, 14. Rd1+, Kc2, 15. Qe2+, Kb3, 16. Nd4+, Kb4, 17. Qb2+, Kc4, 18. Qb3+#!. However, Alice's move is neither "without a sane purpose" (as Madan might comment), or "reflective of Looking-glass madness" (as Gardner would point out), but simply a move that is perfectly logical for a young girl who (1) does not fully grasp the position of the pieces on the board and (2) is overwhelmed by her desire to become a Queen:

'and now for the last brook, and to be a Queen! How grand it sounds!' A very few steps brought her to the edge of the brook. 'The Eighth Square at last!' she cried as she bounded across,

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and threw herself down to rest on a lawn as soft as moss, with little flowerbeds dotted about it here and there. 'Oh, how glad I am to get here!' (229).

When the White Knight temporarily leaves its outpost on f5 to capture the Red Knight, the Red Queen has an opportunity to peer down the length of the fifth rank. Seeing no enemy King, the Red Queen naturally realizes that she did not previously hold the White Knight in a pin. Needing to find the enemy King (and uncertain as to what fate has befallen the Red Knight), the Red Queen makes her way to the Eighth rank with 12. ...Qe8+. However, when she begins her move, it is likely that the Red Queen does not know of Alice's queening. Although she

checks the White King on c6, the Red Queen exposes herself to capture by Alice, who has just recently gained her additional powers.

It seems that White's *only* decent response to 12. ...Qe8+ is to capture the Red Queen on e8, but White to move plays 13. Qa6, which is illegal since the King is left in check! Seemingly forced is 13. QAx8+, Kd3, 14. Qa6+, Kc3, 15. QAe3+, Kb4, 16. Rb1#. This move has aroused the consternation of authorities like Fisher, who are hesitant to defend Carroll on such a matter, "There is no explanation ... why the White Queen, in its final move, ignores the check by the Red Queen on the White King" (Fisher, 87). What Fisher fails to realize is that there is a very logical explanation for 13. Qa6. When the White Queen disappears into the soup (represented by the move 13. Qa6), this action is done without the apparent knowledge of the Red Queen. The Red Queen is present in the castle when the White Queen disappears, but there is no evidence to suggest that she notices what happens. If she does not see the White Queen vanish, then she can not know that White has, in fact, moved. This explains why White is permitted to leave its King in check. If the Red pieces are not aware that an illegal move is being made, then they must naturally suffer for their own ignorance. Finally, although Fisher does express concern over the fact that the White King is left in check, he acknowledges Rev. Ivor Ll. Davies research among the chess books listed in "The Catalogue for the Sale of Carroll's effects held after his death" (88):

Scrupulous research by Davies among the contents of these volumes has revealed variations of play prominent in Carroll's day yet alien to the game as it is known

today, variations that...annul the need for the tired, facile explanation that the topsy-turvy logic of a Looking-Glass world would have demanded a zany upheaval of the rules of the game. Walker's Law XX states: 'When you give check, you must apprise your adversary, by saying aloud "check"; or he need not notice it, but may move as though check were not given.' Why had White ignored the check by the Red Queen on his King? Davies reminds us that on the arrival of the Queen at King one, the Queen had explained to Alice, now her equal on the final rank, 'Speak when you're spoken to!'. Since on her arrival no one had spoken to her, the Red Queen could not break her own stipulation by volunteering 'check' herself (88).

We now reach the final move in the solution, which sees Alice capturing the Red Queen and checkmating the Red King (14. QAx8#). The Red King has no escape squares since Alice controls the e-file, the White Rook guards the f-file, the White Knight protects against movement to d4, the White King watches over d5, and the White Queen overlooks d3. Only now do we realize the importance of the "illegal" move 13. Qa6, which guards the Red King's final escape square. If Alice immediately captures the Red Queen with 13. QAx8+ then the Red King would be forced to wake up and move to d3. However, if the Red King wakes up it might spell the end of Alice, who finds herself in constant fear of this throughout the course of the story.

CHAPTER 4

The Metaphorical Implications of the Chess Problem

The final chapter of the thesis deals with my own interpretation of Carroll's employment of the chess problem in Through the Looking-Glass, as a symbolic device that *reinforces* and *reveals* the novel's underlying implications through a systematic refutation of its surface theme. I shall argue that specific, metaphorical aspects of the chess problem directly subvert the notion that Alice's attainment of queenhood is proof positive of a successful dream-journey from the imprisonment and isolation of youth to the freedom and independence of womanhood. Rather, the implications of Carroll's chess metaphor serve to reveal three disturbing elements about the nature of Alice's dream-journey: (1) The first of these is that Alice is *essentially* a victim, both of the Looking-Glass game in which she currently finds herself as well as the one she has likely begun playing on the other side of the mirror. (2) Alice's condition *within the game* is not imposed by an entity which exists outside of the Looking-Glass reality, but by the society of creatures within that reality. (3) Alice's regimented progression, her capture of the Red Queen and subsequent checkmate of the Red King do not bring victory to her side, but only serve to mark Alice's sobering realization that her attainment of symbolic womanhood comes without the freedom and independence expected.

By examining Alice's acceptance of her lowly position in the chess game, I wish to demonstrate how the metaphorical implications of Carroll's problem reveal that the young girl is victimized, both by the Looking-Glass contest as well as the realities of her own waking existence. Initially, Alice appears thrilled at the prospects of participating in the chess game:

'I declare it's marked out just like a large chess-board!' Alice said at last. 'There ought to be some men moving about somewhere - and so there are!' she added in a tone of delight, and her heart began to beat quick with excitement as she went on. 'It's a great huge game of chess that's being played - all over the world - if this *is* the world at all, you know. Oh, what fun it is! How I *wish* I was one of them! I wouldn't mind being a Pawn, if only I might join - though of course I should *like* to be a Queen, best' (Carroll CW 150).

While Alice's excitement is certainly directed at becoming a Queen, the most powerful piece on the chessboard, she likely accepts the role of a Pawn because the relative strength of this piece in the game is equivalent to her social position on the other side of the Looking-Glass. Furthermore, Alice's own society has invariably flooded her conscious and subconscious reservoirs with the idea that she should aspire to emulate the pawn-like virtues of servitude, humility and the earning of merit through achievement. We recall that a pawn must serve the needs of the stronger pieces in the game and can only merit promotion itself by traversing the entire length of the chessboard. Just as Alice must heed the rules that govern her limited movement throughout the course of the Looking-Glass contest, so must the young girl's previous social conditioning influence her initial

acceptance of this lowly position. However, we must also understand that Alice bears a measure of responsibility for selecting such an inferior piece to begin the game. Conceivably, she could have chosen to be a Knight or Rook, for instance, as a mark of rebellion against her own conditioning (and hence, her failure to do so is not entirely excusable). Alice thinks that the Red Queen is offering her a grand opportunity to play, because the former is either unwilling or unable to recognize the extent to which society has influenced her ability to choose.

The unalterable course of her journey along the d-file of the chessboard, her inability to return to those squares from which she has come, and her attainment of Queenhood through requisite passivity and submission (because of an inherent lack of solidarity with the other White pieces), all demonstrate that Alice's symbolic progression from youth to adulthood is one of isolation as well as inevitability. This sense of controlled order forces Kelly to observe:

Alice is literally a pawn in a game in a dream. She may believe she is in control of her movements and thoughts, but the reader, with a broader perspective, recognizes that her freedom is an illusion, that she is manipulated by the strict rules of a game and by the dreaming King (Kelly 94).

The difficulty I find with Kelly's reasoning lies in his notion that the sense of determinism and order which isolates and controls Alice is the work of either the Red King, or an "unseen chess master" (94), who manipulates the pieces. Whereas the critic believes that the Red King's dream is proof that he controls the actions of the pieces in the Looking-Glass chess game, I think it is much more

reasonable to see the dream as evidence that the players share a measure of responsibility, both for their own condition as well as the conditions of others. For instance, by sleeping throughout the course of the game, the Red King neglects helping the members of his camp (the Red Queen and Knight) and leaves himself exposed to capture. As far as the notion of an "unseen chess master" is concerned, the novel certainly does not place the burden of responsibility for Alice's regimented condition on a single, external entity. Have not the characters of the Looking-Glass society, like those of so-called "normal" society, imprisoned themselves within their own sense of order?. The existence of a being who quietly manipulates the pieces brings with it the dangerous implication that the Looking-Glass society (or any society, for that matter) is not to be held accountable for its own condition.

Once Alice has decided to accept her position as a pawn in the game, she is destined to travel the length of the chessboard and become a Queen. The young girl sees her progression as an achievement, but the absolute surety of the Red Queen's initial instructions to her in the Garden of Live Flowers clearly demonstrates that the Looking-Glass creatures' handling of the chess game has made Alice's attainment of queenhood something of a certainty: "- the Seventh Square is all forest - however, one of the Knights will show you the way - and in the Eighth Square we shall be Queens together, and it's all feasting and fun!" (Carroll CW 153). As a pawn in the Looking-Glass chess game, Alice's progression along the length of the d-file has a predetermination about it which

exceeds even that of an ordinary pawn. Since the young girl's area of awareness extends only to chessmen that stand on either side of her (and not those who are in a position to be captured), Alice never has the opportunity to make her way to any of the other files on the board. This fundamental inability to make a conscious choice in determining a particular course of events not only deprives her of making important decisions about where she stands in the game, it further prevents her from fully comprehending the nature of her experiences. The Railway passengers' discussion of economics, the Red Queen's instruction on manners, and the linguistic lessons of Humpty Dumpty each serve to represent, in symbolic fashion, a part of the sometimes enlightening, sometimes confusing, but essentially, predetermined set of childhood experiences. Sadly, Alice's forced journey as a pawn along the length of the d-file does not allow her to avoid this bombardment of social conditioning.

Coupled with the idea that Alice is confined to a specific sector of the board is the added notion that she can never return to squares from which she has come. At the outset of Chapter VIII, Alice considers returning to the d4 square in order to wake up the Red King: "'I've a great mind to go and wake him, and see what happens!'" (214), but there is the sense that this wish to go back can not be fulfilled. Just as a pawn is fated never to return to a square which it has left, so is Alice similarly fated (if not in her dream-journey then certainly in her own life) to move forward into the trials of puberty and adulthood without a chance ever to return to those "happy Summer days gone by". The significance of Alice's remark

about going back to wake up the Red King is that she quite obviously thinks such a journey is possible, even when it is clearly not. Alice does not have the freedom to return, *but she does have the illusion that she is free to return*. Ultimately, her attainment of queenhood and the subsequent chaos of her coronation feast dispel such illusions and make her dream-journey soberingly complete.

Lacking a solidarity with the other White Pieces in the chess game, Alice is forced to act with passivity and submission as she moves throughout Looking-Glass Land towards the queening square. As a result, her attainment of queenhood does not come to symbolize a gain of power, but rather, a gradual giving up of power. The perennial Eve, Alice fails to find the freedom and independence that she has always associated with figures of authority (like the Red Queen), but only the knowledge that such freedom is a dream. It is this sudden realization that drives Alice to the border of her senses at the close of her own Looking-glass dream-journey: "'I ca'n't stand this any longer!' she cried, as she jumped up and seized the tablecloth with both hands: one good pull, and plates, dishes, guests, and candles came crashing down together in a heap on the floor" (244). Kelly sees Alice's attainment of queenhood as the gain of "a great new power through the freedom of movement" (Kelly 104). However, both Alice and the reader come to the realization that this new freedom proves useless because the game soon ends. Alice has given up the illusion of freedom for the knowledge that she is not able to possess it.

Another aspect of the chess problem that subverts a superficial thematic interpretation of the novel involves Alice's capture of the Red Queen and her subsequent checkmate of the Red King. Tweedledum and Tweedledee warn Alice that she is only a thing in the Red King's dream and that she will go out like a candle if he wakes up:

"And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?"

"Where I am now, of course," said Alice.

"Not you!" Tweedledee retorted contemptuously. "You'd be nowhere. Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream!" (Carroll CW 173-4).

We might consider that the Red King dreams of Alice because she represents the state of youth to which he can never return (just as Alice dreams of Looking-Glass land in search of the adulthood to which she has not yet progressed). Alice's checkmate of the Red King does not bring victory to the White Pieces, but only serves to demonstrate the young girl's frustrated desire to return to the innocence of childhood. By eliminating the Red Queen in the process, Alice demonstrates her desire to eliminate a figure of maternal authority, a figure whom she sees as responsible for her own condition, and sadly, a figure which she appears to have become: "'Sit up a little more stiffly, dear!' Alice cried with a merry laugh. 'And curtsy while you're thinking what to-- what to purr. It saves time, remember!'" (247).

It is also interesting to note that in capturing the Red Queen, Alice removes from the board the character who initially encourages her to set off on her journey

towards Queenhood, one who appears to represent what the author sees as the hallmark of a strong and independent-minded Victorian woman, as Carroll relates in his article, "Alice on the Stage":

The Red Queen I pictured as a Fury, but of another type; *her* passion must be cold and calm; she must be formal and strict, yet not unkindly; pedantic to the tenth degree, the concentrated essence of all governesses! (Gardner AA 206).

How can it be said that Alice's symbolic journey from girlish innocence to maturity and womanhood is in any way a triumph if she is required to capture (destroy) a figure of maturity and womanhood in the process? This is perhaps the clearest example of where the chess problem subverts the surface implications of the text. The events of the story apparently dictate that Alice has gained a victory for her army of pieces, but the metaphorical implications of the chess problem itself probe us to ask: Of what does this "so-called" victory really consist?

Of the novel's denouement, Florence Becker Lennon remarks in her psychobiographical essay, "Escape Through the Looking-Glass", that although Carroll's novel is certainly not a happy one, Alice's successful attainment of queenship does provide it with "a happy ending" (Lennon 221). Certainly, this can not be the case, for it is that Alice wakes up from her dream to find that she is not a queen, but merely a child of seven and a half, that gives the story its satisfactory, albeit sobering conclusion.

CONCLUSION

It is no small wonder that the chess problem in Through the Looking-Glass has aroused the consternation of a number of Carrollian authorities. Falconer Madan boldly speaks out against Carroll's solution, describing it as an entity devoid of a "sane purpose" and lacking sense. Although contemporary critics now tend to see Madan's comments as rather unfair, they themselves are often not entirely satisfied with its curiosities, as is certainly evidenced in the case of Fisher. Generally, it appears that critics have decided to see the various peculiarities of Carroll's chess problem *as peculiarities* and not as things that can be explained without resorting to a discussion of "exceptions", or making allowances. The thesis has endeavoured to show that the chess problem is a credit to the author's genius as a creator of fiction and not simply a credit to his perceived eccentricities.

Mr. Forbes' article certainly serves as a hallmark for the dangers of neglecting the realities of a text while engaged in eagerly putting forth one's own interpretation. His admission that he has cited the text "selectively" and at times, "non-sequentially", in an effort to convince the reader that Carroll's novel serves as the basis for an opening treatise on the game of chess, more than nullifies the validity of his findings. His further failure to address Carroll's own chess problem indicates that this revolutionary attempt to breathe life into an already living text

was, from its very outset, doomed to ignore the subtleties of the author's artistic achievement.

My difficulty in accepting Carroll's defunct *Dramatis Personae* as a literal representation of characters as actual chess pieces is due, in no small part, to the fact that the author eventually saw fit to remove it. While Huxley believes these relationships still hold, Gardner is even more curious in that, within the very same breath, he both confirms and condemns their existence. Gardner firmly supports Carroll's decision to remove the *Dramatis Personae*, because it "only adds confusion to the chess game", but is also quick to point out that Alice's encounter with the Fawn near the close of Chapter Three is the author's representation of two adjacent pawns on the Looking-Glass chess board. Through an examination of the positioning, movement and behaviour of individual characters in the story, the thesis has attempted to demonstrate that any attempt to relate non-game characters with chessmen is an exercise that takes great effort and has little validity.

As far as seeing the so-called "madness" of the chess game as a natural result of the mad logic of Looking-Glass land, this line of reasoning must certainly have developed out of convenience. After all, it seems quite natural to say that the White side makes more moves than the Red side because the Looking-Glass world is mad, that the moves of the game are not brilliancies of the chessboard, because the chess pieces which play the game are mad, and that the White King is left in check while his comrades go about checkmating his crimson

counterpart, because everyone and everything is mad. However, it seems to me that consistently using this excuse does very little justice to Carroll's creativity as an artist. The dissertation has endeavoured to show that the chess problem does have a precise logic of its own, that it can be understood by seeing the game as a contest that is waged between its individual participants and not between opposing entities that silently control the actions of the Looking-Glass chessmen.

Ultimately, I have sought to demonstrate that the chess problem's importance to the novel is the manner in which its metaphorical implications systematically dispel the story's superficial theme of Alice's so-called "victory" in making the journey from innocence to experience. These implications further demonstrate that the game serves as a lesson for young Alice, who undergoes a humiliating defeat in losing the freedom of youth without benefitting from the expected social gains of age. By examining the significance of the regimented journey of the Alice Pawn, her capturing of the Red Queen and checkmating of the Red King, the chess problem has served to underscore that the freedom and independence with which Alice associates womanhood are ethereal, and like life, are really no more than a dream.

Appendix 1

Looking-Glass Chess

1.1 Carroll's Chess Problem

						RN	
		WK					
					WN		
				RK			
			AL	RQ			
		WQ			WR		

"White Pawn (Alice) to play, and win in eleven moves"

The initial position of Carroll's chess problem sees the following pieces arranged as in the diagram above: The Red Knight is preparing for battle on g8, the Red King is sleeping on e4 and the Red Queen is giving Alice her instructions on e2. The White Knight is poised on f5, the White Queen is mumbling to herself on c1, the White Rook is standing fixedly on f1, the White King is waiting for Haigha's return on c6, and Alice is curtsying demurely on d2.

1.2 Carroll's solution

Carroll then uses descriptive notation to denote the moves that follow:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. ALICE MEETS R.Q. | 1. R.Q. TO K.R's 4TH |
| 2. ALICE THROUGH Q'S 3D
(by Railway) TO Q's
4TH (Tweedledum and
Tweedledee) | 2. W.Q. TO Q.B's 4TH
(after shawl) |
| 3. ALICE MEETS W.Q.
(with shawl) | 3. W.Q. to Q.B's 5TH
(becomes sheep) |

4. ALICE TO Q's 5TH
(shop, river, shop)
5. ALICE TO Q's 6TH
(Humpty Dumpty)
6. ALICE TO Q's 7TH
(forest)
7. W.KT. TAKES R.KT.
8. ALICE TO Q's 8TH
(coronation)
9. ALICE BECOMES QUEEN
10. ALICE CASTLES
(feast)
11. ALICE TAKES R.Q.
AND WINS

4. W.Q. TO K.B's 8TH
(leaves egg on shelf)
5. W.Q. TO Q.B'S 8TH
(flying from R.KT)
6. R.KT TO K'S 2ND (CH.)

7. W.KT. TO K.B's 5TH
8. R.Q. TO K's SQ.
(examination)
9. QUEENS CASTLE
10. W.Q. TO Q.R's 6TH
(soup)

- (Carroll CW 125)

Appendix 2

Algebraic Notation and Chess Terminology

2.1 Algebraic Notation

Algebraic Notation is a method of recording one's moves in a game of chess. The horizontal ranks of the chess board are labelled with the numbers 1 through 8 in succession, starting at White's first rank and ending at White's eighth rank, while the vertical files are labelled with the letters a through h in succession, beginning at each player's Queen's Rook file (the a-file) and ending at his or her King's Rook file (the h-file):

a8	b8	c8	d8	e8	f8	g8	h8
a7	b7	c7	d7	e7	f7	g7	h7
a6	b6	c6	d6	e6	f6	g6	h6
a5	b5	c5	d5	e5	f5	g5	h5
a4	b4	c4	d4	e4	f4	g4	h4
a3	b3	c3	d3	e3	f3	g3	h3
a2	b2	c2	d2	e2	f2	g2	h2
a1	b1	c1	d1	e1	f1	g1	h1

A move is recorded by writing down: (1) The first letter of the piece to be moved, K = King, Q = Queen, R = Rook, B = Bishop, N = Knight, (unless the piece is a pawn, in which case no letter is written down), and then (2) The square to which the piece is being moved; ex. For White, "Pawn to King Four" is written as "e4" (it is "e5" for Black), "King to King's Bishop's Seven" is written as "Kf7" (or "Kf2" for Black) and "Knight to Queen's Rook Five" is written as "Na5" (or "Na4" for Black). A capture is denoted by the letter "x", and so if White plays "Bishop takes King's Knight on Queen's Rook One", this is recorded as "Bxa8" (Note: With this system of recording, the player need not specify what particular piece he or she is capturing). The following symbols are also used in algebraic notation:

"+"	- Check"
"#"	- Checkmate
"??"	- Blunder"
"?"	- Poor move
"?!"	- Dubious move
"!?"	- Interesting move
"!"	- Good move
"!!"	- Brilliancy
"++/--"	- White is winning
"--/++"	- Black is winning
"+/"	- White is better
"=/+"	- Black is better
"="	- Draw
"0-1"	- White Resigns
"1-0"	- Black Resigns

2.2 The Algebraic Solution of Carroll's Chess Problem

Adopting Algebraic notation, the solution to Carroll's chess problem in Through the Looking-Glass (from its initial position) looks like this: 1. ...Qh5, 2. d4, 3. Qc4, 4. Qc5, 5. d5, 6. Qf8, 7. d6, 8. Qc8, 9. d7, Ne7+, 10. Nxe7, 11. Nf5, 12. d8=Q, Qe8+, 13. Qa6, 14. Qxe8#.

2.3 Chess Terminology

What follows is a series of common terms used by chess players in order to describe certain tactical or strategical factors that make up the game:

Cheapo: A term used to describe a dubious move that is played in the hopes that an opponent will miss a not-so-obvious threat and hence, blunder.

Corral: An attempt to corner an enemy piece (usually a Knight) with one's own pieces, for the purpose of winning it.

Discovered Check: A check that is given by one piece when another moves out of its path to the enemy king. Its notation is usually given by "dis +" or "dis ch".

Double Check: A discovered check, but with the moving piece also giving check. The only way to defend against double check is for the King to be moved. Its notation is usually given by "dbl +" or "dbl ch".

En Passant: A french term translated as "in passing", En Passant denotes the capture of a enemy pawn which has moved two spaces for its first move and now stands directly beside an enemy pawn. Because in moving two spaces, the pawn has apparently deprived its enemy of capturing it, En Passant states that the pawn may be captured by removing it from the board and placing the attacking pawn on the square that it would normally find itself after capture.

Fork: A term (usually applied to the Knight, though not exclusively) that denotes the attack of more than one enemy piece at one time, by a single unit.

Pin: The restriction of an enemy unit's mobility by placing one's pieces in such a manner that if the enemy unit does move, a piece of greater value (usually a King, Queen or Rook) will be exposed to capture.

Skewer: The opposite of a pin, a skewer is the attack on a high-valued enemy piece, whose resulting movement exposes a piece of lesser value to capture.

Tempo: This term refers to a gain in time. If a developed piece is forced to make extra moves because it has subjected itself to attack then it is losing tempi.

Appendix 3

Areas of Awareness for Looking-Glass Chessmen

In analyzing Carroll's chess problem, I have come to the conclusion that characters in the game move the way they do because they lack an understanding of the true position of the various pieces on the giant Looking-Glass chess board. The White Queen does not begin harassing the Red King with a series of checks at the game's outset because her own area of awareness (the area corresponding to the available squares to which she is currently able to move or on which she is currently able to capture) does not include the e4 square (the Red King's sleeping grounds). The Red Knight exposes himself to capture from the White Knight, not because he makes a poor move, but simply because he takes a risk in his hunt for enemy pieces. On g8, the Red Knight sees only that e7, f6 and h6 are unoccupied, but cannot hope to know whether they are controlled by enemy forces.

Alice does not work coherently with the other White Pieces to effect an immediate checkmate of the Red King, because her own area of awareness (or influence) is limited to the squares on either side of her. Curiously, she appears to be the only piece whose area of awareness is not related to the manner in which she moves (although, like her movement, it is limited).

If we can accept that Looking-Glass chess is controlled by the participants in the game and not some other-worldly force (for which the novel rightly gives no evidence), then we can begin to understand why key moves of Carroll's solution might not perhaps immediately strike us as brilliancies of the chess board, but are quite sound nonetheless.

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