





ALICE'S WANDERLAND  
A SHORT FILM



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A SHORT FILM



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PITCH BIBLE

*With drawings, concept art and storyboards by  
Deborah Ho*

DEBORAH HO

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## CONCEPT HOOK

Alice.  
3 worlds.  
Reality.  
Dreams.  
And the combination of the two.

*Alice's Wonderland* is a 2D animated Surrealist adaptation of Lewis Carroll's classic *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* which explores the synthesis of dreams and reality through Alice's search for identity and control.

My film aims to be poignant, clever and reflective about the transition between youth and adulthood, and the power of identity. It will be a loose adaptation/sequel of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* mixed with Surrealist elements from the likes of Salvador Dali and Rene Magritte. Surrealism aims to resolve the difference between dreams and reality by creating a "super reality" that encapsulates both worlds.

My film will ideally be included in the short film circuit and eventually have a strong online presence in the future. It is aimed at people who are transitioning between two significant stages in their life and those who enjoy unconventional perspectives on conventional stories. My audience is also familiar with both *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and Surrealist art.

## S T O R Y

Alice, aged 8, finds her parents overbearing and shallow, her family is neglectful and ignorant. She starts to actively lucid dream as a way to escape. In the dream world she finds her family's counterparts; Mad Hatter in place of her father, Queen as her mother and the Caterpillar as her uncle. The only difference is their counterparts are the complete opposite and she can control how they act towards her.

After a few trips into her dreams, Alice realises the silliness and outrageousness of the people in Wonderland are annoying and tiresome to her, so she aims to discipline them and take their power away. She then realises the “role reversals” in her dreams have affected her as well, making her something she didn't want to be: her parents. Despite wanting to escape their control in the first place, Alice is now inflicting the same control on others.

After this realisation, she goes back to the real world and sees that her dreams have slowly infiltrated her reality too. Just as the attitudes of Alice's real world (discipline and control) have infected her in the dream world, Wonderland's inhabitants and their ideals (spontaneity and silliness) have filtered into their reality counterparts.

Eventually her worlds merge into a Surrealist “super reality”, which encapsulates the beliefs and standards of both worlds to seek a resolution that accommodates the balance of the good and the bad.

WORLD NO. 1

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# THE REAL WORLD



## INTRODUCTION

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# THE REAL WORLD

The real world is a dull, boring and overbearing place. It lacks colour, vibrancy and feels cold. In Alice's eyes, every aspect is precise, straight and rigid; including the people in it.

Her family consists of her mother; a strict presence, her father; a very cautious man; her uncle; ignorant and oblivious, and her two twin cousins who are very closed off from the world.

Alice lacks a connection to her family in the real world, which leads to her need to escape it.







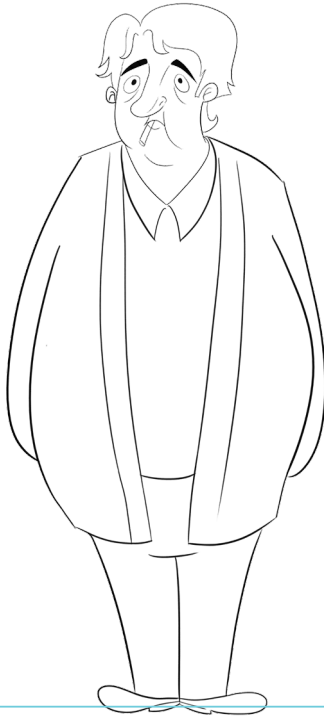
ALICE



ALICE'S FATHER



ALICE'S MOTHER



ALICE'S UNCLE

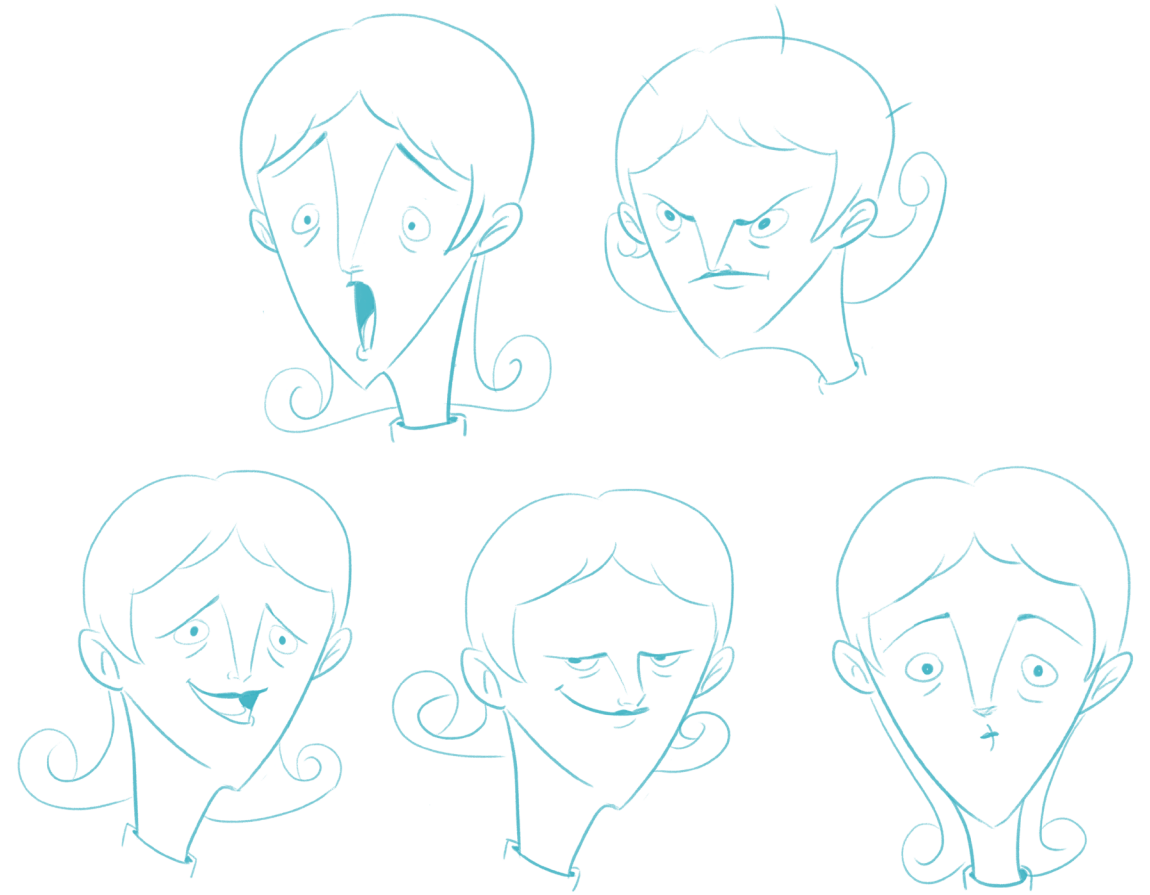


ALICE'S TWIN COUSINS



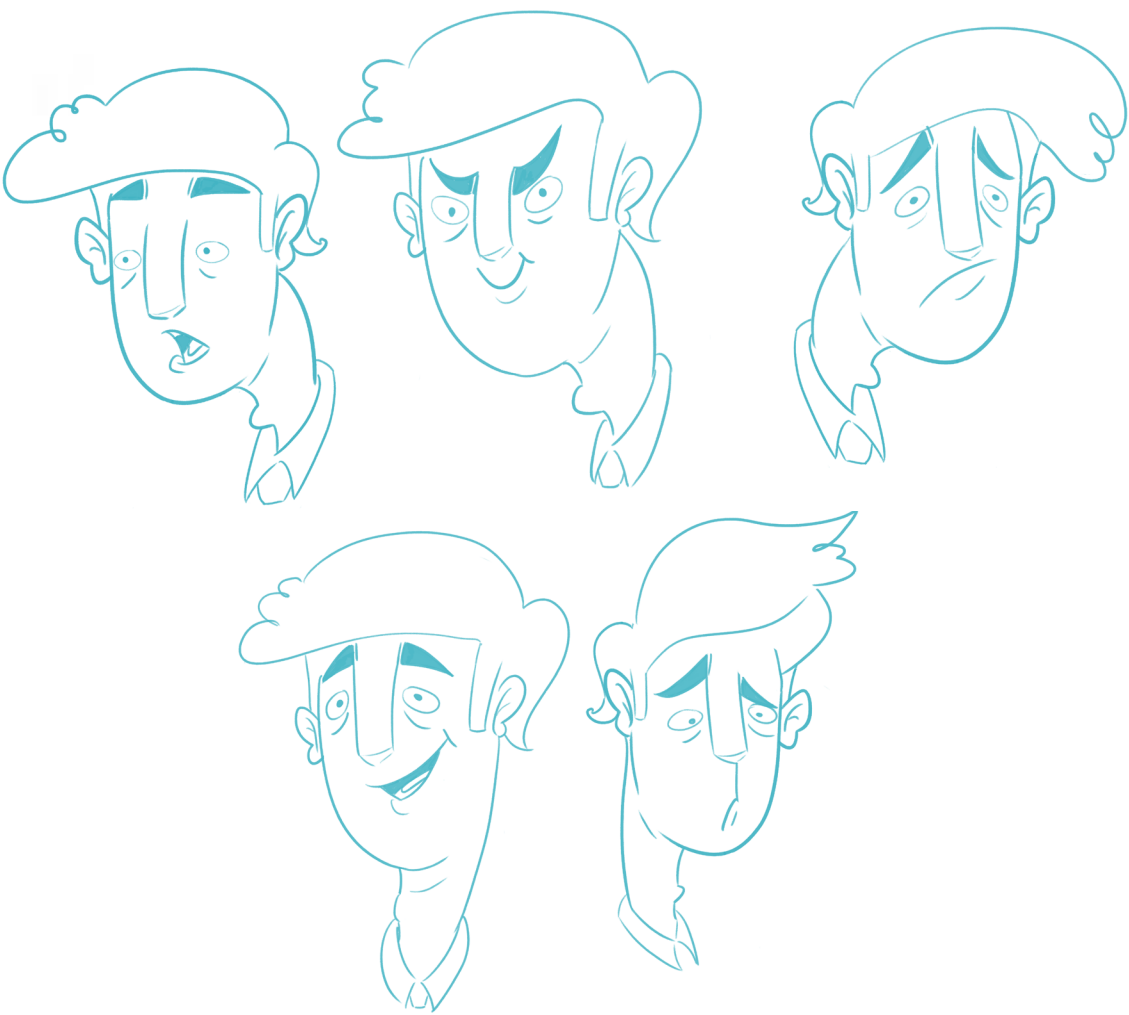
ALICE

Alice, aged 8, is a bit feral, likes playing in the mud and has a fun and spontaneous personality. Alice is a considerate yet temperamental young woman who feels her identity is being controlled and manipulated by her parents.



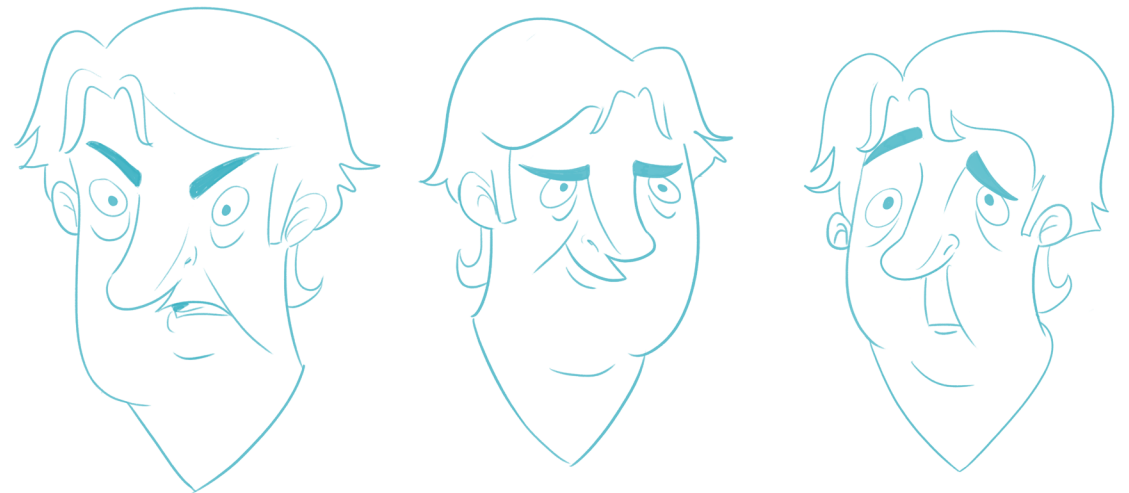
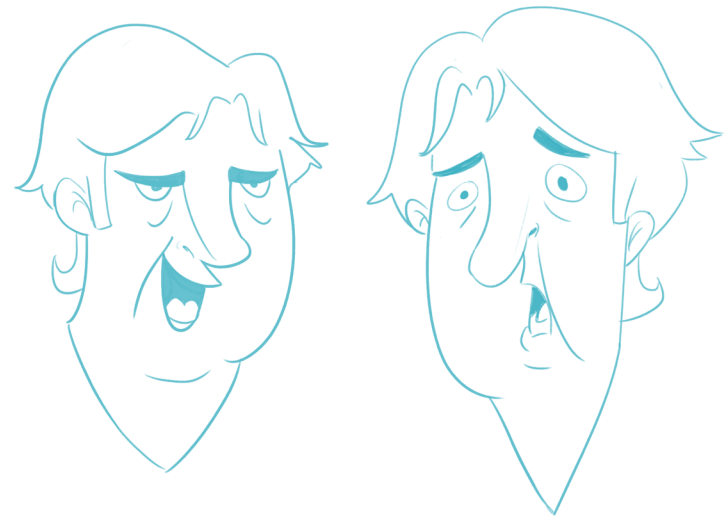
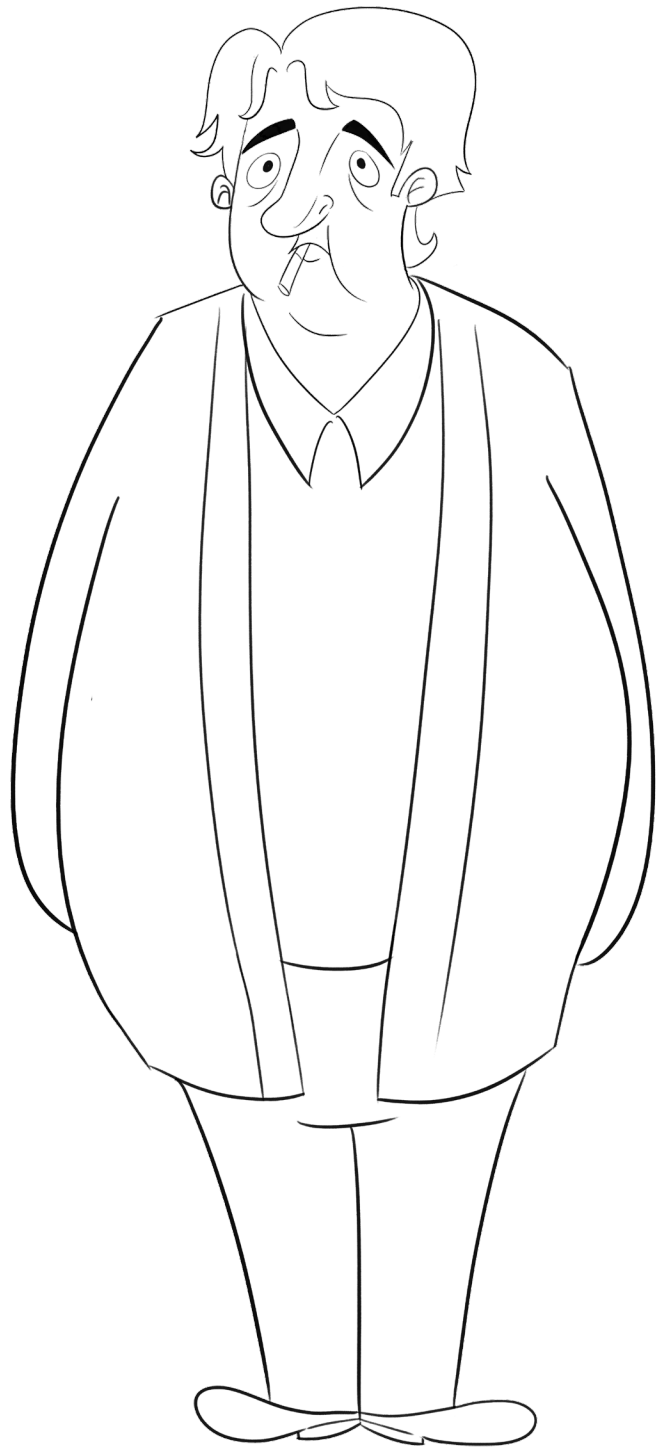
ALICE'S MOTHER

Alice's mother is an obedient perfectionist who follows society's rules and its ideals of women. She is strict and timid. She enjoys painting and constantly lectures Alice to follow the rules and become more like her.



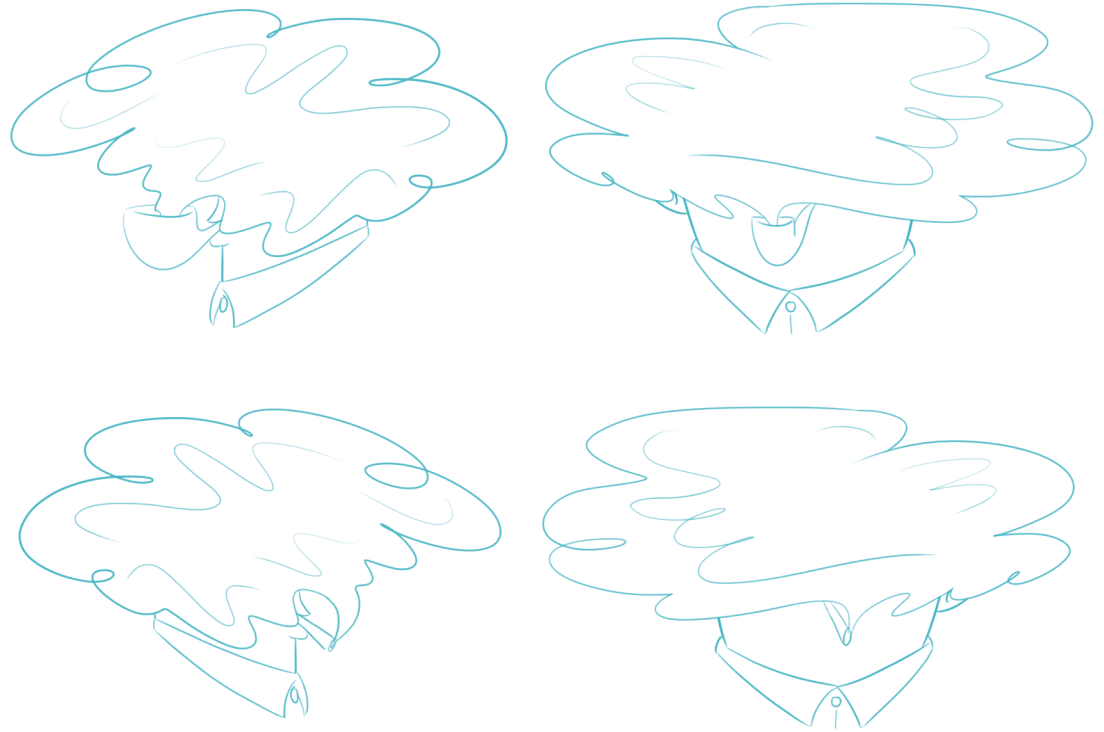
ALICE'S FATHER

Alice's father is a nervous, awkward and cautious man, and is scared of what other people think. He is ashamed of making mistakes. He is quite passive when it comes to Alice's interactions with her mother.



## ALICE'S UNCLE

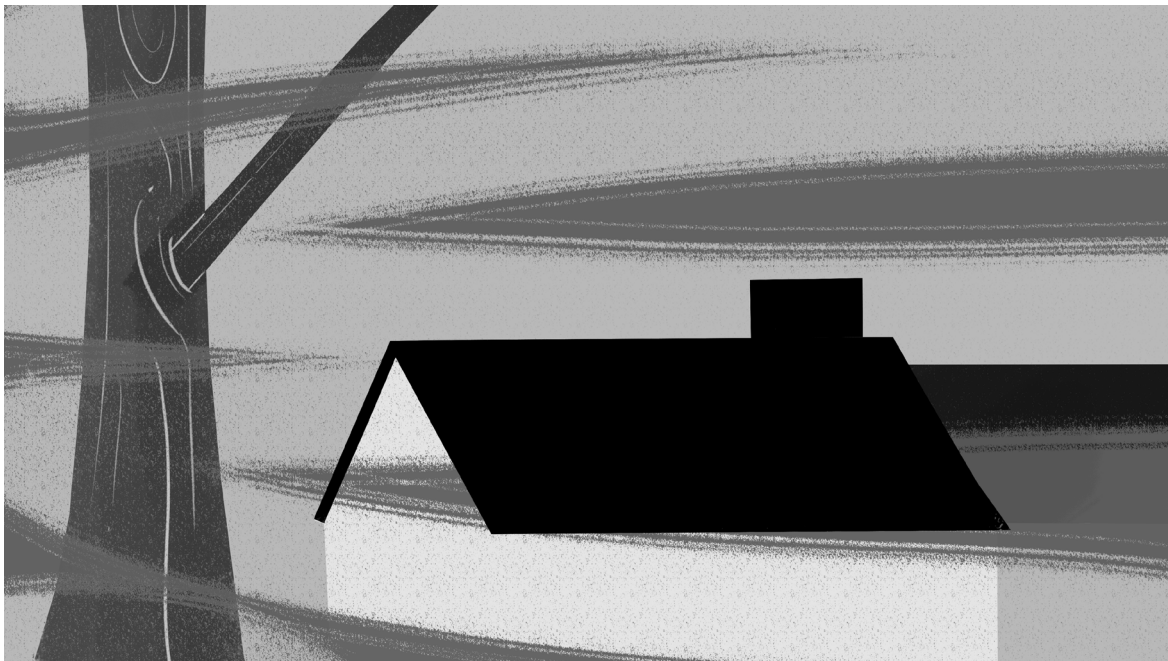
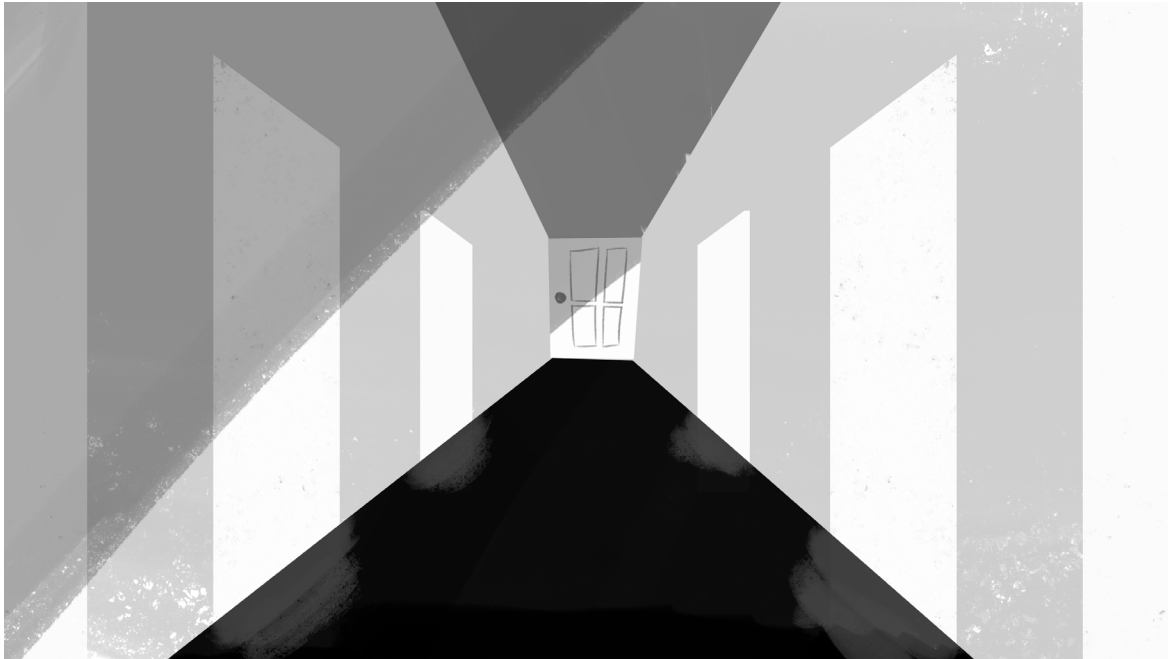
Alice's uncle is a heavy smoking, ignorant and oblivious man, more concerned with himself than anyone else. He is quite dim and a poor listener. His interaction with Alice is minimal and she finds him useless.



# ALICE'S TWIN COUSINS

Alice's twin cousins are very closed off and mysterious. They are tall and towering and do not like sharing. We never get to see their faces behind the cloud of smoke.





## REALITY BACKGROUNDS

**Top left:** A highly symmetrical and dull hallway

**Bottom left:** External look at Alice's neighbourhood

**Top right:** Long establishing shot of Alice's home

My approach to the backgrounds were very simple, I wanted to create a world that felt very boring and murky, defined by very straight horizontal and vertical lines. I used black and white to portray the lack of fun in reality and to contrast the dream world in a strong way.



## REALITY LAYOUTS

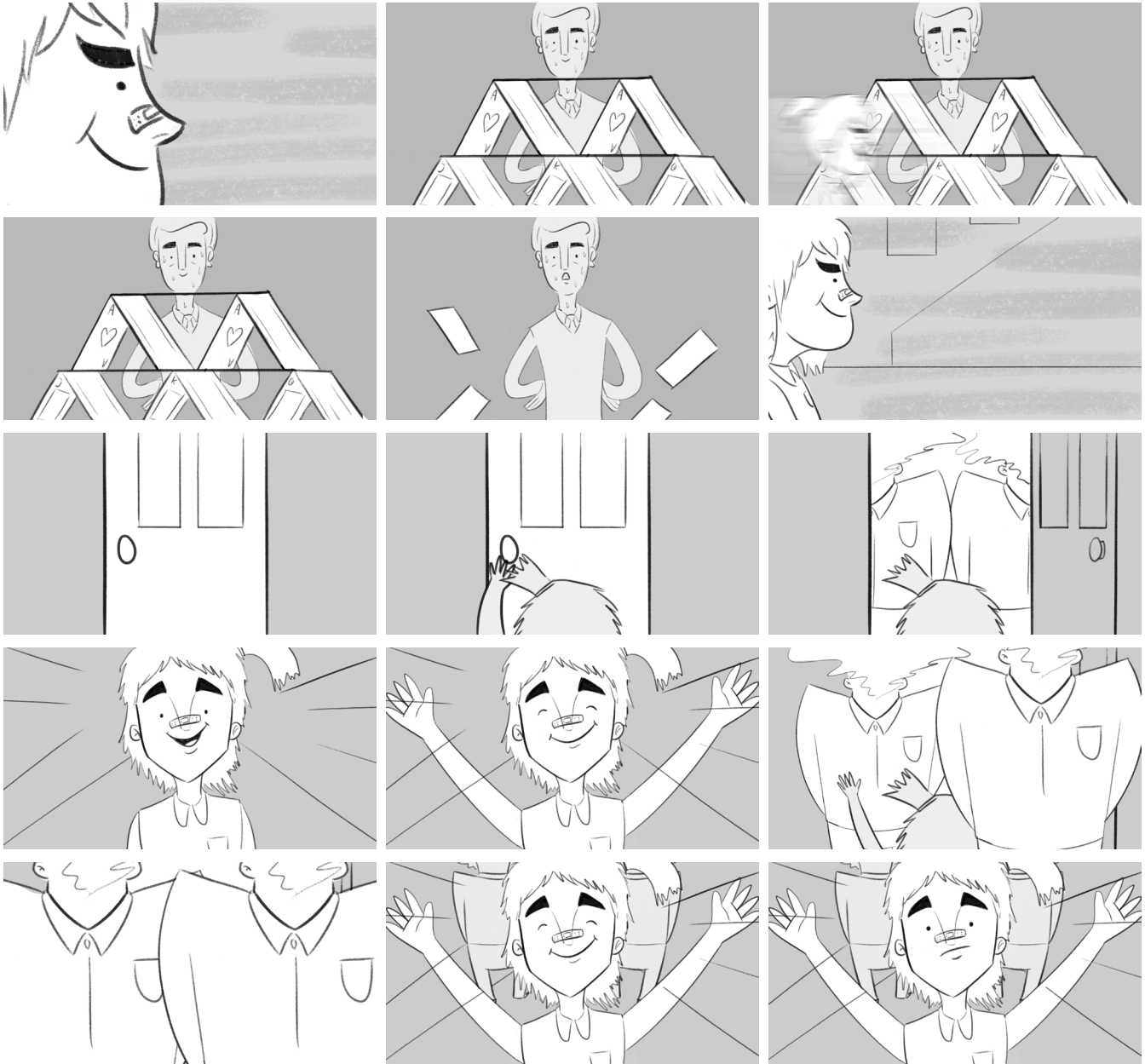
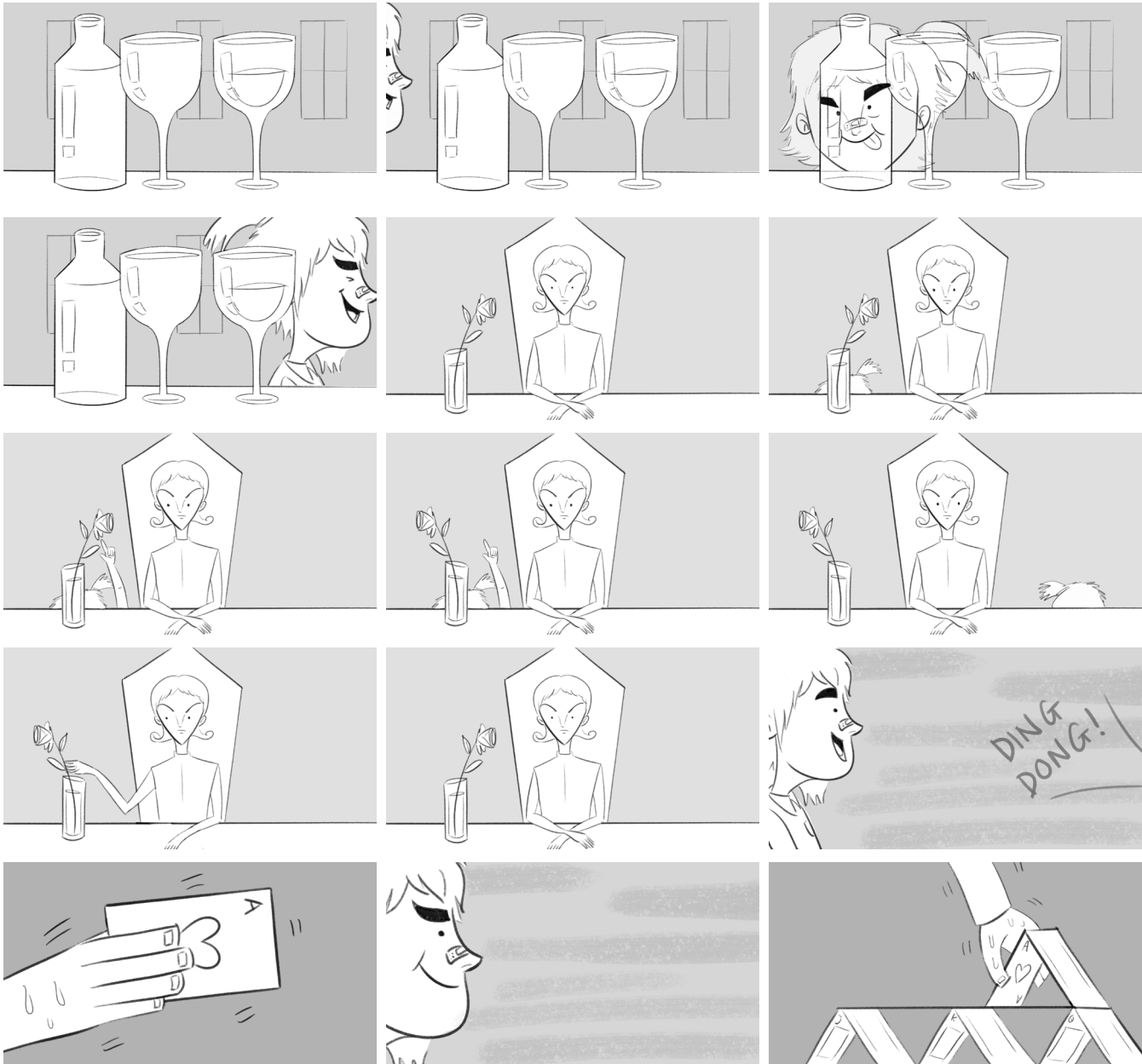
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**Top left:** Alice talking to her mother

**Bottom left:** Shot of the rabbit hole

**Top right:** Alice followed by her two twin cousins

As for the combination of the character renders and the backgrounds, I wanted to form a huge sense of isolation between the Alice and her surroundings (making her small and literally cutting her off in the scene to reflect how her family in reality treats her). Her reality is supposed to be quite overwhelming but at the same time very hollow and empty.



# REALITY STORYBOARD

The following storyboard extract establishes the main relationship between Alice and her family in a quick and succinct way. Alice likes to fiddle, play around and embrace her family but those feelings are not reciprocated. Alice's mother is a perfectionist and doesn't like people changing her arrangements, her father is very nervous and takes a long time to make something small and her twin cousins ignore her completely.

WORLD NO. 2

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# THE DREAM WORLD





## INTRODUCTION

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# THE DREAM WORLD

The dream world is an escape for Alice. It is a light and pastel place, filled with curves and loose energy. By lucid dreaming, Alice is able to control her identity and the way people perceive her. She is also able to make her dream world the complete opposite of her reality.

Of course, she soon realises the complete opposite doesn't necessarily mean "good". Problems start to arise as the "opposite" of her real world isn't quite what Alice imagined. The inhabitants start to go crazy because they don't need to follow the strict rules of reality.

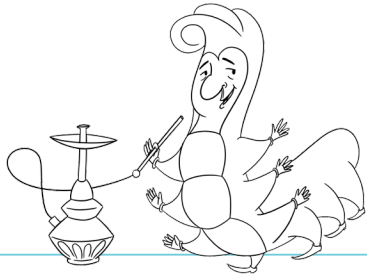
The Queen may be independent unlike her mother, but she is actually domineering and aggressive; the Mad Hatter is not as cautious as her father but his silliness is annoying; the Caterpillar is significantly more insightful than her uncle, but has an air of arrogance. Tweedledee and Tweedledum are more engaging than her twin cousins but they bother Alice too much.

Alice is able to control their actions and aims to discipline them.





ALICE



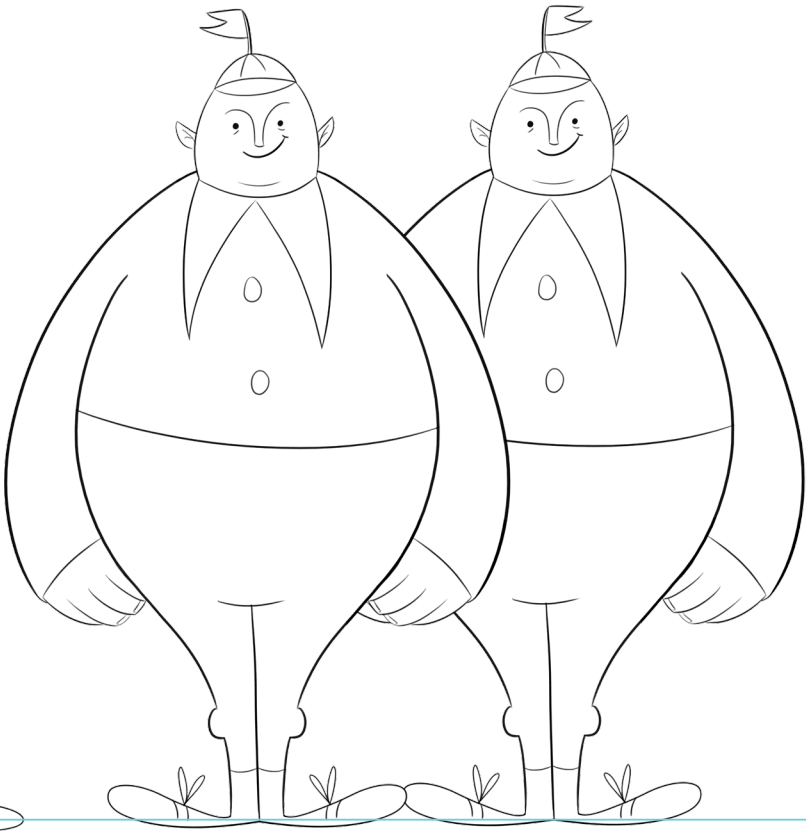
CATERPILLAR



THE RED QUEEN

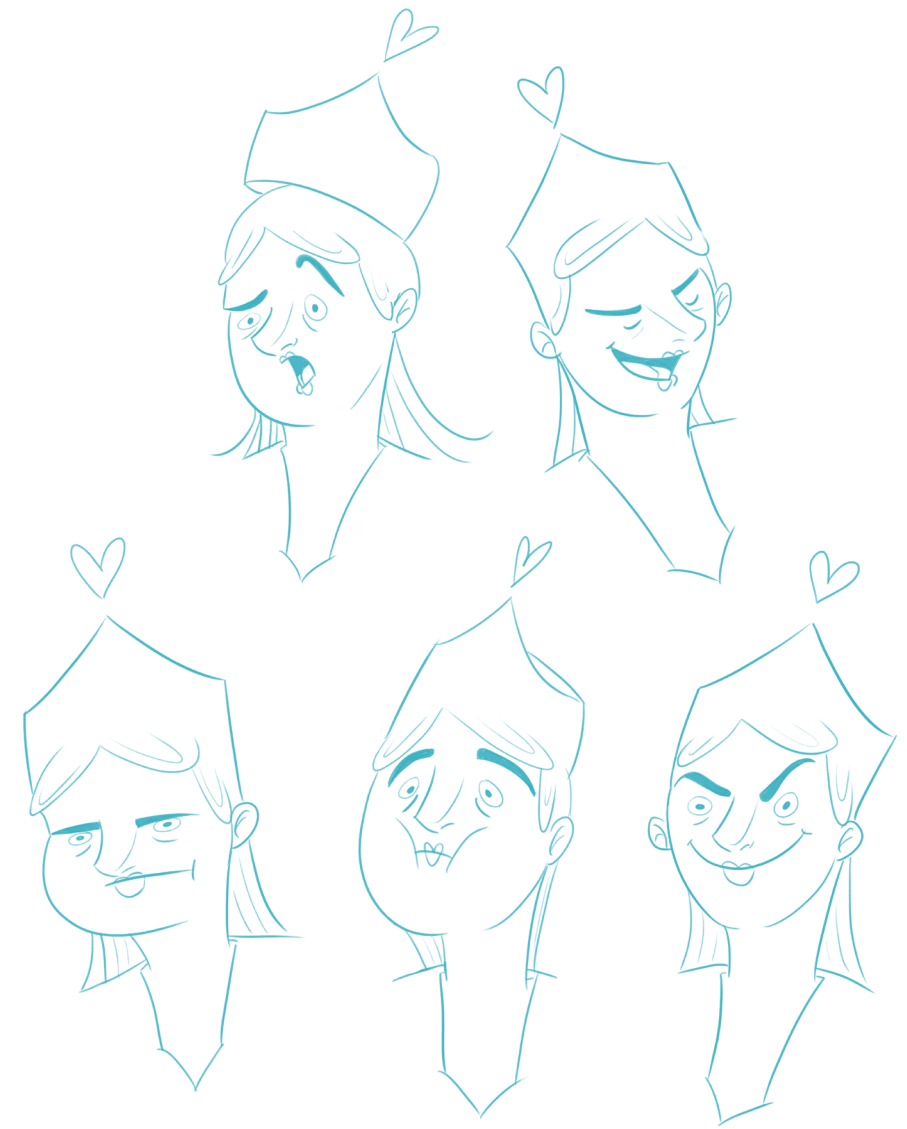


THE MAD HATTER



TWEEDLEDEE AND TWEEDLEDUM





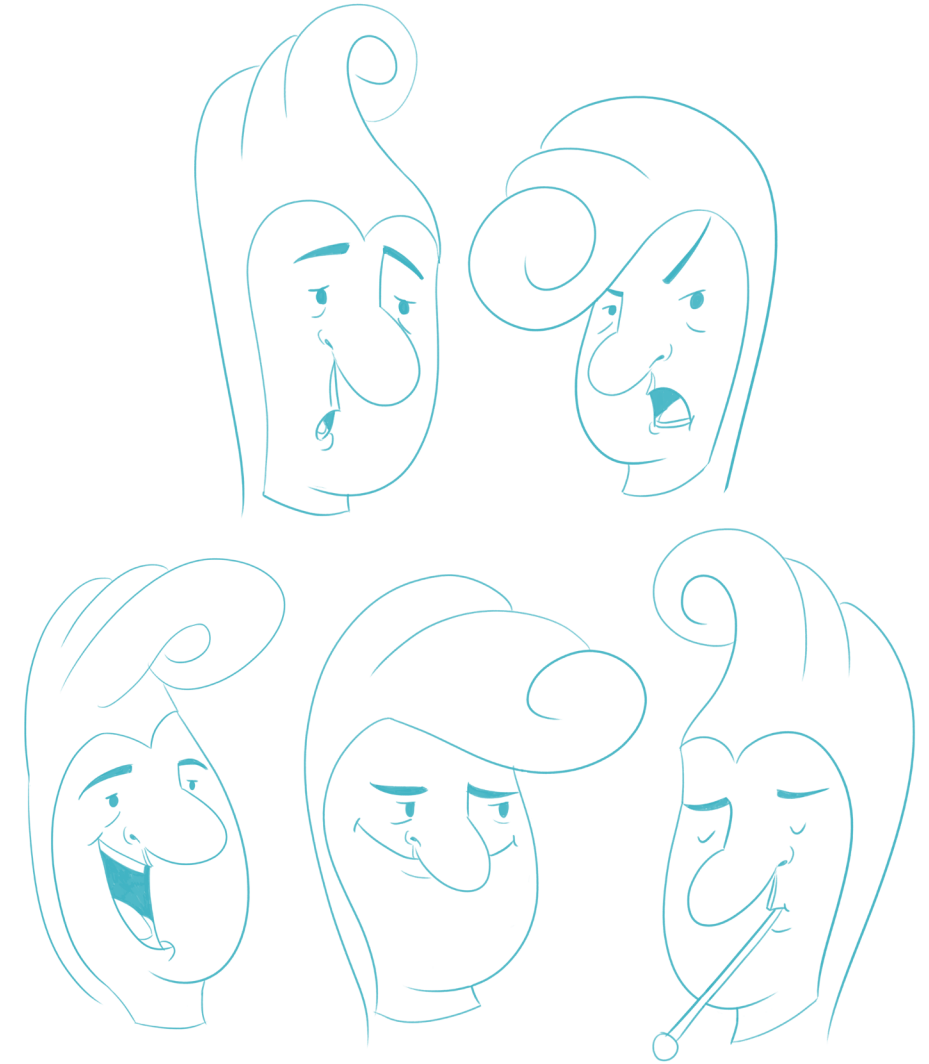
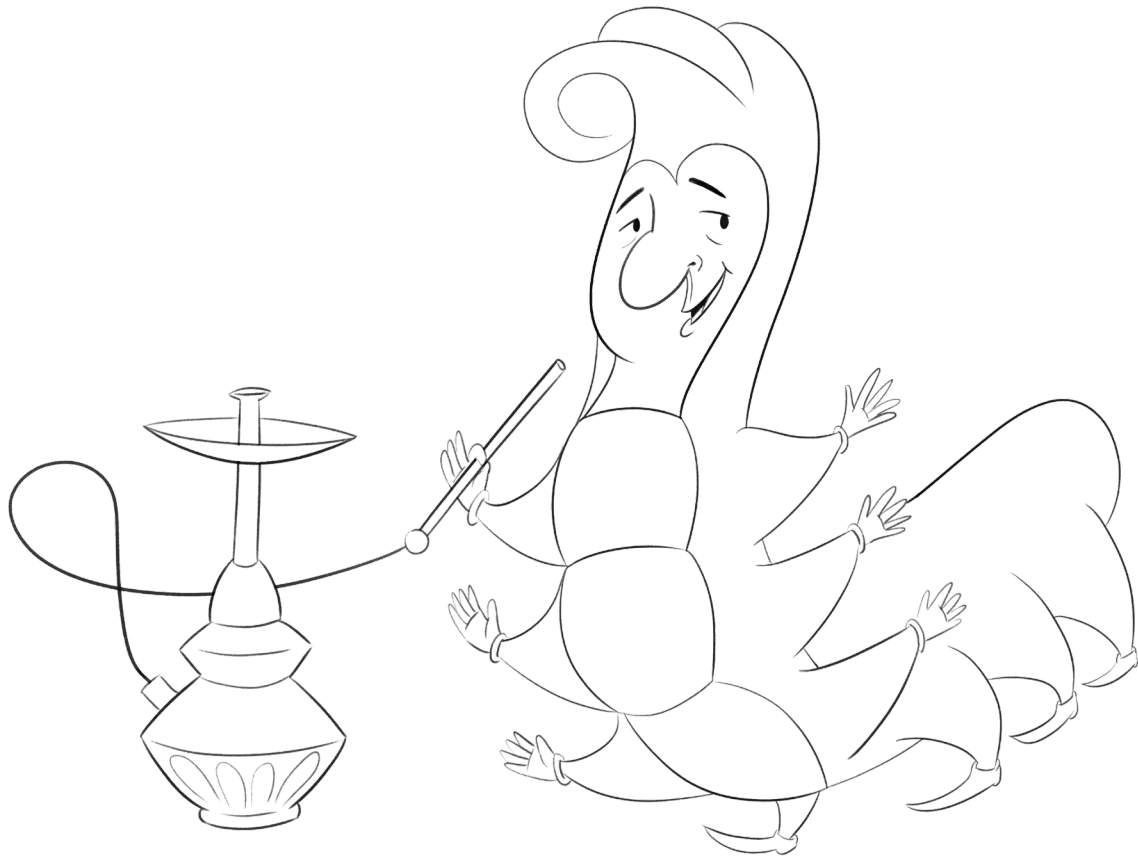
## THE RED QUEEN

The Queen is independent, domineering and doesn't submit to the social norm; she creates new rules to suit her. While she appears to be the complete opposite of Alice's mother, her need for dictatorship and rebellion can be excessive.



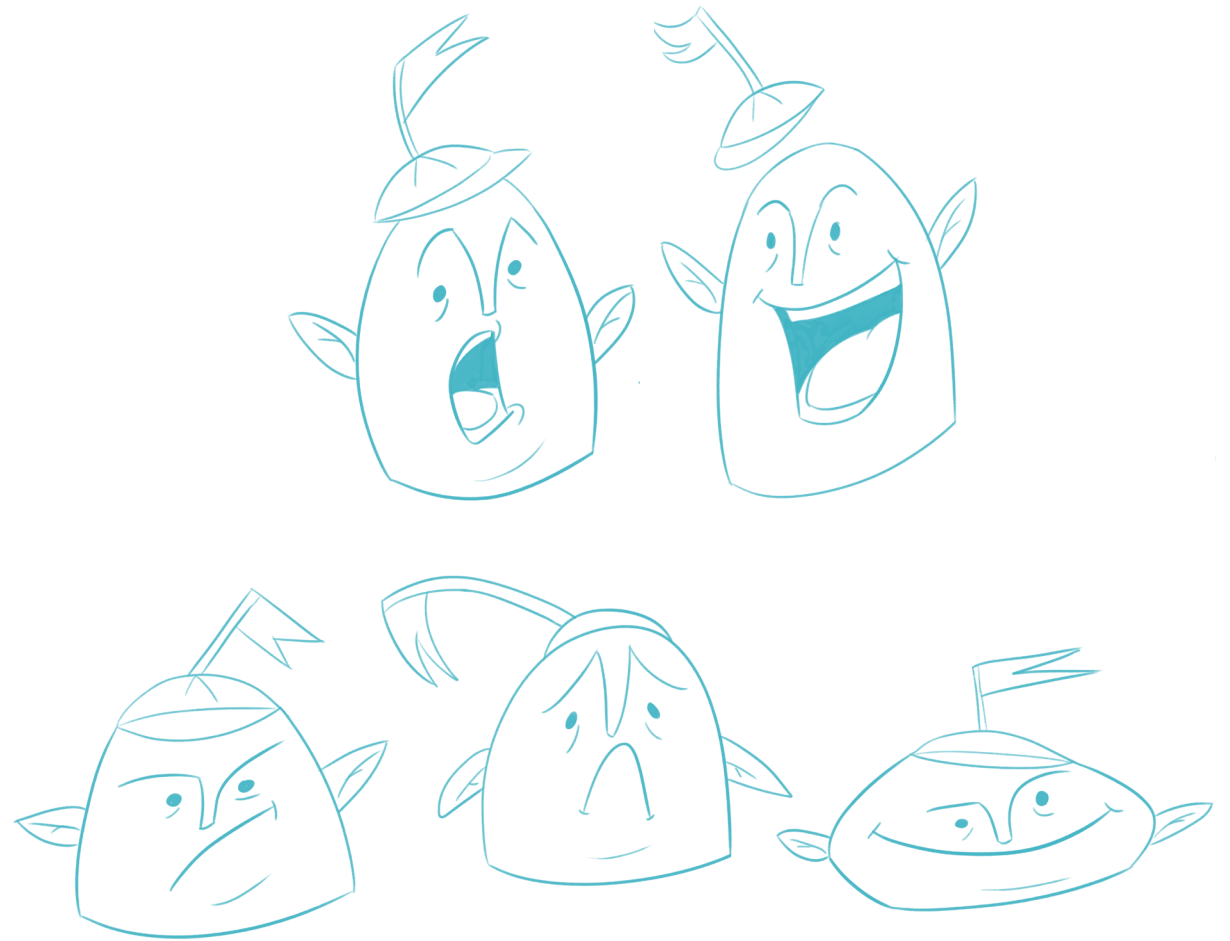
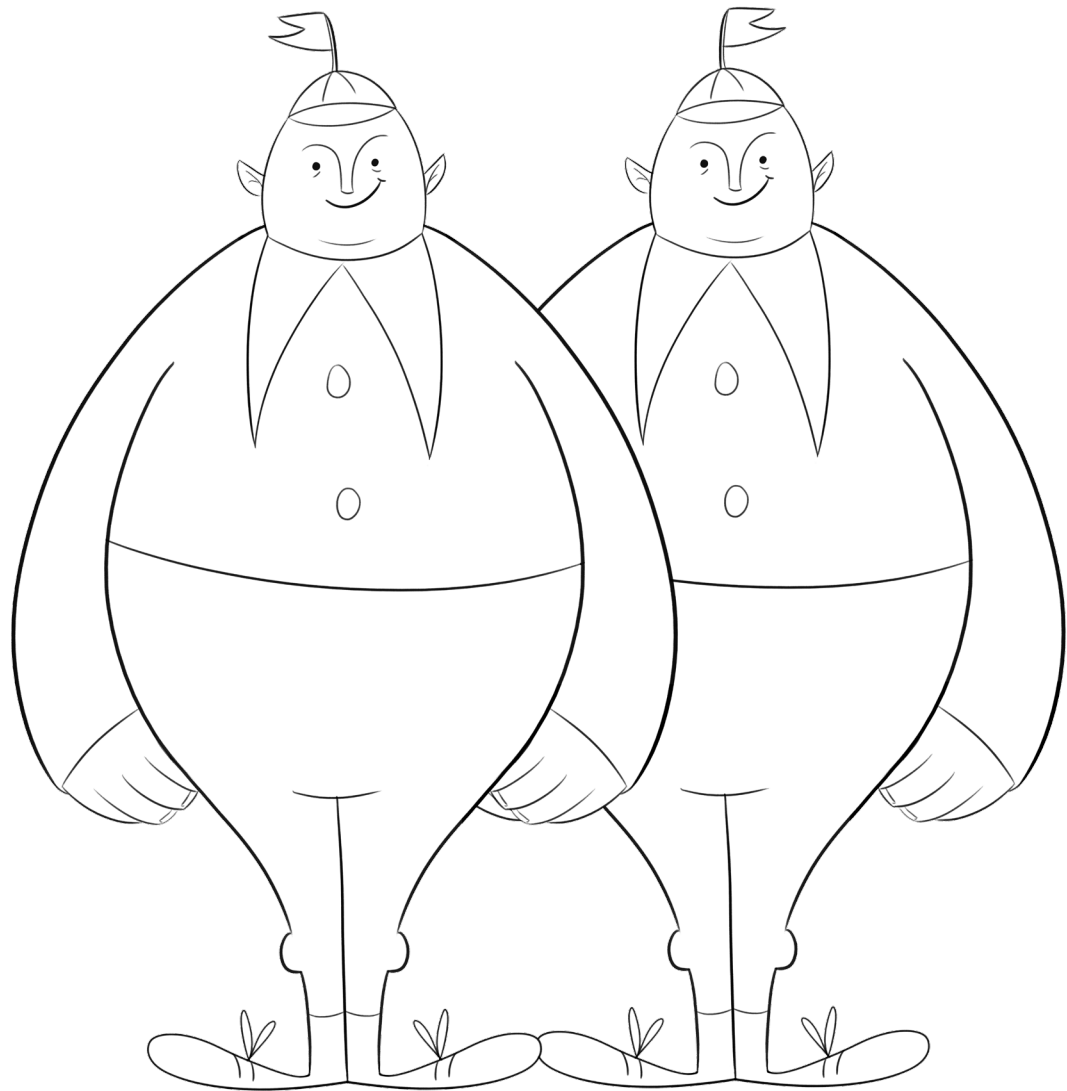
## THE MAD HATTER

The Mad Hatter is a man who likes making mistakes, being silly and living without any consequence. He is elegantly clumsy and feels it's his purpose to turn things on their heads.



## CATERPILLAR

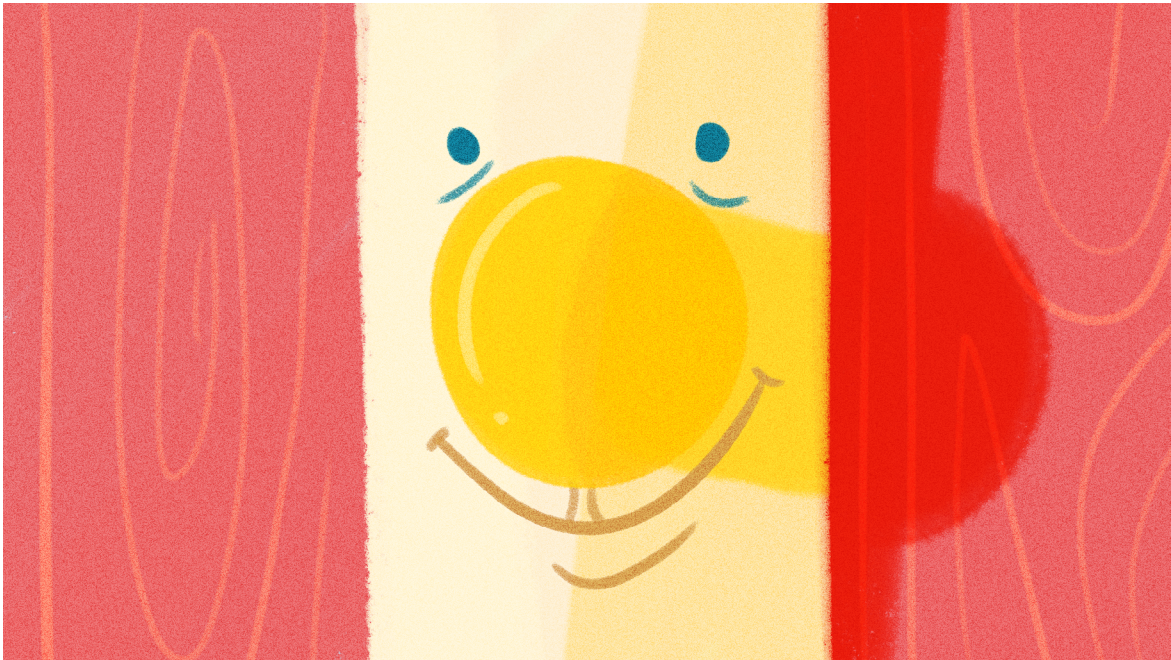
The Caterpillar is curious and insightful, and gives Alice advice regarding her troubles. His thoughts often are formed through imagery from the smoke from his hookah.



## TWINS

Tweedledum and Tweedledee are twins that like to engage in never ending games with Alice. They are fun, but also can be nuisances. They are the complete opposite of her twin cousins in reality; you get to see their faces and they are much more enthusiastic.





## DREAM BACKGROUNDS

- Top left:** An interior Wonderland  
**Bottom left:** Alice's perspective when shrunk down  
**Top right:** Door knob

My backgrounds for the dream world utilise warm reds, yellows and purples to show how inviting the world is and how different it is from reality. I wanted a significant stark contrast so when Alice moves from each world we see a visual change in the scene through colour.



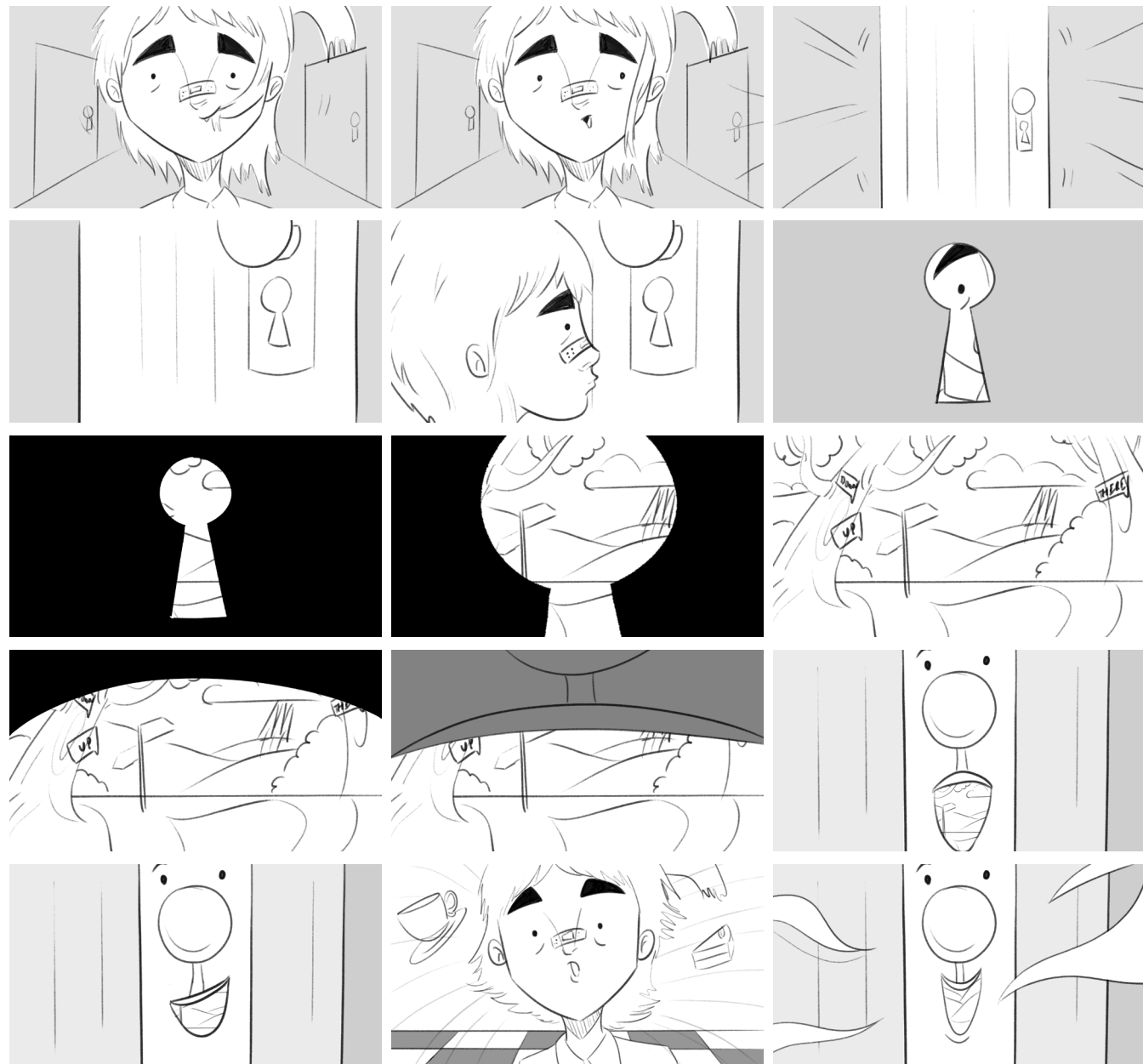


## DREAM LAYOUTS

- Top left:** One of the twins
- Bottom left:** Alice from reality looking into Wonderland
- Top right:** Mad Hatter trippin' out

These images also demonstrate the warmth is not only from the world but also the characters. The bottom left image with Alice looking through the keyhole is a good example of putting two of the worlds in one frame to show her transitioning from one world to the other in an interesting way.





## DREAM STORYBOARD #1

This is an example of a transition between Alice's reality and her dream world. Rather than her fall asleep and wake up, I wanted to be more creative with it and use interesting cuts while Alice is exploring in her home. She hears a noise and peers through the keyhole to see dream world on the other side, only to notice the doorknob talking to her; showing she has already been unconsciously transported.



## DREAM STORYBOARD #2

In this sequence, this is the first time we see Alice exerting her control in a more violent way. We see her conflicting with the Queen. Alice gets upset and uses her lucid dreaming powers to "remove" the Queen. She also starts to play around with the cards, shuffling them before tossing them aside. Alice finds all this power rather amusing at first, but then quickly realises what she has done.

WORLD NO. 3

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# THE SURREAL WORLD





## INTRODUCTION

# THE SURREAL WORLD

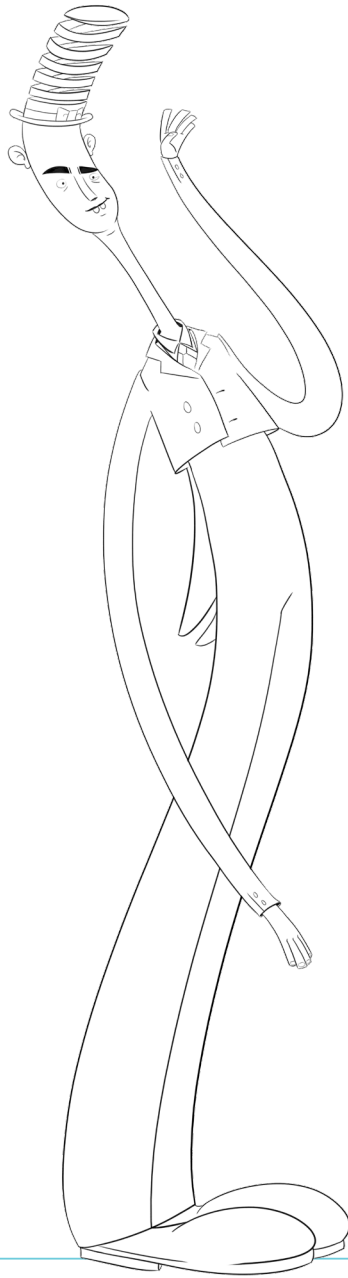
The surreal world resolves the two contradictory realms of dream and reality. It is a desaturated and neutral place filled with blues and purples.

Alice’s new “surrealist” family is a merge of the good and bad in both worlds and mixes original surrealist imagery by Magritte and Dali to inform their behaviour and new personality traits. The Mother Hybrid has the ability to paint herself, her Father Hybrid is more flexible, her Uncle Hybrid is a better listener, and her Twin Hybrid cousins are slightly more open.

The surreal world is reality and dreams combined; with an increased energy in its architectural structure and the people within it.



ALICE



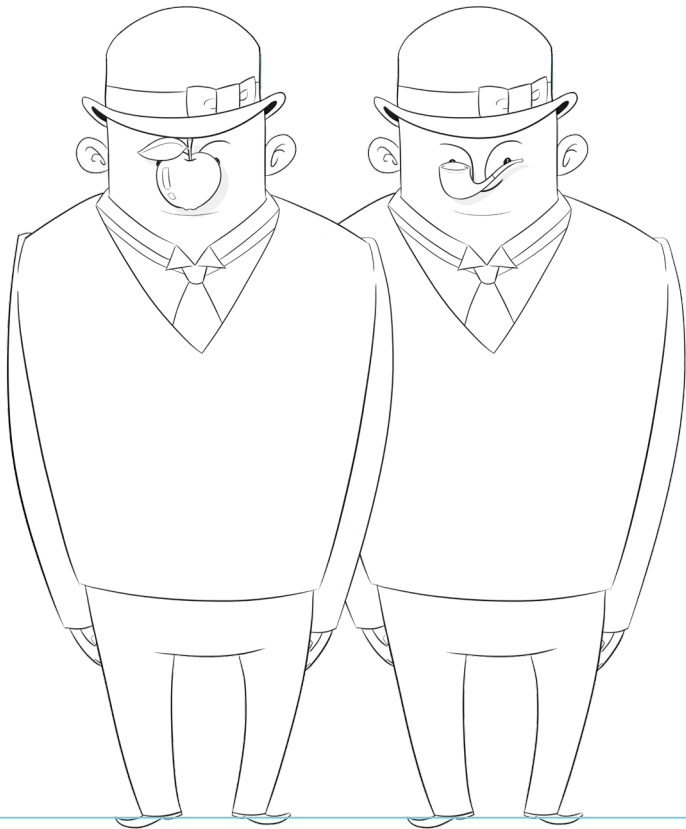
FATHER HYBRID



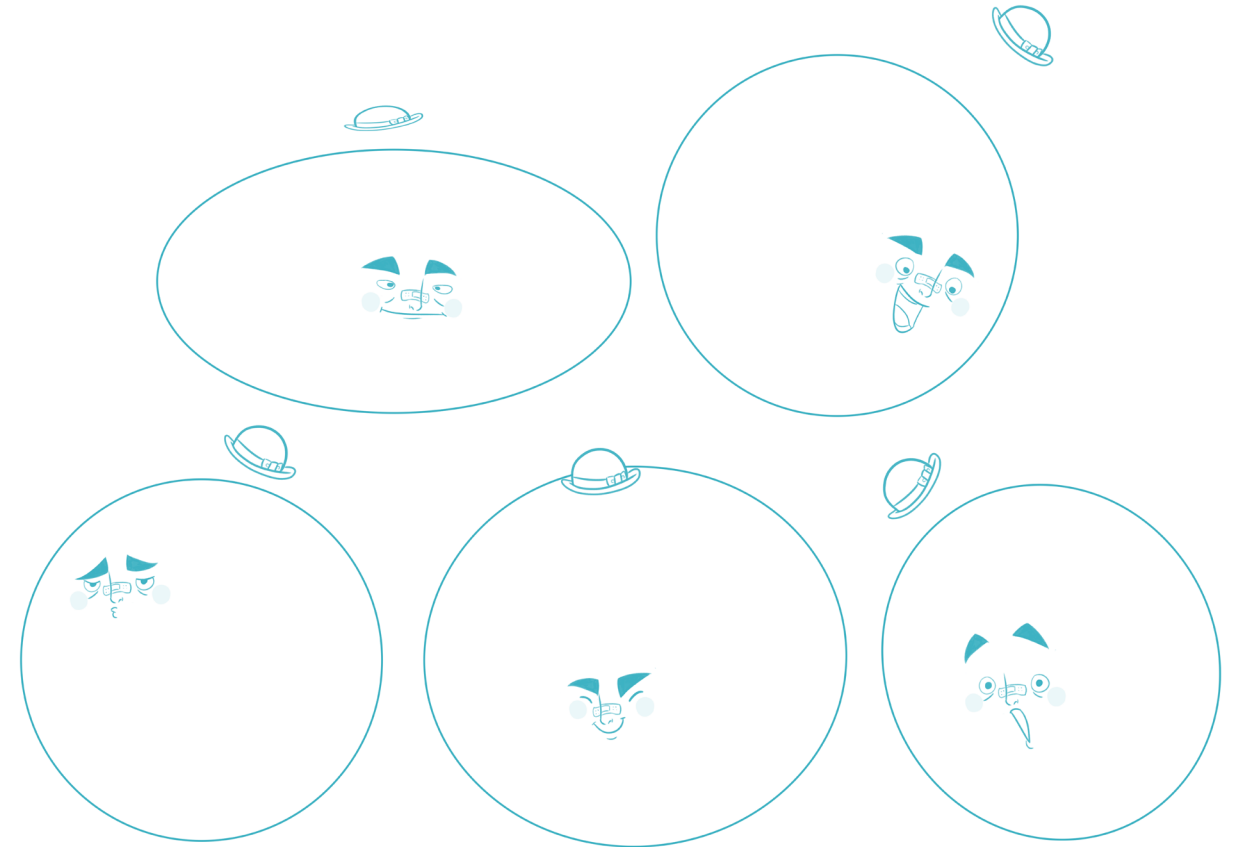
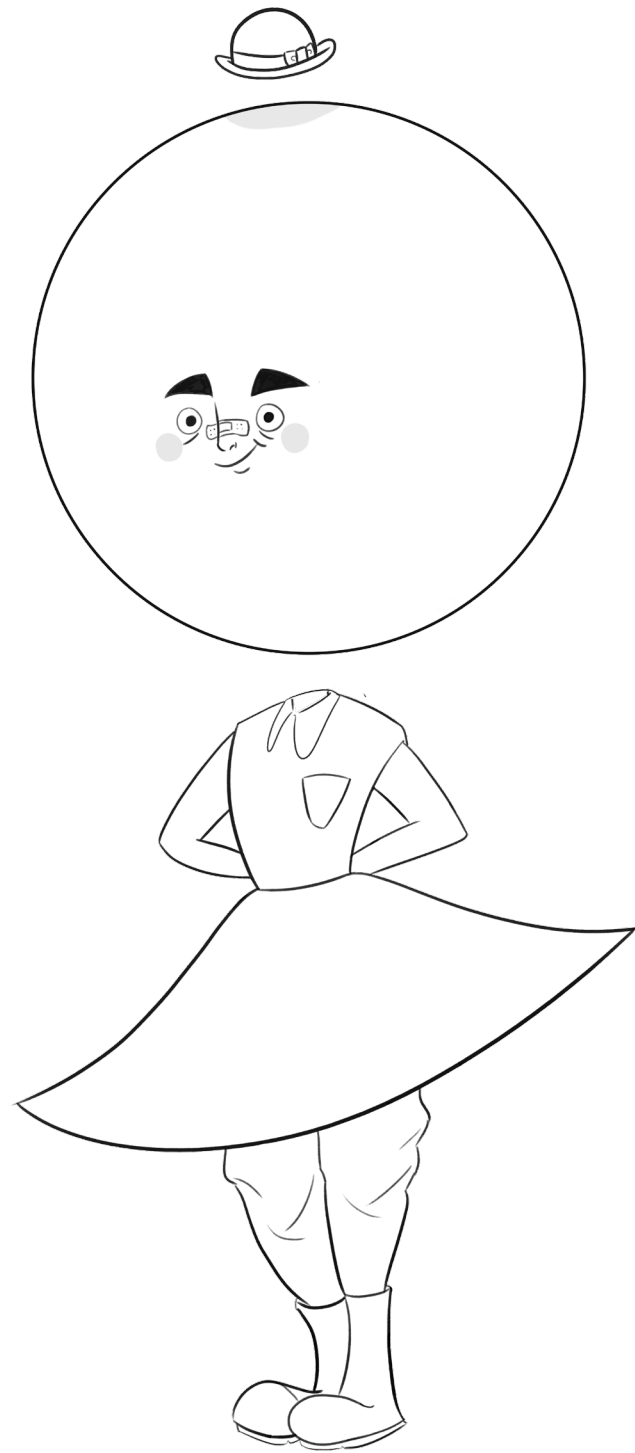
MOTHER HYBRID



UNCLE HYBRID



TWINS HYBRID



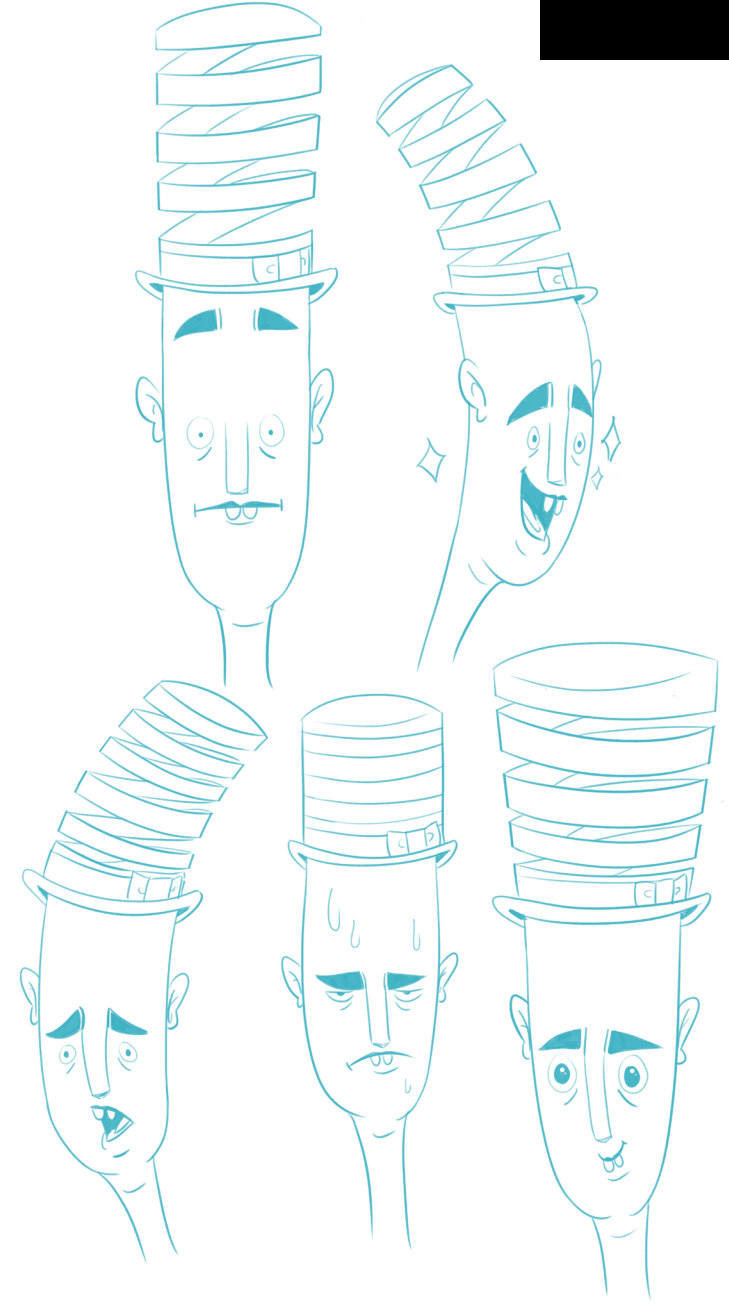
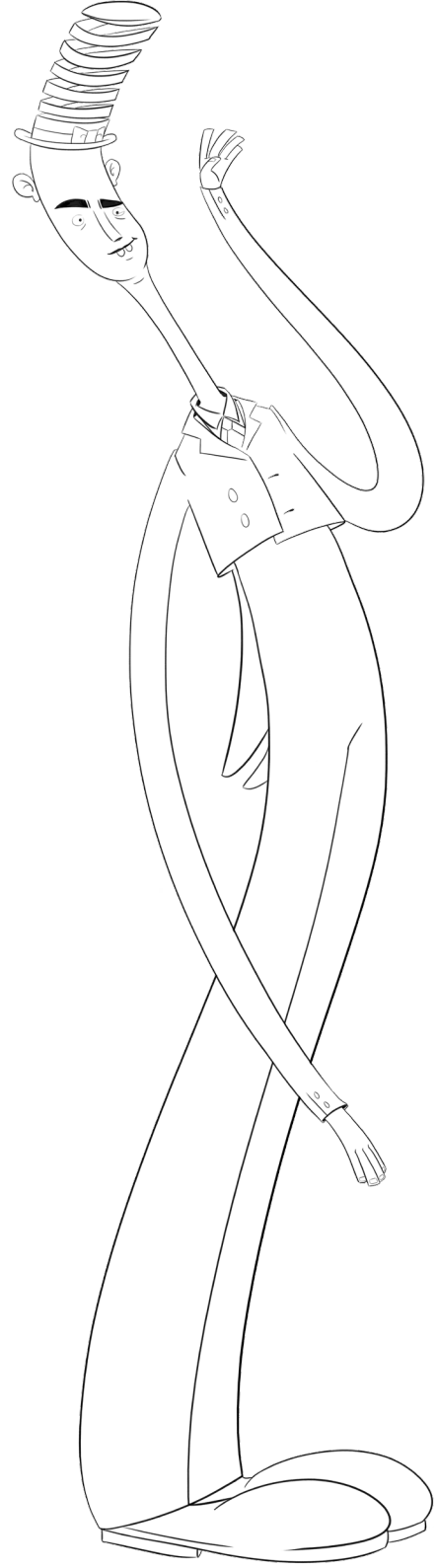
## SURREAL ALICE

After Alice comes back from her dreams and realising and her dream world isn't so different from her reality, her head expands to accommodate from this new knowledge. She still has the same body but a balloon head to visually represent her new insights.



## MOTHER HYBRID

Alice's "Mother Hybrid" is now capable of making her own decisions and has the ability to dictate her own identity through painting herself the way she wants. Her look is influenced by Magritte's *The Lovers*, and references the veil women wore over rose flower crowns.



FATHER HYBRID

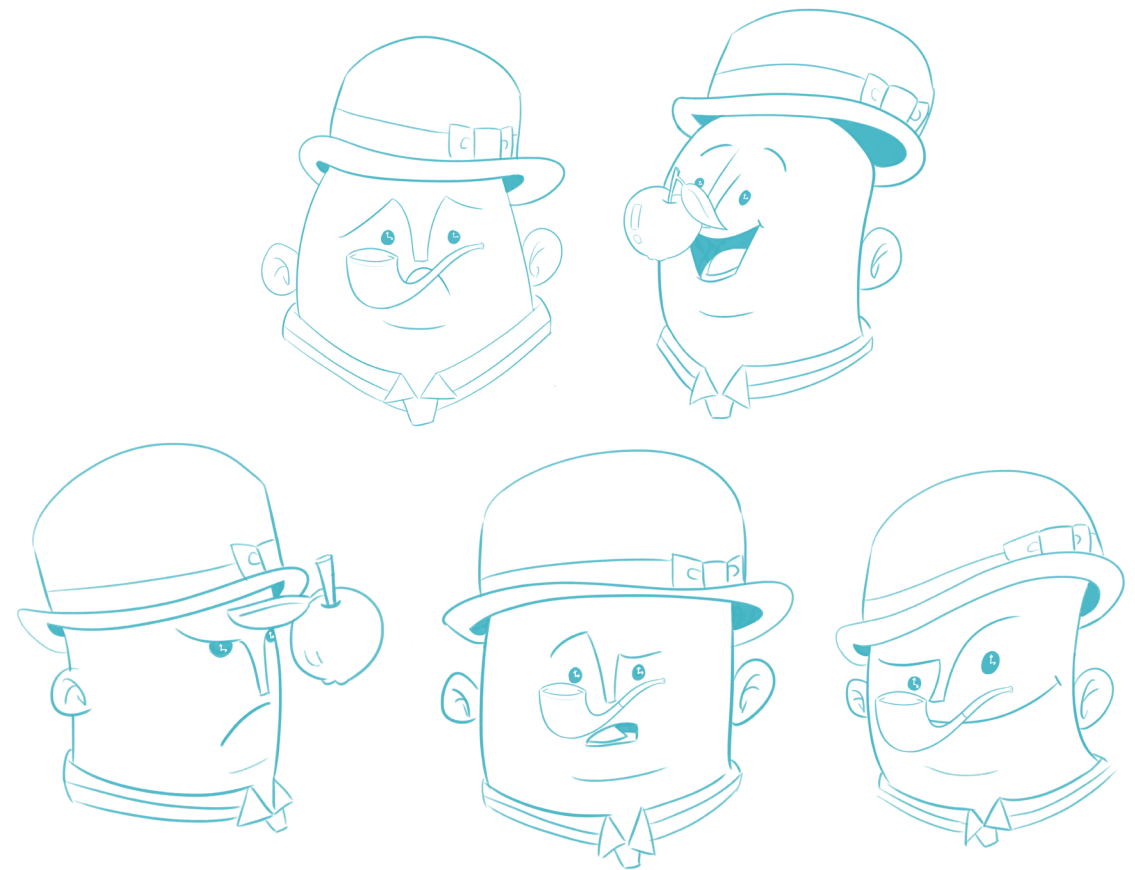
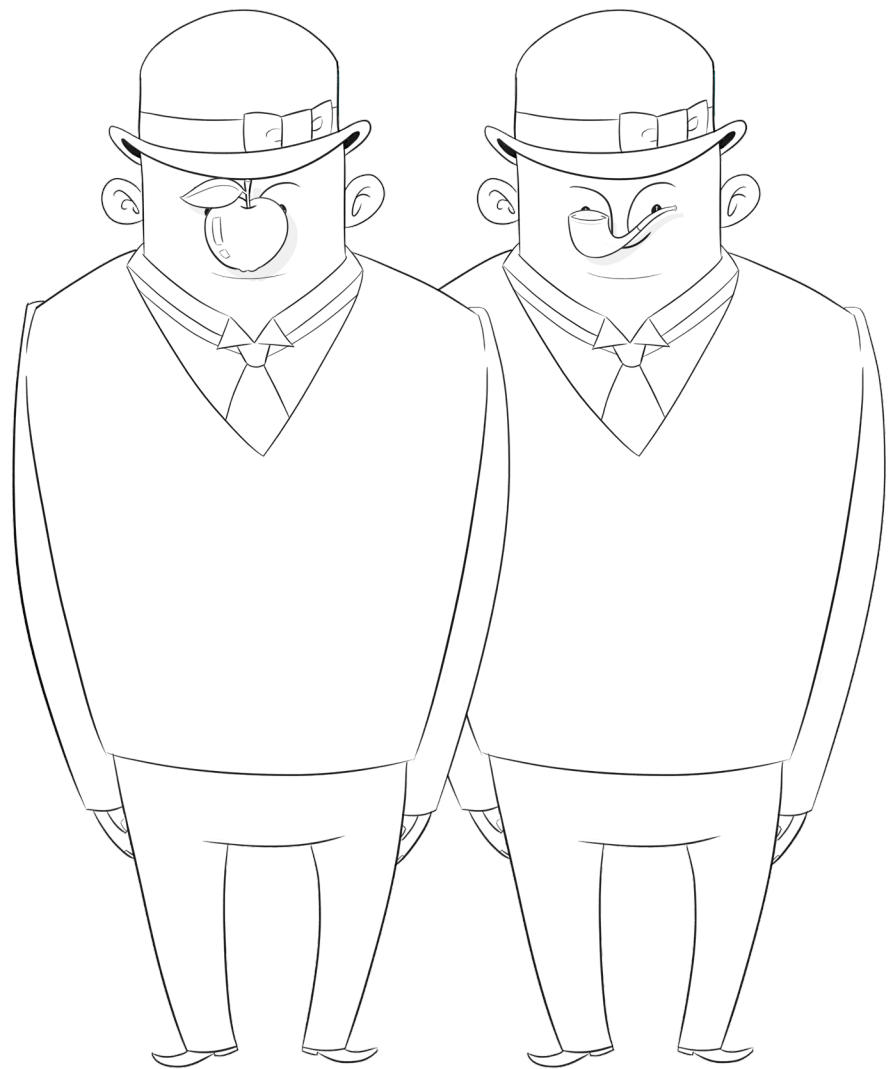
Alice’s “Father Hybrid” is a balance of his two counterparts, definitely still cautious, but a bit more confident and flexible with Alice and making decisions. His height and physique is exaggerated to show his personality. His hat is influenced by Dali’s deconstructed imagery.



UNCLE HYBRID

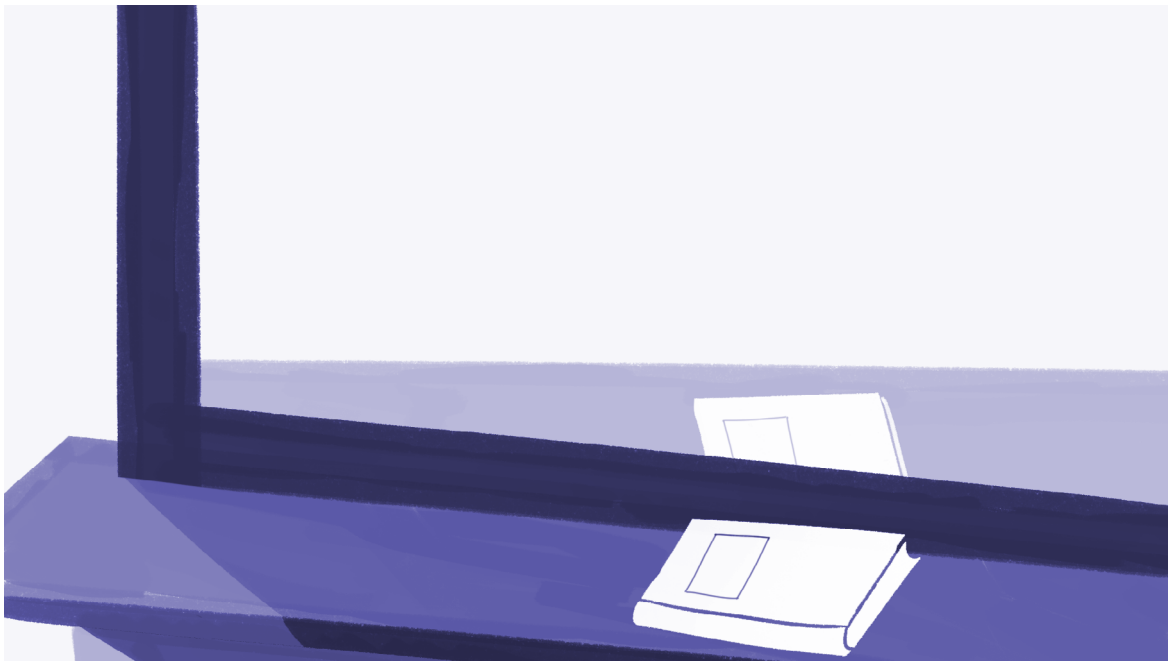
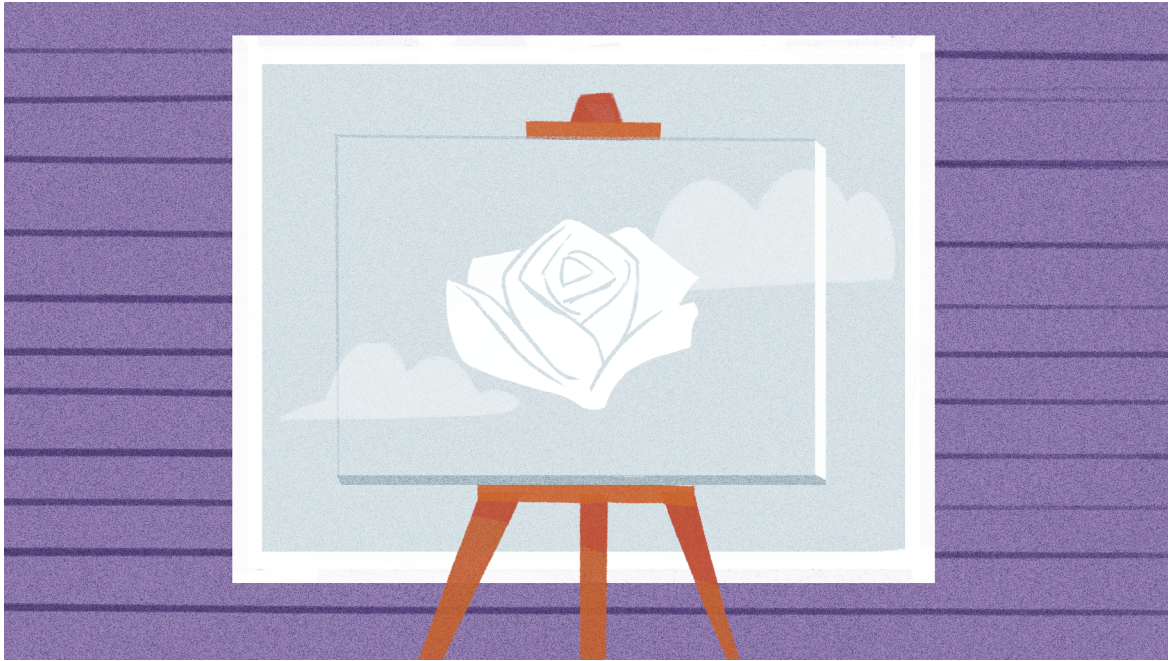
The uncle is still a bit dim, but much better listener (with his bigger ears). He is still a heavy smoker. His look is in reference to Magritte's The Philosopher's Lamp.





# TWINS HYBRID

The twins are much more open, we get to see their faces, but only partially because they are obscured by an apple and a pipe. They are references to Magritte's The Son of Man and Good Faith.



## SURREAL BACKGROUNDS

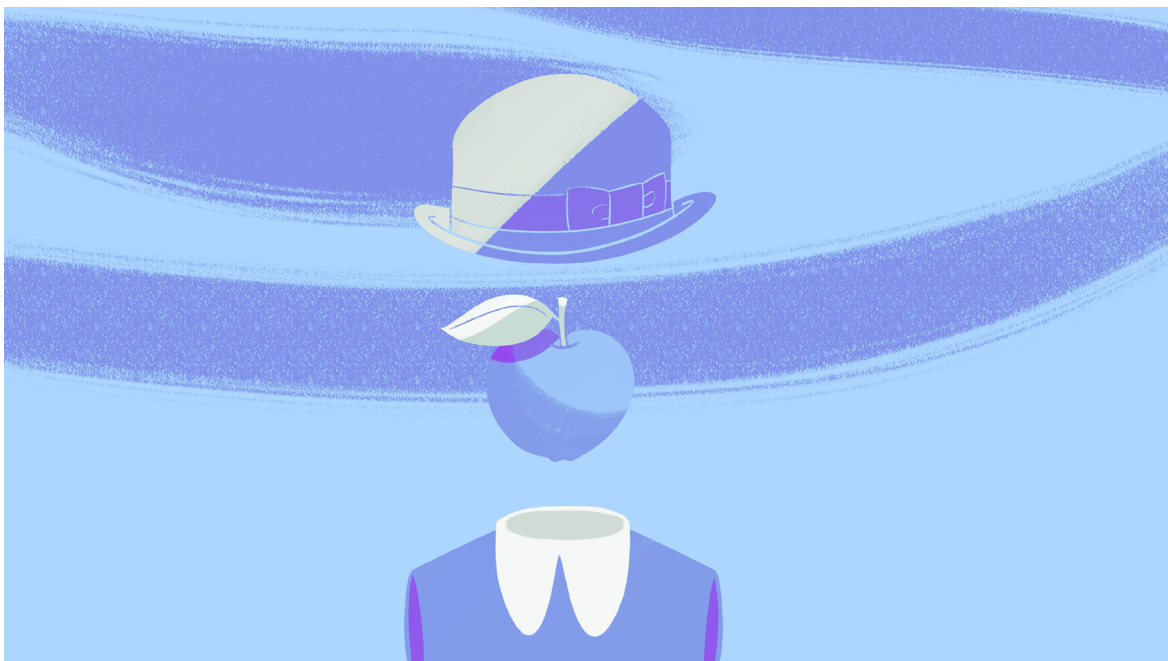
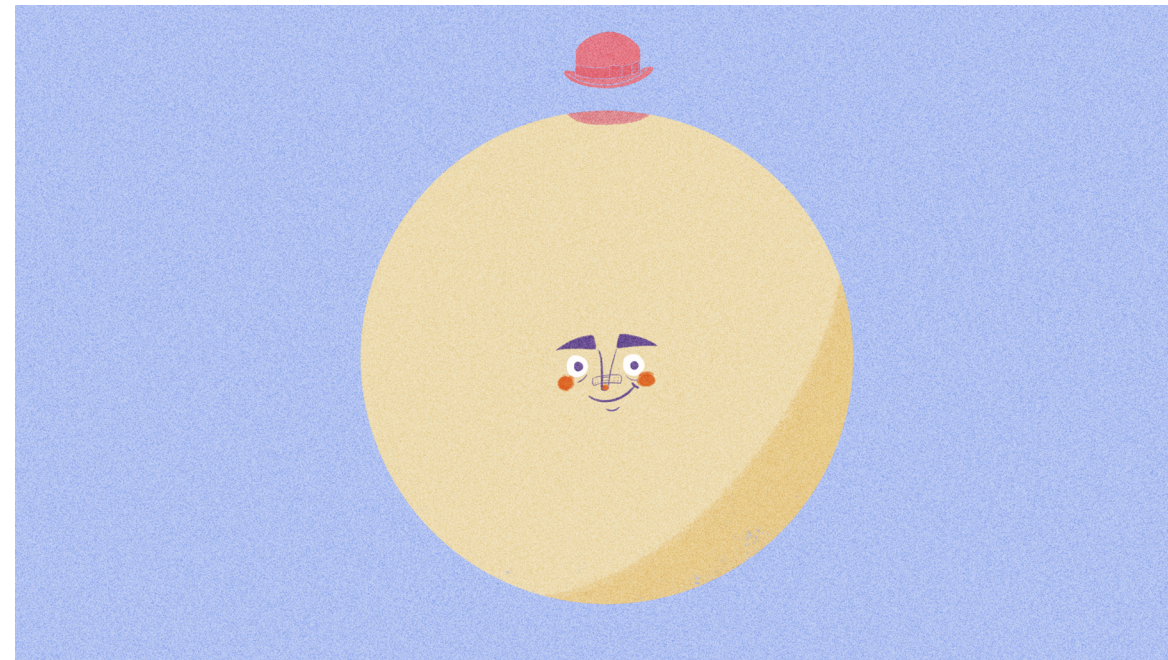
**Top left:** Rose painting merged with the window

**Bottom left:** Magritte's mirror

**Top right:** Ocean and brick wall

The colour palette uses a combination of the dullness of reality and the colour of the dreams to create a cool, neutral palette for the Surrealist world.





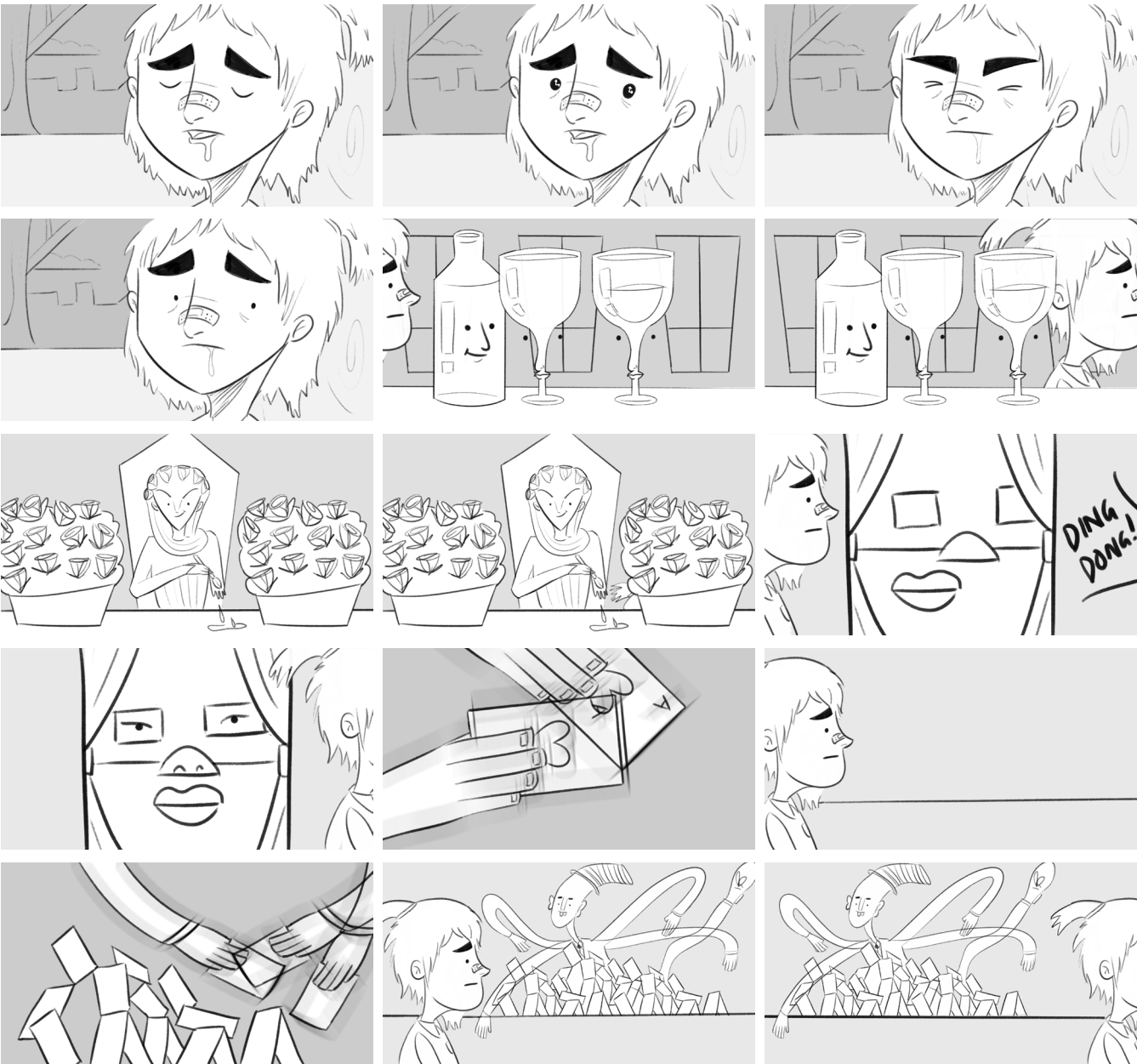
## SURREAL LAYOUTS

**Top left:** Raining umbrella

**Bottom left:** Apple head

**Top right:** Balloon head

I wanted to make the imagery as odd and contradictory as possible to create a sense of strange realism. Something that feels familiar but it's perception is twisted. I used a significant amount of imagery from Magritte and Dali, just as I did with the characters.



SURREAL STORYBOARD

In this sequence I wanted to show immediately how Alice’s conflict with the Queen in Wonderland affected her reality. Her reality already has become Surrealist, with faces emerging in the furniture, props and parents. This scene parallels the first storyboard sequence, except some of the roles of reversed. Her parents are really animated and engaged, Alice is distinct and moving very slowly.





## COLOUR SCRIPT

Colour is one of the most significant ways to visually distinguish between the three different realms of Alice's worlds; with reality being black and white, the dreamscape using warm pastels and reality using desaturated cool colours.

BYE

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THANKS FOR READING!



