
THE
GENTLEMAN'S
PLAY
A WONDERLAND WORKSHOP
ON RESPECT

The Modern Gentleman’s Code

A Guide to Presence, Respect, and Character

Author’s Note

I created this guide because I believe the world needs more of the qualities we’ll explore here — more presence, more respect, and more genuine care for others.

The stories in this book are drawn from everyday life. They are not grand heroic moments, but the small, simple actions that leave lasting impressions.

How someone greets you.
Whether they listen when you speak.
The way they treat a waiter, a stranger, a child, or an elder.

These moments reveal character far more clearly than words ever could.

My hope is that as you read, you’ll find yourself nodding, reflecting, and perhaps even smiling — recognising moments you’ve experienced, or

imagining new ways you could embody these principles in your own life.

This guide isn’t about perfection.

It’s about intention.

Because being a gentleman isn’t about being flawless — it’s about showing up, day after day, in a way that honours both yourself and the people around you.

Introduction

What Is a Gentleman?

A gentleman is not defined by wealth, status, or appearance.

He is defined by how he carries himself.

How he treats people when there is nothing to gain.

How he speaks, listens, and moves through the world.

In many ways, the idea of a gentleman has become confused or forgotten in modern life. Some believe it is outdated. Others assume it belongs to another era.

But respect, kindness, responsibility, and presence are never outdated.

They are simply character.

The principles in this guide are not complicated. They are small actions practiced consistently — the kind that quietly shape how people experience you.

Each chapter explores these ideas through everyday moments, showing how small choices can either build connection… or slowly erode it.

The Hatter’s Gentleman’s Guide Workshop

The sun streamed in through windows shaped like teapots, casting patterns of light across the round tables. The air smelled faintly of cinnamon and old parchment — the perfect scent for learning something important.

In the centre of the room stood **The Hatter**, humming softly as she adjusted the chairs. Each one had a cushion stitched with golden thread, and on each table sat a tiny crystal bottle with a rolled-up scroll inside. The front of the classroom was a little stage made from stacked suitcases and covered in a patchwork velvet curtain. A chalkboard read in swirling letters:

“Today’s Lesson: The Gentleman’s Code — A Magical Stage Play.”

One by one, children began to arrive — boys in waistcoats, girls with ribbons in their hair, a dragonkin boy carrying his notebook, a pair of fairy twins fluttering in together.

The Hatter greeted each one warmly as they entered: "Ah, Master Finn, welcome! Miss Poppy, so glad you're here! Oh, and you, Sir Alder, your chair is right here in the front row."

As the room filled, a hush of curiosity spread.

The Hatter clapped her hands once. *Poof!* A row of paper lanterns above the stage sprang to life, glowing like small moons.

"Today," she began, her voice both playful and serious, "we are in for something truly magical. Stories and teachings brought to life — just for you — through the art of the stage play. We'll watch scenes, meet a few colourful characters, and see what it really means to be a gentleman… and how to spot when someone is not."

She stepped to the edge of the stage, her eyes twinkling.
"And this workshop is not only for the boys. Oh no. Girls, you will learn to notice the signs — to discern

kindness from carelessness, presence from distraction. This is knowledge for everyone."

Behind her, a curtain swayed slightly. Someone — or something — was waiting for their cue.

"When each scene ends, we'll pause. We'll talk about what we noticed, and I'll answer any questions. And later, we'll reflect on our own day — perhaps you've already spotted gentlemanly behaviour this morning without even realising it. We'll come back to that."

She tapped the side of her hat. "Now then, are we ready?"

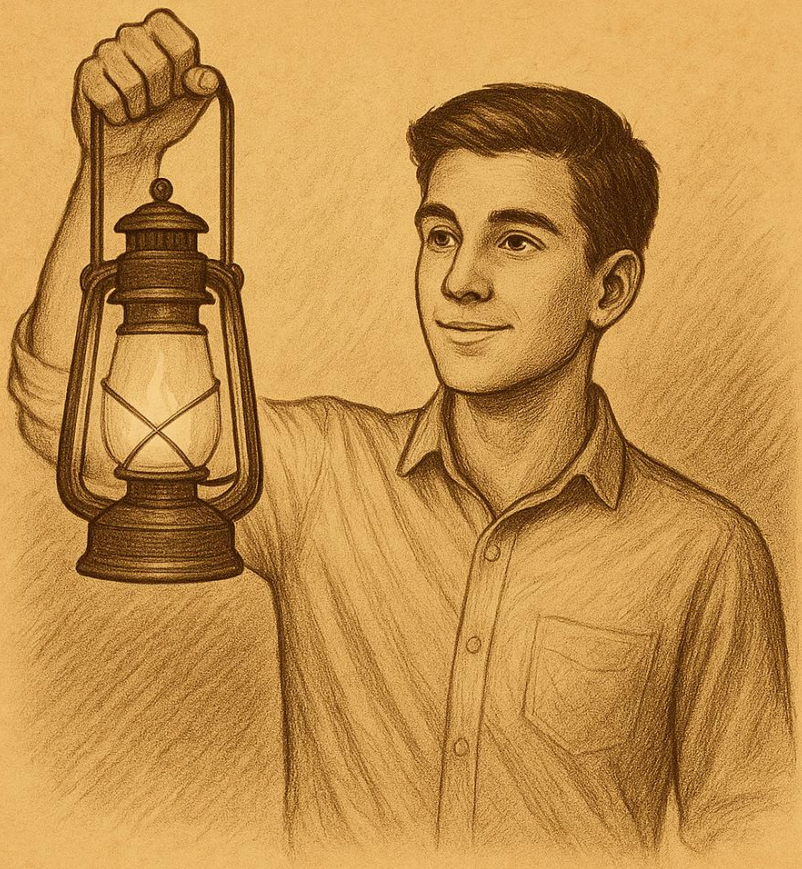
A chorus of voices answered, "Yes!"

"Splendid! Noomi, would you please ring us in?"

The owl on the rafters gave a dignified *hoo* and rang a small silver bell.

The velvet curtain began to rise…





Your presence is the light you bring into a room.

Act One – First Impressions Matter

[The Curtain Lifts]

The stage has transformed into a small, candlelit tea café, complete with a glowing biscuit counter, a little rain machine pattering softly in the corner, and a painted backdrop of a cobbled street.

Noomi the Owl steps forward, wearing a tiny waistcoat, and announces in a deep, theatrical voice: “Scene One — The Warm Arrival.”

Dante Enters

The café door swings open with a soft *ding!* and in walks **Dante**, a tall young man in a moss-green coat and polished boots.

He pauses at the mat just outside the "door," giving his umbrella a gentle shake so not a single drop lands inside. As he steps in, the fireflies above the stage seem to glow brighter.

Dante's eyes scan the café until they find **Lena** sitting at a round table near the window. A genuine smile spreads across his face, the kind that makes everyone watching want to smile back.

He tucks his phone into his jacket pocket — all the way in — and walks over.
"Lena, so good to see you," he says warmly, offering a handshake that's just firm enough.

As the rest of the “guests” arrive, Dante stands each time to greet them, introducing people to one another so no one feels left out.

“This is Oliver — Oliver, meet Amira. She’s the brilliant mind behind the Moonlight Garden design.”

He listens, laughs, and draws everyone into the conversation. The soft background music swells, the glow stays warm, and the whole café feels like a place you’d want to stay forever.

Noomi's Bell Rings

"Scene Two — The Chilly Arrival."

Rex Enters

The door creaks open and in comes **Rex**, earbuds still firmly in his ears, snail-phone pressed to one side.

He spots the table but doesn't pause his conversation — just gives a quick nod and mouths, "One sec," as he strolls past the counter.

When he finally sits, it's without a word of greeting. His eyes flick down to his snail-phone, thumb scrolling endlessly. Someone at the table tries to loop him in, but he only glances up for a moment before returning to his messages.

The fireflies dim. The background music fades into awkward silence. A teacup on the counter wobbles slightly, as if uncomfortable.

Around the table, smiles grow smaller. The lively warmth from moments ago drains into little pockets of quiet.

Later That Evening – Lena & Amira

After dinner, Lena and Amira walked toward the train station together.

Lena laughed softly.

“I was honestly surprised tonight,” she said. “When Dante arrived he was just… thoughtful. He was actually present. Not distracted by anything, not rushing. He seemed genuinely interested in what everyone had to say.”

Amira nodded.

“I noticed that too. The whole atmosphere changed when he arrived. People relaxed.”

She paused for a moment.

“But the contrast with Rex was obvious. It felt like he didn’t really want to be there. He barely acknowledged anyone. It created distance almost instantly.”

Lena smiled thoughtfully.

“It’s strange how much difference those small things make.”

Amira shook her head gently.

“They’re not small things. They’re the things that tell you who someone really is.”

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter steps forward, her hands clasped together, eyes dancing with curiosity.
“Well now… we saw two very different arrivals, didn’t we?” she says to the class.

“Take a moment — without saying anything just yet — to notice how you felt during each scene. Which arrival would you want to be part of? Which one might make you wish you were somewhere else entirely?”

She winks.
“We’ll talk about it in just a moment, but first — Noomi, fetch us the Truth Scroll for Lesson One.”

Post-Play Reflection – First Impressions Matter

The velvet curtain settles, and Noomi the Owl flutters down from the rafters, a scroll tied with a golden ribbon clasped in his talons. With great ceremony, he drops it into the Hatter's hands.

The Hatter holds it aloft. "Ah, thank you, Noomi! Let's see what lesson today has for us…"

She unties the ribbon, and as the scroll unfurls, letters shimmer into view, glowing softly like starlight.

The Truth Scroll Reads:
"Your presence sets the tone — make it one people want to remember."

The class murmurs quietly, some nodding, some scribbling notes in their Wonderland Workshop Journals.

The Hatter's Reflection with the Class

The Hatter steps closer to the children, her voice warm.
“Now then, my curious learners… let’s think together. How did you feel when Dante walked in? Did you notice how the fireflies grew brighter? What was it like when he put his phone away and looked people in the eye?”

A few hands go up.
One boy says, “It felt safe, like you wanted to talk to him.”
A fairy girl adds, “He made everyone feel important, not just the first person.”

The Hatter nods. “Yes, exactly. His presence was like pouring hot tea into empty cups — suddenly, everyone felt included and full.”

She tilts her head, smiling knowingly.

“And what about Rex? What happened to the room when he arrived?”

A dragonkin boy frowns. “It got colder. I didn’t feel like he cared if anyone was there.”
Another girl adds softly, “It felt like… we didn’t matter.”

The Hatter spreads her arms. “Indeed! His presence drained the warmth instead of filling it. And that, my dears, is the power of a first impression. You carry the ability to change the whole room, simply by how you arrive.”

The Call to Reflection

The Hatter twirls her quill and lets it hover in the air above a blank chalkboard, where the following questions write themselves in silver ink:

- “Have you ever been greeted warmly, by name or with a smile? How did it feel?”
- “Have you ever felt ignored or overlooked when someone arrived? What was that like?”
- “When you enter a room, how do you think others feel?”

“Think on these, write in your journals if you wish, and later we’ll share.”

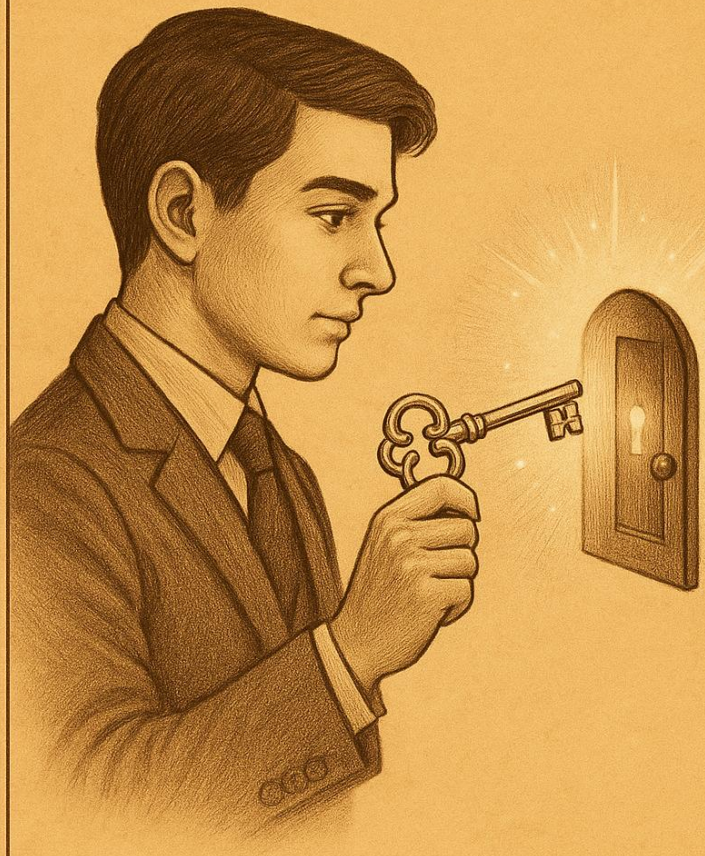
The Challenge

The Hatter claps her hands, and a basket of tiny golden tokens shaped like suns appears, one for each child.

“Here is your first challenge, my fine young scholars. This week, whenever you enter a room — your home, your classroom, even the stables — hold this token in your pocket and remember: *Be on time. Greet others warmly. Make introductions if needed. And put distractions away.*

Do this, and watch how the whole room begins to glow brighter — just as it did for Dante.”

✨ Curtain rises again, ready for the next act of the workshop…



Respect opens doors
before you even arrive.

Act Two – Respect in Action

[The Curtain Lifts]

The stage has transformed again — this time into a little restaurant, glowing with twinkling lanterns and ivy across the backdrop. The scent of garlic and rosemary drifts through the air (courtesy of enchanted scent-pots). A small brass bell above the door *chimes* as the scene begins.

Noomi the Owl struts forward, bowtie a little crooked, and booms in his narrator's voice:
"Scene One — Planning with Care."

Scene One – Dante Makes a Plan

It started with a message.

Dante typed slowly, choosing his words with care before pressing send.

“Hey Lena, I’d love to take you out for dinner sometime. Is there a day and time that works best for you?”

He believed planning something with someone meant considering their schedule first.

A few minutes later Lena replied.

“Thursday evening works well for me.”

Dante smiled and responded.

“Perfect. Do you have a favourite type of food? Or anything you’d rather avoid?”

She mentioned that she loved Mediterranean food but was open to other ideas.

“Great,” Dante replied. “What area works best for you? Somewhere near work or closer to home?”

Once Lena told him the location she preferred, Dante spent a few minutes searching nearby restaurants. He read reviews, checked menus, and chose three options that looked welcoming and well reviewed.

He sent them to Lena.

“Here are a few places that look great. Let me know which one you like best.”

She chose **The Willow Street Brasserie**.

Dante made the reservation immediately and sent her the confirmation.

For Lena, the evening already felt easy and relaxed — and they hadn’t even met yet.

Contrast: Rex

Across the city, Amira received a message from Rex.

“Dinner Thursday?”

She replied politely.

“Sure, what time?”

“7,” Rex responded.

Amira waited a moment before asking,

“Do you have somewhere in mind?”

His reply came later.

“I’ll pick somewhere.”

On Thursday afternoon another message arrived.

“Meet me at that Italian place downtown.”

Amira frowned slightly.

The restaurant was nowhere near her office, but she assumed Rex must have already arranged everything.

When she arrived at seven, the entrance was crowded.

After asking the host, she learned there was no reservation.

The wait would be **forty minutes**.

Rex arrived a few minutes later, glancing at the line.

“Guess we’ll just wait,” he shrugged.

Scene: The Willow Street Brasserie

The small brass bell above the door chimed softly as Lena arrived.

Warm light spilled across polished wooden floors and the scent of garlic and rosemary drifted gently from the kitchen.

Dante was already there, standing near the entrance.

When he saw her, he smiled.

“Hey Lena, good to see you.”

He held the door open for her.

“Evening,” he said warmly to the host. “We have a booking under Dante.”

As they walked toward the table, he matched his pace to hers so she never felt hurried.

He waited until Lena sat down before taking his own seat.

When the waiter arrived, Dante paused their conversation.

“Good evening,” he said kindly. “How’s your night going?”

Only then did he open his menu.

The evening felt comfortable from the very beginning.

Contrast: Amira & Rex

At the crowded Italian restaurant, the atmosphere was very different.

Rex walked ahead through the door, not noticing it swing closed behind Amira.

“Table for two,” he told the host while glancing down at his phone.

“We’re currently on a forty-minute wait,” the host explained.

Rex sighed.

“Seriously?”

He turned toward Amira with a shrug.

“Guess we’ll just stand here.”

While they waited, Rex scrolled through his phone.

When the host finally called their name, Rex walked ahead again, already typing a message.

At the table, the waiter arrived with menus.

“Hi there, can I start you with drinks?”

Rex didn’t look up immediately.

“Yeah… uh… just bring a beer,” he said.

No eye contact.

No “please.”

No “thank you.”

Amira quietly ordered her drink.

The evening already felt heavier than it needed to be.

Later That Evening – Lena & Amira

Later that night, Lena and Amira spoke on the phone while both were heading home.

Lena sounded relaxed.

“Tonight was actually really lovely,” she said. “Dante asked what worked for me before planning anything — the time, the food, even the location. He made the reservation and everything just felt easy.”

Amira gave a small laugh.

“That sounds like the opposite of my evening.”

“What happened?” Lena asked.

Amira sighed.

“Rex just said ‘Dinner Thursday.’ No planning, no checking what worked for me. When I arrived there wasn’t even a booking — we waited forty minutes just to get a table.”

Lena paused.

“That must’ve been frustrating.”

“It wasn’t just that,” Amira said. “It was the little things. No eye contact with the staff. No ‘please’ or ‘thank you.’ It made the whole evening feel… uncomfortable.”

Lena nodded thoughtfully, even though Amira couldn’t see her.

“It’s strange how much those small things shape an experience.”

Amira replied softly.

“They’re not small things at all.”

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter sweeps forward, tugging her coat straight. “Oh my, what a contrast! One meal felt like an invitation to comfort, the other like a chore to endure.” She gestures to the class. “Tell me, what did you notice? How did each scene make you feel?”

Reflection with the Class

Hands shoot up across the room.
A boy pipes up, “Dante thought about what would make her comfortable before she even arrived.”
A fairy girl adds, “And he made the waiter feel respected too.”
The Hatter beams. “Yes — he spread respect in every direction.”

Another voice mutters, “Rex… he didn’t even notice her, or the staff. It was like he was only thinking about himself.”
The Hatter nods solemnly. “And how did that make the whole scene feel?”
“Awkward,” comes the reply. “Like… tense.”

“Exactly,” says the Hatter. “Respect begins before you even arrive. It’s in the planning, in the little gestures, in how you treat those around you. Dante’s thoughtfulness turned the evening into a gift. Rex’s carelessness turned it into a burden.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi flutters down with another scroll, this one glowing silver. The Hatter unrolls it with a flourish.

“Respect begins before you even arrive.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard shimmers as questions write themselves in looping letters:

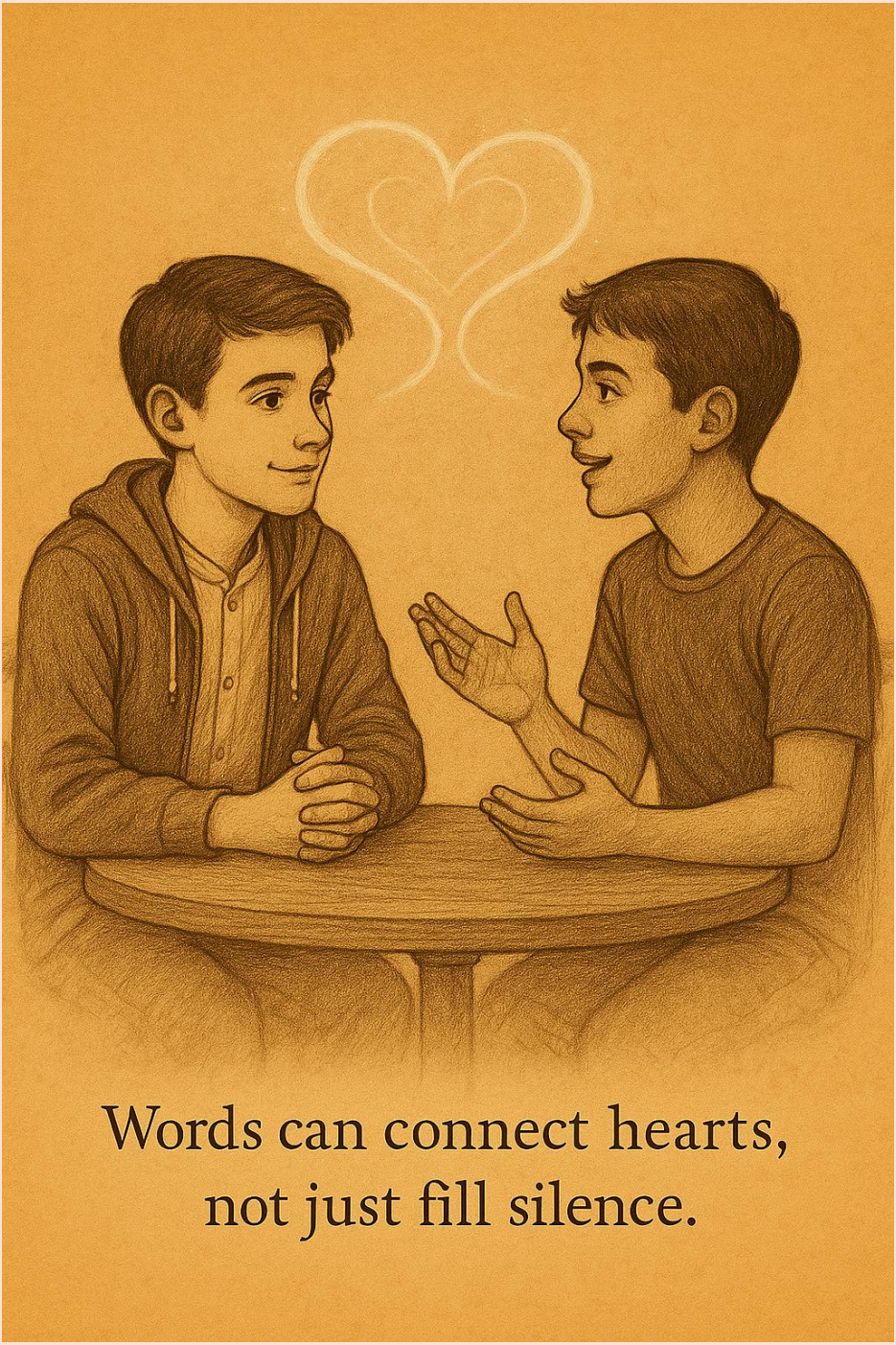
- “Have you ever had someone plan something with your comfort in mind? How did it make you feel?”
- “What about the opposite — when someone left you to figure it out, or ignored your preferences? What did that feel like?”
- “When you make plans, do you think about how to make it easier or kinder for the other person?”

The Challenge

The Hatter conjures tiny bookmarks shaped like keys and passes them around.

"This week, whenever you make plans — with a friend, a parent, or even a teacher — use your key to unlock the question: *What would make this easier or kinder for them?* Then act on it. That's how respect shines before the meeting even begins."

The firefly lanterns pulse softly in agreement, and the curtain begins to rise once more…



Words can connect hearts,
not just fill silence.

Act Three – Conversations that Matter

[The Curtain Lifts]

Scene: Lena & Dante

Rain whispered softly against the windows as the room glowed with the warm light of a floor lamp.

Lena sat curled into the sofa with a mug of tea warming her hands.

Dante sat nearby, his body angled toward her.

They had been talking about small things — movies, music, the weather — when Lena's voice shifted slightly.

"There's something I haven't really told anyone," she said quietly. "Work's been overwhelming lately."

Dante didn't interrupt.

He leaned forward slightly.

"I'm here," he said gently. "If you want help finding a solution, I can do that. But if you'd rather just talk, or even sit quietly for a bit, that's okay too. Whatever you need."

Lena exhaled slowly.

She began explaining everything — the pressure, the expectations, the feeling that nothing she did was quite enough.

Dante listened carefully.

When she paused, he said softly,

“You mentioned something similar a few weeks ago about that project. Is this connected to that?”

Lena looked up in surprise.

“You remembered that?”

He smiled.

“Of course.”

And for the first time in weeks, Lena felt lighter — not because the problem had disappeared, but because she didn’t have to carry it alone.

Contrast: Amira & Rex

Across the city, Amira sat on her sofa while Rex scrolled through his phone.

“I’ve been dealing with something with my sister lately,” she began.

“Mhm,” Rex muttered without looking up.

She tried again.

“I just feel a bit stuck about what to do.”

Rex chuckled suddenly.

“Hold on — you’ve got to see this video.”

Amira forced a small smile.

But the words she had been trying to say slowly faded away.

Some things aren’t easy to repeat once the moment has passed.

Later That Night – Lena & Amira

Lena sent a message later that evening.

“You know that feeling when you’re carrying too much in your head and someone just lets you set it down for a while? That’s what tonight felt like. Dante actually listened. No rushing, no distractions.”

Amira replied a moment later.

“That sounds amazing. I tried talking to Rex earlier about my sister and he barely looked up from his phone. I just stopped halfway through. It felt easier than trying again.”

Lena sighed.

“It’s strange how much difference real listening makes.”

Amira replied.

“It’s not strange at all. Being heard is one of the most powerful things someone can offer.”

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter sweeps forward, tapping her chin. “Did you feel that shift? One space became a sanctuary. The other felt like a wall had been built.”

Reflection with the Class

Hands rise across the room.
A boy says, “Dante didn’t rush. He let her speak.”
A fairy nods. “And he even asked what she needed — listening or advice. That’s rare.”

The Hatter beams. “Indeed! He gave her the gift of presence. Presence is one of the rarest treasures of all.”

Another student adds, “Rex… he thought he was helping but really he just shut her down.”
The Hatter sighs softly. “Yes — sometimes the rush to ‘fix’ takes away the gift of being heard.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi swoops down with a parchment glowing blue like a calm lake. The Hatter unrolls it.

“Listening is love in action.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard glimmers, chalk moving as if by its own hand:

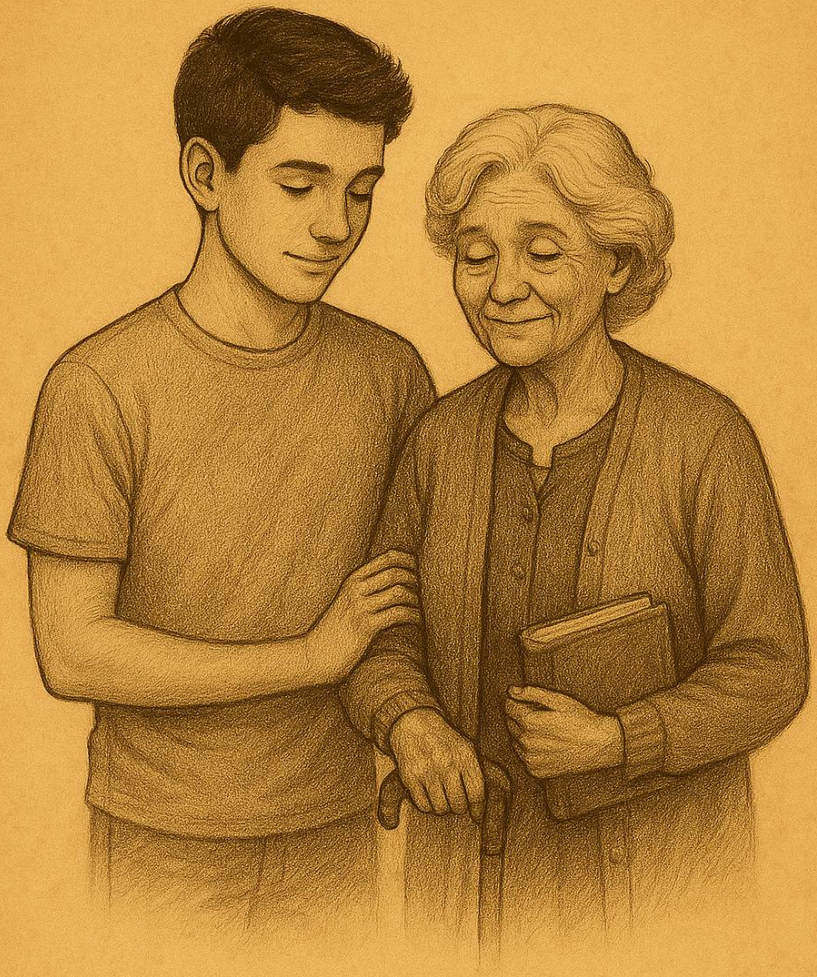
- “When was the last time you felt truly listened to? What did it do for your heart?”
- “Have you ever had someone rush past your words or brush them aside? How did that feel?”
- “When a friend speaks, do you lean in — or do you lean away?”

The Challenge

The Hatter conjures little crystal pebbles, each humming with soft light. She hands them out one by one.

“This week, choose one conversation where you will truly *listen*. No advice, no fixing — just presence. When you feel the pebble in your pocket, let it remind you: Listening itself is enough.”

The chandelier glows full again, the fire bursts into warmth, and the curtain begins to rise once more…



Wisdom flows when
we honour those
before us.

Act Four – Respect Across Generations

[The Curtain Lifts]

The stage softens into a cosy cottage garden. Fireflies hover in the twilight, roses bloom at the windowsill, and a rocking chair sways gently on the porch. In the chair sits Grandmother Willow — not just a grandmother, but a kindly elder with bark-like skin, willow-leaf hair flowing to the ground, and eyes full of ancient sparkle. A teapot steams beside her, its spout curling like a smile.

Noomi the Owl flutters to the front, spectacles perched neatly.
“Scene One — Dante Shows Honour.”

Scene One – Dante Visits with Heart

Dante steps carefully up the garden path, a small basket of berries in his arms. He pauses before speaking, bowing his head just a little in respect.

“Good evening, Grandmother Willow. I thought you might enjoy these berries — they’re as sweet as your stories.”

Grandmother Willow chuckles, her laugh like wind through branches.
“Oh, my dear boy, you always remember. Come, sit. Tell me how your studies fare.”

Dante sits on the step, listening as she shares a tale from long ago. He leans forward, eyes wide, never interrupting, soaking up every word as though it were gold dust.

The roses glow warmer, the fireflies circle in a gentle dance, and the cottage itself seems to hum with pride.

Noomi's Bell Rings.
"Scene Two — Rex Rushes By."

Scene Two – Rex in a Hurry

Rex strides down the same path, kicking a pebble. He doesn't stop, only waves half-heartedly.

"Hey, Grandma, busy — gotta go, see ya!"

Grandmother Willow lifts her hand, but Rex is already gone, snail-phone buzzing in his pocket. The rocking chair creaks, slowing to a halt. The roses wilt slightly at the edges, and the fireflies dim.

Grandmother Willow sighs, her leaves drooping. "Oh, child… respect is not shown in words alone, but in the pause you make to care."

The silence is heavier than before.

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter bounds forward, clapping her hands. “Did you feel the difference? One boy carried honour like a lantern, and the other… well, he dashed by as though his elder were invisible.”

Reflection with the Class

A girl raises her hand. “Dante made her feel important. He slowed down to spend time with her.”

A boy frowns. “Rex acted like she didn’t matter. It was kind of rude.”

The Hatter nods solemnly. “Indeed. How we treat our elders reveals the roots of our character. For they are the trees who grew the soil we now walk upon.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi swoops down again, scroll glowing green with vines. The Hatter unfurls it:

“To honour those who came before is to honour the path you now walk.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard writes itself in leafy script:

- “When have you felt cared for by someone older?”
- “How do you feel when someone ignores your words or wisdom?”
- “What small act of respect could you offer an elder this week?”

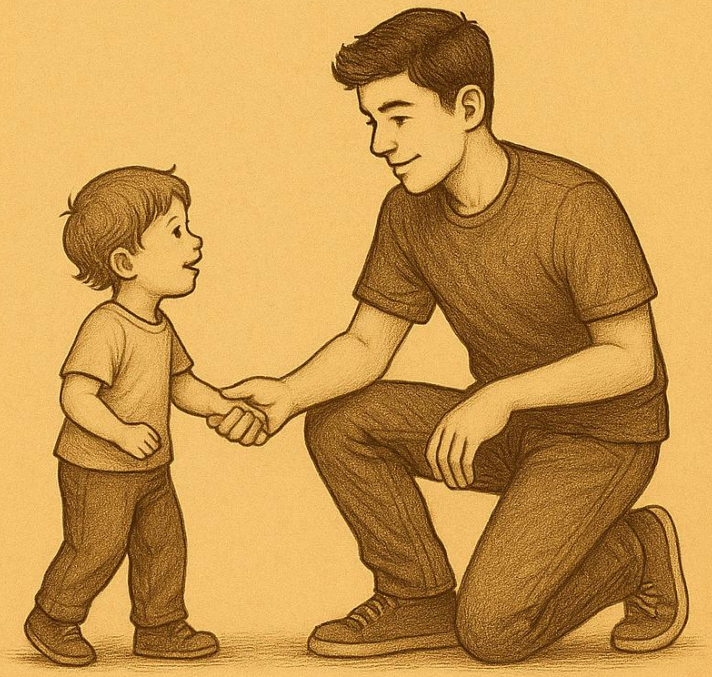
The Challenge

The Hatter produces shimmering seed-stones, placing one into every child’s hand.
“Plant this in your imagination whenever you greet an elder. With each kind word, each moment of listening, the seed grows roots of respect — making you stronger, steadier, wiser.”

The cottage glows one last time, Grandmother Willow smiling with teary-bright eyes…

[The Curtain Rises for the next act.]

THE MODERN GENTLEMAN'S CODE



True strength is shown in gentleness.

Act Five – How You Treat Children Shows Character

[The Curtain Lifts]

The stage opens to a meadow glowing with golden light. Tiny lanterns dangle from mushrooms, hedgehogs roll playfully in the grass, and a circle of fairy children chase bubbles that float like crystal orbs. Laughter rings like silver bells.

Noomi the Owl swoops to the front.
“Scene One — Dante Includes with Patience.”

Scene One – Dante Plays Kindly

Dante kneels in the meadow, placing his hand gently on the ground so the smallest hedgehog can climb onto his palm.

“Up you go, little one,” he says softly, careful not to squeeze.

The fairy children giggle and tug at his sleeve. “Come dance with us, Dante!”

He smiles, joining their circle without taking over, letting them lead. When one trips, Dante helps them up. When another grows shy, he kneels to their level, whispering, “You belong here.”

The meadow brightens. Flowers open wider. Even the bubbles glow brighter when Dante laughs with the little ones.

Noomi’s Bell Rings.
“Scene Two — Rex Snaps and Strides Away.”

Scene Two – Rex in a Hurry

Rex storms across the meadow, eyes fixed on a shiny snail-phone in his hand.

A fairy tugs his sleeve: “Play with us?”

Rex huffs. “No. I don’t have time for silly games.”

The fairies wilt, their wings drooping. A hedgehog rolls toward him, squeaking cheerfully — Rex steps over it without a glance.

The meadow dims. The bubbles burst into nothing. A child’s laughter fades into silence.

Grandmother Willow’s voice echoes softly from the distance:
“How you treat the smallest among you shows the truth of your character.”

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter skips forward, her eyes sparkling.
“Oh, did you see? Patience is magic, and kindness to those smaller than you is a lantern that shines far into the future.”

Reflection with the Class

The Hatter looks around.
“What did you notice?”

A child in the audience calls, “Dante made them feel included!”
Another adds, “Rex made them feel small — like they didn’t matter.”

The Hatter nods. “Exactly. True respect means seeing every person — tall or small — as worthy of care.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi unfurls the scroll, glowing in soft silver this time.

“To honour the young is to plant patience, and patience grows into strength.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard scribbles on its own:

- “Have you ever felt ignored because you were younger?”
- “How did it feel when someone older included you in their world?”
- “What’s one way you could show kindness to someone younger this week?”

The Challenge

The Hatter hands each student a bubble wand. “These are not ordinary bubbles. When you blow one, think of a younger person in your life. Send a bubble of kindness their way. For though bubbles pop, kindness lingers.”

The stage fills with rainbow bubbles, each carrying a whisper of patience and respect.

[The Curtain Rises for Act Six.]



⋆ Kindness given
freely shines brighter.

Act Six – Everyday Kindness Without Expectation

[The Curtain Lifts]

The scene opens on the **Wonderland Tram**, trundling through a city of teapots and chiming lampposts. Seats sway gently. Commuters of every shape and size fill the carriage — rabbits with satchels, gnomes with baskets of mushrooms, pixies balancing parcels.

Noomi the Owl announces in a clear voice:
“Scene One — Dante Offers Help Without Asking for Anything in Return.”

Scene One – Dante Helps the Stranger

At the tram stop, a kindly gnome staggers under the weight of shopping bags brimming with carrots and jars of jam. His hat slips sideways.

Dante steps forward. “Here, let me help you with those.”
He takes two bags, steady but respectful, not fussing, just lightening the load.

Inside the tram, an elderly rabbit leans on a cane, searching for a place to sit. Without hesitation, Dante stands and smiles warmly.
“Please, take my seat.”

The rabbit’s eyes glisten with gratitude.
“Young sir, you didn’t have to—”

Dante shakes his head. “That’s the point. Kindness doesn’t ask for return.”

The tram seems to hum more sweetly. Windows shine brighter. Even the jars of jam glow as if lit from within.

Noomi's Bell Rings.
"Scene Two — Rex Ignores the Stranger."

Scene Two – Rex Pretends Not to Notice

The same gnome shuffles past, bags slipping. Rex looks away, fiddling with his coat buttons, pretending not to see.

On the tram, the elderly rabbit sways, clearly in need of rest. Rex sprawls across his seat, feet up, muttering: "First come, first serve."

The tram jolts. The rabbit nearly falls, saved only by grabbing a pole. The mood sours. Lamps flicker. A hush falls, heavy and uncomfortable.

Grandmother Willow's voice returns, carried like wind through the carriage:
"Small acts of kindness are the mirrors of your true self."

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter bounds forward, eyes shining like stars. “Oh, my dear ones, did you see? A gentleman doesn’t wait for applause. He does what is right simply because it is right.”

Reflection with the Class

The Hatter looks around the classroom.
“Have you ever seen someone give up their seat? Or help a stranger carry something heavy? How did it make you feel?”

Students murmur:
“It made the place feel safe.”
“It made me smile inside.”

The Hatter claps her hands. “Yes! Everyday kindness is the quiet magic that turns ordinary moments into shining lanterns.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi unfurls the scroll, glowing golden this time:

“To offer kindness without expecting return is the heart of true integrity.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard writes by itself:

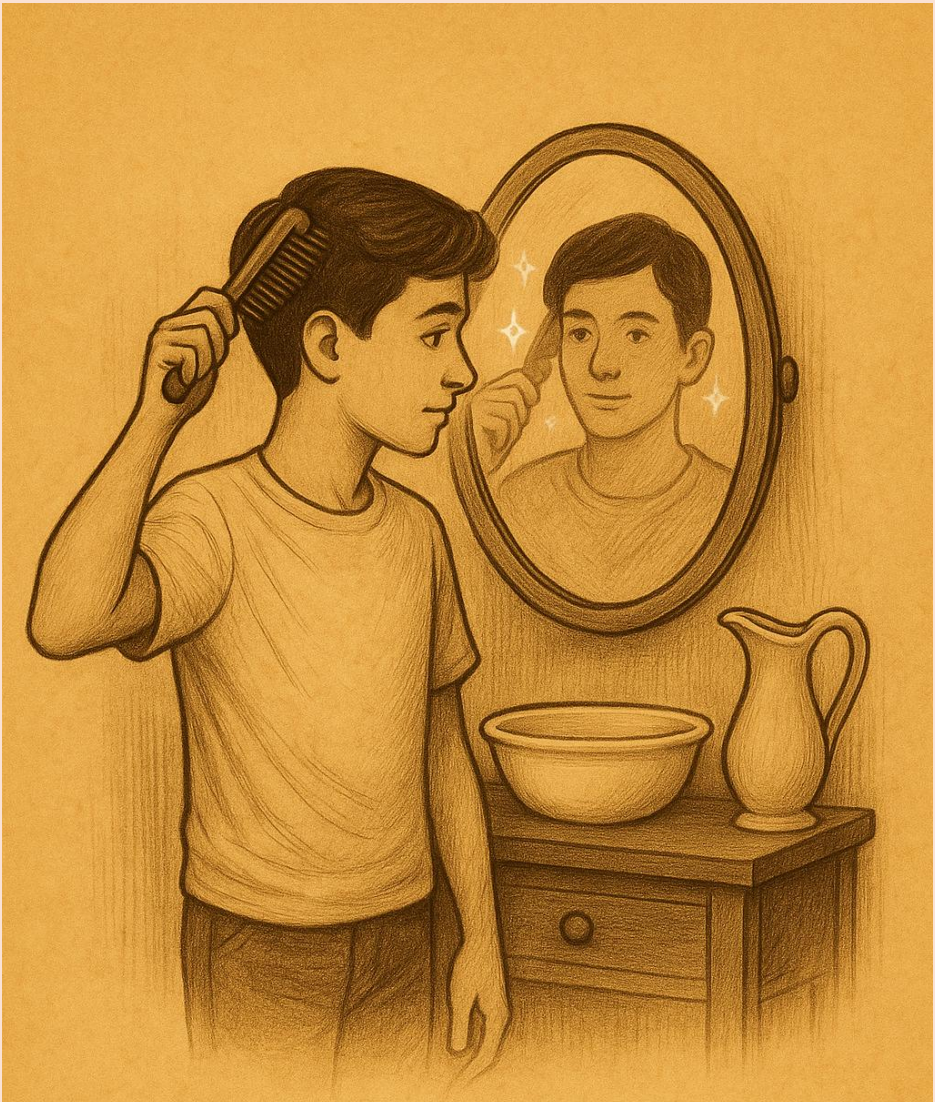
- “When did you last help someone without being asked?”
- “Why does it feel different when you expect thanks compared to when you don’t?”
- “What small kindness could you offer today?”

The Challenge

The Hatter holds up a jar of invisible jam.
“Today’s task, class: try offering one act of help in secret. No thanks, no reward — just a little kindness spell, left behind like jam-sparkles on toast.”

The tram bell dings, echoing like a promise.

[The Curtain Rises for Act Seven.]



Caring for yourself
shows care for others.

Act Seven – Appearance as Respect

[The Curtain Lifts]

The stage is split in two:
On one side, Dante's space is bright and tidy — a mirror framed with flowers, a brush, a neatly folded jacket.
On the other, Rex's corner is messy — crumpled clothes on the floor, a shoe missing its lace, crumbs scattered everywhere.

Noomi announces:
"Scene One — Dante Shows Respect Through Care."

Scene One – Dante is Ready

Dante appears in a simple, clean outfit. His hair is brushed, shoes polished just enough to shine, and he carries himself with quiet confidence.

As he greets the others, the Hatter nods approvingly. “You look ready to greet the day, Dante. Not because of vanity — but because you honour yourself and those around you.”

Grandmother Willow’s voice floats in:
“When you care for your appearance, you say: *I am present. I am here. I value this moment and you.*”

The classroom fills with a soft glow — respect shining like sunlight.

Noomi's bell rings.
"Scene Two — Rex Careless in His Appearance."

Scene Two – Rex Shrugs It Off

Rex wanders in with wrinkled clothes, mismatched socks, hair sticking up in every direction. Crumbs from breakfast tumble from his sleeve.

He yawns loudly and slumps into a chair.
"It doesn't matter what I look like. People should accept me anyway."

The Hatter tilts her head, gentle but firm.
"Respect, Rex, is not about fancy clothes. It's about care. When you don't care at all, you tell others this moment — and they — are not worth your effort."

The light on Rex's side dims, leaving it dull and grey.

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter steps forward with a small comb and offers it to the class with a wink.
"See, darlings? Appearance is not about showing off. It is about showing *up*."

Reflection with the Class

The Hatter turns to the students:
“Have you ever noticed how different it feels when you’re ready for the day — washed, brushed, neat? Does it change how people respond to you? And how you feel inside?”

Students reply softly:
“I feel more confident.”
“People smile back more.”

The Hatter beams.
“Exactly! Self-care ripples outward. It’s kindness you wear on your skin.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi unfurls the scroll, glowing green this time:

“Neatness is respect. It honours yourself and honours others.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard writes by itself:

- “What small part of your appearance do you already care for well?”
- “How might brushing, washing, or tidying help you feel stronger inside?”
- “How is self-care different from vanity?”

The Challenge

The Hatter hands each student a tiny invisible pocket mirror.
“Today’s task, dear ones: choose one way to show care in your appearance — brushing your hair, washing your face, shining your shoes. Not for praise. Simply to say: *I am present. I care.*”

The stage shifts, preparing for the next lesson.

[The Curtain Rises for Act Eight.]



Shared responsibilitiy
is an act of honour.

Act Eight – Manners in the Workplace (or Schoolplace)

[The Curtain Lifts]

The stage shows a **Wonderland Project Hall**: great tables piled with tools, paper, and glowing cogs. In the center sits a half-built invention — a shimmering contraption that hums and flashes.

Children bustle like busy fairies and hedgehogs, each adding their piece.

Noomi rings her bell:
“Scene One — Dante Works With Respect.”

Scene One – Dante in the Team

Dante enters on time, sleeves rolled neatly. He greets his teammates warmly:
“Good morning. How can I help today?”

He listens carefully, hands out tools, and thanks each helper.
When the invention whirs to life with a puff of stardust, Dante smiles and says:
“We did it, together.”

The team beams. The machine glows brighter with every “please” and “thank you.”

The Hatter whispers:
“See? Punctuality, listening, sharing credit — these are the oils that make teamwork run smoothly.”

<u>Noomi's bell rings.</u>
<u>"Scene Two — Rex Struggles with Respect</u>."

Scene Two – Rex in the Team

Rex rushes in late, hair untidy, crumbs still on his jacket.
"Sorry, sorry… what are we doing?" he mumbles, grabbing a tool.

He barely listens, knocks over a pile of papers, and when the invention finally hums, he leaps forward: "Look what *I* made!"

The team exchanges tired glances. The invention flickers, sputters, and dims.

Grandmother Willow's voice echoes gently: "Taking credit for what isn't yours, or failing to honour the time of others, steals respect. True teamwork is never a one-man show."

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter steps forward holding a pocket watch in one hand and a glowing blueprint in the other.
“Respect in work — whether school, home, or job — is shown in how we show up: on time, prepared, and willing to listen.”

Reflection with the Class

The Hatter asks the students:
“How does it feel when someone is late or takes credit for your work?”
Children reply:
“Frustrating.”
“Like my effort doesn’t matter.”

“And how does it feel when someone thanks you, or notices your part?”
“Good.”
“Like I belong.”

The Hatter nods:
“That, dear ones, is the secret to lasting teamwork.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi unfurls a golden scroll:

“Respect in teamwork means showing up on time, listening, and sharing credit.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard writes:

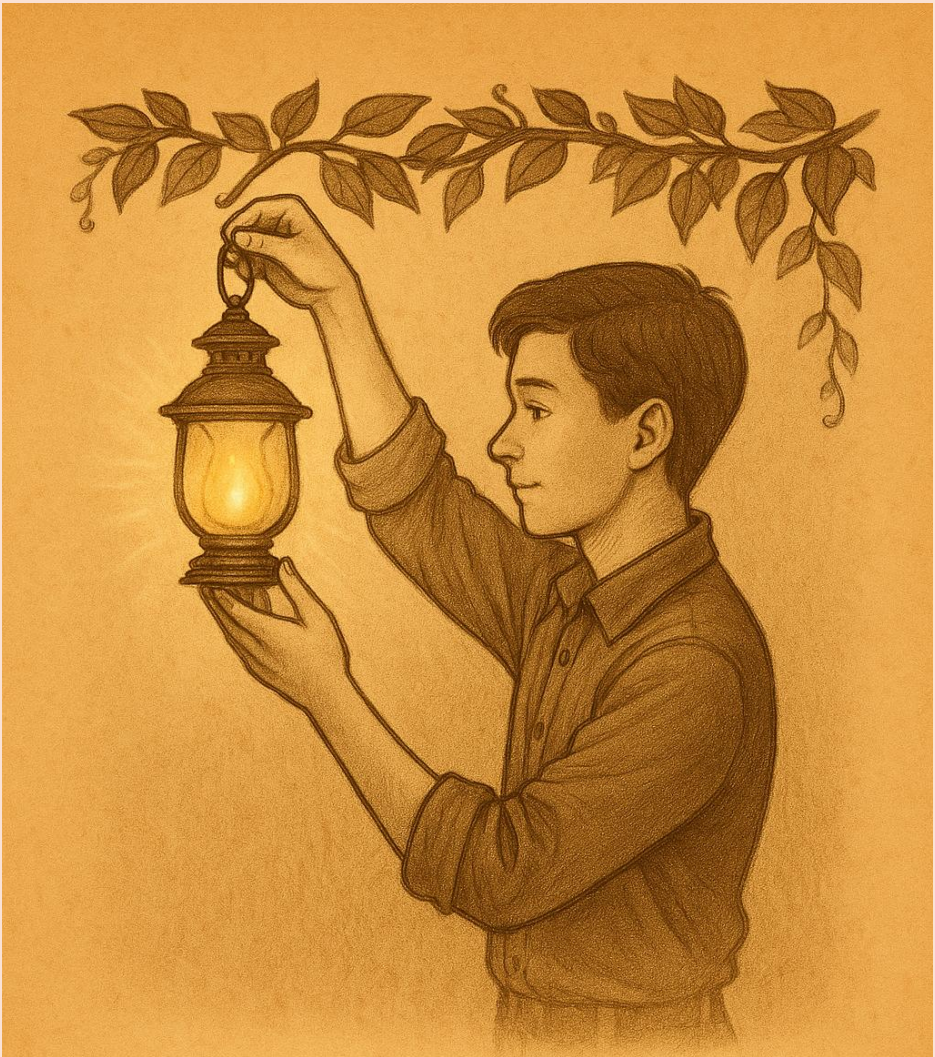
- “Have you ever worked on something as a team? How did you show respect?”
- “What can you do next time to help the group feel valued?”
- “Why is being on time a form of respect?”

The Challenge

The Hatter smiles:
“Today, look for one small way to show respect in teamwork. Be on time. Share credit. Say thank you. Every team needs these small acts of honour.”

The curtain shimmers, hinting at the next lesson.

[The Curtain Prepares for Act Nine.]



Shared spaces deserve
shared respect.

Act Nine – Respect for Shared Spaces

[The Curtain Lifts]

The stage glimmers as a **Wonderland Festival** comes alive: lanterns strung between candyfloss trees, music from a fiddle-playing fox, and long picnic tables laid with food.

The children on stage play fairies, hedgehogs, and rabbits enjoying the celebration.

Noomi rings her silver bell:
“Scene One — Dante Respects the Festival.”

Scene One – Dante at the Festival

Dante strolls through the festival, laughing with the children.
When he finishes his cup of sparkling lemonade, he neatly places it in the recycling basket.

A young hedgehog spills jam on the table. Dante fetches a cloth, smiling:
“Here, let’s tidy this together.”

The table gleams again. The festival glows brighter, lanterns twinkling happily.

The Tea-Witch hostess pats his shoulder:
“Respect for a place is respect for the people who keep it alive.”

Noomi rings her bell.
"Scene Two — Rex Disrespects the Festival."

Scene Two – Rex at the Festival

Rex stomps in noisily, bumping into chairs.
He drops his sandwich wrapper on the grass.
When reminded by a fairy to tidy up, he waves her off:
"Someone else will do it."

He speaks too loudly over the music, knocking over cups. The lanterns flicker dimly, some even going out.

Grandmother Willow's voice rustles in the wind:
"When we treat a place carelessly, we dim the joy of everyone in it."

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter steps forward, lifting a lantern high.
"Respect isn't only for people — it's for the spaces we share. Whether a classroom, a hall, a street, or a festival, how we treat the place shapes the spirit of it."

Reflection with the Class

The Hatter turns to the students:
“How do you feel when a place is left messy?”
Children reply:
“Annoyed.”
“Like no one cares.”

“And how do you feel when a place is tidy and cared for?”
“Happy.”
“Like it’s safe and welcoming.”

The Hatter nods:
“Shared spaces belong to everyone — caring for them shows respect for each other.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi unfurls a glowing parchment:

“Respect is shown by how we treat the places we share.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard writes:

- “What is one shared space you use every day?”
- “How can you show respect for it?”
- “What happens when everyone takes care of the space together?”

The Challenge

The Hatter raises her lantern toward the class: “Today, pick one shared space — at home, at school, or outside — and do one small thing to keep it shining. Respect leaves a place brighter than you found it.”

The lantern glows, and the curtain gently closes.

[The Curtain Prepares for Act Ten.]


Our promises live on
beyond the play.

Act Ten – The Power of Words

[The Curtain Lifts]

The stage is set as a **Wonderland Garden of Echoes**: every word spoken floats into the air as glowing fireflies. Kind words sparkle gold; hurtful words flash red and drop like stones.

Noomi rings her silver bell:
“Scene One — Dante Speaks with Kindness.”

Scene One – Gentle Speech

Dante kneels beside a small fairy who looks worried.
He says gently:
“You’ve done your best — that’s wonderful.”

Golden word-fireflies rise and dance above them,
casting a warm glow over the garden.
The fairy’s wings shimmer brighter; she smiles, uplifted.

The Hatter whispers:
“Words can heal. They are bridges, not weapons.”

Noomi rings her bell again:
"Scene Two — Rex Speaks Without Care."

Scene Two – Hurtful Speech

Rex strides across the garden, muttering impatiently.
When a hedgehog child trips, Rex snaps:
"Clumsy fool!"

Red fireflies fall to the ground with a dull thud.
The hedgehog curls up, hurt. The whole garden grows dimmer.

Grandmother Willow's voice sighs in the wind:
"Harsh words do not vanish; they echo in hearts."

The Curtain Falls

The Hatter steps forward, gathering the children close.
"Respect lives in the tongue as much as in the hands.
Words can wound, or words can mend. Choose yours as if each one is a seed you plant in another's garden."

Reflection with the Class

The Hatter asks softly:
“How do you feel when someone says something kind to you?”
Children reply:
“Happy.”
“Confident.”

“And how do you feel when words are unkind?”
“Small.”
“Sad.”

The Hatter nods:
“Then remember — every word leaves a mark. Be the one who leaves light.”

The Truth Scroll

Noomi unfurls the final glowing parchment:

“Words carry power — respect is spoken through kindness.”

The Call to Reflection

The chalkboard writes:

- “What words have lifted you up before?”
- “What words have hurt?”
- “What words can you choose today to build others up?”

The Final Challenge

The Hatter raises her teacup wand high:
“From this day, let your words be seeds of kindness. Speak in ways that help others grow. This is the mark of true respect — not just in action, but in every word you give to the world.”

The lanterns across the stage flare gold. The cast gathers — Dante, Rex, Grandmother Willow, the fairies, hedgehogs, children, and creatures of Wonderland. Together they bow as the curtain falls.

[The Curtain Closes. The Play of Respect is Complete.]



📜 Closing Reflection & Challenge Circle

[The Curtain Rises One Last Time]

All characters gather in a great **Wonderland circle**, lit by lanterns that glow in soft rainbow hues.
Dante, Rex, the fairies, hedgehogs, Grandmother Willow, the kindly tea-witch, and even the gnome and rabbit from earlier acts stand side by side.

The Hatter steps into the centre with her teacup wand raised.
Her voice is gentle but strong:

“Dear ones, we have walked ten acts together.
We have seen respect in words, in deeds, in care for the young and old, for strangers, and for ourselves.
But the story is not truly ours — it belongs to you.

So now, let us circle. Share with us:
Where have you noticed gentlemanly kindness in your own life?
Or — what small thing will you try next?”

[The children in the audience — or the class if performed in a classroom — are invited to speak aloud or whisper into the circle their reflections.]

The lanterns flicker brighter with each child’s voice.

The Final Truth Scroll

Noomi, perched proudly on the Hatter's shoulder, unfurls a parchment edged in starlight.
Her owl-voice rings out, clear and true:

"Respect is the crown of character.
It is seen in patience, kindness, and care for all beings — young, old, stranger, and self.
Wear it daily, not as a costume, but as who you truly are."

The scroll glows gold, then dissolves into a thousand fireflies that rise into the night sky.

Curtain Call

The Hatter lifts her wand one final time:
"Go forth, dear students of respect. Carry the lessons into your homes, your schools, your friendships, and your dreams. The play may end, but your story continues."

All characters bow. The lanterns fade.
[The Curtain Falls.]



🎓 Workshop: Back in the Classroom

The Hatter gently taps her wand against a teacup. The lantern-lit stage melts away, and the children find themselves back in their classroom setting, though with a little Wonderland sparkle still shimmering around the edges.

The characters gather at the back of the room like honoured guests, while the Hatter addresses the students directly.

The Hatter speaks:

“Now that our play is done, let us pause and reflect.
We’ve seen Dante choose respect in many ways, and Rex learn some hard truths.
But most importantly — what about you?
When did you notice respect in your own life?
Perhaps in your family, with a friend, or even in how you cared for yourself this morning.”

✨ The Hatter wanders between the desks, her coat trailing starlight across the floor. She pauses, leaning in gently as children begin to share:

• One boy says softly, *“I showed respect when I let my sister have the last biscuit.”*

• Another beams, *“I helped my gran carry her shopping bags.”*

• A girl whispers shyly, *“I brushed my hair this morning because I wanted to look neat for school.”*

The Hatter nods at each, her eyes twinkling. “Beautiful… respect takes many forms, doesn’t it? Small things, yet they shine brighter than diamonds.”

Once the circle sharing is done, the Hatter claps her hands, and three silver cards appear floating in the air.

The Hatter:
"Now then, quick-fire trials! Let us practice respect in action."

She reads the first:
• *"What do you say if someone bumps into you in the hallway?"*

Two children step forward. One plays "Rex style," grumbling, *"Hey! Watch it!"* The other tries "Dante style," saying kindly, *"Are you okay?"*

The class giggles, but then murmurs at how different it feels.

Next card:
• *"How do you show respect when a little sibling wants to join your game?"*

Another pair act it out. One folds their arms (Rex style): *"No, go away, you'll ruin it."* The other opens their circle (Dante style): *"Sure, come on! You can be on my team."*

The Hatter raises her hands dramatically:
“Do you see, dear ones? One path closes doors, the other opens them wide.”

📜 **Gentleperson’s Pledge**
Each child receives a small scroll (or paper to decorate).
On it they write one sentence beginning with:

✨ *“I will show respect by…”*

Examples might be:
- *“I will listen before I speak.”*
- *“I will let my little brother play.”*
- *“I will clean up after myself.”*

The classroom sparkles with a hum as the students write with moon ink on the soft parchment. The scrolls are then rolled up and placed in a basket, or pinned proudly on a “Respect Wall” at the front of the room.

🦉 **Noomi the Owl** flutters down with a final word: “Remember — respect is not a costume you wear for a play. It is the way you walk in the world, every day.”

The Hatter smiles warmly, her eyes sweeping over every child:
“And with that, dear ones, our Wonderland lesson is complete. The curtain may close, but your choices have only just begun.”

A soft chime is rung. One by one, the children are collected by their caregivers. The Hatter bends low to bid farewell to each — a tip of her hat, a gentle word, a smile that makes them feel seen.

The last lantern fades as the classroom returns to its everyday self… but in each child’s heart, a quiet pledge of respect continues to glow.

🎩 *The Modern Gentleman's Code*

Facilitator Guide & Lesson Plan

Workshop Length

- Flexible: **60–90 minutes** (can be split across 2 sessions if needed).
- Each Act can be shortened/extended depending on group size and age.

🕰️ Suggested Timing Overview

1. **Welcome & Introduction** – 10 minutes
    - The Hatter's classroom scene (set the tone).
    - Briefly explain the purpose: *"We're here to explore respect, kindness, and presence — through story and play."*
2. **Acts & Reflections** – 40–60 minutes
    - Each Act has:
        - A **short play/skit** (Dante vs Rex).
        - **Discussion/Reflection** (guided by Hatter/Facilitator).

- Optional: **Quick-fire roleplay or journal writing.**

⏳ Roughly 5–7 minutes per Act if doing all 9. Or select fewer Acts if time is limited.

3. **Closing Reflection Circle** – 10–15 minutes
    - Group reflection & sharing.
    - Gentleperson's Pledge activity (scroll writing).
    - Noomi's final words + farewell.

🎭 Act Flow (Repeatable Pattern)

Each Act follows the same rhythm:

1. **Set the Scene** (read the story/play aloud, or act it out with props).
2. **Contrast** (Dante's way vs Rex's way).
3. **Class Reflection Questions** (guided).
4. **Mini Challenge** (practical takeaway).

📖 Example: Act One – First Impressions

- **Scene:** Café meeting.
- **Dante:** Warm greetings, introductions, present.
- **Rex:** Distracted, phone out, no presence.
- **Discussion Questions:**
  - How did Dante make people feel when he walked in?
  - How did Rex make people feel?
  - Which would you rather experience if you were there?
- **Challenge:** *"This week, practise arriving with presence: be on time, greet warmly, put your phone away."*

✨ Facilitator Tips

- **Props help:** lantern, key, scrolls, basket, etc. (symbols can be printed or brought physically).
- **Inclusive language:** say *gentleman, gentlewoman, gentleperson* so everyone feels included.

- **Encourage participation:** let students try acting Dante vs Rex (they love role reversals).
- **Flexible depth:** younger groups = more acting, less discussion. Older teens = deeper conversations.

📜 Closing Reflection & Pledge

- **Circle Sharing:** Invite each participant to share *one way they showed or received respect recently.*
- **Pledge Activity:** Distribute small scrolls/papers. Write: *"I will show respect by…"*
  - Collect in a basket or pin on a wall.
  - **Closing Words:**
    - Noomi the Owl: *"Respect is not a costume you wear for a play. It is the way you walk in the world, every day."*
    - The Hatter: *"The curtain may close, but your choices have only just begun."*