

SYNOPSIS OF DRINK ME or
THE STRANGE CASE OF ALICE TIMES THREE

(A comic drama in two acts; twenty scenes)

TIME: The present

PLACE: London, England. A gloomy shadow strewn set evokes a modern gothic ambiance and depicts three lecture halls, two offices, Gordon Fossmire's bedroom, New Scotland Yard, the Rime sisters' parlor, Regents Park, a ritual chamber, and Lady Augusta's sitting room.

CHARACTERS: 6 women; 2 men (with doubling): Detective Chief Inspector Fossmire; Lady Alice Augusta Fossmire, his widowed mother; Madeline Cobbles Rime, an Oxford professor and mother of triplets; Hugo Brimley Rime, a Cambridge professor and father of triplets; Emmaline, Urseline, and Valentine Rime, all age 20; Doctor Flora Whetstone, a psychiatrist; Detective Sergeant Rupert Slater; The High Priestess.

PLOT SYNOPSIS: Homeless and disreputable men are vanishing from the streets of London leaving only their buttons as evidence. The Metropolitan Police have exhausted all possible clues when Detective Chief Inspector Fossmire hears from a distraught anthropologist specializing in witchcraft who claims her twenty year old triplets are responsible. When the girls were toddlers, their father, a professor of Jacobean Drama, read plays at bedtime to amuse them. They were so delighted by the arcane speech that they claimed it as their own and refused to learn modern English. Now the girls live in opulent seclusion, making their fortune in shrewd investments while worshiping goddesses and inviting indigent men to supper. Although Fossmire is skeptical, he visits the sisters and becomes convinced of their involvement after they demonstrate their powers, sending him reeling to his bed. His mother, Lady Augusta, an activist for the cause of global population control, is fearful for her son's welfare, but is intrigued by the triplets since as a lonely and abused child she had conjured three imaginary sisters of her own, all named Alice and all bearing striking similarities to the suspected triplets. Meanwhile, a sympathetic psychiatrist, Doctor Flora Whetstone, is brought into the case and Fossmire becomes smitten. Together they attempt to comprehend the reasons behind the girls menacing behavior, and to fathom how witchcraft is being employed to accomplish their sinister goals. After learning more about the Rime sisters, Lady Augusta becomes convinced they are her very own fantasy triplets sprung to life -- so she invites them to tea. It is here that the girls true identities are revealed, and the destiny of the missing indigents becomes hideously clear.

The events enacted in DRINK ME may be interpreted to be real or unreal, literal or allegorical or both. The Rime Sisters may be neurotic manifestations of sexual anxiety or they may be flesh and blood women or they may simply be reminders that the inexplicable exists. The play means to question Fossmire's assumption that human experience can be quantified or known, and he is left with doubts about the underlying reality of his own fragile life.