

Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY - MINNEAPOLIS

**2400 THIRD AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55404
612-872-5108
FAX 612-874-8119**

Alice, An Adventure in Wonderland

Story by
Lewis Carroll

Adapted for the Stage by
Charles Way

Alice, An Adventure in Wonderland was first presented by Open Air Theatre, UK in 2000

The license issued in connection with PYA perusal scripts is a limited license, and is issued for the sole purpose of reviewing the script for a potential future performance. All other rights regarding perusal scripts are expressly reserved by Plays for Young Audiences, including, but not limited to, the rights to distribute, perform, copy or alter scripts. This limited license does not convey any performance rights of any kind with this material. By accepting any perusal script(s), Licensee agrees to and is bound by these terms.

Characters:

- Alice
- Father
- Sister
- Mum
- Brother 1
- Brother 2
- White Rabbit
- Card 5
- Card 9
- Jack
- Queen
- Caterpillar
- Cook
- Duchess
- Cheshire Puss
- King
- March Hare
- Dormouse
- Mad Hatter
- Humpty Dumpty
- Gnat
- Tweedledee
- Tweedledum

Doubling:

Actor 1: Alice

Actor 2: Father, White Rabbit,
Caterpillar, Mad Hatter

Actor 3: Sister, Queen, Cheshire
Puss, Humpty Dumpty

Actor 4: Mum, Jack, Duchess,
Dormouse

Actor 5: Brother 1, Card 5,
Tweedledee

Actor 6: Brother 2, Card 9,
Tweedledum

Actor 7: Cook, King, March Hare,
Gnat

A modern family on a picnic. Alice is standing staring at the clouds. Her two brothers are playing football and arguing. Her sister is playing cards. Her parents are sitting on a rug. Jam tarts are in evidence but not referred to. Her father is reading a paper and he laughs every now and then. Her mother reads a book. Every so often they smile at each other and hold hands.

Alice There it is again.

Father What?

Alice The dragon.

Father Oh.

Alice Dad?

Alice turns to see Mum kissing Dad.

Alice It was a horse now it's a dragon. [They ignore her] And it's got huge claws-great big cloudy claws.

Her brothers come up and knock the football against her head. They do it repeatedly but she pretends not to notice. They run off.

Alice Are you reading?

Sister No- I'm scuba diving.

Alice I've been scuba diving.

Sister Fibber-you don't even know what it is?

Alice Yes I do I scuba dived out of plane once.

Sister No- you Scuba dive in water.

Alice Yes- I dived out of the plane- through the air- into the water. And that's where I met Mr. Scuba.

Sister I'm trying to play cards.

Alice Why- is it difficult?

Sister What?

Alice You said trying to play cards- as if you found it difficult. I'm sorry, if you do-

Sister The only thing that's trying round here is you.

Father Everything alright?

Sister No.

Alice [At the same time as Sister] Yes.

Father Good.

Alice Mum? Do you want to go for a walk?

Mum Um. Why don't you play football?

Alice Does that mean, no.

Mum No.

Alice Yes-it does.

Father Alice-It's been a long week.

Alice How can you have a long week ? Weeks are all one length. But, if a week did have more than seven days that would be a strength.

Sister Yawn.

[Enter two boys fighting over the ball]

Father Stop fighting.

[They stop-then continue and exit]

Father Speak to a brick wall.

Alice And what would a brick wall say? If you spoke to it.

Father Alice- please.

Alice I'm bored. I wish something would happen.

Sister I wish you'd go away. I'm playing solitaire . On your own.

Alice Perhaps I will go away, and never come back.

Father Now , now.

Mum Alice!

Alice What?

Mum Those are your school shoes.

Father It doesn't matter.

Mum Of course it matters.

Father Yes. It doesn't matter, at this moment.

Mum If it matters it matters. Do you know how fussy these girls are about their shoes? Do you know how long I spent traipsing round shoe shops –

Father All I'm saying--

Mum I know what you're saying---

Father How can you know before I've said it?

Mum Because I've heard it before-

[The argument continues and Alice moves away]

Sister Well done. Again.

Alice It's not my fault.

Sister You're the fussy one, so it's your fault.

Alice Yes, yes yes. It's all my fault. You never do anything. You are completely innocent, as ever.

Sister Yes-so leave me alone.

Alice [Imitates] 'Leave me alone'.

[Mum and dad embrace making up their quarrel. A white Rabbit in a waistcoat runs by]

Alice Did you see that?

Sister What?

Alice That, rabbit.

Sister No. Where?

Alice It's gone now. It was white-- with pink eyes.

[The football rolls across the back of the stage, but the boys are not to be seen]

Father [Reading his newspaper and laughing] Oh tragic-tragic.

Alice It was wearing a waistcoat.

Sister A what?

Alice A waistcoat.

Sister Mum Dad, She's doing it again.

Alice But this time it's true. A Rabbit- with a waistcoat and, and pink eyes.

Sister Like yours when you've been crying, which you will be if you don't shut up.

Mum What now?

Alice I saw a rabbit wearing a waistcoat?

Father Curious.

Mum Don't humor her, you know what she's like.

Father I like what she's like.

Mum Well of course--

Alice And it took a watch out of its pocket.

Mum Stop Alice stop.

Alice Yes it was, a stop watch.

Mum This is not the time.

Alice Not the time?

Mum She's off, and it's your fault.

Father Oh I'm happy to take the blame.

Alice She saw it too.

Sister No I didn't.

Alice Fibber.

Sister Why do you have to spoil everything?

Mum That's enough.

Father Come on you two, relax, picnic, sun, rain, river, flowers- rabbits- gnats- ow. [He swats it]

Alice What did you do that for?

Father It bit me.

Mum Perhaps we should go for a walk.

Alice Oh?

Mum You and I. Make up for lost time.

Father Right. Right

[Father and Mother wander off.]

Alice Once I fell down and I kept on falling. I fell right through the middle of the earth.
Really?
And I came out the other side. Unscathed?
Completely.
New Zealand or Australia?
I don't think you believe me. Oh I do I do.
And as I was falling I had so much time to think and I thought if only Dinah were with me. She's my cat. But then I thought, it wouldn't be much fun for a cat- because there are no mice when your falling through the air, though you might catch a bat. But do cats eat bats? Or do bats eat cats?

[The white rabbit runs by]

Alice Stop.

WR How dare you.

Alice But you must.

WR Don't you know I'm late.

Alice How would I know ?I don't know you.

WR Everyone knows me, and I'm late-

Alice Late? What for?

WR I'll give you what for.

Alice [Aside] Now something tells me, I shouldn't follow that rabbit- and in that case I will.

[The Rabbit leaves. Her parents have exited through her last speech. She follows the Rabbit.]

Wonderland. The Queens garden. Two soldiers\ Cards [5+9] are busy painting roses. They sing.

5+9 White red
White red
Who cares she'll have our heads
When she does we'll both be-sorry.

[They hear are a cry offstage, which is Alice falling down the Rabbit hole.]

5 Jabberwocky?

9 No-something else.

5 Something worse?

9 There's nothing worse. Just paint. Hey.

5 I couldn't help it. You jogged my elbow.

9 That's you all over. Always blame someone else.

5 That's the privilege of being a low number.

9 Hey--Just watch your step- [No 5 watches his step] Ha-ha, very funny-not. The Queen said only yesterday you deserved to be beheaded.

5 Why?

9 That's none of your business- another privilege of being a very low number.

[The rabbit runs by]

WR Oh my whiskers.

5 You're not late you know.

Rabbit I'm always late-

5 And proud of it.

Rabbit I heard that.

9 He meant well- he's foolish but well meant.

Rabbit I've a mind to report you to the Queen, a personal friend I'll have you know.

5 We know-

Rabbit [He hits the card with his fan]. Respect.

[Exit Rabbit, enter Alice unseen by the two Guards]

9 You deserved that.

5 I don't deserve to be beheaded. I've done nothing wrong.

9 You brought the cook tulip roots instead of onions.

5 That's a lie. [This last line results in paint going over nine] Sorry.

9 I am your superior officer. Now Paint. Paint.

5 And if I don't. [More paint goes on nine] Sorry.

Alice Why are you painting those Roses?

5 Why the fact is Miss, this should have been a red rose tree, and he put in a white one by mistake. And if the Queen was to find out he should have his head cut off.

9 And you.

5 But you first because you're superior. So I'm doing my best Miss to save his superior neck before the Queen notices his superior error.

9 And who are you?

Alice I'm—I'm - well I'm - I don't know. I can't seem to remember. I was- and now I'm---that's so odd.

9 Where do you come from?

5 You look a bit strange.

9 Lost are you?

Alice No-I just, fell down a rabbit hole, that's all.

5+9 Oh.

5 Did it hurt-falling down the rabbit hole?

Alice No- I fell down after a white rabbit and all the way down I could hear his voice saying, 'Oh my whiskers how late its getting'. Perhaps I fell on my head.

Then I landed in this hall, and there were doors all round the hall, but they were locked. I know because I tried every one and I thought I'm not going to get out of here. But suddenly I saw a three legged table, made of solid glass. There was nothing on it but a small golden key and I tried it in all the locks and it was still no use.

But then- then behind a curtain I found a door only fifteen inches high. And it led to a small passage not much larger than a rat hole and I looked down and I saw-you, and this beautiful garden. The most beautiful garden I ever saw, with flowers –

5 White ones.

Alice And I just had to come, then I tried to get my head through the door but I was too enormous, and I thought even if I got through I'd have to leave my shoulders behind and I would at some time in the future probably need them and I began to wish-wish wish I could shut up.

5+9 Yes.

Alice Like a telescope.

5+9 Oh.

Alice Because I think anything is possible-and then I saw this bottle which wasn't marked poison so I drank it.

5 Is that the end miss?

Alice No-

5+9 Oh.

Alice Then I began to shrink until I was only ten inches high. When I was getting smaller and smaller I did begin to worry because I thought , actually I could just go on getting smaller and eventually just go out-like a candle. And I did wonder what that would be like.

5 Well- you'd have to ask a candle.

Alice Yes- although candles can't talk. [aside] But then neither can playing cards as a rule. So the rules are different here. Games have rules. That's it, I've fallen into a game-I think.

5+9 [Sing] White red
White red
Who cares she'll have our heads
When she does we'll both be-sorry

[Enter Jack of hearts with a tray of jam tarts. He does not look at Alice]

Jack Attention-Attention Attention.

9 I assure you sir you have our full attention.

Jack No, no, no. Stand to attention you idiot.

5 One of these days.

9 Keep it in, keep it in.

Jack Have you seen her?

9 Who sir?

Jack Who? The Queen my mother that's who. Who else? The cat's whiskers?

9 We've seen no one.

Jack You've seen her.

[He points at Alice without looking at her]

9 But who is she sir? She's no one-apparently.

Alice I am someone, whatever you may think-it's just a question of finding out who.

Jack I don't care who you aren't. I need help- with these-tarts. I couldn't possibly eat them all.

5 They look nice-

9 No-sir, we don't partake.

5 Yes we do.

9 No we don't. Soldiers and tarts sir- not a healthy mix.

Jack Eat them, that's an order. [Jack gives 5 the tarts.]

5 I don't like orders.

Jack But you do like jam tarts. [Exit jack].

9 Fool.

5 [With his mouth full] Fool with a jam tart.

9 [Takes the tray]

5 Hey!

9 Would you like a jam tart Miss?

Alice I don't know.

5 How can anyone not know that.

9 [Royal fanfare off] Just hold the plate miss. While we paint the Roses. Enter Queen of Hearts-she walks straight past Alice as if she did not exist and addresses the two Guards. She takes 9 by the ear and forces him to his knees]

Queen Listen to me and listen very carefully. Someone-is about to have their head chopped off. This someone, this good for nothing, has stolen from under the cooks nose where she keeps them ,unless she has a cold , my, I repeat MY, in capital letters, MY JAM TARTS. Find them and behead them. The culprit that is -not the tarts-tarts do not have heads-if they did I would CUT THEM OFF.[Alice slowly puts the tarts behind her] Unless of course you took them.

5 No, Your majesty.

Queen Or you?

9 NNNNN .

Queen Stop that. Have you seen my son, Jack?

5+9 Yes your majesty.

Queen He is innocent in every way. Is he not?

5+9 Yes innocent, your majesty

Queen He would not steal or lie, anyone who says so, will?

5+9 Be sorry.

[Queen turns to Alice]

Queen If the guilty one is not discovered the whole pack will be punished. Everyone shall have their heads CUT OFF. Everyone-

Alice Then you would have no subjects left your majesty.

[The Soldiers breathe in in terror]

Queen I never liked subjects-only games. Croquet. Do you play Croquet?

Alice No-your majesty.

Queen Nonsense anyone who's anyone plays Croquet. Are you telling me you don't exist?

Alice No-I do exist, well, I used to.

Queen What is that, behind your back?

[Alice turns-but manages to keep the tarts in front of her-then she turns keeping them behind her.]

Alice It's a lovely garden.

Queen I can see you thinking thoughts. Are you?

Alice I wouldn't know what else to think your majesty.

Queen Show me your hands.

[Alice shows them one at a time]

Queen Now show me both.at the same time. [Alice slowly produces the plate] OFF with her head.

[The guards grab Alice]

Alice But you must listen to me-please-. Please listen to me.

Queen Red hands. Red hands?

Alice A little jam that's all.

Queen There will be a fair trial followed by a summary execution.

Alice I'm innocent.

Queen I too shall have red hands when I cut off your head.

[Offstage -the sound of the jabberwocky]

5 Is it?

9 Yes

Queen Jabberwocky!

[They all fall flat as there is a tremendous roar. Alice drops the plate and runs off]

Queen Where's the girl?

5+9 Um.

Queen Get up-up.

5+9 Your majesty.

Queen Find her then chase her.

9 In that- yes.

Queen Or I will cut off your heads and use them for Croquet.

[Exit Queen. During the next bit of conversation the two cards pull on the Caterpillar on the Mushroom. Throughout the play-these two cards act as on stage, stage managers.]

5 One of these days.

9 Shh.

5 No I won't Ssh-why should I shh. Do this, do that. What does she think I am, a number? And you did that on purpose.

9 What?

5 Got that girl in trouble.

9 Yes and got you out of it- again.

5 She did nothing wrong.

9 You should have thought about that before you started stuffing jam tarts into your mouth.

5 I couldn't resist.
9 No- you never resist. If this country had a resistance you'd be the last to join.

5 That's not fair.

9 It was a choice- your head or hers. Did I make the right one? [Song]

There's many a choice that a card has to make on his way to the top of the pile.

The lower you are, the sweeter by far whereas aces are known to be vile.

But we have a dream that we will be free As free as a Jack or a king,
but you have to be mad , cos its ever so bad To think such a wonderful thing.

But when we rise to the top with a terrible plot
we'll rule with a rod made of string.

The first shall be last
and the last shall be made
to fly without goggles or wings.

But until the time comes, we'll both beat the drum for the big the bad
and the bold.

We'll tighten our belts and muddle along and do whatever we're told.
do whatever we're told

[Exit]

Alice [Enters in a flurry. During her speech one of the cards slowly pushes on a huge mushroom. Throughout the play-these two cards act as on stage, stage managers.]

How strange everything is today, and yesterday things went on just as usual. Except that I can't remember what usual is-or was. I'm in some sort of game- I know that much- but that was just a guess.

What if it isn't a game? What if she really wants to cut my head off- then I ought to get out. But how do I get out? I can't fall up the rabbit hole. But actually- I don't want to go not yet-I want to see what's going on-however dangerous-Oh that's just like me. But who is me? I'm not the same. And if I'm not the same the question is, who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle. I'm sure I'm not Jill, because she's got curls in her hair, and I don't have curls at all, and I can't be Susan because I know all sorts of things, and she, doesn't know anything, she's a real duh. Besides she is she and I am I and--Oh- I'll try if I know all the things I used to know. Um-four times five is twelve, and four times six is thirteen, four times seven is--Oh dear, I'll

never get to London at that rate. Let's try geography. London is the capital of Paris, and Paris is the capital of Rome and Rome is-no that's wrong, I must have been swapped for Susan. And if I have been I'll stay down here. It'll be no use Mum and dad putting down their heads and saying, "Come up dear", because I won't. I shall only look up and say, Who am I? Tell me first, and if I like being that person I'll come up, if not I'll stay down here till I'm somebody else.

Caterpillar Who are you talking to?

Alice I don't know.

Caterpillar What do you mean by that, explain yourself.

Alice I can't explain myself, I'm afraid because I'm not myself you see.

Caterpillar I don't see.

Alice I'm afraid- I can't put it more clearly. I can't understand it myself and being so many sizes in a day is very confusing.

Caterpillar No it isn't.

Alice Well perhaps you haven't found it so yet, but when you have to turn into a chrysalis, you will one day you know- and then after that into a butterfly, I should think you'll feel it a little odd won't you.

Caterpillar Not a bit.

Alice Well perhaps your feelings may be different.

Caterpillar I should hope so.

Alice All I know is it would feel very different to me.

Caterpillar You? Who are you?

Alice I think you ought to tell me who you are first and where I am. And what was that terrible sound?

Caterpillar Why? Come back, I've something important to say. Keep your temper.

Alice Is that all?

Caterpillar No.

Alice What was that awful sound like---like?

Caterpillar The Jabberwocky.

Alice What's that?

Caterpillar So you think you've changed do you?

Alice I have changed. What's the Jabberwocky?

Caterpillar How do you know you've changed?

Alice I used to be bigger than a Caterpillar. Three inches is such a wretched height to be.

Caterpillar It's a very good height indeed.

Alice Oh-I see --You are?

Caterpillar Three inches, to the inch.

Alice But I'm not used to being three inches tall. I'm not used to this strange place-I'm not used to be chased or beheaded.

Caterpillar Beheaded?

Alice I seem to have done something wrong.

Caterpillar As I have always said there's very little point in doing something.

Alice But I didn't do it at all.

Caterpillar Are you referring to the incident known as the Great Tart Robbery.

Alice How do you know?

Caterpillar Read the newspapers girl. Keep up, keep up.

Alice But I only just.

Caterpillar It's been reported. Rather badly I'm afraid. Very lurid, but that's what people like to read-lurid.

Alice I did not do it.

Caterpillar Didn't, seem to, as I recall.

Alice I won't be beheaded I just won't. I- I- I need my head.

Caterpillar Well that's a matter of opinion, it all depends what's in it.

Alice I'm in it.

Caterpillar Stop crying child it's hardly important.

Alice It's important to me.

[Sound of Card 5 Off]

Alice I must hide. Will you help me?

[She sees the Card coming and hides behind the mushroom]

Caterpillar What do you want, number--Five?

5 Seen a girl?

Caterpillar Yes.

5 Where is she?

Caterpillar Can't see her now. Can you?

5 No.

Caterpillar Well go away, you're disturbing my equilibrium.

5 Good-[turns to leave] What is that-Equilibrium?

Caterpillar It's what I had before that girl arrived-and what I'll have again when you leave.

5 Which way did she go?

Caterpillar The way she came.

5 Which way is that?

Caterpillar The way she went.

5 Which is?

Caterpillar Which is where she undoubtedly is.

5 Caterpillars, they're all the same. [Exit]

Alice Thank you. Can I ask you something? Is this a game?

Caterpillar A game?

Alice Like hide and seek.

Caterpillar Certainly not. Do you think that I- I would play games?

Alice Well no. Not you. Well- perhaps then-it's a story, Yes-I'm in a story. A fairy tale and I suppose it is in a way- so the question is why are you in the story?

Caterpillar I am not in a story- or a game. You can be in a story if you want. I am merely sitting on a mushroom.

Alice I see. I didn't mean to offend-- I'm just trying to—

Caterpillar Well don't.

[Enter The White Rabbit who is searching for a dropped invitation to the Croquet]

WR The Queen, the Queen, Oh my fur and whiskers. She'll execute me as sure as ferrets are ferrets.

Caterpillar Oh-I can't stand this fellow.

[Exit caterpillar.]

WR Where can I have dropped it I wonder? Why Mary Ann. What are you doing?

Alice Nothing.

WR Well that's a fine thing. I forgot my fan and gloves go and fetch them. Well?

Alice But I'm--

WR What?

Alice Not.

WR NOT?

Alice No. [Aside] He thinks I'm Mary Ann. But what is she?

WR Don't just stand there my fan and Gloves.

Alice [Aside] I'm not sure I like this life, being ordered about by Caterpillars and Rabbits.

WR Ah.[He finds the invite in his back pocket] Mary Ann. Take this to the Duchess. It's from the Queen. An invitation for the Duchess to play croquet. Take it.

Alice He thinks I'm his Au pair- or something like one.

WR Do your Job as I do mine.

Alice What is your job?

WR The Cheek of it. No-one knows my job, it's far too important for that. Even I haven't been told.

Alice Oh. Well. How do I get to the Duchess?

WR No-one gets to the Duchess-the duchess gets to you, as you very well know. [The rabbit sneezes]

[Exit Rabbit. Strange Music as the next scene forms around Alice. The two card push on a miniature home scene represented by a hearth where the cook is busy, the Duchess is cradling an infant. She sneezes on it violently]

Cook Bless you.

Duchess There's too much pepper in that {sneeze}.

Cook Soup.

Duchess What do you want?

Alice I have a letter for you.

Duchess Stop crying you little pig. No not you-. I don't know you.

Alice Well I'm-Mary Ann, at the moment.

Duchess Well, don't hold on to it, it's not yours you know.[Reads] Mm. Croquet. I'm good at that, as long the Queen plays fairly.

[The Cook stops cooking]

Duchess Well it's true. She bends the rules- it's her privilege I'd do the same- so stop staring, there's nothing treasonous there. I love the Queen- long live the Queen.

Cook Long live the Queen.

Duchess And you-where do you stand?

Alice Long live the Queen.

[The baby howls]

Duchess Speak Roughly to your little boy
and beat him when he sneezes
he only does it to annoy
because he knows it teases.

Cook+ Baby [Chorus] WOW WOW

Duchess I speak severely to my boy
I beat him when he sneezes
for he can thoroughly enjoy
the pepper when he pleases.

Cook +baby [Chorus] WOW WOW.

[The Duchess shakes the baby]

Alice Stop that, it's dangerous. Please mind what you're doing.

Duchess If everybody minded their own business the world would go round a
deal faster than it does.

[The Duchess is about to start shaking the baby again]

Alice Which actually- [The Duchess stops] Would not be an advantage, you
see the earth takes twenty four hours to turn round on its axis.

Duchess Axes? Axes. If you want to know anything about axes see the Queen,
she's got a wardrobe full. All different shapes and sizes. Not that I'd
say anything against her. Long live the Queen. Where do you stand?

Alice Long live the Queen.

[The baby howls more and the cook starts to throw one wooden spoon after another at it.
They hit the Duchess who holds up the baby as a shield]

Alice Stop that stop!

[Alice grabs the child from the duchess-there is a tussle-The Duchess grabs it back. The
cook howls and hits her cooking range like a drum kit]

Duchess Very well- you nurse it if you like.

[She throws the baby through the air to Alice who catches it. It wriggles violently and Alice
find it hard to hold on to it]

Duchess Stop it grunting if you can. I must go and get ready to play Croquet.
Cook? Less pepper.

[The Duchess sneezes and blows the Cook offstage. Exit Duchess]

[Music-Alice walks through Wonderland holding the baby-It changes around her. Behind her the Cheshire Puss emerges from the leaves of a tree.]

Alice Some people. If they don't want children why do they have them? And if they have them-why do they shake them? [sings to the baby]

All in the golden afternoon
A story I pursue
a dream child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird and beast
And half believe it true.

Oh look baby-It's a cat- half a cat -a cat's head. Oh well that's better than nothing .Cheshire Puss-Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?

CP That depends on where you want to get to.

Alice I don't care--

CP Then it doesn't matter which way you go.

Alice As long as I get somewhere---

CP Oh you're sure to do that.

Alice And as long as it's nowhere near The Queen. And whatever you may have heard -or read in the newspapers-I didn't do it.

CP Why are you holding that pig?

Alice It's not a pig-it's a baby.

CP Why have you got it?

Alice They were going to kill it- sooner or later, so I thought, it would have been murder to leave it behind.

CP Its grunting very much like a pig.

Alice It's not grunting, its crying- [Takes the baby aside] please- stop grunting. That's not a proper way to express oneself. Unless of course- you are a pig- which suddenly you do seem to be.

[She puts it down]

Alice Well- thank you -if you're going to turn into a pig just like that- without even asking- I'll have nothing more to do with you.

[The pig runs off. The king who has been asleep unnoticed beneath the tree containing the Cheshire cat now wakes up with a cry.]

King Beware the Jabberwock! Beware the Jabberwock Ah, it's you.

Alice Me?

King Don't kill me. Don't kill me.

Alice I promise you, I won't. I wouldn't know how.

King You're the one she's looking for.

Alice Yes but I didn't –

King Hush hush-danger danger. You were in my dream.

Alice Was I?

King Just then-you in person. You were talking to an egg-no that's later. Red hands red hands.

Alice But I didn't--

King Hush, Hush. She's sent men out to search for you- so she can ch, ch, ch- ch-ch

Alice Chop off my head?

King Yes. Sorry. She's not so bad you know, underneath.

Alice I'm sure she's very nice.

King Are you-sure? Oh good. That's very generous in the circumstances. That's very generous indeed. [Moved to tears] So generous. [Far distant sound of Jabberwocky.] Heaven protect us.

Alice Was that the Jabberwock---?

King SSh child- danger danger.

Alice What exactly is the Jabber-?

King Ssh-The more you mention its name-the closer it gets.

Alice What is It?

King Don't know, exactly

Alice Why are you afraid of it then?

King Everyone's afraid of it.

Alice I'm not.

King Course you are.

Alice No-I'm not. Can't be worse than the Queen.

King Extraordinary child.

Alice I'd like to see it .Have you see it Cheshire puss?

CP I may have- but if I hadn't see one before that I wouldn't have recognized it anyway.

Alice Has anyone seen it- ever?

King Thankfully not-but there are stories.

Alice Oh tell me, tell me -if you've time of course. I know how busy people can be-

King I shouldn't be telling you stories- you're wanted.

Alice [Proudly] Yes, I am.

King I shouldn't forget that, a man in my position. And it's a very serious matter you know turning up in someone else's dream without permission. That's an offence. Scared me half to death. Me - me of all people.

Alice And you are?

King How do you mean?

Alice Well, I don't know who I am, so I'm trying to find out who other people are.

King That's a perfectly scurrilous question. I'm the King. [Puts on the crown] It's obvious isn't it?

Alice It is now.

[Sound of soldiers off]

King Hush hush-danger danger. Dear child-You'd best be running along.

Alice But I don't want to run along – I want to explore.

King They're coming.

Alice Don't them tell where I am- please.

[Alice hides. Enter 1+2 Soldier carrying table.]

9 Searched high and low your Majesty-and she's not anywhere. We've looked everywhere.

5 I interrogated a caterpillar. But you know what they're like-all reason and no rhyme.

9 But, we'll find her.

King Not my business- if my wife wants to send soldiers scouring the country and cutting off the heads of little girls-than that's her concern.

9 Shall I Tell The Queen so?

King No-you will not. The Queen and I are incommunicado. Which is where we first met.

5+9 Your majesty. [Exit]

[Alice comes out]

King Did you-by the way? Steal them-the tarts?

Alice No. But I know who did.

King Jolly good I say. Jolly jolly Jolly good. [He dances around with barely suppressed joy] Something must be done. It can't go on. It can't.

Alice Please don't cry.

King No-I won't cry. I'm a King. Kings don't cry as a rule- they just rule. Do you play croquet this afternoon?

Alice No-I wasn't invited.

King No- because you are under sentence of death.Tragic, tragic. Something must be done.

Alice Your majesty, why don't you do something?

King Pah! Now I've lost my patience. [Exit]

Alice Oh dear. Cheshire cat-Before you go- completely. What sort of people live near here?

CP In that direction lives a hatter and in that direction lives a march hare. Visit either if you like, they're both mad.

Alice But I don't want to go among mad people.

CP Oh you can't help that. We're all mad here. I'm mad, you're mad.

Alice How do you know I'm mad?

CP You must be, or you wouldn't have come here. You certainly wouldn't stay because you're in grave danger- but you don't seem to care. That's mad.

Alice And how do you know that you're mad?

CP To begin with a dog's not mad you'll grant that.

Alice I suppose so.

CP Well then, you see a dog growls when it's angry and wags its tail when it's pleased. Now I growl when I'm pleased and wag my tail when I'm angry. Therefore I'm mad.

Alice I wish you wouldn't keep appearing and vanishing so suddenly, it makes me quite giddy.

CP Alright-I'll go slowly-- but I'll leave you my grin.

Alice Thank you.

[The cat fades- but leaves Alice with its grin which she carries into the next scene.]

Alice It's not a story- but it is. It's not a game- but it is. It's a riddle. I love riddles.

[A mad tea party. She sits. Hare, Dormouse [asleep] Hatter.]

All No room no room.

Alice There's plenty of room. [She sits]

MH Where did you get that grin?

Alice It was gift from a friend.

MH No not that one-the one on your face.

Alice What's wrong with it?

MH It's out of place.

Hatter Have some wine?

Alice I don't see any wine.

Hatter There isn't any.

Alice Then it wasn't very nice to offer it.

MH It wasn't very nice of you to sit down without being invited. It was private-secret- but it isn't any more.

Alice Why secret? We're out of doors. Doesn't feel very secret.

[They look round as if the trees had ears]

Hatter Your hair needs a cut.

Alice You should learn not to make personal remarks, it's very rude.

Hatter Do you like riddles?

Alice Yes-how did you know?

Hatter Why is a raven like a writing desk?

Alice I believe I can guess it.

Hatter Do you mean you think you can find out the answer to it?

Alice Exactly so.

MH Then you should say what you mean.

Alice I do- at least-I mean what I say – that's the same thing you know.

Hatter Not the same thing a bit, you might just as well say that, "I see what I eat", is the same thing as, "I eat what I see"

MH Or, "I like what I get," is the same thing as, "I get what I like".

DM Or, I breath when I sleep," is the same thing as "I sleep when I breath."

Hatter It is the same thing with you. What day of the month is it? [Shakes his watch]

Alice The fourth.

Hatter Two days wrong. [To MH] I told you butter wouldn't suit the works.

MH It was the best butter.

Hatter Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well. You shouldn't have put it in with a bread knife. The Dormouse is asleep again. Wake up. Tell him to wake up he'll listen to you.

Alice Wake up mister Dormouse-WAKE UP.

DM Why?

Alice It's time.

DM Time for tea?

Hatter Yes.

DM Turned out to be the most dull tea party ever attended.

Hatter But you didn't attend it- you've been asleep.

DM Did I miss much?

MH You missed the minutes-.

DM Oh good-I could miss hours of them.

Alice So it's a meeting- not a party.

MH One has to meet even for a party.

Alice And what is it all about?

MH It's a secret.

DM And its very hush hush -hush [Starts to fall asleep]

Hatter Have you guessed the riddle yet?

Alice No-I give up. What's the answer?

Hatter I haven't the slightest interest.

MH Nor I.

Alice I think you might do something better with the time than to waste it in asking riddles that have no answers.

Hatter If you knew time as well as I do you wouldn't talk about wasting it.

Alice I don't know what you mean.

Hatter Of course you don't! I dare say you never even spoke to time.

Alice Perhaps not-but I know how to beat time when I learn music.

Hatter Ah, that accounts for it. He won't stand being beaten. Now if you kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked. For instance. Suppose it were nine o'clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons: you'd only have to whisper a hint to time, and round goes the clock, in a twinkling its half past one. Time for dinner.

MH I only wish it was.

Alice But then I shouldn't be hungry for dinner if there was no time between it and breakfast.

Hatter Not at first-no-but you can keep it at half past one as long as you like.

MH City gents live at half past one most of their lives. Until it's time to go home of course, which is half past two.

Alice Is that the way you manage?

Hatter Not I. We quarreled about something, last march, just before he went mad.

Alice What about?

OM The usual subject.

MH But nothing ever gets done.

Hatter Nothing has to be done- something must be undone.

MH It's very secret.

DM Very hush -hush-hush [starts to fall asleep]

MH Take some more tea?

Alice I haven't had any yet so I can't take any more.

MH As you wish.

Hatter But matters are coming to a head. It was at the great concert given by the Queen of hearts, that it all began. I had to sing- 'Twinkle Twinkle, little bat how I wonder what you're at' You know this song perhaps?

Alice I've heard something like it.

Hatter 'Up above the world you fly, like a tea tray in the sky.'

DM Twinkle Twinkle-

Hatter Shut up! Well I'd hardly finished the verse when the Queen jumped up and bawls. 'He's murdering the time, off with his head'.

Alice Oh.

Hatter And ever since then time will not do as I ask him-it's always six O'clock- It's always-

DM Tea time-

Hatter Yes its always tea time- the same tea- the same time- the same talk round and round and round and round-Ugh It's truly revolting.

MH He means revolving. Take some more tea?

Alice I haven't had any yet so I can't take any more. As you wish.

Alice I have a secret. I too am under sentence of execution.

Hatter Oh good-I mean- how sad. Ah are you by any chance the heroine of the Great,

MH Tart Robbery?

Alice I didn't do anything.

Hatter Oh but you did -you did.

MH She could join the party.

DM No-She hasn't got a party dress.

Hatter Do you want to join?

Alice Sounds exciting.

DM It hasn't been very exciting yet.

MH Wait by.

[He pulls out the ALICE DRESS. Music]

DM Put it on. Put it on.

MH Now then what shall we call you?

Alice Um- I seem to have forgotten that.

Hatter The last girl who wore that dress was called-

OM That was years ago. When we first had tea.

Hatter But she did have a name.

Alice Which was?

Hatter Can't recall.

MH But it began with L.

Hatter You look wonderful- like a princess.

MH And you know what they grow up to be.

Hatter Would you like to be Queen?

Alice Yes-but only for a day. Just for fun.

MH Yes-wouldn't fun be fun.

Alice I'd change everything. I would. I'd turn everything downside up and outside in .And the first thing I'd do is tell Time to put his socks on-

DM Yes-his feet are awful.

Alice And move along from half past six.

MH Of course we'd be by your side.

Hatter All the way.

DM Even in my sleep.

[Enter 5+9 Singing. The hatter the hare and the mouse vanish under the table.]

5+9 There's something about this life you know
it has its downs and lows.
The deeper it gets the more we fret
and the less we seem to know.

9 Hey-you-young Miss. Are you trying to hide?

Alice Me sir? No sir-

9 Have you seen this girl?

[They shows her a drawing-with all the legs and arms the wrong length-stuffing jam tarts into her mouth. This is full length.]

9 It's a very good likeness.

Alice Of?

9 Of the girl we're looking for.

Alice I'm sure it is. Though her arms are longer than her legs and she has
green hair.

9 It was drawn by the Duchess.

5 The Duchess got a good look at her.

Alice Well I haven't seen her, what's she supposed to have done?

9 It all started off with some tarts- then she moved on to stealing babies.
Last we heard she was in the Kings head- without permission.

5 Yes, it's all got out of hand. A very sad tale indeed

Alice Yes, is there a moral to it?

9 We sincerely hope not Miss. So many a good tale starts well and is
spoiled by them.

Alice Do you know any good tales?

9 I should say so. We keep our heads and the tales take care of
themselves.

Alice Do you know the one that begins, 'Twas Brillig and the slithey toves'--
did something- something. Etc.

5 Hush now. That's a fearful tale.

[Then the two cards Recite\Sing / Act out the poem]

5+9

'Twas Brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!

He took his vorpal sword in hand;
Long time the manxome foe he sought-
So rested he by the Tum tum tree
and stood a while in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
and burbled as it came.

One, Two! One, two! And through and through
the vorpal blade went snicker snack!
He left it dead and with its head
He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas Brillig, and the slithy Toves
Did gyre and Gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the Borogroves
and the mome raths outgrabe.

[There is a great roar from off stage-they run off .End of act one.]