

# **Plays for Young Audiences**

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

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## ***Alice in Wonderland***

Story by  
**Lewis Carroll**

Adapted for the Stage by  
**Sharon Holland**

Music Composed by  
**Hiram Titus**

*Alice in Wonderland* was first presented by The Children's Theatre Company for the 1969-1970 season.

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## Scene One

Prelude, sung by a tenor in voice over.

TENOR                   CHILD OF THE PURE UNCLOUDED BROW  
AND DREAMING EYES OF WONDER-  
WHERE AM I TO SEEK YOU NOW?  
OVER HILLS OR UNDER?  
STILL YOU HAUNT ME, PHANTOMWISE,  
ALICE MOVING UNDER SKIES  
NEVER SEEN BY WAKING EYES.  
IN A WONDERLAND YOU SEEM –  
LIFE, WHAT IS IT BUT A DREAM?  
LIFE, WHAT IS IT BUT A DREAM?

As the music fades, lights cone up on ALICE, a child of seven, seated with her older sister EDITH under a tree in early May. ALICE is idly weaving a daisy chain and yawns once or twice as EDITH reads aloud.

EDITH                   *(Reading with little vocal expression.)* "William the Conqueror, whose cause was favored by the pope, was soon submitted to by the English. Edwin and Morcar, the earls of Mercia and Northumbria, declared for him..."

ALICE                   What did they declare?

EDITH                   *(Annoyed.)* It doesn't say. "Edwin and Morcar . . ."

ALICE                   *(Peering into the book.)* What did they look like?

EDITH                   There aren't any pictures. Now, pay attention, Alice.

ALICE                   *(Yawning.)* I am paying attention. But what is the use of a book without pictures or conversations?

EDITH                   "Edwin and Morcar, the earls of Mercia and Northumbria, declared for him, finding it advisable to offer him the crown . . ."

ALICE 'crowns' herself with the daisy chain, then yawns and leans back against the tree as her sister drones on.

EDITH                                *(More and more softly.)* "William's conduct at first was moderate. But the insolence of his Normans . . . "

EDITH "freezes" and the light changes as the WHITE RABBIT, dressed in a waistcoat and jacket, runs by ALICE; she at first regards him with little interest.

ALICE                                *(Yawning.)* A White Rabbit wearing a waistcoat . . . *(The WHITE RABBIT pauses and consults his pocket watch.)*

WHITE RABBIT                    *(Nervously.)* Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I shall be too late!

ALICE                                . . . and looking at his pocket watch... Ho hum... *(She settles back against the tree, closing her eyes. Then she sits up abruptly, realizing how unusual the situation really is.)* A talking rabbit!? With a pocket watch!?

WHITE RABBIT                    Oh, my dear paws! She'll be absolutely savage! *(He begins to run off and ALICE jumps up and follows him.)*

ALICE                                Mr. Rabbit! Wait!

WHITE RABBIT                    Oh, my fur and whiskers! She'll have me executed! I'm late, I'm late, I'm late!

ALICE                                Late for what? Oh, please, please wait!

WHITE RABBIT                    *(Hysterically.)* Sure as ferrets are ferrets, she'll have me beheaded! *(To AUDIENCE.)* Then I really will be late! *(He dives down the rabbit-hole.)*

ALICE                                *(Running up to the rabbit-hole.)* Wait, Mr. Rabbit! *(She dives after him, with a little scream as she starts to fall.)* Oh-h-h! I'm falling!

Blackout.

## Scene Two

ALICE is falling down what seems to be a very deep well. Her skirt balloons like a parachute, slowing her descent. The sides of the well are filled with cupboards and bookshelves; maps and pictures are hung on pegs.

ALICE                    (Voice-over.) Well! After such a fall as this, I'll think nothing of tumbling downstairs. And if I fell off the roof, I wouldn't say a thing... even if I could. (She takes a jar off one of the shelves and reads the label.) "Orange marmalade" . . .but it's empty! I better not drop it; it might kill somebody below. (She puts it onto another passing shelf.) There! I must be getting near the center of the earth. I wonder if I shall fall right through. How funny to be with the people who walk with their heads downwards! The Antipathies, I think . . . no, that's all wrong! I do wish Dinah were here! There aren't any mice, but she might catch a bat. Do cats eat bats, I wonder? (Dreamily.) Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats? Do bats eat cats? "Now, tell me the truth, Dinah: did you ever eat a bat?"

ALICE suddenly lands with a thump. Lights come up on WHITE RABBIT scurrying off.

WHITE RABBIT        Oh, my fur and whiskers! I'm really overdue!

ALICE                    (Wailing.) Mr. Rabbit, don't go! Please wait for me!

## Scene Three

Lights up on a hall lined with large doors. Drapery hides a small door at one end. The WHITE RABBIT scurries onstage at the other end and disappears behind the drapery, just before ALICE enters in pursuit.

ALICE                    (calling.) Mr. Rabbit! Mr. Rabbit! (She stops and looks about her.) Now, where could he have gone? (Trying all the large doors in quick succession.) They're all locked! How will I ever get out again? (A little three-legged glass table with a small gold key upon it suddenly lands before her. She picks up the key.) A little golden key! It must fit one of these locks! (She tries a couple of the doors, but the key is obviously too tiny for them.)

ALICE

No . . . either they're too big or it's too small. *(She draws back the drapery, revealing a door about fifteen inches high.)* But here's another door! And the key fits! *(She opens the little door and kneels to look through.)* Oh, it's the loveliest garden I've ever seen! How I should enjoy wandering through those flowers! *(She tries but cannot get her head through the doorway.)* Well, even if my head would go through, it would be of very little use without my shoulders. Oh, how I wish I could shut up like a telescope! I think I could, if I only knew how to begin. *(A small bottle with the label "Drink me" tied around its neck lands on the table. ALICE turns and sees the bottle.)* This certainly was not here before. *(She picks it up and reads the label.)* "Drink me." Oh, no, I won't; it's all very well to say "Drink me," but I'll look first – for if you drink from a bottle marked "poison" it's almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later. *(She examines the bottle and then tastes the contents.)* Mmm. It tastes like cherry tart, custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffee, and hot buttered toast. *(She drinks the rest and replaces the bottle on the table.)* What a curious feeling! *(Blackout.)* Curiouser and curiouser! I must be shutting up like a telescope! Oh, what if it ends in my going out altogether, like a candle? What does a flame look like, once it's blown out? *(Lights up on a "tiny" Alice beside an enormous glass table. She's now just the right size for the "little" door; the other doors have disappeared.)* Now for the garden! *(She starts towards the door.)* But where's the key? Oh, no! I left it on the table! *(She looks up at the enormous table looming above her.)* Yes, I can see it plainly through the glass. But I'll never be able to reach it! Oh, Alice! *(She starts to cry.)* Come, there's no use in crying like that! Stop it this minute! It won't change anything. *(She stops crying.)* But things do keep on changing here. I wonder if I'm even the same person as before. But if I'm not, who am I? That's great puzzle. I'm sure I'm not Ada, for her hair goes in such long ringlets; and I'm sure I can't be Mabel, for I know all sorts of things, and she knows very little. But if I'm not Ada and I'm not Mabel, then who *am* I? *(The WHITE RABBIT opens the door and looks in.)*

WHITE RABBIT

*(Severely.)* Mary Ann!

ALICE

*(Startled.)* Who?

WHITE RABBIT

*(Entering and closing the door behind him.)* Why, Mary Ann, what are you doing out here? Run home and fetch me a pair of gloves!

Quick, now! (He starts off, paying her no more attention.) Oh, dear!  
Oh, dear! The Queen will be furious!

ALICE                      But, Mr. Rabbit, I ' m not Mary Ann! I'm not . . . am I? Wait! Wait!

Exit the WHITE RABBIT, with ALICE in pursuit. Blackout.

#### Scene Four

A forest. Upstage right is the door to the DUCHESS's house. Downstage right is a huge mushroom, on which sits a blue CATERPILLAR, arms folded, quietly smoking a hookah. ALICE runs on, looks about her in confusion, and gasps when she sees the CATERPILLAR. She goes to the mushroom, stands on tiptoe, and peers over the edge at the impassive smoker. He finally takes the hookah out of his mouth.

CATERPILLAR        (In a languid, sleepy voice.) Who are you?

ALICE                      (Shyly.) I -I hardly know, sir, just at present – at least I knew who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I've changed since then.

CATERPILLAR        (Sternly.) What do you mean by that? Explain yourself!

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

CATERPILLAR        I don't see.

ALICE                      (Very politely.) I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly, for I can't understand it myself; and being more than one size in a day is very confusing.

CATERPILLAR        It isn't.

ALICE                      Well, perhaps you haven't found it so yet, but when you turn into a chrysalis and then into a butterfly, you'll feel a little odd, won't you?

CATERPILLAR Not a bit.

ALICE Well, perhaps you're different. It would feel very odd to me.

CATERPILLAR (*Contemptuously.*) You! Who are you?

ALICE (*Very gravely.*) I think you ought to tell me who you are, first.

CATERPILLAR Why? (*ALICE is by now so irritated that she turns and begins walking away.*) Come back! I've something important to say!

ALICE (*ALICE comes back expectantly.*) What is it?

CATERPILLAR (*With infuriating calmness.*) Keep your temper.

ALICE (*Struggling against her anger.*) Is that all?

CATERPILLAR No. (*It blows smoke at her.*) So you think you're changed, do you?

ALICE (*Coughing.*) I'm afraid I am, sir. I've changed size -and I can't remember things as I used to.

CATERPILLAR Recite "How Doth the Little. "

ALICE (*Reciting with gestures.*) "How doth the little crocodile  
Improve his shining tail,  
And pour the waters of the Nile  
On every golden scale!  
  
How cheerfully he seems to grin,  
How neatly spreads his claws,  
and welcomes little fishes in,  
With gently smiling jaws! "

CATERPILLAR That is not said right.

ALICE (*Timidly.*) Not quite right, I'm afraid.

CATERPILLAR (*Firmly.*) It is wrong from beginning to end. (*It blows smoke at ALICE again.*) What size do you want to be?

ALICE                   *(Coughing.)* Well, I should like to be a little larger. Three inches is such a wretched height to be.

CATERPILLAR       *(Rearing itself, angrily.)* It is a very good height, indeed! I am exactly three inches high!

ALICE                   But I'm not used to it!

CATERPILLAR       You will be, in time. *(He yawns and descends from the mushroom.)* One side will make you grow taller, and the other side will make you grow shorter. *(He crawls away without look at her.)*

ALICE                   *(To herself.)* One side of what? The other side of what?

CATERPILLAR       *(Without looking back.)* Of the mushroom. *(Exit the CATERPILLAR. ALICE stretches her arms around the mushroom and breaks a bit off each edge.)*

ALICE                   Now which is which?

*She's about to take a bite out of the right-handed bit to try the effect, when a FISH-FOOTMAN in livery and curled wig enters, carrying an enormous envelope. Ignoring ALICE, he raps at the DUCHESS'S door. A FROG-FOOTMAN, also in livery and curled wig, answers. The FISH-FOOTMAN hands the envelope to the FROG-FOOTMAN.*

FISH-FOOTMAN     *(Solemnly.)* For the Duchess. An invitation from the Queen to play croquet.

FROG-FOOTMAN     *(With equal solemnity.)* From the Queen. An invitation for the Duchess to play croquet.

*They bow to each other and their curls get entangled. For a moment they dance to and fro, like deer with locked antlers. Then both topple over, and they lie on the ground, kicking helplessly, as ALICE walks over and picks up the envelope.*

ALICE                   *(To audience.)* I'll take this to the Duchess. She may know the White Rabbit. *(ALICE opens the door and goes in. Blackout.)*

## Scene Five

*Lights up on ALICE in a large, smoke-filled kitchen. The DUCHESS sits stage Center, holding a squalling, sneezing baby on her lap. Right is a stove on which is a large cauldron of bubbling soup. A grim-faced COOK stirs the cauldron, continually shaking great quantities of pepper into it. Near the stove sits the CHESHIRE CAT, grinning broadly, ALICE proffers the invitation to the DUCHESS.*

ALICE                   *(Sneezing throughout.)* An invitation... from the Queen... to play croquet. *(To AUDIENCE.)* There's certainly too much pepper in that soup! *(The DUCHESS takes the invitation and tosses it over her shoulder without even glancing at it. ALICE now sees the CHESHIRE CAT.)* Please, would you tell me why your cat grins like that?

DUCHESS               It's a Cheshire cat and that's why. *(Vehemently, to BABY.)* Pig!

ALICE                   *(ALICE is startled, but realizes she was not the object of the remark.)* I didn't know that Cheshire cats always grinned; in fact, I didn't know that cats could grin.

DUCHESS               They all can, and most of 'em do.

ALICE                   *(Very politely.)* I don't know of any that do.

DUCHESS               You don't know much, and that's a fact. *(Shaking the howling infant.)* Pig!

ALICE                   I would like know where I could find the White Rab . . . *(The COOK starts throwing the kitchen utensils and pans at the DUCHESS and the BABY. ALICE jumps out of the way.)* Oh, please mind what you're doing! Oh, there goes his precious nose! *(The COOK goes back to stirring the soup.)*

DUCHESS               *(Growling hoarsely.)* If everybody minded their own business, the world would go round a great deal faster than it does.

ALICE                   Which would not be an advantage. You see, the earth takes twenty-four hours to turn round on its axis . . .

DUCHESS            Talking of axes... *(To the COOK.)* Chop off her head! *(The COOK is too busy stirring to oblige.)*

ALICE                Twenty-four hours, I think; or is it twelve? I . . .

DUCHESS            Oh, don't bother me! I never could abide figures! *(She sings to the BABY, shaking it violently at the end of every line.)*  
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      *(Singing in chorus.)* WOW! WOW! WOW!

DUCHESS            I SPEAK SEVERELY TO MY BOY,  
AND BEAT HIM WHEN HE SNEEZES:  
FOR HE CAN THOROUGHLY ENJOY  
THE PEPPER WHEN HE PLEASES!

COOK & BABY      WOW! WOW! WOW!

DUCHESS            *(Standing up.)* Here, you may hold it a bit if you like. *(She pitches the BABY at ALICE, who catches it with some difficulty.)* I must get ready to play croquet with the Queen. *(As she exits, the COOK throws a skillet at her. Lights out on the kitchen as ALICE carries the BABY downstage.)*

ALICE                *(To AUDIENCE.)* If I don't take this child away, they're sure to kill it in a day or two. *(To BABY, tenderly.)* It would be murder to leave you behind. *(The BABY grunts.)* Don't grunt; that's not at all a proper way of expressing yourself . . . *(Still Murmuring to the BABY, ALICE walks on. Blackout.)*

## Scene Six

Lights up on ALICE, now holding a baby pig and standing under a large tree.

ALICE                   *(Seriously.)* Now, what am I to do with this creature when I get it home? *(The baby pig grunts and ALICE looks at it with some alarm.)* My , your eyes are extremely small for a baby and as for your nose, well . . . *(The pig grunts so violently that ALICE suddenly realizes the truth.)* Oh! If you're going to turn into a pig, my dear, I'll have nothing more to do with you. *(ALICE sets the pig down and it trots off stage.)* It would have made a dreadfully ugly child but it makes rather a handsome pig, I think.

*The CHESHIRE CAT gradually appears on the tree limb above her.*

CHESHIRE CAT       *(Offhandedly, as if to himself.)* "'T' was brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe..."

ALICE                   *(Startled at seeing him.)* Oh!

CHESHIRE CAT       *(Completing his presence. )* "All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe." *(Chuckling at ALICE'S discomfort.)*  
Heh, heh, heh.

ALICE                   *(To AUDIENCE. )* Well, it looks good-natured. *(To CAT, timidly.)*  
Cheshire Puss, would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go  
from here?

CHESHIRE CAT       That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.

ALICE                   I don't much care where . . .

CHESHIRE CAT       Then it doesn't matter which way you go.

ALICE                   . . . so long as I get somewhere.

CHESHIRE CAT       Oh, you're sure to do that if you only walk long enough.

ALICE                   Well . . . I'm looking for the White Rabbit. What sort of people live  
about here?

CHESHIRE CAT     *(Pointing left with its left paw.)* In that direction, lives a Hatter . . .  
*(Pointing right with its right paw.)* . . . and in that direction lives a  
March Hare. Visit either you like; they're both mad.

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

CHESHIRE CAT     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?

CHESHIRE CAT     You must be or you wouldn't have come here. By the by, what  
became of the baby? I'd nearly forgotten to ask.

ALICE                It turned into a pig.

CHESHIRE CAT     I thought it would. Boys often do. *(It vanishes suddenly.)*

ALICE                *(To AUDIENCE.)* It's disappeared. I suppose I ought to be  
surprised, but so many odd things have been happening lately that  
I... *(CHESHIRE CAT reappears suddenly and interrupts her.)*

CHESHIRE CAT     Did you say "pig" or "fig?"

ALICE                I said "pig," and I wish you wouldn't keep appearing and vanishing  
so suddenly; you make me quite giddy.

CHESHIRE CAT     All right. *(He vanishes slowly, beginning with his tail, reciting as he  
goes.)* "'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
all mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe."  
*(Only its grin lingers.)* Heh, heh, heh...*(The CHESHIRE CAT is gone.)*

ALICE                *(To AUDIENCE.)* Well! I've often seen a cat without a grin but a  
grin without a cat? It's the most curious thing I ever saw in my life.  
*(She starts off in the direction of the MARCH HARE's house.)* I believe  
I'll visit the March Hare. I've seen hatters before. Perhaps, since this  
is May, the March Hare won't be raving mad. *(She stops a moment.)*

What in the world is a mome rath? (*Shaking her head, she walks on.*)  
Curiouser and curiouser . . . (*Blackout.*)

## Scene Seven

Lights up on a large table set with numerous and varied cups, saucers, and teapots. The MARCH HARE and the MAD HATTER are having tea at it, resting their elbows on the sleeping DOORMOUSE between them. As ALICE approaches, the HATTER and HARE briefly pummel the DOORMOUSE like a pillow; it only snores gently as they lean back into it.

ALICE                    (*To AUDIENCE.*) That must be very uncomfortable for the  
Dormouse; only, as it's asleep, I suppose it doesn't mind.

As she walks over to the table, the MAD HATTER and the MARCH HARE react with alarm.

MAD HATTER  
& MARCH HARE    No room! No room!

ALICE                    There's plenty of room! (*She sits down in a large armchair at the head of  
the table. The MAD HATTER stares at her unblinkingly.*)

MARCH HARE        Do have some wine.

ALICE                    (*Looking at the table.*) I don't see any wine.

MARCH HARE        There isn't any.

ALICE                    Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it.

MARCH HARE        It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being asked.

ALICE                    I didn't know it was your table. It's laid for a great many more than  
three.

MAD HATTER        (*As though pronouncing judgment.*) Your hair wants cutting.

ALICE                   It's rude to make personal remarks. *(The HATTER opens his eyes very wide at this but quickly recovers.)*

MAD HATTER           Why is a raven like a writing desk?

ALICE                   *(To AUDIENCE.)* Come, we shall have some fun now. I'm glad they've begun asking riddles. *(To the HATTER.)* I believe I can guess that.

MARCH HARE           *(Incredulously.)* Do you mean you can find out the answer to it?

ALICE                   Exactly so.

MARCH HARE           Then you should say what you mean.

ALICE                   *(Confused.)* I do; at least, I mean what I say – that's the same thing, you know.

MAD HATTER           Not a bit. Why, you might just as well say that "I see what I eat" is the same thing as "I eat what I see!" You might just as well say that "I like what I get" is the same thing as "I get what I like!"

DOORMOUSE           *(Sleepily.)* You might just as well say that "I breathe when I sleep" is the same thing as "I sleep when I breathe! "

MAD HATTER           *(Pinching the DOORMOUSE.)* It is the same thing with you. *(Looking uneasily at his pocket watch, to ALICE.)* What day of the month is it?

ALICE                   *(Considering.)* The fourth.

MAD HATTER           *(Sighing.)* Two days wrong! *(Angrily, to MARCH HARE.)* I told you butter wouldn't suit the works!

MARCH HARE           *(Meekly.)* It was the best butter.

MAD HATTER           Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well. You shouldn't have spread it in with the breadknife.

MARCH HARE           *(The MARCH HARE takes the watch and gloomily regards it. Dipping the watch into his teacup.)* It was the *best* butter, you know.

MAD HATTER      *(To ALICE.)* It's always six o'clock now!

ALICE             Is that the reason so many tea things are put out here?

MAD HATTER      *(Sighing.)* Yes, that's it. It's always tea time, and we've no time to wash the things between whiles.

ALICE             Then you keep raving round, I suppose?

MAD HATTER      Exactly so, as the things get used up.

ALICE             But what happens when you come to the beginning again?

MARCH HARE      *(Yawning.)* Let's change the subject.

MAD HATTER      The Dormouse is asleep again. *(He pours hot tea on its nose.)*

DOORMOUSE      *(Shaking its head impatiently.)* Of course, of course; just what I was going to remark myself . . . *(It goes back to sleep.)*

MAD HATTER      *(To ALICE.)* Have you guessed the riddle yet?

ALICE             No, I give up. How is a raven like a writing desk?

MAD HATTER      *(Solemnly.)* I haven't the slightest idea.

MARCH HARE      *(With equal solemnity.)* Nor I.

*ALICE is about to exclaim angrily when the HATER abruptly gets up.*

MAD HATTER      I want a clean cup! Let's all move one place on!

MARCH HARE      *(Enthusiastically.)* Move on! Move on!

ALICE             But . . .

*They all move, the HATTER being the only one who benefits.*

MARCH HARE      *(Very earnestly, to ALICE.)* Do take some more tea.

ALICE I've had nothing yet, so I can't take more.

MAD HATTER You mean you can't take less. It's very easy to take more than nothing.

ALICE *(To HATTER.)* Nobody asked your opinion.

MAD HATTER *(Triumphantly.)* Who's making personal remarks now? *(The DOORMOUSE yawns enormously.)*

DOORMOUSE I'm getting bored. I vote the young lady sings us a song.

MAD HATTER & MARCH HARE Yes, yes! Give us a song!

ALICE I'm afraid I really can't . . .

MAD HATTER Then I shall! Delighted! *(He stands up and announces the title.)* "Twinkle, twinkle , Little Bat. " *(To ALICE.)* You know the song, perhaps?

ALICE I've heard something like it.

MARCH HARE *(Confidentially, to ALICE.)* He sang it at a concert given by the Queen of Hearts. She bawled out, "Off with his head!"

ALICE *(Confidentially, to the MARCH HARE. )* How dreadfully savage!

MAD HATTER *(The MAD HATTER glares at them both. Severely.)* Ahem! *(Singing with elegant hand gestures.)*  
 TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LITTLE BAT  
 HOW I WONDER WHAT YOU'RE AT!  
 UP ABOVE THE WORLD YOU FLY . . .

MARCH HARE *(Joining in enthusiastically.)* LIKE A TEA TRAY IN THE SKY! *(The MAD HATTER glares at the HARE, who lapses into guilty silence.)*

MAD HATTER TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LITTLE BAT!  
 HOW I WONDER WHAT YOU'RE AT!

*He bows as ALICE and the MARCH HARE politely applaud.*

DOORMOUSE      *(Singing monotonously in its sleep.)* "Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle,  
twinkle . . . "

MARCH HARE      *(Alarmed.)* There it goes again! Here, try some butter! *(He proffers the  
butter dish to the HATTER.)*

MAD HATTER      Butter won't work! "Twinkle" starts with a T! *(He pours hot tea on the  
DOORMOUSE, which goes on singing incessantly.)*

MARCH HARE      Of course it starts with a T! So put him in the teapot! *(They pick up  
the singing DOORMOUSE and plunge him head first into a large  
teapot.)*

ALICE              I really don't think . . .

MAD HATTER      Then you shouldn't talk. *(TO MARCH HARE.)* Does "twinkle" end  
with a T?

MARCH HARE      Let's find out, shall we? *(They briefly pull the DOORMOUSE out of  
the teapot.)*

DOORMOUSE      *(Singing as before. )* "Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle . . . "

MARCH HARE      *(Disappointed, to the HATTER. )* No, it doesn't.

*They plunge it back in again, "freezing" in this pose as ALICE gets up in disgust and leaves.*

ALICE              *(To AUDIENCE. )* I'll never go there again! It's the stupidest tea  
party I ever was at in all my life!

## Scene Eight

*ALICE stands, left of Center, in some confusion.*

ALICE              *(To AUDIENCE.)* What am I to do now? I don't know which way to  
go or whom to visit next.

Two signs drop on either side of her, stopping at eye level. Both point to upstage Center. One reads "To Tweedledum's House," the other, "To the House of Tweedledee." Alice reads aloud.

ALICE                    "To Tweedledum's House." "To the House of Tweedledee." (To AUDIENCE, as the signs depart.) Why, I do believe they live in the same house. (Reciting to herself.)  
"Tweedledum and Tweedledee  
Agreed to have a battle;  
For Tweedledum said Tweedledee  
Had spoiled his nice new rattle. . . "

Lights come up on TWEEDLEDUM and TWEEDLEDEE, upstage Center. Each has an arm about the other's neck. ALICE is startled.

ALICE            Oh!

TWEEDLEDUM    If you think we're waxworks, you ought to pay, you know.  
Waxworks weren't made to be looked at for nothing. No how!

TWEEDLEDEE    Contrariwise, if you think we're alive, you ought to speak.

ALICE            I'm sure, I'm very sorry . . .

TWEEDLEDUM    I know what you're thinking, but it isn't so, no how.

TWEEDLEDEE    Contrariwise, if it was so, it might be; and if it were so, it would be; but as it isn't, it ain't. (Helpfully.) That's logic. Do you like poetry?

ALICE            (After a slight pause.) Would you tell me how to get out of this wood?

TWEEDLEDUM suddenly grabs her wrist and points with a trembling finger at a rattle lying on the ground.

TWEEDLEDUM    (Choking with passion. ) Do you see that?

ALICE            It's only a rattle, quite old and broken.

TWEEDLEDEE, with a guilty expression, quietly opens an umbrella and hides under it.

TWEEDLEDUM *(Stamping about wildly and tearing his hair.)* I knew it was! It's spoilt, of course!

ALICE *(Soothingly.)* You needn't be so angry about an old rattle.

TWEEDLEDUM *(More furiously than ever.)* But it isn't old! It's new, I tell you – I bought it yesterday – my nice new RATTLE! *(The blast of his voice causes TWEEDLEDEE to fall over, gaping like a fish. TWEEDLEDUM stamps over to him. Then, calmly.)* Of course you agree to have a battle?

TWEEDLEDEE *(Sulkily, as he stands up.)* I suppose so. Let's fight until six and then have dinner.

TWEEDLEDUM Very well - and she can watch us.

TWEEDLEDEE fetches a wooden sword, an enormous saucepan, and a coal scuttle.  
TWEEDLEDUM speaks to ALICE.

TWEEDLEDUM Only, you'd better not come very close. I generally hit everything I can see.

TWEEDLEDEE *(Handing his brother the coal scuttle.)* And I hit everything within reach, whether I can see it or not!

ALICE *(Laughing.)* You must hit the trees pretty often.

TWEEDLEDUM *(Looking around with a satisfied smile.)* I don't suppose there'll be a tree left standing by the time we've finished!

ALICE And all about a rattle!

TWEEDLEDUM I shouldn't have minded it so much, if it hadn't been a new one. *(To his brother.)* There's only one sword, but you can have the umbrella. Only we must begin quick. *(He puts the coal shuttle on his head, thereby covering his eyes.)* It's getting as dark as it can.

TWEEDLEDEE *(Putting on the saucepan, which covers his eyes.)* And even darker.

They flail about wildly with their weapons, missing widely. TWEEDLEDEE strikes a tree.

TWEEDLEDUM     *(Reacting to the noise.)* You hit me!

TWEEDLEDEE     Contrariwise!

TWEEDLEDUM     No how!

*Still flailing wildly, they back into each other, scream wildly on contact, and exit, running, on opposite sides of the stage.*

ALICE             *(TO AUDIENCE. )* I've never seen such a fuss about anything in all my life!

## Scene Nine

*The CHESHIRE CAT, grinning broadly, appears in the tree near ALICE.*

CHESHIRE CAT    I told you we're all mad here.

ALICE             *(Not surprised to see him.)* And how do you know you're mad?

CHESHIRE CAT    To begin with, a dog's not mad. You grant that?

ALICE             I suppose so.

CHESHIRE CAT    Well, then, 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 call it purring, not growling.

CHESHIRE CAT    Call it what you like. Do you play croquet with the Queen today? You'll see me there. *(He starts to vanish, reciting.)*

"Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe.  
All mimsy were the borogoves . . . "

ALICE             Wait, please!

CHESHIRE CAT    *(The CHESHIRE CAT reappears in full, grinning even more broadly.)*  
Yes-s-s?

ALICE            *(Timidly.)* Before you go, would you tell me, please . . . what does that poem mean?

CHESHIRE CAT    Well . . . if you want to learn the meaning of a thing, you had better consult an egg-spert. *(He waves a paw, and lights come up on HUMPTY DUMPTY, precariously perched upon a high, narrow wall.)*

ALICE            Why, it's Humpty Dumpty himself!

CHESHIRE CAT    Egg-zactly! *(CHESHIRE CAT vanishes.)*