

Alice in Wonderland: the Stage Play

Adapted by Alan Neal Levy



Based on the novel by Lewis Carroll

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Cast of characters

Alice

Lorina (Lory) / Mock Turtle / Juror 1

Edith / Daisy 3 / Eaglet / Juror 2

Bocci Player 1 / Caterpillar / 2 of diamonds

Bocci Player 2 / Daisy 1 / 6 of diamonds / Cook

Croquet player 1 / Queen of Hearts

Croquet player 2 / Tiger-Lily / Gryphon

Dodgson / Dodo / Knave of hearts

Duckworth / Duck / King of hearts /

Mrs. Prickett / Mouse / Dormouse / 7 of spades

Girl 1 / Baby Crab / Cheshire cat / Juror 4

Girl 2 / Frog Footman / 2 of spades / Juror 5

Girl 3 / Beetle / Violet / 2 of hearts

Old man playing cards / Mad Hatter / Daisy 2 / 9 of clubs

Old woman playing cards / Duchess / Tulip / 8 of clubs / Juror 3

Sleeper on bench / Rose / 5 of spades / Fish footman

Newspaper reader / Horse-fly / March Hare / 3 of clubs

White Rabbit

Wonderland creature Puppets: White Rabbit, Baby Crab, Mother Crab, Frog, Fish, Mouse, Lobsters, Dogfish, Catfish, Rose Tree

Scene Outline

Act 1

Scene 1: Down the Rabbit Hole

Scene 2: The Pool of Tears

Scene 3: The Caucus Race

Scene 4: The Garden of Live Flowers

Scene 5: Advice from a Caterpillar

Scene 6: Pig and Pepper

Act 2

Scene 1: A Mad Tea Party

Scene 2: The Queen's Croquet game

Scene 3: The Mock Turtle's story

Scene 4: Who Stole the Tarts

Alice in Wonderland

by Alan Neal Levy

The play premiered June 11-13, 1993 at The Roberts Theatre on the Kingswood-Oxford School campus in West Hartford, Conn by Hartford Children's Theatre.

Director Alan Neal Levy
Choreographer Heidi Klecak
Costume Design Jeffrey Kagan McCann

Cast of Actors

Michelle Lockhart	Alice on 6/11, 6/12 and 6/13 matinees
Leslie Cavanaugh	Alice on 6/11 and 6/12 evening shows
Desiree Duong	Caterpillar, Gryphon, Juror 3 and Girl 3
Meghan McDowell	Cheshire Cat, Lory, Daisy 2, Juror 2 and Lorina
Jason Bush	Cook, 7 of Spades, Juror 4 and Sleeping Man
Quinn Doherty	Dormouse, Mouse, 2 of Hearts, Juror 5 and Girl 1
Tiffany Hendrick	Duchess, Rose, 8 of Clubs and Newspaper Woman
April Bolton	Eaglet, Beetle, 2 of Spades, Juror 1 and Girl 2 (Edith)
Jon Brett	Knave of Hearts, Fish Footman and Old Man
Geoff Molloy	Mad Hatter, Dodo, Dodgson
Lindsey Beeman	March Hare, Tiger Lily, 7 of Clubs
Molly Pearson	Mock Turtle, Violet, Juror 6 and Old Woman
Naomi Wilson	Queen of Hearts, Daisy 1 and Old Woman
Jamal James	King of Hearts, Duck, Frog Footman and Duckworth
Prince Sanders	White Rabbit

Hartford Children's Theatre Staff

Managing Director Sharla Cowden
Artistic Director Alan Neal Levy
Education Intern Shira Epstein

Scene 1: *Down the Rabbit Hole*

(It is May 4th 1862. the setting is sunny summer afternoon in a city park. Downstage is ALICE, a young girl age ten who is lazily making a daisy chain. With her are her older sisters, EDITH, age twelve and LORINA, age fourteen who are both reading books on a bench. Also in the park are a woman reading a newspaper, another sleeping on a bench, an elderly couple playing cards , two men DODGSON and DUCKWORTH and a woman named Mrs. Prickett picnicking with three girls and other adults playing traditional croquet and bocci. Music plays and the whole scene takes on the appearance of a Grand Ballroom Dance: stately, refined and all very dull.)

Music cue #1: *Adult Ennui*

(During the dance ALICE completes her daisy chain and becomes increasingly bored. She observes the adults and finds no amusement in what they are doing. She places the daisy chain upon her head and there is an immediate change in the music, to a lighter and livelier rhythm, as the adults around the young girl freeze in place. The movements of the young girl reflect the music, as she imagines herself a queen. With a giddy sense of mischief, she sneaks up behind her sister and places the daisy chain on LORINA's head. All music stops. in the silence, ALICE waits to see what her sister will do.)

LORINA: Alice! I'm trying to read.

(LORINA removes the daisy chain and places it on the ground next to her. The music reverts to its former ponderous state as the other park VISITORS become reanimated and ALICE wanders among them looking for amusement. As the music ends, ALICE returns to her sister.)

ALICE: Lorina? Sis? Lorina! Let's pretend we're all the kings and queens of England.

LORINA: Don't be ridiculous, Alice. There's just the three of us.

ALICE: Well you can be one of them and Edith and I will be all the rest. (Looking at the people playing cards.) Let's pretend... that you are the Queen of Diamonds I think if you sat up and folded your arms... like this, you'd look just like her.

LORINA: Alice that's enough of your nonsense. Now leave me alone so I can read my book.

ALICE (looking over her shoulder): But why? There's no pictures or conversations. What's the use of a book with no pictures or conversations?

LORINA does not answer and returns to her reading. ALICE reluctantly settles back down and sighs. Shortly, a WHITE RABBIT puppet runs by, stops near ALICE and looks about as if it was lost.

ALICE: Lorina, look!

LORINA (losing her patience): Alice! Please!

WHITE RABBIT - PUPPET: Oh dear! oh dear!

The WHITE RABBIT - PUPPET removes a watch from the pocket of his waistcoat.

ALICE: I've never seen a rabbit wearing a coat before.

WHITE RABBIT - PUPPET: Oh dear! I shall be too late.

The WHITE RABBIT - PUPPET hurries on and exits down a large rabbit hole under a hedge.

ALICE: I wonder where he goes shopping Oh, Mr. Rabbit, I need to ask you something.

ALICE follows after the puppet WHITE RABBIT. The lights change as ALICE sticks her head into the rabbit hole which leads to Wonderland. ALICE takes a moment before deciding to jump.

ALICE: Oh my, it sure is dark in here. Oh well. Here goes.

Music Cue 2: Down the Hole

(To give the appearance of falling down a hole, projected images scroll upwards on an otherwise empty stage. The perceived fall should take a leisurely pace, as well as any rigged flying of actors and/or scenery. All other Scene 1 actors exit and/or perform in the scene change, where various objects drift by including cupboards, bookshelves, maps, pictures and Wonderland creatures. The following dialog continues during the music.)

ALICE: Down, down down. Will this fall never end? (On one shelf, ALICE removes a jar labeled Orange Marmalade.) Orange marmalade! (She opens the jar.) Oh it's empty. (She replaces the jar on another shelf as it slowly falls up.) Well after a fall like this I shall think nothing of tumbling down the stairs. How brave they'll think I am at home. Why I wouldn't say a thing about it even if I fell off the top of the house. I wonder how many miles I've fallen by now. I must be getting somewhere near the center of the Earth. Let me see that would be four thousand miles down, I think. I wonder if I shall fall right through the Earth. How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk around with their heads upside down. But I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is you know. "Please, Ma'am, is this New Zealand or Australia?" (She attempts to curtsey.) And what an ignorant little girl she'll think me for asking. No it'll never do to ask. Perhaps I shall see it written somewhere. (Pause.) Dinah will miss me very much tonight, I should think. I hope they'll remember her saucer of milk at tea-time. Oh, dear Dinah, I wish I had you here with me. There are no mice in the air I'm afraid but you might catch a bat, and that's very like a mouse you know, my dear. But do cats eat bats I wonder? (She begins to start dozing off.) Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats? Do bats eat cats? Do bats eat cats?

(Suddenly ALICE lands with a thud on the stage and the music ends. She looks herself over and discovers she is uninjured, then leaps to her feet and looks around. The WHITE RABBIT, who is no longer a puppet, is seen scurrying away.)

WHITE RABBIT: Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting.

ALICE: Oh Mr Rabbit. Mr Rabbit wait for me.

WHITE RABBIT exits stage right. ALICE follows after him. Direct segue to scene 2 in The Hall of Doors.

Scene 2: *The Pool of Tears*

(ALICE enters stage left looking for the WHITE RABBIT. She sees a small door upstage which she tries to open but finds it locked. She discovers a tiny golden key on the top of a three-legged table and opens the door. The table and doors(s) first appear in a miniature size and stretch to two larger sizes. ALICE kneels down to look through the door to Wonderland.)

ALICE: Oh. What a lovely garden. Just look at those beautiful flowers and that cool fountain. But how am I ever going to get in there? This door is so tiny, I can't even fit my head through it. And even if my head would fit through, it would be of very little use without my shoulders. Oh if I could just close up like a telescope. I think I could if only I knew how to begin. Oh what shall I do?

ALICE returns the key to the table and discovers a little bottle with a paper label tied around its neck which reads Drink Me.

ALICE: That's peculiar I'm certain this was not here before. Drink me. No I'll look first and see if you're marked poison or not. (Not finding any such warning she carefully tastes the liquid inside.) No it must be all right. Mmmmmmm! Tastes like cherry tart. Custard. Pineapple, Roast Turkey, toffee... and hot buttered toast.

Music cue #3: *Getting Smaller*

(ALICE shrinks as the table and scenic elements of the Hall of Doors get larger.)

ALICE: What a curious feeling I must be closing up like a telescope. I am. Oh, no. What if I keep shrinking and shrinking until I go out all together. Pooooff! Just like a candle. I wonder what that would be like.

ALICE and the table complete their change. She waits just to be sure, then races to the little door which she is now the perfect size to enter. Unfortunately, she has left the key upon the table

ALICE: Oh no. The key. (She runs back to the table, but it is impossible to reach the top and she starts to cry.) Come on now there's no use crying like that.

(Slowly her sobbing subsides and she notices a small cake lying under the table on which the words Eat Me are marked in currants.)

ALICE: Eat me. OK I will eat and if it makes me grow larger I can reach the key. if it makes me grow smaller I can creep under the door so either way I'll get into the garden. yeah and I don't care which happens.

ALICE eats a little bit and puts her hand on top of her head to see which way she is growing.

ALICE: Which way? Which way?

(Nothing seems to be happening so she shrugs and finishes off the cake.)

Music cue #4: *Getting Bigger*

ALICE Begins to grow even larger than her original size, as the table shrinks to tiny proportions.

ALICE: Curiouser and curiouser! now I've opened out like the largest telescope that ever was. Goodbye feet. Oh my poor little feet. I wonder who will put on your shoes and stockings for you now dears? I'm sure I shan't be able. I shall be way up here. You must manage the best way you can - but I must be kind to them or perhaps they won't let me walk the way I want to go. Let me see. I'll give A new pair of boots every Christmas. Of course they shall have to go by mail. and how funny it'll seem sending presents to one's own feet. Oh dear what nonsense I'm talking.

ALICE's head nearly bumps into the ceiling as she stops growing. she notices the relative height of the table.

ALICE: The key!

(She removes the key and runs over to the door which is even tinier now unlocks and attempts to peer in through the opening. It is all she can do to look through with one eye while lying on her side. She begins to cry once again as she returns to the table and sets the key down.)

ALICE: You ought to be ashamed of yourself. A great big girl like you to go on crying this way. Stop this moment, I tell you.

(She is however unable to stop and as she continues to cry. A pool of her tears grows from around her until it reaches a depth of four inches. After a time, there is a patter of little feet and the WHITE RABBIT returns dressed in formal attire, carrying a pair of white gloves in one hand and a fan in the other. He trots across the stage muttering to himself.

WHITE RABBIT: Oh the Duchess. The Duchess! She'll be a monster if I've kept her waiting.

ALICE: If you please, Sir?

The WHITE RABBIT reacts violently, drops the white gloves and the fan and scurries away into the darkness. ALICE begins fanning herself with the tiny fan.

ALICE: Oh my how strange everything is today and yesterday things were quite normal I wonder if I changed during the night. Let me think: was I the same when I got up this morning? But if I'm not the same, the next question is who in the world am I? That's the great puzzle. I'm sure I'm not Gertrude for her hair goes in such long ringlets and mine doesn't go in ringlets at all. And I'm sure I can't be Mabel for I know all sorts of things and she knows so little. Besides she's she and I'm me and - no dear, how puzzling it all is. I know I'll try to see if I know all the things I used to know. Let me see: four times five is ... twelve; five times five is fish and... oh dear I shall never get to twenty at that rate. Oh well, the multiplication table doesn't count (She thinks about this and laughs.) The multiplication table ... doesn't count. Well let's try geography. London is the capital of Paris and Paris is the capital of Kumquats and Kumquats is the - - dear that's all wrong, I'm certain. I must be Mabel after all and now I'll have to live in that pokey little house and have practically no toys to play with and, ever so many lessons to learn. No, I've made up my mind about it: If I'm Mabel I'll stay down here in this hole. Even if they stick their heads down and say, "Come on out dear," I shall only look up and say, "well who am I then? Tell me that first and then

if I like being that person I'll come up. If not I'll stay down here till I'm somebody else." But oh dear! I do wish they would put their heads down here. I am so very tired of being all alone.

Music cue #5: *Getting Smaller (Reprise)*

As she finishes saying this Alice begins to shrink. she discovers that she has put the white gloves on her hands

ALICE: How do these gloves fit me? I must be growing small again.

She stands up and measures herself against the table which is now back to its big size. She looks at the fan and it is now indeed a normal size for her. She throws the fan down as she realizes that it must be the new cause of her shrinking.

ALICE: That was A narrow escape. And now for the garden . (ALICE runs to the garden door but it is shut again.) The key! (She looks back at the tall table and sees the key on top of out of her reach.) Oh dear now things are worse than ever for I never was so small as this before. Never!

As she says this ALICE slips and falls into the pool of tears which is much deeper now that she has shrunk again.

Music cue #6: *Embryonic Journey*

(ALICE is tossed about by the fabric pool of tears. A puppet FROG and multiple puppet FISH enter separately and swim past ALICE.)

ALICE: Oh my what's this? Salt water? Am I in the ocean then? No I'm in a hole underground and I was nine feet tall and I was crying ever so much And oh no. I wish I hadn't cried so much.

(A puppet DOGFISH and a puppet CATFISH enter and approach ALICE.)

Now I shall be punished for it by being drowned in my own tears. What is that? Must be a Catfish.

(A puppet MOUSE enters swimming past ALICE, unaware of her.)

ALICE: What is that? A walrus? A hippopotamus? Why it's just A little Mouse. but not so little after all. I wonder if it would be any use to speak to this mouse? Everything is so strange here I wouldn't be surprised if it can talk. At any rate there's no harm in trying. on mouse do you know the way out of this pool? I am very tired of swimming about here. Oh mouse!

(The puppet MOUSE looks at her inquisitively and seems to wink at her but says nothing.)

ALICE: Perhaps it doesn't understand English. Maybe it's a Spanish mouse. Let's see. *¿Dónde está mi gato?* Where is my cat?

(The MOUSE puppet gives a sudden leap out of the water shivering with fright.)

ALICE: Oh I beg your pardon. I forgot you didn't like cats?

MOUSE: Like cats? Would you like cats if you were a mouse?

ALICE: Well I guess not. Still, I wish I could show you my cat Dinah. I think you'd take a fancy to cats if you could only see her. She is such a dear quiet thing as she sits purring so nicely by the fire, licking her paws and washing her face. And she's great for catching mice - (The MOUSE again reacts in horror.) Oh please forgive me. We won't talk about her anymore if you like.

MOUSE: We, indeeed! As if I would ever talk on such a subject. Our family always hated cats: nasty low vulgar things. Don't ever let me hear that name again.

ALICE: I wont, I promise. (In a hurry to change the subject.) are you... Are you fond... of dogs? (No response, so she continues.) There is such a nice little dog near our house. I should like to show you. A little bright eyed Terrier with Oh such long curly brown hair and it will fetch things when you throw them, and it'll sit up and beg for its dinner and all sorts of things. I can't

remember half of them, and he belongs to a Farmer who says the dog is so useful it's worth real money. He says it kills all the rats and -

The MOUSE squeaks in horror and starts to swim away making quite a commotion as it goes. Other creatures enter the pool, including the DUCK, DODO, LORY and EAGLET.

ALICE: Oh dear, I beg your pardon. I'm afraid I've offended you again, my dear Mouse. Please come back and we won't talk about cats or dogs either if you don't like them.

MOUSE: Let's get to the shore. I'll tell you my history and then you'll understand why I hate cats and dogs.

The Group, led by ALICE and MOUSE climb ashore. Direct segue to Scene 3.

Scene 3: *The Caucus Race*

(As the lights come up, We see a mother crab and a baby crab crawling along the beach A number of birds are hopping along as well searching for food. the cries of gulls and the crash of waves is heard. ALICE and MOUSE enter, followed by DUCK, DODO, LORY and EAGLET.

LORY: Well, this is certainly a fine mess.

DUCK: We sure are A curious looking party.

EAGLET: How are we ever going to dry?

DODO: Well, if I might be so b-bold -

DUCK: I know let's build A fire and -

LORY: No no no. Let's hear A mouse. Let's hear A story from the mouse.

ALICE: Certainly that won't make us dry.

LORY: Well who asked you? And what do you know about it anyway?

ALICE: I know that tales are for entertainment and not for drying off.

MOUSE: Not all tails.

ALICE: Well, I think a fire is a much better idea.

LORY: Well I don't agree.

ALICE: So?

LORY: I'm older than you. Therefore I know more than you.

ALICE: That doesn't mean you know more than me. Anyway how old are you?

LORY: That's none of your business

ALICE: Tell me how old you are.

(LORY Turns away from Alice refusing to tell her age. The MOUSE is obviously in a position of authority amongst the creatures.

MOUSE: Sit down all of you and listen to me. I'll make you dry.

(They all sit in a semi-circle around MOUSE.)

MOUSE: Are you ready? This is the driest thing I know. Silence please. Ahem. William the Conqueror, whose cause was favored by the Pope, was soon submitted to by the English, who wanted leaders and had been of late much accustomed to usurpation and conquest. Edwin and Morcar, the Earls of Mercia and Northumbria -

LORY: Ugh!

MOUSE: I beg your pardon. Did you speak?

LORY: Not me.

MOUSE: Sorry I thought you did. I proceed. Ahem. Edwin and Morcar, the Earls of Mercia and Northumbria, For him; and even Stigand, the patriotic Archbishop of Canterbury found it advisable -

DUCK: Found what?

MOUSE: Found **it**. Of course you know what **it** means?

DUCK: I know what 'it' means well enough. When I find a thing it's generally a frog or a worm. The question is what did the archbishop find?

MOUSE (ignoring him): - Found it advisable to go With Edgar Atholing to meet William and offer him the crown. Williams conduct at first was moderate. but the insolence of his Normans - (Turning to ALICE) How are you getting on now dear?

ALICE: As wet as ever. **It** does not seem to dry me at all.

DODO: In that case, I move that the meeting adjourn for the immediate adoption of more energetic remedies.

EAGLET: Speak English. I don't know what any of those big words mean. And I don't think you do either.

(The DUCK quacks in agreement. Some of the other birds titter in amusement.)

DODO (offended): What I was going to say was that the best thing to get us dry would be a caucus race.

ALICE: What's a caucus race?

DODO: Why the best way to explain it is to do it. here this shall be our race course. the exact shape doesn't matter. All set?

Music cue #7: *The Caucus Race*

(Without any signal to start nor with any attempt to line them up in a particular order, all the CREATURES begin running whenever they choose and stopping whenever they liked. After a while and for no apparent reason the DODO speaks.)

DODO: The race is over.

LORY: But who has won?

(The DODO is not prepared to make such a decision and stays for a great while with one finger pressed upon his forehead as if in deep thought.)

DODO: Everybody has won. (They all cheer.) And all must have prizes. (They cheer even louder.)

EAGLET: But who is to give the prizes?

ALL: Yeah! Yeah that's right, Who, etc.

DODO (pointing at ALICE): Why she is of course.

ALL (Crowding around ALICE): Prizes! Prizes! Give us prizes, etc.

(ALICE has no idea what to do and in despair puts her hand in her pocket and pulls out a sack of hard candies and hands them out as prizes.)

MOUSE: But she must have a prize as well.

DODO: Of course. what else have you got in your pocket?

ALICE: Only a thimble.

DODO: Hand it over here.

(They all crowd around her again while the DODO ceremoniously presents her with her thimble.)

DODO: We beg your acceptance of this elegant thimble.

(The others cheer. ALICE is speechless so she bows in acceptance. They all eat their comforts accompanied by various complaints, chokings and gagging noises.)

LORY & EAGLET: Tell us a story Mr. Mouse.

ALICE: You promised to tell me your history, and why it is you hate, you know Cs and Ds.

LORY: Yes. Yes, begin it.

EAGLET: Oh I do hope there will be nonsense in it.

MOUSE (turning to ALICE with a sigh): Mine is a long and a sad tale.

(He takes up his tail which is used in the musical selection that follows.)

ALICE: It is a long tail certainly but why do you call it sad?

Music cue #8: *A Long Tail*

(A solo performance by MOUSE of Lewis Carroll's typographic poem is accompanied by music and features MOUSE wrapping her tail into a knot.)

MOUSE: We lived beneath the mat,

Warm and snug and fat,

But one woe, and that

Was the cat!

BABY CRAB: The cat?

MOUSE: To our joys a clog,

In our eyes a fog,

On our hearts a log,

Was the dog!

BABY CRAB: The dog?

MAMA CRAB: The dog.

MOUSE: When the cats away, then the mice will play, but alas! one day, (so they say) came the dog and cat, hunting for a Rat, crushed the mice all flat, each one as he sat underneath the mat, warm and snug and fat.

ALICE: Think of that.

MOUSE: You are not listening. What are you thinking about?

ALICE (pointing to his tail): I beg your pardon. You had got to the fifth bend I think.

MOUSE (letting go of her tail): I had not.

ALICE: A knot? Oh, let me help you undo it.

MOUSE (walking away): I shall do nothing of the sort. You insult me by talking such nonsense.

ALICE: I didn't mean it. But really, you're so easily offended, you know. (The mouse growls in reply.) Please come back and finish your story.

ALL: Yes, please do! Yes, Come back, etc.

MAMA CRAB (to her daughter): My dear, we let this be A lesson to you never to lose your temper.

BABY CRAB: Hold your tongue, Ma.

LORY: What A pity she wouldn't stay.

ALICE: I wish I had my Dinah here. She'd soon fetch her back.

EAGLET: Who is Dinah?

ALICE: Dinah is my cat. and she's just terrific for catching mice. and oh I wish you could see her go after the birds. Why she'll eat a little bird as soon as look at it.

(This causes a sensation. Some of the birds exit at once.)

LORY (exiting): I really must be getting home - the night air doesn't suit my throat.

ALL (exiting): Yes! I agree. It's time for bed, etc.

(Now all alone again, Alice begins to cry as she crosses down stage.)

ALICE: I wish I hadn't mentioned Dinah. Nobody seems to like her down here, and I'm sure she's the best cat in the world. Oh my dear Dinah. I wonder if I shall ever see you anymore?

(ALICE hears the patter of footsteps in the distance. She looks up thinking that the mouse might be returning.)

ALICE: Mister Mouse?

The WHITE RABBIT enters trotting slowly back and forth looking around as if he has lost something.

WHITE RABBIT: The Duchess. The Duchess. Oh, my dear paws. Oh, my fur and whiskers. She will get me executed as sure as ferrets are ferrets. Where can I have dropped, them I wonder?

(ALICE having that he is searching for his missing fan and gloves begins looking around as well. Soon the WHITE RABBIT takes notice of her.)

WHITE RABBIT: Why Mary Ann what are you doing out here? Run home and fetch me a pair of gloves and a fan. Quick now.

ALICE: He mistook for his house maid. How surprised he'll be when he finds out who I really am. But I better take him his fan in gloves - that is if I can find them.

(ALICE continues to search for the gloves and fan. Blackout.)

Scene 4: *The Garden of Live Flowers*

Music cue #9: *A Long Tail*

(As the lights come up the majesty of the beautiful garden is revealed. The FLOWERS appear rooted in place, with flexible, leaf petal arms and expressive heads in extravagant blooms. A DOGWOOD TREE stands among them with two long branches of blooming flowers. The CHESHIRE CAT and CATERPILLAR observe the action.)

ALICE: Why if it isn't the lovely garden itself. I bet the White Rabbit's house is around here somewhere, but where? Oh Tiger-Lily, I wish you could talk.

TIGER-LILY: I can talk. When there's somebody worth talking to.

ALICE (after a beat): And do all the flowers talk?

TIGER-LILY: As well as you do. And a great deal louder.

ROSE: It isn't polite for us to begin, you know. and I really was beginning wonder if you'd ever speak. I said to myself, "Rose, her face has got some sense in it, even though it's not a very clever one." Still, you have a good strong color, and that goes a long way.

TIGER-LILY (trying to curl up the hem of Alice's dress): I don't care about the color. If only her petals curled up a little more, she'd be all right.

ALICE (brushing away Tiger-Lily): Aren't you afraid being planted out here with no one to take care of you?

ROSE: There's the big tree in the middle. What else is it good for?

ALICE: But what could the tree do, if any danger came?

ROSE: It could bark.

ALICE: Bark?

DAISY 1: Yes. after all, it is a dogwood tree. It says, "Bough Wow." That's why it's branches are called boughs.

DAISY 2: Didn't you know that?

ALL DAISIES: Yeah, didn't you know that? Boy is she in shade, Shadey, etc.

ALICE: But what could the tree do, if any danger came?

TIGER-LILY: Silence all of you!

(They don't respond. TIGER-LILY flails their arms at the unruly DAISIES trembling with excitement.)

TIGER-LILY: They know I can't get at them, or they wouldn't dare to do it.

ALICE (in a soothing tone): Never mind. (to the DAISIES) If you don't hold your tongues, I'll pick you.

(Immediate silence prevails. The DAISIES look at ALICE in stunned horror.)

TIGER-LILY: That's right. (to ALICE) The Daisies are the worst of all. When one speaks they all begin together. It's enough to make one wither, to hear the way they go on and on.

ALICE: How is it you can all talk so well? I've been in many gardens before but none of the flowers could talk.

TIGER-LILY: Put your hand down and feel the ground. Then you'll know why.

ALICE (touching the ground): It's very hard but I don't see what that has to do with it.

TIGER-LILY: In most gardens they make the beds too soft -

ALICE: Beds?

TIGER-LILY: The flower beds.

ALICE: Ohhhh. The beds.

TIGER-LILY: They make the beds too soft and the flowers are always asleep.

ALICE: I never thought of that before.

ROSE (in a severe tone): In my opinion you have no Garden at all.

VIOLET: I never saw anybody that looked so clean.

TIGER-LILY: Hold Your tongue, Violet. As if you ever saw anybody. You hide your head under your petals and just snore away the whole glorious day. You know no more of what's in the real world than a bud.

ALICE: Are there any more people in the garden besides me?

ROSE: There's one other flower that can move about like you. I wonder how you do that -

TIGER-LILY: You are always wondering.

ROSE: But that one is much more bushy than you.

ALICE: There's another little girl in the garden. Is she like me? Does she ever come out here? Would she be a friend to me?

BEETLE (crossing through the garden): I'll be your friend... (ALICE turns in anticipation but sees no one) ... Even though I am an insect. (Alice is startled, then disappoint to discover A beetle.) You don't like insects?

ALICE: I like them when they can talk. None of them ever talk, where I come from.

BEETLE: What sort of insects do you like, where you come from?

ALICE: I don't really like insects. I'm rather afraid of them - at least the big ones. But I can tell you some of their names.

BEETLE (carelessly): Do they answer to their names?

ALICE: Well no. I don't think so.

BEETLE: What's the use of their having names, if they won't answer to them?

ALICE: It's no use to them, but it's useful to the people that name them, I suppose. If not, why do things have names at all?

BEETLE: I don't know. Further on in the woods, they've got no names at all. However, go on with your list of insects. You are wasting time.

ALICE (beginning to count on her fingers): Well, there's the horsefly -

BEETLE: Well here as well, we have Horse-flies. just behind that bush in fact.

(The BEETLE makes a clicking sound as one does to call a horse. The HORSE-FLY enters, a creature with the head and tail of a horse but the body of a fly. He approaches ALICE carefully, sniffs her briefly and then examines the flowers nearby with more interest.)

ALICE: Why it looks just like a horse with wings.

BEETLE: Well how else would a Horse-fly look? You might even see a Rocking Horse-fly if you look hard enough. It's made entirely of wood and gets around by rocking from branch to branch.

ALICE (looking around): What does it live on?

BEETLE: Sap and sawdust. Go on with your list.

ALICE (resuming her count on her fingers): Oh yes. Well there's also the butterfly...

BEETLE: You mean, of course, the Bread-and-Butter-fly -

ALICE: The what?

BEETLE (pointing): Crawling right over there.

ALICE: Why its wings are thin slices of buttered bread. Its body is A crust and its head is A lump of sugar.

BEETLE: Naturally.

ALICE: What does it live on?

BEETLE: Weak tea with cream in it.

ALICE: Supposing it couldn't find any?

BEETLE: Then it would die of course.

ALICE: But that must happen very often?

BEETLE: Yes it happens. Keep going.

ALICE: Have the most beautiful Caterpillar.

BEETLE: Oh yes the Siamese Cat-erpillar?

ALICE: Siamese cat -

Direct segue to Scene 5.

Scene 5: *Advice from a Caterpillar*

(ALICE turns around to discover the Wonderland puppet CATERPILLAR sitting on top of an edible mushroom, smoking a large hookah and studying her.)

CATERPILLAR: Who are you?

ALICE: I - I hardly know Sir, just at present. At least I know who I was when I got up this morning but I must have changed several times since then.

CATERPILLAR: What do you mean by that? Explain yourself.

ALICE: I'm afraid I can't explain myself, Sir, because I'm not myself. You see?

CATERPILLAR: No, I don't see.

ALICE: I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly because I can't understand it myself, to begin with. And being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing.

CATERPILLAR: It is not.

ALICE: Well perhaps you don't think so now but when you have to turn into a chrysalis - you will someday you know - and then after that into a butterfly - or a bread and butter fly - I think you'll feel a little strange then.

CATERPILLAR: Not A bit.

ALICE: Well maybe your feelings are different. All I know is that it would feel very strange to me.

CATERPILLAR: You. Who are you?

ALICE: I think you ought to tell me who you are first.

CATERPILLAR: Why?

(ALICE unable to think of any good reason decides that the CATERPILLAR seems to be in a very unpleasant state of mind, so she turns away to exit.)

CATERPILLAR: Come back. I have something important to say.

(ALICE returns.)

CATERPILLAR: Keep your temper.

ALICE (swallowing her anger as best she can): Is that all?

CATERPILLAR: No.

(The Caterpillar puffs leisurely on the hookah. Finally he uncrosses his arms and removes the hose from his mouth.)

CATERPILLAR: So you think you've changed, do you?

ALICE: I'm afraid I have Sir. I can't remember the things I used to know.

CATERPILLAR: Can't remember what things?

ALICE: Well I've tried to do my multiplication tables but they come out all wrong.

CATERPILLAR: Recite *Humpty Dumpty*.

ALICE: Oh all right. Humpty Dumpty sat on A stoop,
 Humpty Dumpty had A great poop.
 All of the Queen's corpses and all the Queen's hens
 Couldn't keep Humpty from pooping again.

CATERPILLAR: That is not said right.

ALICE: Not quite right at all. I'm afraid some of the words got altered.

CATERPILLAR: It is wrong from beginning to end, but that doesn't mean that you have changed.

ALICE: Well, I also keep changing sizes every ten minutes at a time.

CATERPILLAR: What size do you want to be?

ALICE: Oh I'm not particular as to size. I just don't want to keep changing so often, you know.

CATERPILLAR: I don't know. Are you content now?

ALICE: I would like to be a little larger, Sir. Three inches is such a wretched height to be.

CATERPILLAR (rearing up): It is a very good height indeed.

ALICE: But I'm not used to it.

CATERPILLAR: You'll get used to it in time.

(The CATERPILLAR puts the hookah hose back in its mouth and begins smoking again. Again ALICE waits. After a while, the CATERPILLAR takes the hose out of their mouth, yawns once or twice, gets off the mushroom and crawls away. It takes them a long while to exit.)

CATERPILLAR: One side will make you grow taller. The other side will make you grow shorter.

ALICE (to herself): One side of what? The other side of what?

CATERPILLAR: Of the mushroom, of course.

(The puppet CATERPILLAR exits. ALICE examines the mushroom trying to figure out which are the two sides of it. she breaks off pieces from two opposite sides.)

ALICE: And now which is which?

(She nibbles a little of the mushroom. Direct segue to scene 6.)

Scene 6: *Pig and Pepper*

(A house in a clearing. A constant howling and sneezing is heard amid a general clamor. As ALICE crosses towards the house, a FISH-FOOTMAN enters and knocks on the door of the house. As ALICE hides, the door is opened by the FROG-FOOTMAN. The FISH-FOOTMAN produces a great letter from under his arm and hands it to the other.)

FISH-FOOTMAN (in a solemn tone): For the Duchess. an invitation from the Queen to play croquet.

FROG-FOOTMAN (also in a solemn tone): From the Queen. an invitation for the Duchess to play croquet.

FISH-FOOTMAN: No. I said, "For the Duchess. an invitation from the Queen to play croquet."

FROG-FOOTMAN: Oh. For the Queen. An invitation from the Duchess.

(The FROG-FOOTMAN formally returns the letter to the FISH-FOOTMAN. They both bow low, bumping heads. ALICE stifles her laugh. The FISH-FOOTMAN runs off. The FROG-FOOTMAN looks at the letter, leans it up against the house, and sits on the ground near the door, staring blankly up into the sky. ALICE crosses timidly to the door and knocks.)

FROG-FOOTMAN: There's no use in knocking and that is for two reasons. Because I'm on the same side of the door as you are. Secondly because they are making such a noise inside, no one could possibly hear you.

ALICE: Please then, how am I to get in?

FROG-FOOTMAN: There might be some sense in your knocking if we had the door between us. for instance, if you were inside, you could and then I could let you out.

ALICE: But I'm not inside.

FROG-FOOTMAN: Or if I was inside, you could knock and then I could let you in.

ALICE: Very much, Sir.

FROG-FOOTMAN: but I shall sit here till tomorrow.

(The door opens and a large plate comes skimming out, grazing the FROG-FOOTMAN's head and smashing to pieces against a tree behind him.)

FROG-FOOTMAN (continuing as if nothing): Or the next day maybe.

ALICE (louder): Then how will I ever get in.

FROG-FOOTMAN: Are you to get in at all? That's the first question, you know.

ALICE (to herself): It's really very dreadful the way these creatures argue. It's enough to drive one crazy

FROG-FOOTMAN: I shall sit here on and for days and days.

ALICE: But what am I to do?

FROG-FOOTMAN: Anything you like.

(The FROG-FOOTMAN begins whistling still looking up in the air.)

ALICE: There's no use in talking to him.

(ALICE opens the door and steps into the house which is now completely illuminated. In the smoke filled kitchen, the large puppet COOK is leaning over the fire stirring a cauldron which seems to be full of soup to which she keeps adding more pepper. The large puppet DUCHESS is sitting on a small three legged stool in the center of the room, nursing a baby. The puppet CHESHIRE CAT is lying on the table.)

ALICE (sneezing herself): There's certainly too much pepper in that soup. Please would you tell me why your cat grins like that.

DUCHESS: It's a Cheshire cat that's why. (To the baby) Pig!

ALICE: 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 them do.

ALICE (pleased to have got into a real conversation): I don't know of any that do.

DUCHESS: You don't know much. And that's a fact.

(The COOK takes the cauldron off the fire and begins to throw utensils, pots and everything within her reach at the DUCHESS and the baby. The DUCHESS pays no attention.)

ALICE: Oh please mind what you're doing. Oh there goes his precious nose.

DUCHESS: 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. Just think what a mess it would make with the day and night. You see the Earth takes twenty-four hours to turn round on its axis.

DUCHESS: Speaking of axes... chop off her head!

(Anxiously at the COOK to see if she intended to follow the DUCHESS' orders, but she is too busy stirring the soup.)

ALICE (to herself): I think it's twenty-four hours. or is it twelve? I...

DUCHESS: Oh don't bother me with numbers. I never could stand good round figures.

Music cue #10: *Speak Roughly*

(During the dance, the puppet DUCHESS begins to nurse the puppet BABY again singing a sort of lullaby but punctuating the end of each line by giving the child a violent shake.)

DUCHESS: Speak roughly to your little boy,

and beat him when he sneezes.

He only does it to annoy

Because he know it teases

DUCHESS, COOK and BABY: 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.

DUCHESS, COOK and BABY: Wow! Wow! Wow!

DUCHESS: Here you may nurse it a bit, if you like.

(She throws the BABY at ALICE who catches it with some difficulty.)

DUCHESS: I must go and get ready to play croquet with the Queen.

(The COOK throws a frying pan at her as she exits but just misses.)

ALICE: If I don't take this child away with me, they are sure to kill it in a day or two.

(ALICE exits through the door and returns to the Wonderland garden. She now operates the puppet BABY.)

ALICE: Wouldn't it be murder to leave the little thing behind? (BABY grunts.) Don't grunt. That's not a proper way of expressing yourself. (BABY grunts again. ALICE looks closely at the creature's face, who looks with interest at ALICE.) Why that looks more like A snout than A real nose. But perhaps it was only sobbing. I'll see if there are any tears. (She again looks into the creature's face.) If you're going to turn into a Pig my dear, I'll have nothing more to do with you. Mind me now!

(The creature grunts some more and ALICE, assured of its non-human shape sets it down and shoes it off the stage.)

ALICE: Well if it had grown it would have made A dreadfully ugly child. but it makes A rather handsome pig I think.

(She is startled by seeing the CHESHIRE CAT sitting on a bough of a tree.)

ALICE: 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 go.

ALICE: I don't much care where -

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

ALICE: - as long as I get somewhere.

CHESHIRE CAT: Oh you're sure to do that if you just walk long enough.

ALICE: What sort of people live here?

CHESHIRE CAT: In that direction lives A Hatter and in that direction lives A march hare. This is either if you. they're both mad.

ALICE: But I don't want to go around with 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 that I'm mad?

CHESHIRE CAT: You must be or you wouldn't have come here.

ALICE: And how do you know that you're mad?

CHESHIRE CAT: To begin with a dog's not mad. you grant that?

ALICE: I suppose so.

CHESHIRE CAT: 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 call it purring not growling.

CHESHIRE CAT: What you like. Are you playing croquet with the Queen today?

ALICE: I should like that very much but I haven't been invited yet.

CHESHIRE CAT: You'll see me there.

(The CHESHIRE CAT disappears momentarily and ALICE gives this little notice. just as the CHESHIRE CAT reappears.)

CHESHIRE CAT: By-the-bye, what became of the baby? I'd nearly forgotten to ask.

ALICE: It turned into A Pig.

CHESHIRE CAT: I thought it would.

(The Cheshire cat Danishes again. Alice waits for it to reappear and when it doesn't, she turns to go and it makes A sudden reappearance.)

CHESHIRE CAT: Did you say pig or fig?

ALICE: I said pig. and I wish you wouldn't keep appearing and disappearing so suddenly. you make me quite giddy.

CHESHIRE CAT: All right.

(This time the CHESHIRE CAT disappears quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail and ending with the grin, which remains sometime after the rest is gone.)

ALICE: Well I've often seen a cat without a grin, but never a grin without a cat. It's the most curious thing I ever saw in my life.

(She crosses downstage.)

ALICE: I've seen hatters before. and the March hare is certain to be more interesting. Perhaps since this is May it won't be raving mad - At least not so mad as it was in March.

Blackout.

Alice in Wonderland

Act 2

Scene 1: *A Mad Tea Party*

(As the lights come up, Alice discovers A large table set out under a large puppet tree in front of the house. The MARCH HARE and the MAD HATTER are crowded at one end of the table having with the DORMOUSE sitting between them fast asleep. the hair and the hat are using the DORMOUSE as a cushion, resting their elbows on her.)

MARCH HARE and MAD HATTER (seeing ALICE approach): No room! No room!

ALICE (indignantly): There's plenty of room.

(ALICE seats herself in a large arm chair at the end of the table nearest them.)

MARCH HARE (encouragingly): Have some wine.

ALICE (looking around): 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 invited.

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

MAD HATTER: Your hair wants cutting.

ALICE: You should learn not to make personal remarks. It's very rude.

MAD HATTER (opening his eyes wide at her remark): Why is A Raven like a writing desk?

ALICE: Good... now we shall have some fun! I'm glad they've begun asking riddles. (To the others) I can guess that.

MARCH HARE: Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?

ALICE: Exactly so.

MARCH HARE: Then you should say what you.

ALICE: I do. at least I mean what I say... and that's the same as 'I say what I mean.'

MAD HATTER: Not the same at all. Why you might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same as 'I eat what I see.'

MARCH HARE: You might just as well say that 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same as 'I sleep when I breathe.'

MAD HATTER: It is the same thing with you.

(The Tea Party sits in silence for a moment. ALICE tries to think about ravens and writing desks. The MAD HATTER looks at his pocket watch, shakes it and holds it up to his ear. The MARCH HARE nibbles at a piece of bread and butter they hold between their paws like a carrot. The DORMOUSE sleeps on.)

ALICE (after considering): The fourth.

MAD HATTER: Two days wrong! (to the 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 gotten in as well. You should not have put it in with the bread knife.

(The MARCH HARE takes the watch and examines it gloomily. He dips it in his cup of tea and looks at it again.)

MARCH HARE (muttering to himself): It was the best butter.

ALICE (looking over the MARCH HARE's shoulder): What a funny watch! It tells the days of the month and doesn't tell what o'clock it is.

DORMOUSE (waking briefly): Must be digital. (The DORMOUSE falls asleep again. The Mad Hatter snatches his watch back from the MARCH HARE.)

MAD HATTER: Why should it? Does your watch tell you what year it is?

ALICE: Of course not. but that's because it stays the same year for such a long time.

MAD HATTER: Which is just the same as mine.

ALICE (politely): I don't understand.

MAD HATTER: The Dormouse is asleep again.

(The MAD HATTER pours hot tea on her nose. This awakens the DORMOUSE, but not enough to make her open her eyes.)

DORMOUSE: Of course of course. Just what I was going to remark myself.

MAD HATTER: Have you guessed the Riddle yet?

ALICE: Why is raven like a writing desk? No, I give it up. What's the answer?

MAD HATTER: I haven't the slightest idea.

MARCH HARE: Nor I.

ALICE: You might do something better with your time than wasting it asking riddles that have no answer.

MAD HATTER: If you knew time as well as I do, you wouldn't talk about wasting it. It's her.

ALICE: Her? I don't know what you mean.

MAD HATTER: Of course you don't. I bet you've never even spoken to Time.

ALICE: Perhaps not, but I know how beat time when I learn music.

MAD HATTER: You beat time? Well that accounts for it. She won't tolerate a beating. Now, if you keep on good terms with her, she will do almost anything you like with the clock. For instance suppose it was 8:00 in the morning, just time to start school. All you have to do is whisper a hint to time and the clock will go round in a twinkling. Half past one! Time for lunch!

MARCH HARE (to himself): Oh, I only wish it was.

ALICE: That would be great really But then - I wouldn't be hungry for lunch.

MAD HATTER: Not at first perhaps. But you could make it stay half past one as long as you liked.

ALICE: Is that the way you manage time?

MAD HATTER: Not I!. We quarreled last March - just before he went mad you know. (Pointing with his spoon at the MARCH HARE) - It was at the great concert given by the Queen of Hearts, and I had to sing: Twinkle twinkle little bat! How I wonder what you're at! You know the song perhaps?

ALICE: I've heard something like it.

MAD HATTER: It goes on you know in this way - up above the world you fly like A tea tray in the sky. Twinkle twinkle...

DORMOUSE (singing in her sleep): Twinkle twinkle twinkle twinkle twinkle twinkle. (etc. until she's pinched.)

(The MAD HATTER and the MARCH HARE pinch the DORMOUSE to make her stop.)

MAD HATTER: Well, I'd hardly finished the first verse - (He pauses for the DORMOUSE to finish. He speaks louder.) I'd hardly finished the first verse - (The DORMOUSE continues to sing. He speaks even louder.) I'd hardly finished the first verse, when the Queen cried out, 'He's killing the time. Off with his head!'

ALICE: How dreadfully monstrous.

MAD HATTER: And ever since then, he won't do a thing I ask. It's always four o'clock now.

ALICE (figuring it out): Is that the reason so many Tea things are put out here?

MAD HATTER: That's it. It's always tea time and there's no time to wash anything between servings.

ALICE: Then you keep moving round I suppose?

MAD HATTER: Exactly so. As things get used up.

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

MARCH HARE: Suppose we change the subject. I vote the young lady tell us a story.

ALICE (alarmed): Oh no, I don't know any stories.

MARCH HARE and MAD HATTER: Then the Dormouse shall! (They pinch her.) Wake up, Dormouse!

DORMOUSE (slowly waking): I wasn't asleep. I heard everything you fellows were saying.

MARCH HARE: Tell us a story.

ALICE: Yes, please do.

MAD HATTER: And be quick about it or you'll be asleep again before it's done.

DORMOUSE (hurriedly): Once upon a time, there were three little sisters and their names were Elsie Lucie and Tillie. and they lived at the bottom of a well.

ALICE: How could they live in a well? What did they live on?

DORMOUSE: They lived on Maple syrup.

ALICE: They couldn't have done that. They would get sick.

DORMOUSE: So they were. Very sick.

ALICE: But why did they live at the bottom of a well?

MARCH HARE (earnestly): Take some more tea.

ALICE: I haven't had any 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. In my opinion...

ALICE: Nobody asked your opinion.

MAD HATTER: Well, who's making personal remarks now?

(ALICE Looks offended, so she helps herself to some tea and bread. Then ignoring the MAD HATTER, she speaks sweetly to the DORMOUSE.)

ALICE: Why did they live at the bottom of a well?

DORMOUSE: It was A Maple syrup well.

ALICE: There's no such thing as a Maple syrup well.

MARCH HARE and MAD HATTER: Shhh! Ssshhh!

ALICE (humbly): No please go on. I won't interrupt you again. I dare say there may be one Maple syrup well.

DORMOUSE (indignantly): One, indeed! And so these three little sisters - they were learning to draw, you know.

ALICE (forgetting her promise): What did they draw?

DORMOUSE (answering immedately this time): Well, Maple syrup, of course

MAD HATTER: I want a clean cup. Let's all move one place more.

(They do. The MAD HATTER is the only one who gets A clean place. ALICE is reluctant about moving into the MARCH HARE 's place, but she finally does, looking disapprovingly at the messy remains.)

ALICE (humbly): I don't understand. How could they draw Maple syrup?

DORMOUSE: You can draw water out of a water well, so I should think you could draw Maple syrup out of a Maple syrup well.

ALICE: But they were inside the well.

DORMOUSE: Of course they were. Well inside. (ALICE is too confused for words.) they were learning to draw and they drew all manner of things; Everything that begins with an M.

ALICE: Why with an M?

MARCH HARE: Why not?

(ALICE is silent. The DORMOUSE is dozing off. the MAD HATTER pinches her.)

DORMOUSE: That begins with an M, such as mouse-traps, and the moon and memory and muchness - You know you say things are much of a muchness. Did you ever see such a thing as a drawing of a muchness?

ALICE: Really, now that you ask me, I don't think-

MAD HATTER: Well if you don't think, you shouldn't talk.

(This is more than ALICE can bear. She gets up in great disgust and crosses downstage.)

ALICE: I'll never go there again. It's the worst Tea Party I ever was at, in all my life.

(The MAD HATTER and the MARCH HARE are trying to put the squealing DORMOUSE into the teapot. Voices attract ALICE's attention and she turns to find three puppet Card GARDENERS at work. The TWO, FIVE and SEVEN of SPADES at work busily painting red - a white rose tree. Blackout.)

Scene 2: *The Queen's Croquet game*

(As the lights come up, we see Alice Is back in the beautiful garden, among the bright flower beds. A large puppet ROSE TREE stands near the entrance of the Garden with white roses. there are three gardeners busily painting them red. The three puppet GARDENERS are the TWO OF SPADES, FIVE OF SPADES and SEVEN OF SPADES.)

TWO OF SPADES: Look out now, Five. Don't go splashing paint on me like that.

FIVE OF SPADES: I couldn't help it. Seven hit my elbow.

SEVEN OF SPADES: That's right, Five. Always blaming someone else.

FIVE OF SPADES: You're one to talk. Yesterday, I heard the Queen say that you deserved to be beheaded.

TWO OF SPADES: What for?

SEVEN OF SPADES: That's none of your business, Two.

FIVE OF SPADES: Yes, it is his business, and I'll tell him - it was for bringing the cook Tulip roots instead of onions.

SEVEN OF SPADES: Well of all the unjust things -

(He sees ALICE watching them. The TWO and the FIVE look round also. All three puppet CLUBS turn around and bow low to ALICE.)

ALICE (curtsying): Would you tell me please, why are you painting those roses?

(FIVE and SEVEN look at TWO.)

TWO OF SPADES (in a low voice): Why the fact is miss, this here ought to have been a red rose tree, and we put in a white one by mistake. And if the Queen finds out, she will cut off our heads. So you see Miss, we're doing our best, before she comes, to -

(A bugle call is heard from the left wing.)

FIVE OF SPADES: The Queen! The Queen!

Music Cue #15: The Royal Procession

(The three gardeners instantly throw themselves flat upon their faces. Another bugle call ushers in the procession. The soldiers (Clubs) enter first, followed in order by courtiers (Diamonds), Royal children (Hearts) and the WHITE RABBIT.

If the cast is large enough, a complete royal family of 13 puppet Hearts enter in numerical order: First the Ace of Hearts with a long trumpet, then the TWO and THREE of Hearts enter as Royal Children arranged in birth order. The oldest child - the TEN of hearts - enters last. The procession may also include some soldiers (Clubs) and courtiers (Diamonds.)

Next, enters The KNAVE OF HEARTS, carrying the king's crown on a crimson velvet cushion. He is polite and smiling and half witted. Last of all in this grand procession, the KING OF HEARTS and the QUEEN OF HEARTS enter. The WHITE RABBIT is between them, chatting nervously. When the QUEEN reaches the center stage, she stops and the procession comes to a standstill automatically. She observes ALICE and speaks to the KNAVE.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Who is this?

(The KNAVE OF HEARTS only bows and smiles in reply.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Idiot! (To ALICE:) What's your name, child?

ALICE: My name is Alice, if it please Your Majesty. (To herself:) Why they're only a pack of cards after all. I needn't be afraid of them.

(The QUEEN points to the three GARDENERS, and she is quite unable to tell whether they were Gardeners, Soldiers, Courtiers or three of her own children, since they were lying on their faces and the pattern on their backs was the same as the rest of the pack.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS: And who are these?

ALICE: How should I know? It's no business of mine.

(ALICE is surprised at her own courage. The QUEEN swells with rage, glares at ALICE and screams.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Off With her head! Off -

ALICE (loudly): Nonsense!

(The QUEEN is silenced.)

KING OF HEARTS: Consider my dear, she is only a child.

QUEEN OF HEARTS (to the KNAVE): Turn them over.

(The KNAVE, still holding the crown, gingerly turns the GARDENERS over with one foot to each of the GARDENERS.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS (to the GARDENERS): Get up.

(The GARDENERS rise and begin bowing profusely to all present.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Cut that out! You make me dizzy. (The QUEEN crosses to the ROSE TREE and touches the painted flowers.) What have you been doing here?

TWO OF SPADES (going down on one knee): May it please Your Majesty, we were trying -

QUEEN OF HEARTS: I see! Off with their heads!

(Two or three SOLDIERS (THREE OF CLUBS, EIGHT OF CLUBS, TEN OF CLUBS, and/or high number Hearts) escort the three GARDENERS upstage for execution. As the procession prepares to move to the Croquet Field, the GARDENERS run to ALICE for protection.)

ALICE: You shan't be beheaded. I promise.

Music Cue #16: Royals

(Full cast Dance. The entire pack of live actor CARDS are arranged in rows stretching and doing calisthenics. ALICE hides the three GARDENERS in the front row of the cards. First, the GARDENERS are the only cards with their Fronts facing downstage. The SOLDIERS are caught in a choreographed game of *Streets and Alleys*, where the Streets are horizontal lanes formed by the performers arms touching each other, and the Alleys are vertical lanes formed when they face the same wing. ALICE manages to hide the GARDENERS in front of the ROYALS who are facing upstage. The SOLDIERS wander about for a time, looking for them.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Are their heads off?

EIGHT OF CLUBS: Their heads are gone, if it please Your Majesty.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: It does.

THREE, EIGHT and NINE OF CLUBS: Then yes! Their heads are indeed gone.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Good. (To ALICE) Can you play croquet?

ALICE: Yes!

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Come on then!

Music Cue #17: The Royal Procession 2

(The QUEEN leads the whole procession upstage to prepare for the croquet game. during this the WHITE RABBIT approaches Alice.)

WHITE RABBIT: It's - It's a very fine day.

ALICE: Indeed it is. Where is the Duchess?

WHITE RABBIT: Hush! Hush! (Whispering) She's under sentence of execution.

ALICE: What for?

WHITE RABBIT: Did you say, What a pity?"

ALICE: No I didn't. I don't think it's A pity at all. I said, What for?"

WHITE RABBIT: She punched the Queen in the nose.

(ALICE lets out a burst of laughter.)

WHITE RABBIT: Oh, hush! The Queen will hear you. you see she came rather late and the Queen said -

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Get to your places!

(The ACE OF HEARTS brings ALICE a puppet flamingo to use as a mallet, and a live hedgehog to use as a ball. The ACE makes herself into a wicket on stage left. ALICE struggles at first to control the puppet Flamingo, which has the habit of trying to bite her ankles. Only ALICE and the QUEEN have live puppet flamingos. All the other croquet players are also struggling with their non-puppet flamingos and fun fur balls. (While croquet players are playing simultaneously and quarreling with each other, the Wickets keep walking off to other parts of the field. the continues playing, Always getting more and more furious and shouting , 'Off with their head' or 'Off with her head,' or 'Off with his head' about once every fifteen seconds)

Music Cue #18: *The Croquet Game*

(Choreographed dance. Everyone begins running about in all directions tumbling up against each other. The escaped GARDENERS stand in full view as the three Croquet Poles. The SOLDIERS fold themselves to form Wickets along with the Royal Children TWO through TEN.)

SEVEN: Four stole a wicket.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Off with their head!

FOUR: Nine won't stand still.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Off with her head!

THREE: Five has a bigger Flamingo.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Off with his head!

SIX: Jack the Knave, is eating mushrooms... again.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Off with their head!

TWO: The White Rabbit is not cheating!

(The croquet game dance transforms into a slow motion Ballet of chaos and rage. ALICE crosses downstage.)

ALICE: They're dreadfully fond of beheading people here. It's a wonder there's anyone alive. (Alice begins to look about for some way of escape, when she sees the CHESHIRE CAT.) It's the Cheshire Cat. Now I shall have someone talk to.

CHESHIRE CAT: How are you getting on?

ALICE: I don't think they play at all fairly. and they quarrel so dreadfully one can't hear oneself speak - and they don't seem to have any rules in particular. At least if there are nobody attends to them. And you've no idea how confusing it is all the things being alive. For instance, there is the arch I've got to go through next walking about at the other end of the ground. And I should have croqueted the Queen's hedgehog just now. Only it ran away when it saw mine coming.

CHESHIRE CAT (in a low voice): How do you like the Queen?

ALICE: Not at all. She's so extremely – (ALICE is aware that the QUEEN has arrived behind her) - likely to win, that it's not worth finishing the game.

KING OF HEARTS: Who are you talking to?

ALICE: It's a friend of mine - a Cheshire cat. Allow me to introduce it.

KING OF HEARTS: I don't like the looks of it at all. However, it may kiss my hand if it likes.

CHESHIRE CAT: I'd rather not.

KING OF HEARTS: Don't be impertinent. (The KING hides behind ALICE.) In don't look at me like that.

ALICE: A Cat may look at a King. I've read that in some book, but I don't remember where.

KING OF HEARTS: Well it must be removed. (calling to the Queen) My dear! I wish you would have this cat removed.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Off with...

CHESHIRE CAT: Their.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Off with their head!

KING OF HEARTS: I'll fetch the executioner myself.

(The KING exits stage left, as the QUEEN exits Stage right, followed by the rest. ALICE picks up her puppet Flamingo and looks around for the HEGEHOG. Direct segue to the next scene.)

Scene 3: *The Mock Turtle's story*

ALICE: I wonder where that Hedgehog has gone off to. It really doesn't matter I suppose. All the wickets are gone from this side of the field. When I'm a queen, I won't have any pepper in my kitchen at all. Soup does very well without it. Maybe it's pepper that always makes people hot tempered. And vinegar that makes them sour.

DUCHESS (entering): I'm so glad to see you again my dear.

(ALICE is lost in thought. the DUCHESS crosses to her, tucks her arm affectionately into Alice's and leads her away.)

DUCHESS: You're thinking about something my dear... and that makes you forget to talk. I can't tell you what the moral of that is, but I shall remember it in a bit.

ALICE: Perhaps it hasn't one.

DUCHESS (squeezing closer to ALICE): Tut tut, child. Everything's got a moral if only you can find it.

ALICE (trying to be polite): The croquet game's going on much better now.

DUCHESS: Yes it is. and the moral of that is, 'Oh 'tis love, 'tis love that makes the world go round!'

ALICE: Someone else said that what makes the world go round is everybody minding their own business.

DUCHESS: Well, that means the same thing! (The DUCHESS rests her chin on ALICE's shoulder.) And the moral of that is, 'Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves.'

ALICE (to herself): How fond she is of finding morals and things.

DUCHESS: I bet you're wondering why I don't put my arm round your waist. The reason is that I don't trust your Flamingo. Shall I try the experiment?

ALICE (cautiously): He might bite. (ALICE opens her puppet flamingo's mouth.)

DUCHESS: Very true. Flamingos and mustard both bite. And the moral of that is, 'Birds of a feather, flock together.'

ALICE: Only mustard isn't A bird.

DUCHESS: Right as usual. You have such a clear way of putting things.

ALICE: Mustard is a mineral I think.

DUCHESS: Of course it is. There is a large mustard mine near here. and the moral of that is, 'The more there is of mine, the less there is of yours.'

ALICE: Oh I know. it's a vegetable. It doesn't look like one, but it is.

DUCHESS: I quite agree with you. and the moral of that is, 'Be what you are.' or if you'd like it put more simply, 'Never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others

that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise.'

ALICE: I think I'd understand that better if it was written down. I can't quite follow it as you say it.

DUCHESS (pleased): That's nothing. I could say more if you like?

ALICE: Oh, no! Please don't trouble yourself to say it any longer than that.

DUCHESS: No trouble at all! I make you a present of everything I've said so far.

ALICE (freeing herself from the DUCHESS' grasp and crossing downstage): What a cheap sort of present that is. I'm glad people don't give birthday presents like that.

DUCHESS (with another dig of her chin): Thinking again?

ALICE: I have a right to think.

DUCHESS: As much right as pigs have to fly. And the moral of -

(ALICE Looks around to see why the DUCHESS has stopped talking and to her great surprise, finds the QUEEN approaching and the DUCHESS looking that way in horror.)

DUCHESS: A fine day, Your Majesty!

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Now, I'll give you fair warning. Either you or your head must taken off. Take your choice!

DUCHESS: Me. Me. I'll be off. (She points stage left, starts to exit left and turns back.) Ta!

(The QUEEN stomps her foot and the DUCHESS is gone.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS (sweetly to ALICE): Have you seen the MOCK TURTLE yet?

ALICE: No. I don't even know what a Mock Turtle is?

QUEEN OF HEARTS: It's what Mock Turtle soup is made from.

ALICE: Mock Turtle soup? Is that some sort of vegan, plant protein? I never saw a Mock Turtle? Or even heard of... them?

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Her. Come on then and she will tell you her her-story. Gryphon!

(GRYPHON enters SR. They cross stage right to greet her but the GRYPHON curls up and falls fast asleep in the sunlight. This is the Mythical creature with the head of an eagle and the body and tail of a lion.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Up you lazy Gryphon. Up you lazy thing and take this young lady to see the Mock Turtle and hear her her-story. I must go back and see to some executions I have ordered.

(QUEEN OF HEARTS exits stage right.)

GRYPHON (offering a scaly arm to ALICE): What fun!

ALICE (taking his arm timidly): What is the fun?

GRYPHON: Why, she is the fun. It's just a game, you know. They never execute nobody. Come on!

ALICE: Everybody says, 'Come on,' here. I never was... so ordered about, in all my life. Never!

(They cross to a lonely ledge of rock. As they approach her, the sobbing of the MOCK TURTLE gets louder.)

ALICE (to the GRYPHON): What is her sorrow?

GRYPHON: It's all make believe, that. she hasn't got no sorrow. Come on! (They go up to the MOCK TURTLE, who stop singing and turns sad eyes in their direction.) This here young... lady, She wants to know your story, she does.

MOCK TURTLE: I will tell it to her. Sit down both of you and don't speak A word till I have finished. (They both sit down. The MOCK TURTLE clears her throat.) Once... (she sighs) I was A real turtle. when we were little, we went to school in the sea. The teacher was an old turtle. We used to call him tortoise.

ALICE: Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one?

MOCK TURTLE: We called him Tortoise because he really taught us. (Sighs.) Really!

GRYPHON: You ought to be ashamed of yourself for asking such a simple question. (They both look angrily at ALICE who feels very small.) *Sigue, aprende maestro.*

MOCK TURTLE: Yes. Well, we went to school in the sea, though you may not believe it -

ALICE: I never said I didn't.

MOCK TURTLE: You did so.

GRYPHON: Hold your tongue!

MOCK TURTLE: We had the best of educations. In fact, we went to school every day.

ALICE: I've been to school, too. You needn't be so proud as all that.

MOCK TURTLE: With extras?

ALICE: Yes, we learned French and music.

MOCK TURTLE (anxiously): And washing?

ALICE: Washing? Certainly not.

MOCK TURTLE: Ah! then yours wasn't a really good school. Now, at our school, we had French music... and washing!

ALICE: You couldn't have needed Washing that much, living at the bottom of the sea.

MOCK TURTLE: I couldn't afford to learn it. I only took the regular course.

ALICE: What was the regular course?

MOCK TURTLE: Well to begin with – Reeling and Writhing...

ALICE: You mean reading and writing?

MOCK TURTLE (explaining with gestures and actions): Noooo! I mean Reeling and Writhing. And then we had the different branches of Arithmetic -

ALICE: Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

MOCK TURTLE (with disdain): Hurumph! Certainly not. The different branches of Arithmetic are Ambition -

ALICE: Ambition?

MOCK TURTLE: Distraction, Uglification and Derision.

ALICE: I never heard of Ugly Fiction. What is it?

GRYPHON (lifting her paws in surprise): Never heard of uglifying? You know what to beautify is, I suppose?

ALICE: Yes, it means... to make something... prettier?

GRYPHON: Uglification is simply the inverse operation. It means to make something uglier.

ALICE: Inverse operation. Yes. *Sigue, maestro.* What else did you learn?

MOCK TURTLE: Well there was Mystery - Ancient and Modern Mystery - with Seaography,

ALICE: And how many hours a day did you have lessons?

MOCK TURTLE: Our lessons? Well, our lessons went ten hours the first day -

ALICE: Ten hours!

MOCK TURTLE: - nine hours the next day, then eight hours, seven, six, five and so on.

ALICE: What a curious plan!

GRYPHON: That's the reason they're called lessons: because they lessen from day to day.

ALICE (after figuring it out): Then the eleventh day must have been a Holiday?

MOCK TURTLE: Yes, indeed it was.

ALICE: But how did you manage on the twelfth?

GRYPHON: That's enough about lessons. Tell her something about the games now.

(The MOCK TURTLE draws the back of one of her flappers across her eyes. She tries to speak but is choked up with sobs. the GRYPHON slaps her on the back. Then, to ALICE:)

GRYPHON: Same as if she had a bone in her throat.

MOCK TURTLE: You may not have lived much under the sea.

ALICE: I have never...

MOCK TURTLE: And perhaps you were never introduced to a Lobster.

ALICE: I once tasted... lob- (ALICE shakes her head in the affirmative, but the GRYPHON silently warns her not to.) No. Never.

MOCK TURTLE: So you have no idea what a delightful thing a lobster quadrille is.

ALICE: No indeed. What sort of dance is it?

GRYPHON: Why first you form a line along the seashore.

MOCK TURTLE: Two lines! Seals, Turtles Salmon and so on. Then when you've cleared all the jellyfish out of the way -

GRYPHON: That generally takes some time.

(Their excitement mounts by degrees to a tremendous pitch, each trying to top the other in the matter of noise.)

MOCK TURTLE (rising): You advance twice -

GRYPHON (rising also, the GRYPHON selects two puppet LOBSTERS and gives one to the MOCK TURTLE): Each with a lobster as a partner. Change lobsters and retire, in the same order.

(The GRYPHON and MOCK TURTLE exchange their puppet LOBSTERS.)

MOCK TURTLE: Then you throw the -

GRYPHON (shouting): The lobsters!

MOCK TURTLE (screaming as both creatures throw their puppet LOBSTERS into the sea): - As far out to sea as you can see.

GRYPHON (yelling as he swims): Swim after them!

MOCK TURTLE (bellowing as she somersaults): Turn a somersault in the sea. (She is capering wildly about.)

GRYPHON (roaring as they exchange LOBSTERS again): Change lobsters again!

MOCK TURTLE: Back to land again, and - (suddenly sad and quiet) that's all the first movement.

(Both creatures sit down weak and melancholy.)

ALICE: It must be a very pretty dance.

MOCK TURTLE: Would you like to see a little of it?

ALICE: Very much indeed.

MOCK TURTLE (to the GRYPHON): Come let's try the first movement. We can do it without the lobsters, you know. (Hopefully) Which shall sing?

GRYPHON (roaring): Oh you sing, I've forgotten the words.

(The MOCK TURTLE is pleased, and begins solemnly to sing, Compared to their recent choreography, this has all the quiet dignity of a Minuet.

MOCK TURTLE (recovering): Thank you. Have you ever had turtle soup?

ALICE: No. Never.

Music Cue #19: *Mock Turtle soup*

MOCK TURTLE: Beautiful soup, so rich and green, Waiting in a hot tureen!

Who for such dainties would not stoop?

Soup of the evening, Beautiful soup!

Beau-ootiful soo-oop, Beau-ootiful soo-oop,

Soo-oop of the e-e-evening, Beautiful. beautiful soup!

GRYPHON (roaring): Chorus again!

MOCK TURTLE: Beau-ootiful soo-oop -

WHITE RABBIT (enters dressed as a Herald): The trial's beginning! The trial's beginning! The trial's beginning!

MOCK TURTLE: Beau-ootiful soo-oop,

GRYPHON (Taking ALICE by the hand hurriedly): Come on!

ALICE: Whose trial is it?

GRYPHON: Come on!

MOCK TURTLE: Beautiful soup! Who cares for fish,
Hamburg or chicken or any other dish?
Who would not Give up everything else?
For Soup of the evening, Beautiful soup!
Beau-ootiful soo-oop, Beau-ootiful soo-oop,
Soo-oop of the e-e-evening, Beautiful. beautiful soup!

Scene 4: Who Stole the Tarts

(The GRYPHON pulls ALICE to the Court Room, where the KING and QUEEN OF HEARTS are seated on a high throne with a great crowd assembled around them. Seated near the Evidence, are EAGLET and LORY, dressed as Court Attorneys. The KNAVE OF HEARTS is standing before the KING and QUEEN in chains, with two SOLDIERS guarding him. The KING wears the white wig of a Judge underneath his crown. Seated in the jury box all wearing white wigs are the DORMOUSE, the CATERPILLAR, the DODO, the CRAB, the FROG, the FISH, the three GARDENERS and the ACE OF HEARTS. The WHITE RABBIT, a trumpet in one hand and a scroll of parchment in the other stands close to the KING. The spectators, seated on benches, are the DUCHESS, the EXECUTIONER and as many Playing Cards as possible. In the very middle of the court is a table with a large dish of tarts upon it. ALICE finds herself quite hungry looking at them.)

ALICE: Oh what delicious looking tarts. I wish they'd get the trial done and hand out the refreshments.

GRYPHON: Shhhh!

ALICE: Let's see. That must be the judge because of his great wig. And that's the jury box and those creatures... I suppose they are the jurors. (She studies them for a moment, watching as they write busily on individual slate boards.) What are they doing? They can't have anything to put down yet before the trials begun?

GRYPHON (whispering): Their own names. in case they forget them before the end of the trial.

ALICE: How... amusing!

WHITE RABBIT: Silence in the court!

(The KING puts on his spectacles looking for the person who was talking. Unable to do so, he turns his attention to the jurors who look back fearfully.)

KING OF HEARTS: Write that down!

JURORS (as they write): How amusing.

JUROR 1 (to JUROR 2): How do you spell 'amusing'?

JUROR 2: Don't ask me!

KING OF HEARTS (crossing to ALICE): Young lady, just look along the road and tell me whom you see.

ALICE (breaking the fourth wall, looking at the audience): I see nobody on the road.

KING OF HEARTS: I only wish I had such eyes. To be able to see nobody, and at that distance, too. Why it's as much as I can do to see real people (gesturing to the Performers on stage) by this light. (The KING squints briefly at the stage lights above, and pulls ALICE stage left.)

ALICE: I see somebody now. But she comes very slowly and with curious gestures as she goes.

KING OF HEARTS: She's my messenger and she only does that when she's happy. Her name is Haigh-er.

ALICE (making up words that begin with an H): I love my love with a Haitch, Because she is Happy. I hate her with a Haitch, because she is... Hideous. I feed her with Ham sandwiches and Hay. Her name is Hare and she lives -

(ALICE sees the MARCH HARE in the wings.)

KING OF HEARTS: She lives on the hill. The other messenger is named Hatter. I must have two messengers, you know. One to come and one to go.

ALICE: I beg your pardon?

KING OF HEARTS: It isn't respectable to beg.

ALICE: I only meant that I didn't understand. Why one to come and one to go?

KING OF HEARTS: Didn't I tell you? I must have two, To fetch and carry. One to fetch, and one to carry.

(The MARCH HARE enters, skipping up and down, wiggling like an eel, with her loosely gloved paws waving like fans on either side. She wears a food delivery bag, hanging on a string around her neck. She is too out of breath to speak and stands in the middle of the floor making wild gesticulations at the KING, trying to take his poor messenger's mind off himself.)

KING OF HEARTS: This young lady loves you with a Haitch. (The MARCH HARE gestures wildly.) You alarm me! Give me a ham sandwich!

(The MARCH HARE reaches into her bag and pulls out a small ham sandwich which the KING devours in a second.)

KING OF HEARTS: Another!

MARCH HARE (peeking in her bag): There's nothing left but hay now.

KING OF HEARTS (faintly): Hay it is, then. (The MARCH HARE gives him some hay which he munches happily.)

ALICE: I should think throwing cold water over you would be better.

KING OF HEARTS (quite revived): I didn't say there was nothing better. I said there was nothing like it. (He pauses for that to penetrate. to the HARE:) Who did you pass on the road?

MARCH HARE: Nobody.

KING OF HEARTS: Quite right! This young lady saw him too. Nobody walks slower than you.

MARCH HARE: I do my best. I'm sure nobody walks much faster than I do.

KING OF HEARTS: He can't do that or else he'd have been here first. However, now that you have your breath, you may tell us what they're saying in the town.

MARCH HARE: I'll whisper it. (She tip toes up to the KING and prepares to whisper through his hands into the KING's ear, and shouts:) The trial ought to begin!!!!

(The KING jumps violently.)

KING OF HEARTS: You call that a whisper? If you do such a thing again, I'll have you buttered. Sit down! (HARE seats himself among the spectators.) Herold, read the accusation.

(The WHITE RABBIT blows three blasts on his trumpet, unrolls a big parchment and reads.)

WHITE RABBIT: The Queen of Hearts, she made some tarts, All on a summer day: the Knave Of Hearts, he stole those tarts, and took them quite away!

KING OF HEARTS (to the jury): Consider your verdict!

WHITE RABBIT: Not yet, Not yet! There's a great deal more to come before that.

KING OF HEARTS (clearing his throat): Call the first witness!

WHITE RABBIT (after three more trumpet blasts): First witness!

(The two SOLDIERS usher in the MAD HATTER. He holds a teacup in one hand and a piece of bread and butter in the other.)

MAD HATTER: I beg your pardon, Your Majesty, for bringing these in, but I hadn't finished my tea when I was set for.

KING OF HEARTS: You should have finished. When did you begin?

MAD HATTER: I think it was the fourteenth of March.

MARCH HARE: Fifteenth.

DORMOUSE: Sixteenth.

KING OF HEARTS: Write that down.

JURY (as they write): Fourteen plus Fifteen plus Sixteen. Let's see four plus five plus six.... Carry the one... Divide by three, etc.

KING OF HEARTS (to the HATTER): Take off your hat.

MAD HATTER: It isn't mine.

KING OF HEARTS: Stolen!

(The KING turns to the JURY, who gasp and make notes.)

MAD HATTER: I keep them to sell. I've none of my own. I'm a hatter.

(The QUEEN, Finally taking an interest in this, puts on her own spectacles, and begins to stare at the HATTER who grows fidgety.)

KING OF HEARTS: Give your evidence. and don't be nervous or I'll have you executed on the spot.

(The HATTER becomes so confused he bites a large piece out of his teacup. He spits it on the floor and it is removed by a SOLDIER.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS (the gathering of the storm): Bring me the list of the singers in the last concert.

(The HATTER trembles so violently, his hat falls off. He picks it up and turns it round and round in his hands which seems to help him a bit.)

KING OF HEARTS: Give your evidence, or I'll have you executed whether you're nervous or not.

MAD HATTER: I'm just a poor man, Your Majesty. And I hadn't I begun my tea, not over a week or so ago, and what with the bread and butter getting so thin, and the twinkling of the tea -

KING OF HEARTS: The twinkling of what?

MAD HATTER: It began with the tea.

KING OF HEARTS: Of course twinkling begins with a T. Do you take me for a dunce? Go on!

MAD HATTER: I'm just a poor man, And most things twinkled after that. The march Hare said -

MARCH HARE: I didn't!

MAD HATTER: You did!

MARCH HARE: I deny it!

KING OF HEARTS: He denies it. (The JURY writes it down.) Leave out that part. (They erase what they had written.)

MAD HATTER: Well at any rate the dormouse said - (The HATTER looks around to see if the DORMOUSE will deny this as well, but sees he is fast asleep.) After that, I cut some more bread and butter -

JURY 3: But what did the dormouse say?

MAD HATTER: I can't remember.

KING OF HEARTS: You must remember or I'll have you executed.

MAD HATTER: I'm just a poor man, Your Majesty.

KING OF HEARTS: You're just a very poor speaker. If that's all you know about it, you may stand down.

MAD HATTER: I can't go no lower. I'm on the floor as it is.

KING OF HEARTS: Then you may sit down.

(A COURTIER brings the list of singers to the QUEEN, who begins looking down the list.)

MAD HATTER: I'd rather finish my tea.

KING OF HEARTS: You may go!

(The HATTER makes a swift exit.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS: - and just take his head off outside!

KING OF HEARTS: Call the next witness!

WHITE RABBIT (after trumpeting three times): Next witness!

(It is the COOK carrying the eternal pepper box in her hand. She shakes the pepper about her as she enters causing everyone to sneeze, beginning with those nearest her and spreading out like ripples in a pool.)

KING OF HEARTS (who has not succumbed to sneezing): Give your evidence.

COOK (flicking pepper at the KING): No!

WHITE RABBIT: Your Majesty must cross examine the witness.

KING OF HEARTS (struggling to control a sneeze): Well if I must, I – uh – uh – MUST.

(He lets out a big one. This silences everyone and they sneeze again all around. When quiet is restored.)

KING OF HEARTS: What are tarts made of?

COOK (tossing pepper about): Pepper mostly.

DORMOUSE: Maple syrup.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Collar that dormouse! Behead the dormouse! Behind the dormouse! Turn that dormouse out of court! Suppress him! off With his... whiskers! Off With his tail!

Music cue #20: Courtly chaos

(There is a great tumult. The dormouse is lifted from the jury box by all the soldiers and half the spectators and thrown out Stage Left. The cook slips out unobserved. The meeting comes to order.)

KING OF HEARTS: What has become of the Witness:

TEN OF HEARTS: She has disappeared, Your Majesty.

KING OF HEARTS: Never mind. (to the JURY:) Consider your verdict!

(The JURY, Which has been completely unaware of the previous proceedings is roused by the WHITE RABBIT. As they scurry to more dignified postures, JUROR 1 points to a piece of paper that has just been dropped by the KNAVE, as he was moving to his position in front of the KING and QUEEN. The WHITE RABBIT retrieves the paper.)

WHITE RABBIT: There is new evidence, Your Majesty. This paper has just been picked up.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: What's in it?

WHITE RABBIT: I haven't opened it yet, but it seems to be a letter, written by the prisoner to... to somebody.

JUROR 2: Who is it directed to?

WHITE RABBIT: It isn't directed at all. In fact there's nothing written on the outside. (He opens it up.) It isn't a letter, after all. It's a set of verses.

JUROR 4: In the prisoner's handwriting?

WHITE RABBIT: No they're not. And that's not the strangest thing about it.

(The JURY agree, mumble to each other and scratch their heads, puzzled.)

KING OF HEARTS: He must have copied somebody else's handwriting.

(The JURY brightens up.)

KNAVE OF HEARTS: Please, Your Majesty. I didn't write it and you can't prove that I did. There's no name signed at the end.

KING OF HEARTS: If you didn't sign it, that only makes matters worse. You must have meant some kind of mischief, or else you would have signed your name like an honest man.

(ALL assembled clap and cheer at the King's words. He smiles with pride.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS: That proves his guilt of course, so Off with -

ALICE: It doesn't prove anything of the sort! Why, you don't even know what the verses are about!

KING OF HEARTS (to the WHITE RABBIT): Read them!

WHITE RABBIT (putting on his spectacles): Where shall I begin? Please, Your Majesty!

KING OF HEARTS: Begin at the beginning, and go on till you come to the end. Then stop.

WHITE RABBIT: 'If I or she should chance to be involved in this affair, he trusts to you to set them free exactly as we were.'

KING OF HEARTS: That's the most important piece of evidence we've heard yet. So now let the jury -

ALICE: I bet none of them can even explain it. I don't believe there is an atom of meaning in it.

(The GRYPHON pulls her back into her seat abruptly.)

JURY (as they write): She... doesn't ... be-lieve... there's... an atom... of... meaning... in... it.

KING OF HEARTS: If there's no meaning in it, that saves a world of trouble, you know, as we needn't try to find any. And yet, I don't know -

(He spreads out the verses on his knees and examines the page through large Binoculars handed to him by the WHITE RABBIT down whose back they have been hanging.)

KING OF HEARTS: I seem to see some meaning in, after all. 'Said I could not swim.' You can't swim, can you?

KNAVE OF HEARTS (Shaking his head): Do I look like it?

KING OF HEARTS: All right so far. 'We know it to be true.' ... That's the jury of course. 'If she should push the matter on.' That must be the Queen. 'What would become of you?' What, indeed! 'I gave her one, they gave him two.' Why that must be what he did with the tarts, you know.

ALICE: But it goes on, 'They all returned from him to you.'

KING OF HEARTS (pointing to the tarts): Why there they are! Nothing can be clearer than that. Then again... 'before she had this fit.' You never had fits, my dear, I think.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Fits? Never!

(She accentuates her statement by hurling an ink stand at the JURY.)

KING OF HEARTS: Then the words don't fit you. (The KING looks around the room with a smile expectantly, but is greeted with silence.) It's a pun! (Everybody laughs.)

ALICE (rising): It's a lie!

KING OF HEARTS: What do you know of this business?

ALICE: Nothing.

KING OF HEARTS: Nothing whatever?

ALICE: Nothing whatever.

KING OF HEARTS: That's very important.

(He turns to the JURY who, as usual, make a great business of writing it down.)

WHITE RABBIT (respectfully): Unimportant, Your Majesty, means of course.

KING OF HEARTS: Unimportant, of course, I meant. (To himself.) Important, Unimportant. Imp, ump, imp ump. Oh my! Unimportant! Yes yes to be sure! (To the JURY:) Consider your verdict.

QUEEN OF HEARTS: No, no! The sentence first; verdict afterwards.

ALICE: Stuff and nonsense! The idea of having the sentence first!

QUEEN OF HEARTS (in a rage): Hold your tongue!

ALICE: I won't!

QUEEN OF HEARTS (verging on apoplexy): Off with her head!

ALL: Off with her head!

ALICE: Oh, who cares? You're nothing but a pack of cards!

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Off with her head! Off with her head! Off with her head!

Music Cue #21: *Dreamland (Reprise)*

(The whole pack of cards rise and come towards ALICE menacingly. as the other creatures of the court continue to circle her she gives a little scream, covers her head and sinks to the ground. The cards form a line downstage blocking the view of the stage, as the scene is returned to the original setting of the play. The cards float off in the breeze of the summer day. ALICE is seen lying on the riverbank, her head in the lap of her sister LORINA, who is gently brushing away some dead leaves that had fluttered down from the trees on to her face. EDITH stands near them, holding her book.)

LORINA: Wake up Alice dear, Why, what a long sleep you've had.

ALICE: Oh Lorina. I had such a curious dream. I was sitting right here with you and then I saw this white rabbit run by and hop down a rabbit hole. I really didn't think too much about it except the rabbit was wearing a waistcoat. So I jumped down the hole after him.

EDITH: Did the rabbit speak? Alice, what did he say?

ALICE: Yes, my dear Edith. He pulled out a pocket watch and said, 'Oh dear, oh dear, I shall be too late.'

LORINA: It was certainly a curious dream, but it's getting late. Come on, now.

(LORINA picks up her book, smooths out her dress and begins to exit. EDITH is an eager ear for ALICE.)

ALICE: Down, down, down, I fell. I began to think the whole would never come to an end when suddenly, bump! I landed on a heap of sticks and shavings and the fall was over.

EDITH: But did the rabbit speak? What did he say?

ALICE: I was unhurt after the long fall, and jumped to my feet directly. Before me was another long passage and the White Rabbit was still in sight hurrying down it. There was not a moment to be lost. Away went Alice like the wind and just heard the rabbit say as it turned a corner, 'Oh my ears and whiskers. how late it's getting.'

EDITH: I knew it! Tell me more, Alice.

ALICE: Well, it is a magical Wonderland full of woodland creatures, who all converse in our Mother tongue.

EDITH: Who else did you speak with Alice?

ALICE: I met a very nice Caterpillar, a Gryphon, a Mouse and a Mock Turtle...

EDITH: A real Gryphon?

ALICE: I also met you and Lorina there and there were was a Queen who was always...

EDITH: We were in Wonderland?

LORINA: As what sort of creatures?

ALICE: The most beautiful pair of Birds you will ever see: a baby Eagle and a Lory. We danced together and had a race on the beach.

LORINA: A Lory bird in Wonderland?

EDITH: Did I talk with the Gryphon?

ALICE: I think so. You were complaining about being wet. 'Ugh,' you said, and it was Gryphon who suggested the Caucus race to help us dry off.

LORINA: Nonsense, a Caucus race certainly wouldn't help us get dry.

EDITH: Right, a Caucus is not a real race with a start and finish line.

LORINA: It's a meeting for adults which selects members of a political party.

EDITH: They call it running for elected office, but it requires no physical running.

ALICE: We just ran around in circles without rules or any tangible finish line.

LORINA: Who won the Wonderland Caucus?

ALICE: The Dodo Bird announced that, 'Everybody has won and all must have prizes.'

LORINA and EDITH: Classic.

LORINA: What were the prizes?

ALICE: Hard candy suckers. Dodo announced that I must be the prize giver.

EDITH: And you had your comfits, which you gave to everyone. So, what was your prize?

ALICE: (reaches in her pocket and pulling out a thimble) Dodo had no prizes, so he re-gifted a thimble.

Blackout.

Music cue #21: Curtain Call

(The performers wear and/or carry their heads, masks and puppets.)