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Cast of Characters

ALICE: A curious thirteen-year-old girl.

An ensemble of four actors play all other roles, including:

WOMAN: The mothers and queens of Alice's imagination.

MAN ONE: Young. Mainly Cat, a spry, sly Victorian bad boy.

MAN TWO: A shapeshifter: from the White Rabbit to the Red Queen. A woman could play all these roles.

MAN THREE: Mock Turtle, Humpty Dumpty, and other lost gentlemen.

OR, the parts may be divided by character, creating up to 46 speaking roles, as follows:

Female

ALICE

MOTHER

QUEEN OF HEARTS

WHITE

QUEEN/PEDDLER

Male

PHOTOGRAPHER

CAT

MOCK TURTLE

WHITE KING

HUMPTY DUMPTY

JABBERWOCKY

WHITE KNIGHT

Male or Female

WHITE RABBIT

MOUSE

LORY

DUCK

DODO

DUCHESS

COOK

HATTER/ MOCK TURTLE

DORMOUSE

REPORTER

RED QUEEN

TRAIN GUARD

TWEEDLE DUM

TWEEDLE DEE

NARRATORS (4)

SUBJECTS (4)

NEIGHBORS (3)

JURORS (4)

TRAIN RIDERS (3)

ROSE

LILY

VIOLET

Dialogue Note

Dialogue is listed first by the actor who would play that role in an ensemble, then by the character—i.e.: MAN ONE (CAT). If no character name is listed, then the actor is speaking as a narrator—i.e.: MAN THREE.

Setting

PART ONE begins indoors on a spring day in the Real World. It quickly descends to Wonderland, a world of shifting scale and shape where walls move, doors spin, and little girls change size.

PART TWO begins in the autumn. Looking Glass World is more inversion than fantasy, a place of fleeting memories and outgrown childhood dreams.

Music

Once you have obtained a licensing agreement from Playscripts to perform this play, you will also have permission to use the vocal score found at the end of this script.

Additional orchestral arrangements and incidental music from the original production are also available; permission and materials must be obtained separately from Gina Leishman c/o Morgan Jenness, Abrams Artists Agency, 275 Seventh Ave., 26th Floor, New York, NY 10001 (phone: 646-486-4600; fax: 646-486-2358; email: morgan.jenness@abramsart.com).

Acknowledgments

ALICE: Tales of a Curious Girl was originally commissioned and produced by the Dallas Theater Center (Richard Hamburger, Artistic Director, Edith Love, Managing Director), where it received an AT&T OnStage Award for New Plays. Jonathan Moscone directed.

Sets were by Riccardo Hernandez, costumes by Katherine B. Roth, lights by Christopher Akerlind, music composed by Gina Leishman. Preston Lane was the dramaturg; Jessica Berlin was the stage manager. The cast was as follows:

ALICE	Sarah "Squid" Lord
MAN 1	Khary Payton
MAN 2	Raphael Parry
MAN 3	Bruce DuBose
WOMAN	Lisa Lee Schmidt

ALICE: TALES OF A CURIOUS GIRL

by Karen Hartman

freely adapted from Lewis Carroll
songs composed by Gina Leishman
co-conceived and developed with Jonathan Moscone

PART ONE(derland)

(Darkness.)

ALL BUT ALICE. One: Alice glides from childhood.

(The flash of an old camera.)

(ALICE sits alone inside a fake backdrop of a boat on a river. She wears a small girl's dress and holds an oar. She is having her photo taken.)

(Other actors remain in shadow.)

ALICE. Whoosh. Whoosh.

WOMAN (MOTHER). You needn't rush.

ALICE. Whoosh.

WOMAN (MOTHER). Hush.

MAN TWO (PHOTOGRAPHER). Hold.

(ALICE holds.)

Watch the bunny.

ALICE. Whoosh. Whoosh.

WOMAN (MOTHER). Consider each thing you have learnt. A mind full of memory will never be bored. Consider the spelling of letters. The winding of clocks. Consider your talents.

ALICE. *(Sings:)*

Imagination, multiplication, imitation too.

Dreaming of places, fitting through spaces, searching book—

WOMAN (MOTHER). A lady never considers out loud.

ALICE. How does that take my picture?

MEN. Hold.

MAN TWO (PHOTOGRAPHER). Watch the bunny.

WOMAN (MOTHER). Consider recording last year. May twenty-one.

ALICE. Picnic.

WOMAN (MOTHER). March fourteen.

ALICE. Tea.

WOMAN (MOTHER). What scone?

ALICE. Currant.

WOMAN (MOTHER). What jam?

ALICE. —

WOMAN (MOTHER). Consider remembering.

(MOTHER retreats into darkness.)

ALICE. Mother?

MEN. HOLD.

MAN THREE. A scone is formed by equal parts flour and fat crushed into unshaped lumps. With adequate pressure, time, and heat, the damp mass becomes a dainty and delicious treat.

MAN TWO / MAN THREE. Girls are the same way.

ALICE. Mother?

MAN TWO (PHOTOGRAPHER). Watch the bunny.

(MAN ONE pops up from the fake water surrounding the boat. He is soaking wet.)

MAN ONE. Aliccce.

(He beckons. ALICE watches in amazement. He suddenly ducks under with a SPLASH, spraying ALICE with real water.)

ALICE. Wet.

What's your rush?

(Standing on the bow of the boat.)

What's the rush?

HERE I GOOOOOO!

(ALICE swan-dives off the boat.)

ALL BUT ALICE. Alice headfirst in a hole.

(ALICE is suspended upside-down.)

ALICE. Wrong side up.

Right side under.

Going down.

Consider science, Alice.

(Sings:)

If I drop a rock, a shoe, a curl

It falls as fast as any girl

A house a horse a maple tree

Will fall at the same speed as me.

Identically.

I'd like a chance to practice this lesson.

Only I have nothing to drop but my hair my clothes or my wits.

And I may need all of the above at the bottom.

Yes, I may need all of the above

down below.

Where are we now, Alice?

Oh, probably acceleration over rate times time.

Rate under speed times time.

YUM!

(She grabs a floating pot of jam.)

Lucky! Even if I drop this jampot it will fall at the same rate as me
and I can sticky lick all the way to the bottom.

It will smash to pieces at just the same moment as—

Force equals mass times speed.

Speed equals ten times time.

Alice equals nothing but a pot of jam.

(She sticks her finger in the jampot.)

Empty.

Alice is cooked.

ALL BUT ALICE. And A-THUMP.

(Wonderland. New shapes and colors. The photo backdrop is gone.)

MAN TWO. More gently than expected, Alice lands someplace new.

(He becomes the WHITE RABBIT.)

Hurry child.

ALICE. What's the rush?

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). The faster we hop, the sooner we're there.

ALICE. Where are you going?

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Queen. Don't be late.

(He disappears through a revolving door upstage. As it spins, we glimpse a lush and magical Garden. When the door stops spinning, it appears to be very tiny and above ALICE's head.)

ALICE. What's in there?

MAN ONE. Curious Alice considers the garden. Wonderful flowers, new fruits, and rainbows through the air.

ALICE. Wish I could fit through the door...

MAN THREE. ...thought Alice, when she spied a tiny bottle marked—

WOMAN. *(As water:)* Drink me.

ALICE. Are you poison?

WOMAN. Drink me.

ALICE. It's all very well to say "drink me," but Alice is not going to do *that* in a hurry. Alice is a good reader and has already read several stories about children—

MEN. Who got burnt, and eaten by beasts, and other unfortunate things—

ALICE. All because they would not remember the rules.

MEN. Such as?

ALICE. A red poker will burn, a deep cut will bleed, and if you drink from a bottle marked—

WOMAN. Drink me and see.

ALICE. See what?

(ALICE drinks and drinks.)

Shutting like a telescope. Curious.

(She becomes tiny, perhaps a doll.)

Now I can fit!

(The doll tries to leap up to the garden door.)

ALL BUT ALICE. Poor Alice. Farther than ever from that door.

ALICE. Don't be a baby Alice. Don't be cross. You are small enough for the garden but now you can't reach. Don't be disappointed Alice.

ALL. Don't cry.

ALICE. Has anyone got a way up?

WOMAN / MAN TWO / MAN THREE. ...wondered Alice, when...

MAN ONE. *(As jampot:)* Eat me.

(DOLL ALICE jumps inside the pot of jam.)

ALICE. Yum.

(An enormous HEAD OF ALICE drops down. Alice's Big Voice is the Woman, live or amplified.)

ALICE'S BIG VOICE. DEAR LITTLE ALICE!

(A letter drops down. ALICE reads what Big Alice has written.)

Of all the strange things I saw, this I remembered. Mild eyes, kind smile, sun setting in his thin hair. I took it like a picture. Him I remembered. White Knight.

ALICE. Night is black. Who wrote this?

MAN ONE. And with all the change ahead, falling and rising and corresponding with her own parts, Alice began to cry.

ALICE. Did not!

ALICE'S BIG VOICE. Him I remembered.

(BIG ALICE weeps. Large drops of water fall from above, possibly landing on ALICE.)

ALL BUT ALICE. *(Sing:)*
You ought to be ashamed
A great girl like you
Crying in this way.
Stop this moment I tell you.
You ought to be ashamed.
But she went on all the same.
Ashamed.

ALICE. Not crying.

MAN TWO. As she said those words her foot slipped, and in another moment—

MAN TWO / MAN THREE. Splash! She was up to her chin in saltwater.

ALICE. Where is the bathing machine? I seem to have lost my rope.

WOMAN. She soon realized that this was the pool of tears she had wept as a big, big girl.

ALICE. The salt sea of Alice.

(The water has risen. Everyone swims.)

MAN THREE (MOUSE). I wish you hadn't cried so much.

MAN TWO (DODO). Now we shall all be punished.

MAN ONE (DUCK). Drowned in your tears.

ALICE. Mine?

WOMAN (LORY). STROKE. STROKE. Or we'll never get to shore.

ALL BUT ALICE. STROKE. STROKE.

ALICE. I must have shrunk to the size of a mouse. Hello! Are you a mouse?

MAN THREE (MOUSE). Can't you tell by my long tale?

ALICE. I don't see a tail.

MAN THREE (MOUSE). That's because I haven't told it.

ALICE. In science Teacher split a mouse apart and we watched it digest even after Teacher chopped off its head.

(Silence. The MOUSE is terrified.)

MAN THREE (MOUSE). DON'T CHOP MY HEAD!

ALICE. Did I say something strange?

WOMAN (LORY). STROKE! STROKE. Out of the sea!

(All pull themselves to shore. A change in mood. Spirited meeting and greeting.)

ALICE. How do you do? Alice.

WOMAN (LORY). Lory.

ALICE. Alice.

MAN ONE (DUCK). Duck.

ALICE. Alice.

MAN TWO (DODO). Dodo.

ALICE. Alice.

MAN THREE (MOUSE). Mouse.

ALICE. What wonderful game can we play?

ALL BUT ALICE. "Get dry."

ALICE. Goody.

WOMAN (LORY). Who's got the driest?

MAN TWO (DODO). I do.

What is often called Victorian is in truth characteristic of this later period, an age as distinct from the 1860s as from the 1960s. It was policed by a coalition of evangelicals and progressives—

MAN ONE. (*Whisper—the beckoning voice of the prologue:*) ALLIC-
CCE.

ALICE. Did you speak?

MAN ONE (DUCK). No.

MAN TWO (DODO). —and some who were both. Those at Oxford or Eastbourne who had regarded the Wonderland writer's interest in children and his photographic enthusiasms as innocent, or at worst eccentric, twenty years before would have done so no longer.

How are you now my dear?

ALICE. Wet as ever.

MAN ONE / MAN THREE. Said Alice in a melancholy tone.

MAN TWO (DODO). But that's the driest bit I know.

(Everyone laughs hysterically except ALICE.)

ALICE. Explain the joke. Explain the joke.

WOMAN (LORY). Let's dry off in a race. Lory lory lory lory!

MAN ONE (DUCK). Duck duck duck!

MAN TWO (DODO). Dodo dodo!

MAN THREE (MOUSE). Mouse.

ALICE. Alice?

(Everyone runs in a circle chanting his or her own name. This is the race. ALICE watches, bewildered. Soon everyone gets tired and falls in a heap at ALICE's feet.)

ALICE. Who won?

MAN TWO (DODO). WE ALL WON!

WOMAN (LORY). And now you must give us treats.

ALL BUT ALICE. Treats! Treats! Treats!

ALICE. It's not my job to give treats. I'm a child.

ALL BUT ALICE. Treats! Treats! Treats!

ALICE. I came with nothing but my wits and an empty pot of jam.

MAN ONE (DUCK). Then what shall be our reward?

ALICE. *(Not having a reward:)* Please sir, wrap up your tale.

MAN THREE (MOUSE). Fury and the Mouse. My own song of woe.

(He sings with passion.)

MAN THREE (MOUSE).

***FURY SAID TO A MOUSE THAT HE MET IN THE HOUSE
“LET US BOTH GO TO LAW: I WILL PROSECUTE YOU.”***

***“Come I’ll take no denial; we must have the trial
For really this morning I’ve nothing to do.”
This morning I’ve nothing to do.***

*Said the mouse to the cur, “Such a trial dear sir
with no jury or judge would be
wasting our breath.”*

*“I’ll be judge I’ll be jury,”
said cunning old Fury:*

*“I’ll try the whole cause
and condemn
you to death.”*

*I’ll try and
condemn
you to
death.*

WOMAN (LORY). And you called him a mouse with no tail.

ALICE. Your tale's so long I could hack it off and wind it round my neck!

(Everyone stares at ALICE for a horrible moment.)

Ha ha?

(All turn their backs on her and begin to walk away.)

I APOLOGIZE.

WOMAN (LORY). Let this be a lesson to you.

ALICE. Never make jokes?

MAN TWO (DODO). Never lose your temper.

(ALICE is left alone.)

ALICE. I did NOT lose my temper. I lost my tongue. I lost my way. I can't remember a single day of last year. Did I have a boat? Alice wondered. And if so, where was I rowing? And if not, what did I have? Alice began to cry.

No.

Alice began to skip merrily in circles. Alice remembered her manners. Alice remembered Up Top. Hello? HELLOOO?

Alice began to cry.

(MAN TWO enters as the WHITE RABBIT.)

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Lost and late. Lost and late. She'll split me head from tail. She'll have me sauced and sautéed.

ALICE. Hello!

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Lost and late.

ALICE. For what?

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). The Queen's party. An exclusive affair to which I've been invited. Included, you know. Or will know, once you become the sort of person that people include.

ALICE. A queen is just a mother with a crown.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). HUSH MARY.

ALICE. Alice.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). You stroll about like a troubadour while I've mislaid the very elements of my outfit! Run home and

fetch them, gloves and a fan, or I'm a roast rabbit and YOU'RE FIRED.

(He rushes away.)

ALICE. Curious, thinks Alice.

He mistakes me for a Mary. A little girl for a lady-in-waiting.

Alice checks for littleness.

Is the lady-in still waiting?

Alice isn't sure what to measure.

How long how wide how round?

Curious.

I've never seen a rabbit's house.

(ALICE enters the house.)

ALL BUT ALICE. Alice indoors.

ALICE. It must be tiny to fit a rabbit. And yet his things are just my size.

(ALICE puts on the gloves and fans herself with the fan.)

Alice is a Lady. Alice is a Queen.

(British accent.)

HELLOO. It is I, Alice. Queen of Treats.

MAN ONE. Just then, Alice's eye fell on a bottle.

MAN ONE / ALICE. Something always happens when I drink.

(ALICE gulps down the bottle.)

ALL BUT ALICE. She began to grow.

ALICE. Finally.

ALL BUT ALICE. And grow.

MAN ONE. Her head hit the ceiling. She stooped.

ALICE. That's plenty, thank you.

WOMAN. But it was too late. She went on growing, and growing, and very soon had to kneel down on the floor.

MAN TWO. In another minute there was not even room for this, and she tried lying down with an elbow in the corner and an arm around her head.

ALL BUT ALICE. Still Alice grew.

MAN ONE. She stuck her arm out the window and a foot up the chimney and said:

ALICE. What will become of me?

(ALICE is a huge inside a tiny house. She tries to get comfortable. She sings.)

*It was much pleasanter at home
Where I wasn't growing larger and smaller
Where I wasn't ordered by a rabbit
Where I only had to be still.*

*I almost wish I hadn't jumped down.
And yet
And yet
It's rather curious
This sort of life.
I wonder what happened to me.
I wonder what happened to me.*

*There ought to be a book about me
And when I grow up I'll write it
But I'm grown up now
At least there's no room to grow anymore
Not here.*

*I wish I hadn't jumped down.
And yet
And yet
It's rather curious
This sort of life.
I wonder what happened to me.*

*At least I won't get older
At least I won't get ugly
I've gone as far as I can grow here
No more room.*

*I wish I hadn't jumped down
And yet
And yet
It's curious
this life.
I wonder what happened—*

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). MARY, GET THOSE GLOVES THIS MINUTE!

ALICE. Oh, so sorry.

(ALICE's voice booms. The company becomes WHITE RABBIT's nosy neighbors.)

WOMAN (NEIGHBOR ONE). Beware the monster inside.

MAN THREE (NEIGHBOR TWO). Combat the beast in your bed.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). One minute she's a Mary now she's a merchant ship.

MAN ONE (NEIGHBOR THREE). She is splitting your walls.

WOMAN (NEIGHBOR ONE). Ripping the seams of your gloves. Trampling your fan.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). GET YOUR HAMMY HANDS OFF MY HOME!

(ALICE dangles a hand. It casts a huge shadow.)

ALICE. I'm really sorry. I was looking for the right set of gloves and saw liquid and I drank. I just drank. I'm really sorry. You have such nice things.

WOMAN (NEIGHBOR ONE). Burn her.

MAN THREE (NEIGHBOR TWO). Stone her.

ALL BUT ALICE. Set her right.

WOMAN (NEIGHBOR ONE). Burn her.

MAN THREE (NEIGHBOR TWO). Stone her.

ALL BUT ALICE. Set her right.

WOMAN (NEIGHBOR ONE). Gentlemen, UNITE!!!

ALL BUT ALICE. The creatures begin to pelt Alice with things.

WOMAN (NEIGHBOR ONE). Tools.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Shoes.

MAN THREE (NEIGHBOR TWO). A small cake.

ALICE. Don't hurt me. Please I'm just a little—
DON'T MAKE ME KICK!

(Her voice booms and resounds. The creatures scatter.)

Now, getting back to size.

Alice discovers the cake. She eats it and shrinks right down.

Now I ought to eat something to become myself again.

The question remains,

ALL. who is that?

(MAN ONE as CAT is revealed up high, smoking in a strange manner.)

MAN ONE (CAT). Who are you?

ALICE. I knew who I was in the morning, but I changed.

MAN ONE (CAT). Explain yourself.

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

MAN ONE (CAT). I don't see.

ALICE. I'm sorry. I mean, being so many different sizes is very confusing.

MAN ONE (CAT). No it isn't.

ALICE. Sorry?

MAN ONE (CAT). You use that word a lot.

ALICE. Sorry. Oh. Sorry. Oh, sorry.

MAN ONE (CAT). You are a very. little. girl.

ALICE. What happens when you smoke?

MAN ONE (CAT). Taller and smaller.

ALICE. Just like me.

MAN ONE (CAT). We're a lot alike, Alice. Only you're so far down.

(ALICE *climbs.*)

Breathe like you mean it.

(ALICE *smokes.*)

ALICE. Do you think at my age it is right?

MAN ONE (CAT). Wrong from beginning to end.

ALICE. More please.

MAN ONE (CAT). What size do you want to be?

ALICE. I don't like changing so often you know.

MAN ONE (CAT). I *don't* know.

ALICE. I mean... it's confusing. To me.

MAN ONE (CAT). Who are you?

ALICE. Maybe you should tell me... who *you* are.

MAN ONE (CAT). Who *I* am?

ALICE. Yes.

MAN ONE (CAT). I forgot.

(ALICE and MAN ONE *giggle.*)

ALICE. And I think I forgot my lessons.

MAN ONE (CAT). Here's one:
Keep your temper.

ALICE. Everyone says that.

MAN ONE (CAT). I mean *keep* that temper. It's all you've got.

ALICE. Oh.

MAN ONE (CAT). And Alice... Remember which side to chew.

(He throws her a mushroom and disappears.)

ALICE. What does it do?

(She nibbles a piece.)

MAN ONE (CAT).

Taller and smaller.

Taller and smaller.

Taller and—

MAN THREE. Bang! Alice's face hit the floor. Her chin was pressed so close to her foot that there was hardly room to open her mouth—

WOMAN. Changes in the body occur over time.

MAN THREE. —but she did it at last, and managed to swallow a morsel of the left-hand bit.

ALICE. My head's free at last!

MAN TWO. Said Alice in a tone of delight—

MAN THREE. Which changed to alarm in another moment.

ALICE. Shoulders! Shoulders? All I can see is my neck. Are those the tops of trees?

(The company swirls around ALICE like birds in a nightmare.)

ALL BUT ALICE (BIRDS). Serrrrpennnt.

ALICE. Where?

ALL BUT ALICE (BIRDS). Serrrrpennnt.

ALICE. No.

WOMAN (BIRD). After my eggs.

ALICE. I hate eggs.

WOMAN (BIRD). But you eat them.

ALICE. Yes.

ALL BUT ALICE (BIRDS). Then you're a serrrrpennnt. Yesssss Alicccce.

(ALICE eats the mushroom carefully. As she shrinks, the birds dissipate.)

ALICE. *(Eating one side, then the other:)*

Smaller. Taller. Smaller. Taller.

Ahh. Just my own size.

(ALICE is in front of a door. A tremendous clattering of pots, pans and screams from the other side. She knocks on the door. CAT suddenly appears, lounging against the doorframe.)

MAN ONE (CAT). There's no use in knocking for two reasons. First: I'm on the same side of the door as you. And second: They're making so much noise inside that no one could possibly hear you.

ALICE. Hello again...?

MAN ONE (CAT). Cat. More lessons, Alice?

ALICE. How do I get in?

MAN ONE (CAT). There might be some sense in your knocking if we had the door between us. For instance, if you were trapped inside you could knock and I might let you out.

ALICE. How am I to get in?

MAN ONE (CAT). Are you to get in at all? That's the real question.

ALICE. One. More. Door.

(ALICE pushes past CAT and shoves hard on the door. It gives way to reveal the DUCHESS (MAN TWO) feeding a baby from a tabasco bottle while the COOK (WOMAN) grinds pepper into a cauldron from an enormous pepper mill. A mood of diabolical glee.)

MAN TWO (DUCHESS). Baby want more pepper?

WOMAN (COOK). He's going to like this soup. Chokey choke choke.

MAN TWO (DUCHESS). Baby like pepper soup.

WOMAN (COOK). Sneezey wheeze sneeze.

(The baby howls.)

MAN TWO (DUCHESS). Drinky pink stink.

ALICE. He doesn't like that.

MAN TWO (DUCHESS). Baby want saucey waucey in his eye yi yi?

WOMAN (COOK). Yessy yes mess.

MAN TWO (DUCHESS). Opee wope wope!

(DUCHESS pours tabasco in the baby's eye. Terrible howling. DUCHESS and COOK coo.)

MAN TWO / WOMAN ONE (DUCHESS / COOK). Yummy scum bum.

ALICE. You are a terrible mother. Both of you.

WOMAN (COOK). Little missy priss piss.

MAN TWO (DUCHESS). Watch this!

(He conks the baby on the head with the bottle. Baby screams. COOK and DUCHESS howl with laughter.)

WOMAN (COOK). Baby like a little conky wonk?

ALICE. That's not how to raise a child!

(The violence continues as ALICE recites.)

At two a boy is but a beast
 With body first and conscience least
 At four with proper care he may
 Sometimes rebel sometimes obey
 By six the child is sent to school
 To learn each day a different rule
 A well scrubbed boy, not heard but seen
 Shall grace a home till age eighteen
 When with strong guidance he has grown
 To seek a family of his own.

(Pause. COOK and DUCHESS stare at ALICE.)

WOMAN / MAN TWO (COOK / DUCHESS). You are a very. lit-
 tle. girl.

(DUCHESS begins to sing to the baby. COOK pelts the DUCHESS with kitchen appliances.)

MAN TWO (DUCHESS).

*Speak roughly to your little boy
And beat him when he sneezes:
He only does it to annoy
Because he knows it teases.*

WOMAN (COOK). *Wow wow wow.*

ALICE. *AT TWO A BOY IS BUT A BEAST—*

MAN TWO (DUCHESS). **CHOP OFF ITS HEAD!**

(The danger escalates.)

MAN TWO (DUCHESS).

*I speak severely to my boy
I beat him when he sneezes
For he can thoroughly enjoy
The pepper when he pleases.*

WOMAN (COOK). *Wow wow wow.*

(In a burst of heroics ALICE yanks the child away.)

ALICE. **I MUST SAVE THIS CHILD!**

MAN TWO (DUCHESS). Fine. Let him milk you a while.

(ALICE begins to run with the baby.)

ALICE. Poor baby suffering so much terrible terrible beatings and pepper and teasing and—

(Baby grunts.)

Don't grunt.

(ALICE continues to run. The kitchen disappears. The baby grunts more and more loudly.)

I know it's been very difficult for you. Treated like a beast. But it will be different for us now: teatime and birthdays and milk.

Stop grunting. You sound like a pig.

(She checks under the blanket. It is a pig. ALICE squeals.)

Ugh! Ohh! Eew!
I saved a PIG.

(The pig runs away.)

At least he'll be a good-looking pig. He was showing signs of becoming such an ugly child.

(CAT blocks her path.)

MAN ONE (CAT). Who's an ugly child?

ALICE. Hello again.
Which way do I go?

MAN ONE (CAT). That depends on where you want to get to.

ALICE. I don't care—

MAN ONE (CAT). Then it doesn't matter.

ALICE. —as long as it's not here.

MAN ONE (CAT). If you walk far enough, you'll go a long way.

ALICE. Thanks.

MAN ONE (CAT). Ready to snap, little Alice?

ALICE. Who else lives here?

MAN ONE (CAT). A Hatter, a Hare. Visit whomever you like; they're all mad.

ALICE. But I don't want to meet mad people.

MAN ONE (CAT). Oh, we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad.

ALICE. How do you know?

MAN ONE (CAT). Why else would you come down?

(He disappears. ALICE begins to walk. She arrives at the home of the Hatter. CAT reappears and blocks her way.)

MAN ONE (CAT). What happened to your baby?

ALICE. He turned into a pig.

MAN ONE (CAT). Thought he might.
There's the Mad Hatter's house.

ALICE. It's big.

MAN ONE (CAT). Eat some mushroom.

(ALICE does.)

MAN ONE. Alice raised herself to two feet high; even then she walked rather timidly, saying:

ALICE / MAN ONE. What if we are all mad after all!

(CAT remains lounging and watching. An enormous table appears. DORMOUSE (WOMAN) is asleep on the table. RABBIT (MAN TWO) and HATTER (MAN THREE) use her body as a cushion, resting elbows on her as they talk. All wear party hats. ALICE surveys the scene.)

ALICE. The party looks very uncomfortable for the Dormouse...

MAN ONE. —thought Alice—

ALICE / MAN ONE. ...only as she's asleep, I suppose she doesn't mind.

MAN TWO / MAN THREE (WHITE RABBIT / HATTER). No room! NO ROOM!

ALICE. There's plenty of room!

(ALICE sits at the table.)

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Have some cake.

ALICE. Thank you. I haven't eaten since—

MAN ONE. Alice hadn't eaten since she was a little girl. All that growing was giving her an appetite.

ALICE. I don't see any cake.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). There is none.

ALICE. It's rude to offer what you don't have.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). It's rude to sit with no invitation.

ALICE. I thought there was room. Look at all the plates.

MAN THREE (HATTER). Who combs your hair, dear? Who trims your dress? He or she lacks taste.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Taste this cake.

ALICE. There is none.

MAN ONE. Alice began to get angry.

ALICE. She DID NOT!

MAN THREE (HATTER). Say what you mean.

ALICE. I do. I mean what I say. It's the same thing.

MAN THREE (HATTER). Ohhh? You may as well say that "I see what I eat," is the same as "I eat what I see."

ALICE. I would like to eat something.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Or "I like what I get" is the same as "I get what I like."

WOMAN (DORMOUSE). (*Rising sleepily:*) Or "I breathe when I sleep" is the same as "I sleep when I breathe."

MAN TWO / MAN THREE (WHITE RABBIT / HATTER). (*Pushing the DORMOUSE back down:*) It is the same, with you.

ALICE. Why does she sleep?

MAN THREE (HATTER). So she can dream.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Watch this.

(He slaps the DORMOUSE.)

WOMAN (DORMOUSE). (*Rising up, speaking, then falling down.*) I agree completely.

(Again: slap, rise, speak, fall.)

Just as you say.

(One more time.)

Off with his head!

(HATTER covers his ears in terror.)

MAN THREE (HATTER). SWITCH!

(Everyone switches seats except the DORMOUSE.)

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). He hates that expression.

ALICE. What expression?

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). (*Whisper:*)

“O” with his “H.”

It reminds him of what he does at night.

MAN THREE (HATTER). I am a HATTER.

ALICE. What does he do?

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). You’ll see.

WOMAN (DORMOUSE). (*Rising, speaking, falling:*)

And the queen says, OFF WITH HIS HEAD.

MAN THREE (HATTER). SWITCH!

(All switch seats.)

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Put on a hat.

(ALICE does.)

Have more cake.

ALICE. I haven’t had any cake so I can’t have more.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). You mean you can’t have less. It’s easy to have more than nothing.

ALICE. What does he do?

MAN THREE (HATTER). I WON’T WEAR THE COSTUME.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). He works for the Queen.

ALICE. That’s not so bad.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). A Queen’s dress is fashion. A Queen’s face is beauty. A Queen’s wish is law.

MAN THREE (HATTER). I USED TO BE REAL.

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Yes. And so were you before you came down,

(All look at ALICE.)

ALL BUT ALICE. ...Alice.

ALICE. SWITCH!

(The biggest transition yet. Musical fanfare heralds a shift to the Queen's Party.)

ALL BUT ALICE. THE QUEEN! THE QUEEN!

MAN ONE. Alice watched a procession of every creature she had met so far in Wonderland, and several she had not.

MAN TWO. LIE FLAT FOR THE QUEEN!

(All but ALICE lie face-down.)

ALICE. Alice could not remember ever having heard of such a rule at processions, and besides, what would be the use of a procession if people had to lie flat on their faces so they couldn't see it? Alice stood where she was, and waited.

And watched.

Alice never saw a grown-up party before.

(A tango begins: rhythmic and glamorous.)

ALL BUT ALICE (SUBJECTS).

*The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.*

WOMAN.

*The moon was shining sulkily
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done—
It's very rude of him, she said
To come and spoil the fun.*

MAN TWO / MAN THREE.

*The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand:
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
If this were only cleared away,
They said, it would be grand.*

ALL BUT ALICE. *Sand, sand, sand keeps the beach from being grand.*

(ALICE joins the dance.)

ALL BUT ALICE.

*The time has come, the Walrus said
To talk of many things:
Of shoes and ships and sealing wax
Of cabbages and kings
Of why the sea is boiling hot
And whether pigs have wings.*

ALICE. Mine didn't. He had a snout though.

(The QUEEN OF HEARTS appears way up high.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Off with your heads.

ALL BUT ALICE. Yes, your majesty.

(They exit. The QUEEN OF HEARTS is an enormous playing card puppet.)

ALICE. Where are they going?

QUEEN OF HEARTS. To chop each other crown from stalk.

ALICE. Why?

QUEEN OF HEARTS. It is the command of Her Highness Myself.

ALICE. Is that what it means to be Queen?

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Absolute power. Just you wait.

(MAN ONE, MAN TWO, and WOMAN sneak back on, pretending to be different people.)

Are they chopped?

ALL BUT ALICE. *(Disguised voices:)* CLEAN OFF.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Good. Now get to your places and prepare for the entertainment.

(All sit facing upstage.)

MAN ONE (CAT). Alice. How do you like the Queen?

ALICE. Not at all. She's extremely... *(Looking up at the QUEEN, who peers down at ALICE:)* Potent.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. With whom are you conversing, Alice?

ALICE. A friend of mine.

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

MAN ONE (CAT). It would rather not.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Don't be impertinent. And don't look at me like that.

MAN ONE (CAT). I was looking at Alice.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. OFF WITH ITS HEAD!

MAN ONE (CAT). I'll fetch the executioner myself.

ALICE. No!

(CAT turns and winks at ALICE. He exits.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Absolute power.

(CAT walks back on, pretending to be someone else.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Chopped?

MAN ONE (CAT). Tip from tail.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Absolute power. ON WITH THE SHOW!!!

MAN THREE (MOCK TURTLE). *(Offstage:)* I don't want to do it anymore.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Announce him. ANNOUNCE HIM.

MAN TWO. *(An old-fashioned announcer's voice:)* And now that family favorite, the silver star who lives on in our hearts, yes gentlemen, yes ladies, it's the MOCK TURTLE.

(All watch. MAN THREE is revealed as the old, wistful HATTER playing the MOCK TURTLE. He slowly winds a victrola, then sings along with a recording of his young voice.)

MAN THREE (MOCK TURTLE). *(On victrola and live:)*

Beautiful Soup, so rich and green

Waiting in a hot tureen

Who for such dainties would not stoop?

Soup of the evening, beautiful Soup!

Soup of the evening, beautiful Soup!

Beautiful soup!

Beautiful soup!

One night of beautiful soup.

(Spoken to ALICE:)

I used to be real.

(A moment of silence.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS. We are pleased for now. Your head remains another night. Applause!

(MOCK TURTLE is relieved. All applaud except ALICE.)

Applause is how we show our approval.

ALICE. But I don't approve.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. CURTAIN.

(Lights out on MOCK TURTLE.)

ORDER IN THE COURT.

(The company instantly assumes a formal court structure. Each wears a playing-card mask.)

ALICE. Ooh! Alice had never been in a court of justice before, but she had read about them in books, and was pleased to find that she knew the names of nearly everything there.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. A judge.

ALL BUT ALICE (JURY). A jury.

MAN ONE (JUROR ONE). A crime.

MAN TWO (JUROR TWO). In the very middle of the court was a table with a large dish of tarts.

ALICE. They looked so good that it made Alice hungry. I wish they'd get the trial done and hand round the refreshments.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Defend yourself.

ALICE. Oh good please do, so I can eat.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. An announcement of the charges.

WOMAN (JUROR THREE). One count weeping.

MAN ONE (JUROR ONE). Two counts escaping.

MAN TWO (JUROR TWO). Down the hole and through the glass.

MAN THREE (JUROR FOUR). For being nowhere to be found.

ALL BUT ALICE (JURORS). For getting. For forgetting.

WOMAN (JUROR THREE). For getting what you like.

MAN TWO (JUROR TWO). Forgetting you're a little girl.

MAN THREE (JUROR FOUR). Forgetting lessons.

MAN ONE (JUROR ONE). For getting bigger.

WOMAN (JUROR THREE). For loss.

MAN TWO (JUROR TWO). For less.

MAN THREE (JUROR FOUR). For lost little girls.

ALL BUT ALICE (JURORS). Who lose their temper.

MAN ONE (CAT). Even after our little smoke.

WOMAN (JUROR THREE). You smoked?

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Burnt a hole in my glove. Kicked through my home.

WOMAN (MOTHER). Alice, Alice, Alice.

MAN THREE (REPORTER). Standing trial today is Alice, formerly known as Little Alice, Alice Liddell, assuming aliases including Big Alice, Swimming Alice, Mary, and Portrait of a Beggar Girl.

ALICE. *(To the public:)* I haven't eaten since—

MEN. Hold.

WOMAN (MOTHER). What's the rush?

MAN TWO (WHITE RABBIT). Alice, hush.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Consider reciting.

ALICE. At two... at two... I jumped down the hole. Or twelve? At twelve I dove and hit bottom, six o'clock.

MAN THREE (REPORTER). Alice stands trial for losing her lessons.

ALICE. Curious.

ALL BUT ALICE (JURORS). CURIIOUS!

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Curiosity kills.

MAN ONE (CAT). *(Whisper:)* Alice. Your temper.

ALL BUT ALICE. Alice began to grow.

MAN THREE (REPORTER).

Alice stands trial for breaking Rule Twelve:
Sugar and Spice and Sacrifice
That's what little—

(He sees that ALICE is huge.)

Alice stands trial for breaking Rule Seventy Four:
Hold still while a man takes your photo.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. ALICE.

Must I call your attention to Rule Forty Seven?
All persons more than a mile high shall leave the court.

ALICE. I'm not a mile high.

MAN ONE (JUROR ONE). You're nearly two.

ALICE. That's not a real rule.

MAN TWO (JUROR TWO). The oldest in the book.

ALICE. Then it should be Number One.

ALL BUT ALICE (JURORS).

Consider the verdict.

Consider the verdict.

Consider deliver the verdict.

(Chant repeats.)

QUEEN OF HEARTS. Sentence first. Verdict after.

ALICE. That's ridiculous.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. You are a very. little. girl.

ALICE. Not anymore.

QUEEN OF HEARTS. OFF WITH HER HEAD!

(The company turns on ALICE.)

ALL BUT ALICE (JURORS).

Off with her head.

Off with her head.

Off with her off with her OFF WITH HER HEAD.

ALICE. You're nothing but a pack of cards!

(Silence. Stillness. Playing cards flutter to the stage like rain. A luminous threshold glows upstage.)

Curious.

(ALICE looks around at the remnants of Wonderland. She gazes up at the glowing threshold.)

ALL BUT ALICE. *(Whisper:)* Alice goes through. To...

End of Part One

PART TWO (the looking glass)

(Six months have passed. It is fall. The threshold is an enormous mirror. ALICE stands alone, dressed as a lady. She talks to her chessboard.)

ALICE. Hold.

I lined you up nicely and I expect you to stay.

Black pawns, wait your turn.

White pawn, you may move.

One way.

Forward.

In very tiny steps.

Point the toe and glide. Head erect and glide. Suck your breath and—

(ALICE disturbs the chess pieces.)

Disorder! Dishonor! Who is responsible?

White Pawn, allow me to name your faults.

One: sloppiness.

Two: wiggling.

Three: ignorance of the rules.

I'm saving up your punishments, you can be sure.

WOMAN'S VOICE (MOTHER). *(Off:)* Alice? Are you practicing your lessons?

ALICE. *Je veux tu veux il veut nous voulons vous voulez ils veulent.*

WOMAN'S VOICE (MOTHER). Very pretty.

ALICE. *(To pawn:)*

Fifty missed dinners in a row.

One thousand chapters of French.

Six months inside with summer gone and not a boat in sight.

(ALICE looks in the mirror. She sees an image of herself in the little-girl dress from Part One.)

Looking-Glass Alice says, Wonder.

Looking-Glass Alice remembers the spring.

WOMAN'S VOICE (MOTHER). If you must talk to yourself, do it in French.

(ALICE reaches out to the girl in the mirror.)

ALICE. Can you move backwards in there?

Alice would like to go back.

Punishment or no, here I go... THROOOOOOOUGH!

(ALICE steps through the mirror. Nothing happens.)

Are Alice's adventures at an end?

(In frustration, ALICE tosses chess pieces into the air. The movement brings WOMAN and MAN THREE sailing on as the WHITE QUEEN and the WHITE KING.)

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Mind the volcano! Mind the volcano!

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). What volcano?

(ALICE picks up the WHITE QUEEN from her chess set and moves it around. The WHITE QUEEN rushes around the stage. ALICE sets the piece down.)

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). BLEW ME UP! Come here.

(ALICE moves the white king chess piece around on the board, a square at a time, as in chess.)

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). *(Breathing heavily:)* A king can only go... so far... at a time.

(ALICE lifts the white king chess piece and moves him through the air.)

ALICE. See how far you can go?

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). Ohh. Ohhhh. OH!

(He lands in the WHITE QUEEN's lap.)

I assure you my dear, I turned cold to the very ends of my whiskers!

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). What whiskers?

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). The horror of that moment I shall never forget.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). But you will, if you don't write it down.

(The WHITE KING picks up a notepad and pencil. As he writes, ALICE controls the pencil from above.)

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). I must get a smaller pencil. I can't control this one. It writes things I don't mean.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Such as?

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). *(Reading:)*

A queen's power lies in her range, but the king is the center of the game.

French is for people who don't know English.

I'm up here.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). That's not a record of *your* feelings.

ALICE. I *am* up here!

WOMAN / MAN THREE (WHITE QUEEN / KING). Curious.

ALICE. Parlez-vous—

(ALICE sees a large book.)

Looking-glass language. I'll learn it.

Worse than French. I can't even read the letters.

MAN ONE (JABBERWOCKY). Aliccce.

ALICE. Hello?

MAN ONE (JABBERWOCKY). Hold it up to the glass.

ALICE. Is this your story?

MAN ONE (JABBERWOCKY). *(Sings—fiercely energetic and rhythmic:)*

Twas brillig, and the slithy toves

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:

All mimsy were the borogoves,

And the mome raths outgrabe.

MAN THREE / WOMAN.

Beware the Jabberwock, my son!

The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!

WOMAN. *Beware the Jubjub bird.*

MAN THREE. *And shun the frumious bandersnatch!*

MAN ONE (JABBERWOCKY).

*He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.*

*And, as in uffish thought he stood
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!*

*One two! One two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead.
And with its head
He went galumphing back.*

MAN THREE. *And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?*

WOMAN. *Come to my arms, my beamish boy!*

MAN ONE (JABBERWOCKY). *O frabjous day! Calooh! Callay!*

ALL BUT ALICE. *He chortled in his joy.*

MAN ONE (JABBERWOCKY).

*Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves
And the mome raths outgrabe.*

(Speaks:)

What do you think?

ALICE. Someone killed something, that's for sure.

MAN ONE (JABBERWOCKY). It's a growing-up song. You should learn it.

ALICE. I could slay a Jabberwock.

MAN ONE (JABBERWOCKY). Not in that skirt.

(An abrupt titter of nasty girlish laughter. The company slowly walks off arm-in-arm. ALICE is alone.)

ALICE. Come back!

If I don't hurry up I'll have to go home before I even know what's here.

(ALICE descends to stage level with difficulty.)

Alice floated gently down without even touching toes to floor. Alice was getting giddy by the time she found the garden. The garden appeared.

(She waits.)

The garden appeared.

(She waits.)

Where's the garden?

(Unpleasant schoolgirls surround ALICE: ROSE, LILY, and VIOLET.)

MAN ONE (ROSE). Her face has got *some* sense in it, but it's not a clever one. Still Lily, she's the right color, and that goes a long way.

MAN THREE (LILY). Oh Rose, I don't care about the color. If she'd only curl her petals she'd be all right.

WOMAN (VIOLET). I never saw anyone that looked stupider.

(The FLOWERS laugh.)

ALICE. If you don't stop it I'll pick you.

(Instant silence.)

MAN ONE (ROSE). Come over here. Those little blossoms can be so annoying. When one speaks, they all follow. It's enough to make me wither. What are you called?

ALICE. Alice.

MAN ONE (ROSE). Never heard of that kind.

(FLOWERS *laugh.*)

ALICE. I've been in gardens before, but none of the flowers could talk.

MAN THREE (LILY). Feel the ground.

ALICE. It's hard.

MAN ONE (ROSE). Most flower beds are too soft, so they all stay asleep.

ALICE. I never thought of that.

WOMAN (VIOLET). You never think at all.

MAN THREE (LILY). As if you ever saw anything, Violet! You keep your head under the leaves and snore—

WOMAN (VIOLET). I don't snore.

MAN THREE (LILY). We HEARD you. You don't know any more than when you were a bud.

ALICE. Umm. Are there any people in the garden?

MAN ONE (ROSE). There's a flower that moves around like you, but she's bushier.

ALICE. Another little girl?

MAN ONE (ROSE). She has your awkward shape. But she's redder. And her petals don't droop like yours.

MAN THREE (LILY). But you can't help that, poor thing. You're beginning to fade.

MAN ONE / WOMAN (ROSE / VIOLET). She's beginning to fade.

(FLOWERS *laugh.*)

ALICE. Does the other girl ever come here?

MAN ONE (ROSE). You'll know her. She has spikes on her head.

WOMAN (VIOLET). We thought you all did.

(FLOWERS *laugh.* *The RED QUEEN enters, played by MAN TWO. She is glamorous, regal, and sharp.*)

ALICE. A queen. I'm going to meet a real queen.

MAN ONE (ROSE). If that's what you want...

FLOWERS. ...we would advise you to walk the other way.

ALICE. This sounded nonsense to Alice, so she said nothing, but set off at once straight towards the Red Queen.

(ALICE is blocked and derailed by a shifting landscape.)

WOMAN. To her surprise, Alice lost sight of the Queen in a moment, and found herself stuck in the same spot.

FLOWERS. A little provoked, she drew back.

ALICE. And once again set out straight ahead.

(ALICE marches forward and is blocked again.)

Alice thought she would try the flowers' plan of walking where she did not want to go.

(ALICE walks the other way; soon she and the RED QUEEN back into each other.)

FLOWERS. It succeeded beautifully.

ALICE. Am I addressing the Red Queen?

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Yes, if you call that a-dressing. I've been a-dressing myself for the last two hours.

ALICE. Oh.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Look up, talk pretty, and don't twiddle your thumbs.

ALICE. I've lost my way.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). I don't know what you mean by *your* way. All the ways around here belong to *me*. Curtsey while you're thinking what to say. It saves time.

(ALICE curtseys.)

It's time for you to tell me why you're here. Open your mouth a little wider when you speak, and always say... Your Majesty.

ALICE. I wanted to see what the garden was like, Your Majesty.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Good girl. But you call this a garden? My gardens make *this* look like a desert.

ALICE. And I thought I'd try to climb up the hill.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). You call that a hill? My hills make *that* look like a valley.

ALICE. A hill can't be a valley. That's nonsense.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). You call that nonsense? My nonsense makes *you* look intelligent.

(A pause.)

ALICE. Why don't I curtsy again?

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Right.

(ALICE curtsys and looks around.)

ALICE. The ground looks like a big chess board.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Because life is a big game of chess. And you, my dear, are a pawn.

ALICE. Oh.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). I do love my range of motion.

(The RED QUEEN begins to move around. ALICE can barely keep up.)

ALICE. How do I get to be queen?

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Strategy.

(They begin to run, not getting anywhere. This exhausts ALICE but the RED QUEEN is having an easy time—she may not be running very hard.)

Your move, Alice.

ALICE. I wish...

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Move.

ALICE. I want...

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Move. Faster, Faster. Don't lose ground.

ALICE. ...to be Queen!

(ALICE runs at a furious pace.)

ALL OTHERS. And they ran in silence

MAN ONE. So fast they skimmed through air

WOMAN. So fast the hair pulled from her scalp

MAN THREE. Toes brushed the ground

MAN ONE / MAN THREE / WOMAN. Till just as Alice was exhausted...

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). You may rest.

(ALICE sits panting.)

ALICE. But this is the same place.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). And?

ALICE. Usually when you run so hard you get somewhere.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Not in this world. In this world it takes all you've got just to stay put. And you can't turn around—you're a pawn. Refreshments?

ALICE. Yes please.

(The QUEEN hands ALICE a donut.)

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Have a biscuit.

(ALICE bites into the donut.)

Now, let's take some measurements.

(She measures ALICE.)

Ooh. You must work harder.

(She holds up a doll-size version of Alice's dress from Part One.)

Put this on.

ALICE. It's too small.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Meaning you, my dear, are much too large.

(She yanks away ALICE's donut.)

ALICE. You're large.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Queens are not large. We're grand.

ALICE. I want to be a queen.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Then try to maintain your forward motion.

(Sings:)

*I'll tell you a story
That's pretty and true
I once was a lowly
Pawn like you.*

*I don't apologize
For my former tiny size
I learned to strategize
As all girls do.*

*Taller and smaller is done
Time for more purposeful fun
No more adventures with bunnies and smoke
Swimming in circles with oddly plumed folk
Being forgiven for cracking a joke
Your game has barely begun.*

*Taller and smaller is done
Sweat's all you get when you run
What's fundamental is that you prepare
Developmentally lay out your lair
It is essential to reach the eighth square
You have not crossed even one.*

*Chess is a game of device
Progression's no roll of the dice*

*Volition's essential, ambition is key
One square at a time you'll surpass even me
When the game's over a queen you will be
If you can heed my advice:*

(Speaks:)

Speak in French when you don't know the English
Never move straight forward
Remember who you are.

(The RED QUEEN disappears.)

ALL OTHERS. How she vanished, Alice never knew. But the Red Queen was gone.

ALICE. Alice remembered that she was a pawn.

ALL. And soon it would be time to move.

(Pause. ALICE hesitates.)

ALICE. Of course one had better survey the country first.

(She stands on tiptoe or some kind of step to look around.)

Principal rivers—none.
Principal mountains—only me.
Principal towns—

(Voices of the FLOWERS.)

FLOWERS. Ooh look.

MAN ONE (ROSE). Alice, over here!

MAN THREE (LILY). There's an elephant with wings. An elephant bee!

WOMAN (VIOLET). Swarming over me!

MAN ONE (ROSE). Shut it, scaredy-petal.

FLOWERS. An elephant bee! An elephant bee!

MAN ONE (ROSE). Come see.

ALICE. An elephant bee! He must make oceans of honey! His stinger must be big as a tree! Wings like flags!

FLOWER. Alice come see!

ALICE. Curious!

(ALICE considers.)

But... the first move is crucial to a pawn's advancement—two whole squares. And I must get to the third square if I want to get to the fourth square and the fifth sixth seventh and eighth until I am Queen.

Maybe I'll have time to see the elephant bees on the way back.

ALL BUT ALICE. So Alice moved on.

(ALICE moves on.)

MAN ONE. Alice enters Square Three.

(Train sounds. MAN TWO, MAN THREE and WOMAN sit in train-type seats. They hold newspapers up to their faces. MAN ONE is the rigid TRAIN GUARD. ALICE leaps up and lands in a train seat.)

MAN ONE (TRAIN GUARD). Tickets please.

ALICE. I'm afraid I haven't got one.

TRAIN RIDERS. *(Sing:)*

Don't keep him waiting.

His time is worth a thousand pounds a minute.

This smoke is worth a thousand pounds a puff.

Our land is worth a thousand pounds a meter.

A queen is worth a thousand little girls.

MAN ONE (TRAIN GUARD). You should have bought one at the ticket-office.

ALICE. I didn't see a ticket office.

TRAIN RIDERS / GUARD. *Don't hold the train up.*

MAN THREE. *This ride is worth a thousand pounds a ticket.*

MAN TWO. *My youth it cost a thousand pounds a day.*

WOMAN. *Your blood is but a thousand pounds a gallon.*

TRAIN RIDERS / GUARD. *A boy is worth a thousand little girls.*

ALICE. I'm not a little girl anymore.

MAN ONE (TRAIN GUARD). Then you're headed the wrong way.

TRAIN RIDERS / GUARD. *You're much too heavy.*

MAN THREE. *A child ought to know where she is going*

WOMAN. *Though she cannot remember her own name.*

TRAIN RIDERS / GUARD.

We'll have to send her back from here as luggage

Or ship her like a message in the mail.

We'll stuff her in a paper box and seal it.

My time is worth a thousand little girls.

ALICE. You're nothing but a pack of cards.

(MAN TWO, MAN THREE, and WOMAN drop their newspapers to reveal nightmare faces. MAN TWO repeats his line as WOMAN and MAN ONE chant in a round.)

MAN TWO. *Don't keep him waiting.*

WOMAN / MAN THREE.

A child ought to know where she is going

Though she cannot remember her own name.

We'll stuff her in a paper box and seal it.

A child ought to know where she is going

Though she cannot remember her own name.

We'll stuff her in a paper box and seal it.

We'll stuff her in a paper box and seal it.

We'll stuff her in a paper box and seal it.

TRAIN RIDERS / GUARD. *My time is worth a thousand little girls.*

(The train moves violently away. ALICE falls out, alone.)

ALICE. Hello?

Hello?

Is there anyone else?

At least I can sit here under this...
Under this... you know... What does it call itself?
It really has happened, after all? We have lost our names.
And now, who am I? I *will* remember, if I can!
I know it starts with "L."

(MAN ONE enters as CAT, lost and bewildered.)

ALICE. I remember you.

MAN ONE (CAT). Who are you?

ALICE. I wish I knew.

MAN ONE (CAT). Then who am I?

ALICE. You taught me to smoke.

MAN ONE (CAT). Let's walk. I want to remember.

(ALICE and CAT stroll arm-in-arm. Tender music. Perhaps a dance.)

ALICE. Do you know who you are yet?

MAN ONE (CAT). I'm Cat.

ALICE. Yes!

MAN ONE (CAT). I slew the Jabberwock!

ALICE. Yes!

(He looks at her suddenly, horrified.)

MAN ONE (CAT). And you're all grown up!

(He bolts away. ALICE is distraught.)

ALICE. COME BACK! I'M LITTLE!

Alice. I'm Alice Little. Remember who you are.
Now which way do I go?

MAN THREE. It was not a very difficult question to answer.

(He holds up a sign that says "TO TWEEDLEDUM'S HOUSE" and "TO TWEEDLEDEE'S HOUSE." Both arrows point the same way. ALICE is now in the Fourth Square.)

ALICE. The fourth square. But I can't stay long. I'll just say hello and ask them how to move ahead. I must get to the eighth square before dark.

(MAN THREE lies down and goes to sleep. DUM (MAN TWO) and DEE (WOMAN) enter. They move animatedly, like Wonderland characters. They are a unit, with arms around each other. Their clothing is bright and colorful.)

ALICE. Oh you look so funny!

MAN TWO (DUM). Then you ought to pay admission. Clowns don't work for free.

WOMAN (DEE). And on the other hand if you think we're real people, you ought to say something.

(Pause.)

ALICE. Umm.

MAN TWO (DUM). I know what you're thinking, and it's wrong.

WOMAN (DEE). On the contrary, if it was so it might be, and if it were so it would be, but as it isn't it ain't.

MAN TWO (DUM). That's logic!

ALICE. I was thinking, which is the best way to move on?

WOMAN (DEE). You've begun wrong. The first thing in a visit is to say "How do you do" and shake hands.

MAN TWO / WOMAN TWO (DUM / DEE). *(Extending their free hands to ALICE:)* How do you do?

MAN ONE. Alice did not like to be rude. So she chose both at once.

(ALICE takes both their hands at once.)

ALICE. How do you do?

(They dance around in a ring. Music plays. Suddenly, DUM and DEE separate, twist in front of ALICE and hold her in a sinister, uncomfortable position. They speak pleasantly.)

MAN TWO (DUM). Four times round is enough for one dance.

MAN ONE. Alice did not like to be rude. So she pretended everything was just fine.

ALICE. I hope you're not tired?

WOMAN (DEE). Oh no. Thank you for asking.

MAN TWO (DUM). *So* much obliged. Do you like poetry?

ALICE. Yes, umm, some poetry. Would you tell me please which road leads out of here?

MAN TWO (DUM). What shall I recite to her?

WOMAN (DEE). "The Walrus and the Carpenter" is longest.

ALICE. I believe I've heard that one.

MAN TWO (DUM).

*The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his—*

MAN ONE. Alice did not like to be rude. But this was a bad situation.

ALICE. If it's very long, could you please tell me first HOW TO GET OUT?

(The amplified sound of snoring.)

What's that?

WOMAN (DEE). Only the King dreaming.

ALICE. I think I'll wake him up.

MAN ONE. Alice, as usual, was too blunt.

MAN TWO (DUM). What do you think he's dreaming about?

ALICE. No one knows.

WOMAN (DEE). He's dreaming *you*.

MAN TWO (DUM). And if you yell for help and wake him, guess where you'll be?

ALICE. Right here.

WOMAN (DEE). WRONG! You'd be nowhere.

MAN TWO (DUM). You're just a thing in his dream.

WOMAN (DEE). If he wakes up, you'll go out—poof—like a candle.

ALICE. No I won't.

MAN TWO (DUM). You know you're not real.

ALICE. I am real.

MAN ONE. —said Alice, and began to cry.

WOMAN (DEE). You won't make yourself any realer by crying.

ALICE. If I weren't real, I couldn't cry.

(DUM and DEE laugh.)

MAN TWO (DUM). I suppose you think those are REAL TEARS.

(He laughs loudly, and ALICE cries loudly.)

WOMAN (DEE). Shh. Shh. You're going to wake him.

(The WHITE KING (MAN THREE) starts to wake. MAN TWO stops laughing. ALICE continues to cry loudly.)

MAN TWO (DUM). I didn't wake him.

WOMAN (DEE). You woke him.

MAN TWO (DUM). DID NOT!

WOMAN (DEE). DID TOO!

MAN TWO (DUM). DID NOT!

WOMAN (DEE). DID TOOOOOO!

(The WHITE KING wakes up. DUM and DEE disappear instantly.)

MAN ONE. Poof.

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). Good morning, child.

ALICE. I'm still here.

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). Of course you're here. Why are you crying, child? Did you have a bad dream?

ALICE. I think you had a bad dream.

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). I did. I had a frightening dream.

ALICE. But don't bad dreams go away when you're grown?

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). No, child.

ALICE. Even if you're a king?

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). A king's dreams are the most frightening of all.

ALICE. Why?

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). Because they come true.

ALICE. How do I get to the next square?

(A shawl flutters down from up high.)

MAN THREE (WHITE KING). Catch. It belongs to a queen.

(WOMAN enters as the WHITE QUEEN. She is an anxious, confused person. She walks backwards with her arms outstretched.)

ALICE. That's a queen?

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). My shawl! My shawl!

ALICE. May I help you with it?

(ALICE places the shawl around the WHITE QUEEN's shoulders.)

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Kiss kiss. All better.

ALICE. I don't understand you.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). That's the effect of living backwards. It makes me giddy to have a memory that works both ways.

ALICE. Both ways? I don't remember things until they happen.

(The WHITE QUEEN bandages her finger.)

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Bandage round then clean out the wound. What a poor memory you have. I like to remember things

that happen the week after next. For example my servant is in prison, and his trial will be next Wednesday, and of course the crime comes last of all.

ALICE. What if he never commits the crime?

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Then that would be better, wouldn't it?

ALICE. True. But not for him, being punished.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Were you ever punished?

ALICE. For faults.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). And were you the better for it?

ALICE. But I had done the bad things.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). And if you hadn't, it would have been better. Better and better and better!

(The WHITE QUEEN screams very loudly and holds up her banded finger.)

OH! OH! My finger's bleeding!

ALICE. Did you prick it?

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). I will, when I fasten this shawl.

ALICE. Let me help you.

(ALICE fastens the shawl. The WHITE QUEEN pricks her finger.)

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). It's pricked. That explains the bleeding.

ALICE. Why don't you scream now?

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). I did that already. Haven't you ever wished you could live backwards, my dear?

ALICE. Yes. But first I have to go forward, to be a queen like you. I'm still only in the fourth square.

(WHITE QUEEN walks slowly backwards.)

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). DON'T CRY! Consider, consider what a big girl you are. Consider how far you've come today. Consider the time. Consider anything, only DON'T CRY!

(ALICE starts to follow her, walking backwards.)

ALICE. Can *you* keep from crying by considering things?

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). That's how it's done. Consider my age. One thousand and one, five months and a day.

ALICE. I can't believe it.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Try.

(ALICE tries.)

ALICE. I can't believe impossible things.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). When I was your age, I practiced. Six impossible things before breakfast.

(Her shawl begins to fly away. She chases it.)

My shawl! It's flown to the fifth square!

ALICE. The fifth square!

(The WHITE QUEEN puts the shawl over her head and becomes a PEDDLER.)

WOMAN (PEDDLER). Now, what would you like to buy?

ALICE. Oh. What do you have?

(The PEDDLER has a basket of eggs.)

WOMAN (PEDDLER). Eggs. Growing girls like eggs.

ALL BUT ALICE. *(Whisper:)* Serpent.

ALICE. Who said that?

WOMAN (PEDDLER). I did. Girls need eggs.

ALL BUT ALICE. *(Whisper:)* Serpent.

ALICE. *(Boldly:)* I'll have an egg.

(HUMPTY DUMPTY (MAN THREE) *glows upstage. He is an enormous egghead, sitting on a wall.*)

WOMAN (PEDDLER). He's waiting in the sixth square.

ALICE. Already?

WOMAN (PEDDLER). The older you get, the faster time flies.

ALICE. Well good. Square Six.

(She looks up at HUMPTY DUMPTY.)

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Don't stand there chattering to yourself. Tell me your name and your business.

ALICE. My name is Alice, and—

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). What does it mean?

ALICE. Does a name have to mean something?

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Everything has meaning, Alice. I am happy to explain these meanings. I'm a professional.

ALICE. You look like an egg.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). That's a symbol, Alice. To you, I appear to be an egg. Because you are pre-occupied with eggs. Obsessed. You are, in fact, an egg fetish-etish-ist. Thus the recurring serpent dreams, egg visions, egg-cetera.

(He chuckles at his own joke.)

Egg-cetera. Don't worry. It's all apropos to your developmental stage. How old are you Alice?

ALICE. Thirteen.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). I would have left off at twelve and a half if I were you.

ALICE. One can't help growing older.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). One can't. But two can. If you'd been sent to me sooner, we could have prevented this unfortunate... advancement. As it is, I'll do my best. What do you wish to know?

ALICE. Why do you sit here all alone?

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Because there is no one with me.

ALICE. Don't you think you'd be safer on the ground?

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Of course I don't think so. It's quite apropos to the process for you to be entranced by me. If you wish to spend the hour discussing myself, I shall acquiesce. But I am not going to fall. I am not going to fall. I am not going to fall, and if I DID fall... I have insurance. The King has promised me—that fearful look is so interesting Alice—the king has promised me—

ALICE. To send all his horses and all his men?

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). WHO TOLD YOU? It was a covert agreement, a gentleman's agreement, a behind closed doors sort of thing. Have you been stealing my files, tapping my wires, hiding inside my home?

ALICE. I read it in a book.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). *(Mollified:)* Ah, well. So much has been written of me. I can't keep track of cracks in the system. One forms a cohesive shell, but at some point it's bound to shatter. Such is the nature of a fragile profession. So Alice, your obsession with eggs, with fertilization, when did it begin?

ALICE. It didn't.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Endless. Endless obsession with eggs. Allow me to write that down.

(He reaches for a pencil, almost toppling.)

ALICE. Don't reach! You're wrong anyway. I mean, I'll try to remember.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Good girl. Now, what do you want to know?

ALICE. Well... I've heard a lot of poetry I couldn't understand.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Poetry. Waste of time.

ALICE. So you don't know "Jabberwocky."

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Drivel. Tired imagery, an attempt to re-invigorate a clichéd, indeed truistic male coming-of-age narrative via the adoption of a nonsense language system, a verbal landscape conflating unintelligible lexicography with archaic violence. Set inexplicably in the midst of a nineteenth-century children's epic wherein a lonely mathematician eulogizes a girl of a higher social caste who grew up to spurn him.

ALICE. Stop it.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). The Alice narrative weaves a witty but ultimately pathetic allegory about a child heroine supposedly age seven, actually thirteen, by the second book age twenty, who embodies both the Victorian ideal of pre-pubescent girlish innocence and the rigorous, playful logic of her isolated creator Charles, a.k.a. Lewis, who was, unfortunately, happiest among small girls.

We can clearly read Alice's lack of control over her size as a projection of Dodgson's own fear of the adult female. The egg imagery, the hawkish women characters, the sad and sympathetic White Knight, all jump starkly into relief upon consideration of the biographical impulses behind the wishful fiction of this delightful girl.

ALICE. I am not a fiction.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Now now, no one likes to be interpreted.

ALICE. You're an egg.

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). And **you** are just another story.

(ALICE and HUMPTY DUMPTY freeze in conflict. The other three ACTORS address the audience.)

MAN ONE. Some important chess terms.

WOMAN. Development: the process of moving pieces to locations where they can better aid a player's plans.

MAN TWO. Initiative: control of the game, usually due to superior placement of men and easier access to weaknesses in the opponent's position.

MAN ONE. Endgame: the third and final phase, in which each player has relatively few pieces remaining.

ALL THREE. The promotion of pawns is a common goal in the endgame.

MAN TWO. *En Prise:* Said of a piece that can be captured.

MAN ONE / WOMAN. *Zugzwang:* The compulsion to move—

ALICE. **Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall**

MAN ONE / WOMAN. —when a player would rather maintain the current position, but must move in turn.

ALICE. **Humpty Dumpty had a great fall**

MAN TWO. To play good chess, you must be ready to kill.

ALICE. **All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't stitch the bloody bits together again.**

(HUMPTY DUMPTY falls off the wall. As he tumbles...)

MAN THREE (HUMPTY DUMPTY). Watch your temmperrr!

(He lies lifeless.)

ALICE. Umm. Are you okay?
I didn't do that, did I?

(The sound of a huge procession approaching.)

The horses and the men. They're going to find me here with him.

(ALICE kneels by the broken shell. She sings.)

*You called me a story and I knocked you down.
I think.*

*I wonder.
I wished you were gone and you fell down.
I think.
I wonder.
I wish I hadn't stepped through that mirror.
And yet
And yet
It's rather curious
This sort of life.
I wonder what happened to me.
I wonder what happened to you.
I wonder what happened to everyone
I once knew.*

ALL BUT ALICE (SUBJECTS). *(Marching on in celebration:)*

FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT
WHO DO WE NOW CORONATE?

ALICE!

ALICE!

ALICE IS A QUEEN!

MAN TWO (SUBJECT). Welcome to the seventh square!

MAN ONE (SUBJECT). All you have to—

WOMAN (SUBJECT). All you have to—

MAN TWO / MAN THREE (SUBJECT). All you have to do.

MAN THREE (SUBJECT). Is walk this way!

MAN ONE (SUBJECT). Walk this way!

ALL BUT ALICE (SUBJECTS). WALK AWAY!

ALICE. Umm. Did any of you guys know a giant egg?

MAN ONE (SUBJECT). Who?

MAN THREE (SUBJECT). An egg?

MAN TWO (SUBJECT). Ate one for breakfast!

(All laugh.)

ALICE. So... no one's going to miss him?

WOMAN (SUBJECT). Miss him?

MAN TWO (SUBJECT). I'm hoping to digest him!

(All laugh.)

MAN ONE (SUBJECT). You're almost a Queen now, Alice!

(A razzle dazzle number.)

ALL BUT ALICE (SUBJECTS). *(Sing:)*

Every little girl dreams

Of becoming a queen

Every little girl dreams

Of a crown, a gown, some royal finery

So step up and get yours.

Every little girl dreams

Of becoming a queen

Every little girl dreams

Of a fistful of gold and a kingdom to hold

So step up and get yours.

Alice you've been walking so long.

Alice it's been hours since you were gone.

Alice you've been acting so strong

Now step up and get yours

Come get yours.

Every little girl dreams

Of becoming a queen

Every normal girl dreams

Of a body that curves and a household that serves

So step up and get yours

Come get yours.

Alice come on and get yours.

ALICE. Okay!

(Music stops. Everyone disappears. The stage is very quiet. MAN THREE enters in a sad-looking WHITE KNIGHT outfit.)

MAN THREE (WHITE KNIGHT). My old bones. My old bones.

ALICE. Can I do something for you?

MAN THREE (WHITE KNIGHT). Allow me to bow.

(He bows stiffly.)

Ouch. White Knight at your service.

ALICE. Let me help you.

(He leans on her as they walk.)

MAN THREE (WHITE KNIGHT). It is I who must help you. I am your escort to the final square.

ALICE. I'm afraid you're not well.

MAN THREE (WHITE KNIGHT). Allow me to serenade.

WOMAN. Of all the strange things I saw in that journey, this was the one I remembered. Years later I can bring the scene back as if it were yesterday—the mild eyes of the Knight, the red sun gleaming through his hair and shining on his armor in a blazing light. I took it like a picture.

MAN THREE (WHITE KNIGHT). *(Sings:)*

I'll tell you everything I know

There's little to relate

I saw an aged aged man

A-sitting on a gate.

"Who are you, aged man?" I said

"And how is it you live?"

And his answer trickled through my head

Like water through a sieve.

I'll tell you everything I know

There's little to be done

Your moves were clean and true and slow

And now your game is won.

"Who are you, little girl?" I say

"And how is it you change

From a friend I played with yesterday

To someone tall and strange?"

(He settles into the stage or exits, leaving ALICE alone with WOMAN and MAN TWO as the tired WHITE QUEEN and RED QUEEN.)

WOMAN / MAN TWO (WHITE QUEEN / RED QUEEN). Hooray.

ALICE. Hooray.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Have a crown.

(She holds out a weighty crown. ALICE puts it on.)

ALICE. It's heavy.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). It is so heavy.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Wait till you've been wearing it fifty years.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). My back hurts.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). I'm having trouble with my feet.

(ALICE sits down. The QUEENS lean on her.)

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). I'm frightened, Alice.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). I have lived my life backwards.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Remember... Remember... Remember who...?

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). Sing us to sleep.

ALICE. What do I sing?

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). *(Sings:)*

Hush-a-bye lady, in Alice's lap

Till the feast's ready, we've time for a nap.

When the feast's over, we'll go to the ball—

Red Queen and White Queen and Alice and all.

MAN TWO (RED QUEEN). Sing it please, if you know the words.

WOMAN (WHITE QUEEN). We're getting so sleepy.

ALICE. *Hush-a-bye lady, in Alice's lap...*

(The QUEENS fall asleep as she sings. Slow.)

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!

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