

Alice in Wonderland

A Pantomime

by

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Cast of Characters

Alice (F) – An eleven year old girl suffering from an identity crisis. Her smiles are the chief source of power in Wonderland, without which it cannot function.

Dad/Queen of Hearts (M) – Alice's father in real life and her dream mother in Wonderland. The Dame.

Warren the White Rabbit (M/F) – Alice's guide to Wonderland. The 'Buttons' character.

Mad Hatter (M/F) – Alice's crazy friend in Wonderland. Poses riddles.

Mad March Hare (M/F) – An Ab-fab tea partier. Talks to the glove puppet of a lettuce.

Dormouse (M/F) – Super hero. Constantly falls asleep.

The Knave of Hearts (M/F) – A young man. Master baker and gentle soul.

The Queen of Spades (F) – Alice's antagonist. Wicked.

Tweedle Dum/Tweedle Dee (M/F) – Comedy sidekicks to the Queen of Spades.

Caterpillar (M/F) – A sage advisor.

The Others – Played by children. Various good and bad and represented by minor playing cards from the suits of hearts or spades.

(Note: In the original production, the following five characters were virtual, i.e. they were filmed saying the lines before hand and then projected onto a screen during the show. They could also just as easily appear on stage.)

Cheshire Cat (M/F) – A grinning imaginary cat. Acts as a back up generator when Alice stops smiling.

The Ground (M/F) – A talking piece of the earth. Appears when people wish the ground would swallow them up.

Newsreader (M/F) – Presenter of a news show giving tomorrow's news headlines.

Fashion Editor (M) – Appended to each news bulletin.

Mushroom (M/F) – A Talking Mushroom.

Voiced Characters

SatNav, Telephone Voice, Geordie

List of Scenes

Scene 1 – Prologue. Alice's bedroom.

Scene 2 - Tea Party.

Scene 3 – Tea Party.

Scene 4 – Middle of Nowhere.

Scene 5 – Middle of Nowhere.

Scene 6 – Basement.

Scene 7 – Queen's Ante-chamber.

Scene 8 – Caterpillar's Garden.

INTERVAL

Scene 8 (cont.) – Caterpillar's Garden.

Scene 9 – Caterpillar's Garden.

Scene 10 – Forest Path.

Scene 11 – Land of Never Ending Darkness.

Scene 12 - Land of Never Ending Darkness.

Scene 13 – Queen's Ante-chamber.

Scene 14 – Queen's Labyrinth.

Scene 15 – Epilogue. Alice's Bedroom.

Scene 1 - Prologue. Alice's Bedroom.

Wonderland in darkness. Swirling mist and lullaby music. Alice is in bed. She is playing with a toy rabbit.

ALICE: The Knave of hearts, he made some tarts,
 All on a winters day.
 The Queen of Spades, she stole the tarts,
 And took them all away.
 Alice thought, and thought some more,
 And then she made a wish.
 She wished for tarts with extra jam,
 And just a little fish.
 Hmmmm. I'm pretty sure that's not really how it goes Mr Rabbit!
 (As the Rabbit in a high voice.) Yes it is Alice! You've just got a funny brain!

DAD: Alice! Alice it's bed time.

ALICE: I know. I was just playing.

DAD: Well, no more playing now. Let's turn that light off then shall we? It's your first day at your new school in the morning.

ALICE: Mmmmmm, I know. Dad?

DAD: What?

ALICE: When you dream, where do you go?

DAD: I don't know. I don't think I really have any dreams.

ALICE: So do you stop dreaming then, when you grow up?

DAD: I don't know, Alice come on look, it's getting late.

ALICE: Sorry. Dad?

DAD: What?

ALICE: Nothing. Night Mr Rabbit! *(As rabbit)* No Alice, it's time to go to Wonderland! *(As herself.)* No Mr Rabbit. I think it's time to be sensible! Shhh!

She puts the Rabbit down. Blackout.

Scene 2 - Tea Party.

Alice falls through space as she dreams. Lights up on Wonderland. The table is set for a tea party. The WHITE RABBIT, THE OTHERS (dressed as hearts), the MAD HATTER, the DORMOUSE and the MAD MARCH HARE all enter under darkness and break into song.

SONG 1 – Land of Wonder

RABBIT: Oh Hello everybody! What a lovely surprise to have so many guests come to visit us today! Welcome one and all to Wonderland! Ah, the birds are dancing, the mushrooms are friendly....

MUSHROOM: Hello!

RABBIT: ...and the sky is a beautiful shade of lime green, it's perfect. I'll be honest boys and girls, wonderland is a little bit of a strange place and all the people in it are just a teeny weeny bit on the crazy side, but do you know what, I think you're going to like it here once you get used to it! Let me introduce myself, I am the White Rabbit, but you can call me Warren.

OTHER1: Warren? Isn't that the name for a rabbits burrow?

RABBIT: Yes, that's right.

OTHER2: Why are you called that?

RABBIT: Because I'm deep, complex but at the end of the day, I'm really just a bit of a home bunny!

ALL: Booo!

RABBIT: Oh Sorry! I'm afraid the jokes aren't going to get much better than that! Trust me, I've seen the script! But don't worry, because today we're going to have a wonderful party together!

ALL: Yaaay!

RABBIT: But first boys and girls, do you think you could help me? Sometimes I get terribly discombobulated when I'm running around wonderland, because it's an enchanted place. If you get lost in wonderland, you can completely forget who you are! So every time I come onto the stage could you help me by making me remember who I am? (*A bit of banter with the audience.*) Of course you will! OK, so here's what we'll do. When I hop onto the stage can you all please shout out 'What's up Warren?' Then I'll remember who I am at all times. You might think it's obvious that who I am but trust me, it's easy to forget anything here!

OTHER3: Like that time you forgot to pay your income tax bill?

RABBIT: Shhhh! That was just a misunderstanding about my Caymen islands holding account. But anyway, shall we try it out boys and girls? Oh splendid! (*The RABBIT runs off stage and then sprints back on, looking confused. Hopefully the audience shout out 'What's up Warren'.*) Oh thank you! Yes, that's not too bad, but I think it needs to be a little bit louder. (*Repeating the entrance.*) That's brilliant, now I know who I am, and then I'll tell you what's up so that we all know what's

going on!

HATTER: And they said I was mad!

RABBIT: Well you are, as mad as a hatter!

HATTER: Nonsense by Jupiter! I'm only twice as mad as I was yesterday and half as mad as I shall be tomorrow.

RABBIT: And how mad is that exactly?

HATTER: *(He holds up a road sign with 'Sharp Corner Ahead').* This mad!

RABBIT: What? That doesn't make any sense!

HATTER: *(He stands up and doffs his hat.)* It's a sign that I'm going round the bend! All change!

The sound of the sound of a cash register. The people sat at the table move places, getting in each other's way and spilling tea. THE OTHERS exit.

RABBIT: Sometimes. It's difficult to work out what's going on in Wonderland! It's a very silly place.

HARE: We're having a little tea party darling! Why don't you join us? It'll be simply fabulous! When the cakes get here of course. The Knave of Hearts has baked a special batch and he's due any minute. In the mean time we've just got this lettuce.

RABBIT: Ooh! I do like a bit of lettuce. Maybe I can have a cheeky nibble?

HARE: If he doesn't mind! Do you mind sweetie? *(The HARE has a LETTUCE glove puppet which she talks to.)*

LETTUCE: I'm terribly sorry! But I don't think I'm in a nibbling mood!

HARE: Well, there you have it! You'll have to 'leaf' him alone.

RABBIT: It's a very intelligent lettuce!

LETTUCE: I'm a little gem!

MOUSE: Shhh! Keep the noise down. Some of us are having a heroic power-nap. *(The Dormouse's Leitmotif plays and it yawns loudly before doing a superhero pose before promptly passing out and snoring loudly.)*

RABBIT: *(Sighs)* Honestly, this is what it's like all the time in Wonderland. You can't get an ounce of sense out of people most of the time. Still, we always know how to throw a party and today is a very special day.

ALL: Hip, hip, hooray!

RABBIT: Because today we're going to meet the person who dreamt up Wonderland! Her name is Alice and she's the sweetest girl who ever lived! And she's....how old is she again?

HATTER: She's one again!

RABBIT: What, she must be older than that!

HATTER: No, she's one again. (*Holding up a sign with a number '11' on.*) Eleven! Fiendishly cunning eh? All change! (*The tea party characters all move around again.*)

HARE: I do hope Alice gets here soon my dear. We're starting to run out of juice!

HATTER: But we've got plenty of tea by Jingo! Cheers!

HARE: No, not juice to drink, sweetie. Juice juice. Power!

The lights flicker and there is a crackling sound.

RABBIT: Oh yes, I forgot to mention. Alice supplies all of the power for Wonderland with her smile because you see, because she's so good natured that when she smiles she lights the whole world up. She's due another visit tonight which is just as well because otherwise it gets a bit dim in here! What have we got planned gang?

HATTER: We've got riddles!

HARE: And comedy!

MOUSE: And a heroic amount of snoozing!

RABBIT: Riddles and comedy and snoozing. Well she will be excited! They're her favourite things!

HATTER: Riddle the first, what tree can you hold in your hand?

RABBIT: I don't know.

HATTER: A Palm tree! Mind like a steel trap! All change! (*FX: Cash register sound.*)

RABBIT: Why do you keep doing that?

HATTER: There's no place names so we make sure we sit in all the seats, just to be on the safe side.

RABBIT: Great. Well on that note I think it's time to meet Alice. We're having a celebration tea party today because tomorrow is a very special day, Alice is off to start a new school! That's right, she's growing up! Ooh, I'm so excited to see her again! Would you like to meet her everyone? Oh good, in that case, we need to call her down, through the rabbit hole and into wonderland. Will you help me? Alice is asleep at the moment, but she's not in dream sleep yet, the sort of sleep where she can get into wonderland. So we need to call her down. Will you help me? On the count of three can

you all shout out 'Sweet dreams Alice?'

After three times of trying her bed appears on the stage with her soundly asleep.

Scene 3 – Tea Party.

The characters all gather around Alice's bed. An alarm clock goes off and she sits bolt upright in bed.

ALL: Welcome back Alice!

ALICE: What? Where am I?

ALL: Wonderland! Hooray!

ALICE: Oh no, I knew this would happen when I turned the light off. I'm asleep aren't I? This is another one of those crazy dreams!

ALL: Yes!

ALICE: Oh great! *(She sits on the bed and hugs her knees into her chest.)* Tonight of all nights!

RABBIT: What's wrong Alice? You don't seem very pleased to see us?

ALICE: I'm sorry but I'm really not in the mood for this tonight.

HATTER: Great Scott! Methinks the lady doth need a riddle from the madness of the Hatter. Watch out for he seeks to trick you! What gets wetter when it dries? Haha! By Jimmini! The answer is...

ALICE: *(Bored)* A Towel.

HATTER: *(Slightly disappointed.)* Yes. Well, I suppose it's an old one.

HARE: Well darling, don't look so glum in the mouth. Look, here's Mr Lettuce, he's come to say hello. *(Hopping about excitedly.)* Watch out he might give you a little tickle!

LETTUCE: Hello Alice. Why not sit down and 'lettuce' all have some fun!

HARE: Tee hee! He's crazy!

LETTUCE: And that joke was just the tip of the iceberg!

ALICE: I can see your lips moving.

HARE: Oh.

MOUSE: How about a super-sonic snooze then? *(The Dormouse yawns and salutes. FX: Dormouse music plays.)*

ALICE: I'm already asleep!

RABBIT: Sorry Alice, have we done something to upset you? You normally like all these

things.

ALICE: Yeah, I know but it's just.....I think that now I'm getting older, it might be time for me to move on.

FX: *Dramatic Da, da, da.*

ALL: *(A collective dramatic intake of breath.)* What?

ALICE: I'm sorry, I know I usually liked solving riddles and joking and I know that I loved nothing better than a well earned power snooze but I think that's the old me. Tomorrow I'm starting a new school and I think it's time to leave these childish things behind.

ALL: Childish? Us?

ALICE: Yes! I can't be capering around being silly when there's work to be done. I've got new things to learn, like maths and chemistry and French and the world is in all sorts of trouble, I know because I've seen it on the news. There's people arguing with each other and there's plastic floating around in the sea and the economy is going down, whatever that means. Dad's always talking about it and if he's worried it must be serious. And he looks after me all on his own and I want to be a success and make him proud of me and I've got new people to meet and I'm worried that I won't fit in and what if nobody likes me and I've started writing down all my insecurities in my diary, because that's what eleven year old girls do, *(she holds up her diary)*, but basically what I'm trying to say is...I....I, I just don't think this is for me any more. This Wonderland.

RABBIT: But Alice, we're your friends!

ALICE: I know. But at the end of the day you are only imaginary and its probably time I imagined something else. I think I'm going to have sensible dreams and then wake up.

ALL: Oh no!

The characters hang their heads. There is a crackle of electricity and the lights flicker and dim. STAGE CREW enter and take away the tea party table.

HARE: The lights are going out! Our tea party is disappearing, and Hello! Magazine are due any minute to take photo's. Darlings please bring it back!

CREW: It's more than my job's worth love!

HARE: Oh no! I don't feel like hopping about madly talking to Mr lettuce! Do I? *(The lettuce doesn't talk back.)* No, it's just a puppet!

ALL: *Sharp intake of breath.*

HATTER: What? All Change! *(There is no sound effect.)* No, I'm still mad. I am, honest! Let's see, a riddle. Why is a raven like a writing desk?

ALICE: I don't actually know.

HATTER: They're not, they're completely different. Aaargghh! No, I'm going sane!

The Dormouse wakes up.

MOUSE: What's happening? I'm suddenly feeling very wide awake! (*FX of distorted and slowed down Dormouse leitmotif.*) Oh no. I can feel a bout of insomnia coming on! Un-triumphant!

RABBIT: Alice has stopped smiling!

ALL: Nooooooooo! (*Associated sound and light effect.*)

ALICE: Honestly! There's no need to be so melodramatic!

ALL: It's a pantomime!

ALICE: Well you'll have to finish it without me. I'm sorry everyone. I'm going back to bed!

HATTER: I guess this is it then. We're finished. We'll become joyless shadows of our former selves. We might as well go and join the...(insert name of local rival drama group here.)

HARE: (*To the LETTUCE.*) I'm sorry darling! It's back to Poundland for you!

LETTUCE: Poundland? I thought you got me from Hamleys toy shop?

HARE: That's just what I told you darling. I'm sorry you had to find out this way.

The HATTER, the HARE and the DORMOUSE all shuffle morosely of stage. The DORMOUSE in a state of continual wide eyed agitation.

RABBIT: But how will we light up wonderland now?

ALICE: I don't know. I'm sure you'll think of something! Look, there's something bright up there in the sky. Maybe that can be your new power source!

The sound of a dramatic 'Da da da'. Thunder and lightening sound and light FX.

RABBIT: Oh no! I've heard tales of what happens when darkness falls! It's rumoured that there are strange powers that live deep in the far corners of Wonderland that wait for it to become dark and then emerge and seize control of everything! In that sense they're a bit bit like... (*insert evil politician or similar here*). Ooh! Bit of politics there.

ALICE: Oh I shouldn't worry. It's just superstition. After all, what's the worst thing that can happen?

RABBIT: Don't say that! You'll jinx things.

ALICE: Nonsense. I'm sorry, I'm going to get back into bed until morning. Night night!

RABBIT: Wait! (*Freezes with a funny abstract grin on his face.*)

ALICE: What's wrong? Are you auditioning for a part in Hollyoaks?

RABBIT: No! I'm having a funny premonition of things to come!

FX of news programme music with intro voice.

VOICE: And now it's time for bedtime news. Tomorrow's news, today.

The NEWSREADER appears.

NEWSREADER: The main news from tomorrow night on bedtime news. The Knave of Hearts has been kidnapped while trying to deliver some jam tarts to a local tea party. Eye witnesses have suggested that the wicked Queen of Spades is to blame for the incident. The Queen, a mean spirited old ratbag is well known for wanting to plunge the whole of wonderland into a chaotic darkness. The crime is thought to have been enabled by a young girl not smiling enough. In other news, Alice bands, are they in vogue or do they just look silly? Our fashion editor tried them out.

Cut to FASHION EDITOR. It is a man wearing make-up and an Alice band. .

EDITOR: I actually really like them.

ALICE: Off!

Exit TV characters.

ALICE: I see! You don't want me to go so you're playing tricks on me! Well, I like that! I had thought rather better of you!

RABBIT: I don't know anything about it! Honest guvnor!

ALICE: A likely story! I'm sorry, that's it. I'm going back to sleep.

ALICE lays down in bed again. Stage crew come on and spin the bed around. The light's and scenary change as they do so. Associated sound effect.

RABBIT: *(In slow motion.)* Nooooooooooooo...

ALICE: Why are you moving so slowly?

RABBIT: It's what they do in films to build dramatic tension. Nooooooooooooo.....

ALICE: Um.

RABBIT: *(To the stage hands.)* Sorry, do you mind doing it a bit quicker please. Nooooooo...

THE RABBIT exits as if sliding sideways off the stage as ALICE's bed is picked up and turned around. Backdrop change to Psychedelic middle of nowhere. The KNAVE enters with his tray of hearts.

KNAVE: Alice! There you are I've been looking everywhere. Sorry I'm late, I got lost in the

gloom! You can't go back to bed yet, because look, I've made a new recipe smoked salmon and jam tarts!

ALICE: Smoked salmon and Jam. Urrrghh!

KNAVE: You'll change your mind when you try one! I promise, it will make you smile.

ALICE: No thank you. But anyway I'm glad to see you're perfectly fine! I just heard some nonsense from tomorrow about you being kidnapped by the Queen of Spades.

KNAVE: Tomorrow? Oh dear, no wonder I've felt so wobbly today. (*He wobbles about to a wobbling sound effect.*) I thought I'd made a bad batch of jelly but it must have been a premonition of things to come.

ALICE: Oh pooh! That's complete nonsense! People can't see into the future. And the Queen of Spades. She's just a myth! All the playing cards in Wonderland are hearts! (*She pouts.*)

KNAVE: No she's.....

The lights flicker again and there is some more thunder and lightening.

Scene 4 – The Middle of Nowhere.

The Queen of Spades enters flanked by the OTHERS are now all spades.

KNAVE:definitely real.

ALICE: OMG.

KNAVE: Did you just say pooh?

ALICE: No.

KNAVE: I think you did mate.

ALICE: It just sort of came out.

KNAVE: Well it usually does. That's the way with pooh.

The playing cards surround the KNAVE in a circle. ALICE hides under the bed covers and peeks out.

QUEEN: Ahem, whenever you've finished you disgusting urchins!

ALICE/KNAVE: Sorry!

QUEEN: A myth? Oh I don't think so! (*The audience should boo liberally here.*) Oh thank you. I love boos! (*She looks out at the audience.*) Let me see, who do we have here? Oh dear, I didn't know we'd started letting the peasantry in. There goes the neighbourhood! Primark Wonderland must be doing a roaring trade. I've never seen so much Polyester – make sure you don't light a match down there! Honestly, it's a good job the lights are going out that's all I can say. But here's a beautiful sight, Alice all set to wake up and leave, plunging Wonderland into darkness forever. And leaving me to take over as Queen! Ah ha ha ha ha!

FX: Thunder and Lightening.

KANVE: You'll never be the Queen here, you fiend!

QUEEN: Oh yes I will!

KNAVE: Oh no she won't! Will she boys and girls!

QUEEN: Oh yes I will!

'Oh no she won't' etc. Repeat ad nauseum.

QUEEN: Oh yes I will because you see, I am the Queen of Spades.

KNAVE: That sounds worryingly like the cue for a song.

QUEEN: You'd better believe it baby!

SONG 2 – Queen of Spades

During the song, THE OTHERS dance around the KNAVE and taunt him. They take his Jam Tarts and also his recipe book which they give to the QUEEN.

QUEEN: Oh I feel so alive! So then, in case you didn't catch my evil plan which I just carefully explained via the medium of some vintage heavy metal, I'm kidnapping the only person who knows how to bake jam tarts and without anything to eat, there can be no more tea parties! Wonderland will become a dark and sad place forever and I'll be in charge! Ah ha ha ha ha! Oh I do love being evil. Tweedledum Tweedledee!

Enter TEDDLEDUM and TWEEDLEDEE.

DUM/DEE: Yes Mrs Spade!

QUEEN: Seize this knave!

DUM/DEE: Yes Mrs Spade! *(They seize him.)*

QUEEN: And don't call me that. It makes me sound like a gravediggers wife! Call me, your majesty!

DUM/DEE: Yes Mrs Spade.

QUEEN: Oh, for goodness sake, look maybe it would just be better if you didn't speak at all.

DUM/DEE: Yes Mrs...

QUEEN: Handcuff him! *(She stops them and gives TWEEDLEDUM and TWEEDLEDEE some black fluffy novelty handcuffs).*

DUM: Are they police handcuffs?

QUEEN: *(Embarrassed.)* Ahem. No.

DEE: Where are they from then? It says Anne Summers on here. Is she a police lady?

QUEEN: Sometimes, yes. But less about the handcuffs and more of the arresting! Now then it's off to the bottom of the deck for you my dear. And as for you. The sooner you wake up and leave this place to be run by somebody who knows what to do, the better. You two, take him to the labyrinth where they can't come and find him. And hide the tarts as well. Understood?

DUM/DEE: Mmmmmmmmm! *(They nod frantically.)*

QUEEN: Excellent. Now I have certain evil deeds to carry out in this false beard *(She puts on a false beard)* and then that's me all wrapped up in time for some Netflix and chill! Oh sorry, I should say, other sources of video streaming are available. Ta ta!

The QUEEN exits.

DUM: Right then, dum de dum, you're for it.

DEE: Yes, dum de dee.

DUM: Which way was it again?

DEE: Dunno, let's put the sat nav on.

The SATNAV is a disembodied voice which suddenly starts speaking.

SATNAV: Welcome to satnav for dummies.

DUM/DEE: Hello! Labrinth please!

SATNAV: Labyrinth. Take the next left, onto Barlow Moor rd.

DEE: Left. This way!

DUM: Yes, right, that way.

They go off in different directions nearly pulling the KNAVE in half.

KNAVE: Aaaarghhhhh!

DUM: He's a lively one. Dum de dum.

DEE: He is that. He's livelier than a Brexit debate with an elderly relative! Dum de dee.

DUM: He obviously doesn't want to come quietly. Well have to pull!

DEE: Yes, push!

SATNAV: You are going the wrong way you muppets!

DUM/DEE: Oops. Reverse!

They go round and round in a circle with him.

SATNAV: You total numb nuts!

DUM/DEE: Reverse again!

SATNAV: Right, that's it, you're not intelligent enough to be dummies. I'm off down the pub.
Fx of satnav closing down.

KNAVE: Oh no wonder I felt wobbly. (*He wobbles fx: Wobbling sound.*)

DUM: Sounds like someone's had a bad jelly.

DEE: Really? (*Looking around apprehensively.*) You haven't got any more have you? It's been banned by the queen because it makes people too happy and she doesn't like that!

DUM: Cor, yeah! I couldn't half do with a raspberry jelly right now! I haven't had any in ages. I've forgotten what it tastes like!

DEE: Tweedledum, I remember, it tastes...

DUM: Yes?

DEE: Like Raspberries!

DUM/DEE: Yeah! (*They high five.*)

KNAVE: No, I'm sorry. I haven't got any jelly on me.

DUM: Well, there's plenty of time for you to make us some when we get to the lab-rinth. It'll be like that Baking Bad!

DEE: But we'll just have to keep it all hidden from the queen!

DUM: Right! Off we go then. Dum de dum.

DEE: Yes. Dum de de.

DUM/DEE: Dum de dum de dum. Dum de dee de dee.

KNAVE: Um, are you going to talk like this all the way there?

DUM/DEE: Yes!

KNAVE: Oh great. I suppose this isn't a good time to ask the ground to open up and swallow me?

The GROUND appears.

GROUND: I'm sorry, I wouldn't mind swallowing you but not those two. I do have some standards.

TWEEDLEDEE and TWEEDLEDUM start slowly marching off with the KNAVE.

KNAVE: Always worth a try. Bye Alice, if I don't see you again, good luck in your new school!

ALICE: But what am I going to do?

KNAVE: Mum will help you!

ALICE: But I haven't got a mum!

KNAVE: You have in Wonderland. Here, you can call her using this. (*He throws her a little box.*)

Exeunt KNAVE, TWEEDLEDEE and TWEEDLEDUM.

ALICE: I wonder what on earth is inside? A potion, maybe or a magic key!

The KNAVE pops his head back on.

KNAVE: It's a mobile phone dummy!

Exit KNAVE.

Scene 5 – Middle of Nowhere.

ALICE: Oh well that makes sense. But now I'm trapped in the middle of nowhere and I don't even think I can get a phone signal! Can anybody see a phone signal anywhere? You will tell me if you see one won't you boys and girls?

Three of the OTHERS enter holding giant SIM card replica's with TOADAFONE/LEMON/VIRGIN on. ALICE stands on her tiptoes trying to get a phone signal and wanders around the stage as they move about. FX music: iPhone ringtone remix.

ALICE: It's behind me? Where?

Alice contrives to miss the SIM cards and finally after much shouting she sees them and they stop moving. She inspects the SIM cards.

ALICE: Oh thank you boys and girls. Now lets see, which network shall I use? Well they did say that the future's Lemon didn't they? And at least it should give me some juice!

She gives the phone to the Lemon SIM card. They press a button, here is a sound effect of an electric hum and a voice.

PHONE: Welcome to Lemon, your citrus powered mobile phone network.

ALICE: Wow. I wonder what powers Virgin then?

The OTHER holds their hand out expecting payment.

ALICE: Oh, I'm sorry. I don't carry money with me in my sleep.

The OTHER points to Alice's Diary.

ALICE: This? Its my diary. It's personal.

OTHER: Hard luck. It's ours now. *(They take the diary and exit.)*

ALICE: Oh dear, that's all my personal thoughts! Oh well, that's tech companies for you. I'll just have to manage without it. Now, lets see then, who's in the address book. Hmmmm, only one person. Dream Mother.

ALICE presses a button on the phone. The sound of the phone dialling and then the DAME's voice.

DAME: Hello, this is your dream mother. If you're in need of telling off for being naughty press one. If you're after a lovely game of croquet and a cucumber sandwich, press two. If a telecoms company has just stolen your personal data and you've having an existential crisis, press three.

ALICE presses three.

DAME: Please state your location and emotional state.

ALICE: I'm in the middle of nowhere and I'm experiencing severe bewilderment! I'm also having slight doubts about my choice of hair grip.

DAME: Thank you. Your dream mother will be with you shortly.

ALICE: I didn't know I had a dream mother. I wonder why I need one?

The DAME has entered with THE OTHERS dressed as hearts. She is carrying a Croquet mallet and some brightly coloured wooden balls.

DAME: So you don't have to dream alone!

ALICE: Oh. That sounds...

DAME: Worryingly like a cue for a song?

ALICE: Yes!

DAME: That's because it is my little cherub!

SONG 3 - Dream Mother

DAME: So you see everyone, although Alice doesn't have a mum in real life, she does now in Wonderland, it's me, the Queen of Hearts. It's a new service we're providing to cater for people with emotional health problems – it stops them growing up to become estate agents or investment bankers - and it's my job to try and make her smile again.

ALICE: You're not going to make a load of silly and inappropriate jokes are you?

DAME: Certainly not! I insist you take that back immediately!

ALICE: Sorry!

DAME: I don't know. I rush over to cheer you up and show everyone my enormous pink whacker and my brightly coloured balls and I get accused of being cheap!

ALICE: Mmmm. You know, you look slightly familiar.

DAME: No, I don't think so. It's just your imagination. Now then, let's have a look at you. Oh dear, oh dear. Look at that sad face. You look like you've won two free tickets to the *(insert name of rival drama group here)* panto!

ALICE: Well, I'm sorry. I've not in a very good place right now.

DAME: Neither are they love! Trust me I've seen the show! Anyway, you're in the middle of nowhere, that's why you're lost. *(The DAME starts flouncing about melodramatically.)* It's neither up nor down. Neither here nor there. Neither one nor t'other. Neither....

ALICE: OK, I get the general idea. But what do I need to do to get out?

DAME: You need to start by making a decision my love. Indecision is the key to getting lost.

ALICE: Well, I'm sure I don't quite know what to decide.

DAME: Well what options do we have?

ALICE presses a button on the phone.

PHONE: To go back to sleep and leave wonderland forever, press one. To go and rescue the Knave of Hearts, press two. To speak to somebody in Newcastle about a recent insurance claim press three.

ALICE: Um.

DAME: What do you think she should do boys and girls?

ALICE: But it's all a dream, it can't be that important, can it? But maybe who you are in your dreams reflects who you are in real life. Oh I don't know! Part of me just wants to wake up but part of me knows that I can't let him be kidnapped by that wicked Queen of Spades. Oh, what shall I do? *(She interacts with the audience.)* Yes, you're right. In my heart I know I need to go back. *(She presses a button on her phone. FX of phone button being pushed.)*

GEORDIE: Haway pet, what can I dee for ya? Bit of inshoorance bother like?

ALICE: Oops. I think I pressed three by accident. Sorry, bye!

GEORDIE: Up the Magpies! *(FX phone going dead.)*

ALICE: Oh, now how do I get back in?

DAME: Drink this! I got it in case of emergency! *(Holding up a brightly coloured can.)*

ALICE: What is it?

DAME: It's one of those new craft ales. It's eight pounds fifty a can but it's flavoured with locally produced organic beetroot, so it must be worth the money.

ALICE: I hate beetroot! And I can't drink beer. I'm only eleven!

DAME: Oh sorry, my mistake. This is your one. I was reliably informed by a strange old lady wearing a false beard I met that if you drink it, you'll magically shrink down and then you can burrow down a rabbit hole back into wonderland. *(She gives her a little bottle of potion.)*

ALICE: That was nice of her.

DAME: Yes. Although she did suggest all my clothes came from Primark. Cheeky woman!

ALICE: It says Primark on the label.

DAME: Alright! Let's just, ahem, gloss over that. Look, its potion time!

ALICE: (*Reading the label.*) Hmmm. Drink me! (*The audience may suggest she doesn't drink it which ALICE can play up to.*)

DAME: Come on then, we haven't got all day. Bottoms up! (*She cracks open the beer.*) As the nun said to the carpenter.

ALICE: Is that a riddle?

DAME: Not really love, no.

They both take a drink.

ALICE: Ooh, suddenly I feel very peculiar.

DAME: That's what the nun said. Ooh, but now you mention it, so am I! Mind you it is my fifth can.

ALICE: I'm starting to float. Oh, oh, oh....(*ALICE spins round and round and then, supported by stage hands in appropriate clothing, flies off the stage. FX Floating sound.*)

DAME: Float? Oh dear, I'm sure she was supposed to shrink. I must have been given the wrong potion. Oh you silly Queen of Hearts! That's what happens when you outsource everything. Ooh, I'm so embarrassed. I wish the ground would swallow me up.

The GROUND appears.

GROUND: You look a bit too much of a mouthful to me. I'm not sure I could cope with the indigestion.

DAME: Ooh you cheeky devil! I'd better try and find out where she's going. Which way! Aha. If in doubt, whack your balls! (*She puts down a ball and whacks it off stage*) Fore! That way! Bye kids!

Exit DAME.

Scene 6 . Basement.

The WHITE RABBIT enters looking forlorn. Following him are the HARE, HATTER and DORMOUSE, with their heads bent over in a trance like state.

RABBIT: Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear! This is a conundrum!

Hopefully the audience will shout out 'What's up Warren.'

RABBIT: What's up? Everything's up. With Alice gone it suddenly went very dark and cold. Like that time I locked myself in the fridge! I was trying to see if a little man lived inside and turned the light on and off. There was, his name was Derek! You'd like him, he was totally cool!

FX, drum roll. Echo of Dame's voice shouting 'Fore'. FX the sound of random thumping as a croquet ball bounces around. The RABBIT appears to catch it as the DAME enters.

DAME: Oh thank goodness, it's that White Rabbit. I'm searching for Alice!

RABBIT: Me too. But it's impossible in this darkness. And without her to smile and generate some power, it's game over! Look, these three have started to totally shut down! *(Waves his hand in front of them.)* They're as comatose as an audience at a *(insert name of rival drama group here)* play.

DAME: What you need my son, is to turn on the back up generator!

RABBIT: Back up generator?

DAME: Yes! Didn't you know about it? All imaginary worlds have to have an alternative power supply, just in case of accidental gloominess. Or in case she starts listening to Morrissey when she gets older.

RABBIT: Well how do we turn it on?

DAME: Hmm. Let me think. Now I see you're holding one of my balls.

RABBIT: It just came flying at my face!

DAME: Well think yourself lucky! But interestingly, the chaotic nature of wonderland is such that whenever I hit one of my balls hard, it always takes me in the right direction! Watch! Fore!

She hits a croquet ball very hard, it flies off and we hear the sound of it bouncing and smashing things up. The RABBIT and DAME dodge out of its way. Finally the sound of it hitting a button. The sound of the back up generator coming on. THE CHESHIRE CAT appears and grins. Suddenly things get a little bit brighter.

CAT: Aw yeah!

BOTH: Hoorah!

CAT: This back up generator is totally activated. Power level is mellow!

RABBIT: Mellow?

DAME: I think that's as high as he goes. But it still it seems to be working. Look, these three have come out of their coma. It's like closing time at the house of Lords!

The HATTER, HARE and DORMOUSE are all stirring.

HATTER: What? Ah, did you hear about the restaurant on the moon?

RABBIT: No!

HATTER: Great food but no atmosphere! By George, I'm perking up!

HARE: Me too darling. I feel like jolly well hopping about again. What do you think Mr Lettuce?

LETTUCE: Well, you are looking a bit perkier, but you've aged slightly!

HARE: What?

LETTUCE: Well, you've got a few grey hares!

MOUSE: Oh thank goodness for that, I think I can just drop off again! (*Fx: Dormouse music, it falls asleep.*) A triumph!

RABBIT: Well, at least we've got some power again. I wonder how long it lasts?

CAT: This cat can smile all day long. But come the midnight, I'll be gone. Aw yeah.

The CAT disappears (if possible, leaving just his smile.)

DAME: Then we've got to find Alice and make her smile before midnight!

RABBIT: Which way is it?

DAME: Didn't you listen just now? Just follow your balls! (*She hits another ball and exits.*) Fore! Bye kids!

ALL: What shall we do?

RABBIT: Well, you could try and make some cakes! We're going to need all the sustenance we can get on our hunt for Alice. Bye everyone! *The RABBIT exits.*

HATTER: Right then, by George, John, Paul and Ringo! Here's the stuff to give the troops. Some cakes. Now how do we make them?

HARE: I don't know sweetie. The Knave had all the recipe books and they got stolen!

MOUSE: I had a recipe handed down to me.

HATTER: From your mother?

MOUSE: No from a high book shelf!

HARE: (*Reading.*) How to make a scrummy custard pie.

HATTER: Well, it's not exactly a jam tart, but it will have to do eh?

LETTUCE: It looks delicious to me.

HARE: Really Mr Lettuce?

LETTUCE: Yes! (*The Lettuce makes some loud chomping noises and starts eating the recipe.*)

HARE: No! Stop it sweetie, you're ruining it!

LETTUCE: Oh come on, lettuce eat it.

They struggle and end up rolling around on the floor. And the recipe gets ripped.

HARE: I'm sending you back to the Betty Ford Clinic.

LETTUCE: Oh no! I'm sorry! I can't help it, I've got a problem!

HATTER: Oh by Jim Morrison! I thought things would improve when she got rid of that emu but apparently not. Now you've torn it! How are we going to make it now?

HARE: We'll have to improvise.

HATTER: Oh. OK then. (*FX, unstructured jazz music. The HATTER starts doing a weird jerky dance and singing improvised jazz vocals.*) Ba-ba-ba-dop-do-wop. A doobee-do-wop.

HARE: Not that sort of improvisation dear. Look we, can still read some of it. You hold the bowl.

HATTER: I'll hold the bowl.

HARE: And darling, you fetch the ingredients and bring them to me.

MOUSE: To you?

HARE: To me!

MOUSE: To you!

HATTER: What's first?

HARE: Flour.

MOUSE: Flowers. (*She produces a bunch of flowers.*)

HARE: Eggs.

MOUSE: No eggs! Hmm. Ho about, Greggs? (*She produces a bag of pasties from the eponymous High St. Bakery.*) I think that's a steak bake.

HARE: Custard.

MOUSE: Hmmmm.

HARE: And Cream.

MOUSE: I don't think we've got either of those. How about some custard creams? (*She produces a packet of biscuits and empties them into the bowl.*) Now what?

HARE: Beat vigorously.

MOUSE: OK.

HARE: What's that?

MOUSE: A football. I'm going to beat you at it! (*She produces a football and kicks it past the Hare. FX. Football crowd roar.*) Another triumph!

HARE: No! It means mix all the ingredients together at a high speed.

MOUSE: Right ho. Ready everyone!

HATTER: All change!

FX: Comedy high speed chase music. The three run around, bumping into things ducking and generally being silly. The HARE has another run in with his glove puppet which at one point briefly gets swapped so that the Dormouse has it. At various points they take it in turn to exit briefly behind a flat, emerging with cake mixture, flower etc. on their faces. They eventually come back to the centre looking dishevelled.

MOUSE: Now what?

HARE: It says, chill rapidly!

All three pull out a pair of sunglasses and put them on, pulling a pose. The CAT appears.

CAT: Aw yeah!

HATTER: It doesn't look very nice.

CAT: That's no sweat. This cat's got everything in hand. Here's one I made earlier.

A custard pie appears either projected onto a screen or, on an electronic device held by the CAT.

HARE: That looks lovely darling. But it's a virtual pie!

MOUSE: We can't eat a virtual pie!

LETTUCE: I can try. (*The LETTUCE makes a bee line for the screen, the HATTER and MOUSE hold back the HARE.*)

CAT: You all just need some more bandwidth. Then you can down load this little slice of heaven. Aw yeah.

The CAT disappears.

HATTER: How do we get more bandwidth by Jenga?

MOUSE: Maybe Alice will know! Let's go and find her!

LETTUCE: I agree. This way!

HARE: I still don't think I'm talking to you!

LETTUCE: I don't care! I'm not going to 'Romaine' here any longer. Bye everyone!

HARE: Ciao darlings!

The LETTUCE drags the HARE offstage and the others follow.

Scene 7 – Queen's Ante-chamber.

FX: Baddie Da-da-da theme.

Enter the QUEEN OF SPADES. She deals with the boos etc. in the usual way.

QUEEN: Still here are we then? I thought I could sense a slightly foul odour. That's what happens when you eat nothing but organic lentils from the Unicorn supermarket. Let's have spray of you! *(She pulls out an air freshener and sprays it around.)* Oh go on, you can boo me as much as you like, but nothing will stop me from carrying out my dastardly plan! Nothing I tell you. Ah ha ha ha ha. Now, if you're ready for it, here's the next installment - which really should become a Netflix original, we could call it House of Cards! What do you mean it's been done? Well anyway here it is. I have just purchased this *(She holds up ALICE's diary)* from that Lemon mobile phone network. Yes, it's all of Alice's personal data. Her thoughts, fears, hopes and dreams are all written down in minute detail and I am going to use this to crush her forever. Tweedledum, Tweedledee.

TWEEDLEDUM and TWEEDLEDEE enter.

DUM/DEE: Yes Mrs Sp..., ah Your Majesty. *(They bow and curtsey.)*

QUEEN: That's more like it. Now, what have you done with that Knave?

DUM: He's locked up. Dum de dum.

DEE: Making Jelly. Dum de dee.

QUEEN: Making what?

DUM: Shhhh! It's a secret!

DEE: Yes, it's a secret, shhh! I said he's a bit smelly.

QUEEN: Yes, well that's probably due to his diet of organic root vegetables. The Guardian reading swine! Here, give him a spray with this. *(She gives them the air freshener.)*

DEE: OK! *(DEE accidentally presses the button and sprays the QUEEN.)*

QUEEN: Aaargghhh! You imbecile. Don't spray me with that. It will clash with my Eau de Cologne.

DEE: Oh. Sorry.

QUEEN: Ask me what Eau de Cologne I wear.

DUM: What Eau de Cologne do you wear?

QUEEN: Brut. *(She flexes her muscles.)*

DEE: Isn't that for men?

QUEEN: Yes, but it was the only thing I could find that packs a real punch! Which is incidentally what you'll be getting if you don't buck up.

DUM/DEE: Yes your majesty.

QUEEN: Now here's the evil plan. Because of my tinkering with her potion, Alice has floated off somewhere into the wilds of wonderland. She'll have been lost for long enough now to have completely forgotten who she is and without anyone around to remind her, she may never remember. With access to her personal data, we can play on her deepest fears and make her sad forever. Then wonderland will be ours! Here are your instructions. Don't let me down.

DUM/DEE: No Mrs Spade.

QUEEN: I said don't call me...oh forget it. Ta ta everyone!

The QUEEN exits.

DUM: Are the instructions straightforward?

DEE: Probably. But before we read them. How about, some jelly!

DEE produces some jelly.

DUM: Wow! So green. What flavour is it.

DEE: I don't know. The Knave said it was is latest creation. Let's try it.

DUM: I haven't got a spoon.

DEE: Um, OK, then lets use our fingers.

DUM: My fingers are dirty.

DEE: So are mine!

DUM: OK, I'll use mine then and throw it in your mouth, that way you don't need to touch it.

DEE: That's a brilliant idea!

They throw handfuls of the jelly at each other trying to catch it in their mouths. They inevitably end up throwing some jelly out into the audience as well.

DEE: I don't like it. Dum de dee.

DUM: I don't like it. Dum de dum.

They freeze, FX: Jelly wobble. They wobble together and look shocked.

DUM: Well, what's the worst thing that can happen? Come on, let's go! *They exit.*

Scene 8 – Caterpillar's Garden.

Curtains open to reveal the CATERPILLAR's garden. He is sat on a giant mushroom in the middle of the stage. There is a strange green smoke emanating from somewhere. ALICE floats in and is placed on the floor.

ALICE: Oh, hello. (*The CATERPILLAR looks at her disdainfully.*) Um, I said hello.

CATERPILLAR: Who are you?

ALICE: I'm not really sure sir. I think I knew who I was earlier, but now I've become somewhat lost. Do you see?

CATERPILLAR: I don't see. Please explain yourself!

ALICE: If I had a self to explain then I would. But I drank a magic potion and then I flew off and I lost myself but I think it's all just a dream and I'm not sure if any of it matters and anyway I don't think I really knew who I was before and now, I'm starting to forget even that!

CATERPILLAR: Hmmm. But who are you?

ALICE: I really don't know what you mean sir.

CATERPILLAR: Maybe it will help if I sing it.

SONG 4 – Who Are you?

ALICE: I can't remember any more. I can't remember my name. (*Her voice echoes.*)

Curtains close on the scene as ALICE stares dumbfounded out into the audience.

INTERVAL

The Curtains open on Alice and the Caterpillar who resume their conversation. Alice's voice keeps echoing.

CATERPILLAR: Well, that's Wonderland for you. It is a very confusing place. To be honest I only remember who I am because I sing about it in rhyme all the time. I suppose I'm a bit like LL Cool J (*or other pop star*) in that respect, except I have less success with the lady caterpillars.

ALICE: Who?

CATERPILLAR: You mean you haven't heard of LL Cool J ? He's one of those rap singers! Tchh. You youngsters, don't know what decent music is.

ALICE: LL Cool J dates lady caterpillars?

CATERPILLAR: No. Look, the point is, rhyming in song always helps, it sticks in your brain. That's how I remember I'm a caterpillar now, but that one day I'll change into a magnificent butterfly.

ALICE: Won't you feel a little peculiar when that happens?

CATERPILLAR: No, I shouldn't think so. It's all part of growing up you see. Changing your self for the better.

ALICE: Yes, I see. I think.

CATERPILLAR: Who do you want to be?

ALICE: Just myself, I suppose. Whoever that is. Well, it's been nice talking to you, but I suppose I should go. (*She turns to go.*)

CATERPILLAR: Wait! I have something important to say!

ALICE: What?

CATERPILLAR: Have a mushroom!

ALICE: Will it help me remember who I am?

CATERPILLAR: It seems to work for me. Focuses the mind. Keep it for when you really need it.

ALICE: Thank you, I will.

CATERPILLAR: And I wouldn't stay too long here in the fog if I were you, sometimes it's very difficult to find your way around. Now then, I'm off to use my B&Q home Chrysalis set, to turn into a butterfly. It was twelve ninety nine in the sale.

The CATERPILLAR bows and starts to exit.

ALICE: Wait, which way do I need to go?

CATERPILLAR: To B&Q?

ALICE: No!

CATERPILLAR: Well, where are you going to?

ALICE: I don't really know.

CATERPILLAR: Then go whichever way you like. Only, avoid the roadworks on the (*insert local road here*). They're resurfacing the road. About time as well, the amount of council tax I pay! Goodbye!

Exit CATERPILLAR.

ALICE: Oh dear, well I suppose that makes sense. The (*local road name*), that does ring a bell though. Let me see, let's go, this way. (*FX of traffic.*) No, this way. ALICE goes to exit.

SCENE 9 - Caterpillar's Garden.

As ALICE is leaving, she bumps into TWEEDLEDEE and TWEEDLEDUM, who are have disguised themselves by wearing moustaches, ties and spectacles. They have ALICE's personal diary.

DUM: Did we hear somebody say they were lost, dum-de-dum?

DEE: Yes, and that they'd forgotten who they are, dum-de-dee?

ALICE: Well, yes, I did. Hang on a second. Don't I recognise you two?

DUM/DEE: No, don't think so!

DUM: We're school inspectors.

DEE: Yes, we've come to take you back to school and remind you who you are.

DUM/DEE: *(Leaning in menacingly and putting their arms around her.)* Dum-de-dum-de-dum.
Dum-de-dum-de-dee.

ALICE: Oh, well, I don't know, I'm pretty sure I'm not supposed to go off with moustachioed strangers I meet in a dark mystical wood.

MUSHROOM: Well, what's the worst thing that could happen? *(Thinks.)* Oh yeah.

ALICE: What do you think boys and girls. Shall I go with them? *(After some cheering from the audience.)* I'm sorry, I don't think I should.

DUM: But we know you. We know what makes you happy.

DEE: And we know what makes you sad.

ALICE: Oh. What makes me sad?

DEE: Oh, lets see. *(Looking in her diary.)* People arguing.

ALICE: Yes. Now you come to mention it, I think it does.

DUM: Plastic floating in the sea.

ALICE: Yes. You're right, that does as well.

DEE: Not being popular at school.

ALICE: Yes.

DUM: Being all alone in the world.

ALICE: But I'm not alone, I'm....

DUM/DEE: There's nobody else here.

ALICE: Oh.

DEE: (*Reading from the instruction booklet.*) You see, the world is a terrible place.

DUM: And you'll probably never fit in, anywhere.

ALICE: No, you're probably right. Maybe there's no point to anything after all. Oh, I suddenly feel very sad. Maybe the ground will just swallow me up and make it all go away.

As Alice drops her shoulders, the lights go a bit lower. The GROUND appears and yawns.

GROUND: Sorry mate, all this dark and stuff is making me right sleepy! I've lost me appetite.

ALICE: Oh dear, I can't even get that right.

DUM: Then come with us. Dum de dum.

DEE: Yes, we can help you. Dum de dee.

ALICE: Well, I guess you do seem to know what you're talking about. OK then.

DUM: Great, it's off to the place of never ending darkness for you then.

ALICE: Place of what?

DEE: Er, place of, niceness. Never ending niceness.

ALICE: Oh that sounds.....nice. Which way is it?

DUM/DEE: (*Pointing in different directions.*) That way!

DUM: Yes, that way. (*Pointing in a different direction.*)

ALICE: Um, why don't you use the sat nav?

SATNAV: No, I'm not working with them two again luv! They're having a mare!

DEE: Tweedledum, about what we're doing. Do you ever feel guilty?

DUM: No. Do you?

DEE: No. I feel hungry.

DUM: Me too! Let's get back for some jelly!

DUM/DEE: Yeah!

They high five. Jelly wobble FX as they both wobble again, look at each other and then march off