



Sample Pages from Alice

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ALICE

A PLAY IN ONE ACT ADAPTED BY
Lindsay Price

FROM THE ORIGINAL BY
Lewis Carroll



Alice

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Characters

2M 3W + 8 Either

Alice

*White Rabbit

*Caterpillar

*Pigeon

Duchess

*Cheshire Cat (played by three performers)

Mad Hatter

*March Hare

*Dormouse

King of Hearts

Queen of Hearts

Chorus

Doors

Key

Bottle

Cake

Footmen

Lackey

Cook

Cards

Knave

Jury

* Can be played by either a male or a female.

Author's Note

This version of *Alice in Wonderland* is inspired by the Cheshire Cat's observation that Alice must be mad, otherwise she wouldn't be in Wonderland. Therefore, everything is a bit off-kilter! For example, in the original production (and in the script) the Cheshire Cat was played by three actresses instead of one. Embrace the craziness and find your own way to explore this mad world!

Set Description/Notes

A crazy checkerboard-painted set of many stairs that go nowhere. At the back there is a large door-shaped screen on which images are projected. The pictures on the screen are achieved by an overhead projector behind the screen. When Alice grows or shrinks the overhead moves closer or farther away to show her changing size.

Music Notes

Sheet music and a recording of *The Duchess' Song* can be found at: <http://tfolk.me/p2>

Twinkle Twinkle Little Bat is sung to the tune of *Twinkle Little Little Star*.

The White Rabbit's "*They told me you had been to her*" sequence towards the end of the play is meant to be spoken rhythmically. Feel free to create a tune for this section if you prefer.

SCENE ONE

Opening Montage – Alice Falls Down The Rabbit Hole

In the first scene ALICE falls asleep, sees the WHITE RABBIT, chases him and goes down the rabbit hole. This scene is done without text to music. If you have a large CHORUS this would be an excellent place to use them.

Ideally, ALICE chases the WHITE RABBIT through the corridors and avenues that the CHORUS makes with their bodies. For the most part, the CHORUS tries to stop ALICE from reaching the WHITE RABBIT.

At the end of the scene, the CHORUS makes the shape of a rabbit hole. The WHITE RABBIT dives down the hole. ALICE shows that she is not sure about following the WHITE RABBIT. The CHORUS teases her and finally she dives down the hole as well. Instead of having ALICE falling down, strong members of the CHORUS should hold her up so she can simulate falling with her arms and legs. This effect can be helped with lighting. At the end of the music ALICE is dumped centre stage on the floor. The CHORUS disperses.

Lights come up on the set, showing the crazy mind of Wonderland. There are stairs that go every which way. Some go up and down and some go up into nowhere. The stairs are painted crazily. There is a door-sized frame centre stage with a white screen. During the opening montage the screen has a picture of a rabbit hole on it. There is a platform in front of the screen.

After the music ends ALICE lands centre stage on the floor. There are four CHORUS members standing in a line on the platform. They are the doors in the hallway. They have their fists clenched like doorknobs. The screen changes to a picture of a small door.

ALICE looks around at her new surroundings. The WHITE RABBIT enters running, looking at his watch and not where he is going. He runs into ALICE.

SCENE TWO**The Hallway**

WHITE RABBIT: (*pushing ALICE over*) Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!

ALICE: (*falling on the ground*) OH!

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

ALICE: Wait!! Wait!! Can you tell me where I am? Wait for me!

The WHITE RABBIT goes through one of the CHORUS doors. ALICE tries to go through it as well.

DOOR 1: Locked.

ALICE tries the other doors.

DOOR 2: Locked.

DOOR 3: Locked.

DOOR 4: Locked.

The last CHORUS door blows ALICE a raspberry.

ALICE: All locked! How will I ever get out again?

A CHORUS member enters, holding up a key.

KEY: Look at me! Look at me! I'm a tiny golden key!

ALICE: (*grabbing the key*) It might belong to one of the doors!

The CHORUS doors ad-lib to one another.

DOORS: Oh she's a smart one. Wish I'd thought of that. What a clever ducky she is.

ALICE goes to each CHORUS door with the key, but they reject her.

DOOR 1: No.

DOOR 2: No.

DOOR 3: No.

DOOR 4: Nope.

The last CHORUS door blows ALICE a raspberry.

ALICE: The locks are too large or the key is too small.

A CHORUS member peeps out from behind the screen.

LOW DOOR: Look at me! Look at me! I might fit the golden key.

ALICE: Another door. I didn't see that one before. *(she runs to the screen and mimes putting the key into the keyhole)* It fits! It fits! *(she drops the key and speaks to the CHORUS doors)* Oh it's the loveliest garden I ever saw! Beds of bright flowers and cool fountains! *(She mimes trying to get her head through the door, which she can't. While she does this, a CHORUS member steals the key.)* Oh! Oh! I can't even get my head through the doorway. And even if my head would go through, it would be of very little use without my shoulders. Oh, how I wish I could shut up like a telescope!

A CHORUS member enters holding a bottle, speaking in a very high voice.

BOTTLE: Drink me.

ALICE: What's that?

BOTTLE: Drink me.

ALICE: *(taking the bottle)* It is all very well to say 'Drink me.' I'm not going to do THAT in a hurry. No, I'll look first, and see whether it's marked 'poison' or not. If you drink much from a bottle marked 'poison' it is almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later.

BOTTLE: *(taunting)* Drink me...

ALICE: However, this bottle is NOT marked 'poison.'

ALICE drinks. The CHORUS bottle makes a gulping sound, and then a satisfied 'AH.'

ALICE: Oh how nice! Cherry-tart, custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffee, and hot buttered toast! What a curious feeling! I must be shutting up like a telescope. Now I can go into that garden.

The CHORUS members playing the doors leave the stage, and the CHORUS member holding the key is hoisted on to the shoulders of another CHORUS member. The screen picture of the door gets larger.

KEY: Look at me! Look at me! I am a little golden key. Ha! Ha!

ALICE: I've forgotten the key! *(She tries to get the key but the CHORUS member keeps it out of reach. ALICE starts to cry.)* Come, there's no use in crying like that! I advise you to leave off this minute!

A CHORUS member enters holding a piece of cake, speaking in a low voice.

CAKE: Eat me!

ALICE: This is a very curious place.

CAKE: Eat me!

ALICE: Well, I'll eat it, and if it makes me grow larger, I can reach the key; and if it makes me grow smaller, I can creep under the door; so either way I'll get into the garden, and I don't care which happens! *(She takes a bite out of the cake. The CHORUS cake makes chewing noises and gulps.)* Curiouser and curiouser! Now I'm opening out like the largest telescope that ever was! *(ALICE is hoisted onto the shoulders of one of the CHORUS. The screen door gets smaller. The CHORUS member holding the key climbs down off the shoulders of the other CHORUS member.)* Goodbye, feet! Oh, my poor little feet, I wonder who will put on your shoes and stockings for you now, dears? I'm sure I shan't be able! I shall be a great deal too far off to trouble myself about you: you must manage the best way you can... Oh dear, what nonsense I'm talking!

WHITE RABBIT: *(entering on the run, carrying a fan and some gloves)* Oh! The Duchess, the Duchess! Oh! Won't she be savage if I've kept her waiting!

ALICE: If you please, sir –

WHITE RABBIT: Ahhhh!

He drops the fan and gloves and hightails it offstage. One of the CHORUS picks up the fan and the gloves and they both get passed along to ALICE.

ALICE: *(calling to WHITE RABBIT)* Wait!! I wonder if I've been changed in the night. But if I'm not the same, the next question is, who in the world am I? I'm sure I'm not Ada, for her hair goes in such long ringlets, and mine doesn't go in ringlets at all; and I'm sure I can't be Mabel, for I know all sorts of things, and she, oh! She knows very little! Besides, SHE'S she, and I'm I, and... I'll try to see if I know all the things I used to know. Let me see: four times five is twelve, and four times six is thirteen, and four times seven is – I shall never get to twenty at that rate! Let's try geography.

London is the capital of Paris, and Paris is the capital of Rome, and Rome – No, THAT’S all wrong, I’m certain! I must have been changed for Mabel! I’ve put on one of these gloves! How CAN I have done that? I must be growing small again.

ALICE gets off the shoulders. A picture of a mushroom goes on the screen. The CATERPILLAR enters. The CATERPILLAR should have a long coat so that several CHORUS members can fit underneath, making the caterpillar body. One of the CHORUS should play the extra hands of the CATERPILLAR.

ALL OF CHORUS: (yelling to ALICE) The Fan! The Fan!

ALICE: (dropping the fan, which is picked up by a CHORUS member) The Fan! That WAS a narrow escape! And now for the garden! My goodness what a large mushroom!

SCENE THREE

The Caterpillar

CATERPILLAR: Who are YOU?

ALICE: I – I hardly know, sir, just at present – at least I know who I was when I got up this morning but I think I must have been changed several times since then.

CATERPILLAR: What do you mean? Explain yourself!

ALICE: I can’t explain MYSELF, I’m afraid, sir because I’m not myself, you see.

CATERPILLAR: I don’t see.

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

CATERPILLAR: Who are you?

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

CATERPILLAR: Why? (ALICE stamps the ground and walks away) Come back! I’ve something important to say! (ALICE returns) Keep your temper.

ALICE: Is that all?

CATERPILLAR: No. So you think you’re changed, do you?

ALICE: I'm afraid I am, sir, I can't remember things as I used – and I don't keep the same size for ten minutes together!

CATERPILLAR: What size do you want to be?

ALICE: Oh, I'm not particular as to size; only one doesn't like changing so often, you know.

CATERPILLAR: Are you content now?

ALICE: Well, I should like to be a LITTLE larger, sir, if you wouldn't mind. Three inches is such a wretched height to be.

CATERPILLAR: It is a very good height indeed!

ALICE: But I'm not used to it!

CATERPILLAR: One side will make you grow taller, and the other side will make you grow shorter.

ALICE: One side of WHAT? The other side of WHAT?

CATERPILLAR: Of the mushroom.

The CATERPILLAR exits. ALICE receives two pieces of mushroom from a CHORUS member.

ALICE: And now which is which? (she takes a bite) Whoa!!!!

ALICE grows tall again and goes back on the shoulder of a CHORUS member. A puppet PIGEON appears atop the screen. The voice for the PIGEON stands beside the screen in full view. A picture of a tree appears on the screen.

SCENE FOUR

The Pigeon

PIGEON: (he pecks ALICE in the head) Serpent!

ALICE: I'm not a Serpent! Let me alone!

PIGEON: (he pecks her again) Serpent I say again!

ALICE: I haven't the least idea what you're talking about.

PIGEON: As if it wasn't trouble enough hatching the eggs but I must be on the lookout for serpents night and day. I haven't had a wink of sleep these three nights!

ALICE: I'm sorry you've been annoyed.

PIGEON: And just as I'd taken to the highest tree in the wood and just as I was thinking I should be free of them at last, they must needs come wriggling down from the sky! SERPENT! (*attacks ALICE*)

ALICE: I am not a Serpent, I tell you! I'm a... I'm a...

PIGEON: Well! What are you? I can see you're trying to invent something.

ALICE: I'm a little girl.

PIGEON: A likely story. I've seen a good many little girls in my time, but never one with such a neck as yours. No, no, you're a serpent; and there's no use denying it. I suppose you'll be telling me next that you've never tasted an egg.

ALICE: I have, but little girls eat eggs quite as much as serpents you know.

PIGEON: I don't believe it. You're looking for eggs and what does it matter to me whether you're a little girl or a serpent?

ALICE: It matters a good deal to me! But I'm not looking for eggs and if I was I shouldn't want yours. I don't like them raw.

PIGEON: Well, be off with you then.

PIGEON pushes ALICE.

ALICE: (*falling*) OH!

ALL OF CHORUS: (*yelling at ALICE*) Eat the mushroom!

ALICE: The mushroom! I almost forgot!

ALICE is lowered off the shoulders. A picture of a door appears on the screen and FOOTMAN 2 stands in front of the door. FOOTMAN and LACKEY enter, pushing past ALICE to approach the door.

SCENE FOUR A

Alice Outside the Duchess' House

ALICE: I've got back to my right size: the next thing is, to get into that beautiful garden. How IS that to be done, I wonder? (*sees the door*) Whoever lives there?

FOOTMAN: (*holding an invitation out to FOOTMAN 2*) For the Duchess. An invitation from the Queen to play croquet.

LACKEY: (*imitating the FOOTMAN*) For the Duchess. An invitation from the Queen to play croquet.

There is no response from FOOTMAN 2. FOOTMAN and LACKEY look at each other and try again.

FOOTMAN: From the Queen. An invitation for the Duchess to play croquet.

LACKEY: (*imitating*) From the Queen. An invitation for the Duchess to play croquet.

FOOTMAN 2 does not move. FOOTMAN sticks the invitation into FOOTMAN 2's mouth. FOOTMAN and LACKEY click their heels and push their way past ALICE again as they exit. ALICE approaches FOOTMAN 2 and waves her hand in front of his face. He does not move. ALICE goes to knock on the door.

FOOTMAN 2: (*talking with invitation in mouth*) Mmm mmmm. Mmmhe.

ALICE removes the invitation from FOOTMAN 2's mouth.

FOOTMAN 2: Thank you. There's no sort of use in knocking, and that is for two reasons. First, because I'm on the same side of the door as you are. Secondly, because they're making such a noise inside, no one could possibly hear you.

ALICE: How am I to get in?

FOOTMAN 2: There might be some sense in your knocking, if we had the door between us. For instance, if you were INSIDE, you might knock, and I could let you out, you know.

ALICE: How am I to get in?

FOOTMAN 2: I shall sit here till tomorrow or next day maybe... I shall sit here, on and off, for days and days.

ALICE: But what am I to do?

FOOTMAN 2: Anything you like.

ALICE shrugs her shoulders and goes around one side of the door as THE COOK and THE DUCHESS come roaring out the other side. Four members of the CHORUS also enter. They make up the four elements of a stove and each has a huge pot on his or her head. FOOTMAN 2 exits. THE COOK and THE DUCHESS

and the CHORUS make large amounts of noise. The DUCHESS savagely tries to calm her baby. A CHORUS member makes loud baby crying sounds. ALICE circles the door and re-enters. A picture of the CHESHIRE CAT appears on the screen.

SCENE FIVE

Alice Inside The Duchess' House

DUCHESS and COOK: (*singing*)

Wow! Wow! Wow!

Wow! Wow! Wow!

ALICE: (*pointing at the screen*) Please would you tell me why your cat grins like that?

DUCHESS: It's a Cheshire cat, and that's why. Pig!

The DUCHESS takes the invitation from ALICE.

COOK: Pig!

ALICE: I didn't know that Cheshire cats always grinned; in fact, I didn't know that cats COULD grin.

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

ALICE: I don't know of any that do.

COOK: You don't know much, and that's a fact.

The DUCHESS throws the baby up into the air.

ALICE: Oh, PLEASE mind what you're doing!

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

The COOK and CHORUS members beat out a rhythm for the song.

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

CHORUS: Wow! Wow! Wow!
Wow! Wow! Wow!

DUCHESS: I speak severely to my boy,
I beat him when he sneezes;

For he can thoroughly enjoy
The pepper when he pleases!

CHORUS: Wow! Wow! Wow!
Wow! Wow! Wow!

The CHORUS continues to sing as they exit.

DUCHESS: (*throwing the baby at ALICE*) Here you may nurse it a bit if you like. I must go and get ready to play croquet with the Queen.

The DUCHESS and COOK leave. The CHORUS member making the baby noises remains.

ALICE: If I don't take this child away with me, they're sure to kill it in a day or two. (*the CHORUS member changes the baby's cries into pig squeals*) Don't grunt, that's not at all a proper way of expressing yourself. If you're going to turn into a pig, my dear, I'll have nothing more to do with you. (*she tosses the pig at the CHORUS member who takes it offstage*) Cheshire Puss, would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?

*ALICE talks to the CHESHIRE CAT on the screen.
The voice of the CHESHIRE CAT comes from three performers who enter and sit beside ALICE.*

SCENE FIVE A

The Cheshire Cat

CHESHIRE CAT 1: That depends...

CHESHIRE CAT 2: ...a good deal on where...

CHESHIRE CAT 3: ...you want to get to.

ALICE: I don't much care where.

CHESHIRE CAT 1: Then...

CHESHIRE CAT 2: ...it doesn't matter...

CHESHIRE CAT 1: ...which...

CHESHIRE CAT 3: ...way you go.

ALICE: So long as I get SOMEWHERE.

CHESHIRE CAT 2: Oh, you're sure to do...

ALL THREE: ...that,

CHESHIRE CAT 3: ...if you only walk...

CHESHIRE CAT 1: ...long enough.

ALICE: What sort of people live about here?

CHESHIRE CAT 3: (*pointing*) In THAT direction, lives a Hatter.

CHESHIRE CAT 1: (*pointing*) And in THAT direction, lives a March Hare.

CHESHIRE CAT 2: Visit either you like.

ALL THREE: They're both mad.

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

CHESHIRE CAT 1: Oh...

CHESHIRE CAT 2: ...you...

ALL THREE: ...can't help that.

CHESHIRE CAT 1: We're all mad here.

CHESHIRE CAT 3: I'm mad.

CHESHIRE CAT 2: You're mad.

ALICE: How do you know I'm mad?

CHESHIRE CAT 3: You must be...

CHESHIRE CAT 1: ...or...

CHESHIRE CAT 2: ...you wouldn't...

CHESHIRE CAT 1: ...have come here.

CHESHIRE CAT 3: Do you play...

CHESHIRE CAT 1: ...croquet...

CHESHIRE CAT 2: ...with the Queen today?

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

CHESHIRE CAT 1: You'll see me there.

ALL THREE: By-the-by...

CHESHIRE CAT 2: ...what...

CHESHIRE CAT 3: ...became of the baby?

CHESHIRE CAT 1: I'd...

CHESHIRE CAT 2: ...nearly forgotten to ask.

ALICE: It turned into a pig.

ALL THREE: I thought it would.

The CHESHIRE CAT disappears from the screen and the three performers exit. An odd tree appears on the screen.

ALICE: I've seen hatters before. The March Hare will be much the most interesting, and perhaps as this is May it won't be raving mad – at least not so mad as it was in March.

The MARCH HARE, HATTER and the DORMOUSE come screaming on, up and down the stairs, singing as they go.

SCENE SIX

The Tea Party

HARE, HATTER, DORMOUSE: Twinkle Twinkle Little Bat, How I wonder what you're at! Twinkle Twinkle Little Bat, How I wonder what you're at!

As they reach centre stage and ALICE tries to join them, they start yelling at her.

HARE, HATTER, DORMOUSE: No room! No room! No room!

ALICE: There's PLENTY of room!

MARCH HARE: Have some wine.

ALICE: I don't see any wine.

MARCH HARE: There isn't any.

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

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

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

HATTER: Your hair wants cutting.

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

HATTER: Why is a raven like a writing-desk?

ALICE: I believe I can guess that.

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

ALICE: Exactly so.

MARCH HARE: Then you should say what you mean.

ALICE: I do, at least – at least I mean what I say – that’s the same thing, you know.

HATTER: Not the same thing a bit! You might just as well say that “I see what I eat” is the same thing as “I eat what I see!”

MARCH HARE: You might just as well say that “I like what I get” is the same thing as “I get what I like!”

DORMOUSE: You might just as well say, that “I breathe when I sleep” is the same thing as “I sleep when I breathe!”

HATTER: It IS the same thing with you. (*looking at his watch*) What day of the month is it?

ALICE: The fourth.

HATTER: Two days wrong! I told you butter wouldn’t suit the works!

MARCH HARE: It was the BEST butter.

HATTER: Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well. You shouldn’t have put it in with the bread-knife.

MARCH HARE: It was the BEST butter you know.

ALICE: What a funny watch! It tells the day of the month, and doesn’t tell what o’clock it is!

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

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

HATTER: Which is just the case with MINE.

ALICE: I don’t quite understand you.

HATTER: The Dormouse is asleep again.

DORMOUSE: (*waking up*) Of course, of course; just what I was going to remark myself.

HATTER: Have you guessed the riddle yet?

ALICE: No, I give it up. What's the answer?

HATTER: I haven't the slightest idea.

MARCH HARE: Nor I.

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

HATTER: If you knew Time as well as I do, you wouldn't talk about wasting IT. It's a HIM.

ALICE: I don't know what you mean.

HATTER: Of course you don't! I dare say you never even spoke to Time!

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

HATTER: Ah! That accounts for it, he won't stand beating. Now, if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock. For instance, suppose it were nine o'clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons: you'd only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling! Half-past one, time for dinner!

MARCH HARE: I only wish it was.

ALICE: That would be grand, certainly, but then – I shouldn't be hungry for it, you know.

HATTER: Not at first, perhaps, but you could keep it to half-past one as long as you liked.

ALICE: Is that the way YOU manage?

HATTER: Not !! We quarrelled last March – just before HE went mad, you know – it was at the great concert given by the Queen of Hearts, and I had to sing, "Twinkle, twinkle, little bat! How I wonder what you're at!" You know the song, perhaps?

ALICE: I've heard something like it.

HATTER: It goes on, you know, in this way: – "Up above the world you fly, Like a tea-tray in the sky. Twinkle, twinkle –"

DORMOUSE: (*sleepily*) Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle –

HATTER: Well, I'd hardly finished the first verse, when the Queen jumped up and bawled out, "He's murdering the time! Off with his head!"

ALICE: How dreadfully savage!

HATTER: And ever since that, he won't do a thing I ask! It's always six o'clock now.

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

HATTER: It's always tea-time, and we've no time to wash the things between whiles.

ALICE: Then you keep moving round, I suppose?

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

MARCH HARE: I vote the young lady tells us a story.

ALICE: I'm afraid I don't know one.

HATTER and HARE: Then the Dormouse shall! Wake up, Dormouse!

DORMOUSE: (*waking up*) I wasn't asleep, I heard every word you fellows were saying.

MARCH HARE: Tell us a story!

ALICE: Yes, please do!

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

DORMOUSE: Once upon a time there were three little sisters, and their names were Elsie, Lacie, and Tillie; and they lived at the bottom of a well –

ALICE: What did they live on?

DORMOUSE: They lived on treacle.

ALICE: They couldn't have done that, you know, they'd have been ill.

DORMOUSE: So they were, VERY ill.

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

MARCH HARE: Take some more tea.

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

HATTER: You mean you can't take LESS, it's very easy to take MORE than nothing.

ALICE: Nobody asked YOUR opinion.

HATTER: Who's making personal remarks now?

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

DORMOUSE: It was a treacle-well.

ALICE: There's no such thing!

DORMOUSE: If you can't be civil, you'd better finish the story for yourself.

ALICE: No, please go on! I won't interrupt again.

HATTER: I want a clean cup, let's all move one place on.

ALICE: This is the stupidest tea-party I ever was at in all my life!

The HATTER, HARE and DORMOUSE, look at each other, shrug and run off singing.

HARE, HATTER, DORMOUSE: "Twinkle twinkle little bat how I wonder where you're at! Twinkle twinkle little bat how I wonder where you're at!"

A rose tree appears on the screen. Three CHORUS members dressed as CARDS enter with paint and brushes.

SCENE SEVEN

The Cards

TWO: Look out now, Five! Don't go splashing paint over me like that!

FIVE: I couldn't help it, Seven jogged my elbow.

SEVEN: That's right, Five! Always lay the blame on others!

FIVE: YOU'D better not talk! I heard the Queen say only yesterday you deserved to be beheaded!

TWO: What for?

SEVEN: That's none of YOUR business, Two!

FIVE: Yes, it IS his business! And I'll tell him – it was for bringing the cook tulip-roots instead of onions.

SEVEN: Well, of all the unjust things –

ALICE: Would you tell me, why you are painting those roses?

The three CARDS jump with a scream and prostrate themselves in front of ALICE.

ALICE: What are you doing?

They all look up.

SEVEN: Oh my goodness gracious.

FIVE: I just lost a year of my life. Nearly became a four.

TWO: Why the fact is, you see, Miss, this here ought to have been a RED rose-tree, and we put a white one in by mistake; and if the Queen was to find it out, we should all have our heads cut off, you know. So you see, Miss, we're doing our best, afore she comes, to –

FIVE has been looking offstage and runs to the others.

FIVE: Red Alert! The Queen! The Queen!

The three CARDS scream and prostrate themselves. A fanfare is heard as the QUEEN, KING and their party enter. ALICE watches from the side. Once everyone is in place, the QUEEN notices ALICE, and sees she is not bowing.

QUEEN: (pointing at ALICE) Who is this? (the CARDS look up, scream and prostrate themselves again) Idiots! What's your name, child?

ALICE: My name is Alice, so please your Majesty.

QUEEN: (pointing to the CARDS) And who are THESE?

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

QUEEN: Off with her head! Off –

ALICE: Nonsense!

KING: Consider, my dear: she is only a child!

QUEEN: Can you play croquet?

ALICE: Yes.

QUEEN: Come on, then!

A CHORUS member hands ALICE a flamingo. The players prepare for the game. Everyone holds a flamingo.



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