

Through the Looking-Glass



Sample Pages from Through the Looking-Glass

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THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

A PLAY IN ONE ACT ADAPTED BY
Lindsay Price

FROM THE ORIGINAL BY
Lewis Carroll



Through the Looking-Glass

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Characters

3W+3M+7 Either + Wonderland Ensemble

Alice	Humpty Dumpty
White Queen	Tweedledum & Tweedledee
Red Queen	Haiga & Hatta
White King	Lion
White Knight	Unicorn
Red Knight	

Wonderland Ensemble, from which comes the following:

Flowers: Tiger-lily, Violet, Rose, Daisies (3), Larkspur	Sheep The Curiosities in the Shop
Passengers: Guard, Goat, Horse, White Paper, Beetle	All the King's Horses and All the King's Men
The Wood	Waiter

Humpty Dumpty, Tweedledum & Tweedledee, Haiga, Hatta, Lion and Unicorn can be played by either gender. You might consider using masks for the Lion and the Unicorn, and a puppet for Humpty Dumpty.

You may consider dividing up the part of Alice – one girl to play her at the beginning and end, and another while she is in Wonderland.

Set

The set for *Through the Looking-Glass* is a bare stage, as this is a prop-heavy show. The Wonderland Ensemble will be very busy helping to transition from location to location. Everything that comes on and off should be able to be handled by actors.

For example, anything used in *Chapter I* must be easily movable as it has to be rearranged quickly from “real world” drawing room to “looking-glass world” drawing room. Think about putting felt (or wheels) on the bottom of pieces so they are easy to push. Perhaps the fireplace is only drawn on canvas, held by two actors and thus easily moved.

Don't be bound by realism – the mirror should be an empty large round shape because Alice is going to have to go through it. Don't be afraid to be abstract. If possible, find ways for furniture pieces to come apart or to be reused in unusual ways. It would be awesome if anything used in the drawing room reappeared throughout the play. If you use a three-dimensional fireplace, what if it's turned on its side and used as a seat for the steam train later on? What if the chair travels across the stage during one of the transitions? How could the large circular mirror shape be used in other scenes?

Lastly, specific pieces (such as the steam train) should NOT look realistic. Go for basic pieces and let our imagination fill in the blanks. This is Wonderland after all...

Props

You can find a prop list for each chapter at the back of the script.

Costume

Think simple. There is very little time for complete costume changes in the transitions. Anything that slows the pace of the play will take the audience out of Wonderland. Give the Ensemble a base costume with perhaps a single add on piece. Since the characters are chess pieces, half should be dressed in red (this version uses red instead of black) and the other in white. Consider using half-masks for some of the Wonderland characters.

If you are using two Alices, dress Wonderland Alice in dark colours, while Real Alice wears light colours.

Unison Speaking

There is a lot of unison speaking in the script. The only way it will work is to practice, practice, practice. Everyone has to feel a thousand percent confident in the lines and the timing, otherwise it won't work. Whenever the cast speaks in unison it must sound like one voice.

Movement

Looking-Glass World is a backwards image world. Any time you can incorporate characters entering or exiting backwards, do so – as long as the actors feel comfortable with that movement.

Chaos and order is explored in the book. Explore having actors explode into chaotic movement, then brought back into order. Explore using circles and lines in both states of chaos and order.

Chapter I

In the darkness there are the sounds of whispers. Each of the WONDERLAND characters whispers a line from one of the poems in the play: Jabberwocky, The Lion and the Unicorn, Tweedledee and Tweedledum, The Walrus and the Carpenter. Each actor must choose a single line to whisper, very softly. It should sound like the snow against the windowpanes ALICE speaks of. See NOTES for line suggestions.

The lights slowly rise on ALICE. She sits in a wingback chair, holding a black kitten (a stuffed toy). Behind her is a window pane with curtains. Beside her is a fireplace, a mirror above the fireplace, and a small stepladder or stool. NOTE that the mirror should be a large round empty shape because ALICE is going to have to go through it.

Far upstage the rest of the WONDERLAND ENSEMBLE (here on in just called WONDERLAND) stands in two rows with their backs to the audience. They represent the two rows at the start of a chess game. At various points in Chapter I they are going to take a step backward – toward downstage. Practice this many times so actors can step backwards with confidence, without looking.

The whispers continue until the lights are up full. When ALICE starts to speak, WONDERLAND goes silent.

ALICE: Do you hear the snow against the windowpanes, Kitty? Just as if someone was kissing the window all over outside. I wonder if the snow loves the trees and the fields, that it kisses them so gently? And then it covers them snug, you know with a white quilt, and perhaps it says... (she yawns) Go to sleep, darlings...

The WONDERLAND characters take a step “forward.” (they step back, still facing upstage)

WONDERLAND: (whispering) In a wonderland they lie, dreaming as the days go by...

All of WONDERLAND gives a big yawn. ALICE yawns at the same time. ALICE then shakes her head. She sits up straight.

ALICE: Kitty dear, let's pretend! Let's pretend that you're the Red Queen. *(she looks at the cat)* Can you play chess? Now don't smile, my dear. I'm asking it seriously.

WONDERLAND: *(whispering)* Dreaming as the summers die...

RED QUEEN: A pawn goes two squares in its first move, you know.

WHITE KNIGHT: You will observe the rules of battle?

WONDERLAND takes a step "forward."

ALICE: *(holding Kitty toward the mirror)* If you're not good, I'll put you through into looking-glass house. How would you like that?

WONDERLAND takes a step "forward."

WONDERLAND: *(a little louder, not full voice)* Ever drifting down the stream...

TWEEDLEDUM & TWEEDLEDEE: You like poetry?

ALICE puts Kitty on the chair. She stands and moves to the mirror, making her way up the stepladder.

ALICE: How would you like to live in looking-glass house, Kitty?

WONDERLAND: *(A little louder)* Lingering in the golden gleam...

ALICE: *(looking in the mirror)* That room's the same as our drawing-room, only the things go the other way.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: You've been listening at doors!

ALICE: Let's pretend there's a way of getting through it.

WHITE QUEEN: Sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.

WONDERLAND takes a step "forward."

WONDERLAND: *(a little louder)* Life, what is it but a dream?

ALICE: I'm sure it's got, oh! *(she stands on the top step of the ladder, looking into the mirror)* Such beautiful things in it. It'd be easy to...

WONDERLAND: *(louder!)* It'd be easy to!

ALICE: *(reaching toward the mirror)* It'd be easy to...

WONDERLAND: *(louder!)* It'd be easy to!

ALICE: to... to... *(she puts her hand through the mirror)*

WONDERLAND: Oh Kitty!

ALICE: Oh Kitty!

Chaos erupts.

The entrance into WONDERLAND has three parts. All three parts are done at the SAME TIME.

ONE: All the WONDERLAND characters start saying their “one line” in full voice, a cacophony of noise. WONDERLAND runs in two circles around ALICE, one row runs clockwise, the other runs counterclockwise. WONDERLAND moves as fast as they can, repeating their line. Add music if it helps increase the noise.

TWO: ALICE, at the same time, is moving through the mirror. She must move as slowly as possible, perhaps she stays still, frozen, while everyone moves to make the drawing-room changes. Think The Matrix.

THREE: The movement of the furniture from real world to Wonderland. ALL the furniture needs to be altered – since it’s the mirror reverse. If the chair was Stage Left, it has to move to Stage Right. The stepladder has to move from the left of the fireplace to the right. Wonderland drawing-room is the mirror image. The furniture must move in a circle around ALICE just as the WONDERLAND characters move around ALICE. The more “fantastical” the movement the better. Make it magical.

NOTE: In the movement, kitty is removed from the chair and replaced by a book.

At the end of the sequence, ALICE stands in the Wonderland drawing-room, and all the WONDERLAND characters return to their two chess-like rows. Only now WONDERLAND faces ALICE. (instead of facing upstage)

When ALICE speaks all become silent.

ALICE: Oh!

ALICE looks around her with wonder.

WONDERLAND: Beware the Jabberwock, my son...

ALICE: (*picking up the book from the chair*) My goodness. What’s this?

WONDERLAND spouts out nonsense words.

WONDERLAND: Sevot yhtils eht dna, gillirb sawT...

ALICE: Why it's a looking-glass book of course.

ALICE moves to the mirror and holds it up.

WONDERLAND: Jabberwocky...

As WONDERLAND recites, they move together to form the monster that is the Jabberwock. They form a t-shape with snapping jaws, a wide wing span and a slashing tail. The cloth that will eventually be used for the brook is draped over the back to create wings.

WONDERLAND:

Tw'as brillig, and the slithy toves
 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
 All mimsy were the borogoves,
 And the mome raths outgrabe.
 Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
 The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
 Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
 The frumious Bandersnatch!
 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 whiffing through the tulgey wood,
 And burbled as it came!

ALICE: Well, that's rather hard to understand.

ALICE closes the book with a slam. When she does, WONDERLAND crumples to the ground.

ALICE: *(dropping the book on the chair)* It fills my head with ideas, only I don't exactly know what they are! Let's have a look at the garden.

Chapter II

ALICE starts running in place. WONDERLAND runs in around her in two circles – one clockwise and one counterclockwise. They run one time around ALICE and return to their chess rows.

WONDERLAND: (*as they run*) 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!

ALICE stops and looks around her.

ALICE: Oh no! How curiously it twists! It's more like a corkscrew than a path. (*she points off*) THIS turn goes to the hill.

ALICE starts running in place. WONDERLAND runs in circles around her – one clockwise and one counterclockwise. They run one time around ALICE and return to their chess rows.

WONDERLAND: “And, has thou slain the Jabberwock? Come to my arms, my beamish boy! O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!” He chortled in his joy.

ALICE: No it doesn't! It goes straight back to the house. I'm not going in again yet. That would be the end of all my adventures.

ALICE starts running in place double time. WONDERLAND also moves double time in their circles and speaks double time. Don't worry if it sounds like gobbledegook.

WONDERLAND: Twas brillig, and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe; All mimsy were the borogoves, And the mome raths outgrabe. O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay! (*repeat last till they exit*)

This time as WONDERLAND moves around ALICE, the drawing-room furniture is taken offstage and the FLOWERS enter downstage left. When the scene is set, WONDERLAND exits.

ALICE stops running and stamps her feet. She's gone nowhere.

ALICE: Oh! I never saw such a house for getting in the way! Never! (*she sees the flowers*) O Tiger-lily, I wish you could talk.

TIGER-LILY: We CAN talk. When there's anybody worth talking to.

All the FLOWERS giggle. ALICE looks around amazed.

ALICE: And can ALL the flowers talk?

TIGER-LILY: As well as YOU can. And a great deal louder.

ROSE: It isn't manners for us to begin, you know. And I was really was wondering when you'd speak! I said to myself, her face has got SOME sense in it, though it's not a clever one.

TIGER-LILY: If only her petals curled up a little more, she'd be all right.

ALICE: Aren't you sometimes frightened at being planted out here, with nobody to take care of you?

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

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

DAISY: It says "Bough-wough!" (*same as bow wow*)

DAISY TWO: That's why its branches are called boughs!

DAISY THREE: Didn't you know THAT?

All the DAISIES start to talking shrilly to each other, about ALICE's stupidity.

TIGER-LILY: Silence, every one of you!

The DAISIES just talk louder.

ALICE: (*to the DAISIES*) If you don't hold your tongues I'll pick you!

The DAISIES are immediately silent.

TIGER-LILY: (*holding her head*) The daisies are the worst of all. When one speaks, they all begin together. It's enough to make one wither.

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

ROSE: Put your hand down, and feel the ground.

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

TIGER-LILY: In most gardens they make the beds too soft. The flowers are always asleep.

ALICE: I never thought of that before!

ROSE: It's MY opinion that you never think AT ALL.

VIOLET: I NEVER saw anybody that looked stupider.

TIGER-LILY: Hold your tongue! As if YOU ever saw anybody! You keep your head under the leaves, and snore away there, till you know no more what's going on in the world, than if you were a bud!

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

ROSE: There's one other flower in the garden that can move about like you. But she's more bushy than you are.

ALICE: There's another little girl in the garden somewhere? Does she ever come out here?

ROSE: I daresay you'll see her soon.

LARKSPUR: (*squeaking*) She's coming! I hear her footstep, thump, thump, thump, along the gravel-walk!

ALICE: (*looking off*) Oh! It's the Red Queen. I think I'll go and meet her.

ALICE starts walking forward.

FLOWERS: (*shaking their heads and wagging their fingers*) Ah, ah, ah!

ALICE turns around and starts walking backwards. As she does so, all of WONDERLAND enters to run a circle around ALICE.

WONDERLAND: (*as they move*)

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!

WONDERLAND finish upstage in their chess rows.

Meanwhile, the FLOWERS exit, and the RED QUEEN has entered, walking backwards. The RED QUEEN and ALICE end up side by side on stage. The RED QUEEN gets right in ALICE's face, causing ALICE to jump back.

RED QUEEN: Where do you come from? And where are you going?
Look up, speak nicely, and don't twiddle your fingers all the time.

ALICE: I have lost my way.

RED QUEEN: I don't know what you mean by YOUR way. All the ways about here belong to ME. But why did you come out here at all?
Curtsey while you're thinking what to say, it saves time.

ALICE curtseys right away.

ALICE: Ah –

RED QUEEN: Open your mouth a LITTLE wider when you speak and always say (*speaking snootily*) ‘your Majesty.’

ALICE: I only wanted to see what the garden was like, (*imitating*) your Majesty.

RED QUEEN: (*patting ALICE on the head*) That’s right.

ALICE: (*looking out*) I declare...

RED QUEEN: What, child?

ALICE: (*pointing*) It’s marked out just like a large chessboard! There ought to be some men moving about somewhere, and so there are! It’s a great huge game of chess.

WONDERLAND: (*whispering*) In a Wonderland they lie, dreaming as the days go by...

ALICE: How I WISH I was one of them! I wouldn’t mind being a Pawn, if only I might join – though of course I should LIKE to be a Queen, best.

RED QUEEN: That’s easily managed. You can be the White Queen’s Pawn, if you like. You’re in the Second Square to begin with: when you get to the Eighth Square you’ll be a Queen. RUN!

*The RED QUEEN and ALICE start running in place.
WONDERLAND runs around them once in their two
opposite circles.*

RED QUEEN: Faster! Faster!

ALICE: I wonder if all the things move along with us?

RED QUEEN: Faster! Don’t try to talk!

ALICE: (*puffing*) Are we nearly there?

RED QUEEN: Nearly there? Why we passed it ten minutes ago. Faster! Stop!

*WONDERLAND is back in their rows. ALICE is out of
breath, the RED QUEEN is composed.*

RED QUEEN: You may rest a little now.

ALICE: (*looking around*) Why, I do believe we've been under this tree the whole time! Everything's just as it was!

RED QUEEN: Of course it is. What would you have it?

ALICE: Well, in OUR country, you'd generally get to somewhere else – if you ran very fast for a long time, as we've been doing.

RED QUEEN: A pawn goes two squares in its first move, you know.

ALICE: I beg your pardon?

RED QUEEN: A pawn goes two squares in its first move. So you'll go VERY quickly through the Third Square—by railway, I should think—and you'll find yourself in the Fourth Square in no time. Well, THAT square belongs to Tweedledum and Tweedledee—the Fifth is mostly water—the Sixth belongs to Humpty Dumpty. But you make no remark?

ALICE: I – I didn't know I had to make one.

RED QUEEN: You SHOULD have said, "It's extremely kind of you to tell me all this." We'll suppose it said. The Seventh Square is all forest—however, one of the Knights will show you the way—and in the Eighth Square we shall be Queens together, and it's all feasting and fun! Curtsey!

ALICE does so.

RED QUEEN: Speak in French when you can't think of the English for a thing. Turn out your toes as you walk. And remember who you are! Good-bye!

The RED QUEEN turns and runs offstage backwards. As she does WONDERLAND starts to move in their circles very slowly.

ALICE: (*can't believe the RED QUEEN is gone so fast*) But where... She CAN run very fast. I must remember I am a pawn. I do so want to get into the Third Square!

WONDERLAND kicks into high gear. They move in their circle at top speed. At the same time two of WONDERLAND weave in and out with a blue cloth. ALICE runs in place.

WONDERLAND: (*as they move*)
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!”

Those holding the blue cloth lay it down in front of ALICE.

ALICE: The brook! It must soon be time for my moooooooooove. (she jumps over the cloth) OH!

WONDERLAND bursts out of their lines (think chaos) and sets up for the next scene. ALICE is flung about.

WONDERLAND: (imitating a steam engine) Whooo-hooo! Chugga, chugga, chugga, chugga, Whooo-hooo! (WONDERLAND keeps this up during the scene change)

Chapter III

The steam train is set up around ALICE. She is flung to and fro during the set up. Cubes or steamer trunks are set up in a row.

The PASSENGERS sit and bounce up and down as if they are on a moving train. ALICE stands, looking around her in wonder.

PASSENGERS: (imitating the sound of a steam train) Whooo-hooo! Chugga, chugga, chugga, chugga. Whooo-hooo!

The GUARD enters.

GUARD: Tickets, please!

Everyone but ALICE holds up a ticket.

GUARD: (to ALICE) Now then! Show your ticket, child.

PASSENGERS: (leaning toward ALICE) Don’t keep him waiting, child! Why, his time is worth a thousand pounds a minute.

ALICE: I’m afraid I haven’t got one. There wasn’t a ticket-office where I came from.

PASSENGERS: (to each other) There wasn’t room for one where she came from. The land there is worth a thousand pounds an inch.

GUARD: Don’t make excuses. You should have bought one from the engine-driver.

PASSENGERS: The man that drives the engine. Why, the smoke alone is worth a thousand pounds a puff.

ALICE: (*whispering*) There's no use in speaking.

PASSENGERS: (*whispering*) Better say nothing at all. Language is worth a thousand pounds a word. (*nice and loud*) Whooo-hooo! Chugga, chugga, chugga, chugga. Whooo-hooo!

The PASSENGERS continue the "chugga, chugga, chugga, chugga" quietly under the next exchange.

ALICE: I shall dream about a thousand pounds tonight, I know I shall.

GUARD: You're travelling the wrong way. (*exits*)

Note: WHITE PAPER is a passenger dressed in a suit of white paper.

WHITE PAPER: So young a child ought to know which way she's going, even if she doesn't know her own name.

GOAT: She ought to know her way to the ticket-office, even if she doesn't know her alphabet.

BEETLE: She'll have to go back from here as luggage.

HORSE: She must be labelled 'Lass with care!'

GOAT: She must draw the train herself the rest of the way!

The PASSENGERS all laugh once in unison and go right back to their quiet "chugga, chugga, chugga, chugga."

WHITE PAPER: Never mind what they all say, my dear, but take a return-ticket every time the train stops.

ALICE: Indeed I shan't. I don't belong to this railway journey at all. I was in a wood just now and I wish I could get back there.

There is a shrill scream from the engine. Everyone jumps.

HORSE: (*looking out the window*) It's only a brook we have to jump over.

PASSENGERS: (*in an "oh that's all" fashion*) Only a brook.

ALICE: Jump? The train? It'll take us to the fourth square, I suppose that's some comf – ohhhhhh!

Everyone rears back as if the train is jumping.

PASSENGERS: Ohhhhhhhhhhh! (everyone stands) Whooo-hooo!

Chaos. WONDERLAND runs in their two circles around ALICE. Those holding the cloth for the brook run on and place it in front of the train. The train blows apart, the PASSENGERS scatter the cubes and take them offstage, ALICE jumps over the brook.

WONDERLAND:

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying over head
There were no birds to fly!

WONDERLAND finishes upstage. They are now a wood. They hold their arms above their heads as branches.

Chapter IV

During the above, TWEEDLEDEE and TWEEDLEDUM enter, walking backwards. They stand frozen with big grins on their faces. ALICE turns to see them.

ALICE: Oh!

TWEEDLEDEE and TWEEDLEDUM don't move. ALICE moves closer and closer, until –

TWEEDLEDUM: If you think we're wax-works, you ought to pay, you know. Wax-works weren't made to be looked at for nothing, nohow!

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

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

WONDERLAND:

Tweedledum and Tweedledee
Agreed to have a battle;
For Tweedledum said Tweedledee
Had spoiled his nice new rattle.
Just then flew down a monstrous crow,
As black as a tar-barrel;

Which frightened both the heroes so,
They quite forgot their quarrel.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM give a loud laugh.

TWEEDLEDUM: I know what you're thinking about, but it isn't so, nohow.

TWEEDLEDEE: Contrariwise, if it was so, it might be; and if it were so, it would be; but as it isn't, it ain't.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: That's logic.

ALICE: I was thinking, which is the best way out of this wood: it's getting so dark. Would you tell me, please?

TWEEDLEDUM: The first thing in a visit is to say "How d'ye do?"

TWEEDLEDEE: (*hugging TWEEDLEDUM*) How d'ye do!

TWEEDLEDUM: (*hugging TWEEDLEDEE*) How d'ye do!

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: (*shaking each others hand*) And shake hands!

TWEEDLEDEE and TWEEDLEDUM hold out a hand to ALICE to shake. Not knowing which one to take first, she takes both their hands. Suddenly they're in a circle dancing around.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: (*singing*) Here we go round the mulberry bush,
the mulberry bush, the mulberry bush, Here we go round the
mulberry bush, early in the morning.

They stop. TWEEDLEDEE and TWEEDLEDUM lean over, quite out of breath.

TWEEDLEDUM: Four times round is enough for one dance.

ALICE: I hope you're not much tired?

TWEEDLEDUM: Nohow. And thank you VERY much for asking.

TWEEDLEDEE: So much obliged!

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: Do you like poetry?

ALICE: SOME poetry... Would you tell me which road leads out of the wood?

TWEEDLEDEE: What shall I repeat to her?

TWEEDLEDUM: The Walrus and the Carpenter is the longest.

ALICE: Oh...

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM take a deep breath in and make a reciting pose.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: 'O Oysters come and walk with us!'

ALICE: If it's VERY long, would you please tell me first which road –

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM take a deep breath in and make a reciting pose.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: 'O Oysters come and walk with us!'

The poem is interrupted by a loud sound offstage. It sounds like the puffing of a large steam engine combined with a snore.

OFFSTAGE VOICE: (snoring) Whooo-hooo, chugga, chugga, whooo-hooo.

ALICE looks around quite nervously.

ALICE: Are there any lions or tigers about here?

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM give a loud laugh.

TWEEDLEDEE: It's only the Red King snoring.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: Come and look at him!

They take ALICE by the hand and cross the stage to where the RED KING lies sleeping just offstage.

TWEEDLEDUM: Isn't he a LOVELY sight?

ALICE: He's snoring very loudly.

TWEEDLEDUM: Fit to snore his head off!

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM give a loud laugh.

ALICE: I'm afraid he'll catch cold with lying on the damp grass.

TWEEDLEDEE: He's dreaming now. What do you think he's dreaming about?

ALICE: Nobody can guess that.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: Why, about YOU!

TWEEDLEDEE: And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?

ALICE: Where I am now, of course.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: Not you!

TWEEDLEDUM: You'd be nowhere.

TWEEDLEDEE: Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream!

TWEEDLEDUM: If that there King was to wake, you'd go out – bang!

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: Just like a candle!

ALICE: I shouldn't! Besides, if I'M only a sort of thing in his dream, what are YOU, I should like to know?

TWEEDLEDUM: Ditto.

TWEEDLEDEE: Ditto.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: Ditto, ditto!

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM give a loud laugh.

ALICE: Hush! You'll be waking him, I'm afraid, if you make so much noise.

TWEEDLEDUM & DEE: Well, it's no use YOUR talking about waking him,

TWEEDLEDEE: When you're only one of the things in his dream.

TWEEDLEDUM: You know very well you're not real.

ALICE: (*stamping her foot*) I AM real!

TWEEDLEDEE: You won't make yourself a bit realer by crying.

TWEEDLEDUM: (*seeing something off on the other side of the stage*)
There's nothing to cry about.

ALICE: If I wasn't real, I shouldn't be able to cry.

TWEEDLEDUM: Do you see THAT?

TWEEDLEDUM is on the move, crossing to the other side of the stage and pointing off.

ALICE: I'd better be getting out of the wood, for really it's coming on very dark...

ALICE follows behind. TWEEDLEDEE pretends not to pay attention.

TWEEDLEDUM: (*pointing off*) Do you see THAT? Do you SEE that? DO you see that!

ALICE: It's only a rattle, not a rattleSNAKE, you know, only an old rattle. Quite old and broken.

TWEEDLEDUM: I knew it was! (*having a temper tantrum*) It's spoilt of course!

ALICE: You needn't be so angry about an old rattle.

TWEEDLEDUM: But it isn't old! It's new, I tell you—I bought it yesterday—my nice new RATTLE!

He has another temper tantrum, and then just as quickly shuts it off. He calmly marches over to TWEEDLEDEE, who is looking elsewhere.

TWEEDLEDUM: Of course you agree to have a battle?

TWEEDLEDEE: (*sulkily*) I suppose so.

TWEEDLEDUM: What's the time now?

TWEEDLEDEE: (*looking at wrist*) Half-past four.

TWEEDLEDUM: Let's fight till six, and then have dinner.

ALICE: And all about a rattle?

WONDERLAND starts to gently sway back and forth, making a soft wind whistling noise.

TWEEDLEDUM: There's only one sword, you know, but you can have the umbrella, it's quite sharp. Only we must begin quick. (*looking up*) It's getting as dark as it can.

TWEEDLEDEE: (*looking up*) And darker.

ALICE: (*looking up*) What a thick black cloud that is! And how fast it comes! Why, I do believe it's got wings!

WONDERLAND's wind is getting stronger.

TWEEDLEDEE & DUM: It's the crow!

They run offstage right as the WHITE QUEEN runs on stage left.

Chapter V

The WHITE QUEEN runs on backwards with both arms stretched out wide as if she were flying.

WHITE QUEEN: (*as she enters*) Bread-and-butter, bread-and-butter, bread-and-butter... (*continuing*)

ALICE grabs her as she flies past. The WHITE QUEEN is dressed crookedly, everything is covered in pins. The wind dies down.

ALICE: Am I addressing the White Queen?

WHITE QUEEN: (*fumbling with her shawl*) Well, yes, if you call that a-dressing. It isn't MY notion of the thing at all.

ALICE: If your Majesty will only tell me the right way to begin, I'll do it as well as I can.

WHITE QUEEN: (*still trying to put her shawl right and failing*) But I don't want it done at all! I've been a-dressing myself for the last two hours.

ALICE: May I put your shawl straight for you?

WHITE QUEEN: I don't know what's the matter with it. It's out of temper, I think. I've pinned it here, and I've pinned it there, but there's no pleasing it.

ALICE: It CAN'T go straight, you know, if you pin it all on one side, (*fixing shawl*) And, dear me, what a state your hair is in!

WHITE QUEEN: (*touching her hair*) The brush has got entangled in it. And I lost the comb yesterday.

ALICE: Really, you should have a lady's maid.

WHITE QUEEN: I'm sure I'll take you with pleasure! Twopence a week, and jam every other day.

ALICE: I don't want you to hire ME—and I don't care for jam.

WHITE QUEEN: It's very good jam.

ALICE: Well, I don't want any today, at any rate.

WHITE QUEEN: You couldn't have it if you did want it. The rule is, jam to-morrow and jam yesterday, but never jam today.

ALICE: It MUST come sometimes to "jam today."

WHITE QUEEN: No, it can't. It's jam every OTHER day: today isn't any OTHER day, you know.

ALICE: I don't understand you. It's dreadfully confusing!

WHITE QUEEN: That's the effect of living backwards, it always makes one a little giddy at first...

ALICE: Living backwards!

WHITE QUEEN: ...but there's one great advantage in it, that one's memory works both ways.

ALICE: I'm sure MINE only works one way, I can't remember things before they happen.

WHITE QUEEN: It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards. (*jumping up and down and shaking her hand*) Oh, ohhhhhh! Oh, ohhhhhh!

When the WHITE QUEEN shouts, it sounds like a steam engine whistle – two sounds: short long, short long.

ALICE: (*putting her hands over her ears*) What is the matter?

WHITE QUEEN: My finger's bleeding! Oh, ohhhhhh!

ALICE: Have you pricked your finger?

WHITE QUEEN: I haven't pricked it YET, but I soon shall. Oh, ohhhhhh! Oh, ohhhhhh!

ALICE: When do you expect to do it?

WHITE QUEEN: (*groaning*) When I fasten my shawl again, the brooch will come undone directly. Oh, ohhhhhh! (*fumbles with the broach*)

ALICE: Take care! The broach!

WHITE QUEEN: (*has pricked her finger*) That accounts for the bleeding, you see. (*she sighs happily and smiles*) Now you understand the way things happen here.

WONDERLAND sways in the wind and makes a low wind noise.

ALICE: But why don't you scream now?

WHITE QUEEN: Why, I've done all the screaming already. How old are you?

ALICE: I'm seven and a half exactly.

WHITE QUEEN: I'm just one hundred and one, five months and a day.

ALICE: I can't believe that.

WHITE QUEEN: Can't you? Try again: draw a long breath, and shut your eyes.

ALICE: There's no use trying. One can't believe impossible things.

WHITE QUEEN: Why? Sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast. Bread and butter!

Chaos erupts. The WHITE QUEEN runs backwards off. The WONDERLAND characters all move in their own circles around the stage, swirling and twirling in the wind.

WONDERLAND: (*as they move*)

In winter, when the fields are white,
I sing this song for your delight.
In spring, when woods are getting green,
I'll try and tell you what I mean.
In summer, when the days are long,
Perhaps you'll understand the song:
In autumn, when the leaves are brown,
Take pen and ink, and write it down.

While the storm is taking place, WONDERLAND sets up for the next scene. ALICE stands in the eye of the storm as those holding the cloth for the brook move forward. They hold the cloth out in front of ALICE and she jumps over it.

As soon as she does so those not involved with the scene exit as fast as possible. There is silence.

ALICE now stands in a store, looking about with wonder. A SHEEP stands at a counter. A row of CURIOSITIES stand downstage left and a row stands downstage right (ALICE is in between the two rows).

SHEEP: What is it you want to (*with a bleat*) buy?

ALICE: I don't quite know yet. I should like to look all round me first, if I might.

SHEEP: You may look in front of you, and on both sides, if you like, but you can't look ALL round you—unless you've got eyes at the (with a bleat) back of your head.

ALICE: So many curious things...

ALICE takes a step left. The stage left CURIOSITIES take a step away. ALICE takes a step back. The stage left CURIOSITIES step back. She turns around to look at the stage right row. She takes a step right. The stage right CURIOSITIES take a step away. She turns and takes three steps to the left. The stage left CURIOSITIES take three steps away. ALICE turns to the right and runs straight at the stage right CURIOSITIES. They let out an "Ah!" and run behind the counter. ALICE tries to catch the stage left CURIOSITIES and they too let out an "Ah!" and run behind the counter. The two rows have now joined into one row. ALICE chases the row once in a circle before she gives up. The CURIOSITIES all huddle together.

ALICE: Things flow about so here!

SHEEP: You'll make me giddy soon, if you go on turning round like that. Now, what DO you want to buy?

ALICE: To buy? I should like to buy an egg, please. How do you sell them?

SHEEP: Fivepence farthing for one. Twopence for two.

ALICE: Then two are cheaper than one?

SHEEP: The fifth square is mostly water.

ALICE: (looking around) I don't see any water.

SHEEP: The Sixth belongs to Humpty Dumpty. (exits)

ALICE: Humpty Dumpty?

The CURIOSITIES run in a circle around ALICE as they talk. As this happens HUMPTY DUMPTY appears from behind the counter and settles on top. The two of WONDERLAND who hold the brook cloth also enter and stand off to the side.

CURIOSITIES:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall:
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

All the King's horses and all the King's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty in his place again.

ALICE: This is the very queerest shop I ever saw! And a brook!

ALICE jumps and the CURIOSITIES cheer. Everyone then scatters. ALICE turns to see HUMPTY DUMPTY.

Chapter VI

ALICE: Humpty Dumpty! It can't be anybody else. And how exactly like an egg he is.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: It's very provoking to be called an egg. VERY!

ALICE: (*moving closer*) I said you LOOKED like an egg, Sir. And some eggs are very pretty, you know.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Some people have no more sense than a baby! Don't stand there chattering to yourself, but tell me your name and your business.

ALICE: My name is Alice, but –

HUMPTY DUMPTY: It's a stupid enough name! What does it mean?

ALICE: MUST a name mean something?

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Of course it must. My name means the shape I am, and a good handsome shape it is, too. With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost.

ALICE: Why do you sit out here all alone? Don't you think you'd be safer down on the ground? That wall is so very narrow!

HUMPTY DUMPTY: What tremendously easy riddles you ask! Of course I don't think so! Why, if ever I did fall off—which there's no chance of—but IF I did—IF I did fall, the king has promised me with his very own mouth to –

ALICE: (*excitedly, she knows the answer*) To send all his horses and all his men.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Now I declare that's too bad! You've been listening at doors! And behind trees! And down chimneys, or you couldn't have known it!

ALICE: I haven't, indeed! It's in a book.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: It's my turn to choose a subject. How old did you say you were?

ALICE: Seven years and six months.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Wrong! You never said a word like it!

ALICE: I though you meant “How old ARE you?”

HUMPTY DUMPTY: If I'd meant that, I'd have said it.

ALICE: (*trying to change the subject*) What a beautiful belt you've got on! At least, a beautiful cravat, I should have said—no, a belt, I mean—I beg your pardon!

HUMPTY DUMPTY: It is a most provoking thing, when a person doesn't know a cravat from a belt.

ALICE: I know, it's very ignorant of me.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: It's a cravat, child, and a beautiful one, as you say. It's a present from the White King and Queen.

ALICE: Is it really?

HUMPTY DUMPTY: They gave it me, they gave it me, for an un-birthday present.

ALICE: What is an un-birthday present?

HUMPTY DUMPTY: A present given when it isn't your birthday, of course.

ALICE: I like birthday presents best.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: You don't know what you're talking about! How many days are there in a year?

ALICE: Three hundred and sixty-five.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: And how many birthdays have you?

ALICE: One.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: And if you take one from three hundred and sixty-five, what remains?

ALICE: Three hundred and sixty-four, of course.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: And that shows that there are three hundred and sixty-four days when you might get un-birthday presents, and only ONE for birthday presents, you know. Good-bye!

ALICE: Oh. Good-bye, till we meet again!

HUMPTY DUMPTY: I shouldn't know you again if we did meet, you're so exactly like other people.

ALICE: The face is what one goes by, generally.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Your face is the same as everybody has: two eyes, so, nose in the middle, mouth under. It's always the same. Now if you had the two eyes on the same side of the nose, for instance, or the mouth at the top – that would be some help.

ALICE: It wouldn't look nice.

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Wait till you've tried. (*shouting off*) I'm waiting!

Some of WONDERLAND run on and move HUMPTY DUMPTY and the counter off as ALICE stares.

ALICE: Of all the unsatisfactory, of all the unsatisfactory people I ever met –

A heavy crash is heard. Like the cracking of an egg.

ALICE: Oh dear.

Chapter VII

Offstage there is the sound of a bugle horn playing – a call to battle. And then the roar of a battalion of soldiers. And then all the King's horses and all the King's men run across the stage toward the fallen HUMPTY. ALICE gets out of the way. She turns to see the WHITE KING entering backwards.

WHITE KING: I've sent them all! Did you happen to meet any soldiers, my dear, as you came through the wood?

ALICE: Yes, I did. Several thousand, I should think.

WHITE KING: Four thousand two hundred and seven, that's the exact number. I couldn't send all the horses, because two of them are wanted in the game. And I haven't sent the two Messengers, either. They've both gone to town. Just look along the road, and tell me if you can see either of them.

ALICE: (*looking off*) I see somebody! But he's coming very slowly.

WHITE KING: His name is Haigha. (*Rhymes with 'mayor.' This is the HARE from Alice in Wonderland.*)

ALICE: (*skipping in a circle*) I love my love with an H, because he is Happy. I hate him with an H, because he is Hideous. I fed him

with—with Ham-sandwiches and Hay. His name is Haigha, and he lives—

WHITE KING: He lives on the Hill.

HAIGHA enters, too out of breath to say a word, waving hands, making faces.

ALICE: What is he trying to say?

WHITE KING: (to HAIGHA) You alarm me. Give me a ham sandwich!

HAIGHA snaps to order. He opens a bag that hangs around his neck and hands a sandwich to the KING who devours it greedily.

WHITE KING: Another sandwich!

HAIGHA: (looking in the bag) There's nothing but hay left now.

WHITE KING: Hay, then. (HAIGHA hands over a handful of hay, which the KING begins to eat) There's nothing like eating hay when you're faint.

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

WHITE KING: I didn't say there was nothing BETTER. I said there was nothing LIKE it. (to HAIGHA) Tell us what's happened in the town.

HAIGHA: I'll whisper it. (shouting) They're at it again!

WHITE KING: (jumping) If you do such a thing again, I'll have you buttered!

ALICE: Who are at it again?

WHITE KING: Why the Lion and the Unicorn, of course.

ALICE: Fighting for the crown?

WHITE KING: Yes, to be sure. And the best of the joke is, that it's MY crown all the while! Let's run and see them.

They start running in place. ALL of WONDERLAND enters to run in place with them.

WONDERLAND:

The Lion and the Unicorn were fighting for the crown:
The Lion beat the Unicorn all around the town.
Some gave them white bread, some gave them brown;
Some gave them plum-cake and drummed them out of town.

ALICE: (*out of breath*) Does—the one—that wins—get the crown?

WHITE KING: Dear me, no! What an idea!

ALICE: Would you—be good enough – to stop a minute—just to get—one's breath again?

WHITE KING: I'm good enough, only I'm not strong enough. You see, a minute goes by so fearfully quick. You might as well try to stop a Bandersnatch!

They stop suddenly and all of WONDERLAND laughs once loudly (and somewhat mechanically) as if the WHITE KING has told this joke many times before. WONDERLAND arranges themselves about the stage. HATTA has also entered, he's drinking tea and eating a piece of bread.

WHITE KING: (*seeing HATTA*) There's my other messenger. He's called Hatta. (*this is the HATTER from Alice in Wonderland*) I must have two, you know— One to come, and one to go.

HAIGHA: He's only just out of prison and he hadn't finished his tea when he was sent in. And they only give them oyster-shells in there. So you see, he's very hungry and thirsty. (*to HATTA*) How are you, dear child?

HATTA looks around and nods, he goes on eating.

HAIGHA: Were you happy in prison, dear child?

HATTA looks around and shrugs. He goes on eating.

HAIGHA: Speak, can't you!

WHITE KING: Speak, won't you! How are they getting on with the fight?

HATTA: They're getting on very well, each of them has been down about eighty-seven times.

WHITE KING: (*calling out*) Ten minutes allowed for refreshments!

Everyone applauds politely. One of WONDERLAND brings around trays of white and brown bread. The UNICORN enters and talks silently to some WONDERLAND characters.

WHITE KING: I don't think they'll fight any more today, (*to HATTA*) go and order the drums to begin.

HATTA exits.

UNICORN: (*approaching*) I had the best of it this time?

WHITE KING: (*nervous*) You shouldn't have run him through with your horn, you know.

UNICORN: It didn't hurt him. (*seeing ALICE*) What—is—this?

The UNICORN leans in to sniff ALICE, causing her to step back.

HAIGHA: This is a child! We only found it today. It's as large as life, and twice as natural!

UNICORN: I always thought they were fabulous monsters! (*he pokes ALICE*) Is it alive?

HAIGHA: It can talk.

UNICORN: Talk, child.

ALICE: Do you know, I always thought Unicorns were fabulous monsters. I never saw one alive before.

UNICORN: Well, now that we HAVE seen each other, if you'll believe in me, I'll believe in you. Is that a bargain?

ALICE: Yes, if you like.

UNICORN: (*to the WHITE KING*) Come, fetch out the plum-cake, old man! None of your brown bread for me.

WHITE KING: Certainly, certainly! (*beckoning to HAIGHA*) Open the bag! Quick! Not that one! That's full of hay!

HAIGHA takes a large cake out of a bag and gives it to ALICE to hold. The LION enters.

LION: (*looking at ALICE – yawning, tired, sleepy*) What's this?

UNICORN: Ah, what IS it, now? You'll never guess! I couldn't.

LION: (*yawning*) Are you animal, vegetable, or mineral?

UNICORN: It's a fabulous monster!

LION: Then hand round the plum-cake, Monster. (*Yawning, lying down. To the KING and UNICORN.*) And sit down, both of you, fair play with the cake, you know!

The LION roars. The KING sits uncomfortably, trying to keep his distance but not be impolite.

UNICORN: (seeing how tired the LION is) What a fight we might have for the crown now!

LION: (yawning) I should win easy.

UNICORN: I'm not so sure of that.

LION: (half getting up) Why, I beat you all round the town, you chicken!

WHITE KING: All around the town? That's a good long way. Ha ha!

LION: (growling as he lays down again) What a time the Monster is, cutting up that cake!

Offstage there is the sound of drums. Everyone except for ALICE jumps up and starts running in circles.

WONDERLAND: The drums! The drums!

UNICORN: Drummed out of town again?

WHITE KING: Tough luck!

LION: Right in the middle of our feast!

WONDERLAND: Bread and butter! Bread and butter!

Everyone runs in circles, muttering as they go. Someone takes the cake from ALICE. Those holding the cloth for the brook run on and place it in front of ALICE. She jumps over the brook, and everyone runs offstage. ALICE is alone.

Chapter VIII

RED KNIGHT: (offstage) Ahoy! Ahoy! Check!

ALICE looks off to see the RED KNIGHT come galloping in. Note: Both KNIGHTS are riding either mimed horses, or stick horses.

RED KNIGHT: You're my prisoner. Ah!

The RED KNIGHT falls off his horse and tumbles to the floor. He gets up and resets himself.

WHITE KNIGHT: (offstage) Ahoy! Ahoy! Check!



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