

Alice in Wonderland

by Bill Robertson

{adapted from "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll}

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Bitesize Theatre Co., 8 Green Meadows, New Broughton, Wrexham, LL11 6SG

cast

ALICE	SISTER	RABBIT	DODO	HERALD
	DUCK	MOUSE	GRYPHON	CROW
	BILL	CATERPLR	PAT	FISH
	FROG	DUCHESS	COOK	CAT
	TURTLE	SEVEN	HATTER	FIVE
	HARE		TWO	
	QUEEN	KING	KNAVE	

Alice in Wonderland

Preshow: *music: Stravinsky/Petrushka -Shrovetide Fair*

SCENE 1 The Riverbank

[*Music: Delius/Walk in Paradise Gardens. Riverbank SFX. Summer meadow smell. SISTER enters, reading a history book aloud. ALICE is trailing behind her, bored*]

SISTER:On Christmas day, 1066, Duke William of Normandy was acclaimed king in Westminster Abbey. Despite his victory at Hastings, and despite the surrender of London and Winchester, William's position was still a precarious one and he had good reason to be nervous..... Are you listening, Alice ?

ALICE: Yes!... I suppose so.

SISTER: There's no supposing. Either you are or you're not.

ALICE: I would be listening if the book had pictures in it, or conversations. I like books with pictures and conversations.

SISTER: It's a History book, Alice, not a fairy story.

ALICE: Well, I like fairy stories. Anyway! What use is a book if it hasn't got pictures or conversations ? [*SISTER shakes her head. pause*]. I think I'll just stay here a while by the river and make a daisy chain for mama.

SISTER: Very well! We can continue with your History lesson later. But don't go too near the river. We wouldn't want you to fall in, would we?

ALICE: Alright! [*SISTER exits. ALICE sits down and stares at the river. sighs*] It's so warm and peaceful here by the river, it makes me feel quite sleepy. [*Music:Runaway Rocking Horse. ALICE lies back, stretches, yawns and falls asleep. Lighting change to indicate she has fallen asleep. She suddenly sits up.*] Gosh, I nearly nodded off.....[*seeing audience*] Goodness! Where did you all spring from? You must have crept up very quietly, for me not to hear you. [*getting up*] I must say it's such a lovely day to be out, isn't it? My name's Alice, by the way. [*to a child in the front row*] What's your name? [*get name*] Well, Hello {NAME}. Hello everyone. [*audience: Hello (feebly).*] Oh, I'm sure you can do much better than that. I said, [*shouts*] hello everyone. [*audience: Hello*] That's better.... But you know, I do have the strangest feeling,.... I feel as though... as though I'm still asleep.... but how can I be? You're not asleep, are you ? [*audience: No*] Well are you? [*audience: No*] No! Good!

[*Music:Saint-Saens/Clarinet Sonata. The White RABBIT enters. He is out for a Sunday Afternoon stroll. He stops and takes out a pocketwatch.*]

RABBIT: Oh dear! Oh dear! Now, I shall be too late!

ALICE: How curious. I've never seen a Rabbit with a pocket watch before. Let alone one with a waistcoat to keep it in. Have you? [*audience: No*]

RABBIT: Tut, tut. Where has the time gone? [*the RABBIT exits through the Rabbit hole.*]

ALICE: I wonder where he can be going in such a hurry and I must say I'm very curious to know what he'll be late for, aren't you?.... Well, we won't find out unless I ask him, will we? Mr. Rabbit! Mr. Rabbit! [*ALICE follows the RABBIT through the Rabbit hole under the hedge*]

SCENE 2 Inside the rabbit hole.

[*{music continues} Lights go darker. The White RABBIT enters and changes the scene. It becomes a long hall with lots of doors. While he is doing this, ALICE enters on her hands and knees*]

ALICE: Mr. Rabbit! Gosh! That was quite a tight squeeze. Thank goodness, it's large enough to stand up in, now that I'm inside..... but it does seem to be very dark. I wonder where the Rabbit went to? *[to the audience]* Did you see where he went? **[audience:answers]** There?

[*Partial behind you routine. While ALICE is facing upstage the RABBIT starts to go around the audience muttering about the time. ALICE follows.*]

RABBIT: Oh! my ears and whiskers. Look how late it's getting! Time, time, look at the time!

ALICE: Why there he is? Mr. Rabbit! Oh! Mr. Rabbit!

RABBIT: Oh! my ears and whiskers. I'm sure to be late!

[*The RABBIT returns to the stage and exits through one of the doors. ALICE follows*]

ALICE: Mr. Rabbit !..... *[she tries the door he has gone through, but it's locked]* Oh, dear. It's locked! Now what shall I do? *[She stands in the middle wondering what to do. Magic SFX. Suddenly she sees a table. On it there is a tiny gold key.]* Goodness! I could have sworn that table wasn't there a moment ago. And what's this.... a tiny golden key, but I'm sure it's much too small to fit any of these doors. *[She looks at each of the doors in turn and then finds a very small door hidden behind a curtain].....* But what's this? A tiny door. This must be the one. *[she tries the key and it opens the door. She looks through.]* It works!..... Oh! I can see the most wonderful garden you could imagine. Oh, how I wish I could wander among all those beautiful flowers and those cool fountains. But how shall I ever get in? If only I could make myself small enough to squeeze through the door! I'm sure I could, if I only knew how to begin. *[She returns to the table and finds a small bottle with a label saying "Drink me".]* What have we here? Drink me!.... No, I'll look first and see whether it's marked Poison or not. I've read about such things you know. If you drink from a bottle marked Poison, it is almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later..... But this bottle doesn't seem to be marked Poison, so I suppose it'll be ok to taste it. *[she drinks]* Ooo! What a curious feeling! I seem to be getting smaller and smaller. Oh, dear, how will it end. I hope I don't go out altogether, like a candle. *[ALICE shrinks. The table gets bigger. Shrinking SFX]* Oh, thank goodness, I've stopped! Now I'm sure to be small enough to get through the door into the garden. *[the door behind the curtain is now a normal sized door. She tries it.]* It's locked. Oh, no! Where did I put the key? Did you see? **[audience:answers]** On the table? But now I'm so small I'll never be able to reach it. *[she starts to cry]* Come now, there's no use in crying like this, is there? Crying never solves anything. *[she cries]*

[*The White RABBIT enters carrying a pair of white gloves and a fan.*]

RABBIT: Oh! the Duchess, the Duchess! Oh! Won't she be savage if I keep her waiting.

ALICE: Oh, it's the White Rabbit.....*[wiping her eyes]* If you please sir...

RABBIT: Argh! *[RABBIT starts, drops the gloves and fan and runs off.]*

ALICE: [ALICE picks up the fan.] Oh! Mr. Rabbit! Please come back. You've dropped your fan.... Oh! it's no use, he's gone. But what's this? [She finds a small glass box under the table with a small cake in it with the words "Eat me" written on it.] Eat me! Well, I will 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 much care which happens! [She eats the cake. The table shrinks and she grows. Growing SFX] Curiouser and curiouser! Now I'm growing! Goodbye feet! Oh dear! What nonsense I'm talking! Anyway, here's the key..... But now, I'm much too big to get into the garden again! Oh! [She starts to cry again.] You ought to be ashamed of yourself. A great girl like you crying in this way. Stop this moment! But I can't [She sobs] Dear, dear! How queer everything is today! And yesterday things went on much as usual... I wonder if I've been changed in the night? I must try to think... [she starts to wander, fanning herself absently. She begins to shrink again. The table grows. Shrinking SFX]was I the same when I got up this morning?... I think I remember feeling a little different... But if I'm not the same, the next question is... who am I? Oh dear, how puzzling it all is!... I know! I'll try to see if I know all the things I used to know. Now.... four times five is... twelve, that's right isn't it? [audience: no] And four times six is thirteen?.... [audience: no] Oh dear! Let's try Geography. London is the capital of Paris, and Paris is the capital of Rome, and Rome... [audience: no] No, that's all wrong! I must have been changed for I'm sure I knew all the right answers yesterday! [She stops by the table] Goodness! The table has grown all by itself... or perhaps it's me, perhaps I've started to shrink again. How can I have done that? [She measures herself against the table, and discovers that it's the fan that's making her shrink.] It's this fan. Whenever I begin to fan myself I start to shrink. [She stops fanning and puts the fan down.] That's enough! I'd better stop before it's too late. That was a narrow escape... Now, what have I done with the key. Oh, no! It's back on the table again. I still can't get into the garden, and things are worse than ever, for I was never as small as this before, never!

[The DUCK and DODO enter with 2 lengths of blue material which they bring on like a wave. They exit opposite. The material is used to represent the pool of tears. ALICE is engulfed in the wave and finds herself up to her chin in the pool of salt water. Music: Saint-Saens/Aquarium. Crashing waves SFX.]

ALICE: Argh! [ALICE splutters to the surface and starts treading water] It tastes salty. Somehow, I must have fallen into the sea.... or perhaps this is a pool of my own tears. I wish I hadn't cried so much when I was big, for now I shall be punished for it, by being drowned in my own tears! That'll be a very strange thing, to be sure! But then, everything's strange today. [noises off] What's that? It's coming from over there. [The MOUSE enters swimming.] A mouse!..... Would it be of any use, do you think, to speak to this mouse? Everything is so odd down here, that I should think very likely it can talk. At any rate, there's no harm in trying. Oh Mouse! Do you know the way out of this pool? I'm getting very tired of swimming about here. Oh Mouse!.... Perhaps it doesn't understand English. I daresay it's a French mouse, come over with William the Conqueror.... Emm.... OÙ est ma chatte? [The MOUSE takes fright at the mention of a cat.] Oh, I beg your pardon! I quite forgot you wouldn't like cats.

MOUSE: Not like cats! Would you like cats if you were me?

ALICE: Well, perhaps not. But, please don't be angry about it. You know... I wish I could show you my cat, Dinah. I think you'd take a fancy to cats if you met her. She's such a dear quiet thing, and she sits purring so nicely by the fire, licking her paws and washing her face... and she's such a capital one for catching mice....[sharp intake of breath] Oh, I'm so sorry! We won't talk about her any more.

MOUSE: We, indeed! As if I would talk on such a subject! Our family has always hated cats. Nasty, low, vulgar things!

ALICE: Are you... are you fond... of... of dogs? You see, there's such a nice little dog near our house. A little bright-eyed terrier, you know, with oh, such long curly brown hair! And it'll fetch things when you throw them, and it'll sit up and beg for it's dinner, and all sorts of things, I can't remember half of them, and it belongs to a farmer, and he says it's so useful, it's worth a hundred pounds! He says it kills all the rats and..... [*the Mouse moves away*] Oh dear! I'm afraid I've offended it again! Mouse dear! Do come back again, and we won't talk about cats or dogs either, if you don't like them!

MOUSE: Humph! Follow me to the shore, and I'll tell you my history, and then perhaps you'll understand why it is I hate cats and dogs. Come on!

[*They exit*]